



## PRESS RELEASE

### **ARTE COME RIVELAZIONE. DALLA COLLEZIONE LUIGI E PEPPINO AGRATI (ART AS A REVELATION. FROM THE LUIGI AND PEPPINO AGRATI COLLECTION)**

**Gallerie d'Italia - Piazza Scala, Intesa Sanpaolo museum complex  
Milan, 6 Piazza della Scala  
Open to the public: 16 May 2018 - 19 August 2018  
Exhibition curated by Luca Massimo Barbero**

*Milan, 16 May 2018 – From Wednesday 16 May to Sunday 19 August at the Gallerie d'Italia – Piazza Scala, Intesa Sanpaolo's museum complex in Milan, the exhibition **Arte come rivelazione. Dalla collezione Luigi e Peppino Agrati (Art as a revelation. From the Luigi and Peppino Agrati collection)** will be open to the public. For the first time ever, the exhibition allows the public to see a selection of works by eminent figures in Italian and international artistic experimentation from the second half of the twentieth century, that belong to one of the largest private contemporary art collections. The exhibition project was headed by **Luca Massimo Barbero**, with **Gianfranco Brunelli** as the general coordinator.*

The Luigi and Peppino Agrati collection, that includes 500 works, was first set up **in the late 1970s by the two leading industrialists**, who were successors and leading figures in the learned Lombardy bourgeoisie. Following Peppino's death, the torch was passed to his brother Luigi who, with his wife, decided to donate the collection to Intesa Sanpaolo, a landmark contribution to the international dimension of the Bank's artistic heritage.

**Giovanni Bazoli**, President Emeritus of Intesa Sanpaolo, said: *"The Luigi and Peppino Agrati collection, one of the major art collections of the second half of the twentieth century in Italy, will become part of the Intesa Sanpaolo collections thanks to the extraordinary act of generosity from the Cavaliere del Lavoro (Order of Merit for Labour) Luigi Agrati. An important selection of works from this collection is to be presented to the public for the first time ever in the Gallerie d'Italia on Piazza Scala in Milan. It will be an excellent opportunity to admire and compare never-before-seen masterpieces of Italian, European and American art from the twentieth century. The exhibition also intends to commemorate and pay homage to Luigi Agrati who, along*

*with his brother Peppino, conceived a collection that is notable on the international stage of private art collections.”*

**In the exhibition, the public will be able to view a selection of 73 works from the collection**, thanks to Mariuccia Agrati’s assistance, the wife of *Cavaliere* Luigi Agrati. There are masterpieces from American artists including Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Robert Rauschenberg and Christo, as well as from eminent figures in Italian artistic experimentation, such as Lucio Fontana, Piero Manzoni, Mario Schifano, Alberto Burri and Fausto Melotti. The Agratis established a relationship based on dialogue and friendship with many of these artists. From Informalism to Pop Art, and from *Arte Povera* movement to Conceptual Art up to the developments in the 1980s, the collection passes through and creates links with the movements that left their mark on the course of art not only in Italy but across the world in the second half of the twentieth century.

*“Arte come rivelazione (Art as a revelation) means presenting a representative selection of works from the Luigi and Peppino Agrati collection for the very first time to the public as a visual gift to the city, revealing the pair of collectors’ perceptiveness and love of art. In November 1970, the Agratis saw Christo removing the white cloth which he had used to wrap the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II in Piazza del Duomo and the monument to Leonardo da Vinci on Piazza della Scala with their very own eyes, a moment known today as one of the most defining in Milan’s history of contemporary art. Peppino immediately got in touch with Christo, and commissioned the artist to create a number of installations in the garden of his villa in Brianza. Peppino also was one of the patrons of Valley Curtain, one of the environmental installations that led to Christo being known as the pioneer of Land Art. The Agratis fervently and directly kept their finger on the pulse of the most important developments in art in their time, which is symbolically encapsulated in their personal relationship with Christo, and is also reflected in their close relationship with Fausto Melotti. This was also evident in their attentive and deep understanding of trends in conceptual art and minimalism, the latter being symbolised by Flavin’s large neon piece, which was dedicated to Peppino Agrati himself. Today the collected works express a way of seeing the collection as a revelation and an enrichment, as an opportunity to share a possible world of images that embody modern life”,* said exhibition curator **Luca Massimo Barbero**.

The exhibition is the first ever opportunity there has been to reveal the collection to the public with a representative selection of Italian and American artworks. Opening with an exceptional group of sculptures by Fausto Melotti, acting as the linchpin of the exhibition, and then moving onto magna opera by Lucio Fontana, Alberto Burri, Yves Klein and Piero Manzoni, the exhibition gives a deeper insight into Italian “new figurative” painting, with works from Jannis Kounellis and Mario Schifano to name just two, and then progresses to the roots of *Arte Povera* in its infancy, represented by experimental pieces by Piero Gilardi, Luciano Fabro, Mario Merz and Giulio Paolini.

Thanks to their curiosity, a typical trait of entrepreneurs, and a rare ability to examine in great depth, Luigi and Peppino Agrati have brought together a collection that is representative of the plethora of interests in their experience of contemporary art. Their discovery of American art, examined in detail at the same time as they developed relations in the United States, led to the purchase of works by figureheads of the Pop movement, with Andy Warhol and his large *Triple Elvis* being iconic of this style, and also pieces by leading figures of minimalist and conceptual trends, including Dan Flavin and Richard Serra. Forming a diverse constellation, included in the collection alongside the Italian art are exceptional works by Robert Rauschenberg, that were widely collected from the late 1960s to the 1980s, as well as extraordinary pieces by Cy Twombly, the original mediator between American and Italian culture, and conceptual artists such as Bruce Nauman and Joseph Kosuth, whose experimental works on language are placed into a dialogue with those of Alighiero Boetti's and Vincenzo Agnetti's.

The exhibition develops through a non-chronological itinerary that creates areas and meeting points. Opening from the centre of the Gallerie d'Italia complex, the exhibition passes through every room, section by section, displaying works that form the tiles of an extraordinary mosaic that stands for the history of this collection, unseen by the public until today.

The exhibition catalogue is edited by Silvana Editoriale.

**For press material and images, click the following link:** <https://goo.gl/Rd4yvY>

**Press information:**

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**EXHIBITION INFORMATION**

Title: *Arte come rivelazione. Dalla collezione Luigi e Peppino Agrati*

*(Art as a revelation. From the Luigi and Peppino Agrati)*

Location: Gallerie d'Italia – 6 Piazza della Scala, Milan

Exhibition period: 16 May - 19 August 2018

Opening hours: Tuesday - Sunday 9:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. (last entry at 6:30 p.m.); Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 p.m. (last entry at 9:30 p.m.); closed on Monday

Ticket prices: available on [www.gallerieditalia.com](http://www.gallerieditalia.com)

Information Toll free number 800.167619; [info@gallerieditalia.com](mailto:info@gallerieditalia.com)

Opening Wednesday 16 May, with free entry for the public from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. (last entry at 10:00 p.m.)

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Intesa Sanpaolo makes its contribution to Italy's cultural life with the **Progetto Cultura**, a strategic collection of the Bank's cultural activities that, through the Gallerie d'Italia, Intesa Sanpaolo's museum complex, showcases a selection of over 20,000 works from the Bank's collection in its three complexes in Milan, Naples and Vicenza. The pieces range from archaeological artifacts to contemporary works, with the most notable being *The Martyrdom of St. Ursula*, Caravaggio's masterpiece, Attican and Magna Grecian ceramics, Russian icons and Italian works from the second half of the twentieth century. Alongside the permanent exhibitions, Intesa Sanpaolo's Progetto Cultura organises **temporary exhibitions** in the Gallerie d'Italia thanks to original scientific projects, and loans and exchanges with major museum institutions on the national and international scene. Since 1989 the **Restituzioni** programme has supported the restoration of artworks of national heritage that have been identified in collaboration with public conservation bodies. The **Officine delle Idee** project also aims to provide young people, graduates and post-graduates with qualified learning opportunities within the art world. Progetto Cultura is set up by the Art, Culture and Historical Heritage Head Office Department of Intesa Sanpaolo, headed by Michele Coppola.