

Culture: The soul of the Italian Economy

Mila Tenaglia (February 27, 2015)



The Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities and of Tourism in visit in New York. Dario Franceschini presented the government plan Art Bonus and the cultural program for Expo 2015 at the Italian Cultural Institute and at the Consulate General. “Investing in culture is good for minds, and spirits of Italians, as wells as for the Italian Economy”

These are event-filled days for the Minister of Culture and Tourism, [Dario Franceschini](#) [2], who just arrived in New York. On Wednesday February 25th, the new [ENIT](#) [3] office was inaugurated – ribbon cutting ceremony and all – within the Italian Cultural Institute.

Alongside it, the [Lorenzo Da Ponte](#) [4] Library was also re-opened and made available to the entire city of New York.



“The re-opening of the Lorenzo Da Ponte Library, named after an Italian opera librettist, poet, and professor who became a naturalized American, is yet another strong signal of the presence of Italian culture. We want this presence to grow stronger in the world and particularly in New York” states the Minister Dario Franceschini.

“We are on the right path to getting out of the Italian crisis” He states with conviction. “It’s important to make the people who look at Italy from the outside the extent to which investing in culture is a powerful strategy in global competition”.

“The United States” Minister Franceschini continues “understood the concept of investing in cultural heritage quite a while ago. We have to open the doors to [fundraising](#) [5], a concept that is still scarcely diffused, as a tool for the valorization and safeguard of single museums and theatres”.

A large room filled with journalists, art curators, and attaches to cultural sector for the press conference, listened to the consul general [Natalia Quintavalle](#) [6]’s words of introduction regarding the government plan confirming this approach/ angle adopted by the Italian government, referred to in the media as [Art Bonus](#) [7]: a fiscal incentive that will provide a 65% tax credit for donations to art.

“It’s good for public and private sectors to collaborate to promote culture and protect Italian cultural heritage. An incentive has to be provided for patronage and the doors must be opened to the privates who want to invest or donate resources to support public heritage.” He continues.

Art Bonus will re-launch Italian cultural heritage but so will [Expo 2015](#) [8]. Franceschini urged to remain faithful in the face of difficulties. The numbers speak for themselves. “More than 150 national pavilions for the Expo and a great opportunity for our country. Eight million tickets have already been sold, many of which in developing countries. More than twenty million people are expected to come”.

The Minister encourages doing more than visiting just the most famous Art Cities such as Rome, Florence, and Venice. A site was inaugurated for this very purpose: “[Very Bello](#) [9] were all the quality events that will take place during the six-month Expo period are grouped: dance, lyrical music, exhibitions, concerts... From Sicily to the Alps, from the lakes to the small art towns scattered all over the national territory, people from all over the world will have the chance to explore the beauty of our country and to visit the true heart of Italy if they so wish”.

Another engagement for Dario Franceschini: celebrating the 60th anniversary of the entry of Italy in the United Nations with the retrospective on Italian cinema at the UN headquarters. During the event, [Prova D’Orchestra](#) [10] (Orchestra Rehearsal), a 1979 film directed by Federico Fellini, was shown.

Other encounters worth mentioning are those between the minister and the director of the Guggenheim, [Richard Armstrong](#) [11], and that of the Met Museum, [Thomas Campbell](#) [12].

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