

PAUL GAUGUIN. Tahitians in a Room

As part of the event *L'Ospite illustre* (The Illustrious Guest)

Gallerie d'Italia - Palazzo Leoni Montanari
The Intesa Sanpaolo museum complex in Vicenza
30 November 2019 - 8 March 2020

Vicenza, 29 November 2019 – The series of events to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the opening of the Gallerie d'Italia - Palazzo Leoni Montanari, the Intesa Sanpaolo museum complex in Vicenza, draws to a close with an exhibition from **30 November 2019 to 8 March 2020**, dedicated to the painting by **Paul Gauguin, *Eiaha ohipa* (Not working. Tahitians in a Room)**, on loan from the **Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow**.

The arrival of Gauguin's masterpiece from Moscow marks the **eleventh edition of the *L'Ospite illustre* (The Illustrious Guest)** event, which gives visitors the chance to admire a major work of art on temporary loan from prestigious Italian and foreign museums in the Gallerie d'Italia exhibition venues in Vicenza, Milan, Naples, as well as on the 36th floor of the Turin skyscraper.

Michele Coppola, Executive Director of Art, Culture and Historical Heritage of Intesa Sanpaolo, said: *"The anniversary of the opening of Gallerie d'Italia in Vicenza is celebrated with this special guest, bearing witness to the friendship and bond existing between Palazzo Leoni Montanari and leading international museums. The achievements accomplished in 2019 are the best motivation for us to continue our mission of developing our collections and promoting art and culture in the building which became the first Intesa Sanpaolo museum complex twenty years ago."*

The work was painted by Gauguin in 1896 when, shortly after returning from France to Tahiti, he found himself in financial straits with serious health problems, and depression as a result.

The more commonly used title, *Tahitians in a Room*, does not convey the same meaning as the Maori title *Eiaha Ohipa*, which is written on the painting and refers to the idleness or leisure time of the two figures portrayed. The two figures embody the Utopian condition of a harmonious state of nature, a freedom to be and act as they wish. In the background, an observer stands out, essentially outside of the scene; this is presumably the artist himself, with his dog closer to the figures at the doorway, a recurrent figure in many of his paintings of that era.

In 1891, Gauguin set sail for Polynesia for the first time, drawn to the islands partly by the foreignness of the exotic location and partly by the idea of reinvigorating traditional forms of painting thanks to contact with a so-called “primitive” culture, that was virginal and authentic. The practically unanimous rejection in Paris of his works completed during his first stay, between 1891 and 1893, led him to radically distance himself from his homeland. Tahiti took on a fantastical dimension, a type of paradise free from the constraints of western life and its values of false progress, control and exploitation.

Running alongside the exhibition of this piece is a programme packed with activities, with free educational courses for schools, multisensorial art itineraries, workshops for kids, floral design workshops, an art and cinema event, and many other initiatives designed to bring the visitor on a journey of colour, fragrance and tastes from Polynesia.

The museum catalogue, curated by Edizioni Gallerie d'Italia | Skira, contains essays by Maria Grazia Messina and Alexey Petukhov.

CAPTIONS:

Paul Gauguin (Paris, 1848 – Hiva Oa, 1903),
Eiaha ohipa (Not working. Tahitians in a Room)
1896, oil on canvas, 65x75 cm
© Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow.

PRESS INFORMATION

Intesa Sanpaolo
Media Office for Institutional, Social and Cultural Activities
Tel. +335.7282324
stampa@intesasampaolo.com



EXHIBITION INFORMATION:

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: 30 November 2019 - 8 March 2020

VENUE: Gallerie d'Italia - Palazzo Leoni Montanari – Vicenza, 25 Contra' Santa Corona

OPENING HOURS: From Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 6pm (last admission at 5.30pm). Closed on Mondays

SPECIAL OPENINGS:

- 8 December 2019
- 24 December 2019 (from 10am to 3pm)
- 26 December 2019
- 30 December 2019
- 31 December 2019 (from 10am to 3pm)
- 1 January 2020 (from 2pm to 6pm)
- 6 January 2020 (from 10am to 6pm)

CLOSURES:

- 25 December 2019

INFORMATION: freephone number 800.578875; info@palazzomontanari.com, www.gallerieditalia.com

TICKET PRICES: full price 5 euro, reduced 3 euro. Free admission for school groups, under 18s, customers of the Intesa Sanpaolo Group, and all visitors on the first Sunday of each month.