



40 years on Vodafone and the "Mario Brancaccio" cultural association restore Naples' "Partenope" group of sculptures

Naples, January 23, 2004 - The facade of the San Carlo Theatre is to regain its former appearance in line with the original design of the architect who built it in 1816, Antonio Niccolini.

The final design for the restoration of the group of marble sculptures, the "Partenope", was today presented to the press in the presence of the city's Mayor, Rosa Russo Iervolino. The sculptures were damaged by lightning during the sixties and had to be removed as a result.

The event was also attended by **Gaetano Brancaccio**, Chairman of the "Mario Brancaccio" Cultural Association, **Luca Rossetto**, General Manager of Vodafone Italia, **Fabrizio Brancaccio**, CEO of Fiat Mare, **Senator Prof. Fulvio Tessitore**, Vice Chairman of the San Carlo Theatre's Board of Directors, and **Prof. Enrico Guglielmo**, Head of Naples' Department of Environmental and Architectural Heritage.

After careful study of documents, designs and reproductions of the time showing Naples' most important theatre around the turn of the twentieth century, carried out under the supervision of Naples' Department of Environmental and Architectural Heritage and the Department responsible for the San Carlo Theatre, the project aims to restore the group of sculptures on the pediment of the facade of Europe' oldest active theatre to its original form, removing all subsequent changes.

This important restoration project and the subsequent return of the sculptures to their original location have been made possible thanks to the ongoing partnership between the "Mario Brancaccio" Cultural Association, Italy's biggest cinema club with over 8,000 members, and Vodafone, the world's leading mobile phone operator which, with 20 million customers in Italy, has one of its most important head offices in the Naples-Pozzuoli area. In 2002 the same partnership was responsible for the restoration of the lions in Piazza dei Martiri, after they had been vandalised by unknown persons.

To mark today's presentation of the model of the triptych, an accurate historical reconstruction showing the Partenope statue and the two geniuses, "Comedy" and "Tragedy", Luca Rossetto, General Manager of Vodafone Italia, recalled the Company's commitment to pursuing not only its

business strategies, but also goals linked to its well-established corporate values, including its commitment to the social, environmental and cultural aspects of the communities in which it operates.

Gaetano Brancaccio, Chairman of the Association of the same name, emphasised the importance of the partnership with Vodafone, which he hoped could serve as a model for the exploitation of public heritage. The presentation also provided the chance to publicise the opportunities offered by the regulations introduced by the Ministerial Decree of October 3, 2003 (based on the Melandri Law of 2000) regarding the detaxation of cultural investments by companies. This legislation aims to boost patronage and the new form of “advanced sponsorship” based on the model adopted in the USA. The Chairman of the Brancaccio Association and the Mayor, Rosa Russo Iervolino, agreed on the need to organise a one-day congress to discuss such topics and above all the potential in this area offered by the city of Naples.