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MILAN BERGAMO AIRPORT INAUGURATES WORKS OF ART AS PART OF THE BERGAMO BRESCIA CAPITALS OF CULTURE INITIATIVE

Six months on from the handover in Pesaro, the cities of Bergamo and Brescia embrace the legacy of Capitals of Culture to relaunch their goals for carrying forward the promotion and valorisation of their respective city centres and territories. One step in this direction has been marked by the installation of two sculptures in the access roundabouts at Milan Bergamo Airport, which still is - as was the case in 2023 - the main airport for visitors to the area.

The official inauguration of the two installations took place on Tuesday 9 July in the presence of the mayors of Bergamo and Brescia, Elena Carnevali and Laura Castelletti, and of the president of SACBO, Giovanni Sanga.

The works, commissioned by the **BGBS23 Commission** and created by the artist **Steven Cavagna**, were created especially to serve as a memory and a continuation of the year that saw Bergamo and Brescia come together in celebration of cultural values, identified in the historical, artistic and architectural expressions of increasingly sustainable urban environments, and of natural beauty and landscapes that are a significant tourist attraction. They also express the added value represented by identity and innovative entrepreneurial ability. It is no coincidence that the sculptures recalling BGBS23, called *Crossroad Avenue and Crossroad Mainroad*, are the result of extreme and complex technique and express the artisan nature of the cities of Bergamo and Brescia. The project has been made possible thanks to the support of artisans and the professionalism of local companies, and it is important to recognise the partners in this project; the paint supplier Decom, Via Luce of Cassinone, Bonfanti Autotrasporti speciali and Carpenteria Carrara of Matteo Carrara.

The artist Steven Cavagna chose to create forms that evoke movement, change and infinite lines. The forms are incomplete, leaving the viewer the task to complete and imagine; on the one hand, a black hole that evokes the idea of travel through time, and on the other, a series of intersections that also express the cultural diversity that pervades the airport and the two cities. Thus, people passing through the airport are welcomed by two blue monoliths seeking to express a new image of the territory of Bergamo and Brescia, in the past prevalently known for their roles as forerunners of enterprise and now increasingly appreciated as tourist destinations due to their ability in having expressed the wealth of their timeless heritage.



*“The legacy of works and relations that Bergamo Brescia Capitals of Culture 2023 has left us is a treasure that we have worked to cultivate and revitalise together, through initiatives and projects that continue to spread throughout the territory - stated **Elena Carnevali, the mayor of Bergamo** - with the aim of valorising and sharing the creativity and the expressive force of our young citizens and our artists. The inauguration on the access roundabouts to our airport of the two works by Steven Cavagna, a multifaceted talent from Bergamo who ranges from painting to sculpture and from installations to design, is the artistic expression of the year of the Capitals, and will be an expression to travellers from all over the world of the pride and the determination of our communities to never give in, and to find new life through beauty, art and culture, thanks to an inclusive network that promotes good practices, synergy and the most deeply rooted values of work and solidarity”.*

*“BGBS23 continues to be a source of art, culture and reflection more than six months on from its official conclusion - commented **Laura Castelletti, the mayor of Brescia** - These two works are a physical representation of the fellowship that binds our two cities, underscored by the sincere and tangible intention to continue to work together for tourism and culture, and beyond. Every day, thousands of travellers will be welcomed by our highly recognisable logo, set within the sculptures by Steven Cavagna, and they will know that together, Brescia and Bergamo were the Capitals of Culture for 2023. It is a form of recognition that, despite having officially concluded, continues through collaboration and practical projects”.*

*“The chapter of Bergamo and Brescia together as Capitals of Culture has not yet concluded, and the process that began in 2023 will continue to generate osmosis between the two provincial areas, which are proving to be increasingly attractive - stressed **Giovanni Sanga, President of SACBO** - The year that came to a close in January 2024 saw a springboard for a shared vision and for lasting and successful collaboration, accompanying visitors from other countries to explore the attractions of the two cities and their respective provinces. It is a whole expressed by Milan Bergamo Airport which, with its more than 150 destinations in 42 countries and the possibility to connect to hundreds of intercontinental routes, represents a point of convergence for tourists evermore attracted, to whom the message in the two works installed at the entrance to the airport is addressed”.*