

PRADA AND FAI COLLABORATE TO SUPPORT THE OPIFICIO DELLE PIETRE DURE'S LABORATORY IN ITS RESTORATION OF VASARI'S *LAST SUPPER*

Milano, Italy, January 8, 2014 - For the inauguration of its new store in Florence, Prada pays tribute to the city by supporting the restoration work of Laboratorio dell'Opificio delle Pietre Dure in collaboration with FAI - Fondo Ambiente Italiano.

For the fourth time Prada and FAI join their forces to protect and enhance Italy's artistic and cultural heritage; their collaboration began in Bologna in 2010, and continued in Padova in 2012 and Bari in 2013*.

Prada's involvement is now dedicated to the restoration of Giorgio Vasari's *Last Supper*, one of the Italian masterpieces seriously damaged in the 1966 flood and the last still requiring restoration and conservation.

Marco Ciatti, Director of the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, commented:

"The restoration of Giorgio Vasari's *Last Supper* is a dream come true and the final victory over the damage caused by the flood in 1966. This work, which was considered to be beyond repair, has been kept in the storeroom for the past 40 years, until the Opificio delle Pietre Dure decided to tackle this new challenge, inventing innovative solutions for this project that perfectly typify its activity: operativeness and research, combined with the conservation of the artistic heritage. Thanks to the contribution of Prada and the collaboration of FAI, for which the Opificio is extremely grateful, it will now be possible to make progress on this important restoration in a significant way, making it possible to bring nearer the date on which the public will be able to enjoy the painting once more.

Marco Magnifico, Executive Vice-President of FAI, added:

"For FAI, it is a privilege to be able to make an active contribution to this important project alongside Prada, which has always supported us in our mission to safeguard and conserve our artistic heritage. For years, on top of promoting its own properties, FAI has worked on the public heritage and also intervenes in exceptional situations, such as in the case of earthquakes. We knew of the need to complete the restoration of Vasari's *Last Supper*, almost 50 years after the flood, and that this was the last work not yet returned to its original location. It was thus natural to suggest to Prada that we participate in this extraordinarily important operation for the city of Florence, supporting the work of the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, one of the finest institutions in Italy and which does honour to our country".

**Bologna: In December 2010, Prada - in collaboration with FAI and the Soprintendenza per i Beni Storici, Artistici ed Etnoantropologici of Bologna - supported the restoration of four large chalk statues owned by the Accademia delle Belle Arti and three arches of Palazzo dell'Archiginnasio.*

Padova: In February 2012 Prada co-operated with FAI to highlight its connection with culture in the refurbishment of the Sacello di San Prodocimo in the Abbazia di Santa Giustina of Padova.

Bari: In June 2013 - Prada, together with FAI, undertook the restoration of a polyptych by Antonio Vivarini in the city's Pinacoteca Provinciale and of the well in the Abbey of Santa Maria di Cerrate, a few kilometres from Lecce.

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FURTHER DETAILS:

The Opificio delle Pietre Dure and Laboratorio di Restauro of Florence:

Directed by Marco Ciatti, it is one of the central Institutes administered by the Ministry for Cultural Affairs in the conservation and restoration of Italy's artistic heritage.

The Opificio Moderno was founded in 1975 from the merger of two institutions working in the conservation of works of art in Florence: the former Opificio, founded in 1588 as a court manufactory and transformed into a restoration institute towards the end of the 19th century, and the Laboratorio di Restauro, created within the Florentine Soprintendenza in 1932.

A fundamental event for the growth of the Institute was the flood in Florence on 4th November 1966, which saw the most skilled experts in restoration rushing to the city from around the world in the wake of the catastrophe to save the city's immense artistic heritage.

One of the largest laboratories in Europe, the Opificio now has a workforce of 110 individuals.

Giorgio Vasari's *Last Supper*: the work to be effected from 2014 thanks to Prada's contribution

After a conservative intervention on the wooden panels made possible by the Getty Foundation, the Getty Conservation Institute and the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2010, it will be possible to continue with the conservation work on the actual painting. An initial diagnostic and pre-consolidation phase for the colour will be followed by a second phase of restoration of the support. The last phase will be dedicated to the restoration of the painted surface.

In 1966, the large panel depicting the Last Supper (262 x approx. 660 cm, divided into 5 panels), remained under the flood waters of the Arno for more than 48 hours. The painted surface of the work presents a series of stability problems, for which a solution has already been identified and successfully applied to the two central panels. After the painting has been cleaned, restoration of the painted surface will be tackled, to obtain a harmonious reading of the whole and an adequate aesthetic appreciation. Finally, at the same, a frame will be constructed; the rear will serve also to control the exchanges of humidity and temperature with the environment.

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