Kering sponsors renovation of Florence’s Palazzo Vecchio courtyard

By Godfrey Deeny - 11 January 2021

Kering is sponsoring a key element of the renovation of the courtyard of Florence’s Palazzo Vecchio, the city hall of the Renaissance capital.

The Paris based luxury group, whose single largest fashion house is the Florentine-born Gucci, will contribute to the renovation of the lighting system in the courtyard of Palazzo Vecchio. The main part of the renovation will be the famed Michelozzo courtyard, designed in 1453 and extensively transformed and embellished in the following century by Giorgio Vasari, the artist and single most-read chronicler of the greatest Renaissance artists. The renovation begins this spring and will continue through 2021.

"Exactly one year ago, when I was awarded the Fiorino d’Oro, I reiterated that Florence and Tuscany hold a particular significance for me and for the Group," affirmed François-Henri Pinault, chairman and CEO of Kering. "Precisely for this reason, we genuinely wanted to help the city during a particularly difficult time, and decided to contribute to the enhancement of one of the many wonders of the Palazzo Vecchio, a symbol of Florence and its cultural heritage and artistic splendor."

The Fiorino d’Oro is the highest honorary award given in recognition of services to the historic Italian city and its culture. The project also underlines the close links between Kering and the city of Florence and Tuscany, which the French chose as the base for the leather goods production of Saint Laurent and Balenciaga, two other key houses in its string of luxury marques. Kering also owns other Italian brands including Bottega Veneta, Pomellato, Brioni and Richard Ginori.
“I am very grateful to François-Henri Pinault, whom I have always esteemed as a farsighted and courageous entrepreneur,” said Mayor Dario Nardella. “Just a year ago, we awarded him the Fiorino d’Oro because he has always believed in our region, betting on the ‘Made in Florence’ brand and offering job opportunities and career development to many young people.”

The Michelozzo courtyard, is accessed from the main door of the Palazzo Vecchio on the Piazza della Signoria, the main square of the Tuscan capital. The Palazzo Vecchio was formerly known as the Palazzo Ducale, when Duke Cosimo I de’ Medici made it his residence. The name Vecchio took hold in 1565, when the court of Duke Cosimo moved to the “new” Palazzo Pitti, across the river Arno. From 1865 to 1871 it was the seat of the Italian Parliament, while today it houses the offices of the mayor of Florence and various municipal departments. The building also contains the Civic Museum, with a series of magnificent monumental rooms where Bronzino, Ghirlandaio and Vasari created, and where works by Michelangelo, Donatello and Verrochio are on display.