Acquapendente museo della città civico e diocesano

USER-FRIENDLY GUIDE

to the MUSEO della CITTA' CIVICO e DIOCESANO di ACQUAPENDENTE

USER-FRIENDLY GUIDE

to the MUSEO della CITTA' CIVICO e DIOCESANO di ACQUAPENDENTE

with in-depth information sheets

DID YOU KNOW THAT..... a child-friendly museum
THE MUSEUM MASTERPIECES
THE BEAUTY REVEALED
THE EXCELLENT FALSE BY RAFFAELLO

San Francesco Art Collection
Sano di Pietro
Saint Bernardine of Siena

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Bishop's Palace
Filippo Germisoni, Il Moletta
Madonna with Child

PREFACE by ANDREA ALESSI

DIRECTOR of the MUSEO DELLA CITTA' CIVICO e DIOCESANO di ACQUAPEDENTE

This small guide to the Museum is an agile tool, designed to be immediately usable by the visitor: through simple and clear language, it presents the collections and works of art in an inviting form, both in text and images.

A large part of the volume is reserved for the description of the rooms, whose spaces have changed deeply over the centuries, while a second part is reserved for the main masterpieces' presentation, some of which have been restored to their former splendour after careful and wise restoration.

There are also curiosities and in-depth information on the main techniques or restorations carried out, with contents designed to stimulate the interest of the youngest.

Many descriptions contain QR codes so that the visitor can deepen his knowledge of the artefacts through films and supplementary texts. This interaction will then be able to continue even outside its natural context, where everyone can virtually return to the museum whenever he/she wishes.

Torre Julia de Jacopo

Romanesque Crypt
Cathedral of the
Holy Sepulchre

1. THE MUSEUM

1.1 Introduction

The Museum was founded in 2005 and constitutes an "integrated museum system" with several exhibition sites located along the road axis that coincides with the urban crossing of the **Via Francigena**.
Its main purpose is to enhance the territorial identity through the exhibits, which bear witness to its history, art and culture, through educational and experimental activities, scientific research and educational initiatives with schools.
The museum is part of the "**Lake Bolsena Museum System**".

1.2 The Bishop's Palace

Oliva Palace, former Bishop's Palace, exhibits sacred art collections from the **Cathedral of the Holy Sepulchre** and other churches in Acquapendente, as well as numerous ceramic artefacts from the Middle Ages to the present day. It houses civic and diocesan collections, such as the Pope Gregory XIII's heraldic emblem, Innocent X Pamphilij's bust by Alessandro Algardi and the lunette by Girolamo di Benvenuto.
The Palace also houses a section dedicated to the **Via Francigena**, one of the first in Europe, where a large model represents the route from Canterbury to Rome.

1.3 The San Francesco Art Collection

Originally housed in the **Church of San Francesco**, the collection conserves one of the most interesting and conspicuous collections in our area. It boasts valuable works such as the Saint Bernardine of Siena by Sano di Pietro, the Virgin in Adoration of the Child by Maestro di Marradi, and two valuable replicas by Raffaello.

2. THE HALLS OF THE BISHOP'S PALACE

2.1 Heraldic Hall

This room houses the heraldic section of the museum, including exhibits of historical and artistic interest, such as the monumental travertine **emblem of Pope Boncompagni** (1572-1585), the rampant dragon. Other exhibits include the blazon of Bishop Leti and the tombstone of Pius VII.

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

The **ARALDIC STEMMA** is a symbolic sign that identifies an important person or family.
Based on the graphic features represented - colours, animals or plant elements - it gives information about the history of its owner.

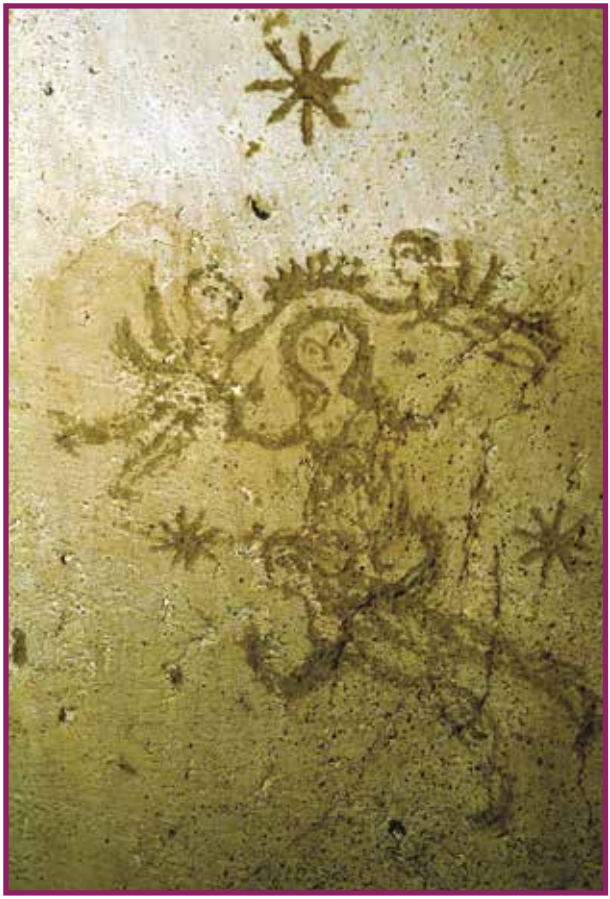
2.2 The Bishop's prisons

The prisons, on the ground floor, were the place where all those who did not observe the 10 commandments were kept prisoner.

The first cell has graffiti representing mostly birds: the prisoners probably drew what they could see through the window, the only source of air and light.

The second cell was completely dark, without windows, most likely destined for the condemned prisoners, in which they waited for the day of execution.

The last cell is certainly the most interesting; from the numerous inscriptions, we can imagine that it housed adulterers. Other sentences are written in correct Italian, which was very rare at the time, suggesting that heretics, usually well learned people, were also imprisoned there.



2.3 Audience hall's anticamera

The construction of the Bishop's Palace is associated to the new Diocese of Acquapendente establishment in 1649, ordered by **Pope Innocent X Pamphilj** due to the destruction of Castro, the previous diocesan seat and belonging to the Farnese family.
The confraternities then bought the Renaissance palace, owned by the Oliva family, to use it as a bishop's residence.
In the anticamera you can find a Madonna and Child by **Filippo Germisoni**, a portrait of Pope Clement XIV by **Giovanni Domenico Porta**, and two small 17th century paintings with stories of St Catherine.

THE MUSEUM MASTERPIECES

MADONNA WITH CHILD

Filippo Germisoni, oil on canvas, 18th century (before 1715)

Madonna and Child, also known as Madonna of the Chair, is a painting of exquisite quality, attributed to Filippo Germisoni known as **il Moletta**. It escaped being catalogued by the Department of Cultural Affairs in 1993 and became part of the museum collection in the same year.

2.4 Audience or throne hall

The Audience room houses paintings on canvas of prelates, bishops and popes, framing the **Pope Innocent X Pamphilij**'s marble bust.
Some works come from the **Cathedral of the Holy Sepulchre**; others were already in the palace. The collection includes portraits of Cardinal Corsini, Cardinal Campanella and Pope Pius VII, works by **Vincenzo Milione** (1735 - 1805). On the walls runs a fresco decoration, painted by **Alfredo Consoli** in 1934, with the emblems of the bishops who succeeded one another in the city, alternated with views of towns of the diocesan territory.

Un Museo a misura di bambino

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

INNOCENZO X, called Giovanni Battista Pamphilj (1574-1655), was the 236th pope of the Catholic Church.
He established the new diocese of Acquapendente in 1649, with the Papal Bull "In Supremo militantis Ecclesiae throno".
His marble bust was damaged splinters that hit it during World War II.

THE MUSEUM MASTERPIECES

BUST OF INNOCENZO X PAMPHILJ

Alessandro Algardi, sculpted marble, ca. 1650

The marble bust was commissioned by Pope Innocent X to **Alessandro Algardi** (1598-1654) to be placed above the entrance portal to the Cathedral of the Holy Sepulchre in Acquapendente. In 1944, the explosion of a German convoy caused extensive damage to the exterior of the church, splintering the sculpture.
During restoration work, it was decided to replace the original with a cast. In 1979, a second chalk copy was left in the cathedral and the original placed in the Bishop's Palace, where it is one of the most important pieces in the museum's collection.

2.5 Second hall previously Bedroom and then Dining room

This area was formerly the bishop's bedroom, which was converted into a dining room in the mid-19th century. It exhibits the museum's collection of sacred vestments and six ostensorium reliquaries that belonged to the bishops of Acquapendente.

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

The term **RELIQUIARY** comes from the Latin *reliqua* meaning leftover, residual.
It is a container of relics of saints, usually fragments of bones or other body parts, or objects that belonged to them or fragments of them, e.g. clothing, or miraculous objects.

2.6 Third hall previously library

In the 19th century, the room was used as a library and contained many volumes, as can be deduced from the inventories.
In this room we can find many ceramic objects discovered during archaeological excavations in Piazza Tranquillo Guarnieri - the garden in front of the museum building - between 1988 and 1991.

2.7 Fourth hall previously Bishop's Chapel

The room exhibits a large panel painting, the lunette, by Girolamo di Benvenuto (**Christ in Pity among Angels**). On the walls, there are works by Tuscan and Lazio artists from the 15th and 16th centuries, including a detached fresco from the Acquapendente hospital (**Madonna Enthroned with Child and cherubs**) from the early 16th century, and two precious reliquaries from the 17th century, recently restored.

THE MUSEUM MASTERPIECES

CHRIST IN PITY AMONG ANGELS

Girolamo di Benvenuto, tempera on panel, ca. 1505

A large panel painting by **Girolamo di Benvenuto**, it is a lunette in which the figure of Jesus appears in the centre, supported by two angels. Formerly installed in the **church of Sant'Agostino** in Acquapendente, the cymatium was part of a monumental altarpiece, now dismembered, of which the central body - *The Madonna Enthroned with Child between St. Monica, St. John the Evangelist, St. Augustine and St. Nicholas of Tolentino* - is preserved in the Harvard Art Museums of the **Fogg Museum in Cambridge** (Massachusetts).

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

The **LUNETTE** is usually a part of the altarpiece.
It has a semi-circular shape and is a religious representation, painted or in relief, placed above the altar or behind it, attached to the wall.

2.8 Hallway of the Bishop's Prison Staircase

The room is dedicated to the chronological display of Acquapendente ceramics: **archaic majolica** (14th and 15th centuries); **engraved majolica** (15th and 16th centuries) and **lustro** (late 15th and 17th centuries), a technique that allows for changing shades of gold and ruby. So-called *ceramica de Le belle* date back to the mid-16th century, followed by a production in Compendiario style and a production similar to the Regio Parco type in Turin (from the mid-17th century).

Un Museo a misura di bambino

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

The so-called **LE BELLE** style was present in ceramic productions between 1400 and 1500. The maiolica represented the image of the beloved woman and the artefact was given as a gift to celebrate important moments such as engagement, marriage or childbirth.

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

LUSTRO is a special decorative technique that allows to reproduce the colour of gold (yellow) or ruby (red) with colour-changing and iridescent shades. The process is long and difficult, and is achieved by applying special mixtures and following a complex firing technique.

2.9 Fifth hall previously Bargello's house

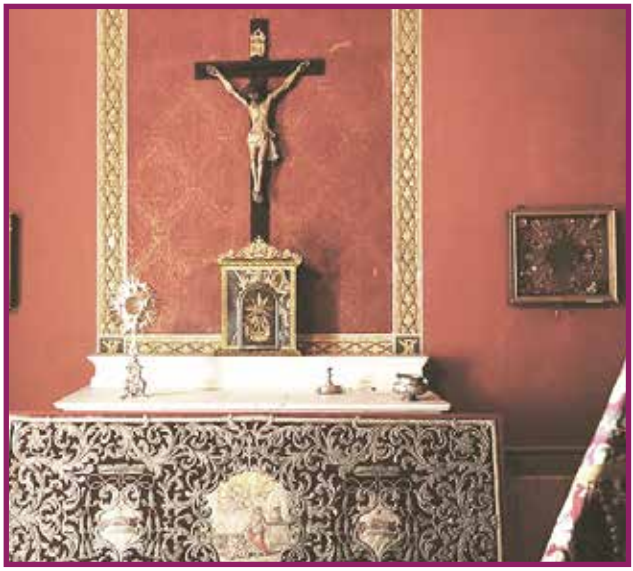
Until the end of the 18th century, the room was part of the *Bargello*'s house. The *Bargello* was an official in charge of public order, who lived in the rooms above the prisons. The room displays artefacts from archaeological excavations conducted in 1996 at Palazzo Morelli, the current location of the local Cinema.

2.10 Hallway to the garden

The showcases display everyday objects used in inns and taverns, which prospered in the city at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. Excavations, conducted near Porta della Ripa, have brought to light both local artefacts and those of other origins, which were part of the travellers' equipment and which, in the event of accidental breakage, were thrown into the **butti** (ancient underground dumps). The showcases flanking the chapel entrance were used to display artefacts from the excavations in Via Cesare Battisti, Vicolo Viola and Via Rugarella.

2.11 Bishop's Chapel

It is the bishop's private chapel. Its current appearance is due to the reconstructions following the damage caused by World War II. The intimate atmosphere is the setting for the antependium, in italian *paliotto*, with the emblems of Bishop Alessandro Fedeli (1690-1696), made in red velvet and relief silver embroidery.
On either side of the altar there are two reliquaries; a valuable altar-piece of Jesus of the Sacred Heart from the second half of the 18th century and a silver and gold plated wooden cross from 1700.



Un Museo a misura di bambino

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

The coating that covers the front, sides and back of the altar in Italian is called **PALIOTTO** (from the Latin *pallium*, drape). It can be made of painted or embroidered fabric, wood, metal, stone, ivory or leather. It is only used in very important ceremonies.

2.12 Sixth hall previously the Bishop's Bedroom

The chamber has been the bishop's bedroom since the second half of the 19th century. The exhibits come from the excavations in Via Cantorrivo (14th and 15th century).

2.13 Seventh room previously the Bishop's office

In the years before the unification of Italy, this room was used as a study and contained Bishop Castiglioni's library. Finds from the excavations in the square in front of the museum, which brought to light the remains of a kiln for firing ceramics and a workshop, are preserved here. Worthy of note: a 16th-century dish with landscape motif decoration; works depicting female figures from the 16th-17th centuries; and a very valuable 15th-century graffito *Piatto da pompa* with a winged dragon figure in the centre.

Un Museo a misura di bambino

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

The **PIATTO DA POMPA** is a ceramic artefact so called because of its monumental size, it had only an ornamental function and was usually worn as a gift on special occasions.

2.14 Hall of Panoramas

The salon, the living room of the bishop's palace, has walls painted in **trompe-l'oeil** depicting different landscapes framed within balanced divisions of fake classical architecture. The columns support a lintel above which the blue of the sky opens up and an eagle soars, clutching in its claws a ribbon with the inscription 'M. Pronti A. D. 1944', dedicated to Bishop Pronti, who commissioned the restoration.

Un Museo a misura di bambino

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

TROMPE-L'OEIL, in French "trickery for the eye", is a pictorial style that creates the illusion of looking at real, three-dimensional objects, but which are actually painted on a flat surface. The subject is so realistic that the wall on which it is painted disappears from view.

2.15 Via Francigena section

With the help of videos and exhibits, the Via Francigena section shows the importance of the road over the centuries, as an instrument of faith and pilgrimage, trade, communication and exchange, hospitality and folklore, but also of sieges and wars.

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

In 1649 Acquapendente became a diocese, the bishop's headquarter. The palace that now houses the museum was then purchased, also because it is perfectly located along the city's section of the **VIA FRANCIGENA**, an important road that connected European regions to Italy. The route started in Canterbury in England, continued through France, and finally reached Rome. A multitude of travellers followed the route: soldiers, merchants, nobles and above all pilgrims. The journey was no mean feat: the roads were infested with brigands who often attacked the most defenceless travellers. In addition to people, objects and stories from faraway countries also travelled, bringing art and knowledge of all kinds.

3. THE CERAMICS OF THE SANT'AGOSTINO ESTATE

The Museum's most conspicuous ceramic collection, originally housed in the **Torre Julia de Jacopo**, the ancient city gate, is now located in the new exhibition rooms of the Bishop's Palace.
This is one of the most valuable ceramic collections in the area, the result of excavations carried out in **Sant'Agostino's convent** in the mid-1990s. The finds cover a chronological span from the first half of the 13th century to the first decades of the 15th century. The medieval pottery's decorative motifs reveal a predominance of plant themes over geometric ones, although zoomorphic or religious symbols remain. From the middle of the 14th century, decorations tend towards simplification, until the appearance of heraldic and epigraphic symbols. The introduction of the anthropomorphic motif, with depictions of female faces, dates back to these years; also typical of this period are the figurative scenes involving the themes of Courtly Love.

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

INGOBBIO is a decorative coating applied to the unfired ceramic item to conceal the colour of the paste. It consists of a liquid clay mixture, usually white, and completely covers the object. A painted or graffitied decoration can be applied on it after firing.

THE MUSEUM MASTERPIECES

BOWL WITH KNIGHTLY SCENE

Pottery, mid-14th century

The basin was found during an excavation carried out in 1995 in the convent of St. Augustine.

The scene is accompanied by an inscription that reads "*Tolle questa frasca p(er) mio amore*" (Hold this branch for my love), followed by "*Voleti direto p(er) testo serpente*" (You want to tell me about this snake). The text refers to an amorous dialogue between the knight and the lady, depicted in the foreground. The man, flanked by the snake, symbol of sin and lust, offers a floral gift to the damsel, but she prefers the peacock's gift, whose attributes of beauty and chastity make her insensitive to the man's flattery.

4. THE SAN FRANCESCO ART COLLECTION

Originally located in the ancient sacristy of the **Church of San Francesco**, it is now exhibited in the new hall of the Bishop's Palace.
It contains part of the works coming from the Franciscan Friars' convent and can boast over forty works, covering a time span of about four centuries, from the end of the 15th century to the middle of the 19th century. It therefore constitutes one of the most conspicuous artistic complexes in the Viterbo area and among the most interesting in terms of the individual works' quality.
Among the artefacts are: the **Madonna con Bambino e San Giovannino** by Maestro di Marradi, the **San Bernardino** by Sano di Pietro, and numerous works attributed to Francesco Nasini. Recently, was also found a **Raffaello**'s replica, made by the first forger in the art history, Terenzio Terenzi da Urbino, also known as **Rondolino Pesarese**.

THE MUSEUM MASTERPIECES

MADONNA IN ADORAZIONE DEL BAMBINO COL SAN GIOVANNINO

Maestro di Marradi, tempera on panel, early 16th century

The work was formerly located in the church of San Francesco in Acquapendente. Attributed first to Perugino, then to Bartolomeo di Giovanni, the famous art critic Federico Zeri proposed the most convincing hypothesis, which recognises **Maestro di Marradi** as the author of this splendid panel. Trained by Domenico Ghirlandaio, he shows an inclination to perpetuate figurative schemes and models from his past, taking inspiration from **Botticelli** and **Perugino**.

THE MUSEUM MASTERPIECES

SAN BERNARDINO DA SIENA

Sano di Pietro, tempera on panel, c. 1450/1460

This precious panel is attributed to **Sano di Pietro**, an important artist in the Siena school of his century and famous for his miniatures. The space of the painting is entirely taken up by the Franciscan and theologian Bernardino da Siena, who was canonised in 1450 by Pope Nicholas V and is depicted with his traditional attributes: the Franciscan cassock and the monogram of Christ.

THE BEAUTY REVEALED
from Acquapendente and Viterbo restoration laboratories
curated by Andrea Alessi and Claudio Strinati

FILIPPO GERMISONI, known as IL MOLETTA
Madonna with Child, oil on canvas, 18th century (before 1715)

RESTORATION

Restored by **Linda Bernini** of the Lazio Region Laboratory, under the coordination of **Paola Sannucci**, it presented some critical conservation issues, but had a fairly solid support.
There were falls in the paint film, but the greatest damage consisted of a cut that crossed diagonally across the Child's face. The crack was severe in places, presaging a future lifting of the paint film.
In order to better investigate some stains on the hand and neck of the Madonna, it was necessary to use non-invasive diagnostic techniques such as infrared.
Thanks to these investigations, it was possible to realise that the work had already been retouched in the last century, overcoming the edges of the gaps.

The painting before restoration

The painting in ultraviolet

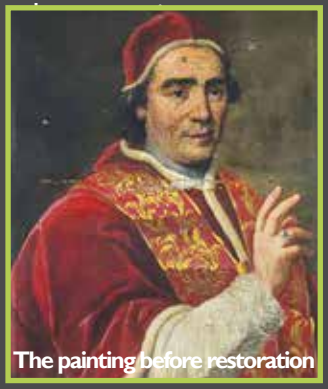
Cleaning test window

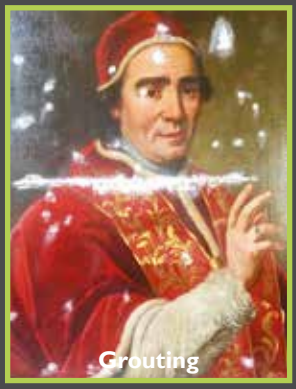
After removing the re-covering canvas and eliminating the yellowed paint and altered reintegrations, a new canvas was applied to the painting back, to give more support to the original fabric and fix the colour. The gaps were plastered and tone-in-tone reintegrated according to the mimetic technique and the painting was finally protected with layers of coating.

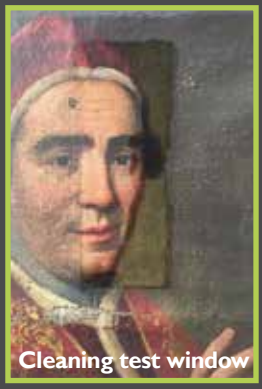
THE BEAUTY REVEALED
from Acquapendente and Viterbo restoration laboratories
curated by Andrea Alessi and Claudio Strinati

GIOVANNI DOMENICO PORTA
Portrait of Pope Clement XIV, oil on canvas, 1769-1770

Giovanni Vincenzo Antonio Ganganelli, elected pope in 1769 with the name Clement XIV, belonged to the order of the Conventual Friars Minor of San Francesco, who probably commissioned the work. He is depicted in a slight three-quarter pose on a neutral background with a blessing gesture. Noteworthy are the attention to chiaroscuro variations and the refined rendering of the material details of the drapery, the lacework and gilding of which have been executed with negligible skill in stark contrast to the fineness of


The painting before restoration


Grouting


Cleaning test window

RESTORATION

Restored by **Anna Tozzi** of the Lazio Region Laboratory, under the coordination of **Paola Sannucci**, the painting was executed on a very sparse canvas covered by a substantial paint body. Loosening from the support has led to an extensive fall of the paint film. Very darkened by the alteration of the varnish and surface deposits, it was cleaned with solvent and scalpel. In order to strengthen its structure, it was varnished and re-tinted. To restore the work's legibility, the gaps were filled in and tone-in-tone reintegrated using the mimetic technique; finally, the painting was protected with layers of varnish.

THE BEAUTY REVEALED
from Acquapendente and Viterbo restoration laboratories
curated by Andrea Alessi and Claudio Strinati

SAN GIUSTO'S RELIQUARY
carved, golden and silver-plated wood, 1645

A golden, silver-plated and painted wooden artefact with a square base and pyramid top, never exhibited before.
On the base the inscription: SANCTAE IUSTAE MARTIRIS F.I.L.A. 1645, where the acronym contains information about the commission: Frater Julius Leonardus Aquipendi, provincial of the San Francesco's Minors. The work has two wax seals that can be traced back to the Chigi family, indicating who certified the authenticity of the relic.

The work before restoration

The restored work

Wax seal

RESTORATION

Restored by **Roberta Sugaroni** of the **Restauri Lignei** Laboratory, it was in a poor state of conservation. The surfaces had multiple problems due to the decohesion of the preparatory layer, which was the cause of the collapse of the gypsum fillings, and the stratification of particulate. The restorations carried out were: a chemical anti-wormwood treatment, a structural consolidation for the re-admittance of mobile and detached parts, a consolidation of the painted surface, and the filling of gaps. The additions on the golden parts were made with gold leaf and the pictorial reintegration was performed in watercolour.

RELIQUARY BUST OF SANTA ELISABETTA MARTYR

golden and silver-plated wood, early 18th century

Originally belonging to the Franciscans of Acquapendente, the artefact became part of the museum collections in 1993. Thanks to the wax seal with the family emblem, it was possible to date the authentication of the relic by the bishop of Acquapendente, Gisleno Veneri, between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The artefact is older, datable to the first decades of the 18th century, and depicts the saint in the features of a Roman matron.

The work before restoration

The restored work

Wax seal

RESTORATION

Restored by **Roberta Sugaroni** of the **Restauri Lignei** Laboratory, it was in a fairly state of conservation.
The gilding was cleaned with neutral fat emulsion, removed with White Spirit and finished with a pass of 'synthetic saliva'.
Plastic reconstructions to fill in the gaps were carried out with stucco and gilder's plaster, the gilding was done with gold leaf and treated with agate stone. The reintegration and colour harmonisation of the silver-plated surfaces were carried out with watercolour painting and varnish glazing.

THE EXCELLENT FALSE BY RAFFAELLO

curated by Andrea Alessi and Claudio Strinati

Terenzio Terenzi, also known as Rondolino Pesarese
Madonna del Divino Amore, oil on canvas, c. 1595-1610
by Raffaello Sanzio, oil on panel. Naples, Capodimonte Museum

The work was catalogued in 1993 by Marina Ciai under the direction of Egidia Coda of the Soprintendenza per i Beni storico-artistici di Roma e del Lazio.
The scholar, after identifying the direct link with Raphael's prototype, thought it was a copy made by an unknown painter contemporary with Sanzio.
The current investigation revealed that it was actually a fake, painted by Terenzio Terenzi, who worked in the late 16th and early 17th century. The canvas's dimensions, which are almost identical to the original, as well as the use of dull colours, which fade into a slight penumbra, certainly refer to the production of Terenzi, who chose used and worn supports and applied a mixture of varnishes and colours that he then blackened with smoke to give an aura of ageing. The work was restored in 2010.

Original by Raffaello

Copy by Pesarese

San Francesco Art Collection
Giacomo Collini
Gloria di Sant'Antonio da Padova

The USER-FRIENDLY GUIDE to the MUSEO della CITTA' CIVICO e DIOCESANO di ACQUAPENDENTE is intended to be an easy-to-read tool, presenting the museum and its main works and collections in an inviting form in both text and images.

The descriptions are supplemented by QR codes so that the visitor can explore further images, films and texts.

This interaction with the works of art can also continue outside the museum, when you can return 'virtually to the museum', visit it, deepen the various contents and make it known to family and friends.

GUIDE realised thanks to funding provided by:

REGIONE LAZIO
DIREZIONE REGIONALE CULTURA E LAZIO CREATIVO

L.R. n. 24/2019
D.G.R. 399/2023 "Piano annuale 2023"
Avviso pubblico finalizzato all'assegnazione di contributi a favore dei servizi culturali inseriti nelle organizzazioni regionali O.B.R., O.M.R. e O.A.R. per l'anno 2023 per attività e ammodernamento

REGIONE LAZIO

Comune di Acquapendente

SIMULABO

LA PERGOLA REGINA