**Press Release**

**44th MASI PRIZE:**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE AWARD WINNERS**

Civiltà Veneta: **Alberto Bombassei, Federica Manzon, Fabrizio Plessi**Civiltà del Vino: **José Vouillamoz**Grosso D’Oro Veneziano: **Gilles Kepel**

**2025 THEME:**

**“Progress and Conflicts: Paradoxes of the Present”**

**THE EVENT IN VALPOLICELLA**

**Friday, October 24, 2025**

At the Masi Cellars: Amarone Cask Signing

At Monteleone21: Awards Ceremony

*Gargagnago di Valpolicella (VR), September 9, 2025 –* **The Masi Foundation** is pleased to announce the winners of the **44th edition of the Masi Prize**. Founded in 1981, the award honors outstanding national and international personalities involved in civilization and culture, celebrating them in the heart of Valpolicella.

The 2025 **Civiltà Veneta Award** goes to three emblematic figures:

• **Alberto Bombassei**, a visionary entrepreneur from Vicenza, for his contribution to industrial excellence and technical innovation, with a focus on research and education;

• **Fabrizio Plessi**, an international artist who is Venetian by adoption, for his pioneering work in combining artistic tradition with the technological idiom of contemporary life;

• **Federica Manzon**, a writer from Trieste, whose works explore the complex tensions intrinsic to identity, belonging and memory.

The **International Civiltà del Vino Award** goes to:

• **José Vouillamoz**, Swiss geneticist, for his fundamental contribution to ampelography regarding native grape varieties and for his scientific outreach.

The **Grosso D’Oro Veneziano** goes to:

• **Gilles Kepel**, French political scientist, who has placed knowledge at the service of dialogue and solidarity in his tireless commitment to intercultural exchange and the analysis of threats to social cohesion.

'**Progress and Conflicts: Paradoxes of the Present'** is the common thread of the 2025 edition, chosen in light of today’s extraordinary technological advances in counterpoint to global crises, inequalities, wars and cultural divides. The Masi Award reflects on these paradoxes, selecting figures from various fields - industry, art, literature, science and sociopolitical research - who suggest critical appraisals of today’s realities.

"We live in an era of extraordinary potential, but also of great contradictions," says **Isabella Bossi Fedrigotti**, president of the Masi Foundation. "Technology, artificial intelligence and advanced scientific knowledge offer unprecedented opportunities to improve the human condition. Yet, despite this progress, we are witnessing an increase in conflict, a crisis of values and the return of inequalities we thought had been eradicated. With the Masi Prize this year, we aim to limelight personalities whose vision and work help us understand this complexity; people capable of transforming expertise into responsibility, and knowledge into a tool for dialogue, social exchange and cohesion."

"Culture provides guidance in the contrast between innovation and conflict,” says **Sandro Boscaini, vice president of the Masi Foundation** and **president of Masi Agricola**. “We cannot consider progress solely in terms of technical innovation. True progress is only achieved when actions promote humanity and social dignity. Even wine, in this perspective, acquires symbolic value: the fruit of time-honored culture, of respect for the land and harmony with the landscape, it embodies relationships, identity and time. In this sense, viticulture can and must continue to represent a civilization that reconciles development, human relationships and aesthetics. Even in times of difficulty and far-reaching uncertainty.”

In the words of **Marco Vigevani, Secretary General of the Masi Foundation**, “the winners of this year's Award do more than simply excel in their respective fields: they offer profound interpretations of reality, raise essential questions and suggest concrete models for action. This is also a way of affirming that true progress must pursue a collective, inclusive and shared good. Emblematic in this regard is Gilles Kepel, winner of the Grosso D'Oro Veneziano. For years, he has devoted meticulous study to the dynamics of radicalism and the Mediterranean crisis. His commitment to promoting dialogue between cultures and civilizations reminds us of our duty to comprehend the causes of conflict, respecting differences and transforming difficulties into opportunities for growth, cohesion and peace."

On **Friday, October 24, 2025**, the **awards ceremony** will start with **the signing of the Amarone barrel**, the symbol of the Prize, at the historic **Masi cellars** and will continue at the new **Monteleone21** multipurpose complex in **Gargagnago di Valpolicella**. The event will be enriched by a moment of reflection and discussion among the award recipients, moderated by journalist Alessandro Milan.

**CITATIONS FOR THE 44TH MASI PRIZE**

**MASI VENETIAN CIVILIZATION AWARD**

*Recognition of individuals who are Venetian by birth, family or adoption and who have distinguished themselves in the fields of literature, art, journalism, science, entertainment or economics. With their work they have promoted and endorsed the skills of the Venetian people in the broadest fields of human endeavor, embodying the fundamental values and civilization ​​of the region shaped over many centuries by the Most Serene Republic of Venice.*

**Alberto Bombassei**

(entrepreneur, Vicenza – Bergamo) *"For the extraordinary contribution made with foresight and vision to automotive technology and the promotion of Made in Italy. In a broader sense, through the Kilometro Rosso Science and Technology Park, championing synergy between research, business and education."*

**Federica Manzon**

(writer, Trieste) *"For her literary work, which skilfully explores the tensions between identity, memory and belonging. Trieste, the frequently mentioned border city, symbolizes the uncertainties and challenges of human existence."*

**Fabrizio Plessi**

(artist, Reggio Emilia – Venice)

*"For his work, which reconciles artistic tradition with technological brilliance. The humanized technology intrinsic to Plessi’s many creations has established him as an international pioneer and master of video art and video installations."*

**MASI INTERNATIONAL WINE CIVILIZATION AWARD**

*This award regards the broader world of viticulture, honoring the most representative figures who have contributed internationally to appreciation of the ancient art of viticulture and wine.*

**José Vouillamoz**(ampelographer and geneticist, Switzerland)

*"For his internationally recognized accomplishments, combining advanced biotechnology with research into native grape varieties. His contribution to wine culture is further enhanced by his tireless efforts as a disseminator and by his book, "Wine Grapes," which has become a global reference work."*

**MASI INTERNATIONAL GROSSO D'ORO VENEZIANO AWARD**

*This award is reserved for people who have contributed to spreading a message of culture throughout the world, fostering understanding between peoples to promote solidarity, civil progress and peace.*

**Gilles Kepel**(political scientist, France)

*"For his unfaltering commitment to promoting understanding between cultures, religions and civilizations; for his lucid and profound analysis of phenomena that threaten social cohesion and peace; for placing knowledge at the service of dialogue and truth, offering precious tools for a coexistence based on respect and listening."*

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**The event will be broadcast in prime time on TeleArena on Sunday, October 26th at 9:15 PM**

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**For information:**

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**Masi Foundation:** The Masi Foundation is committed to promoting and enhancing the region, its people, cultural heritage and the remarkable creativity and productive expertise of Venetian civilization. Particular attention is paid to wine culture and production, which share distinctive traits in the Veneto region. These goals are pursued nationally and internationally, also through collaboration with government agencies, public and private entities, foundations and other Italian and foreign organizations. The Masi Foundation was established in 2001, building on the two decades of experience of the Masi Prize, which it aims to further and support by means of cultural projects that help broaden the focus to encompass the entire community. In this sense the historic civilization of the Veneto is perceived as an inspiration for productive, cultural and civic progress on an international scale. On April 16, 2007, the Veneto Region granted the Masi Foundation legal status, recognizing its statutory values ​​and objectives. [www.fondazionemasi.com](http://www.fondazionemasi.com)

***Masi Foundation Board of Directors* - *President***:Isabella Bossi Fedrigotti; ***Vice President***:Sandro Boscaini; ***Secretary***:Marco Vigevani; **Auditor:** Giovanni Aspes; ***Board Members*:** Michele Bauli, Francesco Benedetti, Bruno Boscaini, Marzio Breda, Massimilla di Serego Alighieri, Federico Girotto, Paola Marini, Maurizio Marino.

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