



ANTORELLA FIORE/ALAMY

Giovanna Zanuso, who gave away this painting of the Pantheon, hopes to inspire others with her plan for the Ca' d'Oro palazzo, below

that once adorned its exterior. "Reviving such ancient splendour makes this a dream project."

Built in the 15th century, the Ca' d'Oro was turned into a museum in 1894, filled with paintings by Titian, Mantegna and Van Dyck.

However, years of weathering and poor maintenance mean it has fallen into a "pitiful state of total disrepair", Zanuso says. Spectacular floor mosaics have faded, wooden beams rotted and stucco plasterwork come unstuck.

Zanuso, founder and president of the Giulio and Giovanna Sacchetti Foundation, has provided €2 million to restore the building, with Venetian Heritage, an international NGO, raising €4.1 million.

Paintings have been put into storage or lent to museums around the world so that restoration and building work can begin in the coming weeks. It is due to reopen by the end of 2025.

Zanuso's recent projects include the restoration of Mantegna's *Madonna and Child* in 2020. She says her brand of "modern patronage", focused on restoring existing works for public good, takes inspiration from the US, where families like the Guggenheims have built entire art museums.

She laments that in Italy, where donors do not enjoy comparable tax benefits, and heritage lovers prefer to keep masterpieces in the family, she is a rare breed. "I'd love to inspire the next generation of patrons in this country," she said.

Art patron splashes out on palazzo's €6m facelift

She has restored paintings by Renaissance masters and, last week, donated a €3 million painting of the Pantheon in Rome to a museum (James Imam writes).

Now Giovanna Zanuso,

Italy's leading art patron, is gearing up for her most ambitious project yet: a revamp of the Ca' d'Oro palace, which overlooks the Grand Canal in Venice, hoping that other budding heritage financiers will follow her lead.

"It is a masterpiece," Zanuso said of the palazzo, which takes its name from the sparkling gilt decorations

