



Artists and collaborators gathered at the new Fondazione Dries Van Noten in Venice, clockwise from top left: Xavier Mañosa, Isaac Monté, Dries Van Noten, Mario Codognato, Cristina Codognato, Pao Hui Kao, Luis Sendino, Kaori Kurihara, Roberto Beltrami, Armand Louis, Ann Carrington, Ayham Hassan, and Wendy Andreu. The group is joined by Van Noten's Airedale Terrier, Scott.

MAGAZINE

The Fondazione Dries Van Noten Opens a Bold New Chapter in Venice

Set along the storied Grand Canal, the new foundation signals a collaborative evolution for the Belgian fashion icon

By [Asad Syrkett](#), Photography by [Alessandro Timpanaro](#)

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As next acts go, showcasing art and craft in a 15th-century Venetian palazzo is an audacious—and romantic—plan. Now, for Belgian fashion designer Dries Van Noten, it's a reality. Nearly two years after Van Noten stepped away from his role as the creative director of his namesake brand, the Fondazione Dries Van Noten opened its doors on April 25. Its mission: celebrating things made by the human hand, from art, fashion, and jewelry to objects in metal, ceramic, glass, and more.

On a recent day, in advance of the institution's inaugural show, a dozen of the 50 artists and collaborators whose work will be on view gathered for a portrait. (Titled “The Only True Protest Is Beauty,” the exhibition, curated by Van Noten with Geert Bruloot, is named for a quote by American folk musician and activist Phil Ochs.) There was the buzz off new connections and, for many, first contact with the space.



Dries Van Noten

the Grand Canal, which he'll operate alongside Patrick Vangheluwe, his partner in life and work. That spirit of curiosity has guided curatorial decisions, as they placed artworks in conversation with ornate interiors. The palazzo's former chapel, for example, hosts contemporary sacred heart assemblages by artist Ann Carrington, made with upcycled silver cutlery. A former storage lined in golden jacquard presents designer Wendy Andreu's woven riff on an Empire chair. And, for the grand salon, Van Noten asked local atelier Wave Murano Glass to create a large table with “no wood or metal structure, to challenge the idea of what glass is capable of.”

Gesturing to a series of 18th-century wall pedestals that recent spring afternoon, Van Noten announces, “This is where we'll showcase the work of Kaori Kurihara.” The Paris-based artist, known for her fantastical ceramics, was present—and it was her first time hearing the news. Taking in the extravagance of the room, she let out a small, awed gasp.

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