

**Press release April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**“IL FIORE DI PIETRA” at Monte Generoso’s peak, a year later**

**It’s time for new appraisals, challenges and new points of view**

**Mario Botta presents the book “FIORE DI PIETRA-MONTE GENEROSO”**

After just one year since its launch it became the symbol of Ticinese and swiss tourism; the imposing architectural structure signed by Mario Botta, calls out a moment of deep meditation by those who have strongly wanted it, supported it and think that together with the Monte Generoso’s railway it has huge potential to bring unexpected results in the touristic and cultural scope. For this reason Migros and Ferrovia Monte Generoso wanted a special day in occasion of the release of “Fiore di pietra-Monte Generoso” by Mario Botta.

### **The history, the love for mountain peaks and the passion for challenges**

“The history of Ferrovia Monte Generoso has always been marked by the volition of extraordinary personalities such as Carlo Pasta, Carl Roman Abt, Gottlieb Duttweiler, in the past, and nowadays by architect Mario Botta”, remembers Fabrice Zumbrunnen, CEO of Federazione Cooperative Migros.

Carlo Pasta, swiss doctor and politician from Mendrisio, decided to build the first “Hotel Monte Generoso Bellavista” in 1867, it was only reachable by foot, but in 1890 he managed to get built the railway up to Monte Generoso’s peak.

Carl Roman Abt, one of the most illustrious swiss characters of the ‘900, inventor of the small-gauge rack train, built the Monte Generoso’s Railway in just 16 months, a record time.

In 1941, Migros founder Gottlieb Duttweiler saved the Railway from planned demolition because of the economic crisis between the two wars.

“Migros supports cultural and economics initiatives, adult training, social and leisure activities”, emphasizes Zumbrunnen. “And it’s just in this context that Migros couldn’t let the opportunity to finance the building of “Fiore di pietra” by architect Mario Botta, one of the greatest talents of our time in the architectural domain.”

Mario Botta grew up at the foot of Monte Generoso and in his youth he climbed to the top during summer nights with his friends, to witness the irresistible sights of the sunrise. “At an age in which the majority of citizens enjoys their retirement, Mario Botta has designed the Fiore di pietra, an impressive structure that in just 12 months has become the emblem of Ticino!” concludes Zumbrunnen.



The passion, the insatiable spirit of enterprise, the capability to raise a challenge even if success seems hard to reach, the love for mountains and the rare capacity to stray from beaten paths on the lookout for innovation; these are the features that pull together in different times those four personalities who contributed to Monte Generoso's fame.

### **From the history to the success of 2017**

2017's success came with significant numbers:

- Around 450 people per day coming from all Europe and all over the world climbed at the top of Monte Generoso, attracted by this natural stage and by the architectural beauty of Fiore di pietra.
- 115 thousand passengers from Ticino, other swiss cantons and from the rest of the world. Major inflows from: Italy, Germany, USA, Great Britain, France, Belgium and Austria.
- 2630 train trips to mountain's top.
- Many events have been set up during the year, 225 large scale.
- A noticeable 60% increase vs. 2013, last year the railway was running, which inextricably marks the connection of Ferrovia Monte Generoso and Fiore di pietra in the territory of the magical Monte Generoso. It highlights a fundamental revival of the regional tourism of Mendrisiotto, Ticino and Switzerland as a whole, furthermore it puts the destination in an urgent trendy niche: *slow-tourism*.

"Today you can't ignore anymore the importance of the quality of time, environment's respect, farm-to-table fine dining and sustainable mobility; "we own all those peculiarities and we're very proud of it", specifies Francesco Isgro, director of Ferrovia Monte Generoso.

### **New strategies and objectives for a better tomorrow**

**Ferrovia Monte Generoso has implemented new marketing strategies:** locally diffused but also forward looking, up to those countries we didn't even think we could reach. Nowadays it's essential to attend fairs, workshops and conferences all over Asia, Far East, Middle East and the USA.

"Our next goal is to bring ticinese, swiss, italian and foreign young students at the top of Monte Generoso: a unique and valuable example of biodiversity, "because we strongly believe that children must be educated to respect the environment very early, they're the future of our planet", says Martina Di Ponziano, Head Marketing & Sales of Ferrovia Monte Generoso, "and to connect and empathize with juvenile, we're on social medias and we set up a Newsletter to promote events and spread news about Fiore di pietra of the Monte Generoso".



### **The Restaurant 'Fiore di Pietra' in Sapori Ticino**

Thanks to the stature of the Fiore di pietra and Ferrovia Monte Generoso we are joining the event "Sapori Ticino", which has already reached its 12<sup>th</sup> edition. On Saturday June 2<sup>nd</sup> the Restaurant "Fiore di pietra" will host Norbert Niederkofler, guru-chef of three-star rated St. Hubertus of San Cassiano, and his "Cook the Mountain" philosophy.

The star-rated food and wine of the Fiore di pietra is not only available by day! Now you can enjoy a "Generoso Evening" with appetizers, music, dance and astronomical observations, two Saturdays per month.

### **A bond between two cultures**

Architect Mario Botta wanted the Fiore di pietra to overtake its intended purpose in order to acquire a symbolic meaning, becoming a strong sign of the human presence on the border marked by the mountain between Europe and the Mediterranean. Monte Generoso is a magical mountain which divides the south, the Po valley and the North Sea from Europe.

"However, I enjoy thinking that the Fiore di pietra and the magical Monte Generoso, unite and not divide the two countries", concludes Isgrò, "That they're not a limit, but rather a bond between the two cultures, the ticinese and the italian one, strongly similar".

### **The Photography Exhibit on the Fiore di pietra monte Generoso**

On the occasion of its first anniversary, the 'Fiore di pietra' offers its guests and visitors a photo exhibit of 13 excellent shots by architect and photographer Luca Ferrario.

Thanks to architect Mario Botta and Francesco Isgrò, the director of Ferrovie del Monte generoso, the exhibit rewards the talent and passion put in those photos by the author.

Luca Ferrario, Mario Botta's former student, had the privilege of being in close quarters with him in his office of Mendrisio during five years, cooperating in various projects.

During these years he acknowledges his working methods, he deepens the language and architectural style of it. His photographs are the result of a discerning look.

Every photograph is limited to 5 pieces, signed by Arch. Mario Botta and by the author, printed in carbon lakes on cotton paper.



### **A very special day**

The presentation of the monography “Fiore di pietra- Monte Generoso” at Belvedere conference room at the top of Monte Generoso ended just a few hours ago.

Over 130 prominent attendants, many architecture and Mario Botta’s fans, but also many ticinese and italian journalists. These last few arrived in a group with a mini-bus from Milan. Everyone came to admire the results of man’s hand on nature. “Because everything that surrounds us bears the stamp of the man’s modernization”, tells Mario Botta in a speech that moves the public, as he always does. “Nature has inevitably been ‘processed’, ‘guided’ by man. Monte Generoso is my mountain and being able to build up there has been a privilege for me, because the terrain offers an extraordinary condition. You feel that there are hundreds of meters of difference levels and then a kind of mass, which is earth’s crust, upon which you’re called to place an object, a little jewel. I think about Bruno Taut and his Alpine Architektur, a utopian vision in which mountain tops become moments of irradiation. It’s like if earth brought its power inside earth’s crust, to a point in which a human artifact is born...”

Mr. Claudio Zali, State Council’s president, and Mr. Marco Romano, National and Municipal Counselor of Mendrisio, attended to greet all guests.

