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Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana
Giuseppe Penone: Matrice
January 27–July 16, 2017



Palazzo Della Civiltà Italiana, FENDI HQ in Rome. Courtesy Palazzo Della Civiltà Italiana.

FENDI presents the first exhibition of contemporary art at Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana in Rome. From January 26 until July 16, 2017, the Maison's headquarters hosts a solo exhibition entitled *Matrice* by Italian artist Giuseppe Penone.

The exhibition takes place in the extraordinary first floor of Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, which FENDI has restored and opened to the public for exhibitions and installations.

Matrice is a unique opportunity to admire a selection of historical works and new productions realized specifically for this occasion by Giuseppe Penone, one of the greatest living sculptors. The exhibition features 17 artworks that date from the 1970s to the present, including many that are rarely seen and will be shown in Italy for the first time.

The entire exhibition has been conceived in dialogue with the monumental architectural spaces of the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, presenting a collection of artworks that contrast the clear-cut geometry and the marble facets of this building.

The exhibition is named after one of Giuseppe Penone's most spectacular works, *Matrice* (2015), a 30-meter-long sculpture in which the trunk of a fir tree has been carved out following one of its

growth rings, thus bringing to the surface the past of the tree and its transformations in time. A bronze mold has been cast in the wood, apparently freezing nature's flow of life. Like many of Penone's artworks, *Matrice* reveals the artist's interest in the relationship between time and nature and, metaphorically, between nature, humankind and transience.

In addition, a new major sculpture in stainless steel and bronze, over 20 meters tall, *Abete (Fir Tree, 2013)*, is installed in front of Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, adding a new natural dimension to the abstract geometric architecture of the EUR area.

With this exhibition by Giuseppe Penone, which is free to the public, FENDI renews its support and promotion of the highest expressions of contemporary culture, and its desire to merge innovation and tradition, savoir-faire and creativity—values always dear to the Maison.

Abete and the entire exhibition at Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana anticipate the unveiling of a major Penone sculpture, which will be permanently installed in Largo Goldoni, in the center of Rome, in the spring of 2017. This new sculpture titled *Foglie di Pietra (Leaves of Stone, 2016)* is one of the most complex artworks of Giuseppe Penone: two bronze trees—18 and 9 meter tall respectively—interlace their branches, lifting-up at 5 meters from the ground a sculpted marble block weighing 11 tonnes. This major donation marks the first time in which a significant contemporary artwork will be installed permanently in the public spaces of Rome.