

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA

Il disegno tra arte e scienza

(The drawing between art and science)

Palazzo Magnani, Reggio Emilia

March 14 – June 14, 2015

A GREAT EXHIBITION ON PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA AT PALAZZO MAGNANI IN REGGIO EMILIA

One hundred works will display the art of the Master from Sansepolcro and the other protagonists of the theory and practice of perspective drawing and architecture in the 15th and 16th centuries: Lorenzo Ghiberti, Leon Battista Alberti, Ercole de' Roberti, Domenico Ghirlandaio, Giovanni Bellini, Francesco di Giorgio, Albrecht Dürer, Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, Baldassarre Peruzzi, Amico Aspertini, Michelangelo, and many others

Vernissage for the Press: March 2015

Press Release

Exhibition curated by *Filippo Camerota, Francesco Paolo Di Teodoro, Luigi Grasselli*

There are figures in the history of art that brought such innovative ideas that they **triggered a veritable revolution**. One of these is certainly **Piero della Francesca**, the protagonist of the exhibition "**PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. Il disegno tra arte e scienza**" [the drawing between art and science], curated by Filippo Camerota, Francesco Paolo Di Teodoro and Luigi Grasselli, that will be held at Palazzo Magnani in Reggio Emilia from March 14 to June 14, 2015.

The Master from Sansepolcro has always been surrounded by a halo of mystery and enigma due to the scarcity of documents concerning him, but also to the peculiarity of his expressive language, which magically combines, in perfect balance, the plasticity and monumentality of Giotto and Masaccio with an extraordinary capacity of abstraction and suspension. His essential and pure shapes are, in fact, well-grounded in his mathematical and geometric interests, so admirably expressed in the treaties he left us: the *Abacus*, the *Libellus de quinque corporibus regularibus*, the *De prospectiva pingendi*, and the more recently discovered *Archimedes*. The exhibition at Palazzo Magnani will focus precisely on these precious testimonies of Piero della Francesca's scriptographic work, and particularly on his treaty *De prospectiva pingendi* [On perspective in painting].

"**PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. Il disegno tra arte e scienza**" will present the figure of the great Master from Sansepolcro in his double role of **designer** and great **mathematician**. For the occasion, Palazzo Magnani will also house an extraordinary event taking place **for the first time in the last half millennium: the display of the entire graphic and theoretical corpus of Piero della Francesca's work**: the seven specimens - some in Latin, others in vernacular language - of the work called *De Prospectiva Pingendi* (preserved in Bordeaux, London, Milan, Paris, Parma, and

Reggio Emilia), the two codes of the *Abacus* (Florence), the *Libellus de quinque corporibus regularibus* (Vatican City) and *Archimedes* (Florence).

But the exhibition will not only be the first and unique opportunity to admire all the graphic works produced by Piero della Francesca together (an extremely important event itself for art scholars from all over the world). Rather, it will offer a **journey through the Renaissance**, the unique Italian period that influenced Western art and thinking (and much more) by producing the greatest masterpieces of all times – today unparalleled icons of the global figurative culture and of our collective imagery.

The journey has been commented by the scientist Piergiorgio Odifreddi, whose words are available in the audio guide that will accompany visitors among Piero's graphic and pictorial works. These include the magnificent detached fresco of "**San Ludovico da Tolosa**" from the **Museum of Sansepolcro** and the paintings and graphic works of other great masters of the 15th and 16th centuries, such as **Lorenzo Ghiberti, Ercole de' Roberti, Domenico Ghirlandaio, Giovanni Bellini, Francesco di Giorgio, Albrecht Dürer, Bernardo Zenale, Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, Baldassarre Peruzzi, Amico Aspertini, Michelangelo, and many others**. All the works have been lent by prestigious Italian and foreign institutions like the Sbb-Pk Staatsbibliothek of Berlin, the Municipal Library of Bordeaux, the National Library of France, the British Museum, the British Library, the "Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe" of the Uffizi Gallery, the National Gallery of Umbria, the Vatican Museums, the Laurentian Medici Library, the National Central Library of Florence, Milan's Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Parma's Biblioteca Palatina, Galleria Estense of Modena, the Municipal Museum of Sansepolcro... just to mention a few.

The fulcrum of the exhibition will be the treaty ***De Prospectiva Pingendi*** (On perspective in painting), one of the most important testimonies of the fundamental work on perspective done by Piero della Francesca, that normally resides in the Panizzi Library of Reggio Emilia. The manuscript, written by a copyist, shows numberless corrections, side notes and extensive additions handwritten by Piero himself, which prove the continuous text revision work done by the author. It consists of 110 sheets containing **many drawings made by the artist**: very thin lines that mark the pages of the code that illustrates the text, showing the extraordinary graphic skills of the master.

The so-called "masters of perspective", i.e. the inlayers, founded their art on the repertoire of themes and images of the treaty, and the fraternal friendship between Piero and the **brothers Lorenzo and Cristoforo Canozzi from Lendinara**, inlayers *par excellence*, deserved mention by **Luca Pacioli**. In many of his writings, **Albrecht Dürer** showed that he knew Piero's treaty, while **Daniele Barbaro** even wrote most of his famous treaty on perspective (1569) along the lines of Piero's *De Prospectiva Pingendi*.

If it is true that only Constantin Winterberg (in 1899) told that **Leonardo, after learning from Pacioli that Piero had written a treaty on perspective, gave up writing his own**, and the fact was never demonstrated or confirmed by others, we cannot avoid saying that such a high comparison was a fortune for Piero and underscored the extraordinary and innovative nature of his major works, to place him above all the perspective painters of his time.

The works displayed at Palazzo Magnani – **about a hundred pieces among paintings, manuscripts, printed works, engravings, sculptures, tarsias, painted tiles and medals** – accompany the visitor along a path that follows the themes dealt with in the various chapters of the *De Prospectiva Pingendi*, so that walking from a room to another will be a bit like leafing through its pages. The sequence starts with Piero's geometric principles and continues with plane figures, geometric bodies, architecture, the human figure, the projection of shadows and anamorphosis.

Furthermore, the exhibition is conceived as a **tool and a “teaching machine”** to explore the art and creativity of this most peculiar artist. The drawings of the treaty are transformed into three-dimensional models to better illustrate the logic of their geometric construction, while a series of **mathematical machines** of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia scientifically reproduce the tools of the artist’s Renaissance studio, thus allowing visitors to touch with their hands and understand the techniques used by the painters to creatively play with the tricks of vision.

Suggestive **multimedia installations** will enliven the exhibition, together with augmented reality browsing apps created to facilitate the comprehension of the famous “Ideal City” of Urbino, one of the masterpieces of Renaissance perspective, a necessary complement to the treaties on this subject.

All the equipment and systems used for the installations have been provided by *Imago rerum team of the IUAV University of Venice, DCP - Department of Design Cultures*, and the *DICEA (Dip. Ingegneria Civile Edile e Architettura)* and the *DII (Dip. Ingegneria dell'Informazione) of the Marche Polytechnic University*, which cooperated with the Palazzo Magnani Foundation by taking care of the scientific aspects for the project, with also *Cr-Forma of Cremona* for the scientific analysis on the reggiano code of *De prospectiva pingendi*.

The *Biblioteca digitale tematica* about all codexes of *De prospectiva pingendi* by Galileo Museum of Florence can be consulted in the exhibition.

The exhibition will take place at Palazzo Magnani, which, however, will be only the central location of a **network of places and signs that will involve the entire city**. In fact, the exhibition path will also involve the **San Prospero Basilica**, where the stalls of the sixteenth-century choir will focus the visitors’ attention on the Emilian production of wooden tarsias. Another significant part of the exhibition is the Reggio Emilia headquarters of the **University of Modena and Reggio Emilia**, that house a large section dedicated to mathematical machines, where workshops for school students of all ages will be organized.

An international must-go for all these reasons, **“PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA. Il disegno tra arte e scienza”** has been designed to explain the expressive language of the Master, who was defined as the *“Monarca a li dì nostri della pictura e architectura”* [king of painting and architecture of our time] by Luca Pacioli in the *Divina proportione* (1509), as well as to decipher the reading codes of his work by shedding a new light on **an artist that managed to transform science into art and who influenced, at a great distance in time, the avant-gardes of the early Twentieth Century, as well as metaphysical painting.**

On the occasion of Expo 2015, the two exhibitions "*Piero della Francesca. The design between art and science*" in Palazzo Magnani and "*Leonardo 1452-1519*" in Palazzo Reale of Milan (April, 15/July 19, 2015) are in partnership with a mutual discounts on entrance tickets.

INFORMATION ON THE EXHIBITION

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA.

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Palazzo Magnani, Reggio Emilia

March 14 – June 14, 2015

with the support of the **Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism**

within the framework of the cultural events of **Expo Milano 2015**

within the framework of the cultural events of **Reggio Emilia per Expo 2015**



WE A·RE \ Reggio Emilia per EXPO 2015

Exhibition promoted by:

Palazzo Magnani Foundation

Authority for the protection of the Historical, Artistic and Ethnoanthropological Heritage of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Municipality of Reggio Emilia

University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Academy of Fine Arts of Bologna

With the support of:

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Province of Reggio Emilia

Dioceses of Reggio Emilia and Guastalla

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Chamber of Commerce of Reggio Emilia

In cooperation with:

Panizzi Library of Reggio Emilia

Laboratory of Mathematical Machines, UniMoRe

Galileo Museum, Florence

With the contribution of

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AudioGuide
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Exhibition organized by:

Palazzo Magnani Foundation

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Filippo Camerota, *Galileo Museum, Florence*
Francesco P. Di Teodoro, *Politecnico of Turin and Centro Linceo Interdisciplinare "B. Segre" – Lincei Academy*

Scientific Committee

Piergiorgio Odifreddi (Chairman)
Maria G. Bartolini Bussi, Filippo Camerota, Stefano Casciu, Mons. Tiziano Ghirelli, Enrico Maria Davoli,
Francesco P. Di Teodoro, Luigi Grasselli, Roberto Marcuccio, Massimo Mussini

Timetable

Tuesday to Sunday and holidays: 10:00 – 19:00
Saturday 10:00 – 22:30
Monday only for schools

Extra openings

5 April 2015, Easter Sunday; 6 April 2015, Easter Monday; Saturday 25 April 2015, Liberation Day; Friday 1st
May 2015, Workers' Day; Tuesday 2 June 2015, Republic Day.

Timetable of Mathematical Machines section – University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Via Camatta 15, Modena. Guided tours can be organized for school students: call 3407012734, e-mail:
info@macchinematematiche.org - www.macchinematematiche.org

Timetable of San Prospero Basilica

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday: 10:00 – 12:00
Sunday: 16:00 – 18:00

Entrance fees

Full fare € 11
Reduced fare € 10 (COOP nordest Reggio Emilia members valid membership card, residents of the province
of Reggio Emilia)
Reduced fare € 9 ("Amici della FPM"; Amici of I Teatri Reggio Emilia; Military personnel; Over 65; Disabled;
Students 18 to 26 years; visitors of the exhibition "Leonardo 1452-1519" of Palazzo Reale in Milan)
Students € 5 (students 6 to 18 years)

Free entrance (children until 6 years of age; person accompanying disabled visitor; reporters registered in the national register showing a valid membership card)

The exhibition entrance ticket includes the entrance fee for the San Prospero Basilica.

Families

Entrance € 22 (2 adults + 1 children 6 to 14 years)

Entrance € 28 (2 adults + 2 children 6 to 14 years)

Entrance € 35 (2 adults + 3 children 6 to 14 years)

Groups of min 20 – max 26 people

Reduced fare € 9/person, free for the group leader

Reservation is mandatory

Audio Guides

Adult and children versions available.

Included in the entrance ticket.

Guided tours

Groups up to 20 people: € 60.00 + reduced fare entrance

Groups up to 26 people: € 3.00 per person + reduced fare entrance

Students: € 2.00 + student entrance fee

Guided tour in a foreign language: € 100 + + reduced fare entrance

Teaching activities for students

Guided tours and workshops can be organized for school students, incl. in days and at times when the exhibition is closed to the public. Reservation is mandatory. All our teaching proposals are available in the following website: www.palazzomagnani.it

BUY TICKETS ONLINE

Tickets can be purchased online at musement.com, the Italian exhibition and museum marketplace delivering travel experiences all over the world.

www.musement.com

TOURIST PACKAGES

- **ITINERE** - Club di Prodotto Reggio Tricolore
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For information and reservations:

Palazzo Magnani – Ticket Office: tel. 0522 454.437 – 444.446

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