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Benetton - the future begins at 40

On 10th October the Group will celebrate its first 40 years. The Centre Pompidou in Paris is to open its doors to the verve of timeless fashion and the shape of the new seen through the eyes of Fabrica.

Benetton is 40. On 10th October it is to celebrate its anniversary at the Centre Pompidou in Paris with the passion, verve and attention to the future of a company that retains its true identity, inspired by life.

In Paris, in the prestigious spaces of the Parisian contemporary art institution, Benetton will present a fashion show telling the story of a brand that represents freedom, democracy of taste and a simultaneously international and Italian lifestyle. In parallel, the Centre Pompidou will present an exhibition entitled *Fabrica: les yeux ouverts*, conceived together with Fabrica, the communication research centre created from the business philosophy of Benetton. The exhibition will visualize the future and explore the different worlds that form the backdrop to human existence.



“We chose Paris as the location for our celebrations”, stated Luciano Benetton, Benetton Group Chairman, “because it represents, now more than ever, the capital of international fashion. Our future is beginning again at 40 right here, just like in 1969 when the opening of the first overseas retail outlet, in Boulevard St. Germain, launched our expansion in the world. For this reason too I have a special bond with the city.”

The fashion show on 10th October at the Forum of Centre Pompidou (in support of the initiative of the World Food Programme in the fight against hunger in the world) is to be an event in itself, the first time that Benetton creations appear on the catwalk. The dominant theme will be wool; the essence, together with colour, of the innovating spirit of Benetton who, from the mid 1960s onwards, has revolutionised style for everyday living and leisure. Items created specially for the occasion are to be shown, a collection without time or season, multiethnic and global, like the label that inspires it.

Joining Benetton are some companies in the sector that represents Benetton’s core business: Shima Seiki, a Japanese textile machinery multinational, and Huntsman and Prochimica Novarese Group, companies specialising in the dyeing of yarns and fabrics. Their involvement with the Group goes beyond typical sponsorship to achieve a true partnership in hi-tech research.

From 6th October to 6th November 2006 the Centre Pompidou will give room to Fabrica’s research projects, developed through various forms of expression: design, photography, cinema, music, publishing projects and

new media. A complete festival of its multicultural and international activities, *Fabrica: les yeux ouverts*, eyes open on the world and on the future.

The Centre Pompidou will, in fact, house an exhibition that covers 800 square metres on level –1. It opens with a full immersion in a space of images, commercials and graphic signs that evoke the creative energy of a community of young artists and, at the same time, document the importance of visual communication. A series of photographic projects give an account, in a single collective coverage, of the changes in some major geographical areas of the planet. Colors Notebook, a special edition of Colors, whose 50 white pages have been filled in without filters, editing or censoring, will tell the stories of people that nobody has wanted to listen to, from “impossible” situations and countries where freedom of expression is denied. Finally, interactive installations which, poised between the real and the virtual, will involve visitors in creative “games” with images, sounds and a sense of time.

Emphasising the editorial line of Fabrica which focuses on the “rest of the world”, some projects are developed with “Reporters Sans Frontières”, “Terra Madre” and the “World Food Programme”.

A parallel cinema and music festival will be held throughout the period of the exhibition.

In the festival of films co-produced by Fabrica Cinema, directed by Marco Müller, the 2002 Academy Award winner *No Man's Land* by Danis Tanovic tops the bill, with also “Blackboards” by the young Iranian director Samira Makmahlbaf, “Seventeen Years” by China’s Zhang Yuan, “Secret Ballot” by Babak Payami and “Tropical Maladie” by Apichatpong from Thailand. The musical events include live solo and choral performances and the European première of *Winners* by Andrea Molino, a multimedia work created by Fabrica Musica with the Brisbane Festival which explores, through the alliance of music and performance, the so-called “culture of winning”, the social and political tendency, common to all hemispheres, to divide and catalogue peoples, nations, classes and individuals as winners and losers.

For further information:

Tel. +39 0422 519036

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