



## “THE ARTIST IS PROPHET AND POET”

*HOMAGE OF THE VATICAN MUSEUMS TO PAUL VI ON THE OCCASION OF HIS CANONIZATION*

Collection of Contemporary Art  
Vatican Museums

12 October – 5 November 2018

On the occasion of Paul VI canonization – 14 October 2018 – the Vatican Museums dedicate a symbolic homage to pope Montini, precisely in the spaces of the Collection of Contemporary Art, which was conceived, sought and created by him 45 years ago.

He had just ascended the papal throne when, in May 1964, Paolo VI summoned the art world in the Sistine Chapel with the aim to bridge the gap between the Church and contemporary culture and to reforge an historically meaningful bond which had been interrupted for far too long.

The meeting at the Sistine Chapel will be foundational to the birth of the new Collection, which will be inaugurated by the pontiff himself on 23 June 1973.

The establishment of the initial nucleus was conducted by the Personal Secretary of Paul VI, Msgr. Pasquale Macchi, with the collaboration of Msgr. Giovanni Fallani and Msgr. Ennio Francia. During the span of nine years, a widespread network of relationships was created, which will led to the gathering of a highly precious nucleus of about a thousand of 20th-century artworks. And it is just the beginning. The link with the present, its ambitions, contradictions and weaknesses, implies a constant dialogue: today there are more than 8000 works in the Collection.

The day of the inauguration, pope Montini defines the Gallery as “a documentary record [...] even more than of Art, of the modern Artist, who is both Prophet and Poet, in his own way, of mankind of today, his mentality, and modern society”.

Along the exhibition path of the Collection of Contemporary Art some historical photographs have been placed in order to highlight the milestones in the history of the Collection and homage its founder, Paul VI, who reopened the doors of the Vatican Museums to the present times with farsighted perspicacity.