



Terna Award Press Conference – Tuesday, July 1, 2008 - MAXXI

Address given by Flavio Cattaneo, Terna's CEO

I would like to thank Professor Mannheimer, who is always so clear and brilliant in his presentations.

Once again, good morning to all! First of all, I wish to thank the Authorities, the representatives from the worlds of art and culture, and the many journalists that have participated.

This is a special occasion for Terna, and according to the research data released by the Ispo Institute, I believe our project is headed in the right direction.

Moreover, art, innovation and architecture are already present at Terna, closely linked to the topic of environmental sustainability.

**We believe that when a company such as Terna has such a strong impact on the territory and the environment, it has the duty to restore value to the territory.** We try to do so every time it is possible: in developing and maintaining the electricity grid, in removing 1,200 km of obsolete lines in the next few years; in building new pylons and structures for which we have requested architects and designers, through an International bid that will be closed within this year, to design new ones having the lowest possible environmental impact. Within the year, Terna will also build an electricity line approximately 8 km long in Tuscany, a region rich in art and culture, with pylons designed by Norman Foster.

Today we are launching the Terna Award, **which is not merely a competition, but a great Italian project supporting contemporary art and artists. For the first time, a company is attempting to interconnect art, economy and society through innovation. In order to do so, we have not chosen just a sponsorship, but have decided to directly invest in our own project.**

We are bringing an idea, our industrial expertise, that of energy transmission, which has become the conceptual metaphor for the Award and its inspiring theme. We have found open doors: support, appreciation and availability. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have shared and supported this project.

Prof. Mannheimer's presentation stressed the public's interest for art and the large margin for potential growth. The greatest part of the Italians believes that art is fundamental for the country's cultural heritage. For us the fundamental fact is that **Italians have the desire for "Contemporary" art: nearly 9 million are interested and nearly 5 million would like to purchase art.** The surprise consists in the fact that the interest in art is not only focused on the past, but towards looking to the future and to young artists. Future, innovation, energy transmission: these represent Terna's priorities. The majority of Italians feels that art is not only for the artistic world: while 44% believes that it is a sector for connoisseurs, an extraordinary number of people, 6 million, considers it as a very important sector capable of expressing culture and energy for the country.

We have focused on these aspects in creating the Terna Award. We wished to create a network with the energy of all contemporary Italian artists, famous and emerging ones, interconnecting the art system with that of companies and promoting the society's involvement.

Only a small minority of Italians associates companies with the art world, while over 30% of people interested in contemporary art feels that this sector should be supported by private and public initiatives.

How can we meet this request? In many different ways: by supporting contemporary arts, promoting artists, particularly young ones, supporting companies. Today, Terna has taken on an important and ambitious commitment by launching this Award that wishes to support contemporary art together with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage.

How?

**By encouraging a circuit of emerging talents, enhancing the role of artists as professionals, connecting their creativity and energy with the entrepreneurial world, with the purpose of spreading and supporting the importance of art.**

In order to do so, we created the Terna Award based on new strong elements:

- first of all, I am referring to the importance of presenting Italian artists to the country and to the world, through the presence in the Jury and in the Committee of Honor, of prestigious representatives from the art and cultural worlds, from the economic sector and the institutions both nationally and internationally. We called on representatives from different sectors with the objective of having contemporary art emerge from the confines of art and experts.

- by dividing the award into three categories, the sector has been completely involved and this has highlighted the capacity for integrating the many different experiences. The well-known artists represent the supports, the “pylons” of the Award while the emerging ones are the new energy.

- I am thinking of the idea of developing a survey to collect the opinions of Italians on these topics and create moments of reflection so that the public will have a greater awareness of specific situations and overcome common clichés linked to contemporary art.

- I am thinking of the choice to be present here at the Maxxi, so generously made available to us by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities. We are in a symbolic place that represents the wish for innovation and for the new role to be played in society by contemporary art. As President Roth stated, this location looks ahead to the future and to the idea of an open museum.

Lastly, I would like to mention the important support, also in economic terms, of this Award. This is a strong sign that expresses our corporate social responsibility plan since the larger part of funds intended for the Award are aimed at supporting cultural and artistic projects and initiatives, in addition to the artists themselves.

The initiatives will be identified together with the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and other Institutions, also local, that make the artists the true protagonists of this ambitious project for enhancing and promoting the growth of Italian culture.

We know a lot about energy because we transmit it to the country... and we are learning to feel how much energy flows in the world of contemporary art. We wish to enhance it. We wish to create a network for it and have it grow. Thank you.