

OUR WOMEN

Rita Levi-Montalcini was an Italian American neurologist. She was born on 22 April 1909 in Turin, to Italian Jewish parents. She studied at the University of Turin.

After graduating with honors Levi-Montalcini remained at the university as Levi's assistant, but her academic career was cut short by Benito Mussolini's 1938 Manifesto of Race.

During World War II her family fled to Florence, where they survived the Holocaust, under false identities, protected by some non-Jewish friends. Her family returned to Turin in 1945.

In 1946 she obtained a scholarship at Washington University in St. Louis where she accepted a work as a researcher .

She obtained the Italian and American citizenship. In 1963, she became the first woman to receive the Max Weinstein Award and she became a professor in 1958 and in 1962 she founded the Institute of Cell Biology in Rome.

In 1986 Rita shared the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine with Stanley Cohen for her discovery of the NGF. In 2001 the Italian Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi appointed Levi-Montalcini senator for life for her outstanding contributions to science.

She died in 2012 in Rome when she was 103 years old.

Miuccia Prada, original name Maria Bianchi, was born in 1949, in Milan. She is an Italian fashion designer best known as the head designer of Prada. She is famous for her designs : traditional style with modern influence.

At first she was interested in politics, infact she became a member of the Italian Communist Political Party. In 1978 she succeeded her mother controlling family company. In the 1980s she started to sell Prada goods all over the world.

The brand was immediately associated with confident, intellectual, and affluent working women. Nowadays the Prada brand is one of the most famous and fashionable all over the world.

Samantha Cristoforetti is the first Italian woman in space.

She was born in Milan in 1977. Samantha studied in many schools around the world and she took many degrees.

She was officially selected as an astronaut in 2009 by the European Space Agency .

On 23 November 2014, Samantha and two other astronauts left for space and she come back on 11 June 2015.

She spent 199 days and 16 hours in space and so she became the holder of the record for the longest single mission for a woman.

Samantha can speak Italian, German, Russian, English, French and Chinese. She is married with Lionel Ferra, a French astronaut instructor, and they have a 4 years old daughter.