

WANTED in ROME

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CULTURE: AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ROME HONOURS RICCARDO MUTIwww.aarome.org

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The American Academy in Rome awards its prestigious McKim Medal to Riccardo Muti, the celebrated Italian conductor of opera and classical music, at Villa Aurelia on 28 May.

Director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Muti has been a regular guest conductor at opera houses in Vienna and Berlin but has also courted controversy throughout his colourful career.

In March 2011, during celebrations at Rome's opera house in honour of Italy's 150th anniversary of unity, Muti criticised the Italian government for cutting Italy's arts budget, while just over a year ago he refused honorary citizenship offered to him by the city of Rome.

In April 2005, after 19 years, Muti resigned as music director of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan following a much-publicised row with La Scala staff.

The American Academy's annual award was established by the academy's trustees in 2005 to honour exceptional individuals whose work has had a global impact on the arts and humanities.

Named after noted architect and academy founder Charles Follen McKim (1847-1909), the medal was designed by the American artist Cy Twombly who died in Rome last year. The 2012 medal has been crafted by Roman jeweller Fabio Sabini.

The award ceremony is the beginning of a week of cultural events at the American Academy, including the Fellows Open Studios, readings and concerts.

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