**Press Release**

**42ND MASI PRIZE:**

**CEREMONY AT THE PIEVE DI SAN GIORGIO**

**IN THE HEART OF VALPOLICELLA**

Gargagnago di Valpolicella (VR), 28th October 2023 - **exponents of the theme “Roots and Perspectives” , as presented at the 42nd Masi Prize, have received their awards at the Pieve di San Giorgio in Valpolicella.** The **Masi Civiltà Veneta Prize** went to the lexicographer **Mario Cannella**, to the “Water Nobel Prize” winner **Andrea Rinaldo**, and to the **Stevanato Group**, the historic Venetian company and leading producer of glass containers for medicines. **The Masi International Civiltà del Vino Prize** went to the Japanese manga authors **Yuko and Shin Kibayashi**; and the **International Grosso d'Oro Veneziano Prize** went to the Iranian film director **Rakhshan Banietemad**.

After autographing the **historic barrel of Amarone** in the Masi cellars, the Prize winners, accompanied by Foundation President **Isabella Bossi Fedrigotti**, Vice-President **Sandro Boscaini** and Secretary **Marco Vigevani**, went to the village of San Giorgio for the official awards ceremony in the eponymous 7th-century Barbarian-Romanesque parish church looking out over a landscape of terraced vineyards stretching as far as Lake Garda.

This beautiful architectural setting was the setting for an interesting **debate**, moderated by Radio 24 journalist **Alessandro Milan** and also broadcast via live-streaming, which saw the Prize-winners discuss **highly topical issues**, including the causes of global conflicts, women's civil rights, current wars, and the fundamental issues of access to water and the consequences of climate change. Plus health in a post-pandemic world and prevention methods. Lastly, the changes that have taken place in recent years that have also modified our language. All these themes were **amply covered by the qualifications of the winners of this 42nd edition of the Masi Prize.**

Doing the honours at the awards ceremony was **Sandro Boscaini,** who told us "*This year's Prize has a strong international matrix; we went as far as Persia and Japan to find our worthy winners and, for the Civiltà Veneta Prize we have three true 'champions of links with their roots', who have been successful in a wider context at the same time.*"

This was followed by an official welcome from the **Mayor of Verona Damiano Tommasi**, who was present in person: “*It is an honour to be here representing the city, enhanced by the quality of the prize winners here today. This year's theme made me reflect on the importance of our roots and the courage needed to create visions of the future.”*

**Roberto Zorzi, Mayor of Sant'Ambrogio di Valpolicella**, spoke too: “*For years, the Masi Prize has brought internationally prestigious personalities to our splendid church, and they have proved to be very worthy winners. It is also thanks to the contribution of the Foundation and the Masi winery that our town is now famous all over the world.*”

The **President of the Veneto Region, Luca Zaia,** also wished to emphasise the cultural value of the Prize with a greeting addressed to the President of the Foundation: "*The Masi Prize, which this year has ‘Roots and Perspectives ' as its running theme, demonstrates the farsightedness with which Masi and the Boscaini family conduct this project for cultural enhancement. Culture and business are worlds that are not, in fact, so far apart; on the contrary, they mix with and enrich each other, creating a strong bond that favours the growth of a region that is famous for a 'business culture' made up of strong values, premium products, love for the land and love for the wine that comes from it with such hard work. The bond we have with our roots is therefore important, because these roots define a community and its identity, which remains solid over time and lays solid foundations for the future.”*

The institutional greetings were closed by **Isabella Bossi Fedrigotti** who reiterated how: "*Saying ‘Roots and Perspectives' is the same as saying 'Tradition and Innovation'. They are contradictory terms, but this is what enables us to grow. The Masi Group knows this well, because it is in its DNA, and our prize winners also fall into the same categories*.”

Alessandro Milan opened the debate by introducing all the winners of this edition to the audience, praising them as being 'profoundly up-to-the-minute'.

Iranian film director **Rakhshan Banietemad** was especially grateful to receive the Prize: “*I would like to thank the Foundation Board and the jurors. I am honoured to receive the Masi Prize for my life-time career as a filmmaker. This award belongs to those whose lives, women above all, have been a source of inspiration for my work. I will present this award to the Museum of Iranian Cinema in honour and memory of the master of Iranian film-making Dariush Mehrjui,, who was brutally killed just a few days ago.*”

**Andrea Rinaldo** shared his thoughts on water, one of the fundamental topics of the present and future, with the audience: "*Water, a resource that is fought over in so-called 'water wars', has been with us for ever. And it is still at the centre of conflicts in its role as a primary resource. If we think back to the Fertile Crescent, which was the origin of man's development, and from which cities and religions were born, we can be sure that water is an issue central to our roots and future prospects. We need to create a collective consciousness to deal with the new situation imposed by climate change*.”

**Franco Stevanato** also spoke about his thoughts on the subject, summarising the principles that have made his family business successful: “*Heart and head in our roots, great curiosity and hunger for future growth*.” Stevenato went on in the talk directed by Milan to tell us about the commitment with which his Group, with its international locations, supports the world of pharmaceuticals, which is so important to society, with the aim of constantly improving people's living conditions.

Replying to the moderator's questions, **Mario Cannella** spoke about the rich Italian linguistic heritage that comes from famous figures starting with Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, and how the profession of a lexicographer is a ‘frontier’ occupation, which has witnessed profound changes in language in the last twenty years. "*Detached observation shows when a term becomes common in society and is ready for registration in dictionaries. As they say, 'everything flows', and so does the Italian language. In this ever-changing scenario, it is essential to continue research work to maintain the integrity of our lexis*.”

Talking about new means of expression, we come to **Yuko and Shin Kibayashi**, who told us about the genesis of the manga 'Drops of God', a highly successful operation with millions of copies sold worldwide, and how it was born out of their passion for wine and their desire to talk about the tasting experience by using graphic images. "*In this way, the language of wine can become a worldwide language understood by all. When we thought of the title we did not imagine our venture would be so successful internationally. Now, after the TV series, there will be a new format as well*.”

At the end of the debate, Milan asked the Prize-winners to summarise what 'Views for the future' meant for them. For Rakhshan Banietemad it was '*hope and not losing hope'*; for the Kibayashi brothers it was *'witnessing the recognition of the new-born Japanese wine in the world*'; for Mario Cannella *'continuing the work of observing the evolution of language*'; for Franco Stevanato it was *'ambition, opportunity and the ability to grow'*. Finally, Andrea Rinaldo explained how he sees the future in different realities, reflecting the fact, for example, that drought affects different regions of the world differently.

The ceremony concluded with the physical presentation of prizes. There were also two special prizes sponsored by the Boscaini family and presented by the **Prefect of Verona Demetrio Martino**. The winners were two long-time commercial partners who have materially helped the success of wines from the Venetian regions on the Italian market.

\*\*\*

**Further information:**

MASI COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

Cristina Valenza - Tel. +39 3388850758 - E-mail: cristina.valenza@masi.it

MASI PRESS OFFICE

Elisa Venturini - Tel. +39 3357590837 - E-mail: elisa.venturini@masi.it

Close to Media - company founded by Elisabetta Neuhoff

Product Press Office: Cecilia Isella, Elisa Gioia: +39 3480990515 - +39 3492332555

E-mail: cecilia.isella@closetomedia.it; elisa.gioia@closetomedia.it

Finance Press Office: Adriana Liguori: +39 3451778974

E-mail: adriana.liguori@closetomedia.it

**THE MASI FOUNDATION:**

The Masi Foundation is committed to promoting and enhancing the region, the people, the cultural heritage, and the great ingenuity and productive skills of the Veneto. Particular attention is paid to the culture and production of wine, which are distinctive features of the Veneto region. The Foundation works at a national and international level, and also in collaboration with local administrations, public and private bodies, Foundations and other Italian and foreign organisations. The Masi Foundation was set up in 2001 on the basis of the 20-year experience of the Masi Prize, whose continuity and direction it manages. A series of initiatives in the cultural sphere extend the influence of the Foundation to all who see the values of Veneto culture as an inspiration and stimulus for productive, cultural and civil progress on an international scale. On 16 April 2007 the Veneto Region gave the Masi Foundation legal status, recognising its values and statutory aims.

**Board of the Masi Foundation**

President: Isabella Bossi Fedrigotti

Vice President: Sandro Boscaini

Secretary: Marco Vigevani

Auditor: Giovanni Aspes

Councillors: Michele Bauli, Francesco Benedetti, Bruno Boscaini, Marzio Breda, Franca Coin, Massimilla di Serego Alighieri, Federico Girotto, Maurizio Marino.

**Civiltà Veneta Commission**: Sandro Boscaini, Isabella Bossi Fedrigotti, Marzio Breda, Franca Coin, Gabriele Colleoni, Ilvo Diamanti, Massimilla di Serego Alighieri, Massimo Ferro, Francesco Giavazzi, Stefano Lorenzetto, Piergaetano Marchetti, Paola Marini, Pilade Riello, Paolo Possamai, Giovanni Maria Vian, Marco Vigevani, Stefano Zecchi, Filiberto Zovico.

**Civiltà del Vino Commission**: Federico Castellucci, Piero Antinori, Sandro Boscaini, Luciano Ferraro, Angelo Gaja, Jens Priewe, Ezio Rivella, Alessandro Torcoli. Spokesperson: Federico Castellucci.

www.fondazionemasi.com