

PORTRAIT OF *ITŌ MANCHO* FROM 1585 BY DOMENICO TINTORETTO WELCOMES VISITORS TO THE ITALY PAVILION AT THE OSAKA EXPO

The Bracco Group, Official Gold Sponsor of the Expo in Japan, presented the portrait of Itō Mancho and the related diagnostic analysis at a scientific conference held in collaboration with the Italy Pavilion. The painting from 1585 will guide the visitor experience at the Italy Pavilion throughout the six-month exhibition. The historical figure of Itō Mancho, leader of the first Japanese diplomatic mission to Renaissance Europe, holds significant symbolic value in the cultural relations between Italy and Japan.

Osaka, 16 April 2025 – The Expo that has just opened its doors in Osaka is a special one: built on Yumeshima Island, the exhibition site is surrounded by the Grand Ring, a wide circular promenade that symbolises the philosophy of Expo 2025 and reflects the broader concept of *unity in diversity* that lies at the heart of World Expos.

“The Japanese World Expo, especially in these complex times, carries even greater significance: it will be a great agora, with 161 countries participating and more than 28 million visitors expected — a place where different peoples will be able to engage in dialogue and learn about each other,” said Diana Bracco, Chair and CEO of the Bracco Group. “*Art Regenerates Life*, Italy’s chosen theme for Expo 2025, is a truly powerful message. The interweaving of beauty, art, landscape, creativity and innovation is a defining element of our national identity and it allows us to share our areas of excellence with the world.”

On the opening day, in the presence of Commissioner General and Ambassador **Mario Vattani**, the stunning Italy Pavilion was visited by the Italian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Antonio Tajani**, along with senior executives from numerous Italian companies, including **Fulvio Renoldi Bracco**, CEO of Bracco Imaging.

“The Italy Pavilion stands out as an extraordinary showcase of the innovation, scientific research and technological excellence that our country has to offer,” said **Fulvio Renoldi Bracco** at the end of the visit. “Alongside internationally-renowned masterpieces of art such as the Farnese Atlas from MANN in Naples and Leonardo’s Codex Atlanticus, the Pavilion also highlights the role of Italian businesses in building a more sustainable, inclusive and advanced future.”

The Bracco Group, Official Gold Sponsor of the Italy Pavilion, has arranged a rich programme of initiatives throughout the six-month Expo. During Health and Wellness Week (20 June – 1 July), it will host a series of high-level scientific events focused on personalised medicine and the many applications of diagnostic imaging. In particular, CDI-Centro Diagnostico Italiano and Bracco Imaging will lead discussions and speeches on longevity, sustainability in radiology and the use of artificial intelligence in medical imaging. To mark Italy's National Day on 11–12 September, which will be attended by the very top of Italy's institutional leadership, Bracco will also support the La Scala Academy Ballet School in presenting a special preview performance.

The flagship of Bracco's participation in the Osaka Expo is the cultural project *Itō Mancho*, presented at the Italy Pavilion during a scientific conference attended by a number of distinguished people. Alongside Commissioner General Mario Vattani and Diana Bracco (joining via video link from Milan), the event featured: **Andrea Raos**, Director of the Italian Cultural Institute; **Rossella Menegazzo**, Professor of East Asian Art History at the University of Milan; **Gian Giacomo Attolico Trivulzio**, President of the Poldi Pezzoli Museum and founder of the Trivulzio Foundation; Monsignor **Alberto Rocca** of the Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana; **Kōso Toshiaki**, S.J., former Chancellor of Sophia University; **Maji Rhee**, Dean of the Center for International Education at Waseda University; **Takako Tamai**, Adjunct Researcher at the Aizu Museum, Waseda University; **Koshiro Sonoda**, Director of the Osaka Office of the Nagasaki Prefecture; and **Isabella Castiglioni**, Professor at the University of Milan-Bicocca and Director of Research, Development and Innovation at CDI-Centro Diagnostico Italiano.

The portrait of the young Itō Mancho, leader of the first Japanese diplomatic mission to Europe in the 16th century, is owned by the Trivulzio Foundation and arrived in Osaka on a cargo flight operated by ITA Airways, which specialises in transporting sensitive items. The painting holds not only artistic value but, above all, symbolic significance for the relationship between Italy and Japan. The story of this young man's journey through the Bel Paese — landing in Livorno before travelling on to Rome and Venice to attend courts and palaces and meet dignitaries and popes — is truly fascinating. It marks one of the very first “official” moments of contact between the two cultures.

“We can only imagine the emotions that the young traveller and his companions must have felt as they witnessed the wonders of the Renaissance with their own eyes,” said Diana Bracco. “Wonders revived in the beautiful concept behind our Pavilion, designed by Studio Cucinella and inspired by the Renaissance Ideal City, with its theatre, porticoes, piazza and Italian garden. It's wonderful that, centuries later, *Itō Mancho* continues to provide a bridge between our cultures, serving as a host at the extensive Italy Pavilion exhibition space.”

The Bracco Group also took on a detailed, multidisciplinary diagnostic analysis of the painting.

“Before shipping Domenico Tintoretto’s portrait to Osaka, as is customary for us, we conducted a series of imaging-based diagnostic examinations that were coordinated by our Foundation and overseen by Professor Isabella Castiglioni and her team,” explained Diana Bracco, who, in addition to leading the global life sciences company, also serves as President of the Bracco Foundation. “For us, art and science form a winning combination. For years, we’ve made the Group’s imaging expertise — an area in which we are a global leader — available to support the analysis and restoration of Italy’s cultural heritage.”

The non-invasive diagnostic analysis of *Itō Mancho*, which visitors can admire alongside a video narrative created by **Mauro Belloni** and the **Cromazoo** creative team, offers the public a fascinating journey into the painting itself. Through science, they get the chance to delve into its hidden layers, lifting the veils of time and revealing the mysteries of art.

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