



**Fondazione Prada**

*press release*

**THE UNIVERSITY OF VITA-SALUTE SAN RAFFAELE AND THE FONDAZIONE PRADA  
SIGN A LONG-TERM AGREEMENT FOR CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC  
COLLABORATION**

Within the framework of independent backing at the new Faculty of Philosophy, the teaching of Aesthetic Philosophy shall assume the title of Fondazione Prada Aesthetic Philosophy Chair.

An extensive program of conferences has been planned with internationally important scientists from the fields of philosophy, aesthetics, research and the contemporary arts.

The agreement is an original example of collaboration between private centers for the excellence of expression united by the will to delve into the reality of the world today

Milan, November 26, 2003 – On this day, a long-term agreement for cultural and scientific collaboration was signed between the Independent University Vita-Salute San Raffaele and the Fondazione Prada.

The University of Vita-Salute is a private university inspired by the principals of autonomy in research and freedom in teaching. The Fondazione Prada is a non-profit organization that promotes and propagates research and innovation in contemporary arts and culture.

Those present included Don Luigi Verzé, Head of the University and President of the Fondazione San Raffaele, Miuccia Prada, President of the Fondazione Prada, Massimo Cacciari, Head of the recently created Faculty of Philosophy, and Germano Celant, Artistic Director of the Fondazione Prada.

The initial three-year agreement is renewable and based on the free support of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Vita-Salute, in full consideration of its identity and liberty in research and teaching, and on a program of conferences, debates and seminars – jointly promoted – to which internationally eminent personalities from the advanced fields of philosophic thought, aesthetics, scientific research and contemporary artistic expressions will be invited.

The first act within the agreement consists in the financial backing and support of the Faculty of Philosophy, in accordance with which the Aesthetics Chair, held by Professor Massimo Cacciari, shall assume the title of Fondazione Prada Aesthetic Philosophy Chair in the new academic year.

The general agreement is based on the reciprocal recognition of the purpose of the study and propagation of philosophy and contemporary art, and on the safeguarding of the autonomy of the University and its academic freedom.

The University of Vita-Salute San Raffaele carries out research in Life sciences, cognitive and philosophical sciences; internationally renowned, it is one of the Italian centers of excellence and its aim is to be entirely autonomous and independent, and collaborate with the most pioneering entities in the world.

Over the years, the Fondazione Prada has promoted the knowledge, research and study of the activities and forms of avant-garde in contemporary art on an international scale.

The agreement presented today is of particular importance because it constitutes an example of the possibilities for collaboration and integration between private cultural centers with an aim for reciprocal exchange and support. It also constitutes a concrete and unusual activity based on pure research in the humanist field of which the basic requirement is the recognition and teaching of liberty and independence of expression in philosophy and teaching.

Massimo Cacciari, Head of Faculty, declared: "The role of the philosopher is to redirect attention to reality, beyond every prejudice, every pre-conception. Philosophy brings us back to concreteness, to real life, it urges us to question the significance of our actions. In order to take on this challenge it is necessary to free philosophical research from isolation and create the conditions for a transversal dialogue in all directions. Our aspiration is to create a community of thinkers that does not bear confessional or ideological labels and create conditions such that the students are an active part of this research community, because they are the unique source of a constant stimulus to renew thought. At our faculty, we endeavor to teach young people to question reality and compare themselves with the outside world with an open mind. Today's collaboration between our University and the Fondazione Prada is a concrete example of this and the beginning of a shared contribution to the cultural growth of the city."

Germano Celant, Artistic Director of the Fondazione Prada, declared: "Ever since 1995, the Fondazione Prada has committed itself to producing exhibitions and catalogues about the contemporary languages of photography, video, sculpture, architecture and cinema. It has worked towards an embodiment through images and objects, ideas and experiments that conveys thoughts about contemporaneity. A center for proposals and studies that covers visual philosophising without prejudices and limits. A process that places itself in a relation to the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Vita - Salute San Raffaele and its Aesthetics Chair to support its attention to "concrete thought", which is best expressed in the arts. It is a collaboration that believes in pure and creative research as the source of a global vision of existence."