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Rome embraces another Florida-based collector, Bilotti

Loans to Palazzo Venezia and talks for new contemporary arts centre

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The Italian, Florida-based collector Carlo Bilotti is scheduled to meet architects from Rome City Council this month to discuss plans for an extension to the chapel of Il Divino Amore in Villa Ada, north Rome, which he hopes to convert into a centre for contemporary art to display works, including several by Damien Hirst commissioned specifically for the building (The Art Newspaper, February 2005, p.21).

The proposed new wing of the chapel would house a ticket office and bookshop. Mr Bilotti is in discussions with the council about leasing the deconsecrated chapel for 80 years. Inside, he intends to display the series of paintings *The Four Evangelists* (2004) by Damien Hirst.

Meanwhile, Mr Bilotti's entire collection of 20th-century works by Matisse, Picasso and Roy Lichtenstein, among others, will go on display at the Palazzo Venezia in Rome in April in an exhibition sponsored by the City council.

This show coincides with the delayed inauguration of the Museo Bilotti, in Rome's Borghese Orangery. Nineteen paintings by De Chirico, a portrait of Mr Bilotti's wife and late daughter by Andy Warhol and a painting of the collector by Larry Rivers from Mr Bilotti's holdings will be on display in the new museum, following a E1.6 million (\$2.1 million) renovation of the building funded by Rome City Council. Mr Bilotti is in discussions with US artist James Turrell about lighting the museum façade.

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