

## Launching 2013 — The Year of Italian Culture

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2013 to be the Year of Italian Culture in the United States, during which America will discover Italy and all its values: culture, arts, sciences, and advanced technologies. The aim of this yearlong journey is to communicate and promote Italy, and to create new, and reinforce the already longstanding bonds uniting Italy and the United States, by engaging Americans in numerous cultural activities taking place in major American cities throughout the year.

The [inauguration of 2013 - The Year of Italian Culture in the United States](#) [2] took place on Wednesday, December 12th 2012, in Washington D.C., where during a press conference held at the [National Gallery of Art](#) [3], an official calendar of events to take place during this remarkable year presenting the innovative, forward moving Italy, was released.

[Guilio Terzi di Sant'Agata](#) [4], Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, did the honors of opening the yearlong celebration, organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the [Embassy of Italy in Washington](#) [5], in collaboration with the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali and with the support of the Corporate Ambassadors Intesa Sanpaolo and Eni. The aim of this initiative is to showcase the best of Italian arts and culture in some forty major American cities, including Boston,



Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco, just to name a few.

Foreign Minister Terzi proudly stated: “Research, discovery, and innovation are keys to understanding the spirit of the Year of Italian Culture in the United States. This project, organized under the auspices of the President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, aims at showcasing Italian creativity and culture both in our artistic heritage and in our “Made in Italy,” pointing up how contemporary excellence rests on cultural foundations spanning the Classical age and the Renaissance up to present times. The Year also highlights Italy’s most advanced achievements in science and technology, bearing witness to the growing role that these fields of cooperation play in the development of Italy-U.S. relations: aware of our invaluable rich cultural past, the focus is on our future, a future which we intend to build on a more and more intense dialogue and exchange with our long-standing partners, among which the United States is paramount.”

In the message from the President of the Italian Republic, [Giorgio Napolitano](#) [6], read during the inauguration ceremony, Napolitano states: “The artistic value of the events that will take place and the importance of the partnership between Italian and American institutions in bringing them to fruition are epitomized in Michelangelo's David-Apollo, which will usher in the program at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, a sanctuary of culture.”

Michelangelo’s David-Apollo, a true artistic gem, has been brought to the United States from Florence, to be unveiled during the opening ceremony and will remain on exhibition until March 2013 at the National Gallery of Art.

Minister Terzi emphasized the significance of this exclusive occasion by stating: “Michelangelo’s David-Apollo, in particular, is emblematic of the relationship between our two countries. The National Gallery in Washington displayed the sculpture for the first time in 1949 at the inaugural reception for President Harry Truman. It was on loan from the Bargello Museum in Florence as a sign of Italy’s gratitude to the United States for the assistance it provided in the post-war period. Today the David-Apollo is back at the National Gallery to launch the Year of Italian Culture in the U.S. and to be admired by new generations of visitors.”

It is this new generation that will receive particular attention during the Year of Italian Culture in the US stated Minister Terzi: “Our special concern and most urgent commitment go toward the younger generations in our two countries: our initiative addresses them as both main actors and privileged participants and looks at them as the long-term beneficiaries of the dynamic impulse to mutual relations which is the main objective of the Year.”

The concept of 2013 as a showcase of Italian culture and excellence and what it means to the American public, gives an opportunity to promote Italy as a whole, its cultural aspects as well as the economic features of the Italian Brand. Presenting culture not only in its traditional form of historical and artistic legacy, but as a dynamic asset that gives value to the whole system, strategically affirms the Italian system from the perspective of cultural economy.

[Ambassador of Italy in Washington DC, Claudio Bisogniero](#) [7] called the collaboration on this project between Italian and American institutions “the best possible assurance that 2013 will fulfill its promise of further consolidating the bilateral relations between Italy and the United States, reaffirming the statement made by [President Obama](#) [8] in his recent Columbus Day Proclamation and underscored by Secretary of State Clinton during her last meeting here in Washington with Minister Terzi.”

The inauguration festivities continued throughout the day in Washington D.C., and included a meeting between Foreign Minister Terzi and the Democratic Leader [Nancy Pelosi](#), [9] followed by a press briefing. He then went on to meet with Senior United States Senator, [John Kerry](#), [10] and later in the afternoon joined Ambassadors [Claudio Bisogniero](#) and [Marisa Lino](#) [11] at the Italian Embassy for the presentation of an English version of the book *Il Palazzo sul Potomac*. The Italian Embassy in Washington.

The day came to a close back at the National Gallery, where dignitaries and guests were invited to a



reception held at the West Sculpture Hall, where remarks were made by the Director of the Gallery, Earl Powell III, Minister Terzi and the honorable Nancy Pelosi, after which guests were able to view Michelangelo's David-Apollo statue.

As stated in the letter from the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano: "The Year of Italian Culture in the United States represents a commitment to further strengthen the longstanding and solid friendship between our two countries. In 2011, the celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of Italian Unification, which met with great success also in the United States, have spurred significant reflection on our common roots and cultural ideals. 2013 will allow us to look at the present and the future. To the Italy of innovation, creativity, science, and technology.

Minister Terzi highlighted some of the events scheduled for the course of next year: "2013 will also mark the Bicentennial of Giuseppe Verdi's birth. Maestro Riccardo Muti and Maestro Maurizio Pollini will perform in some of America's premier theaters and concert halls as will our jazz virtuosos. Cinema and photography will play a leading role at festivals and exhibitions across the country. In the sciences, Italy will display its cutting edge technology, from "science parks" to robotic surgery. The internationally renowned furniture by Gio Ponti as well as Barriquer, a project that transforms disassembled barrel staves into works of art, will showcase the ingenuity of innovative Italian design. Young people will benefit from interuniversity projects and new fellowships on both shores. Academic institutions will celebrate the 700th anniversary of Boccaccio's birth as well as the 500th of Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Verses by our most famous poets will be displayed on Washington buses and a new App will help Americans find the nearest location for courses in Italian."

To join in the celebration of 2013- The Year of Italian Culture in the United States click [HERE](#) [12] to visit the website of events or follow on Twitter #2013ItalianYear.

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