

Michele Affidato and Maurizio Talarico Discuss Their Craft in New York

Events

Goldsmith Michele Affidato's creations and the ties, scarves, and accessories produced by Maurizio Talarico's namesake brand were the focus of an event at the Consulate General of Italy in New York dedicated to craftsmanship in Southern Italy. The gathering concluded the mission organized by the association I Sud del Mondo ETS for Columbus Day 2026, with a discussion of the businesses' work and support for their activities abroad.

Over the years, Affidato has created pieces for several pontiffs, developing an artistic relationship with the Vatican that has earned him the nickname "the Pope's goldsmith." In his remarks, he discussed the connection between his craft and the culture of his home region: "Every piece we create comes from a story, an identity, and a tradition that we have

a duty to preserve. Taking our art around the world means bringing the culture and values of our homeland with us, showing how craftsmanship can become a universal language."

Talarico spoke about his own company, whose products have also attracted the appreciation of government and institutional representatives. "The quality of Italian craftsmanship comes from attention to detail, passion, and the ability to turn a tradition into a product that is recognizable and appreciated around the world. That is the strength of our work: expressing the elegance, culture, and excellence of Made in Italy through every creation," he said. Two videos accompanied their accounts, showing production techniques and tracing the history of the two businesses.

Consul General Giuseppe Pastorelli opened the event. Speaking to ilNewyorkese on the sidelines, he returned to the connection between Italian products and the places where they originate: "I would like to thank the association I Sud del Mondo, Giuseppe Galati, and Pompeo Torchia for bringing a piece of Italy here to New York. We had the honor of hosting master craftsmen Michele Affidato and Maurizio Talarico to discuss Made in Italy, craftsmanship, and how our country draws on the strength of its regions and their know-how to express a brand that is so powerful around the world and for which we are widely admired. It comes from the determination, vision, and creativity of Italian entrepreneurs—all qualities that are highly valued here in New York."

The consul then recalled the contribution Italian immigrants have made to the city: "This is a city that welcomed so many Italians, so many people from Southern Italy, including Calabria in particular, who brought honor to our homeland, to the places they came from, and to our country. With their hands, their hearts, and their minds, they truly helped build this city and make it more beautiful—the New York we know today."

The role associations play in maintaining ties with communities abroad was the focus of comments made to ilNewyorkese on the sidelines of the event by Pompeo Torchia, president of I Sud del Mondo: "As the association I Sud del Mondo, we are proud to be here in New York, at the Consulate General of Italy. We thank Consul General Giuseppe Pastorelli for welcoming us to this prestigious institutional setting. During this international outreach mission, we have addressed several subjects: roots, communities, and Made in Italy, with Southern Italian craftsmanship helping create opportunities for economic and cultural development overseas as well."

Torchia added: "We recognize that associations must play an important role in supporting institutions—a leading role in supporting Italy through the cultural diplomacy we so greatly need. It helps strengthen Italian identity around the world, ensuring that this important sense of belonging to our nation is not lost."

Giuseppe Galati, the association's scientific director, emphasized cooperation with Italy's diplomatic network. "I would like to thank the consul, because the work of the diplomatic network is very important in strengthening the Italian community and promoting Made in Italy," he told ilNewyorkese on the sidelines of the gathering. "The consul has demonstrated this approach: understanding the needs and expectations of communities, but above all what Italy can contribute."

"We are talking about a city that is a hub not only because of its long history of immigration, but also because it is the center of the global economy," Galati continued. "I believe this is important work: if we work together as a network, Italy can strengthen its presence. We can certainly say that the consul has fulfilled, and continues to fulfill, this role superbly."

Vito Pitaro, a member of Calabria's Regional Council attending on behalf of its president, also took part in the event. In his remarks, he discussed public support for businesses: "Calabria has an extraordinary wealth of entrepreneurial skills, traditions, and talent that deserve support and promotion. Institutions must commit to helping businesses grow and expand internationally, creating new opportunities, especially for younger generations, so they can build their future by making the most of our region's resources and potential."

In the preceding days, the mission had also explored the relationship between emigration and places of origin. On October 11, Pino Nano's book *Donne del Sud—Women of the South* —was presented at Piazza Italia. The event featured Italian American women sharing their personal and professional experiences.

At the same gathering, the association gave the first international presentation of "Radici Connesse," or "Connected Roots," a roots tourism project intended to connect small towns in Southern Italy with communities of Italian descent abroad. The presentation included the first trailer dedicated to Badolato, in the province of Catanzaro, one of the initiative's pilot towns.

On October 12, the delegation took part in the Columbus Day Parade. The mission's program also included the gala of the Italian Cultural Association of New York, where the I Sud del Mondo International Awards were presented to Giorgio Marrapodi, Italy's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and Tony Di Piazza, president of the cultural association.

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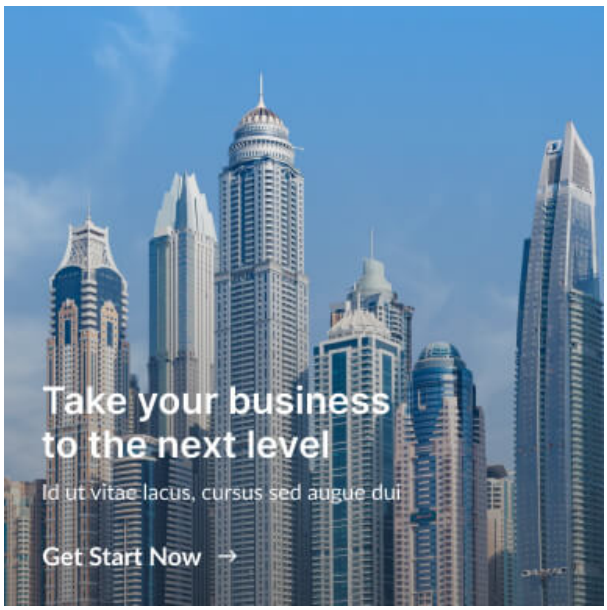
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Automobile (4)

Culture (38)

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Editors Pick (4)

Events (28)

Guests Posts (1)

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