



Press release

## **Piaggio: opening of “The Vespa and the Movies” exhibition**

*Pontedera, 5 November 2010* – “**The Vespa and the Movies**” exhibition was officially opened this morning at the **Piaggio Museum** in Pontedera. A major initiative of the **Piaggio Foundation** organised jointly with the **Cinema Multimedia Centre** and **Viareggio EuropaCinema**, the exhibition celebrates the links between the cinema – *the dream factory* – and the world’s most famous scooter.

The opening ceremony – where guests included actors **Alessandro Gassman** and **Ugo Dighero** – was addressed by the Mayor of Pontedera, **Simone Millozzi**, the President of the Province of Pisa, **Andrea Pieroni**, and, for the Piaggio Group, **Michele Pallottini**, chief operating officer for finance, and **Francesco Delzio**, director of external and institutional relations.

“Today, after more than sixty years, the Vespa is the worldwide symbol of Italian creativity and a unique example of ‘immortality’ in the history of industrial design,” writes Piaggio Group Chairman and CEO **Roberto Colaninno** in the introduction to the exhibition catalogue. “The Vespa is no longer just a product of the world of transport: it is the story of a phenomenon-symbol of global mores, and the images exhibited at the Piaggio Museum offer a fascinating journey through films, advertisements, photographs and posters, in the company of a legend without equals.”

Entry to the exhibition in the **Piaggio Museum** is free. It will be **open to the public until 15 January 2011**, re-tracing the origins and development of the **Vespa-Cinema binomial** through a huge selection of material – presented for viewing on **multimedia stations** – and a collection of more than **150 posters of cult movies** starring the Vespa. An assortment of styles, colours and moods synthesised and enhanced by the splendid **exhibition poster**, designed by painter and sculptor **Ugo Nespolo**.

The more than two hundred images in the **exhibition catalogue** – many of them previously unpublished – are included in the documentation on the **official website** [www.lavespaeilcinema.it](http://www.lavespaeilcinema.it). The **catalogue** also presents critical essays by **Tommaso Fanfani**, President of the Piaggio Foundation, **Pier Marco De Santi** and **Andrea Mancini** (the exhibition curators), **Elena Colombini**, **Veronica Boggian** and **Daniele Michelucci**. It closes with a filmography documenting the Vespa’s appearances in the movies, often in a leading role and never in a simple walk-on part.

While the exhibition is open, **the Piaggio Museum will be turned into a movie theatre**, with weekly projections of some of **the most important films in which the Vespa appears**. A total of **ten evenings** will be held, attended by actors and entertainers. The **first evening** is **Saturday 13 November at 9 p.m.**, when the **Hungarian film “Vespa”** will be shown.

The Vespa made its movie debut in 1950, four years after its market launch, in the Italian film “**Sunday in August**”, and became a worldwide status symbol in “**Roman Holiday**” (1953), with the celebrated sequence when **Audrey Hepburn** and **Gregory Peck** weave their way through the Rome traffic on a Vespa 125. In addition to movie posters and stills from countless films, the exhibition opened today at the Piaggio Museum also exhibits the **Vespa models that played leading roles in the films**, covering sixty years of history, styles and a changing way of life.



During that time, countless actors and actresses sat on the Vespa, which appeared, or even took a leading role, in countless films – comedies, dramas, action movies, social comment: “Examples include **Nanni Moretti’s** ‘Dear Diary’ (1993), where the main character spends an entire episode – entitled, naturally enough, ‘In Vespa’ – on the saddle of a 150 Sprint,” says the exhibition curator **Pier Marco De Santi**, “or ‘Alfie’ (2004), directed by Charles Shyer, which sees **Jude Law** out on the streets of Manhattan on a white and blue Vespa; or Sydney Pollack’s ‘The Interpreter’ (2005), where **Nicole Kidman’s** favoured means of transport around New York is a yellow Vespa.”

The photographs in the exhibition “The Vespa and the Movies” illustrate the long list of international movie stars seen on the world’s most famous scooter over the years, in films ranging from “**Quadrophenia**” to “**Absolute Beginners**”, “**American Graffiti**”, “**The Talented Mr. Ripley**”, “**102 Dalmatians**” and the blockbuster “**Transformers**”. In the photos, in the films and on the sets, the Vespa was the “travelling companion” of stars like Raquel Welch, Ursula Andress, Geraldine Chaplin, Joan Collins, Jayne Mansfield, Virna Lisi, Milla Jovovich, Marcello Mastroianni, Charlton Heston, John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Gary Cooper, Anthony Perkins, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Nanni Moretti, Sting, Antonio Banderas, Matt Damon, Gérard Depardieu, Jude Law, Eddie Murphy, Owen Wilson, Nicole Kidman and many others.

[www.piaggiogroup.com](http://www.piaggiogroup.com)