

THE LAST WORDS OF CHRIST: RICCARDO MUTI IN CONVERSATION WITH MASSIMO CACCIARI

With contributions by Sylvain Bellenger and Vittorio Verdone

Bologna, 29 March 2021

Thursday, 1 April at 18.30 a conversation will be held online between **Maestro Riccardo Muti** and **Professor Massimo Cacciari** entitled **“The last words of Christ”** on the **CUBO** (the Unipol Group corporate museum) and *Il Mulino* publisher channels.

Two specific works will form the backdrop to a discussion ranging between music, philosophy, religion and art: the **“Crucifixion”** by **Masaccio** and the score by **Franz Joseph Haydn** based on the last words of Christ on the cross and composed for the Good Friday ceremonies. The conversation will pick up again on the issues tackled by Muti and Cacciari in the book they wrote together *Le sette parole di Cristo* (“The seven last words of Christ”) published by *Il Mulino*. A special appearance will be made by **Sylvain Bellenger**, Director of the Museo and Real Bosco di Capodimonte (Naples), where Masaccio’s work is displayed, during which he will show images from the rooms of the Museum. **Vittorio Verdone**, Corporate Director in Communications and Media Relations of the Unipol Group, will also attend.

The profound cultural and philosophical reflections will take their cue from Masaccio’s Crucifixion to reach the central conclusion that thought does not originate solely from pictures then translated into words, but also from sounds that can then become music: even though art can take us to giddy heights, it pins us closely to the painting, while music can take us unimaginable distances since it can touch us directly.

In the first few pages of the book, Massimo Cacciari says to Maestro Muti: *“Before performing the Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross, you said to the public “You will find yourselves in this piece, each with your own lives, pain, fears and hopes, all united in Christ; that is, the humanity of Christ and the humanity of you listeners”.* This reflection alone contains the depth of the interwoven bond between art and music, giving the cue to their conversation on 1 April, Holy Thursday, on the **last words of the dying Christ that become music to make universal sense and that transcend the image, becoming purely abstract.**

Vittorio Verdone said *“In Easter week, dwelling in a sublime way upon the last “human” words of Jesus Christ can even go beyond the sense of individual faith, these words encourage us all to stop and think. For Unipol, supporting the publishing house il Mulino through such significant events proves our Group’s commitment to championing culture as a fundamental instrument for the social and civil growth of the community”.*

The online event is free for everyone, and can be followed:

- on the [CUBO platform and http://www.mulino.it](http://www.mulino.it)
- on the [Facebook page CUBO Condividere Cultura](#) and [@edizioni.mulino](#)
- on the [CUBO Unipol and il Mulino YouTube channels](#)

For further information, please visit www.cubounipol.it

The book: **Riccardo Muti, LE SETTE PAROLE DI CRISTO. Dialogo con Massimo Cacciari**, il Mulino, 2020, 136 pages, euro 12.00, part of the series *"ICONE. Pensare per immagini"* edited by Massimo Cacciari.

Riccardo Muti

He has been the conductor of prestigious international orchestras, the Maggio Musicale Theatre in Florence and the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. He has been the conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 2010. Since 2015, he has been involved with teaching young conductors from all over the world through the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy. He has received numerous honours and honorary degrees. RMMusic is his record label.

Massimo Cacciari

He is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the San Raffaele University in Milan and a member of the Lincean Academy. His most recent books include *"Il potere che frena"* (2013) and *"Labirinto filosofico"* (2014) for Adelphi, *"La mente inquieta"* (Einaudi, 2019) and for il Mulino *"Generare Dio"* (2017), forming part of the same series.

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