

Get the perfect start this academic year with a student subscription to The Art Newspaper // 50% off normal price [Subscribe today](#)

Appointments & departures / News

Italy names new culture minister following appointments scandal

Alessandro Giuli, who heads up Rome's Maxxi museum, replaces Gennaro Sangiuliano in the right-wing government role



Giuli, a former journalist, was reportedly a member of the far-right youth organisation Fronte della Gioventù in his teens. Lisa Meola / Publishing Group / Alamy Stock Photo

Gareth Harris

9 September 2024

Share

The former journalist Alessandro Giuli has been appointed as Italy's new culture minister by prime minister Giorgia Meloni. The move follows the resignation of former minister Gennaro Sangiuliano, who stepped down after a row over the appointment of his former mistress as an adviser.

The prime minister said in a statement that Giuli will continue "the action of relaunching national culture, consolidating discontinuity with the past that Italians asked of us and that we have started from our inauguration to today".

Who is Alessandro Giuli?

Giuli was appointed president of the foundation that runs Rome's Maxxi museum of contemporary art in 2022. According to the Italian newspaper *Il Corriere della Sera*, he was a member of the far-right youth organisation Fronte della Gioventù during his teens. He later studied philosophy at Sapienza University in Rome but, according to his CV, failed to graduate. He worked as a journalist for most of his career at the conservative Italian daily newspaper *Il Foglio*.

In his recent book, *Gramsci è vivo* (Gramsci is alive, Rizzoli), based on the life of the Italian Marxist philosopher, Giuli asks: "Can there be a systemic right [wing political body] that does not sever its roots or run the risk of chasing the left too late?"

Sangiuliano, meanwhile, stepped down after becoming embroiled in a controversy over a consultancy role reportedly awarded to his former lover. The former minister had an affair with the social media influencer Maria Rosaria Boccia, who he tried to hire as an unpaid ministry consultant. Boccia said last month she had been nominated "adviser to the minister for major events".

Gennaro Sangiuliano's record on the arts

In his resignation letter, Sangiuliano said he was "proud of the results achieved in cultural policies over the past two years in government", claiming that on his watch "the number of visitors to museums is up 22% and their takings up 33%". But the [Financial Times](#) newspaper criticised his comments saying that "2022 was still a pandemic year... in short, it is rather easy to claim staggering increases if the comparison is made with a year when most museum visitors did not go to museums for fear of contracting Covid".

Sangiuliano also claimed that projects such as the former Albergo dei Poveri in Naples, planned to be used as a new space for the National Archaeological Museum of Naples; the expansion of the Uffizi Gallery in Tuscany; and investment in the Venice Biennale are well underway. "For the first time in Italy, large exhibitions on authors and characters have been organised by historians that the left had ignored for ideological reasons," he said.

Some commentators believe this statement refers to a recent exhibition on *Lord of the Rings* author JRR Tolkien, held at Rome's National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art. In her 2021 autobiography *I Am Giorgia*, Meloni described Tolkien's 1954 fantasy epic as a "sacred" text.

Appointments & departures Italy MAXXI

Share

Related content



Ex-Uffizi chief Eike Schmidt loses bid to become Mayor of Florence

Sara Fanari, a local councillor with the centre-left Democratic Party, reportedly took more than 60% of the vote

Gareth Harris



Is Italy's government meddling in who runs top museums?

Cultural figures voice concern about culture ministry's appointments to run institutions including Florence's Uffizi Galleries and Milan's Pinacoteca di Brera

James Inman



Six women, one foreigner: Italy appoints 12 new museum and heritage directors

Culture minister Dario Franceschini reserves travel for appointing foreign leaders for its leading institutions

Gareth Harris

Subscribe to The Art Newspaper's digital newsletter for your daily digest of essential news, views and analysis from the international art world delivered directly to your inbox.

[Newsletter sign-up](#)

Information

- About
- Contact
- Cookie policy
- Data protection
- Privacy policy
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Subscription T&Cs
- Terms and conditions
- Advertise
- Sister Papers
- Sponsorship policy

Follow us

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- YouTube
- LinkedIn



Enjoy unlimited access to The Art Newspaper.

[Subscribe today](#)