The 54\textsuperscript{th} international marble, technology and design exhibition scheduled until 28 September was inaugurated yesterday

MARMOMAC 2019: INNOVATION, DESIGN AND CULTURE TO CONQUER NEW MARKETS FOR NATURAL STONE

The Verona Exhibition Centre welcomes 1,650 companies (64% of which international). More than 68,000 buyers from 150 countries are expected.

www.marmomac.it

Verona, 25 September 2019 - An increasingly international exhibition with a focus on promoting business and sector culture that also pays special attention to artistic experimentation and projects involving major luxury brands. The Verona Exhibition Centre today saw the inauguration of the 54\textsuperscript{th} edition of Marmomac: the most important global event dedicated to natural stone, marble, granite, processing technologies, means of transport and hoisting/lifting, applied design and services scheduled until Saturday 28 September.

More than 1,650 exhibiting companies are taking part (64% international from 60 countries in addition to Italy), with more than 68,000 specialist operators and buyers expected from 150 countries. The overall exhibition area by now amounts to over 80,000 square metres distributed across 12 show halls and outdoor exhibition areas.

Marmomac thereby confirms it status as the main world meeting point between demand and supply in the natural stone sector, in the forefront of the B2B appointments aimed at 240 top international buyers and architects. 160 members of this group were identified in collaboration between Veronafiere, the Ministry for Economic Development, the ICE Trade Agency and Confindustria Marmomacchine as part of the Special Made in Italy promotion plan. The other 80 international operators, on the other hand, were selected by Veronafiere and will attend 15-minute “speed dating” meetings that will focus on three product segments: luxury, slabs and equipment.

Aspects such as culture, innovation, design and training are fundamental for the promoting products in natural stone. This concept finds ample representation during Marmomac in The Italian Stone Theatre - the hall that offers operators a complete overview of the opportunities of natural stone when matched with the potential of the most advanced machinery and processing technologies alongside the creativity of internationally renowned architects and designers. The theme chosen for the 2019 edition is Naturality - the naturalness of marble in its most pure aspect enhancing uniqueness and geodiversity.

Innovations in 2019 also include an educational project targeting interior designers, titled "Meet The Inspiration". It seeks to teach interior decorators, surveyors and architects working in showrooms how to offer marble more effectively to end customers, with notions of the features of natural stone products and the way these materials can be used, through to the most popular furniture and social media trends.

This year’s show is even more digital: the new online catalogues - People+Products+Projects helps companies promote themselves to the full by highlighting their history and their entire portfolio of completed projects. This year also sees the launch of a trial related to geolocation of visitors.

Lastly, Marmomac welcomes back several awards: the Icon Award identifies the work within the scope of The Italian Stone Theatre that will become the image for the 2020 promotional campaign. The Best Communicator Award acknowledges the dedication and originality of exhibiting companies as regards
exhibit layout. Lastly, the **Archmarathon Stone Award** is a kind of talent event for the best international architectural studios.

**Inauguration: attendance and speeches**

The inauguration of the 54th Marmomac was attended by Maurizio Danese, President of Veronafiere; Giovanni Mantovani, CEO of Veronafiere; Luca Zaia, President of the Veneto Region; Federico Sboarina, Mayor of Verona; Manuel Scalzotto, President of the Province of Verona; Donato Giovanni Cafagna, Prefect of Verona; Marco De Angelis, President of Confindustria Marmomacchine; Giovanni Rodia, Director of External Relations / ICE-Trade Agency.

**Maurizio Danese, President of Veronafiere:** "Marmomac is the leading exhibition in the world for all operators in the sector, a trade fair highlighting products as well as solutions that plays a fundamental role in promoting the value chain focusing around natural stone. Inasmuch, this show will also receive the investments envisaged in our Business Plan through to 2022, totalling 105 million euros, with the aim of further strengthening its international vocation and improving services for exhibitors and operators."

**Giovanni Mantovani, CEO of Veronafiere:** "Marmomac is increasingly expanding its global community, thanks to promotion platforms already consolidated in Brazil and the United States and several new exploratory initiatives in China in the design field that ensure we enjoy an increasingly international, interconnected and functional scope for company business."

**Luca Zaia, President of the Veneto Region:** "Marmomac is the number one trade fair in the world, an expression of 1,200 companies in the Veneto marble sector, 500 of which are based in Verona, achieving exports worth more than 370 million euros. The keyword today for growth is internationalisation and the challenge is to ensure Government attention for this sector through investments for research and to open new markets."

**Federico Sboarina, Mayor of Verona:** "The sector represented by Marmomac is part of the economy and culture of Verona and has achieved growth thanks to innovation and internationalisation. The bond between the city and the Exhibition Centre will be further strengthened over the next few years thanks to the huge central park project that will further enhance the image of our international events."

**Manuel Scalzotto, President of the Province of Verona:** "Marmomac is the world leading event for natural stone. I hope that the event, in addition to business, will continue to focus on the culture of marble and its bonds with our local area, promoted in the awareness of unique and inimitable values for artists and architects."

**Donato Giovanni Cafagna, Prefect of Verona:** "Marmomac, on the strength of its leadership posting new records every year, gives voice to a sector that has always known how to keep itself up-to-date. Success is made possible by an entrepreneurial fabric boasting a wealth of traditions and culture yet which today increasingly looks towards the contribution of new ideas by young people and the environmental sustainability of its materials and production processes."

**Marco De Angelis, President of Confindustria Marmomacchine:** "Confindustria Marmomacchine and Marmomac have chosen to work together to promote and protect authentic natural stone through the PNA brand, involving a specific communication campaign to promote a product and its millennial history. In 2020, this initiative will also have the support of the ICE-Trade Agency on international markets."

**Giovanni Rodia, Director of External Relations / ICE-Trade Agency:** "The natural stone supply chain must increasingly focus on young people, start-ups and principles of the circular economy, bringing innovation
into a traditional sector. Another fundamental lever is the growth of internationality, where we collaborate with Marmomac on incoming activities to host 160 selected internationality buyers at the trade fair."

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