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Interview with Carlo Giordanetti, CEO of the Swatch Management and Swatch Art Peace Hotel



The Press Office of the Global Campus of Human Rights has followed the fifth online Global Campus of Human Rights Conversation in preparation of the next Human Rights Pavilion Cosmocafes taking place in

Venice at the same time of the opening days of Biennale Arte, and has interviewed one of the guests of the Conversation Carlo Giordanetti, CEO of the Swatch Management and Swatch Art Peace Hotel, about the links between businesses, art and human rights.

We know that Swatch is always interested in Art. How is important to invest in Art to help a company building its culture?

Swatch relationship with artists and their work has been a DNA pillar of the brand since its very early days. This has been injecting amazing energy and knowledge in the company throughout the years – especially thanks to the strategic choice of offering Swatch as a canvas to artists from many different generations, areas, disciplines and background. In the true spirit of Swatch, we have invited a true diverse and transversal community to join us in this adventure – and most of the artists have enjoyed the idea of having one of their artworks becoming part of people's daily lives, as Swatch has always kept these projects at a very affordable price level. This is an amazing added value, both for affirmed, famous artists and for the younger generations.

Since 2011 we have in Shanghai a project that brings the relationship with artists to another dimension: the Swatch Art Peace Hotel has been created to host artists from all over the world, offering them time and space to develop their vision, to experience the Shanghai art scene and culture, to expand their horizon and create in freedom. A wonderful adventure that has involved already more than 450 artists from 53 Countries, and that contributes to nourish the culture of Swatch as a brand, also thanks to the visibility we give to the artists and their work with our communication activities around the world.

Could you tell us about the most important results of the ten years cooperation between Swatch and Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia? Any important news about your initiatives in the 59th Biennale Arte?

Certainly our partnership with la Biennale di Venezia is one of the key elements of our strategy – the most important art exhibition in the world in fact gives us a perfect platform for two kind of activities.

On one side, every Biennale edition we invite a contemporary artist to create a site specific installation at Giardini – we have had Joana Vasconcelos, Ian Davenport, Joe Tilson creating unforgettable larger than life artworks there, and in 2022 Thai artist Navin Rawanchaikul will for sure mark another strong statement, as his artwork will be a show stopping installation, based on his observation of Venice as a city of migrants throughout the centuries, and a message to Marco Polo.

On the other side, at Arsenale, we have developed over the years the “Swatch Faces” concept: we present the work of some of the artists who have been in residence at Swatch Art Peace Hotel, giving them a unique stage for their work and for sharing their vision and experience. Interesting, attaching, strong and emotional: the ideal key words behind our commitment to support artists and their work. In 2022, there will be 3 Chinese artists, one artist from Korea and one from Brazil, each working with a different technique, all of them bringing an original artwork. And in particular, the installation by Marcelot, a Brazilian artist living in Switzerland, is a somehow provocative homage to Venezia.

As you will be participating in the next Human Rights Pavilion Cosmocafo art work, please elaborate on your vision to connect businesses to the world of arts. In particular, what role could play the topics of human rights and sustainability in this historical period?

In our path, the word responsibility plays an important role. Through the years, we have been involved in many projects involving arts, business and socially responsible projects. Our support to artists and their work is an ongoing expression of this attitude, and certainly our openness to any kind of culture and background (see the Swatch X You project created around Expo 2020 in Dubai and communicated

throughout the world) is the best example of it. Encouraging artistic expression, making it accessible to many, creating a real constructive dialogue and activating a global community around this is how we see our role. And of course, bringing the collaboration with artists to new dimensions, well beyond the product one.

Could you share with us about the Swatch Art Peace Hotel and some of the artists and topics involved which could be of interest for our network of 100 Universities around the world?

I think the most interesting topic is the diversity of profiles we continue to host. Many of the artists joining us are interested in exploring the local culture and develop very interesting projects based on the observation, confrontation, inspiration deriving from this process. I believe there could be a way to develop a networking project with 100 Universities around the world – in both directions.

Could you give a personal message to the students, professors, partners and staff of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

Keep in mind the power of art as a messenger: the emotional power of an artwork can be more than the power of a long speech. Art can speak directly to one's heart – and before hitting the brain, this is where important decisions are made. I believe an artwork can be a game changer.

For more information contact our [Press Office](#)

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