

## Exhibition “Leoni e Tori. Dall’antica Persia ad Aquileia”



The 24th of June saw the inauguration of the great exhibition “Lions and Bulls from ancient Persia to Aquileia”, which is open to the public until September 30th, 2016 at the National Archaeological Museum of Aquileia, created by the Aquileia Foundation in collaboration with the Museum Centre of Friuli Venezia Giulia, the National Museum of Iran, the Iranian Cultural Heritage Handcrafts and Tourism Organisation and supported by the Bracco Foundation.

The exhibition symbolically links the memory of two great cities, Persepolis and Aquileia, both destroyed by fire and sword, nearly eight hundred years apart, and which became part of the cultural heritage, art, and fascination of all humanity.

The precious artifacts on display cover an extensive period of history and are testimony of two pre-Islamic dynasties of Iran: the Achaemenids and Sassanids. Besides their enormous historical and artistic value, these truly outstanding finds, loans from the National Archaeological Museum of Tehran and that of Persepolis, are objects of rare beauty. Examples of such wealth are the bulls and lions from which the exhibition takes its name: not only related to Mesopotamian tradition and Elamite, but also to the Iranian Iron Age, where aspects from the animal kingdom played an important role.

*“The Bracco Foundation has chosen to support the important exhibition for many reasons - explains Diana Bracco - President of the Bracco Foundation: “First of all, the extraordinary importance of the project promoted by friends of the Aquileia Foundation in collaboration with the Museum Centre of Friuli Venezia Giulia, which*

*brings to Italy precious Achaemenid and Sassanid jewelery and sculptures from the Museums of Tehran and Persepolis. Then, there is the international significance of this initiative, which in fact is supported not only by the President of the Region, Debora Serracchiani and the Minister of Culture Dario Franceschini, but also by the Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni. Finally, the third reason is Bracco's strong ties with Friuli Venezia Giulia. Our family actually originates from Istria, and for this very reason the Bracco Group decided to locate its new manufacturing plant in Torviscosa".*

The exhibition also aims to accompany the restart of dialogue and revival of interest in the Islamic Republic of Iran, a great cultural partner and political and economic power.

The exhibition, presented to the press on June 22nd at the Mibact Ministry Hall in Rome by Minister Franceschini and President of Friuli Venezia Giulia Deborah Serracchiani, inaugurated in Aquileia on June 24th, 2016 at 18:30 in the presence of President Serracchiani.