

Arts patron Donà dalle Rose wins World Woman award

Posted on September 12, 2026 by Alina Trabattoni, Sabina Castelfranco

VENICE — Chiara Modica Donà dalle Rose, the Venetian lawyer and art patron who exhibits as Rosa Mundi, received the World Woman Hero Honoree Award 2026 on September 7, as the 83rd Venice International Film Festival ran on the Lido.

World Woman Foundation, led by CEO Rupa Dash, presented the award at the Procuratie Vecchie, home of The Human Safety Net, the philanthropic foundation of Assicurazioni Generali, Europe's third-largest insurance company.

"Receiving this prize is a great recognition, one I take in my hands thinking of all the great women who over the centuries have helped make this world better," Donà dalle Rose told Italy Now. "To be a woman is to love life and those around you, and to build the future with harmony, gentleness, and wisdom."

"Chiara has never treated heritage as something static," said Joseph Gulino, vice chair international of the National Italian American Foundation. "She has taken an extraordinary Venetian and Italian cultural legacy and continually found ways to make it relevant to the present."

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Chiara Modica Donà dalle Rose (*Credits: Italy Now*)

Patron and lawyer

Born in Venice, Donà dalle Rose studied law in Paris and Strasbourg. She now presides over the Fondazione Donà dalle Rose, in the family palazzo in Cannaregio, and sits on the board of Iuav, Venice's architecture and design university.

Her best known project is BIAS, the *Biennale Internazionale Arte Contemporanea Sacra* (international biennial of contemporary sacred art), first held in 2016 and grouping artists by spiritual pavilion rather than nationality. She also chairs WISH, World International Sicilian Heritage.

The award came at the World Woman Venice Agenda, a day of panels under the foundation's Equality Moonshot, a pledge to reach one million women and girls by 2030 with capital, commerce, skills, and content.

Organisers said the prize recognised her work "advancing equality, art, and cultural dialogue on the global stage." Asked whether capital or access was the greater barrier, all three finance panellists chose access. "Women's intellectual property and contributions have not been priced correctly," said Divya Shahani, a Toronto entertainment lawyer.

"Money matters, but access often determines who gets the opportunity to receive it in the first place," said Sara Winslow, founder of the Ambitchous Collective and author of The Power of Women Trivia Series.

A patron who sorts artists by belief rather than passport was honoured in a room arguing that talent, too, deserves to be judged blind.

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