



FRIENDS *of* FLORENCE

For Immediate Release
July 7, 2021

**Friends of Florence President Simonetta Brandolini d'Adda Recipient of
U.S. Consulate General in Florence Inaugural Award for Cultural Diplomacy**



Friends of Florence President Simonetta Brandolini d'Adda receives U.S. Consulate General's inaugural Award for Cultural Diplomacy presented by U.S. Consul General Ragini Gupta. Photo: Courtesy Friends of Florence

Florence, Italy... On July 1, 2021, Friends of Florence President Simonetta Brandolini d'Adda received the U.S. Consulate General's inaugural Award for Cultural Diplomacy. The award recognizes outstanding contributions by American citizens and those with strong U.S. ties to the cultural and intellectual life of Florence. Presented by Consul General Ragini Gupta, the new award recognizes those exemplifying exceptional leadership in enhancing exchange between the United States and Tuscany. Brandolini d'Adda was honored with Maestro Zubin Mehta, former principal orchestra conductor of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and now Honorary Director for Life, in a ceremony at the U.S. Consulate in Florence.

Consul General Gupta established the new award as the country enters a time of new beginnings or the "rinascita" (rebirth) following the tragic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic to thank and acknowledge those who have contributed so much over the years.



L to R: Florence City Councilman for Culture Tommaso Sacchi, Friends of Florence President Simonetta Brandolini d'Adda, Maestro Zubin Mehta, and U.S. Consul General Ragini Gupta. Photo: Courtesy Friends of Florence

Also in attendance at the Palazzo Canevaro, the historic headquarters of the Consulate, were regional and municipal authorities, including Florence City Councilman for Culture Tommaso Sacchi, Superintendent of Fine Arts and Landscape for Florence and the provinces of Pistoia and Prato Andrea Pessina, and the Superintendent of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Alexander Pereira.

“It was my pleasure and high honor to accept this award on behalf of the foundation. It acknowledges the extraordinary generosity of our many supporters, the majority of whom are Americans. We remain profoundly grateful to our institutional partners and the conservators who help us sustain the city’s artistic, architectural, and cultural treasures. As we emerge from the pandemic, we look forward to welcoming back visitors to Florence from near and far to enjoy and be inspired by them. I am deeply grateful to Consul General Gupta and her colleagues and am personally humbled to receive this inaugural award alongside Maestro Mehta.”

In 2012, Brandolini d’Adda and Friends of Florence were awarded the Gold Florin, the city of Florence’s highest honor and in 2019, she was awarded the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic (*Cavaliere Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana*).

Friends of Florence

Friends of Florence is a non-profit foundation supported by individuals from around the world who are dedicated to preserving and enhancing the rich cultural heritage of Florence and Tuscany and conserving irreplaceable artistic and cultural treasures. Friends of Florence identifies significant projects spanning centuries in need of restoration, secures funding, and works in collaboration with local authorities to complete projects.

Since its founding in 1998, the Foundation has raised and donated \$10 million for conservation projects in the region. Friends of Florence works directly with Florence’s famed conservation laboratories to ensure restoration is done at the highest level, has the approval of the City of Florence and the Italian Ministry of Art, and is completed on time and on budget.

Through its work, Friends of Florence creates opportunities for the study and appreciation of paintings, sculptures, architectural elements, places of worship, and collections at the Uffizi Gallery, the Accademia, the Baptistery, the Piazza della Signoria, the Museum of San Marco, and dozens of other museums, churches, and public sites.

A model of high-impact, low-overhead philanthropy, Friends of Florence is the primary source of funding for the city’s conservators, a respected partner with museums and cultural authorities in Italy and the U.S., and a publisher/producer of publications, multimedia offerings, seminars, lectures, and cultural travel opportunities.

#

Media contacts

Italy: Elisa Bonini, mob. +39.333.6729563, elisaboniniitaly@friendsofflorence.org

USA: Lisbeth Mark, Bow Bridge Communications, mob. +1 917 968 5567, info@bow-bridge.com