



# PRADASPHERE II

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Milan, 6 December 2023 — Pradasphere II, a public exhibition tracing the history and culture of Prada from its origins in 1913 to the present day, opens today at the Start Museum in Shanghai, China. Told through a selection of stories curated by co-creative directors Miuccia Prada and Raf Simons, the exhibition is as rich as it is intimate. More than 400 artifacts — physical and digital — are on display, drawn from the fashion archive as well as decades-long engagements across art, architecture, culture, and sport. Building on the success of the first iteration in 2014, this exhibition follows the groundbreaking trajectory of Prada, exploring the indelible impact of its vision on luxury, beauty, and fashion as an intellectual act.

Staged as a lush *magazzino*, the Italian word for warehouse, Pradasphere II is a cross-section of the multivalent Prada universe. Created in collaboration with 2x4, the New York City and Beijing-based design studio, the exhibition juxtaposes the rough and refined: constructed of industrial warehouse shelving lined with precious pink silk velvet. Together, the exhibition puts forward a way of thinking about luxury: fashion intersects with life — history, art, sport, architecture, and sound.



## WHAT IS IN THE EXHIBITION?

The main *magazzino* corridor displays nearly 200 looks, both women's and men's, from the first collection to the current day, some of which have not been seen for over three decades. These looks have been carefully chosen by Raf Simons, super-fan from the outside turned insider and co-creator.

A number of special rooms designed to evoke uniquely Prada spaces branch off from the *magazzino*. These rooms serve as focal points to go deeper into various episodes of this multi-dimensional world.

The green velvet entrance, designed to evoke the foundations of the Prada style, features an original Andreas Gursky photograph, depicting an emblematic wall from one of the brand's early retail stores.

**FRATELLI PRADA** recreates a fragment of the original Fratelli Prada shop in Milan, including super-high-resolution videos of many of the original objects offered, as well as three recently-reissued purses, and recreations of the murals Mario Prada commissioned in the early 1920s.

**PRADA MILANO** displays over thirty photographs from the great photographer Albert Watson and specimens of Miuccia Prada's earliest Nylon collection.

**GALLERY** presents, for the first time, two new artworks by British artist Damien Hirst that include thirty of the most precious handbags from the Prada archive in one of the artist's iconic cabinets, and a Galleria bag displayed in a tank from Hirst's Natural History series. This collaboration epitomizes Prada's relationship with some of the most significant artists, an essential way the brand extends beyond fashion.

**GREEN STORE** recreates a fragment of Prada's iconic store display and presents a chronological overview of the most notable shoes.

**CINEMA** presents a continuous program of Prada collaborations with directors Ridley Scott, Wes Anderson, David O. Russell, and Yang Fudong, among many others.

**VITRINE** presents twenty significant bags from the Prada archive, featuring those silhouettes that have become iconic for the house. From the Galleria to the Cleo, these forms reveal a deep formal sensibility, specific to Prada, as well as the impeccable craftsmanship for which they are known.

**ARCHITECTURE** offers never-before-displayed documents pertaining to major Prada architecture projects from architects Rem Koolhaas/OMA, Jacques Herzog/Herzog & de Meuron, and others.

**MATERIALITY** reveals twenty first-ever exhibited skirts created exclusively for the Shanghai Pradasphere, demonstrating the extraordinary craftsmanship and striking materiality of the Prada workroom.

**LUNA ROSSA**, the Prada sailing syndicate, shows how fully immersed and active Prada is in its interests. Their genuine passion for the sport is on display with a simulator in which guests can experience the America's Cup sailing environment, among Luna Rossa uniforms, and more.



**LINEAROSSA** extends the technical story to include a whole series of garments with their signature red blaze. Prada's innovative spirit extends deeply into technical development and competition at the highest level.

**RE-NYLON** explores Prada's work in the development of sustainable materials. In a display featuring several Re-Nylon looks, together with films from the house's collaboration with National Geographic, the structural and circular possibilities of the material are explored in detail.

**FONDAZIONE PRADA** presents an overview of thirty of the most extraordinary exhibitions staged by Prada's art foundation. A range of pathbreaking shows and ambitious books reveal the depth and breadth of Prada's ongoing relationship with culture, from fine arts, to cinema, music, science, and technology.

**PRADASPHERE CAFFÈ**, fitted in velvet and marble, is the final area of the main hall, where guests can enjoy coffee, cocktails and typical Italian snacks. The luxurious cafe features projected walls displaying a wide selection of uniquely Prada spaces including many of the fashion show spaces over the last decades.

Finally, the Start Museum in Shanghai includes two historic train cars that house a special gift shop and a workshop area.

The entire experience is scored by world-renowned electronic musician Plastikman, also known as Richie Hawtin, who created bespoke soundscapes that reveal themselves as guests move through the exhibition.

Not a spectacle, but an in-depth experience of astonishing variety, the exhibition depicts Prada through accumulation, close looking, and hospitality. Diverse elements reveal the themes and ideas core to Prada. Some explore deep craft and skilled making, others reveal the manifold aesthetic contradictions at the heart of the brand, while others explore Miuccia Prada and Raf Simons's ongoing quest to challenge traditional notions of luxury. Sharing new perspectives on 110 years of history, the exhibition grants unparalleled, firsthand access into the brand's past, present, and future.

The Start Museum, which opened in December 2022 after an ambitious renovation by Jean Nouvel, is located in the historical building of the Nanpu Railway Station, a sea-to-land transport hub whose origins date back to 1907. Located on the west bank of the Huangpu River, the Start Museum is a vibrant addition to the Xuhui District. Pradasphere II marks the first exhibition of its kind at the museum.

A beautiful book will be designed and published to accompany the exhibition. The volume documents the contents of the *magazzino* in an immersive inventory, together with a foreword from Miuccia Prada and Patrizio Bertelli, reflections on curating the archive from Raf Simons, and an essay by Michael Rock.

Pradasphere II is free and open to the public from December 7, 2023 to January 21, 2024 at the Start Museum, 111 Ruining Road, Xuhui District.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Prada Press Office  
corporatepress@prada.com  
prada.com