

New York,  
8 November 2019

# SHAPING

raising awareness  
on human dignity,  
respect and equal  
opportunities

**SOCIETY**

**A SUSTAINABLE**

**FUTURE**

## PRESS RELEASE

### "SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE SOCIETY" EVENT OVERVIEW

The third edition of Prada Group's "Shaping a Future" conference took place today at the Prada US headquarters in New York City. A diverse and renowned group of speakers from global institutions and the academic, architecture and intellectual worlds, including US Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman, architect Sir David Adjaye and Paralympic champion Simone Barlaam, gathered to discuss the overarching theme of social sustainability within business and society.

Prada S.p.A. Chairman **Carlo Mazzi** set the tone for the conference with his opening comments. "Sustainability goes beyond the border of any nation. We must remember that progress cannot take place in a vacuum but within society."

Architect **Sir David Adjaye OBE** then took the audience on a journey through some of his most important projects, and the intellectual foundations underpinning them. One of his recent projects, in Harlem New York, truly "shows how a building can contribute to the life blood of a city and the stories that define these communities. This is not about a token gesture but one of community." He also described how his award-winning Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture is covered in bronze plates with patterns to honor the history of African American craftsmanship.

The roundtable, moderated by Professor and journalist **Gianni Riotta**, followed the discussion. **Amale Andraos**, Dean of the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, **Richard Armstrong**, Director of the Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, **Mariarosa Cutillo**, Chief of Strategic Partnerships of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), **Amanda Gorman**, poet and activist, **Kent Larson**, City Science Director at MIT Media Lab, and **Livia Pomodoro**, President of Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, all provided unique perspectives about the social substantiality and the importance of diverse sectors working together to achieve real impact.

In the conversation, Mariarosa Cutillo gave a stark warning. "We are not doing enough on one of the UN's central goals. We are not doing enough on leaving no one behind. The main challenge we have now is we cannot make a big part of the population visible." Amanda Gorman urged the audience to reframe their perceptions on sustainability. "What are we willing to give up for a sustainable future? That question requires a major re-shift in how we think. We need to imagine that sacrifice now doesn't mean scarcity in the future. It will be a reimagined amalgamation of resources."

The inspirational speech of the day was given by **Simone Barlaam**, the talented Paralympic champion, who spoke passionately about being conscious to human differences. "When we are open to similarities and differences we understand more about ourselves. This moment of self-discovery can help us grow spiritually and help us become better citizens of the world."

After a short coffee break, the Yale Center for Customer Insights, in partnership with the Prada Group, delivered an engaging presentation on their findings from a survey, dedicated to exploring and understanding the impact of sustainability on consumer attitudes and behaviors. Professor **Ravi Dhar** explained that consumers always have a judgement - not necessarily based on data, but on innate psychology. "If you don't have enough data, what do people end up doing? They make up their own data based on their beliefs."

The final discussion of the day, a dialogue between Distinguished Research Professor at New York University, **Kate Crawford**, and Professor **Raffaella Cagliano** from the Politecnico di Milano School of Management captured the ethical and social importance of developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technology from an ethical and social perspective. Professor Kate Crawford called for the audience to understand that "We are talking about a profound shifting of power in the societies we live in. We do not have international AI regulation or any safeguards in place. This is one of the most profound issues in society today." On sustainability, she laid out the three serious impacts of unfettered tech and AI production. "Tech and AI is extraordinarily natural resource intensive, labor intensive and data extractive. At every level, we are just not building the framework to make this sustainable." Professor Raffaella Cagliano wrapped up the dialogue with a positive view on how awareness, responsibility, and grass root movements will propel AI and technology into a benevolent social force.

The event concluded with powerful remarks by foreign policy analyst and author **Rula Jebreal**, who spoke inspiringly about overcoming prejudice. "Dignity, respect, equality, opportunity. We need to stand up for this every day. If we don't shape this world, it will shape us. If we don't do something now it will define us, our present, and our future".

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### **About "Shaping a Future" conferences:**

Since 2017, the Prada Group has hosted an annual conference with the aim of stimulating a debate on the most significant changes taking place in contemporary society. In both editions, Prada collaborated with the Schools of Management of both Yale and Politecnico di Milano.

The first conference in 2017, entitled "Shaping a Creative Future" addressed the links between creativity, sustainability and innovation. The second conference in 2018, "Shaping a Sustainable Digital Future" explored the relationship between sustainability and digital innovation.

The conference series format consists of keynote speeches, panel discussions, and students' competitions.