

IN MADRID BFF LAUNCHES THE SECOND YEAR OF THE TOURING EXHIBITION "ART FACTOR – THE POP LEGACY IN POST-WAR ITALIAN ART"

A new selection of works on show at the Italian Institute of Culture in Madrid, from 5 May to 24 June 2023, under the aegis of the Italian Embassy in Spain.

The exhibition, previously staged in Slovakia, Poland and Greece, describes the Italian path towards Pop Art through the works of Italian artists active in the second half of the twentieth century.

Madrid, 4 May 2023 – BFF Banking Group is delighted to inaugurate in Madrid the latest leg of the exhibition "ART FACTOR – The Pop Legacy in Post-War Italian Art", on display at the Italian Institute of Culture from 5 May to 24 June 2023, under the aegis of the Italian Embassy in Spain.

The exhibition maps out the Italian path towards Pop Art through the works of seven artists: Valerio Adami, Franco Angeli, Enrico Baj, Lucio Del Pezzo, Gianfranco Pardi, Mario Schifano and Emilio Tadini, all of whom are featured in the collection that BFF has been assembling since the 1980s.

With Madrid – the fourth stage in the European tour that in 2022 saw the exhibition being held in Bratislava, Warsaw and Athens – BFF is launching the second year of a journey across Europe, visiting the countries in which the group operates.

Benedetto Giuntini, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Italian Embassy in Madrid, stated: *"I am confident that this exhibition will be warmly welcomed here in Madrid – a cosmopolitan city that has always been open to and interested in the avant-gardes. As a sure-fire success, this new, significant example of cultural diplomacy will contribute to consolidating yet further the links between Italy and Spain, which have been experiencing a new lease of life over recent years."*

Massimiliano Belingheri, CEO, BFF Banking Group, commented: *"Staging this project in Spain – a place with a specific value for BFF – makes us particularly proud. It was here, back in 2010, that the process of internationalization of the bank got under way, and to this day Spain plays a key role in the growth of our group. Moreover, we are honoured here to be building on the*

experience, accumulated in Greece in 2022, of collaborating with an Italian Institute of Culture, the ideal partner for the promotion of Italy's art and values, and for the development of a real dialogue between cultures."

Marialuisa Pappalardo, Director of the Italian Institute of Culture in Madrid, declared: *"Every day, just as it does for BFF, for us, too, Art Factor offers a springboard for the launching of new projects, to support new forms of creativity that have what it takes to create opportunities for exchange with the Spanish world. With this virtuous collaboration between the private and public sectors, we are adding an important tile to the mosaic of dialogue between the cultures, on which this institute works day in, day out, as we enable the discovery of artists and works from what was a vibrant time in Italian contemporary art – a time that, I am convinced, is sure to arouse the passion of the Spanish public, as it has already done elsewhere"*.

Maria Alicata, curator of the exhibition, added: *"I believe that one of the main aspects of this project is the opportunity it affords to engage once again with the BFF collection, modulating and customizing the exhibition route on the basis of the partnerships with the exhibition venues, as in this latest staging at the Italian Institute of Culture in Madrid. From the outset, the project has been infused with the desire to foster dialogue with the foreign institutions in those countries in which BFF has a presence. This year, in conjunction with the exhibition, it is the 90th anniversary of the birth of Gianfranco Pardi, an artist with particularly close links to the bank's identity; we therefore decided to take this opportunity to explore his work in greater depth."*

Javier Molinero Sánchez, Head of Spain, BFF Banking Group, concluded: *"We are delighted that our time has come to play host to the touring Art Factor exhibition here in Spain, the fourth leg on an exciting trip across Europe. It is great for us to be able to share this initiative with our employees, customers and the whole local community, leveraging it as a tool for building dialogue and new relationships."*

The touring exhibition *"Art Factor – The Pop Legacy in Post-War Italian Art"* forms part of a larger project that was launched by BFF in 2019 and has included the surveying, reconditioning and digitizing of the collection of around 250 artworks, put together by BFF from the 1980s onwards and exhibited on a permanent basis at the group's offices in Milan and Rome. The project continued in 2021 with the publication and international distribution of the artbook of the same name, published by *Skira editore Milan Genève Paris*. The initiative will culminate in 2024 at "Casa BFF", the bank's new headquarters in Milan, which will feature a museum section.

The exhibition will be staged **from 5 May to 24 June 2023**. Access is free, and the opening hours are: **Tuesday to Saturday, from 12 noon to 8pm**.

For more information: www.art-factor.eu

BFF Banking Group

BFF Banking Group is the largest speciality finance provider in Italy and a leading player in Europe for the management and non-recourse factoring of trade receivables owed to suppliers by public-sector organizations; BFF also provides securities services and corporate payment services. The group operates in Italy, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain. BFF is listed on the Italian Stock Exchange. In 2022 it reported a consolidated Adjusted Net Income of €146.0 million, with a 16.9% Group CET1 ratio at the end of December 2022. www.bff.com

Italian Institute of Culture in Madrid

The Italian Institute of Culture (IIC) in Madrid is an overseas office of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, and is responsible for promoting Italian culture in Spain. Located in the super-central Calle Mayor and housed within the wonderful Palacio de Abrantes, just a stone's throw from the Royal Palace, the institute was established eighty years ago and provides a frame of reference for the rich and vibrant cultural scene of the city and the surrounding territory. It serves as a hub for the efforts being made to support and raise the profile of contemporary Italian creativity, and is the perfect forum for engagement and dialogue between Italy and Spain through the exchanging of ideas and the promoting of new artistic, musical and academic collaborations. Concerts, exhibitions, film festivals, literary events, conferences, workshops and Italian language courses are just some of the activities staged here, aimed at audiences of all ages, including very young people, with a view to making Italian culture more accessible to Spaniards. www.iicmadrid.esteri.it

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