



SAFILO'S 75TH BIRTHDAY A GREAT OCCASION FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE GUGLIELMO TABACCHI GALLERY

- *Chairman Vittorio Tabacchi officially opens the newly renovated gallery in the presence of the Minister of Culture, Sandro Bondi and the Chairman of the Veneto Region, Giancarlo Galan, together with the representatives from the world of business, politics and government in the Veneto region*
- *Bruno Vespa presents his new book "Viaggio in un'Italia diversa"*

Padua, 16 February 2009 – The Padua headquarters of Safilo Group was the chosen venue for the **official inauguration ceremony of the "Guglielmo Tabacchi" Gallery** following a major renovation and extension project undertaken last year.

The big event also constituted the main celebration marking the **company's 75th birthday**, an important milestone which Safilo has reached thanks to unflinching commitment and hard work. Safilo was founded on 17th March 1934 and has continued to grow steadily ever since then so that today it is a leading world manufacturer of eyewear.

This was a momentous occasion for the company, turning the spotlight on the "Guglielmo Tabacchi" Gallery, which is the largest, most comprehensive private collection of spectacles and artefacts linked to the optical sector. The unique collection represents the labour of love of Vittorio Tabacchi, Chairman of Safilo Group, who has cultivated a lifelong passion for eyewear. It is divided into several different sections that "re-tell" seven centuries of eyewear history, exploring the various historical, social, artistic, geographical, cultural and fashion aspects.

The inauguration was held in the presence of the Italian Minister of Culture, **Sandro Bondi**, and the Chairman of the Veneto Region, **Giancarlo Galan**: an eminent attendance that made the celebratory event even more prestigious. The ceremony was also attended by a large number of representatives in the world of business, politics and government in Veneto, whose presence testified to Safilo's major role in the region's social and economic fabric.

Another special event that took place after the "cutting of the ribbon" ceremony was the presentation of the new book by **Bruno Vespa**, "**Viaggio in un'Italia diversa**", presented for the first time in Padua by the author himself. With an audience of such exceptional stature, it was the perfect opportunity for an intense debate on the recent turn of events in Italy.

Vittorio Tabacchi, Chairman of Safilo Group, stated, “Both I and my children, Massimiliano and Samantha are extremely proud to be celebrating the 75th birthday of this company founded by my father. The Gallery we inaugurate today after major refurbishment and extension is named in his honour. This is a milestone which testifies to the company's success story, but it is also a new starting point for looking to the future with renewed determination and enthusiasm.”

Samantha Tabacchi, Director of Corporate Communications and Identity for Safilo stated, “I'm delighted to support this great passion of my father's, which he has passed on to me and allows us to preserve our collective memory, an invaluable heritage of Italian-made style, design and excellence. Thanks to my father's continuous research worldwide, the Gallery documents the natural evolution of a timeless product”.

Safilo Group is leader in the high-end eyewear sector and heads world production of optical, sunglass and sports eyewear. Operating on the world market through sole distributors and 32 subsidiaries in major markets (in U.S.A., Europe and the Far East), Safilo markets its own Safilo, Carrera, Smith, Oxydo and Blue Bay brand collections, as well as numerous prestigious ranges produced under license, including Alexander McQueen, A/X Armani Exchange, Balenciaga, Banana Republic, Bottega Veneta, BOSS by Hugo Boss, Diesel, 55DSL, Dior, Emporio Armani, Fossil, Giorgio Armani, Gucci, HUGO by Hugo Boss, J.Lo by Jennifer Lopez, Jimmy Choo, Juicy Couture, Kate Spade, Liz Claiborne, Marc Jacobs, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Max Mara, Max&Co., Nine West, Pierre Cardin, Saks Fifth Avenue, Valentino and Yves Saint Laurent.

This press release is also available on the website www.safilo.com.

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