



MAPEI STADIUM. THE STADIUM OPENS UP TO CULTURE

Official presentation of a book about stadiums as congregation places where everybody is welcome

Reggio Emilia, 22nd November 2023 - "In this book, we have tried to talk about the history and appeal of stadiums, one of the largest congregation places ever invented by man". This is how Simona Giorgetta, sole administrator of Mapei Stadium, explained the thinking behind the book entitled: *Mapei Stadium. The stadium opens up to culture*. A publication by Marsilio Arte edited by the journalist Valentina Pigmei, which, with the help of Filippo Vinardi's images and contributions by historians, sociologists, designers and other experts, only a few of whom belong to the world of football, celebrates the stadium more as a community facility than a place for hosting sport.

Mapei Stadium - Città del Tricolore is taken as an emblem of these large congregation buildings, sometimes hosting commercial or entertainment enterprises, which often only really come to life during matches, offering a new form of openness to the community and people through cultural projects.

The manifesto for this new openness appears on the cover: a work entitled *All together now* by the Reggio Emilia-born and internationally renowned artist Olimpia Zagnoli, which has been placed on the middle of the west façade. A stylised illustration, almost like a pattern, representing a crown of people singing and shouting out passionately as if they were in a choir, conveying a sense of inclusion and the sheer joy of being together.

Olimpia Zagnoli also has the final word in the book to complete the circle, talking about the inspiration behind her work: a video from the 1960s in which Liverpool FC fans sing in unison *She Loves You* by the Beatles. Hence the idea of placing 'An invitation to sing less slogans of hate and more songs of love' at the entrance to the Reggio Emilia stadium.

And this same sense of sharing and participation pervaded the book presentation evening that was held inside Mapei Stadium, an event organized under the patronage of the City of Reggio Emilia. After some welcoming words from the mayor of Reggio Emilia, Luca Vecchi, Sky Sport journalist Sara Benci moderated a debate between Giovanni Carnevali – CEO and general manager of U.S. Sassuolo Calcio, Vittorio Cattani - general manager of A.C. Reggiana, Simona Giorgetta and Pierluigi Allotti, a journalist and a contemporary history scholar who wrote the section entitled: *Italian stadiums. Football and arenas in the 20th-21st centuries*.



The focus was back on stadiums. A home for the teams, a new kind of cathedral where the most diverse community rituals are celebrated, a barrier-free space open to all and, as of this year, also a venue and means of promoting cultural events that opens its doors to both people and the city.

At the end of the debate, guests were able to visit certain areas of the stadium and enjoy a choreography of light and sound thanks to the new Thorn system, a Zumtobel Group brand, which was installed during the latest development works on the stadium, which included the donation of 150 cherry trees during the winter to add colour even to the public car parks outside.

The company Mapei Stadium, part of the Mapei Group, which has had the stadium on licence since 2014, has so far invested 25 million euros in adapting, improving and modernising the structure, transforming it into a facility that meets the highest international standards and is among the most popular in the Italian Serie A league.

"There is no doubt that the investments made to improve the facility have always been driven by a desire to contribute to the development and evolution of what we consider to be a public building belonging to the city of Reggio Emilia", so Simona Giorgetta noted. "This is also part of our way of doing business: giving value back to the places where we operate through investment and hard work.

For further information

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