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**Permanent Exhibitions at the
Galleria Nazionale delle Marche
History and Perspectives, 1912–2003**

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Table of contents

Acknowledgements	III
Abstract.....	IV
Vita	V
List of figures	VI
Introduction	1
Building the Galleria Nazionale	5
1.1 Legal Premises for the Collection and the Location.....	5
1.2 The Galleria is Born: Director Lionello Venturi	15
A Growing Collection: Luigi Serra’s Museum “in Stile”	29
2.1 The Galleria Nazionale delle Marche post-World War I.....	29
2.2 Serra’s Second Intervention on the Permanent Exhibition	52
Reappraised Architecture and Museum Reconfiguration, 1930s–1940s.....	63
3.1 Guglielmo Pacchioni before World War II	63
3.2 Dismantling and Refurbishing the Galleria. Pasquale Rotondi	78
1949–1979: Impulses of Innovation at the Palazzo Ducale	98
4.1 Restitution and Collection Management: Pietro Zampetti	98
4.2 The “garbato gusto personale” of Giuseppe Marchini.....	105
4.3 Institutional Expansion in Constrained Spaces. Piero Torriti.....	111
4.4 The Directorship of Italo Faldi beyond the <i>Heist of the Century</i>	117
4.5 Dante Bernini’s Unexecuted Project	119
The Steps Forward Towards Modernity	128
5.1 Paolo Dal Poggetto.....	128
5.2 Epilogue. Luigi Gallo’s latest layout (2020-2026)	136
Appendix 1. Maps of the Museum’s Early Itineraries (Venturi and Serra)	160
Appendix 2. Documents from the archives	173
Bibliography.....	196

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Abstract

This dissertation offers a historiographical and museological study of the permanent exhibition layouts in the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche at Urbino's Palazzo Ducale. It examines the curatorial and institutional use of space since the foundation in 1912 to the end of the century, and reconceptualises the museum as a dynamic entity shaped by evolving cultural and conservation paradigms.

The study focuses on the evolving relationship between the collection and the architecture. The initial directors, Lionello Venturi and Luigi Serra, established classifications based on chronology and style.

Then, Guglielmo Pacchioni favoured the reappraisal of the architectural context. Following World War II, Pasquale Rotondi implemented a new setup characterised by greater selectivity and clarity.

It also considers the tensions between preservation and communication in the second half of the XX century and concludes with Paolo Dal Poggetto's reconfiguration of the visitor route based on the building's construction phases. Drawing on archival and visual sources, the dissertation argues that the museum was transformed into an active interpretive mediator.

An epilogue examines interventions initiated in 2021, emphasising a renewed institutional dedication to historically informed permanent exhibitions. Two appendices present reconstructed itineraries from the Venturi and Serra periods, alongside transcriptions of pivotal archival documents.

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List of figures

1 Soprallogge with lapidarium, 1756-1944 (S.G.U. N. 1776-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	8
2 Studiolo, c.1935 (O. Savio, U.Pl. D 44779, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Roma)	8
3 Studiolo, c.1935 (O. Savio, U.Pl. D 44778, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Roma)	8
4 Sala degli Angeli, Accademia Raffaello, post 1869 - ante 1873 (Unknown author, 31875/ 1001, fondo fotografico Faccioli, Archivio Storico della Pinacoteca di Bologna, Bologna).....	10
5 Sala della Jole, c. 1907 (Unknown author, extract from Storia di un Museo, 1977, figure 9)	14
6 Cappellina di Guidobaldo with the cast of Raphael's skull, 1870-19 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 17549, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)	18
7 Loggia in the Gallo courtyard c. 1910 (Unknown author, extract from Venturi 1914, p. 444)	19
8 Heating system in the Camera Picta (Unknown author, S.G.U. 1240-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	20
9 Sala IV, Scuola fiorentina del secolo XV, Gallerie degli Uffizi, Firenze, 1920 (Unknown author, 9866, Firenze, Gabinetto Fotografico degli Uffizi, Firenze).....	21
10 Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7964, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	22
11 St. Clare/ L. Salimbeni, crucifix/G. Baronzio and Senese Crucifixion in the Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7972, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	23
12 St. John and Michael/ Barna da Siena, crucifix/Pietro Lorenzetti, St. Agathe/ Antonio Alberti da Ferrara in the Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7973, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	23
13 Polyptych of the Zoccolanti/ Antonio di Guido da Ferrara in the Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, 65947, Fototeca Zeri, Bologna)	23
14 Labels, c. 1916 (Detail of image 11)	24
15 Sala delle Udienze c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7999, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	25
16 Salotto della Duchessa c. 1916 (Unknown author, MPI6216666, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	26
17 Alcova in the Duchessa apartment c. 1916 (Unknown author, S.G.U. 1207-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	27
18 Salone del trono 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5165, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	31
19 Salone del trono 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5166, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	32
20 Salone del trono 1919-1923 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37914, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)	32
21 Sala delle Veglie/ Magnifico 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5168, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	33

22 Sala delle Veglie/ Magnifico 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5167, fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	34
23 Jade Room, Victoria & Albert Museum, 1931 (E. O. Hoppé, PH.271-2021, V&A South Kensington, Prints & Drawings Study Room, level F, London)	34
24 Museum Cleaning, Victoria & Albert Museum, 1931 (E. O. Hoppé, PH.265-2021, V&A South Kensington, Prints & Drawings Study Room, level F, London)	34
25 Salotto della Duchessa, Chimneypiece 1920-1930 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37928, MPI6216703, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	36
26 Testa muliebree/Agostino di Duccio, 1932 (Unknown author Stab. Anderson, 31832, Fototeca Zeri, Bologna)	36
27 Salotto della Duchessa 1920-1930 (Unknown author, S.G.U. 53-C, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	37
28 Salotto della Duchessa 1915-1923 (Unknown author, Serie E 7516, ICCD Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	37
29 Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne, 1900 (Unknown author, Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Köln)	38
30 Venice International Art Exhibition, 1905 (Unknown author, extract from Nicoletti 2024).....	38
31 Sala degli Angeli, 1915-1923 (Unknown author, S.G.U. Serie E 5170, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	39
32 Sala degli Angeli, post 1922 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37934, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)	39
33 Sala degli Angeli, 1915- 1923 (Unknown author, Serie E 5172, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	40
34 Sala delle Udienze, 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5166, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	41
35 Sala di Raffaello, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milano, 1925 (Unknown author, extract from L'inaugurazione della rinnovata Pinacoteca di Brera 1925, p. 363)	42
36 Appartamento degli Ospiti (131), 1915-1920 (Unknown author, Serie E, 5174, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	44
37 Appartamento degli Ospiti (131), 1927-1930 (Unknown author, S.G.U. without accession number, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	44
38 Sala del Re d'Inghilterra, c. 1918 (Unknown author, Serie C, 8062, ICCD Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	45
39 Room 134, 1916-1920 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5136, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	46
40 Room 148, c. 1923 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37958, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)	47
41 Scena Sacra exhibited in Room 148 (Detail of Figure 40).....	47
42 Detail of a photograph of the chimneypiece in room 153, 1924 (C. Carboni, Serie E 8025, ICCD Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	49
43 Giuditta by Palma il Vecchio, Uffizi Galleries (Unknown author, WGA16936.jpg, Wikipedia.org)	49

44 Sala della Jole, c. 1930 (Unknown author, 59-c, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).....	50
45 Sala della Jole, c. 1930 (Unknown author, 60-c, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).....	50
46 Salone del Trono with tapestries, c. 1930 (Unknown author, Stab. Anderson, 31782, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	53
47 Four Raphael Cartoons in South Kensington Museum, London 1868 (J. Davis Burton, 60748, V&A South Kensington, Prints & drawings study room, level f, London).....	53
48 Detail of the Entrance to the Salotto della Duchessa 1920-1930 (Unknown author, S.G.U. 867-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).....	54
49 Stanza di preghiera della Duchessa, 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5169, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	55
50 Stanza di Gentile da Fabriano, room 122 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37928, Archivi Alinari, Firenze).....	56
51 Sala dell'Ariosto, postcard 1927-1930 (Unknown author, Ed. C. Varani, Urbino).....	57
52 Room 143 (XXIV), post 1922 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37953, Archivi Alinari, Firenze).....	58
53 Room 147 (XXVI), post 1922 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37956, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	59
54 Project for the Salone del Trono by Fratelli Toso sent to Pacchioni on 27 April 1939, attached to letter #6 in M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona.....	68
55 Project for the Salone del Trono by Fratelli Toso sent to Pacchioni on 27 April 1939, attached to letter #6 in M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona.....	68
56 Salone del Trono, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216697, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	69
57 Salone del Trono, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216716, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	70
58 Salone del Trono, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216714, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	70
59 Sala degli Angeli, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216045, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	71
60 Stanza da letto del Duca, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216677, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	72
61 Stanza da letto del Duca, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216683, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	73
62 Stanza da letto del Duca, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216680, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	73
63 Guardaroba del Duca, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216671, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	74

64 Sala delle Udienze, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216684, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	75
65 Sala delle Udienze, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216682, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	75
66 Sala delle Udienze, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216681, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	75
67 Cappellina di Guidubaldo II, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216588, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	76
68 Sala della Jole, 1933-1939 (Unknown author, 2150-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	77
69 Sala della Jole, 1933-1939 (Unknown author, 2151-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	77
70 Salone del Trono, after 1945 (Unknown author, MPI6216694, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	82
71 Sala delle Veglie, c. 1946 (published in Rotondi 1946, p. 103)	83
72 Madonna and Saints by Francesco Bissolo, date unknown (published in Šustić 2018).....	83
73 Vestibule, Appartamento della Duchessa, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1097-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino).....	84
74 Salotto della Duchessa, c.1946 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino).....	84
75 Salotto della Duchessa, c.1946 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	85
76 Salotto della Duchessa, 1963 (Unknown author, G.F.N. Serie F 15905, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	86
77 Stanza da letto della Duchessa (Author, unknown S.G.U. N. 1098-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	87
78 Stanza da letto della Duchessa, c.1963 (Author, unknown, Serie F, N. 15904, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	87
79 Guardaroba della Duchessa (Author, unknown, S.G.U. N. 1099-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	88
80 Sala degli Angeli, c.1946 (Author, unknown, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	89
81 Sala degli Angeli, c.1946 (Author, unknown, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	89
82 Sala degli Uomini Illustri, c.1946 (Author, unknown, S.G.U. N. 1114-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino).....	91
83 Second Ospiti Room, c.1946 (Author, unknown, S.G.U. N. 1115-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino).....	91

84 Sala del Re d'Inghilterra, c. 1946 (Author, unknown S.G.U. N. 1116-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	92
85 The fourth room in the Ospiti Apartment, c. 1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1166-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	92
86 Melaranci apartment, Sala dei rilievi bellici, c. 1950 (Unknown author, MPI6216684, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma).....	93
87 Sala dell'Alcova, c. 1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1206-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	94
88 Sala degli Affreschi, c.1939 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1924-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	94
89 Sala della Iole, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 942-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	95
90 Prima sala roveresca, c.1946 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 1, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	96
91 Seconda sala roveresca, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1245-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	96
92 Terza sala roveresca, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1247-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	97
93 Mercurio e Prometeo tapestry, photographed at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, 1945-1960 (Omero- Urbino, MPI6216498, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche).....	99
94 Postcard of the Sala delle Veglie, c. 1953 (Unknown author, Edizione Scala, Firenze)	100
95 Pala dell'alabarda, Lorenzo Lotto (Unknown author, Università Carlo Bo, Fototeca Zampetti, Urbino)	101
96 Postcard of the Sala degli Angeli, c. 1953 (Unknown author, Edizione Scala, Firenze)	102
97. Postcard of the Camera da letto del Duca, c. 1953 (Unknown author, Edizione Scala, Firenze)	102
98. Flagellazione by Piero della Francesca in context, c. 1953 (Zampetti P., Università Carlo Bo, Fototeca Zampetti, Urbino)	103
99 Opening the loggia overlooking the Cortile del Gallo, work in progress. 1938-1955 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 1, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	106
100 Prima sala Roveresca, 1963 (Unknown author, F15956, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	108
101 The fourth room at the second floor, 1963 (Unknown author, F15951, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)	109
102 Sala delle Udeinze, 1951-1964 (A. Sansone, extract from Il mondo, a. 16(1964), n. 24, "Urbino: dipinti e campane nelle sale del Palazzo Ducale", preserved at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Firenze).....	110
103 Sala delle Campane, 1951-1964 (A. Sansone, extract from Il mondo, a. 16(1964), n. 24, "Urbino: dipinti e campane nelle sale del Palazzo Ducale", preserved at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Firenze).....	110

104 Sala degli Angeli, 1973-1975 (M. Hutzel, 256, box 383-385, Accession no. 86.P.8, Foto arte minore: Max Hutzel photographs of art and architecture in Italy, 1960-1990. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute)	114
105 Sala degli Angeli, 1973-1975 (M. Hutzel, 255, box 383-385, Accession no. 86.P.8, Foto arte minore: Max Hutzel photographs of art and architecture in Italy, 1960-1990. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute)	115
106 Sala degli Angeli, 1973-1975 (M. Hutzel, 25, box 383-385, Accession no. 86.P.8, Foto arte minore: Max Hutzel photographs of art and architecture in Italy, 1960-1990. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute)	116
107 The Palace the day after the theft, 1975 (Unknown author, extract from Danese 2015)	118
108 The Palace the day after the theft, 1975 (Unknown author, extract from Danese 2015)	119
109 Project for the Lapidarium by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	121
110 Project for the Lapidarium by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	121
111 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	122
112 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	123
113 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	124
114 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	124
115 Project for Barocci's room by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)	125
116 Sala delle Veglie, 2003 (extract from Dal Poggetto 2003, figure 185)	129
117 Sala con statue lignee, 2001 (M. Magliani, CAL-F-009890, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)	129
118 Giardino Pensile, 1985 (Author unknown, the photograph is included in M.PS 67-284, Perizia 1044/85, "Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie", Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona (as a document for the project "Fornitura e posa in opera di pavimenti, cornici e chiusini per il Giardino Pensile")	130
119 Project for the showcases, 1981 (C. Gaudenzi, Faldone 6, document of October 28, 1981, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).	132
120 Showcases, 1989 (Unknown author, extract from Emiliani 1989, p. 171).	132
121 Specimen of painting support in the Duchessa Apartment, 2023 (A. Fapanni)	135
122 A Plexiglas shield protecting a tapestry in the Duchessa Apartment, 2023 (A. Fapanni)	136
123 Example of a structural base for a statue in the Duchessa Apartment, 2023 (A. Fapanni)	136
124 F. Primari, G. Russo, dir. L. Gallo and an architect overseeing the setup of the first Ospiti room, 2024 (A. Fapanni)	137
125 New rooms at the second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni)	139

126 Southern corridor, second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni).....	140
127 The first room on the second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni).....	141
128 The second room on the second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni).....	142
129 Detail of the totem containing electrical systems, 2024 (A. Fapanni).....	144
130 Detail of the totem containing electrical systems, UV insect trap, 2024 (A. Fapanni)	144
131 Room 151, 2024 (C. Ripalti)	145
132 Room 148 during renovation, 2024 (A. Fapanni)	147
133 Room 148 after renovation, 2025 (A. Fapanni)	147
134 G. Russo and conservator G. Papini on duty during the Iole Apartment setup, 2024 (A. Fapanni)...	148
135 Camera Picta, new setup, 2024 (A. Fapanni)	149
136 Sala dell' Alcova, 2024 (A. Fapanni).....	150
137 Basreliefs pre-setup, 2024 (A. Fapanni)	151
138 Basreliefs in the new permanent exhibition, 2025 (A. Fapanni).....	151
139 Ospiti apartment, 2024 (A. Fapanni).....	152
140 Ospiti Apartment, exhibition detail, 2024 (A. Fapanni)	153
141 Soprallogge, 2024 (A. Fapanni).....	153
142 Sala degli Angeli work in progress, 2025 (A. Fapanni)	156
143 Salone del Trono work in progress, 2024 (A. Fapanni)	157
144 Città Ideale in the Salone del Trono (work in progress), 2024 (A. Fapanni)	157
145 Federico Barocci exhibition at Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino, 2024 (C. Ripalti)	158
146 Città Ideale in the Stanza da letto del Duca, 2025 (A. Fapanni)	159

Introduction

The Palazzo Ducale in Urbino, with its six centuries of history, has long captivated the attention of scholars of the Renaissance, who have examined its architecture and decoration in exceptional depth. The history of the building itself is both intricate and multi-layered. Yet, what insights can the academic community offer concerning the use and interpretation of these spaces following their transformation into a museum? The Galleria Nazionale delle Marche bears the responsibility of attesting to this complexity while ensuring the optimal preservation of the past for the benefit of present and future generations. Over the past century, successive display arrangements within the monumental setting have responded to this mission in markedly diverse ways.

The permanent collection of the Galleria originated through a series of significant acquisitions and donations and was subsequently expanded through both minor and major additions. The accumulation of objects of varied provenance and typology is never a neutral process; rather, it reveals the prevailing cultural values and intellectual climate of the institution's successive eras.

This research undertakes a comprehensive examination of the museum's permanent displays across the historical trajectory of the Galleria, in close dialogue with the evolution of its management and institutional identity. For much of the twentieth century, studies of the palace and studies of the collection developed along separate, scarcely communicative lines of inquiry. Both strands were essential for confirming historical data and establishing attributions, yet they often served primarily as functional tools for further discoveries rather than interpretative syntheses. Each director of the Galleria responded to this dichotomy in a distinctive manner. Their curatorial and organizational choices, when reinterpreted today, provide valuable insight into their professional identities within the cultural sector, the expectations of the public, and the educational and political environments of their time, including the influence of ministerial directives, art-historical trends, and critical discourse. Consequently, the issue of the "content-container" relationship recurs throughout this dissertation, not only as a local phenomenon but also in comparison with parallel international case studies.

The principal objective of this dissertation is to compile an up-to-date and comprehensive analysis of the museum displays of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche. By considering the continuities and dissonances among successive directors' approaches, it becomes possible to assess their orientations toward visitors, conservation practices, and museological theory. The period under scrutiny extends from the foundation of the then Real Galleria to the close of the twentieth century, offering a reassessment of the historical, institutional, and intellectual forces that contributed to the Galleria's emergence as a nationally and internationally recognized institution.

Achieving this aim required the updating of the relevant bibliography and the verification of archival sources that have hitherto underpinned the Galleria's historiography. As with many Italian museums, scholarship on the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche in the English language has been scarce. This has produced an anomalous situation in which the artworks housed in the museum are internationally renowned, yet knowledge of the institution's history remains limited, particularly among scholars outside Italy. Furthermore, Italian-language studies provide only partial coverage of the successive "eras" of the museum's permanent installations.

The most comprehensive prior contribution on this subject remains the 1977 exhibition catalogue *Palazzo Ducale di Urbino. Storia di un Museo*, organized under the direction of Dante Bernini. Bernini initiated a pioneering cross-disciplinary research project aimed at reconstructing the origins of the Galleria Nazionale as a public institution devoted to the integrated protection of works of art and architecture. For the first time, the museum engaged in a form of self-reflection, examining the historical forces that had shaped its identity and its role within the broader cultural landscape.

The conception of that exhibition coincided with the restoration and reorganization of the Palazzo Ducale's monumental spaces - structures whose origins had been thoroughly studied, yet whose modern and future destinies had long been neglected. Before Bernini's project for intervention, information concerning the internal transformations of the palace and its collection was fragmented and incomplete. His initiative thus marked a turning point: he was among the first art historians to shift attention from the origins of the ducal project to its contemporary history.

Storia di un Museo begins in 1756, when Cardinal Stoppani displayed Raffaele Fabbretti's lapidary collection in the Palazzo Ducale for public edification. This event marked the first direct encounter between the palace and artworks that remain part of the Galleria's holdings today. Bernini's reconstruction traced the evolution of this relationship over two centuries, culminating in 1977.

The year 2027 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of that seminal exhibition, underscoring the need to pay renewed tribute to the intellectual and civic values that inspired it. The present dissertation responds to this call. A critical re-examination of *Storia di un Museo* is warranted, not only because it encompassed such an extended historical span, but also because its pioneering nature inevitably left certain lacunae and inconsistencies.

While the 1977 catalogue embraced a broad chronology, this study selects 1912, the year of the formal establishment of the Real Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, as a more appropriate point of departure. The creation of the Galleria as a legal entity constitutes a watershed moment for several reasons. A substantial body of scholarship already documents the condition of the Palazzo Ducale in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particularly during the period of Italian unification; this material is consistent and thus required no further review.

In contrast, the history of the museum following its institutional foundation has received uneven attention. Although the early decades were the subject of detailed analysis, the later period, especially from the 1960s onward, has been only superficially addressed. This dissertation therefore extends its inquiry to the later twentieth century, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the Galleria's physical transformations, curatorial policies, and institutional management up to the XXI century. Viewed through this lens, the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche emerges as a living organism, continuously evolving through phases of consolidation, expansion, and modernization.

Building upon Bernini's foundational work, two methodological principles guide the present study: first, the revision of previously published data through direct consultation; and second, the incorporation of subsequent developments that have shaped the museum since 1977. A broad chronological framework enables comparison across distinct curatorial eras and supports an evaluation of their respective museological orientations.

The first setup of the Galleria Nazionale was curated by Lionello Venturi, the second chapter is dedicated to the expansion under Luigi Serra, and the third brings together Guglielmo Pacchioni and Pasquale Rotondi, highlighting that each of them developed their own exhibition with some different aspects but a similar theoretical orientation. This was followed by a thirty-year period during which five directors maintained Rotondi's layout with minor changes. Then came the long-awaited update curated by Paolo Dal Poggetto, which was maintained with respect for its intentions by the directors of the new millennium. The features of continuity and some significant changes will be considered, also in relation to the Superintendency.

As the chronological narrative approaches the present, the sources become increasingly bureaucratic in tone and less descriptive in content. Reports that were once handwritten and richly detailed evolved, after the 1950s, into typewritten administrative documents, impoverished of context and interpretative nuance. This shift complicates the reconstruction of institutional life in the later decades. Nevertheless, the renewed appraisal of the period following *Storia di un Museo* reveals the vitality of the second half of the twentieth century, a time not only of respectful conservation of Rotondi's legacy but also of innovations in collection management, staffing, and exhibition planning that paved the way for future developments.

The extensive research carried out in the historical and photographic archives of the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino and the photographic library of the Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione (ICCD) in Rome has yielded some interesting results for reevaluating some of the choices made by the directors, in order to assess what the museum has been and what it could have become. For example, the chapter on the directors who preserved Rotondi's layout until the 1970s also includes an example of an exhibition update that never materialized. What would the Galleria have looked like if architect Raineri's avant-garde and daring design had been implemented? Most of the architect's designs were never put into practice, but the study demonstrates a vision shared with the management, which, after several decades of the last layout of the rooms, made clear the need for a radical update. After that, Dal Poggetto's era represented the final evolution of the museum by the close of the century. His setup is attested in official catalogues, guides, newspaper articles and official documents that can be only partially disclosed in the respect of confidentiality normatives.

Finally, an "Epilogue" is dedicated to the restoration programme directed by Luigi Gallo, the Director of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche in the years 2020-2026. Although this recent phase lies beyond the chronological limits of the present study, its documentation provides significant insight into the ongoing dialogue between the palace and its collection. Gallo's reconfigured itinerary, conceived in close collaboration with the museum's curatorial and technical teams, reveals a sustained engagement with the museological questions addressed throughout this research. In particular, its comparison with Paolo Dal Poggetto's earlier layout affords a deeper understanding of how the institutional policies and interpretative choices of the late twentieth century have shaped the museum's trajectory into the new millennium. The on-field approach adopted in this PhD project facilitated the documentation of the various stages of restoration of the rooms and the new layout, with a particular focus on the years 2023, 2024 and 2025, when the Jole, Ospiti and Duca apartments were refurbished and reopened.

Within the chapters, the reconstruction of the museum itineraries across different periods gives rise to reflections on museological practices, particularly concerning the selection and spatial arrangement of artworks in each era. One of the principal challenges encountered during this complex study concerned the management and presentation of information, specifically, how to render it accessible and comprehensible without resorting to exhaustive lists of paintings and rooms.

To ensure clarity and facilitate consultation, a system was devised and presented in the first appendix. This illustrates the significant alterations to each room during the museum's first two phases of administration. The series of plans appended to the text visually documents the precise positioning of the artworks in the initial stages of the Galleria. Furthermore, the titles and authors of the paintings correspond directly to the official guides and publications of their respective times, thereby preserving a faithful record of each director's interpretation and understanding of the collection. A comparison of these visual reconstructions with the photographs included in the main body of the text enables a more nuanced re-evaluation of the museum's historical configurations.

The research also faced considerable challenges in evaluating primary and secondary sources. Several key references concerning the museum's history and exhibition arrangements were characterized by weak or inconsistent citation systems, making the validation of information particularly difficult. Extensive consultation of archival materials in both Urbino and Ancona proved essential in resolving these discrepancies. The second appendix therefore includes transcriptions of several documents preserved in the Archivio della Soprintendenza ai Beni Architettonici di Ancona, which at various stages of the investigation were crucial for supplementing or corroborating data absent from other sources.

In conclusion, this dissertation seeks to clarify the complex history of the permanent exhibition arrangements of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche. By verifying, dating, and cross-referencing existing information, it establishes a reliable foundation for future scholarship and contributes to a deeper understanding of the interplay between architectural heritage, curatorial practice, and museological thought within one of Marche's most emblematic museum institutions.

Building the Galleria Nazionale

1.1 Legal Premises for the Collection and the Location

The Marche region, a territory historically divided by its very orography, arrived at the proclamation of the *Regno d'Italia* without a consolidated regional consciousness. The territories that now compose it were reunited by a series of decrees issued between 1860 and 1861 by a special commissioner for the unification of the Marche, personally chosen by Luigi Carlo Farini, Minister of the Interior in the third Cavour government¹. The honor of this office fell to Lorenzo Valerio, then governor of Como. In life Valerio had directed prosperous silk manufactories in Piedmont, lived abroad for a few years because of his liberal ideas, and upon his return had begun to work with undiminished conviction in support of those ideas, both in print and in work practice². From 1848 he was involved as a leftist parliamentarian in the Subalpine Parliament, became a deputy in the first legislation of united Italy, and king Vittorio Emanuele II chose him as first governor of the provinces of Como and Marche³.

Along with the Unification, temporary power vacuums could put the cultural heritage at risk, therefore in parallel with Valerio's diligent efforts also took place the expedition of Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle and Giovanni Morelli, aimed at mapping the art collections of Marche and Umbria for more than two months⁴. As many as five convents and four monasteries of friars were visited in Urbino, with a total of thirty paintings described, estimated and marked with the royal seal in red wax. Many works by Giovanni Santi, Timoteo Viti, Titian, Federico Barocci and even the celebrated *Città Ideale* panel, now in the Galleria, appear in that early catalogue⁵.

In 1861 commissioner Lorenzo Valerio promulgated the legislative act to create a Marche entity capable of bringing together «i monumenti e gli oggetti d'arte appartenenti alle case religiose e alle collegiate sopresse che possono essere convenientemente traslocati»⁶. The intent of gathering expropriated goods from across the region in one place marked the origins of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche. He envisioned Urbino as the ideal seat for the Galleria, because of its meaningful Renaissance history⁷. At first, Valerio allocated to the future Urbino gallery not only works from the local area, but from all the suppressed ecclesiastical institutions in the region. Since the Marche region was still fragmented, however,

¹ In a note dated August 13, 1860, Minister Farini wrote to the commission established by temporary law at the Council of State to reiterate the criteria for regional unity: "Questi centri possiedono antichissime tradizioni fondate in varie condizioni naturali e civili: la politica italiana disgregata tra i comuni e le repubbliche ha trovato in essi una prima forma e disciplina dello stato (...). Al disopra della provincia e al di sotto del concetto politico dello stato, io penso si debba tener conto di questi centri". Less than a month later, Valerio was appointed commissioner in the provinces of the Marche, with the aim of unifying them.

² Viarengo 2020.

³ Fondo Valerio 2007.

⁴ Giardini 2011, p. 40. On this topic see also: Levi 1988, Levi 1993, Anderson 2000, Anderson 2019.

⁵ The Catalogue was published by Adolfo Venturi, for the part on Urbino see: Cavalcaselle, Morelli 1896, pp. 236-246.

⁶ Extract from the royal decree R.D. 705, 3rd January 1861 by Lorenzo Valerio. With this decree the Piedmontese law for the suppression of religious corporations was introduced in the Marche.

⁷ Valazzi 2011, p. 212.

the various municipalities rose up against this decision, and in 1865 the objects were finally divided among the provinces⁸.

The artworks of Urbino area were given to the recently established Istituto di Belle Arti delle Marche. The school's founding statute stipulated the formation of a museum of works of art, with the objective of providing a source of inspiration for the young students of the institution⁹.

The parochial interests of each town caused the project of preserving all the expropriated artworks of the Marche in one place to fail; in the 1875 Pompeo Gherardi, a local scholar, recalled this decision with disappointment in his "Guida di Urbino" ¹⁰.

The guide presents two very important cores of information. On the one hand, it provides a valuable, albeit incomplete, compendium of the Istituto's collection; on the other hand, it meticulously describes the Ducal Palace in its architectural richness.

The collection of the Istituto di Belle Arti in 1875 counted more than 50 statues and plaster casts and about 240 paintings within its picture gallery¹¹. Only the first 84 paintings were accompanied by the name of the author or school, however, this account is interesting for understanding the order of magnitude of the initial nucleus of works that in the 20th century converged to constitute the Real Galleria Nazionale delle Marche.

Upon the departure of Canon Count Nicola Mauruzi della Stacciola (1865), the rich testamentary bequest that included ceramics, medals, terracotta objects and much more had also been added to the museum. All the statues of the school, the Mauruzi collection and the works of the religious entities initially were in the former convent of San Benedetto, a dismissed abbey in Urbino. The Mauruzi donation was so relevant that the institute dedicated an entire room in San Benedetto complex¹². Furthermore, the

⁸ Santoncini 2008.

⁹ Scarpacci 2012.

¹⁰ Gherardi 1875, pp. 69-70. "Questo decreto subì in processo di tempo alcune variazioni che importa siano notate. Primieramente non furono devoluti alla Città di Urbino i monumenti e gli oggetti d'Arte appartenenti alle corporazioni religiose sopprese come il Valerio aveva disposto nell'altro Decreto 3 gennaio 1860 N.705 con l'intento di formare nelle sale dell'Accademia un Museo. La legge Commissariale rimase lettera morta fino al 1865, epoca nella quale venne con il nostro danno modificata dalla nuova Legge votata in Parlamento il 7 di luglio, in cui all'articolo 24 si legge « i libri, i manoscritti, i documenti scientifici, gli archivi, i monumenti, gli oggetti d'arte o preziosi per antichità che si trovano negli edifici appartenenti alle case religiose e agli enti morali colpiti da questa, o da precedenti leggi di soppressione, si devolveranno a pubbliche Biblioteche od a Musei nelle rispettive provincie ecc». In seguito di ciò il signor Ministro della Pubblica Istruzione faceva intendere che le opere d'Arte spettanti alle case religiose abolite del Circondario di Pesaro erano devolute al Museo Oliveriano di quella Città; e che a noi venivano date quelle del solo Circondario di Urbino. Poi neppur questo fu vero, sicchè svaniva la speranza di poter fondare un buon Museo Marchigiano".

¹¹ The Valerio law provided for the convent of the Gerolimini fathers as its seat, but this was occupied by the Convitto and the Scuole normali, therefore the seat fell to the convent of S. Benedetto in Urbino, before the museum was transferred to the Palazzo Ducale in 1883. Calzini 1897, p. 41.

¹² Gherardi 1875, pp. 68-69. The author specifies that the dedicated room was called "Gabinetto Mauruzi" and indicates which works present were part of the donation and which instead belonged to the Istituto.

collection kept growing. Gherardi's testimony asserts that as early as 1875, the municipality had formally entrusted to the Istituto the apparatus of canvases created in 1621 by Claudio Ridolfi and Gerolamo Cialdieri for the nuptials of Claudia de' Medici and Federico Ubaldo della Rovere¹³. The objects incorporated by the Istituto di Belle Arti had not yet been located in the Ducal Palace because of unresolved legal and conservation issues.

The second core of information provided in the Guide pertains precisely the building that now houses the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche. In those years several restorations were taking place in order to rediscover the oldest pre-existences of Palazzo Ducale and opening to the public.

For example, on the ground floor, in the room near a torricino, there was a column with interesting inscriptions. Gherardi argued "it would be a good work if among the restorations that are now being meditated upon, they would think about reopening those arches that had been walled up in a vandalistic way to profit from some rooms"¹⁴. Also, on the ground floor the visitor could observe the "small and very ancient theater" that was already in disuse and a few years later was destroyed. It was seat of the city's stage performances until 1843, when the Sanzio Theater was inaugurated¹⁵. These two sentences are of particular pertinence as they anticipate the restorations that would in fact take place beginning in the 1980s.

Regarding the *piano nobile*, the Guide describes the main decorations, coats of arms, statues and also many ancient elements walled in the *soprallogge*, such as the famous reliefs depicting war machines designed by Francesco di Giorgio Martini¹⁶. These were 72 stone tablets carved by Ambrogio Barocci, placed in the plinth that circled the *soprallogge* on the first floor. Cardinal Stoppani had recovered these reliefs from the backrest of the palace's outer seat in 1756, saving them from certain destruction, and took charge of properly refitting them inside. The display criterion was primarily oriented towards the embellishment of the spaces, with no reservations about the creation of 17 counterfeits intended to complement the ornamental design, which also encompassed statues and ancient works¹⁷.

Equally interesting is the depiction of the Duke Federico's *studiolo* with wooden inlays; in addition to describing many of its figures, Gherardi recalls, "peccato che antichi spogliatori togliessero da questo studio parte delle stupende cose che l'ornavano, perché fra la cornice del soffitto e gl' intarsi, ove ora sono specchi coperti d'un pessimo color celeste, erano un tempo tarsie preziose che, si vuole, contenessero i ritratti dei Duchi e delle Duchesse d'Urbino"¹⁸. This refers to a blue fabric that filled the empty space between inlays and coffered ceiling, but clearly did not enhance it, according to the author.

¹³ Gherardi, 1875, p. 70.

¹⁴ Gherardi 1875, p. 90.

¹⁵ Gherardi 1875, p. 90.

¹⁶ Gherardi 1875, p. 96

¹⁷ Bernini Pezzini 1977, p. 12.

¹⁸ Gherardi 1875, p. 97.



1 Soprallogge with lapidarium, 1756-1944 (S.G.U. N. 1776-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)



2 Studiolo, c.1935 (O. Savio, U.Pl. D 44779, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Roma)¹⁹



3 Studiolo, c.1935 (O. Savio, U.Pl. D 44778, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Roma)

¹⁹ Studying the images taken by Oscar Savio at Urbino's Palazzo Ducale it is possible to date the photographic campaign in the beginning of Guglielmo Pacchioni's directorship (1933-1936); however, some of these layouts remained static for over fifteen years.

We will see in the next chapters how the theme of emptiness in the *studiolo* would also prompt early gallery directors to question themselves in search of possible solutions to the gaps. Before the end of the century the information on the subject of the plates was corrected and appears in “Urbino e i suoi Monumenti” no longer as a series of portraits of Montefeltro nobles, but of the illustrious thinkers dearest to the commissioner of the paintings²⁰.

After becoming State property, the building faced twenty years of serious decay, it housed the prisons, the Intendenza di Finanza, the Subprefect's offices, the Subprefect's private quarters, the salt and tobacco depot, and each disposed of the spaces without criteria of heritage protection²¹. Gherardi decided to conclude the section precisely with a heartfelt plea: “chiudiamo questo articolo facendo voti che il Palazzo dei nostri Duchi, già dichiarato Monumento Nazionale, sia tenuto dal Governo in buona custodia; e toltene le carceri e taluni altri ufficii che in esso non dovrebbero stare, sia nella parte artistica con serio proposito restaurato”²². A truly laudable and tireless concern, already presented in 1872 to the Ministry of Public Education, which at the time encompassed the functions of today's Ministry of Culture.

1.1.1 Palazzo Ducale after the Unification of Italy

In 1869, Gherardi established the Accademia Raffaello, that reunited a koiné of intellectuals part of an academic tradition «consolidata negli ambiti culturali cittadini»²³.

The eminent institute that initially occupied the apartments of the Dukes of Urbino in the Ducal Palace. Within a mere three years, the institution had successfully rendered several rooms on the piano nobile accessible to the public ²⁴. Then the sudden opportunity to purchase Raphael's birthplace caused the academy to move away from the palace, but the president did not stop interceding for state intervention, asking the Minister for help. “Per rispondere alla seconda parte della perorazione fatta da V.E. In essa è detto che *molto per la conservazione del Palazzo deve fare il Comune, collocandovi scuole o destinandolo ad altro uso (...)* E come, Sig. Ministro si può pensare al collocamento nel Palazzo di scuole e uffici municipali mentre tutti sanno quali elementi di conservazione possano da esse aspettarsi?”²⁵. Despite the restoration project being in its nascent stages, the necessary financial resources were lacking.

The static problems encountered since the 18th century had been temporarily solved by re-roofing, replacing all damaged stone parts, and sometimes inserting iron chains between some arches to balance the horizontal forces acting on the structure. For example, in the second half of the eighteenth century the

²⁰ Calzini 1897 p. 42.

²¹ *Storia di un Museo* 1977, p. 15. For example, the pilasters at the beginning of the monumental staircase suffered serious damage due to the salt stored on the ground floor, which was absorbed into the masonry and combined with rising damp corroded the stone decorations. In 1872 Sali e Tabacchi were moved to the former convent of Sant' Agostino, as mentioned in Musacchio 1994, p. 925.

²² Gherardi 1875, pp. 97-98.

²³ Paolini 2014, p. 118. Fucili 2003, p. 16.

²⁴ Cerboni Baiardi 2007 p. 10.

²⁵ Gherardi 1872, pp. 33-34.

walls of the first floor's *soprallogge* were already crowded with tombstones and monuments that, in addition to being in unsuitable conservation conditions, caused a static risk to the corridor²⁶. Valadier had stemmed the situation with iron chains to help the thrusts of the vaults, but after nearly a century a new intervention was needed²⁷.

In 1880 the urgency of structural work on the building gained resonance in Parliament, when Senator Luigi Chiesi directly exposed to Minister De Sanctis the serious conditions of Urbino's largest palace. The request was addressed by the newly appointed Presidente della Camera dei deputati, Michele Coppino, and the restoration process was initiated with the Torricini façade²⁸. From 1881 the Inspector of Excavations and Monuments Giuseppe Ciccolini, in accordance with the Subprefect Colbertaldo, entrusted the structural restoration of the former prison to engineer Raffaele Faccioli (Bologna, 1836-1914)²⁹.

This delicate operation was conducted with particular intensity between 1882 and 1883 and the following year earned him the appointment by the Minister as delegate for the compilation of the list of national monuments for Emilia, Romagna and Marche. The new task required many graphic surveys characteristic of his professionalism, but also historical-conservative research and photographic reproduction of buildings and architectural details. Photos of the Ducal Palace appear in album number 2 of the Faccioli fund, kept in the Cabinet of Drawings and Graphics of the Pinacoteca di Bologna, and attest to the different stages of his work³⁰.



4 Sala degli Angeli, Accademia Raffaello, post 1869 - ante 1873 (Unknown author, 31875/ 1001, fondo fotografico Faccioli, Archivio Storico della Pinacoteca di Bologna, Bologna)

A good part of the photographs comes from the firm Fotografia dell'Emilia, directed by Pietro Poppi, and was made for study purposes, given the documentary and catalographic slant of the shots³¹. A first campaign is dated 1877 and published in 1879 within the photographic studio's catalog, while the second

²⁶ Polichetti 1985, p. 407.

²⁷ On this see: Polichetti 1985, pp. 405-411.

²⁸ Marchigiani 1880, p. 90. The magazine edited by the Accademia Raffaello used to periodically report on the state of the Palazzo Ducale and the various initiatives carried out within it.

²⁹ Marchigiani 1881, p. 62. Dal Poggetto 1985, pp.113-117.

³⁰ *All'Esposizione di Roma 1883*, p.161 the article testifies to Faccioli's success at Rome art exhibition as a painter in the years he was also restoring Palazzo Ducale, as he had a multifaceted approach to his job, both engineering and artistic.

³¹ See Cervellati 1992, p. 15.

should be dated between 1883 and 1885, and was included in the 1888 catalog³². Faccioli, having completed the prisons, may have actively taken part in the second one. From 1885 he was also in charge of the restoration of the representative spaces and needed documentation for that. The operations lasted until 1890, albeit with some health difficulties that removed him from the site during the last year of work³³.

The documentary photograph of the access door to the *Sala da letto del Duca*, surmounted by the sign of the Accademia Raffaello, is presented herewith. It was conjectured that this campaign's chronology could extend to the demise of Faccioli. However, given that the institute had left the palace in 1873 in favour of the painter's house, the dating should be prior to that. The photograph is part of a series of anonymous prints in Faccioli's album that can be traced back to the late 1860s, earlier than his appointment to compile the list of regional monuments. It is evident that the photographic collection serves as a medium to articulate not only functional rationales but also to substantiate the architect's continuous engagement with the palace.

1.1.2 The Artworks Landing at the Palace

To coincide with the fourth centenary of Raphael's birth in 1883, the collections of the Royal Institute of Art were moved from the Convent of St. Benedict to the Ducal Palace, which had been made accessible with the structural restoration of the previous years, however, only in a very small part ready for exhibition use. The management of movable and immovable property at this stage was parted, which caused problems for both the collections and the structure of the palace.

Raphael's anniversary was celebrated with an exhibition where ducal apparatus by Ridolfi and Cialdieri, some of Raphael's prints and the design of the monument dedicated to him could be seen on display in the *Salone del Trono*. At the same time in the Sala della Jole took place the paintings from the convent of San Benedetto³⁴. This consisted of 67 paintings, which were still in the *Sala della Jole* in 1885, as reported by Count Ettore Gherardi, Pompeo's heir, in the "Guida Storica e Artistica al Palazzo Ducale di Urbino"³⁵.

There was probably a setback and many paintings from the Real Istituto remained on display in the halls without major changes for a decade or so. This situation is quite common in the history of many museums, as is also the display of Donatello statues at the Bargello, placed temporarily for the fifth centenary of the artist's birth and later stabilized in the permanent collection³⁶. In the Urbino case, the stasis hypothesis is supported by Grazia Bernini Pezzini, who refers to a "Elenco degli ambienti ed oggetti esistenti nel palazzo ducale di Urbino" attesting in 1892 to "a collection of paintings belonging to the erigenda galleria marchigiana" inside the *Sala della Jole*³⁷.

³² Cristofori, Roversi 1980, pp. 227-241.

³³ Nave 2007, pp. 195-202.

³⁴ Dal Poggetto 1985, p. 116.

³⁵ Gherardi 1885, p. 11.

³⁶ *Catalogo del R. Museo Nazionale di Firenze* 1898, pp. 62-68.

³⁷ On this see the note 16 in Bernini Pezzini 1977 p. 16.

In 1894, the picture gallery began to consolidate a certain autonomy from the school, which had primarily didactic purposes. With the appointment of Count Camillo Castracane-Staccoli as “Real conservatore in carico dell’Istituto di Belle Arti”, the art collections owned by the institute became the priority of a specifically dedicated figure³⁸. Upon assuming this role, Castracane-Staccoli had already accumulated a wealth of experience, having served as vice-president of the Istituto di Belle Arti and as inspector of the conservatory commission for the district of Urbino, Macerata Feltria, S. Agata Feltria, Pennabilli, S. Angelo in Vado, Urbania and S. Leo³⁹. In his report of 6th March 1895, he submitted a detailed account to the Ufficio Regionale per la conservazione dei monumenti delle Marche e dell’Umbria, denouncing the interior of the Ducal Palace as having fallen into a state of disrepair and disregard⁴⁰.

The document provides a comprehensive account of the entities that occupied the various rooms. This offers an overview of the distribution of spaces and responsibilities at the close of the century. The subprefecture expanded into the *Ospiti* apartment, occupying the valuable spaces returned by the Accademia Raffaello. Also, several rooms were converted into a residence for the Subprefect. Since 1885 some didactic activities of the Istituto di Belle Arti moved to the area vacated by the prisons (later expanded to the former theatre and ground-floor spaces, eventually restored by the Ufficio Regionale)⁴¹. The picture gallery of the Real Istituto remained in the *Sala della Jole* without major changes.

Prior to the promotion of Castracane, the responsibility for the entire palace was held by the prefecture. After the unification of Italy, the prefect was responsible for many aspects, representing the central government at the provincial level. He was appointed to public order, security, and the enforcement of laws regarding the protection of artistic heritage⁴². He often served as president of local commissioni di Belle Arti and also handled procedures for the restoration of monumental buildings⁴³. However, the sub-prefecture of Urbino had neither the resources nor the motivation to manage it effectively⁴⁴. Castracane reports that, upon his arrival, supervision was negligible⁴⁵. This marked the beginning of the shift of that responsibility to the person of the conservator, with the effect of finally reuniting the tasks of protecting the building and the works it contained.

He increased the collections to the number of 165 paintings and, considering the *Jole* room alone unsuitable for displaying all the works, Castracane-Staccoli decided to distribute them in the *Trono* room as well ⁴⁶.

³⁸ Dal Poggetto 1985, p. 106

³⁹ *Annuario del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione* 1983, pp. 296, 535

⁴⁰ Polichetti 1985, pp. 417-421.

⁴¹ Sacconi 1903, p. 401. Several documents on the restoration works of these years are available at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato (see Musacchio 1994, p. 925.)

⁴² Comandini 1901, p. 426

⁴³ Dalla Negra 1986, p.192.

⁴⁴ Bencivenni, Dalla Negra, Grifoni 1987, pp. 7-8. Curzi 2008, p. 28.

⁴⁵ *Storia di un museo* 1977 p. 17.

⁴⁶ *Relazione creduta del 1900-1901 citata in Storia di un museo* p. 17.

After the wall restoration, the *Sala delle Veglie*, the vestibule and the so-called *Salotto della Duchessa* i.e. “Duchess's living room” also became part of the itinerary⁴⁷.

1.1.3 Location of Artworks at the Beginning of XX Century

The present research is oriented towards an interest that extends beyond the objects present and the spaces occupied; rather, the objective is to investigate the principle according to which the works were placed. It is therefore a particularly interesting subject to analyse a guide created by the local periegete and historian Egidio Calzini⁴⁸. Published in 1897, towards the end of the century, the town guide won a gold medal from the Minister of Education. Here Calzini described separately, among other Urbino attractions, the palace and collection of the Istituto di Belle Arti. Regarding the former, a historical account of the foundation and description of the decorations was presented, while the latter reported that the paintings reached the number of 240⁴⁹. In the large *Sala degli Angeli* (“of the Angles” because of the chimneypiece decoration) were collected “alcune dozzine di pitture che non figurano nell’ultimo elenco de’ dipinti appartenenti all’Istituto” perhaps the recent acquisitions advocated by Castracane-Staccoli⁵⁰. In fact, Calzini claims that previously the hundred works formerly were placed in the room then known as the *Plebiscito* (now *Veglie*) and in the vestibule immediately after. The appearance of the rooms can be deduced from some black-and-white photographs published in the guidebook show that wallpaper with arabesque designs of a rather intense color stood out on the walls, detaching from the white of the fireplace.

On the layout he writes: “le opere di alcuni maestri sono state collocate possibilmente vicine tra loro, o a quelle di una medesima scuola; ma non per tutte si è creduto di poter fare altrettanto; di guisa che non sempre si è raggiunto lo scopo precipuo per cui si vanno riordinando in Italia anche le gallerie minori”⁵¹. In the *Sala degli Angeli* were two crucifixes of the XIV century, a stained-glass window by Timoteo Viti, the *Madonna del Soccorso* by Raffaellino del Colle, two bishops of Barocci’s school and other⁵². Sometimes artworks were brought together in a confusing manner, for example, tablets by Antonio da Ferrara belonging to the same composition were displayed disjointed. Also, Calzini questioned the juxtaposition of painters from different periods such as Giusto di Gand with Barocci and his school. Overall, the exhibition showed no separation by chronology or medium. Some schools were partially grouped, but none were given a dedicated room.

Finally, in 1901, the three rooms in the *Duchessa* wing were properly restored and occupied by the collection. Calzini recalled the management of the spaces on the *piano nobile*, as well as an exhibition in honor of Giovanni Santi, which opened the previous June, as written in «L'Arte»⁵³. In any case, this

⁴⁷ Calzini 1897, p. 24. Dragoni, 2010.

⁴⁸ De Carolis 2016 pp. 153-172.

⁴⁹ Calzini 1897, p. 41.

⁵⁰ Calzini 1897 p. 26.

⁵¹ Calzini 1897, p. 25.

⁵² Calzini 1897, p. 27.

⁵³ Calzini 1901, pp. 361-390. Sacconi 1903, pp. 400-409.

arrangement was short-lived. In 1907, the Ministry granted those rooms to the new conservator, Astorre Antaldi, as his personal quarters.

Antaldi rearranged the collection, perhaps inspired by the recent change in the layout of Perugia's picture gallery⁵⁴. Bernini Pezzini drew this insightful parallel noting that, since 1910, the Pinacoteca of Perugia had displayed the medieval section of the Musei Civici in a more scenographic than philological manner⁵⁵. Moreover, the interiors of the Pinacoteca had been refreshed in 1906 for the exhibition *Esposizione di Antica Arte Umbra*, a local newspaper announced “Procedono i lavori di addobbo delle sale, le cui pareti saranno coperte con stoffe adatte a porre in maggiore rilievo le tavole e le tele. (...) Speriamo che il riordinamento risponda a pieno alle esigenze dei tempi ed alla giusta aspettativa degli studiosi”⁵⁶.

In Urbino Antaldi decided to display the Mauruzi collection in the Jole room along with other objects owned by the municipality and the Congregation of Charity, thus creating a “museo di oggetti d’arte” that did not apply art-historical criteria but appealed to the sense of curiosity evoked by this sort of wunderkammer. A rare photograph of the time allows us to see that the walls were completely packed with objects.



5 Sala della Jole, c. 1907 (Unknown author, extract from *Storia di un Museo*, 1977, figure 9)

The Galleria Nazionale archives also preserve a valuable 1906 document in which Ettore Gherardi, the new secretary of the Real Istituto di Belle Arti, created an inventory of the collection. The main focus was on the Mauruzi donation of about one hundred works. Then, a second paper listed an additional thirty objects that came to the institute with the count's collection but did not belong to it. A case of recent

⁵⁴ Bernini Pezzini 1977, p. 17.

⁵⁵ Santi 1969, p.11.

⁵⁶ Blasi 1906, p.186.

interest, for example, concerns the terracotta relief known as “Madonna della Ghiara” believed to have already belonged to Mauruzi, until a 2013 conference rightly pointed out that it was part of the Gherardi's second list; the different provenance opened up new attributions, no longer to Brandani but to Antonio Traeri known as Cestellino⁵⁷. Many of the 130 works inventoried in 1906 were exhibited by Antaldi in the *Jole* room beginning in 1908, the photograph mentioned above shows many objects that in fact correspond precisely with what Ettore Gherardi reported⁵⁸.

In the 1909 monograph *Federigo Barocci; ein Begründer des Barockstils in der Malerei* August Schmarsow reported that Barocci's works were not supposed to be in dark rooms “Solcher Malweise widerstrebt aber die Gedrücktheit dunkler Säle, wie die Aufhängung der Bilder Schloss von Urbino”, such as the ones of the palace⁵⁹. Probably he refers to the *Duchessa* wing, and there was no lighting system. The display said much about the neglected condition of the palace in those years, where local interest proved insufficient to give a worthy presentation to the Real Istituto's collection⁶⁰.

1.2 The Galleria is Born: Director Lionello Venturi

The legal breakthrough that marked the beginning of the museum's history as we know it today took place on March 17, 1912. The Galleria Nazionale delle Marche was established by royal decree number 391/1912⁶¹. Palazzo Ducale was recognized as the most suitable place to house all the aforementioned collections of national interest. The artworks belonging to the Municipality of Urbino, the dismantled religious institutes, and the Istituto di Belle Arti collection were officially united under a single institution responsible for their management.

Lionello Venturi, the first director of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, promoted initial purchases and restorations⁶². He had previously been an inspector of fine arts in Venice, resolutely accepted the challenge of structuring the museum in Urbino. This early phase of his career already demonstrates the determination of a man who, a few years later, would fight in the Great War, earning a silver medal for military valor, and who was one of the very few university professors to refuse to join the Fascist Party in 1931⁶³.

⁵⁷ Montanari 2015, pp. 129-156. Lipari 2024, pp. 85-106.

⁵⁸ Pubblicata nel catalogo *Storia di un Museo* (1977) e riconfermata da Dal Poggetto 1985, pp. 105-124.

⁵⁹ Schmarsow 1909 p. 20.

⁶⁰ Scarpacci 2015, p. 101.

⁶¹ Zampetti 1992, p.6 refers to two decrees of 17 March 1912 and 30 January 1913, on the contrary Paolo dal Poggetto 1985 p.105 reports the date of 7 March 1912. The Superintendent Rosaria Valazzi celebrates the centenary of the Gallery on 7 March 2012 and also the statute of the museum post-Franceschini reform reports the date of 7 March. However, in recent times the date of 17 March reappears (most recently in Bernardini 2023, p. 30), this prompted me to look for the original decree, which in fact reports the date of 17 March (“R.d. 1912, marzo 17, n.391” Archivio centrale dello Stato> Raccolta ufficiale delle leggi e dei decreti> Parte ordinaria, 1912).

⁶² Venturi, 1914a, pp. 305-327. Serra, 1930, p. 12.

⁶³ Valeri 2017, p. 656.

Among the new acquisitions, the director secured the frescoes by Antonio da Ferrara detached from the Paltroni chapel from S. Francesco church. In 1912-1913, the Ministry of Education purchased a Madonna and Child fresco by Giovanni Santi and the banner with St. Giacomo delle Marche by Carlo Crivelli⁶⁴. Also, The Madonna di S. Agostino was acquired thanks to Corrado Ricci in 1912⁶⁵. In 1914, a Madonna and Child by Allegretto Nuzi, a triptych attributed to Maestro Antonio from Ostra Vetere, seven carved 15th-century chests from Cagli, and a Madonna and Child with Saints by Filippo Bellini were added⁶⁶.

Many works were retrieved from the storerooms, as clearly explained by Venturi in 1914 and in the 2023 exhibition *L'Altra Collezione*⁶⁷. Both the purchase and the rediscovery were followed by restoration work, entrusted to Cavalier Gualtiero De Bacci Venuti, whose value was recognized by important figures in the Ministry such as Giulio Cantalamessa and Adolfo Venturi⁶⁸. Thanks to his father's intervention Lionello Venturi called on De Bacci Venuti to work in the Marche region, where he continued to work from 1911 to 1922, carrying out numerous interventions in the Montefeltro area⁶⁹. From 1914, there is documentary evidence of his collaboration with his son, the painter Riccardo, and with the restorer Guglielmo Filippini, whose letters to the Superintendent of the Galleria Nazionale refer to the state of conservation of works both in the museum and in the region⁷⁰.

In an estimate dated March 8, 1913, addressed to the Superintendent of Urbino, Gualtiero De Bacci Venuti presented the 14 works in need of restoration before their placing in the rooms⁷¹. He referred to a Madonna and Child with the head of St. John below and a village background, Tuscan school of the first half of the 16th century (probably the panel in the style of Francesco Menzocchi from S. Chiara church), claiming that it was “currently in the holy room after the one called the throne room,” that is, perhaps in the *Angeli* or the *Veglie* rooms⁷². De Bacci then mentioned a “small room leading to the room of Giusto di Gand” where there were some works by Federico Barocci, such as the sketch for the Deposition previously belonging to the Congregation of Charity, the two kneeling angels, and an unidentified Madonna with Angels. The restorer's inspection, which took place at the end of February and beginning of March, marks the start of the rearrangement designed by Venturi⁷³.

⁶⁴ Venturi 1914a, pp. 314-316.

⁶⁵ Madiari 1913, p. 161.

⁶⁶ Serra 1917, pp. 17-23. Lionello Venturi exercised the right of preemption for sixteen thousand lire for Allegretto's panel and entrusted it to Gualtiero De Bacci Venuti for restoration (Paparello 2024, p. 148).

⁶⁷ Venturi 1914b, p. 415; Bernardini 2023, p. 30.

⁶⁸ Scarpacci 2012, p. 212.

⁶⁹ Pini 2001, pp. 141-174.

⁷⁰ Torresi 1996, pp. 96-97.

⁷¹ Cit. in Donati 2007, pp. 43-46.

⁷² Donati 2007. The information enables the reconstruction of the arrangement of the works immediately prior to Venturi's initial installation of the Galleria Nazionale.

⁷³ The restorer writes of a large room entirely dedicated to Barocci, which housed the *Immacolata Concezione*, the Madonna of San Simone, and likely the *Stimate*. The correspondence between Venturi and De Bacci Venuti attests that the 14 paintings needed to be restored in preparation for the museum's inauguration, as the director specified that the work must be completed by the end of May (Donati 2007 pp. 43-46; Scarpacci 2015 p.111).

In 1912, at the 10th International Congress of Art History, Corrado Ricci presented a painting attributed to Barocci, recently purchased by the state. This lecture drew attention to the artist, and on the occasion of the third centenary of his death, Urbino celebrated him not only with city celebrations but also with the publication of "Studi e Notizie su Federico Barocci"⁷⁴. This text, a collection of historical-critical and documentary essays on Barocci's life and pictorial activity, is a tangible sign of the renewed interest in the figure of the painter as a *genius loci* for his native city⁷⁵. Until that time, the painter had been completely overlooked by Italian art historians. Therefore, it is particularly significant that Lionello Venturi and the Galleria Nazionale participated in this movement of reevaluation⁷⁶.

The young director decided to coincide the inauguration of the museum with the celebrations in honor of the artist and to proceed with the restoration of his paintings. The origin of the Gallery brings with it the ambitious project of transforming Urbino into the most representative center for the art of the Marche region, responding to the needs expressed since the time of the Valerio laws⁷⁷. The coincidence of the founding year with the tercentenary of Barocci's death promoted the rediscovery of the Urbino school of painting between the 16th and 17th centuries, which was also celebrated during the inauguration held on May 25, 1913⁷⁸.

As far as the layout is concerned, the museum spaces were larger than those of the Regio Istituto: it occupied the *Sala degli Angeli*, the *Sala dell'Ariosto*, i.e. *Sala delle Udienze*, and the six rooms of the *Magnifico* apartment, for a total of eight. For more than a century, it was possible to reconstruct Venturi's layout choices only inspecting a few faded photographs and the accounts by Luigi Renzetti and Egidio Calzini, authors of two detailed guides to the gallery. These were very valuable texts, and we will briefly look at their merits, but the sum of all the clues was not enough to provide a complete picture of the museum at its inauguration. Let's see what information they provided and how it was possible to integrate it.

1.2.1 The sources for the first layout of the Galleria Nazionale

The guidebook for the visitors produced in 1913 by Luigi Renzetti immortalized how the various spaces of the palace were intended to be used. On the one hand, it allowed visitors to understand the layout of the palace and, on the other, it mentioned some lesser-known rooms, attesting to their various uses. The description of the main floor began with the decorations of the loggias and the door to the *Sala della Jole*⁷⁹. The loggias, still marked by architectural quadrature in accordance with 18th-century antiquarian taste,

⁷⁴ *Studi e notizie su Federico Barocci*, 1913.

⁷⁵ Gallo 2024, p. 29.

⁷⁶ Scarpacci 2015, p. 107. See also the eulogistic article: Calzini 1912 pp. 97-99

⁷⁷ Archivio Centrale dello Stato 260.5: Pos. 3 Gallerie e Pinacoteche - Urbino. Reale galleria nazionale delle Marche. Conto delle anticipazioni e riordinamento (1913 - 1915) in Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione - Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle Arti - subfondo Divisione seconda (già Divisione prima) - serie Scavi; musei, gallerie, oggetti d'arte, esportazioni; monumenti - sottoserie 1908-1924 (Divisione I).

⁷⁸ Corrado Ricci's speech on Federico Barocci recorded in the catalogue curated by the Brigata Urbinate (*Studi e notizie su Federico Barocci*, 1913, p. 233). Calzini 1913a, p. 49. Bernini Pezzini 1977, p. 18.

⁷⁹ Renzetti 1913, p. 29. Calzini 1913, p. 49.

housed many ancient finds and the 72 reliefs with war machines sculpted by Ambrogio Barocci. Some photographs show the situation prior to Venturi's arrival and remain valid for observing the layout of the lapidary museum even during his administration, as he decided to leave the finds as he had found them (figure 1).

The main hall was described as white and unadorned, with three large windows, four sober fireplaces, and a large niche between the two entrances ⁸⁰. The hall led to the *Duchessa* apartment, which is remembered for its Rosselli fireplace and the “war” door. Then the itinerary passed to the apartment formerly intended for the Duca, where the *Sala degli Angeli* was encountered first, but only some of the subsequent rooms were open to visitors. Renzetti pointed out that in the *Ospiti* wing, were intended as the private residence of the sub-prefect, including the *Sala del Re d’Inghilterra* and the room with the effigies of the dukes and duchesses⁸¹. More will be said about this in the next chapter, as Venturi was unable to resolve this situation during his term of office.

An interesting note by Renzetti reported that at that time, Count Luigi Nardini, inspector of monuments, was preparing the paperwork to free the entire first floor from uses not in accordance with its museum purpose⁸². After an extensive account of the artists who worked on the doors, the study, and other court works, the guide also mentioned the charming balcony nestled between the Torricini and Guidobaldo's chapel, where Raphael's skull cast was displayed.



6 Cappellina di Guidobaldo with the cast of Raphael's skull, 1870-19 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 17549, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)

⁸⁰ Renzetti 1913, p. 31.

⁸¹ Renzetti 1913, p. 32.

⁸² Renzetti 1913, p. 32.

The report began with the architectural spaces and then moved on to the works, listed by painting schools in the following chapter: Renzetti chose to organize only 'the most notable paintings' in form of a list, without indicating in which room each group was located. This example indicates scholars considered the classification of the works to be a priority over their position in space⁸³. In the early phases of the Galleria Nazionale the new pieces on display emerged in the sources, with prevalence over other curatorial and restoration aspects. On the other end, the director addressed also structural consolidation, exhibition layout and the study of valuable stuccoes in the palace. In a 1914 article, Venturi wrote:

«il Palazzo Ducale di Urbino si presenta a noi come un'opera mista di architettura puramente costruttiva e di decorazione plastica con intento pittoresco. Il cortile e le logge da un lato, le porte ben intagliate e la serie di ritratti dipinti dall'altro, sono il risultato non di un insieme disarmonico, ma di due civiltà sovrapposte. La differenza delle scuole a cui appartenevano gli artisti che lavoravano nel palazzo ducale non bastava a spiegare la diversità delle due tendenze, che variavano nel tempo indicando un cambiamento nello spirito che presiedeva all'opera»⁸⁴.



7 Loggia in the Gallo courtyard c. 1910 (Unknown author, extract from Venturi 1914, p. 444)

This paragraph is relevant not only to the history of Renaissance architecture, but also to his perception of this magnificent palace as a product of multiple historical layers. The vision of a museum where several

⁸³ Renzetti 1913, p. 43.

⁸⁴ Venturi 1914b, p. 415.

overlapping civilizations can coexist in harmony inspired this thesis as well, because contemporary living spaces still tell a multifaceted history, that in the last century was made of museum setups.

Along with Venturi's article, some photographs showing details of the collection and the appearance of some architectural elements (before the gallery was open) were published on «L'Arte». For example, the two-level loggia next to the Torricini appeared completely walled up in those years (figure 7).

When Venturi arrived, the *Appartamento della Jole* was still covered with ornate wallpaper, as we can see in the second room of the apartment, now known for its frescoes. In the photographic documentation it is recognizable only by its stone decorations⁸⁵. The museum's archive preserves an image of this room (figure 8) which shows a stove set into the fireplace frame. Before the gallery was founded, therefore, some of the important rooms were heated by coal stoves whose exhaust pipes for dirty fumes pierced the chimney hood from the outside to connect to the flue.



8 Heating system in the Camera Picta (Unknown author, S.G.U. 1240-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

Another text that provides us with a wealth of information about the exhibition is that of Egidio Calzini. In 1913, he published an article on the layout of the Galleria in «Rassegna Bibliografica dell'Arte Italiana», describing how the works of art were managed immediately after Antaldi's regency: “erano tre mesi fa raccolte e ammonticchiate in quattro stanze senz'ordine, né cronologico, né di scuola e senza che una tinta

⁸⁵ Venturi 1914b, p. 422. The director attributed and commented on the stone carvings, and also added a photograph of the chimneypiece. The wallpaper was the same as in figure 8, but the heating system pipe had been removed, indicating that this type of stove was no longer in use after the inauguration of the Galleria Nazionale.

unita armonica le isolasse nello sguardo dell'osservatore”⁸⁶. In addition to the grouping criteria, the main problems were the limited space and the color of the walls. In fact, he reported that the decorative wallpaper disturbed the visitor's eye.

The impact of Venturi's setup was reminiscent of a Victorian gallery, aligning with the previous arrangement. However, he distributed it more effectively, as the paintings were no longer confined to four rooms but spread across eight. The doubled exhibition area had a distinctive solid color in each room “a seconda del carattere delle opere ivi raccolte”⁸⁷. The two main rooms were adorned with carved walnut baseboards, a design choice that may have been influenced by the layout of some important rooms in the Uffizi Galleries. There, the rooms dedicated to Botticelli, the XV-century Florentine School, and the portraits (figure 9) presented wooden baseboards along the lower portion of the walls. The photographic documentation of the Uffizi is dated around 1920; however, paneling was installed earlier⁸⁸. While there is no definitive date for all the spaces, the self-portraits room has been dated to around 1910 based on a document in the Uffizi's Archivio Storico⁸⁹.



9 Sala IV, Scuola fiorentina del secolo XV, Gallerie degli Uffizi, Firenze, 1920 (Unknown author, 9866, Firenze, Gabinetto Fotografico degli Uffizi, Firenze)

As was the case in Florence, the walls in Urbino were also painted with tempera on stucco, a technique that, according to Calzini, produced “un effetto più decoroso e signorile rispetto alle pitture a calce”⁹⁰. It

⁸⁶ Calzini 1913a, p. 49.

⁸⁷ Calzini 1913a, p. 50.

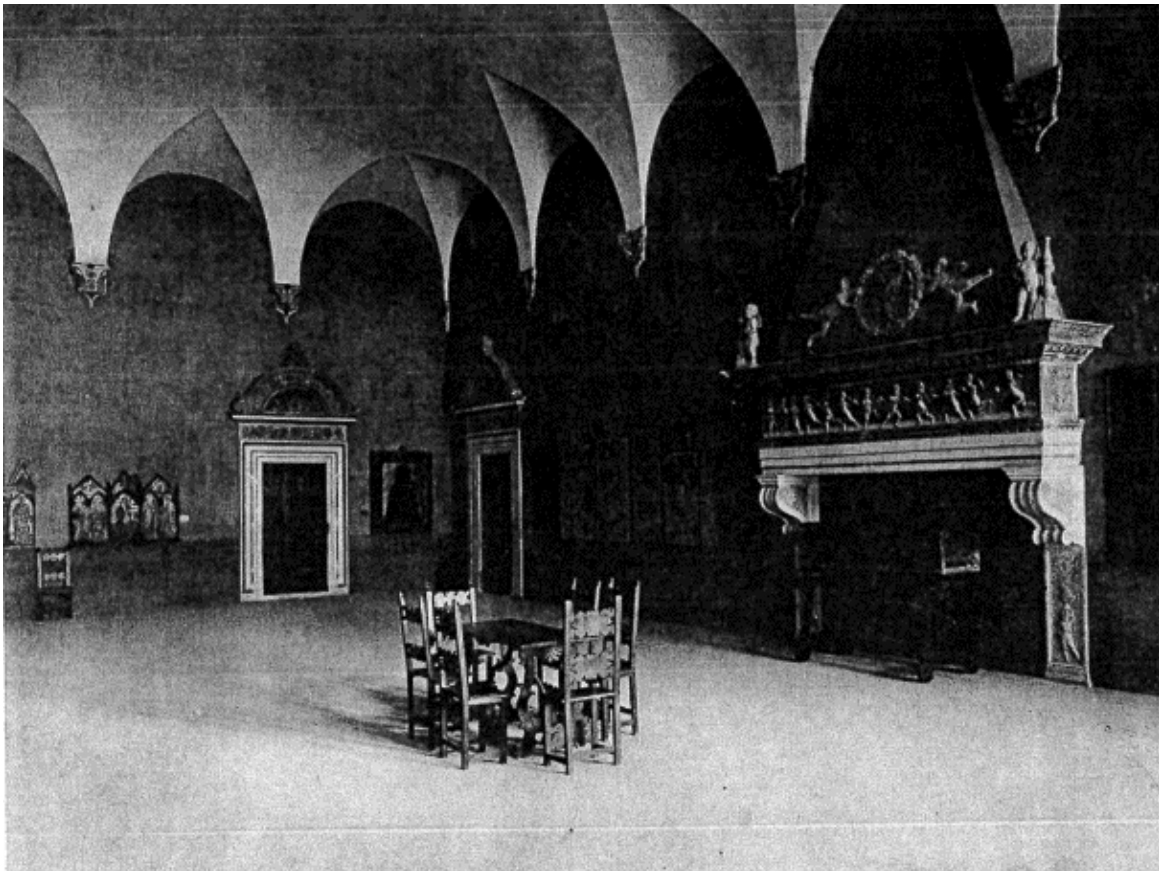
⁸⁸ Ieri, 2014. Parenti 2022, pp. 159-165.

⁸⁹ “17 - Sala degli autoritratti: zoccolo in legno e richiesta di ventilatori”, Archivio Storico, posizione 2 - Galleria degli Uffizi, 1910.

⁹⁰ Calzini 1913a, p. 50.

should be noted that photographic sources relating to Venturi's direction are very limited: only two rooms were documented in the museum's latest history, while this research shows four. The images, combined with Calzini's testimony, offer many museographic insights into that brief but significant era.

The order of the visit began with the Sala degli Angeli, with 14th-century Rimini paintings crowning the representation that historically had important links with Urbino⁹¹. The rediscovery of this school of painting is one of the most significant achievements of Venturi during his brief tenure⁹². The overall photograph allows us to place Alberti's triptych from the church of San Bartolomeo in Urbino (identified by Venturi as 15th-century Fabriano school) near the entrance to the Ospiti apartment, with the triptych by the Master of the Coronation of Urbino (then Giuliano da Rimini) next to it.



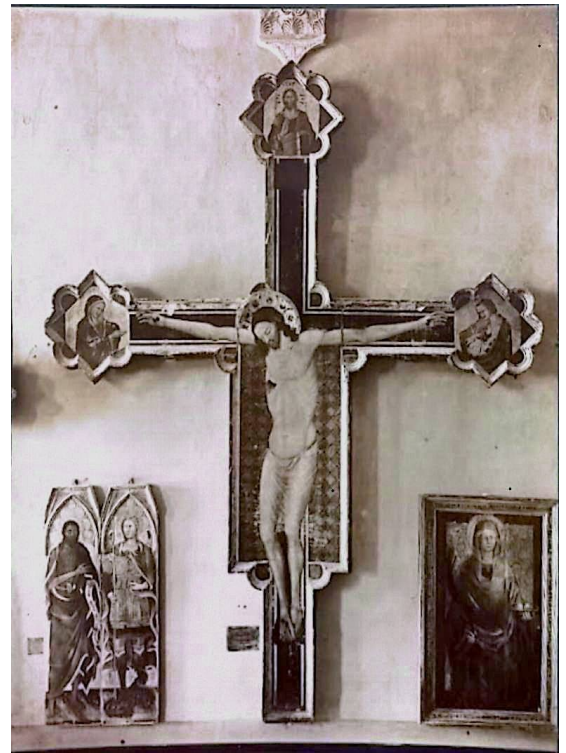
10 Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7964, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

⁹¹ Some of the artworks in the *Sala degli Angeli* were recently freed from extensive restoration work. This included the triptych by Giuliano da Rimini, now known as the *Maestro dell'Incoronazione di Urbino* (Brandi 1935, pp. XXXV, 124-125. Marchi 1995, p. 274), and the crucifix by Pietro da Rimini. This allowed for a deeper understanding of these paintings.

⁹² In the same room, Umbrian and Tuscan works, which were then attributed to the schools of Pietro Lorenzetti and Simone Martini, interacted with the *Madonna* by the Master of the Coronation of Bellpuig. Frescoes detached from Saint Francis and a polyptych by Antonio da Ferrara were placed on the same wall as Saint Clare and Saint Anthony, both attributed to Lorenzo Salimbeni. These pieces were used to illustrate the last traces of Gothic influence in 15th-century local painting.



11 St. Clare/ L. Salimbeni, crucifix/G. Baronzio and Senese Crucifixion in the Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7972, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)



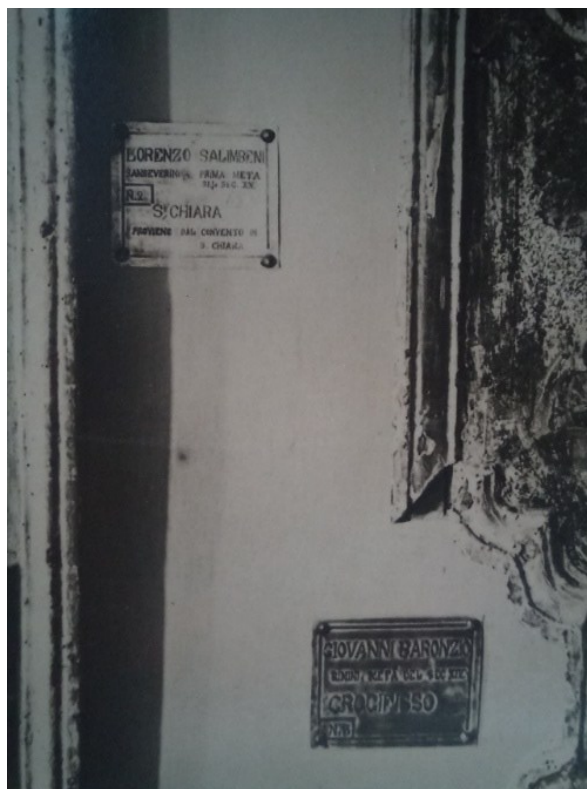
12 St. John and Michael/ Barna da Siena, crucifix/Pietro Lorenzetti, St. Agathe/ Antonio Alberti da Ferrara in the Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7973, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

On the corner between the two doors was the Byzantine-style Madonna and Child taken from the *Salus Populi Romani*, brought to the city to be reproduced on the Urbino Town Hall, and along the wall of the fireplace on one side were the detached frescoes from the church of San Francesco, in dialogue with the fresco by the Master of the Coronation of Bellpuig. On the other side was the polyptych of the Zoccolanti by Antonio di Guido da Ferrara, when it was still disjointed, as can be seen in a photograph by Zeri.



13 Polyptych of the Zoccolanti/ Antonio di Guido da Ferrara in the Sala degli Angeli c. 1916 (Unknown author, 65947, Fototeca Zeri, Bologna)

The image also shows that some works were framed by large panels, as in the case of the 44x20 cm cuspidated panel with Crucifixion, which the catalogs and the first directors marked as measuring 102x51 cm⁹³. It might have seemed like an inconsistency, but thanks to the photographic documentation, it was possible to understand that the measurements related to the arched support, which was much larger than the painting and also included label (visible in figure 11). Usually, the labels for the paintings were displayed on the wall next to the painting and included the name, place of origin of the artist, date, title and provenance of the work.



14 Labels, c. 1916 (Detail of image 11)

The following room, called “del Duca” by Calzini and today “delle Udienze,” collected the works created in Urbino under the government of Federico da Montefeltro, an idea that was assimilated by all subsequent directors and exhibitions. Another photograph of this room allows us to add Carlo Crivelli's *San Giacomo della Marca* and the inlaid chest with an architectural perspective to the list. On the other walls were the famous portrait of Duca Federico with the young Guidubaldo by Pedro Berreguete, the monumental *Rocco* and *Tobia* from the Santi school, and then there were the Verrocchio Madonna, *Sant' Apollonia*, and *San. Sebastiano* by Timoteo Viti⁹⁴.

⁹³ Brandi 1935, p.116.

⁹⁴ Calzini 1913a p. The works presented included the following: the architectural perspective originally attributed to Piero della Francesca, the predella by Paolo Uccello, the *Salvator Mundi*, which was initially attributed to Melozzo da Forlì, and was later transferred to Bartolomeo della Gatta, the *Apostles* by Giusto di Gand, and a significant group of works by Giovanni Santi, such as the Buffi altarpiece, the *Saint Sebastian*, and the *Madonna and Child* fresco, which arrived in 1912 from Cagli. (see Appendix 1)



15 Sala delle Udienze c. 1916 (Unknown author, Serie C 7999, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

The walls were covered with sober wallpaper fabric, which was perhaps considered the most elegant choice. This also left more space for artworks. However, the imposing wooden plinth at the base weighed down the visual appeal.

Afterwards, visitors could see the *studiolo*, the chapel, and the loggia set between the Torricini. The apartment was made up of two more rooms, but they were not part of the tour. The Accademia Raffaello maintained a presence in that portion of the apartment, which they had restored prior to their relocation to Casa Raffaello in 1873. This may be the rationale behind the allocation of certain rooms to the academy and its persistence even after the official establishment of the Galleria Nazionale.

Entering the Sala delle Veglie, visitors found themselves in front of two paintings by Titian and the best of 16th-century Urbino art, such as Federico Zuccari's Dead Christ, Raffaellino del Colle's Madonna, several works by Antonio Palmerini, an imitator of Raphael, and contemporary Flemish tapestries. In the next vestibule there were some minor works by painters such as Bagnacavallo and Mansueti.

The subsequent chamber contained the artistic creations of Federico Barocci, a renowned artist who, despite primarily working within the confines of his place of origin, managed to garner acclaim and recognition among his contemporaries. Venturi intended organizing a monographic temporary exhibition in his honour but did not manage to realise it for the short duration of his directorship in

Urbino⁹⁵. However, one room was completely dedicated to Barocci and his school. A photograph (figure 16) allows to evaluate the selection of the numerous paintings that can be recognized in it.⁹⁶



16 *Salotto della Duchessa c. 1916* (Unknown author, MPI6216666, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Next was the room dedicated to the 17th and 18th centuries, with the *Madonna del Sassoferato*, a pair of portraits from the school of Rosalba Carriera, the *Sant'Agata* del Passeri, the Baptism of Lazzarini, and a *San Filippo* by Claudio Ridolfi. In summary, the Duca wing, west side of the Salone del Trono, was organized by chronology, starting with the 14th and 15th centuries, and this approach continued in the first four rooms of the Duchessa apartment, with 16th and 17th centuries. However, the criterion did not follow through to the end: the last two rooms were dedicated to the 'objects of the museum'.

One small room presented the best of the museum's sculptural objects, with Romanesque sculpture on the right of the entrance, including marble and stucco Madonnas, followed by 15th-century busts and, finally, on the left wall, some works by Brandani. The other room presented a selection of majolica, the precious

⁹⁵ Gallo 2024, pp. 29-32.

⁹⁶ Almost frontal to the entrance, *S. Francesco riceve le Stimate* was the focal point at the end of a series of rooms. This choice was intended to capture the interest of those entering the Duchess's wing, a role that the *S. Francesco* still fulfills today, welcoming visitors as they ascend to the second floor. Adjacent to it was Alessandro Vitali's *S. Agata*. Vitali's painting was not referenced in Calzini's guide, but it is unmistakable in the photographic document. Between the fireplace and the door were works that were challenging to discern: centrally, at the top, was the head of Christ expiring (*L'altra collezione* 2023, pp. 49, 94-95), and below it, a copy of the Visitation, obtained from the church of Santa Chiara. The photograph featured also the *Eternal Father*, characterized by his horizontal format, and the portrait of Barocci positioned above it.

stained-glass window with the Annunciation designed by Timoteo Viti, and the *Alcova del Duca Federico*, recently rediscovered by Inspector Nardini⁹⁷. This structure is almost unique: it is painted yet not a painting *stricto sensu*, and it is sculpted yet not a sculpture. This object, which can be considered quasi-architectural, was placed in the room divided by typology, as its interpretation from a museological perspective proved challenging. Other options would have been by chronology, or by attempting to establish a connection with the Palazzo Ducale, a move that may have resulted in the reconstruction of the Duke's bedroom. Nonetheless, at the onset of the 20th century, this methodology was regarded as antiquated⁹⁸. Ultimately, the alcove was situated within a chamber surrounded by majolicas.



17 *Alcova in the Duchessa apartment c. 1916 (Unknown author, S.G.U. 1207-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)*

This research could fill in the gaps left by the descriptions and photographs thanks to eight stylized maps, showing the layout of each room. The unframed “blind spots” were finally integrated, and the collection was positioned in the space with a reasonable margin of certainty. This is probably Venturi's final design, as the works to be displayed on the walls match well with other sources, with only one chest and Timoteo Viti's stained-glass window being placed differently. Each floor plan shows the author, subject of the work, and numbering (Appendix 1).

This first layout was a breath of fresh air compared to the management of the collection and the building prior to the establishment of the Galleria Nazionale. Lionello Venturi's tenure ended after only two years

⁹⁷ Calzini 1913a, p. 52.

⁹⁸ Levi 2016, pp. 515-517 explains more on the rejection of historic-reconstruction setups in early 1900s.

because the young director won the 1914 competition for a University chair in Art History in Turin, where he replaced Pietro Toesca⁹⁹. The arrangement of the rooms by school of painting was a criterion recognized and repeated by his successors, who applied it to most of the future exhibitions, especially consolidating the connection of the *Realissimo* apartment with the late-Quattrocento. Even in the subsequent phases of enrichment of the collections, the Rimini and Fabriano schools were privileged, following the line traced in those years.

⁹⁹ Cavenago 2020.

A Growing Collection: Luigi Serra's Museum "in Stile"

2.1 The Galleria Nazionale delle Marche post-World War I

In 1913, the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice undertook a programme of refurbishment overseen by an inspector of fine arts named Luigi Serra¹⁰⁰. Following his graduation in Rome in 1901, under the supervision of Adolfo Venturi, he successfully completed the ministerial competition, becoming inspector in Urbino since 1909¹⁰¹. Subsequently, he assumed a teaching position in Naples, thus acquiring both theoretical and practical expertise. Upon arriving in Venice, he initiated a comprehensive reorganization of the collection. The principle that guided this operation was primarily chronological, and, when possible, connections were created between the artworks and the museum building, the Scuola Grande di Santa Maria della Carità¹⁰². For example, he placed the so-called 'primitives' in the *Sala del Capitolo*. The room's gilded, coffered ceiling is adorned with cherubic head decorations and was crafted by Marco Cozzi in the 1460s, thus establishing a connection with the exhibited objects.

In 1915 Serra was promoted at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, where he would organize a new refurbishment for a whole fifteen years. It was a period of tremendous expansion for the gallery, but the early days were marked by a shortage of funds due to the outbreak of World War I. Furthermore, a few months after his appointment, Serra himself was called up for military service and stationed in Rimini¹⁰³. In the meantime, the archaeologist Arduino Ciolfi was sent to Urbino to carry out the projects and restorations decided upon by the director¹⁰⁴.

Among the most important operations completed by Ciolfi was the definitive removal of the Sub-Prefecture and the Notarial Archive from the relevant areas of the first floor. He also obtained for the museum's collection works by Timoteo Viti, Piero della Francesca, and Giovanni Santi from the Curia, that the "conservatori" of the Real Istituto di Belle Arti had formerly pursued, without success. The most important of these were the Arrivabene altarpiece, the Flagellation, and the six panels with the Apostles by Santi¹⁰⁵. The facade of the Cathedral needed urgent work, so the Chapter agreed to carry out the deposit and, with Ciolfi's support, the paintings were restored between February and June 1916.

¹⁰⁰ Serra 1914, pp. 1-2. There is not much documentation on this reorganization because it was dismantled in February 1915 due to the start of the war. This required artworks to be detached from the walls and protected from the risk of bombing (Boscolo Marchi 2021, p. 152).

¹⁰¹ Mochi Onori 2007, p. 580. Sciolla 2016, pp. 13-25, 27-49.

¹⁰² This information is derived from inspecting Serra's catalogue. However, it is worth mentioning the deafening silence on the museology and on his setup choices. The aforementioned method continued in Serra's work during 1921 at the Pinacoteca di Pesaro: Levi 2016, p. 514. Instead, both guidebook (Serra 1919) and catalogue (Serra 1930) of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche show more reasoning and argumentation.

¹⁰³ Scarpacci 2012, pp. 212-213.

¹⁰⁴ Ciolfi had directed the excavation of Chiusi (Tuscany) in 1911. See *Grandi archeologi del Novecento. Ricerche tra Preistoria e Medioevo nell'Agro Chiusino* 2010, pp. 63-65.

¹⁰⁵ Bernini Pezzini 1977, p. 19.

Back in Urbino at the end of the conflict, Serra expanded the Galleria and set up most of the rooms that had been recovered from the offices of the Sub-prefect and the Accademia Raffaello. The refurbishment encompassed a total of twenty-four rooms, in addition to the reception areas, such as the Salone del Trono, the chapels, and the *studiolo*¹⁰⁶. This first reorganization was explained in the guidebook published by Alfieri & Lacroix in Milan without indication of the year of printing, but apparently the latest chronological reference is to 1919, that is usually its dating. The initial extract remembers: “questo volumetto che vede la luce al chiudersi di un periodo ansioso e glorioso della vita italiana non vuol essere che una guida per i visitatori ed un annuncio del catalogo critico della Galleria, in cui ogni questione inerente al Palazzo e alle raccolte verrà dichiarato sobriamente nei suoi lineamenti iniziali.”¹⁰⁷

The director distributed the objects in the newly obtained space, thereby creating a setting more separate than Venturi's. The objective was to accentuate the aesthetic quality of the rooms, not to create a conventional gallery, but rather to establish an elegantly furnished apartment¹⁰⁸. This concept entailed the integration of antique fabrics, furniture, ceramics, musical instruments, and other artifacts to achieve an environment that evoked a sense of historical and cultural richness¹⁰⁹. The evolution of his thinking on the museum was shaped not only by the philosophical underpinnings laid out by his professor Venturi and by Benedetto Croce, but also by a careful consideration of foreign exemplars¹¹⁰. The new paradigm is reflected in Serra's catalogue of the Galleria Nazionale as well. There, he reported the constraints that the collection had imposed on him, such as the size, importance or religious character of some of the works, and phrased his approach to the reorganization in clearer terms, compared to the catalogue he curated in Venice¹¹¹.

An article published in the *Bollettino d'Arte* immortalized the first phase of the museum reorganization in 1918 and attests the original idea of dividing the rooms into three sections: museum, gallery, and historical-topographical section. However, Serra stated that he wanted to preserve Venturi's work as well¹¹². The Ariosto room, for example, was broadly kept as it had been when it was created in 1913, but more space was given to Giusto di Gand's Communion of the Apostles by moving the works surrounding it¹¹³. On the other hand, the conclusion shows that at that point in time, the director was still far from fully

¹⁰⁶ Serra 1918, p. 26.

¹⁰⁷ Serra 1919, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ A shift was discernible, from a more strictly Venturian aesthetic to one of greater European influence. The transition in the setting of the appartamento della Duchessa is analogous to the stylistic transformation at the Palazzo Reale di Napoli during the same period. In 1919, the refurbishment of the latter museum featured furnishings that recalled the palace's past use as a residence. This approach led to the reevaluation of applied arts, both in Naples and Urbino case studies. Barrella 2014, pp. 425-428; Ferretti 1987, p. 18.

¹⁰⁹ Serra 1922. p.177.

¹¹⁰ Serra's connections abroad are testified, for example, by his participation in the honorary committee for the *Exhibition of Italian art, 1200-1900*, organized at the Royal Academy of Arts, London 1930.

¹¹¹ *Catalogo delle R.R. Gallerie di Venezia* 1914.

¹¹² Serra 1918, p. 27.

¹¹³ Serra 1918, p. 28.

satisfied with the work done: “col tempo si farà, si deve fare assai meglio. Ripeto: ora non si è volute che segnare un indirizzo, chiarire una necessità”¹¹⁴.

The need was to highlight both the collection and the history of the area, of which the palace was the most illustrious testimony. Reducing the number of works per room and increasing the space between them denotes an attempt to differentiate the Galleria Nazionale from the traditional picture gallery model. There is no complete and adequate photographic documentation of the complete layout of the 31 rooms, but the 1919 catalog-guide provides an overview of the main works displayed in each room and a better understanding of the reason for the tripartite division.

During the first decade of its management, the Galleria maintained a layout that began with the Salone del Trono, where until 1914 there was a “nicchione su gradini” with the statue of Pope Albani, which Serra had moved to the Duomo¹¹⁵. The large space was adorned with chests, halberds, shields, and other war objects purchased in 1919.

From 1916 until that date, the hall was left empty “come grandioso vestibolo”¹¹⁶. The difference from Venturi’s setting is striking: the presence of objects adorning the monumental space transforms the first impression of the grand hall.

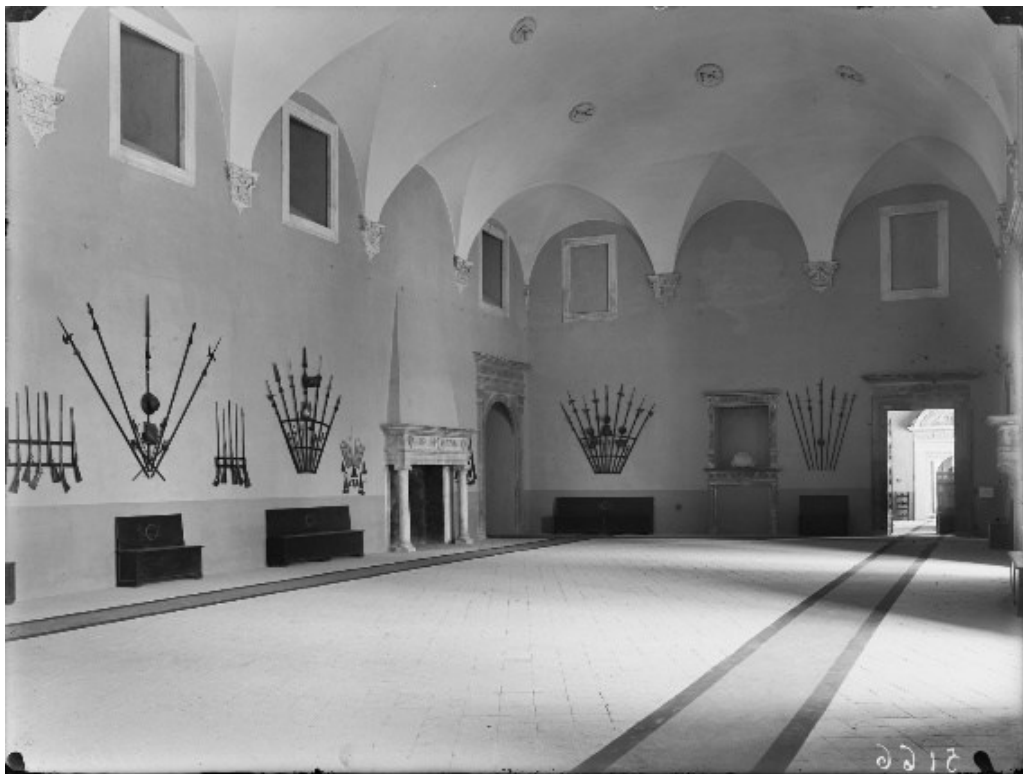


18 Salone del trono 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5165, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

¹¹⁴ Serra 1918, p. 29.

¹¹⁵ Serra 1919 p. 17.

¹¹⁶ Serra 1918, p. 27.



19 Salone del trono 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5166, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)



20 Salone del trono 1919-1923 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37914, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)

The section designated as the “museum” started right after the Trono, extending across the entire *Duchessa* apartment, known as “del Magnifico”. This had the effect of overturning Venturi's conception of the spaces. Indeed, the initial itinerary commenced in the *Realissimo* (or *Duca*) wing and culminated in the *Duchessa*.

Serra's “museum” section contained furnishings ranging from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, and various rooms displayed majolicas from the workshops of Urbino, Pesaro, and Castelli. The *Sala delle Veglie* housed six tapestries to demonstrate the historical connection between this art and the palace, where, at the time of the Montefeltro duchy, there was a precious series of Italian and Flemish tapestries, much admired and paid for more than ten thousand ducats¹¹⁷.

In those years, the arrangement of tapestries in historic palaces was a matter of taste in interior design and also of belonging. A similar issue arose at the Palazzo Ducale in Mantua, perhaps even more striking because it was recent: in 1866, the Austrian emperor ordered the transport of Raphael's tapestries to Vienna. For the subsequent fifty years, numerous requests were made for their return, but these efforts were unsuccessful. Finally, in 1919, the precious objects were given back to Italy and were rearranged in the rooms of the *Verde* Apartment, to the great satisfaction of the authorities and the population¹¹⁸.



21 *Sala delle Veglie/ Magnifico* 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5168, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

For the Palazzo Ducale in Urbino, the plundering dates back much further, when the Borgias occupied Urbino and removed the famous tapestries dedicated to the Trojan War. When Guidobaldo da Montefeltro returned to power, Cesare Borgia promised to return everything except the tapestries, which he had

¹¹⁷ Serra 1919, p. 18.

¹¹⁸ Luzio 1919, pp. 9-10.

already given away¹¹⁹. The original tapestries are now lost, so Serra tried to recreate the impression of the palace in the Renaissance, initially with the tapestries available at the museum. We will see that in 1923 he managed to obtain from the State a large cycle of tapestries not connected to the Trojan epic events, but which at least evoked the appearance of the hall in the past.



22 Sala delle Veglie/ Magnifico 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5167, fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)



23 Jade Room, Victoria & Albert Museum, 1931 (E. O. Hoppé, PH.271-2021, V&A South Kensington, Prints & Drawings Study Room, level F, London)



24 Museum Cleaning, Victoria & Albert Museum, 1931 (E. O. Hoppé, PH.265-2021, V&A South Kensington, Prints & Drawings Study Room, level F, London)

¹¹⁹Luzio, Reiner 1893, p. 151.

In addition to the tapestries, the *Veglie* contained furnishings such as chests, wedding coffins, musical instruments, and ceramics. The photographic documentation facilitates the observation of the arrangement of the objects and display cases, as well as the presence of a table accompanied by chairs in the central area. That situation was analogous to the configuration established for the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The evidence collected by photographer Emil Otto Hoppè reveals the continued display of Renaissance chests along the walls for the purpose of decoration, up to 1930. Additionally, a distinction in the configuration of the cases can be observed within the same room: some were supported by legs, while others were affixed to a solid plinth (figure 23). The gallery of Urbino also exhibited a variety of cases, some with slim legs and others with wooden supports. One notable example is the layout of the XV century wedding chest with pastiglia decoration, encased in a glass box on a full wooden base. Figure 22 presents it in the distance, and close to a showcase on legs.

The overall view also includes the antechamber connecting the *Veglie* to the *Salotto della Duchessa* (figure 22), that displayed the two wooden statues of the Annunciation recovered in 1919 from the parish church of Rotella. In addition to the sculptural group, the vestibule exhibited some examples of Byzantine art, such as the silver-gilt stauroteca with niello decorations and the banner representing Michael the Archangel, formerly in the Monastery of S. Croce in Fonte Avellana, also published in the August 1919 issue of *The Burlington Magazine*¹²⁰.

The next grand room, dedicated to sculpture, was arranged by typology. This precious room was no longer dedicated to Federico Barocci. The relocation of his paintings, compared to Venturi's layout, was part of a different vision for the museum. According to the new director, this section should evoke a domestic environment with at least some of the rooms decorated in the style of an inhabited palace¹²¹. The esteem for Barocci's works remained unchanged from his predecessor, but the different exhibition criteria favored the transfer of Barocci to the Ospiti rooms, where the paintings were selected on the basis of theme and size¹²².

With Serra's renewal, the *Salotto della Duchessa* reunited some of the most important reliefs and statues in the Galleria's collection. This arrangement generated a dialogue with the stuccoes on the ceiling, the fireplace by Domenico Rosselli, and the doorframe decorated by Ambrogio Barocci¹²³. Photographs allow to distinguish the two Madonnas with Child (now by Gregorio di Lorenzo), which are almost identical, and, to the right of the portal "della Guerra", the stucco fragments of Brandani's ceiling collapsed from the first room on the second floor.

¹²⁰ Serra 1919b, pp. 105-110 introduced the Stauroteca to academic audiences in England and around the world. During those years, the Galleria Nazionale was gaining international resonance.

¹²¹ Musto 1920, p. 134

¹²² Gallo 2024, p. 32.

¹²³ Serra 1919 p. 26. In the so-called Duchess's "living room" there were a series of Madonnas with Child, one by Gregorio di Lorenzo at the time given to Domenico Rosselli, the aedicule by Michele di Giovanni da Fiesole and the one with St. John the Baptist by Giuliano da Maiano (see Appendix 1 for further reference).



25 Salotto della Duchessa, Chimneypiece 1920-1930 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37928, MPI6216703, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

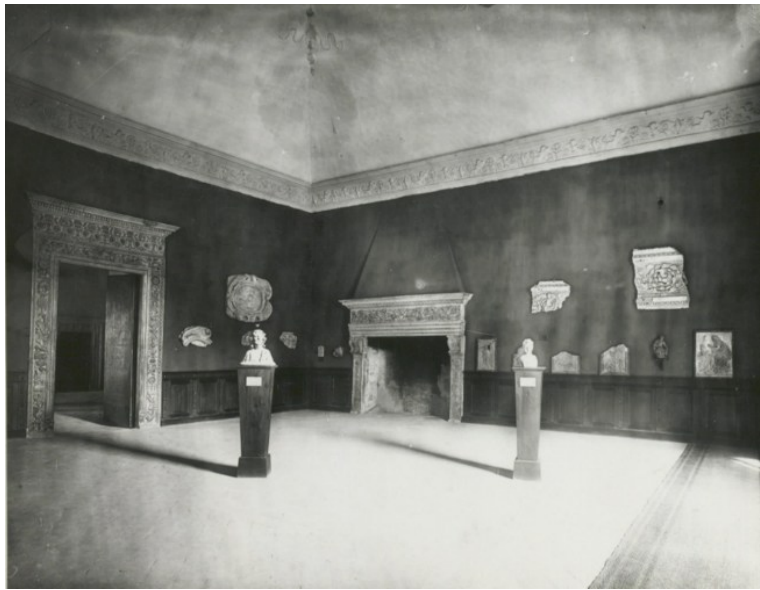
26 Testa muliebre/Agostino di Duccio, 1932 (Unknown author Stab. Anderson, 31832, Fototeca Zeri, Bologna)

Adjacent to the fireplace was a depiction of Saint Sebastian, depicted as bound to a tree trunk and subjected to a flagellation with arrows, now attributed to Domenico Rosselli. The 1919 guidebook made no mention of several sculptures, including the bas-relief of San Giovanni Battista in the act of announcing and Moses by Giovan Battista della Porta (Figure 27). However, photographic evidence suggests that the sculptures were present at some point during the reorganization. The question therefore arises as to whether the two sculptures were actually present in both phases of the reorganization. The photographs were instrumental in this regard, despite the absence of definitive production dates on any of them. The initial step entailed the identification of discrepancies.

Both rooms feature a similar arrangement of sculptures, including busts of an infant by Gregorio di Lorenzo and an adult San Giovanni Battista on two wooden pedestals. The most significant discrepancy is observed in the carpets: one enters the Porta della Guerra, while the other does not. Additionally, a distinction in the pattern of the carpets can be observed. As illustrated in figure 27, the edge of the runner is adorned with three parallel lines, while figure 28 displays a single, uniform color border. Therefore, it was necessary to determine which phase of setup is referred to.

The comparison with other photographs taken in the Palazzo Ducale was crucial to prove that, when carpets had solid dark edging, the situation was closer to the 1919 guidebook, while the other carpets

appeared later on. In conclusion, the bas-relief depicting S. Giovanni Battista was always present, even if it was not mentioned in the first guidebook. The Mosè was possibly added in a later phase.



27 Salotto della Duchessa 1920-1930 (Unknown author, S.G.U. 53-C, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)



28 Salotto della Duchessa 1915-1923 (Unknown author, Serie E 7516, ICCD Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

The museum guide also mentioned other sculptures and bas-reliefs in the room, which, in the absence of further images, cannot be precisely located in the space, including the female head from the Mauruzi Collection, then attributed to Agostino di Duccio (figure 26)¹²⁴.

¹²⁴ Serra 1919 p. 27. The attribution was made by Venturi 1914a, pp. 323, 325-326.

The war portal led to the Duchess's bedroom, the fifth according to Serra. Across the doorway, a central display cabinet exhibiting ceramics came into view. Leaning against the entrance wall were the four waffle irons purchased in 1918, and the rest of the room contained many other pieces of furniture, sideboards, and chairs, which are difficult to relocate spatially in the absence of further photographs.

In the sixth room, there was a stained-glass window by Timoteo Viti, and in the seventh and last room of the 'museum' section, the 1920 catalog only mentioned the Brandani ceiling¹²⁵. This exceptional stucco work, consisting of five large narrative mirrors surrounded by rich decorative frames, was purchased by the Ministry of Education at Serra's request and transported directly from the Corboli Aquilini palace in Urbino¹²⁶.

Then the itinerary went back through the rooms just visited and entered the Sala degli Angeli, where the section called the "gallery" began. In terms of decoration, the second part of the exhibition maintained the same style as the first: white ceilings with a light-colored band connecting the capitals. The walls were a medium, uniform color that ended at the bottom with a darker band about one meter high. Runners spread out on the terracotta floor and guided visitors along the path. Similar carpets have been used in European museums since the second half of the 19th century, both for traditional collections and for temporary or exotic exhibitions. For example, a photograph from the Fischer Collection shows that, around February 1900, the Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne included walkways. This setup was curated by the famous modernist designer Koloman Moser (1868–1918). A few years later, the same method was used in Venice to guide visitors through the 1905 International Art Exhibition in the room dedicated to the sculptor Leonardo Bistolfi.



29 Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne, 1900 (Unknown author, *Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Köln*)



30 Venice International Art Exhibition, 1905 (Unknown author, extract from Nicoletti 2024)

In Urbino the carpets guided visitors into the Sala degli Angeli. Here was the large fresco depicting the crucifixion, removed from the church of S. Maria della Bella in 1915 and placed right next to the monumental fireplace, while on the left wall were the Madonnas by Antonius Magister (now Maestro

¹²⁵ Serra 1919 p. 31

¹²⁶ Serra 1919, p. 32

della croce di Mombaroccio) and what is today attributed to Maestro del trittico di San Bartolomeo¹²⁷. The photograph of the wall in question also allows for the inspection of the row of rooms through the doorway between the Madonnas (figure 31). It is evident from the photograph that the friezes in the Ospiti apartment had been painted with contrasting colors and that Simone Cantarini's Angelo Custode had been placed at the end. In Venturi's times the walls were all painted up to the ceiling, Serra preferred lowering the colour to the spring line of the arches. An Alinari photograph (figure 32) also immortalizes the Madonna by the Maestro della croce di Mombaroccio, and Andrea del Verrocchio's Madonna is recognizable in the first room of the Ospiti, looking across the doorframe. There we can notice a further change in the walls because in the 1920s the white stripe connecting the capitals disappeared.



31 Sala degli Angeli, 1915-1923 (Unknown author, S.G.U. Serie E 5170, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

32 Sala degli Angeli, post 1922 (Unknown author, Stab. Alinari, 37934, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)

The decision to detach some works from the walls and place them on different supports testifies to another attempt to animate the space of the room, not only with the furnishings. Between the door of the Duke's chamber and the fireplace was placed the polyptych by Giovanni Baronzio mentioned in the guidebook. Next to it was Francesco da Rimini's Crucifixion displayed on an easel and opposite it mirrored Allegretto Nuzi's Madonna and Child. Between the two easels, in the middle of the windows, the triptych by the Maestro dell'Incoronazione di Urbino¹²⁸.

¹²⁷ Serra 1919 p. 37. The latter is a banner on canvas that at the time was generically attributed to a 14th century painter from the Marche region and Serra adds that "l'accostamento alla Madonna dipinta da un maestro Antonio non sembra confortato da affinità evidenti. Venne assegnata più verosimilmente a Lorenzo e Jacopo de Sanseverino" (Serra 1917, p.19) translated: the comparison to the Madonna painted by a master Antonio does not seem to be supported by evident affinities. It was more likely assigned to Lorenzo and Jacopo de Sanseverino.

¹²⁸ Serra 1918, p. 27.

Finally, the three imposing crucifixes by Pietro da Rimini, those then given to Giovanni Baronzio (now the Maestro dell'Incoronazione) and Pietro Lorenzetti (now the Master of Verucchio), were all on the wall opposite the fireplace, alternating with the polyptych compartments depicting Saints John the Baptist and Michael the Archangel. The wall aimed to bring the Sienese school into dialogue with the Rimini school of Giottesque ancestry, variously presented in the rest of the room, albeit with the limitations of the Urbino collection.

Therefore, compared to Venturi's layout, the crucifixes remained side by side, so as to facilitate comparison by type, but at the same time most of the panels that were interspersed between them were removed. The reconfiguration of the exhibition space in question offers compelling evidence on Serra's approach, defying the previous perspective of the primitives as a matter of "taste" more abstract and less historically verifiable¹²⁹. Instead, it unveils a more rationalist vision that the new director applied to the "gallery" section at the Galleria Nazionale, in contrast to the "museum" section in the *Duchessa* wing. He opted for a more accurate comparison between the elements. His modern approach emerged also in his school manual for lyceums, which won the competition with Adolfo Venturi's because of its clean and unembroidered lexicon, while Venturi's poetic terminology was more clouding¹³⁰.



33 Sala degli Angeli, 1915- 1923 (Unknown author, Serie E 5172, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Then visitors descended to see the chapels: in the catalog for this first exhibition curated by Serra, the Cappella del Perdono was mentioned only briefly, stating only that in the center there was a sculpted

¹²⁹ Galansino 2013, pp. 83-84.

¹³⁰ Meyer 2024, pp. 330-334.

Virgin and Child “di mano di un fine maestro toscano”, and the other chapel must have been a study decorated with Minerva, Apollo, and the Muses commissioned by the duke Guidobaldo, now at the Corsini Gallery¹³¹. Then the itinerary regressed back to the first floor to enter the eleventh room, “delle Udienze”, where the public could focus on the works related to the Montefeltro government.

First on the right, at the top, was a copy by Giusto di Gand, below which were three small paintings depicting a Holy Martyr, Christ supported by Saint Clare, and Saints Peter and Paul in half-length portraits from the circle of Giovanni Santi. On the left, instead, was Giusto's Communion of the Apostles, which surmounted the predella with Paolo Uccello's *Miracolo dell'ostia profanata*. In 1930, in addition to the Communion, Serra added another work in the corner, but until 1920, the space next to it was empty and the left wall was occupied by only three works: St. Sebastian by Berreguete, then attributed to Giovanni Santi, followed by the Buffi Altarpiece and the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian from the school of Giovanni Santi, now in storage at Casa Raffaello¹³².



34 Sala delle Udienze, 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5166, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Piero della Francesca's Flagellation was exhibited on an easel. Figure 34 attests that the wall bordering the chapel still had no fireplace nor window reopened: the wall was covered with two works by Evangelista

¹³¹ Serra 1919 p. 47.

¹³² Serra 1919 pp. 47-57.

di Pian di Meleto depicting St. Roch and Tobias and the Angel (now Giovanni Santi)¹³³. Between the two large canvases, stacked vertically, there were Giovanni Santi's Dead Christ between Two Angels and the *Testa di monaco* attributed to Giovan Francesco da Rimini. Finally, on the wall opposite the Communion of the Apostles, there were the six panels depicting the Apostles of Santi's school.

The appearance of the room was similar to Venturi's setup, Serra removed Giusto di Gand and Crivelli's panels that visually constricted the Communion. He kept the wooden panels on the lower part of the walls and added a damask fabric of ancient production. Antique red and yellow fabrics were purchased to make curtains and coverings. For the fabrics used in the decoration of the rooms, the director had to resort to copies, at least in part. A few years later, similar wooden panels were used in the renovation of the Pinacoteca di Brera (figure 35)¹³⁴.



35 Sala di Raffaello, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milano, 1925 (Unknown author, extract from *L'inaugurazione della rinnovata Pinacoteca di Brera* 1925, p. 363)

There, Mario Salmi and architect Piero Portaluppi chose wall paneling and baseboards around one meter high to frame specific artworks and enhance targeted rooms, just as Venturi did in Urbino a decade earlier¹³⁵. Several other rooms had wooden baseboards and simple sage-coloured fabric covering the upper

¹³³ Antoniutti 2016, p. 85 highlights that Venturi subtracted several paintings from Giovanni Santi in favour of Evangelista.

¹³⁴ *L'inaugurazione della rinnovata Pinacoteca di Brera* 1925, p. 362.

¹³⁵ Torriano 1925, pp. 255-258.

part of the walls.¹³⁶ In particular, the Raffaello room in Brera was an homage to Urbino: The Marriage of the Virgin was enclosed in walnut stalls reminiscent of Federico da Montefeltro's *studiolo*¹³⁷. The new layout in Brera received recognition from the experts and the press, this was possibly confirmation for Serra, that maintained this room in both phases of his reorganization.

Traversing beyond the south portal, the subsequent phase of the journey unfolded within a loggia that offered a view of the Gallo courtyard. At Serra's times the loggia was closed and served as a regular museum room, number twelve of the itinerary. There, artworks characterized by the influence of painters from Venice were presented, such as Titian's banner, Bellini's *Madonna col Bambino e Santi*, and the deposits from the Pinacoteca Civica of Ascoli Piceno that arrived in Urbino in 1918. Some of which were Pietro Alemanno's *Madonna* and Cola dell'Amatrice's *San Giacomo della Marca*¹³⁸. This was probably in dialogue with Crivelli's *San Giacomo*, mentioned in the guidebook. The room was completed by Giovanni Mansueti's *Pietà* from the monastery of Santa Chiara in Urbino and Girolamo da Santacroce's *Madonna*.

The next room, first of the *Ospiti* apartment, exhibited works dating from the end of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the following century¹³⁹. The guidebook attests that there was a banner painted on both sides by Luca Signorelli. Two photographs can confirm the presence and disposition of Signorelli's work, separated on either side of the fireplace, the Crucifixion on the left and Pentecost on the right (figure 36). Above the fireplace, the *Madonna* by Baldo dei Sarofini completed the layout of the area surrounding the chimney¹⁴⁰.

An illustrious piece in this room is Piero della Francesca's *Madonna con Bambino e Angeli*. The Galleria had received it in 1917 from the church of S. Maria delle Grazie in Senigallia, establishing a deposit of great importance. Unfortunately, there aren't photographs documenting the positioning of this panel¹⁴¹.

By the end of Serra's direction, however, the view of the chimneypiece was occluded with the large *Incoronazione della Vergine* by Orlando de Merlinis, Baldo dei Sarofini was removed and the *Madonna di Senigallia* moved to another area in favour of the Flagellation, the new focal point of the room (fig. 37).

¹³⁶ *L'inaugurazione della rinnovata Pinacoteca di Brera* 1925, p. 362.

¹³⁷ Bassanini 2021, p. 125.

¹³⁸ Serra 1919 pp. 57-64. The Pinacoteca in Ascoli Piceno, reorganized in 1915-17 at the behest of Mayor Giuseppe de Marzi, received many works from national museums and in exchange ceded some works to the Galleria of Urbino, as Serra explains. 1922, pp.170-171.

¹³⁹ Serra 1919 pp. 64-70.

¹⁴⁰ On the north wall were SS. Giuseppe and Rocco, the Arrivabene altarpiece and Santa Apollonia by Timoteo Viti. Furthermore, as anticipated, a photograph of the *Sala degli Angeli* allows us to place Verrocchio's *Madonna* next to the entrance to the room (figure 32).

¹⁴¹ Other paintings present in the guidebook but not visible in any photograph are: Orlando de Merlinis' *Incoronazione della Vergine*, a fresco of the *Madonna col Bambino* attributed to Santi and purchased in 1912, the tondo in the style of Credi, Timoteo Viti's half-length portrait of S. Sebastian., and the architectural perspective from the monastery of Santa Chiara.



36 *Appartamento degli Ospiti* (131), 1915-1920 (Unknown author, Serie E, 5174, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

37 *Appartamento degli Ospiti* (131), 1927-1930 (Unknown author, S.G.U. without accession number, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

The following two rooms offered visitors a comprehensive immersion into the artistic oeuvre of Federico Barocci. The first room featured a series of large altarpieces, including notable works such as the Stigmata, the Crucifixion, the Immaculate Conception, and the Madonna of San Simone. In addition, a selection of pupils' works was on display, including Cimatori's Madonna of St. Agostino, Alessandro Vitali's St. Agata and Annunciation, St. Rosa of Barocci's school, and Federico Barocci's portrait¹⁴².

The small room that had accommodated George III Stuart, therefore known as *Sala del Re d'Inghilterra*, preserved the *Trasporto al sepolcro*, a sketch for the canvas of Senigallia, the sketch for the *Perdono di Assisi*, two angels, the Eternal Father, and the cartoons with the two bishops. Next were Ludovico Viviani's Nativity of Mary, a study of the Visitation, and the *Madonna di San Giovanni*¹⁴³. Despite the implementation of photographic campaigns, a photograph of the artworks in the room has yet to be found. It is conceivable that the room appeared as depicted in figure 38, because the photographs retrieved in the ICCD archive in Rome, although not explicitly dated, can be plausibly placed within 1916-1918.

The room is presented as an "in stile" (or "ambientazione"¹⁴⁴) interior, a display typology intended to evoke the atmosphere of a historic domestic residence rather than to reconstruct a specific documented setting. The furnishing and decorative scheme contribute to the creation of a coherent period ambience: the entire floor is covered by a fitted carpet, over which a runner carpet is laid, reinforcing both the visual richness and the domestic character of the space. The doorway is concealed behind a substantial drapery whose dense folds and deep coloration suggest the appearance of heavy velvet. This treatment softens the

¹⁴² Serra 1919, pp. 71-75.

¹⁴³ Serra 1919, pp. 76-78.

¹⁴⁴ Failla 2013, p. 269.

architectural threshold and enhances the sense of intimacy and enclosure, while simultaneously contributing to the room's evocative and immersive character.



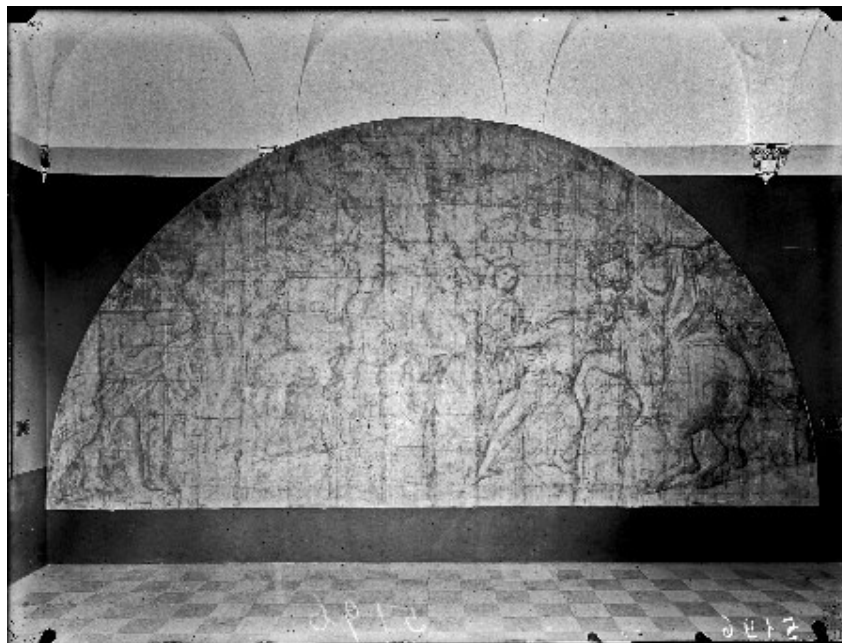
38 Sala del Re d'Inghilterra, c. 1918 (Unknown author, Serie C, 8062, ICCD Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Two additional rooms completed the Ospiti area. Having only recently been incorporated into the museum, their floors and wall finishes initially differed from those of the adjoining galleries. When the sub-prefecture left this part of the building to the Galleria, it was covered in brightly colored wallpaper and the floor of the first room was checkered¹⁴⁵. The photograph of this room, the 16th –134 in Rotondi's numbers, shows that unusual floor, probably laid in the 1920s, and demonstrates that Serra decided to display the cartoons for Domenichino's *San Gennaro trascinato al martirio* and Annibale Carracci's *Trionfo di Bacco*. In the chekered room, there were also Federico Zuccari's *Cristo morto tra angeli*, Giuseppe Marchetti's *Pietà*, and other contemporary paintings¹⁴⁶. The other room continued with paintings of the same chronology, both property of the Galleria Nazionale and received in deposit from the Pinacoteca of Ascoli Piceno¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴⁵ Carnevali 1977, p. 57 recalls that the chequerboard effect was achieved with white and red tiles and the walls covered with striking pink wallpaper. Before entering the exhibition rooms, there was a reception room in the sub-prefect's apartment.

¹⁴⁶ Serra 1919, pp. 78-84. The guide mentioned the presence of Christ in Glory between Saints Clement and Ignatius of Antioch (previously believed to be Augustine of Hippo), then attributed to Ciro Ferri, the *Madonna del Soccorso* by Raffaellino del Colle and *San Giovanni a Patmos* by Emanuele Alfani (Giovanni Andrea Lazzarini), but the precise location of these works is unclear.

¹⁴⁷ Serra 1919, pp. 84-90. There were a portrait of a man with a red chair, purchased in 1918 as a work by Carlo Maratti, Ridolfi's St. Catherine, Taddeo Zuccari's Virgin and Child, Sebastiano Conca's Annunciation, Passeri's St. Agatha,



39 Room 134, 1916-1920 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5136, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Rooms 16 and 17 historically were joined together in a single space, as was discovered in 2024 during the Galleria's refurbishment. The opening of a large fireplace reappeared right in the middle of the two rooms, confirming that they were originally a single large space heated by the same fireplace. Perhaps the dividing wall was erected in the 19th century to prevent heat loss and make this wing of the palace more habitable. At the end of the century, the fireplace was converted into a built-in cupboard for the sub-prefect, and only a small adjoining cavity was preserved to connect a stove to it, so that it could vent fumes outside through the old chimney. As a consequence, this subdivision likely postdates the principal historical phases considered in previous architectural studies and, since the building's conversion into a museum, has not been identified or discussed in the scholarly literature on the palace¹⁴⁸.

In the eighteenth room of the itinerary, which opened the apartment known as the Melaranci wing, there was a portrait of a cardinal attributed to Gaulli, the *Sacra Famiglia* by Bagnacavallo, Sebastiano Ricci's *Resurrezione di Tabita*, Cantarini's *Angelo Custode*, which, as previously mentioned, was placed in line with the corridor leading from the Sala degli Angeli, and lastly, to the right of the entrance, the *Visitazione della Vergine*¹⁴⁹.

The sole exit from the hall leads to Room 142, which housed a collection of works ranging from the 16th to the 18th centuries. Room 143, right after, featured prints by renowned artists Simone Cantarini and Federico Barocci. It is reasonable to assume that the tour proceeded to Room 137, where a collection of

and Sassoferrato's sweet Madonna and Child. The head of Christ of Barocci's school dialogued with Filippo Bellini's Madonna and Child with Saints, followed by Simone Cantarini's St. Jerome and De Magistris' Madonna and Child, also part of the Ascoli Piceno Gallery's collection.

¹⁴⁸ The findings presented here, will be further contextualized by the museum officials once the results of the ongoing architectural investigations are formally published, hopefully at the end of the restoration project in 2026.

¹⁴⁹ Serra 1919, pp. 90-91.

additional prints was on display, along with the portrait of Marianna Ottavia Casaretto, which was painted by Francesco Podesti.¹⁵⁰ However, there are no photographs available to confirm this disposition.

The same problem was encountered for the following four rooms. The twenty-second contained large paintings celebrating the deeds of Pope Clement XI Albani, followed by three more rooms. The guidebook reports that two were dedicated to the wedding of Federico Ubaldo della Rovere and Claudia de Medici, and the last one contained various works from the 16th to 18th centuries. In the absence of photographs, it is not easy to understand precisely which rooms these were, and how the paintings were arranged before 1919.

The Alinari company produced some photographic records of these last rooms, dating from a few years later. Some allegories of the wedding apparatus were then on display in room 143, unchanged in both phases of Serra's reorganization. Concurrently, the photographer also documented Room 148, where the Viviani collection was housed. There were display cases affixed to the wall, with one situated centrally within the room, and three paintings adorning the walls, all of which remain unmentioned in the catalog. This phenomenon is noteworthy because it suggests that these objects are perceived as more of an aesthetic embellishment than as independent artistic creations.



40 Room 148, c. 1923 (Unknown author, *Stab. Alinari*, 37958, *Archivi Alinari*, Firenze)

41 *Scena Sacra* exhibited in Room 148 (Detail of Figure 40)

¹⁵⁰ Serra 1919, p. 93.

Close to the window there was a Sacred Scene, hard to retrieve in the museum's inventories because it has long been given to the Accademia Raffaello. Now it is in the Sala dell'Accademia in Casa Raffaello with the inventory number 1990 D 256. The small painting next to the Madonna is Vincenzo Nini's landscape with a wayfarer, and further right is Barocci's *San Lorenzo Diacono*.

Also, looking closely we can see how drawings were exhibited vertically, eclosed in simple wooden frames locked inside the showcases. In 1919 this room was not yet dedicated to the Viviani bequest, as the guidebook attests, so the chronology of these photographs is towards the end of Serra's tenure¹⁵¹.

Entering the oldest wing of the palace was the third and final section. After the museum and gallery, visitors moved on to the historical-topographical section, where prints, maps, and photographs contributed to the memory of the Duchy of Urbino and the Apostolic Legation. The museum catalogues explain that the dukes had a rich collection of paintings by Titian, Raphael and many other renowned Renaissance painters. Their artworks, gone from the Palazzo Ducale since more than two centuries, were remembered by exhibiting photographic reproductions in rooms 152 and 153.

The list included full-size photographic copies of the *Uomini Illustri* of the *studiolo*, Apollo and the Muses of the Corsini gallery, and the *Arti Liberali* by Giusto di Gand, which decorated the ducal library and are now divided between the National Gallery in London and the Bode Museum in Berlin. The *camera picta* was still covered with layers of paint and wallpaper, and the frescoes underneath would be discovered only in 1939, as we'll see in the next chapter. Therefore, several photographs were hanging from the walls.

Reading the catalogues, we can imagine the visitors being surrounded by the most important artworks from Urbino, now in the Uffizi and other museums worldwide, portraits of Duca Federico, his court, and his most illustrious successors. In the ICCD photographic archive it was possible to retrieve a picture of the camera picta's chimneypiece that should be dated around 1916, according to their serial numeration. Near the edge we can spot a small part of a painting reproduction. That's exactly what was written in Serra's catalogues, and trying some comparison it seems plausible that the image is *Giuditta* by Palma il Vecchio now at the Uffizi Galleries.

¹⁵¹ Serra 1919, p. 94.



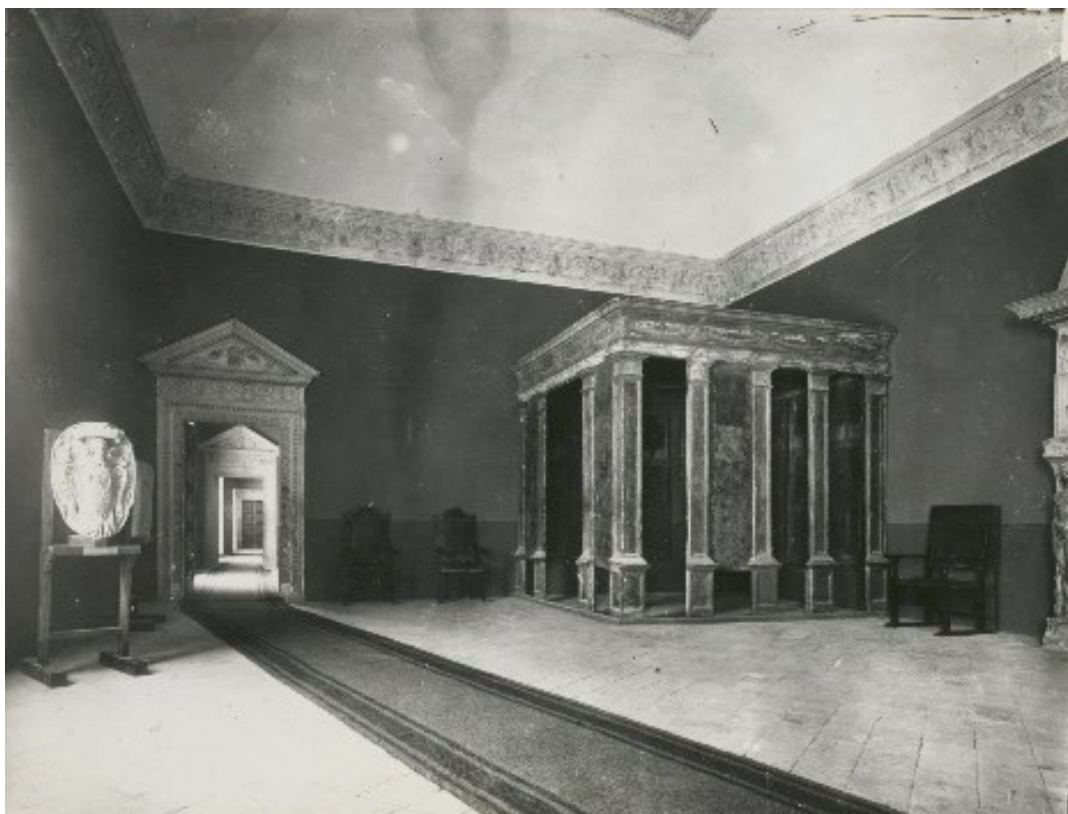
42 Detail of a photograph of the chimneypiece in room 153, 1924 (C. Carboni, Serie E 8025, ICCD Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

43 *Giuditta* by Palma il Vecchio, Uffizi Galleries (Unknown author, WGA16936.jpg, Wikipedia.org)

Unfortunately, the only subject of the photograph is the chimneypiece, and the surroundings were intentionally cropped as much as possible, however this detail gives a precious hint on how the room appeared during Luigi Serra's supervision.

Finally, the last room of the itinerary was the Sala della Jole. It housed the Duke's Alcove, a tapestry with hunting scenes, the lunette with Federico da Montefeltro and Ottaviano Ubaldini in profile, the Dukes' hunting belt, other tapestries, coats of arms, and sculptural portraits¹⁵². Apart from the relocation of the Alcove together with the hunting belt, which were previously in the *Duchessa* apartment, this room has not changed much since Venturi's time.

¹⁵² Serra 1919, pp. 96-99. In addition to the Alcove and the *Fascia Venatoria*, there was a 16th-century Flemish Annunciation, a profile of Duchess Battista Sforza within an oval frame, the Della Rovere coat of arms, and the coat of arms of Urbino with the Montefeltro eagle. The portraits of the dukes were concentrated in the lunette of Duke Federico with Ottaviano Ubaldini and the stone portrait of Guidubaldo I of Urbino in half-length. These two and the coats of arms were previously walled up in the loggias of the palace and were transferred to the gallery in 1918. In addition, the room was decorated with tapestries, a piece of furniture on which amphorae were placed, and a 15th-century Italian chest.



44 Sala della Jole, c. 1930 (Unknown author, 59-c, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)



45 Sala della Jole, c. 1930 (Unknown author, 60-c, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

The expansion of the exhibition spaces made it possible to divide the Galleria Nazionale into three main areas corresponding to the building's three wings, thereby lending greater coherence to the visitor's experience despite the diversity of the displays. The Medieval and Renaissance Museum was located in the *Duchessa* rooms, with 16th-century style furnishings, a mixture of originals and period reproductions, conveying the idea of inhabited spaces. The *Duca*, *Ospiti*, and *Melaranci* rooms were dedicated to paintings and sculptures from the Gallery, and the historical-topographical section was located in the *Appartamento della Jole*. The latter section had a marked educational function, with in-depth information on the geography and history of the Montefeltro territories, a modern and interesting idea but certainly not suited to the splendid rooms of the oldest wing of the palace. However, the work and refurbishment continued until 1930.

The 1919 guidebook we just went through was designed specifically to help visitors understand the layout of the museum and plan their visit. The artworks on deposit received great attention, new acquisitions were highlighted, and thanks to the catalog, attempts were made to publicize works that were still unpublished, demonstrating that in Serra's mental organization, the demands of protection, study, and enhancement went hand in hand¹⁵³. In 1922, Serra himself recalled in the pages of *Emporium* the progress made, and the objectives achieved up to that point:

«Il moltiplicarsi così notevole degli ambienti e delle opere rese necessario un nuovo ordinamento delle raccolte ed esso fu regolato da due concetti fondamentali: distribuire gli oggetti con notevole respiro tra uno e l'altro, in modo da far trionfare sempre la stupenda bellezza architettonica e decorativa degli ambienti; non creare una galleria nel senso consueto, ma, per quanto lo consentiva la natura e il numero delle opere, un appartamento nobilmente animato. (...) Tuttavia si è dovuto mantenere alle raccolte certa disposizione sistematica, date le dimensioni considerevoli dei dipinti, la loro prevalenza, il loro carattere religioso. (...) In taluni gruppi di oggetti non si è voluto segnare per ora una direttiva, che man mano si vien svolgendo giacchè urgeva affrettare l'apertura del primo piano della *dimora feltresca* per disvelarne intero il suggestivo splendore architettonico e decorativo.

Le somme impiegate sono state veramente cospicue dal 1915 al 1921 si sono spese complessivamente per acquisti e lavori circa 500.000 lire.

Chi voglia comparare lo stato attuale del Palazzo e della Galleria a quello di pochi anni or sono noterà almeno che si è lavorato; ma, certo, per quanto con alacrità e fervore si attenda all'opera, quel che rimane da fare supera sempre ciò che si è compiuto.

Notevole tempo e mezzi e tenace ardore sono necessari per raggiungere risultati definitivi.»¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Serra 1922, p. 169.

¹⁵⁴ Serra 1922, pp. 176-177.

2.2 Serra's Second Intervention on the Permanent Exhibition

On a structural level, director Serra completed the restoration of the *Salone del Trono*, and by the end of his term of office, he had five rooms of about 400 square meters covered with antique damask wallpaper and had all the other rooms, previously painted with lime or covered with bright wallpaper, uniformly painted with tempera. Serra wanted many fireplaces to be reopened, he worked on the *Giardino Pensile* and the Pasquino courtyard, he had the funerary monuments and some memorial stones removed from the monumental courtyard, he reopened the walled mullioned windows and worked on the visual balance of the facades. The work of this director, often remembered for his outdated exhibition style, demonstrated a rigorous approach to the multiple souls of the Galleria Nazionale.

In the Catalogue promoted by the director in 1930, the museum route was extended to part of the ground floor, where two rooms housed the stone objects removed from the courtyard: the collection of Roman cippi from Cardinal Stoppani's collection and some funerary monuments transferred from the church of San Francesco to the courtyard of the palace in 1866, such as the large Gothic mausoleum of Count Antonio. Serra reports that the ducal courtyard was followed by a second, disfigured and incomplete one, namely that of Pasquino¹⁵⁵.

On the first floor, the *soprallogge* featured the panels depicting war machines still embedded in the lower part of the walls and, above them, many stone antiquities placed there at the behest of Stoppani in the mid-18th century¹⁵⁶. The freshly redesigned Salone del Trono featured a set of seven tapestries inspired by Raphael's cartoons, constituting the third stop on the museum tour¹⁵⁷.

The tapestries were received on loan from the Royal Palace of Milan in 1923, three of the seven tapestries are English, made in Mortlake. Around 1650, Cardinal Mazarin purchased three English tapestries depicting religious scenes to complete the series with four other French tapestries made by Lefebvre. These tapestries reproduce the ones that Raphael made between 1515 and 1516 for the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. The cartoons for those tapestries are now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century, the South Kensington Pavilion exhibited the cartoons in a large hall with a runner in the center, similar to those used in Urbino. A photograph from 1869 shows those large drawings, chests, chairs, and carpets working together to create the idea of a lived-in environment at the Victoria and Albert Museum. This effect is also echoed in Luigi Serra's final result.

¹⁵⁵ Serra 1930, p. 18.

¹⁵⁶ Mennella 1973, Appendice I.

¹⁵⁷ See Appendix 1.



46 Salone del Trono with tapestries, c. 1930 (Unknown author; Stab. Anderson, 31782, ICCD fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

47 Four Raphael Cartoons in South Kensington Museum, London 1868 (J. Davis Burton, 60748, V&A South Kensington, Prints & drawings study room, level f, London)

It is interesting to note that the Catalogue emphasizes the harmony of this large space, explaining that he had removed many plaques and coats of arms that had been placed on the walls by papal legates¹⁵⁸. A photograph included in the publication confirms that the space between the monumental fireplaces and the wall of the lion of St. Mark was completely dedicated to tapestries, however, the text explains that there were still numerous trophies of armaments, probably concentrated on the wall leading to the Duca's apartment. The hall also used to house a statue of Pope Clement XI, which was removed from its niche and moved to the Duomo.

On the right, was the Magnifico room, where the tour continued with the fourth room. There, the musical instruments of the 17th and 18th centuries, the tapestries, and the display cases with ceramics remained as a decoration. Some important additions were the Gothic furniture received on deposit from the municipality of Urbino in 1920 (now in Casa Raffaello) and the polychrome Madonna della Misericordia from the second half of the 15th century, purchased from the Accademia Georgica di Treja in 1923¹⁵⁹. It was a time of numerous new acquisitions for the museum. Serra had a strategic approach to integrate artworks in the collection

A postcard dating from the early 1930s shows the part of the room not visible in the 1930 catalogue and allows us to integrate some additions that were probably made after the end of Serra's directorship, such as the statuette depicting *San Crescentino* placed near the first window to the left of the entrance¹⁶⁰. It can

¹⁵⁸ Serra 1930, p. 22

¹⁵⁹ Serra 1930, pp. 30-41.

¹⁶⁰ The Saint Crescentino, attributed to the School of Giambologna, and the Madonna, by Alessandro Algardi, arrived in storage from the Municipality of Urbino in 1920. According to the records, the municipality initially intended to

be deduced that the period is later because in the meantime the runners that Serra had wanted on the floors to accompany visitors on their journey had been removed.

The vestibule remained unchanged and led directly to the sixth room, i.e. the *Salotto della Duchessa*, still dedicated to sculpture in dialogue with the ceiling by Francesco di Simone Ferrucci da Fiesole. The photograph that frames the entrance door seen from the previous vestibule shows also the *Mosè*, the *Madonna della Ghiara*, Federico Brandani's *San Lorenzo*, and the terracotta with Christ going to Calvary (figure 48). This corner was not known before the discovery of this picture.



48 Detail of the Entrance to the *Salotto della Duchessa* 1920-1930 (Unknown author, S.G.U. 867-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

In the seventh room, there was a sideboard with inlaid decorations, a Robbia head originally belonging to Count Mauruzi, the two bells already present in the 1920s, to which a third was added with the acrostic inscription 'sator arepo tenet opera rotas'. The number of iron pieces known as "ferri da cialde" also increased, with Serra acquiring seven between 1920 and 1926¹⁶¹. It is not clear whether the two display cases with ceramics were already located here, but the *Madonna della Misericordia*, purchased in 1924 by the *Congregazione della Carità* of Urbino, was certainly added. The seven carved boxes from Cagli were moved to the next room, which housed not only the stained-glass window by Timoteo Viti, but also some trophies and weapons previously placed in the Salone del Trono. On the walls were various ceramic artifacts from Castelli and Pesaro, such as a *San Crescentino*, a *Madonna col Bambino*, and an *Annunciazione*, while the works from Urbino and Casteldurante (Urbano) were placed in a display case.

Finally, room 119, the ninth on this route, featured a ceiling by Brandani and ceramic tiles by Caselli on the walls, now attributed to Nicola Cappelletti (invv. 1990 C. 380, 388, and 381). The only known

sell the *Crescentino* statuette (Calzini 1904, p. 503) but evidently changed their plans. Initially, the bronze statues were placed in Room IX of the second itinerary designed by Serra (i.e. Room 119 of Rotondi's numeration).

¹⁶¹ Serra 1930, pp. 50-52.

photograph shows Algardi's Madonna and Child on a wooden column and some ceramic vases on a chest of drawers. The catalog reports that there was also a bronze statue of St. Crescentino, probably near the entrance¹⁶². To reach the tenth room, it was necessary to retrace one's steps to the Salone del Trono, where, on the right, one entered the *Duca* apartment, beginning with the *Sala degli Angeli*.



49 Stanza di preghiera della Duchessa, 1915-1923 (C. Carboni, Serie E 5169, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

This catalogue did not mention the tripartite division of the Galleria Nazionale into “museum”, “gallery” and “historical-topographical section”, as outlined in the previous guidebook, although in fact these remained almost unchanged. When entering the majestic room named after the angels on its chimneypiece, there was a XV century monumental table received in 1920, then Allegretto Nuzi, Giuliano da Rimini, the crucifixions and all the previous artworks. The direction updated some attributions. For example, the Saints *Giovanni Battista* and *Michele Arcangelo* passed from Barna da Siena to Andrea di Bartolo¹⁶³. They were also rejoined compared to the previous setup¹⁶⁴.

The *Camera da letto del Duca* was partially reorganized due to new acquisitions and attributions¹⁶⁵. For example, the triptych depicting the *Madonna del latte* and the life of St. Bartholomew, previously was in the next room, but was moved here to facilitate new connections with other works, mostly by artists from

¹⁶² Serra 1930, pp. 58.

¹⁶³De Nicola 1921, p. 25.

¹⁶⁴ Serra 1930, pp. 59-72.

¹⁶⁵ The fragment of the Odasi house door, the triptych from the church of *S. Bartolomeo*, *S. Chiara* by Lorenzo Salimbeni, and the frescoes from the Paltroni chapel stayed exactly where previously located. Also, there were new additions: the papier-mâché bust of Federico da Montefeltro, purchased by the ministry in 1922, and the double-face panel depicting the *Crocifissione* and the *Madonna in Trono*, purchased in 1920

the Marche region and Antonio di Guido da Ferrara¹⁶⁶. An Alinari photograph shows the impressive triptyc flanked by the two panels depicting the *Crocifissione* and the *Madonna in Trono* previously (1919) attributed to Antonio da Fabriano, in the catalogue (1930) were generically referred to as “arte marchigiana, prima metà del sec. XIV” (now Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro). Across the door on the left was a Madonna with a decorated mantle, received on deposit from the Congregazione della Carità of Cagli. The photograph must be placed in an intermediate phase between the two guidebooks, as in 1919 the *Madonna di Cagli* was in this room, but not the paintings by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro, while in the 1930s the opposite is true. However, clearly the subject of this section shifted from Fabrianese school to the whole Marche region, in dialogue with the room right after this one, number twelve of the itinerary.



(E.A. Alinari - N. 37945. 1919 - Palazzo Ducale, Sala di Gentile da Fabriano. L'interno. (RV Senale).

50 Stanza di Gentile da Fabriano, room 122 (Unknown author, *Stab. Alinari*, 37928, *Archivi Alinari*, Firenze)

There, *S. Antonio da Padova* by Salimbeni (now Jacopo Bedi) was in dialogue with the banner with *Crocifissione e Santi* by Antonio da Ferrara, and the *Salvator Mundi*, which the catalogue attributed to Melozzo da Forlì, albeit with some doubts¹⁶⁷. Two of the masterpieces of the gallery were in this room as well: the *Madonna di Senigallia*, which previously was in the Ospiti apartment, and the *Madonna e Santa Rosa* attributed to Gentile da Fabriano¹⁶⁸.

From here, the itinerary descended to the *Cappella del Perdono*, built by Ottaviano Ubaldini, considered the thirteenth room, given the marble decorations by Ambrogio Barocci and the delicate *Madonnina* by

¹⁶⁶ Serra 1930, pp. 72-77.

¹⁶⁷ On Jacopo Bedi see Russo 2023, p. 92. Serra 1930, pp. 80-81.

¹⁶⁸ Serra 1930, pp. 79-80.

Francesco di Simone Ferrucci. Once back upstairs, one returned to the *Camera da letto del Duca*, which led to the *Ariosto Room* (now *Udienze*).

Here, the layout was very similar to the one mentioned in 1919 guidebook, as can be seen in a postcard from the period. The only difference is in the removing of the Flagellation by Piero della Francesca, the focal element was substituted with the portrait of a noblewoman nicknamed “la Muta” by Raffaello Sanzio¹⁶⁹. It was given to the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche in 1927 upon the intervention of Benito Mussolini¹⁷⁰. The museum's director prioritized accentuating this significant addition to the museum's collection, given the city of Urbino's prior lack of paintings by the *Divino Pittore*. This acquisition has not only augmented the museum's holdings but also addressed “le secolari aspirazioni della R. Accademia e della cittadinanza”, thereby increasing the museum's popularity¹⁷¹.

Further testimony to this setup is a postcard (figure 51) portraying the new acquisition on an easel that was previously intended for The Flagellation. Serra managed to bring the notable absentees, Raphael and Gentile, back to Urbino. First, in 1915, he secured the purchase of the Virgin with Santa Rosa, then believed to be Gentile da Fabriano's, and in 1927, the *Muta* finally completed the puzzle.



51 Sala dell'Ariosto, postcard 1927-1930 (Unknown author, Ed. C. Varani, Urbino)

The fifteenth room corresponded to Duke Federico's *studiolo*, it was counted for the first time as part of the museum itinerary in an official catalogue. It was always mentioned of course, but it did not have numbering of its own. Its current exit door was closed with a panel inlaid with parrots and measuring instruments; therefore, once visited, visitors retraced their steps to linger in Guidubaldo's chapel and then proceed to the *loggia del Gallo*, again destined for the Venetian painting.

¹⁶⁹ Serra 1930, pp. 84-94. Civis 1927, pp. 46-48.

¹⁷⁰ Caldari 2015, p.16.

¹⁷¹ *Riunione della R. Accademia Raffaello* 1927, p. 3.

The subsequent rooms of the apartment remained unaltered overall, maintaining the same criterion of distribution as the 1919 configuration. The *Ospiti* apartment opened with the eighteenth room - corresponding to the thirteenth in the previous layout - with the *Incoronazione* by Orlando Merlinis, the *Città Ideale*, the two sides of Signorelli's banner and the Arrivabene altarpiece by Timoteo Viti¹⁷². The Flagellation was relocated here to replace the Madonna of Senigallia. Additionally, following its acquisition in 1925, the painting St. Vincenzo Ferrieri in the style of Giovanni Santi, was included in the room. It is conceivable that it was situated in place of the "tondo della scuola di Credi", which was no longer documented in the catalogue¹⁷³.

The Barocchi rooms and the two following rooms remained almost completely unchanged. Only the twenty-first room lost Zuccari's Deposition of Christ in favor of Giovanni Francesco Guerrieri's S. Vittore, and then the attribution of Christ crowning two Saints was corrected from Ciro Ferri to Francesco Mancini¹⁷⁴. The only update in the next room was the new attribution of the virile portrait to Isacco Luttichus instead of Maratti.

Starting from room XXIII, the wing of the gallery known as the *Melaranci* apartment began, essentially unchanged in terms of the objects on display, which ended with the works of Ridolfi and Cialdieri: the most precise description of the spaces confirms that these are rooms 143 and 144, as can also be seen in the photographic documentation.



52 Room 143 (XXIV), post 1922 (Unknown author, *Stab. Alinari*, 37953, *Archivi Alinari*, Firenze)

¹⁷² Serra 1930, pp. 104-114.

¹⁷³ Serra 1930, pp. 104-114.

¹⁷⁴ Voss 1924, p. 523. Catalucci 2023, pp. 102-103.

The thirty-first room corresponded to the corridor overlooking the Pasquino courtyard. Unlike the previous catalog, the works collected here were precisely defined in 1930: there was a copy of the Madonna “Salus Populi Romani,” Mancini’s large canvas with the Virgin and Saint Teresa, Carlo Ratti’s Saint in Ecstasy before the Crucifix, Saint Philip Neri, the Assumption and the Nativity of the Baptist by Cimatori, the Baptism of Jesus by Lazzarini, two works attributed to Giuseppe Marchetti, the Deposition of Christ copied from Zuccari, and the painting by Domiziano Domiziani with the Archangel Michael and the Baptist¹⁷⁵.

Room 147 housed the collection of weapons that previously was exhibited in the *Salone del Trono* (figure 53), and room 148 housed the collection of drawings donated by Counts Filippo and Adele Viviani della Massa in 1922.



53 Room 147 (XXVI), post 1922 (Unknown author, *Stab. Alinari*, 37956, *Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma*)

Serra then reported that the last rooms housed the “historical-topographical” section, which he structured in 1916¹⁷⁶. Rooms 150, 151, and 152 resented prints, liturgical objects and vestments, objects on deposit from the Municipality of Urbino, and dynastic portraits of the Montefeltro-Della Rovere family. The

¹⁷⁵ Serra 1930, pp. 135-136.

¹⁷⁶ Serra 1930, p. 142.

camera picta still displayed photographs of the most famous works that once adorned the palace, and the Sala della Jole also remained unchanged since 1920.

To sum up, step by step the director achieved the main objectives he had set, increasing the collections and transforming the temporary deposits into permanent storage of the artworks of the Istituto di Belle Arti and the Municipality of Urbino. Thus, he secured the gallery's oldest collection of paintings and sculptures. Also, he obtained the masterpieces belonging to the Curia of Urbino, the banner by Luca Signorelli from the church of S. Spirito in Urbino, and the two large cartoons by Annibale Carracci and Domenichino from Count Alberto Castelbarco Albani.

This stately apartment and the historical documentary section on Urbino were particularly dear to him, and these decisions were interesting in terms of content and education. For the furniture, he used mostly Renaissance-style chairs and tables that were already in the gallery, although they were not original. The reliance on furniture and objects created ad hoc as historical fakes is unacceptable today, but the underlying research was serious and philological. Serra reconstructed the environment as if the palace were inhabited by Duke Federico, and this effort constituted the first approach to the study of sixteenth-century sources¹⁷⁷.

Serra was mainly concerned with expanding the collection and the spaces it occupied, however, the material care of the architecture was not matched by an exhaustive understanding, due to the deficiency of scientific studies of the building and historical documents. The only evidence of this, dates to his last period as director, when in 1929 he sent a restoration project to the Consiglio Superiore per le Antichità e le Belle Arti. Among the proposals were the isolation of the original structure of the palace by demolishing the more recent buildings on the sides of the Pasquino courtyard and the restoration of the crenellated crown. Despite the 19th-century taste for historicizing reconstruction, the unrealized project represents the first study of the structural aspects¹⁷⁸.

In 1923, the Superintendency was definitely settled by decree 3164¹⁷⁹. Urbino did not receive any decision-making role to optimize regional management, and the palace came under the control of the Superintendency of Monuments of Ancona. In 1939, however, the atmosphere of war and the risks of protection meant that the director of the Galleria Nazionale regained the role of Superintendent for the territory of Urbino, in the person of Pasquale Rotondi.

In 1931, Serra was transferred to Rome, assigned as director to the Gabinetto fotografico e del Corpus dei Cataloghi e delle Guide, and took on the role of commissioner of the Museum of Industrial Art¹⁸⁰. The responsibility for the Urbino Superintendency fell pro tempore to the Superintendency of Medieval and Modern Art for the Marche and Dalmatia in Ancona, which in turn had been left vacant after the death of Icilio Bocci. For this reason, the position was entrusted to Carlo Aru, the new Superintendent of L'Aquila,

¹⁷⁷ Arcangeli 1977, p. 20.

¹⁷⁸ Arcangeli 1977, p. 23.

¹⁷⁹ Zampetti 1992, p. 8.

¹⁸⁰ Mochi Onori 2007, pp. 580-588.

who did not leave a significant mark during his brief tenure¹⁸¹. He certainly continued the attempt to clear the second floor of the Palazzo Ducale, in particular the Registry Office, but unfortunately without lasting results.

The Archivio architettonico della Soprintendenza ai monumenti delle Marche contains a correspondence with Engineer Cardelli that recounts a near diplomatic incident between the institutions. In the document dated June 27, 1932, the Finance Department issued authorization to provide the museum with the rooms available on the second floor¹⁸². Which rooms? A handwritten note signed by Cardelli at the bottom of the document states that “two rooms above the King of England room and the Barocci painting room” were left “temporarily”¹⁸³. A loose sheet of paper recalls the response: “Per ora prendiamo in consegna quello che ci danno. E subito planteremo la grana per avere gli altri due vani”¹⁸⁴. Thus, with the support of the Superintendency, the engineer went to Urbino on July 18 to take possession of the rooms. However, the Registrar did not hand over all the rooms, using the excuse that he still had to arrange some furniture. The communication that reached Ancona from the envoy betrayed a certain irritation, but he personally took it upon himself to go to Pesaro to urge the removal of the furniture and also to inform the Civil Engineering Department to suspend the adaptation work in progress in those spaces¹⁸⁵. The following day, the Registrar confirmed that the Finance Department had agreed to move the furniture and registers to the rooms belonging to it, as proposed by Cardelli¹⁸⁶. The move took place, but after only four years, the Registry had reoccupied its spaces and the museum was unable to make use of them.

Serra maintained contact with the city and continued to study the palace and the collections, publishing a further catalog of the Galleria in 1932. The transition did not see a total detachment of the Superintendency from the Palazzo Ducale. In fact, the fifteen years in which decisions were made in Ancona saw the establishment of the ‘director’, an overseer figure who handled relations with the superintendent of the regional capital and provided reports on the situation at the Palazzo.

The honorary position was not subject to selection based exclusively on academic qualifications. As demonstrated in Appendix 2, it could be contingent on cultural merits and be endorsed by the most

¹⁸¹ Spantigati 2007, pp. 39-46. Documento Soprintendenza faldone 283 p. 135.

¹⁸² Appendix 2 - 1932 Intendenza di Finanza.

¹⁸³ In Luigi Serra's exhibition, Barocci was in rooms 132 and 133, so the rooms in question would be 174 and 175, immediately above. “possibilità di lasciare temporaneamente 2 locali al disopra della saletta del Re d’Inghilterra e la sala di dipinti del Barocci” (Appendix 2- 1932 Intendenza di Finanza).

¹⁸⁴ M-PS-67-238. *Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie*, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona. Translated: “For now, we will take what they give us. And we will immediately raise the issue of obtaining the other two rooms”. The communication is informal, yet the decision-making indications allow the note to be attributed to one of Cardelli's superiors. The initials at the bottom appear to be “CA,” which could be those of Superintendent Carlo Aru.

¹⁸⁵ M-PS-67-238. Prot. 2434. *Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie*, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona, (Prot. 1674 Pesaro 20 luglio 1932) “Le faccio noto che il Geneo Civile sta ancora seguendo i lavori di adattamento in quelli stessi locali; possibilmente andrò anche a quell’Ufficio ad avvertire che i locali li prendiamo in consegna noi e che rinuncino, quindi ai lavori” – Cardelli”

¹⁸⁶ M-PS-67-238. *Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie*, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona (Prot.1673 Pesaro 20 luglio 1932).

distinguished officials in the city¹⁸⁷. It has been determined that the Podestà was capable of proposing an honorary director, and furthermore, the identity of the director between 1924 and 1928 has been ascertained to be a certain Luzi. This conclusion has been reached based on the findings derived from archival consultations¹⁸⁸. However, the most interesting document signed by Luzi concerns the condition of conservation risk for the paintings kept at the Galleria Nazionale during the very hot summer of 1928¹⁸⁹.

After this interim director, as requested by the mayor, came Luigi Renzetti, who at the time also held the role of Honorary Royal Inspector of Monuments. He collaborated mainly with Superintendent Pacchioni, for example sending a complete review of the entities occupying the Urbino palace to Ancona¹⁹⁰. This work made it possible to verify the condition of the palace and its use in the 1930s.

¹⁸⁷ See Appendix 2 - 1933 Podestà.

¹⁸⁸ Perhaps Francesco Luzi or, more likely, Luzio Luzio. The first one is mentioned in the State Archives of Ancona among the "Ispettori Onorari D-R" (Busta 142, File 3, part 10) and documented from 1911 to 1934. However, the Podestà of Urbino (Appendix 2, 1933 Podestà) refers to our Luzi as "compianto", mourned, in 1933, which clearly represents an element of incongruity. Luzio Luzio, on the other hand, is attested only until 1929, when he signed as "Real Ispettore" a document sent to the Superintendency of Ancona, there he reported the outbreak of a small fire at the Ducal Palace of Urbino (Appendix 2, 1929 Luzio).

¹⁸⁹ Appendix 2 - 1928 Luzio

¹⁹⁰ Appendix 2 - 1939 Renzetti

Reappraised Architecture and Museum Reconfiguration, 1930s–1940s

3.1 Guglielmo Pacchioni before World War II

On 16 July 1933, Guglielmo Pacchioni assumed his post as Superintendent for the Marche region and Director of the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino¹⁹¹. In his previous role as head of the Galleria Sabauda in Turin, he had concentrated his efforts on two closely related aspects: the critical selection of works on display and the evaluation of the spatial and functional limitations of the museum's interiors¹⁹². The conceptual premises underlying his initiative to introduce electric lighting into the exhibition rooms were documented through a photographic campaign that recorded the situation prior to reorganization. These images provide valuable evidence of the nineteenth-century display practices of the Galleria Sabauda and testify to the profound transformation brought about by Pacchioni's intervention in the Piedmontese museum¹⁹³.

Attention to the public, rigorous documentation, and a refined sensibility in the renovation of spaces also characterized the director's work at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche. Under his leadership, a systematic reappraisal of the Palazzo Ducale began at the architectural level. He carried out numerous masonry investigations and studies of construction techniques, initiating the identification of building phases and the mapping of carved decorative elements within the palace, with particular attention to those attributable to Luciano Laurana¹⁹⁴. As reported by Renzetti, Pacchioni intended to free the façade of the Torricini from the superimposed roof in order to restore its original appearance; he also planned the reopening of the loggias in the *Cortile del Pasquino* and oversaw the restoration of the previously bricked-up window in the *Sala degli Angeli*¹⁹⁵.

During his directorship, repeated attempts were made to extend the Galleria into additional rooms of the Palazzo Ducale by reclaiming spaces occupied by various inappropriate tenants. One such attempt was documented as early as January 1934, when Pacchioni noted: "La difficoltà è molto seria. Se come temo non si riesce a spuntarla e ottenere che il Registro rimanga fuori del Palazzo e che le Ipoteche passino ove era la Pretura, noi non potremo mai avere i locali monumentali che le Ipoteche occupano attualmente"¹⁹⁶. As previously discussed, two years earlier the engineer Cardelli had succeeded in securing the return of

¹⁹¹ Astrua 2007, p. 441.

¹⁹² Pacchioni 1934, pp. 126-128.

¹⁹³ Giovannini Luca 2015, VI appendice, pp. 227-230.

¹⁹⁴ The architectural studies were resumed and expanded by Pacchioni's successor: Rotondi 1950-51, pp. 227-228. The windows, the capitals and corbels, the decorative stucco bands that run around the loggia, the decorative elements were meticulously mapped and described.

¹⁹⁵ Appendix 2 - 1939 Renzetti, confirms all these structural works in his testimony.

¹⁹⁶ M-PS-67-238. Prot 334. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona. Translated: "The difficulty is very serious. If, as I fear, we do not succeed in getting the Registry to remain outside the Palace and the Ipoteche to move to where the Magistrate's Court used to be, we will never be able to have the monumental rooms currently occupied by the Ipoteche office" (23.1.1934).

two rooms on the second floor from the Registry Office. The Ufficio delle Ipoteche was likewise housed on the second floor, which prompted Pacchioni to propose its relocation to the Magistrate's Court¹⁹⁷.

A document signed by Inspector Renzetti attests that by September 1936 these efforts had proved unsuccessful: the Registry Office had reoccupied the rooms it had vacated in 1932, and, moreover, the Istituto di Belle Arti had taken possession of additional spaces on the second floor¹⁹⁸.

On 13 June 1936, Pacchioni also considered relocating the lapidarium, as the Congregazione della Carità had expressed its willingness to relinquish several ground-floor rooms directly connected to the two already housing funerary monuments¹⁹⁹. Under this plan, the lapidary section would have been transferred to the ground floor, while other fragments and sculptures would have been installed in the *Cortile del Pasquino*, forming a kind of garden antiquarium. Ultimately, however, no substantial changes to the display of the ancient materials were implemented until the 1940s²⁰⁰.

The study phase was lengthy and methodical, and in 1937 a restoration plan was drafted, taking into account the history, significance, and critical conditions of each component of the original architectural fabric. The Palazzo Ducale constituted the central focus of Pacchioni's activity during his tenure as director, which lasted until 1939²⁰¹. He initiated the restoration and installation of the *Duca* Apartment, but was unable to complete a comprehensive reorganisation. This task was subsequently carried forward by his successor as director of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche and former colleague at the Ancona Superintendency between 1933 and 1936, Pasquale Rotondi.

The contributions of the two figures should be examined in conjunction, both in light of their close professional collaboration and in recognition of the fact that the extensive reorganisation implemented by Rotondi after the Second World War was grounded in the substantial body of research undertaken by

¹⁹⁷ M-PS-67-283. Prot. 215. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona. "Trasferendosi la R. Pretura nel Palazzo Mauruzi quest'ufficio riteneva finalmente possibile che l'ufficio delle Ipoteche potesse andare ad occupare i locali di essa lasciando libero il secondo piano, posto in cima al secondo ramo del grande scalone; i più vicini alla Galleria." (29.1.1934).

¹⁹⁸ M-PS-67-283. Prot. 2355. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona. "Un altro passo era stato compiuto nello sgombrò del Palazzo Ducale dagli Uffici Demaniali, che lo ingombrano e lo deturpano; un'altra tappa in quel progressivo lavoro che la Direzione Generale di Belle Arti la Sovrintendenza, la Direzione della Galleria e del Palazzo andavano compiendo per la libertà dell'intero monumento. Ora invece siamo tornati indietro, abbiamo perduto ciò che avevamo ottenuto con tanta fatica e con tante lunghe pratiche." (25.9.1936).

¹⁹⁹ M-PS-67-283. Prot. 1350. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona. "Vengo ora informato che la Congregazione di Carità di Urbino sarebbe disposta a cedere alcuni locali a terreno bene illuminati e che a mio parere potrebbero essere adattissimi a ricevere questa collezione, tanto più che questi locali si trovano di seguito e potrebbero anzi essere con essi messi in diretta comunicazione ad altre 2 sale già in consegna alla nostra Amministrazione nelle quali sono collocati i monumenti sepolcrali e le sculture di gran peso medioevali e della Rinascenza." (13.6.1936).

²⁰⁰ Arcangeli 1977, p. 23.

²⁰¹ Appendix 2 – 1939 Renzetti; this text provides evidence of the actions and intentions of Pacchioni during his period of directorship, thereby demonstrating the significant attention that was dedicated to the architectural aspect of the Palace.

Pacchioni. Without this preparatory work, the exhibition arrangements of the 1940s would not have been the same.

One of the most significant, though largely overlooked, events of this period was the collapse of a ceiling in 1934²⁰². During restoration work on the ceiling of the *Sala delle Campane*, now known as the *Stanza da letto della Duchessa*, a substantial portion of the original stucco decoration collapsed. This incident prompted urgent correspondence with the Minister of Education, Tricarico. The superintendent of the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino acknowledged improper conduct on the part of the *Genio Civile* workers and formally requested authorization from the Ministry to proceed with the salvage of all recoverable elements. On 15 May 1934, Tricarico authorized Pacchioni to secure the ceiling to the greatest extent possible. As Pacchioni reported to the Minister five days later, the detached stucco decorations were ultimately preserved in their entirety ²⁰³.

The documentation relating to this hazardous episode illustrates the inherent difficulties of managing restoration work within a historic palace, particularly when carried out by personnel insufficiently trained in the precautions required for intervention on fragile and historically significant structures.

During his tenure in Urbino, Pacchioni produced few official publications, no comprehensive gallery catalogue, and the collection itself remained largely unchanged. The most significant increase occurred in 1934, as a result of a government measure that enabled the return of several panels from the cycle of the *Uomini illustri* by Pedro Berruguete and Justus of Ghent, which until then had been preserved in Rome within the Barberini collection²⁰⁴. Although the remaining fourteen panels continued to be held at the Louvre, this initiative represented an important step toward the reconstitution of the *studiolo* as it had originally been conceived by Duke Federico da Montefeltro. Pacchioni reflected extensively on the means of achieving this objective and initially displayed the recovered *Uomini illustri* in the *Sala della Jole*²⁰⁵.

In March 1939, he wrote a ministerial report explaining his approach to the exhibition of the fourteen paintings that had returned to Urbino five years earlier. Philological research into the original position of each portrait led him to decide that, where the original version was missing, a copy should be inserted.

²⁰² M-PS-67-283. Prot. 1521. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona. "Facendo seguito al mio telegramma in data di ieri, comunico all'On. Ministero che, ottemperando alle sue disposizioni, avevo dato incarico al Genio Civile di Pesaro di attuare il consolidamento della volta di cui in oggetto, quando improvvisamente -durante i lavori- essa precipitava per intero, non apportando però alcun altro danno, se non una leggiera incrinatura nella volta sottostante. Urge ora provvedere alla rimozione di tutte le macerie e alla ricostruzione della volta stessa, la quale è stata pure affidata al sullodato Genio Civile di Pesaro, che redigerà al più presto un preventivo di spesa. Tutti gli stucchi sono stati salvati. Segnalo al riguardo la coraggiosa benemerita dei muratori Gino Rossi e Carlo Ugolini. – Il Sovrintendente G. Pacchioni" (20.5.1934).

²⁰³ See Appendix 2- 1934 Pacchioni b, which provides a chronological account of the emergency response.

²⁰⁴ Upon their arrival in 1934, the panels depicting the Illustrious Men were placed in the Jole room. In 1938 they were borrowed at the Forlì exhibition, see Gnudi 1938, pp. 25-38. In these years Pacchioni questioned the most suitable type of exhibition and discussed the neutrality of a layout that simply left some spaces empty.

²⁰⁵ Dragoni, Paparello, 2020, pp. 104-105

He advised against leaving empty spaces, arguing that emptiness or a fabric may appear to be “non-interventions” but in reality, emerge as predominant gaps for the visitor²⁰⁶.

This position reflects the superintendent's involvement in the debate on restoration theory, which was very lively in those years, following the 1931 Athens conference and the Italian Restoration Charter published the following year. National and international bodies were primarily concerned with the restoration of monuments and ancient architecture, but soon the key criteria, such as avoiding complete reconstruction and, where possible, favoring the reunification of ancient parts, even with the use of modern materials and technologies, provided they were concealed so as not to alter the image of the work of art, would also be applied to museology and the restoration of paintings. The stylistic unity invoked in the restoration charter was refined by Cesare Brandi, who in the following decades theorized the potential unity in pictorial restoration where, that is, gaps cannot be filled with a neutral color, just as Pacchioni had rejected plain-colored fabric in the studiolo. The Urbino case opens up research into the theoretical approach followed by the director, which is in fact an important contribution not only to the history of the Palazzo's exhibitions, but also to museology in the first half of the 20th century.

During the conference of Superintendents held in July 1938, at which Giulio Carlo Argan gave his famous speech calling for the creation of a Central Restoration Office, each director dealt with a specific topic. In addition to Argan, Carlo Calzecchi Onesti spoke about monuments, Roberto Longhi about cataloguing, Achille Bertini Calosso spoke about landscape protection, and Guglielmo Pacchioni discussed the coordination of museographic criteria. The latter's speech was based primarily on practical experience, which is of particular interest here because it demonstrates the reasoning that arose during the five years spent at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche between research and restoration sites, pondering what he inherited from Luigi Serra.

The superintendent mentioned as the first two criteria “giving space to the works” arranging them at a suitable distance from each other to allow for their best appreciation, and the necessary renunciation of ‘stylish’ surroundings without false decorations and antique furnishings. In fact, at Palazzo Ducale, he chose only works of particular historical and artistic importance to ensure that visitors could enjoy the spaces and the collection to the fullest²⁰⁷. The restructuring led to the removal from the *Trono* hall of the ornamental panoplies in which Serra had arranged the weapons, and the *Duchessa* apartment was emptied of musical instruments and many pieces of furniture²⁰⁸. Pacchioni argued that this museological path was not only already open, but now wide open, to the point of risking falling into the opposite extreme: displays without style and without evaluation of the works on display²⁰⁹. While on the one hand he

²⁰⁶ In the absence of publications by Pacchioni on this subject, reference is made to his report of 9 March 1939 submitted to the Ministro dell' Educazione Nazionale, as cited in Arcangeli 1977, p. 23 (2), and in Dragoni, Paparello 2020, pp. 104-105.

²⁰⁷ Dragoni, Paparello 2020, p. 107.

²⁰⁸ Dragoni, Paparello 2020 and Arcangeli 1977, pp. 23-25.

²⁰⁹ Pacchioni 1938-1939.

indirectly implied the backwardness of his predecessor, on the other he considered unacceptable the style that a few decades later would become known as the 'white cube'.

He argued with foresight that the relationship between art and the contemporary era strictly required the mediation of a gallery curator. The primary task of this figure was to make a selection of works to be exhibited, otherwise every institution would tend to expand disproportionately, lowering the level of quality. Emphasizing the controversy surrounding museums affected by "elephantiasis" Pacchioni went so far as to argue that a rule should be created whereby for every work of art admitted to the galleries, another should be removed. This was a hyperbole to clarify the difference between what is preserved in the museum and what is exhibited in the galleries²¹⁰. In fact, the museum was encouraged to be very rich, always open to any possible increase in demonstrative and documentary value, but the exhibition, according to him, had to be concise²¹¹.

The rejection of scenographic reconstructions and the selection of works were intended to arouse the emotions of the visitor without limiting them, "così da farne più che sia possibile, un collaboratore partecipe anziché un osservatore disorientato e distratto"²¹². According to the director, this abstract goal could not be subject to precise rules because every piece of architecture, like music, has a unique harmony to which the exhibition values must be attuned in order to enhance both the structure and the works it contains. The only specific provision expressed in the document concerned the lighting system, often considered inadequate because they created an atmosphere of a sterile laboratory rather than an environment to be lived and experienced creatively. In his role at the Urbino gallery, Pacchioni intervened precisely on the lighting by inserting ceiling lights and floor lamps of modern and minimal design that went to inhabit many rooms and also the throne room. The museum system was studied by the engineer Vincenzo Lucci Chiarissi to illuminate the building in view of the evening openings on summer weekends²¹³. The result was certainly satisfactory for the director who had the rooms of the building photographed in the two daytime and nighttime versions, in this second case the desire described at the conference came to life expressed by the lit lamps.

In the *Trono*, four linear floor lamps stood out, arranged rhythmically and crowned with modern glass lamps whose shape vaguely resembled a flute glass. The design was developed in collaboration with the best Venetian glassmakers, such as Venini and the Toso brothers of Murano²¹⁴. The Architectural Archive of Ancona still preserves the drawings and estimates relating to the design phase, which took place between the end of 1938 and the summer of 1939.

²¹⁰ Pacchioni 1938-1939, p.150.

²¹¹ Pacchioni 1938-1939, p. 151.

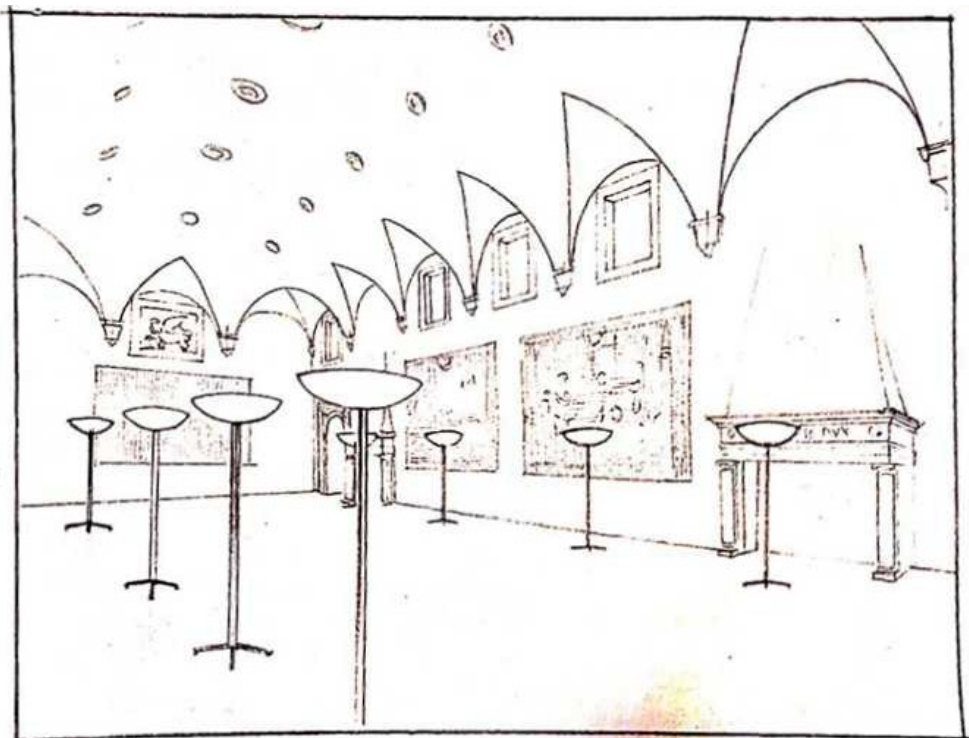
²¹² Pacchioni 1938-1939, p. 152. Pinna 2009, pp. 2-33.

²¹³ *L'arte in guerra*, 2014, p. 42. A document (987/283) dated May 1, 1939, states the intention of opening the museum in the evenings, every Saturday from 9 to 12 pm.

²¹⁴ Appendix 2 - 1939 Toso, provides an overview of the negotiations conducted with these companies, which included visits by sales representatives and numerous detailed design proposals aimed at identifying the most suitable design for the museum's lighting solutions.



54 Project for the Salone del Trono by Fratelli Toso sent to Pacchioni on 27 April 1939, attached to letter #6 in M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona (ASAN).



55 Project for the Salone del Trono by Fratelli Toso sent to Pacchioni on 27 April 1939, attached to letter #6 in M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona (ASAN).



56 Salone del Trono, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216697, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

A letter from Pacchioni dated July 5, 1939 recalls the visit of Minister Bottai, who appreciated and encouraged the initiative²¹⁵. The room thus illuminated was indeed impressive, with the shadows cast on the ceiling vaults highlighting the architectural form better than a clear, uniform light, which would have tended to flatten it optically²¹⁶. The focus on the built spaces was also emphasized by the choice of a biscuit color for the walls, painted in contrast to the white ceilings. The weapons were definitively removed from the hall, together with the two false fireplaces that occupied the windowed wall²¹⁷. The fireplaces removed from the hall were returned to the *Duca* apartment, from which they probably came, respectively in the *Udienze* room and the Duke's bedroom. The walkways designed by Serra to accompany visitors were also removed, leaving the tapestries as the only elements on display in the hall.

Figure 56 shows the wall adjacent to the Laurana loggias: one of the large fireplaces and part of a tapestry can be seen. Through the monumental door, it can be seen that many ancient fragments and reliefs depicting war machines were still walled up in the loggia. This was the last arrangement before the removal of the lapidary, which Pacchioni was already planning to move. The project, which was never implemented, involved removing the tombstones and moving them to the *Pasquino* courtyard, where they would have formed a sort of garden-antiquarium, typical of large 16th-century residences, together with the funerary monuments, memorial stones, and archaeological antiquities²¹⁸. This was linked to the hoped-for removal of the Monte di Pietà from the adjoining rooms on the ground floor, which, however, were

²¹⁵ Appendix 2 - 1939 Pacchioni.

²¹⁶ Arcangeli 1977, p. 24. During the exploratory tests carried out by Pacchioni's collaborators, a portion of ancient biscuit-colored plaster had emerged, which also covered the lunette areas. The director followed this clue and applied a philological principle to the painting of the spaces (Dragoni, Paparello, 2020, p. 105).

²¹⁷ Serra 1930.

²¹⁸ Arcangeli 1977, p. 23.

only vacated in the early 1940s²¹⁹. Then, Pasquale Rotondi actually moved the lapidarium collection to those spaces in collaboration with the Superintendency of Monuments and Antiquities, but without intervening on the garden²²⁰.



57 Salone del Trono, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216716, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)



58 Salone del Trono, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216714, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

²¹⁹ Appendix 2 - 1944 Rotondi, shows that still the Palace was crowded of other public entities and institutes that limited the spaces available for the museum.

²²⁰ Rotondi 1946, p. 44.

Continuing through the *Realissimo* apartment was the *Sala degli Angeli*, where contemporary design lamps hung from the decorative ceiling rosettes, contrasting with the classical environment.

Until now, it was unclear how the room was presented²²¹. Similarly to the Salone, Pacchioni mainly displayed in this reception room tapestries, but thanks to the photographic document, we can also integrate some chests and, in the middle of the room, two Savonarola-style chairs for visitors to use. Also, we can spot the presence of the corner window, which had remained walled up until Serra's time and was reopened by Pacchioni.

The closed window space was probably noticed during the structural work carried out by the director and his collaborators, first and foremost Luigi Renzetti, honorary curator of the Galleria, Giacomo Nardone, engineer of the Superintendency of Medieval and Modern Art, architect Luigi Leporini, colleagues Giuseppe Pompei, Riccardo Pacini, and the young Pasquale Rotondi ²²².



59 *Sala degli Angeli*, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216045, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

²²¹ *Storia di un museo* 1977. Image 21 of the catalogue is erroneously placed in the section relating to Pacchioni. Yes, it correctly attests to the work of reopening the corner window of the *Sala degli Angeli*, carried out at the same time as the restoration of the *Loggia del Gallo*, however the installation presented is the one carried out by Rotondi, who removed the chandeliers and had the gilding on the door frames refreshed.

²²² Dragoni, Paparello 2020, p. 105



60 Stanza da letto del Duca, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216677, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Among the most impressive achievements was the reopening of the *Loggia del Gallo*, which over the centuries had become a real room adjacent to the *Sala delle Udienze* and was restored to its original state with the arches open on the right side of the Torricini facade²²³.

The project originally included all the apartments around the grand courtyard, but eventually the *Realissimo* was the sole specimen carried out. For this research it is particularly relevant to note that Pacchioni updated the permanent setup of this apartment only. The works and the space resonated to welcome those entering the wing of the palace historically dedicated to the *Duca* apartment with a strong narrative of the Urbino Renaissance.

The photograph of the *Stanza da letto* showed a fireplace that until the 1920s was still mistakenly located in the *Salone del Trono*, which was replaced correctly by Pacchioni. Next to the hood decorated with the eagle with outstretched wings, was placed the dynastic portrait of Federico da Montefeltro with his son, painted by Pedro Berruguete.

In the same room, Paolo Uccello's predella was placed under a tapestry, an anachronistic choice compared to past (and future) installations, which usually tended to reconstruct the original unity with Giusto di Gand's Communion of the Apostles. This change of position could represent a clue to inspect the director's approach. He knew of the original unity of panel and predella, but possibly preferred a different pairing to highlight the tapestry.

²²³ Appendix 2 -Renzetti 1939.

The scene depicting the procession was positioned in close proximity to the most emblematic works of the government of Duke Federico, a strategic decision that underscores the original provenance of the tapestry from the collections that were retained within the ducal palace²²⁴. The area once inhabited by Federico da Montefeltro now showcased the director's approach to museology.

Another image allowed us to identify the Communion of the Apostles in the same room, displayed on a dark, possibly metallic support, in a distinctly contemporary style that contrasts with the classical setting. This choice is consistent with the modern lighting, while the Savonarola-style chairs in the center of the room do not seem to be in line with the exhibition design, but rather respond to a need to save money by reusing what was already available in the museum.



61 Stanza da letto del Duca, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216683, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)



62 Stanza da letto del Duca, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216680, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

The research also contributed to uncovering a photograph of the *Guardaroba del Duca* (room 123). Two paintings by Piero della Francesca are clearly visible: the Madonna di Senigallia in the corner next to the entrance door and, on the adjacent wall, near the other door (closed) leading to the study, the Flagellation. In addition to the general forgetfulness of the existence of these photographs, they had probably not yet been correctly attributed at the time of Pacchioni, as not all of them show the characteristic lighting with modern-style lamps.

²²⁴ Musacchio 1994, p. 925.

Here, it was possible to confirm their date of origin thanks to their author, Antonio Ceccato. He worked as a photographer collaborating with the Superintendency of Ancona during the twenty years of Fascism, carried out the documentary campaign at the Palazzo Ducale in the 1930s, and his prints can be recognized thanks to the linear stamp “Fot. Dott. Cav. A. Ceccato - Ancona” affixed on the back²²⁵. Further confirmation can be found in the document in which Rotondi recalls the photographic campaign carried out by Ceccato in Urbino “per ordine del Cav. Pacchioni”²²⁶.



63 *Guardaroba del Duca*, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216671, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

The photographs of the *Udienze* hall (129), where other masterpieces from the gallery were collected, also reappeared from the same Institute. In the first image, Raphael's *Muta* and the hunting belt can be seen, under which there was a chest mounted on a dark structure with the dual function of separation and display. On the adjacent wall were the two parts of the processional banner of the Corpus Domini confraternity of Urbino painted by Titian and, continuing on, the two parts of Luca Signorelli's banner. Beyond the threshold of a door was the banner from a completely different era and style known as the Byzantine banner, a choice that attests to a typological selection that goes beyond artistic schools.

²²⁵ Photographer's profile on the ICCD website, consulted on June 19, 2024. URL: <https://fotografia.cultura.gov.it/iccd/Agent/IT-ICCD-EACCPF-0001-003018>

²²⁶ See Appendix 2- 1941 Ceccato.



64 Sala delle Udienze, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216684, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)



65 Sala delle Udienze, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216682, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)



66 Sala delle Udienze, 1939 (A. Ceccato, MPI6216681, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

On the last wall, bordering the small chapel of Guidubaldo II, the director moved one of the fireplaces from the throne room and opened a square window next to it to allow a view inside. All the photographs of Raphael's works and the cast of Raphael's skull, which until then had occupied the niche at the back, were removed from the walls of the chapel and replaced by the Madonna della Ghiara.



67 *Cappellina di Guidubaldo II, 1939* (A. Ceccato, MPI6216588, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

By the end of the director's term, the only apartment that had been fully restored and refurbished was the Duca. This provided concrete evidence to support the theory promoted at ministerial level.

The rest of the exhibition area saw the removal of the carpets and a more careful selection of the objects on display. The photographs of the Jole room, which were long forgotten in the photographic archive of Urbino's Galleria, attest to this period.

The setup has changed slightly since Serra's time, but the alcove is already in this room, as can be seen both in the second image and on the left side of the first one²²⁷. The correct dating of these documents finally clarifies the museographic management of parts of the Galleria that Pachioni did not completely refurbish, yet tried to blend in with the new rooms, reflecting his approach to exhibitions.

²²⁷ The comparison with image 45 with the present study enables the verification of the status quo ante and post situations.



68 Sala della Jole, 1933-1939 (Unknown author, 2150-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)



69 Sala della Jole, 1933-1939 (Unknown author, 2151-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

On the ground, leaning against the wall, we can spot some objects across the door that leads to the rest of the Jole apartment. It is difficult to make out, but they appear to be four dark frames that could possibly contain photographs from the Dukes' collection, exhibited by Luigi Serra and possibly removed by Pacchioni alongside the changes to the Jole room.

In autumn 1939, Pacchioni's work in Urbino came to an end and he assumed the position of Superintendent of Milan from 1939 to 1945²²⁸. Among his final documents sent to the Ministry of National Education was a highly confidential registered letter in which the outgoing director complained about the danger posed by the presence of military aviation depots in the railway tunnel under the hill of Urbino²²⁹.

3.2 Dismantling and Refurbishing the Galleria. Pasquale Rotondi

After a brief interim period in which the Superintendency was headed by Enzo Carli, on October 1, 1939, Pasquale Rotondi became the new regional superintendent and director of the Urbino Gallery, where he was tasked with implementing a ministerial plan devised together with Argan for the protection of Italian heritage²³⁰. He had graduated in 1932 with Pietro Toesca and, at the age of 24, had begun his professional career as an inspector at the Superintendency of Ancona²³¹. Upon his arrival in Urbino, having learned of the military depots beneath the palace, he had to reconfigure new protection solutions²³². This required a rapid understanding of the site and its structural conditions in order to ensure the effective protection of the cultural heritage entrusted to him.

A typewritten report attests to the situation he encountered probably in his first year²³³. It recorded the intended uses of the various parts of the building and outlined the actions he considered most urgent for a better arrangement of the Galleria Nazionale. The ground floor housed the notary's archive, the Monte di Pietà, the Guardia Forestale's barracks, and the Istituto d'Arte, which also extended into the first basement, along with the city's water tanks and some rooms for storing the Gallery's works. Below were the state monopoly warehouses for goods such as salt and tobacco. The main floor accommodated the Gallery together with the headquarters of the Superintendency, while on the second floor only a small portion of the Gallery remained and was largely unusable, the rest of the area having been subdivided and allocated to administrative offices.

²²⁸ Ghibaudi 2009.

²²⁹ ASAN, Fondo Soprintendenza ai Monumenti, Amministrazione, b.320, fasc.4- P.A.A. Provincia di Pesaro e Urbino, sotto-fasc. "Urbino" (cit. in Bernardini 2022, p. 131).

²³⁰ On 18 September 1939. Zampetti 1992, p. 11.

²³¹ Rotondi Terminiello 2007, pp. 548-554. Rotondi 1977, p. 59.

²³² Di Ludovico 2009, pp. 28-31.

²³³ Rotondi 1940, pp. 1-2.

The form and content of the report suggest that Rotondi composed it shortly after taking up his post in Urbino²³⁴. This early dating is significant for understanding his approach to the directorship, which was based on a prompt and careful evaluation of the conditions he was called upon to manage.

A review of his activity shows that this preliminary survey became an essential instrument during the critical years from 1939 to 1944. In this phase, Rotondi focused primarily on the evacuation of the museum spaces and on the coordination of emergency measures, a set of actions that can be identified as the first stage of his work in Urbino. A second stage emerged in the immediate post-conflict period and was characterized by a renewed and more systematic study of the Palazzo Ducale, undertaken in parallel with the broader process of institutional reorganization.

When Italy entered World War II, the galleries on the main floor were necessarily cleared in order to transfer the collections to more secure locations. Smaller or immovable objects were relocated to the ground floor of the Palazzo Ducale and to a torricino, while the most significant works were sent to the Rocca di Sassocorvaro. These included paintings by Piero della Francesca, the Byzantine banner, Francesco da Rimini's *Crocifisso*, the so-called *Città Ideale*, the banners by Luca Signorelli and Titian, and several major commissions by Duke Federico, amounting to a total of twenty-seven paintings and panels²³⁵. The fortified structure designed by Francesco di Giorgio Martini also received masterpieces from the Gallerie dell'Accademia and from Venetian churches, forming an initial deposit of 347 works²³⁶. Important collections from Rome and Milan were later transferred to the Marche, underscoring the complexity of the circumstances in which the Urbino holdings were safeguarded, as their fate became temporarily linked to that of other artworks protected in the region²³⁷. With the exception of the twenty-seven works sent to Sassocorvaro, the remaining collections of the Galleria Nazionale initially remained in Urbino. In his diaries from the early 1940s, Rotondi recalled narrowly avoiding enemy incursions, attributing this outcome to strict organization, the dedication of the custodial staff, and a degree of good fortune²³⁸.

Moved from the rooms, 23 medium-sized works were walled up inside the right tower, while most of Federico Barocci's paintings, Giusto di Gand's *Communion of the Apostles*, Giovanni Santi's exceptional panels, Viviani's drawings, tapestries, and majolica were hidden in five rooms on the ground floor. These spaces were specially reinforced with anti-collapse walls and sandbags, as were the arches of the courtyard

²³⁴ The description concerned the spaces still inhabited, frequented by institutions and people, only partially open to the public. In the absence of a date, it can be ruled out that the document refers to years after 1940, given that at that juncture the museum would have been empty and, at the end of the war, some did not recover their previous spaces. Moreover, the subject of war was never mentioned in the text. When describing the structure, it would have made sense to explain the improvements and deterioration linked to the war years, and the absence of such facts is a sign that they had probably not yet occurred.

²³⁵ Bernardini 2022 p.120.

²³⁶ *Storia di un museo* 1977 p. 27.

²³⁷ The most up-to-date review on this topic can be found in the catalogue of the exhibition *Arte Liberata. Capolavori salvati dalla guerra*, curated by L. Gallo and R. Morselli (Roma, Scuderie del Quirinale, Dec. 2022- Apr. 2023), Electa: Roma 2022.

²³⁸ Melograni 2015, pp. 115-200.

of honor and the architectural parts of the palace considered most at risk. From June 1940, the main floor was completely empty in its imposing and harmonious structures, with some areas recently restored by Pacchioni and others virtually untouched since Serra's arrival.

It was a unique moment for the study of the Palazzo Ducale, whose bareness struck the director and allowed him to appreciate the “musical” rhythm with which the spaces were articulated²³⁹. The alternation of stucco decorations with bare plastered walls and the proportion of the volumes suggested the grandeur of the project that had guided the Dukes of Urbino, aimed not at uniformity but at the harmonious overlapping of the different architectural phases. The “eternal simplicity” observed by Rotondi in the empty palace was a founding principle for the subsequent refurbishment²⁴⁰.

Even before the country could move into a renewed period of stability, Rotondi was already engaged in planning for the future. In 1941, he published in «La Rinascita», the journal directed by Giovanni Papini, a project for the refurbishment of the Palazzo Ducale²⁴¹. The following year, in 1942, he also promoted the re-establishment of the Superintendency of the Galleries of the Marche, based in Urbino, as an autonomous body alongside the regional Superintendency, with its own staff and a greater degree of decision-making authority. This initiative marked a significant change at the legal and administrative levels. Since 1924, the Superintendency of Ancona had exercised jurisdiction over the Urbino area, and Rotondi himself initially held both positions, serving simultaneously as superintendent of Ancona and, by extension, of Urbino²⁴². However, his clear awareness of the risks posed by the conflict to the region, together with the limited resources allocated specifically to Urbino, led him to recognize the need for a dedicated management structure for the Galleria²⁴³.

The second phase of Rotondi's leadership began in August 1944, when the Allied army entered Urbino. Captain Frederik Henry Joseph Marxse, appointed by the Allied government to protect monuments, works of art, and archives in the Marche and Abruzzo regions, immediately showed his support for the reopening of the Palazzo Ducale²⁴⁴. First thing, structural checks and architectural restoration work began, which took more than a year, and then the works that had remained on site re-emerged from their hiding places.

The reorganization of the museum is documented in the *Vade mecum del visitatore di Urbino*, published in May 1946 as a guide to the layout of the collections, less than two years after the German withdrawal. In the introduction, Marxse highlighted the temporary absence of numerous works. Due to a shortage of skilled craftsmen, the wooden inlays in the studiolo had not yet been restored, while the most significant masterpieces, transferred to Vatican City in September 1943, remained under papal protection²⁴⁵. *La Muta*,

²³⁹ Rotondi 1950, p. 13.

²⁴⁰ Rotondi 1950, p. 14.

²⁴¹ Rotondi 1941, pp. 639-645.

²⁴² Paparello 2015, p. 53

²⁴³ Rotondi 1992, pp. 59-60.

²⁴⁴ Di Ludovico, 2009, p. 159.

²⁴⁵ Marxse 1946, pp. 8-11.

which had been on loan to the Uffizi at the outbreak of the conflict for a temporary exhibition, was returned to Urbino on 2 April 1947, despite some initial resistance.

The chief officer defined this first exhibition as a “mostra” and explained the arrangement according to a criterion of chronological harmony with the palace, where possible. Most of the works on display corresponded to commissions by Dukes Federico and Guidobaldo I, and there were also older ones, such as those by Allegretto Nuzi, Antonio Alberti da Ferrara, and the Rimini school. The tapestries based on Raphael's designs returned to the *Salone del Trono*, and the upper floor, opened to the public for the first time, housed Barocci and works from later periods.

The collections were enriched by the purchase of pieces such as Orazio Gentileschi's painting *Madonna with Child and Saint Francesca Romana*. The director's extraordinary attention to the conservation of the existing works allowed for the restoration of all the prints and drawings, particularly those that came to the museum with the Viviani bequest. After the conservation phase, they were placed on the second floor in a room that had been renovated for the occasion. The objects received through the Mauruzi bequest, which included a large number of weapons and ceramics, were also relocated for a proper exhibition.

As far as the palace was concerned, the restoration criteria were explained by Rotondi in the body of the text: to give priority, even before the artworks, to the structures and decorations of the rooms. The 15th-century architectural layout was considered perfect for housing medieval and early Renaissance works: “Abbiamo insomma voluto che le opere esposte fossero spiritualmente vicine e, per la maggior parte, direttamente legate alla civiltà artistica che dalle architetture si esprime: in modo che dalla visione dell'insieme il visitatore possa riuscire ad afferrare il più possibile i caratteri di tale civiltà”²⁴⁶. The exhibition was designed so that the works would maintain a strong connection with one another and the surrounding architecture. Most pieces were arranged to reflect the artistic civilization represented by the building, allowing visitors to apprehend, through the ensemble as a whole, the defining qualities of that cultural and artistic tradition.

The *Duchessa* apartment housed works of particular regional interest which, entrusted to the Superintendency during the war, were temporarily stored in Urbino. The *Duca* wing, like the previous exhibitions, housed the most valuable works of Federico da Montefeltro's court.

The other paintings in the permanent collection and the reliefs with war machines by Francesco di Giorgio Martini, sculpted by Ambrogio Barocci, were placed in the following rooms. Finally, the *Appartamento della Jole* was mainly dedicated to 15th-century culture. The frescoes by Giovanni Boccati had just been rediscovered here, and work on the hanging garden had brought the original flowerbeds back to light.

The descriptive guide began with the courtyard of honor and the ground floor, whose rooms were declared inaccessible because they were occupied by the classrooms of the Scuola del Libro²⁴⁷. Going up

²⁴⁶ Rotondi 1946, p.44.

²⁴⁷ Rotondi 1946 p. 49. In the revised 1948 edition of the *Vademecum* p. 44, however, the wording of this passage was moderated to “alcuni di tali ambienti”, reflecting the transfer of several rooms from the School to the Galleria.

to the first floor, the *Vade mecum* described the *soprallogge*, highlighting the sculptural decoration and wooden inlays of the doors. At this stage, the loggias were already free of the ancient steles, but the installation of the new lapidary on the ground floor was not yet complete²⁴⁸.

The text had a different layout depending on the subject matter. When explaining the history of the palace and the construction phases, the margin of the text was normal, while for everything concerning the installation of the works just completed in 1946, an additional indent was inserted. In this way, visitors could easily access information about both the palace and the collection and could quickly and clearly distinguish between the two in the text at a glance.

The indented paragraphs began with the *Salone del Trono*. The starting point of the tour was not changed after the war, and the seven magnificent tapestries designed by Raphael hung on the walls as they had in Pacchioni's time, but the lighting was modified and the modern-style lamps were not used anymore.



70 Salone del Trono, after 1945 (Unknown author, MPI6216694, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Then the museum path entered the *Duchessa* apartment. In the *Sala delle Veglie* there were five tapestries by Francois Van Den Hecke on temporary loan from the National Museum of Ancona. Next to the fireplace was a Madonna and Saints attributed to Francesco Bissolo on loan from the Cathedral of Lagosta (Croatia),

²⁴⁸ Rotondi 1946 pp. 44-45.

followed by Lorenzo d'Alessandro da Sanseverino's Baptism of Christ and Pietro Alemanno's Madonna with Four Angels, which remained in Urbino and are still in the Palazzo Ducale.



71 *Sala delle Veglie*, c. 1946 (published in Rotondi 1946, p. 103)

72 *Madonna and Saints* by Francesco Bissolo, date unknown (published in Šustiċ 2018)

In the official guide to the gallery, published two years later, no changes were reported. In fact, most of the works on loan were returned not by Rotondi, but by his successor Pietro Zampetti²⁴⁹. In the next vestibule were *San Giacomo delle Marche*, initially identified as Bernardino, on an easel was a Madonna and Child (both attributed to Carlo Crivelli), and next to the entrance was a wooden faldstool. In the 1948 exhibition, the faldstool was removed in favor of moving the other *San Giacomo delle Marche* by Cola dell'Amatrice, allowing for greater comparison with that of Crivelli²⁵⁰.

Various 15th-century paintings were displayed in the *Salotto della Duchessa*: to the right of the entrance was Cola dell'Amatrice's *San Giacomo* near a first bell from Montelabate, then, on an easel in front of the window, was the Madonna with Saint Rose, believed to be by Gentile da Fabriano, and, completing the wall, Mansueti's *Deposition*. On the wall opposite the entrance, there was a second bell, the Madonna by Jacopo da Valenza, then attributed to Alvise Vivarini, and the monumental polyptych by Antonio Vivarini from the convent of Monte Fiorentino, as can be seen in the photograph of the following room. The decision to display Early Renaissance paintings in this space represented a significant departure from the previous arrangement, which had been devoted exclusively to sculpture. That earlier display had been justified by the visual and conceptual dialogue established with the portal sculpted by Ambrogio Barocci. The new installation therefore constituted a radical change; however, it formed part of a broader revision of the museum itinerary that redirected emphasis toward the Jole apartment.

²⁴⁹ Zampetti 1977, p. 70. Mosco 1977, p. 35.

²⁵⁰ Rotondi 1948 p. 61.



73 Vestibule, Appartamento della Duchessa, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1097-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino)



74 Salotto della Duchessa, c.1946 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino).

Between the fireplace and the door were the Crucifixion by Girolamo di Giovanni and the triptych by the Maestro della Vita di San Bartolomeo. Then there were the *Madonna in trono* and the *Crocifissione* by Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro (formerly Antonio da Fabriano), interspersed with a Gothic Circumcision on temporary loan from the church of S. Maria della Piazza in Ancona. The last wall was occupied by St. Anthony of Padua and St. Clare (formerly attributed to Lorenzo Salimbeni), the polyptych with the Virgin Adoring the Child, Saints, and the Risen Christ, and the panel with St. Agatha by Antonio da Ferrara. The room was closed by the banner with St. James and St. Anthony the Abbot by Antonio Palmerini, then believed to be by Alberti.

This arrangement lent visibility to recent attributions and contributed to the stimulation of art-historical debate. At the same time, it established a deliberate comparison between the *fondi oro* of the Urbino collection and those preserved on site for reasons of conservation, allowing their stylistic, iconographic, and technical features to be read in relation to one another. The resulting juxtaposition enhanced the interpretative potential of the display, offering scholars an opportunity for closer comparative analysis while remaining accessible and intelligible to a broader, non-specialist public.

In 1948, the Guide stated that the Ancona Circumcision had taken its place next to the entrance, followed by Saint Clare, Mansueti's Pietà, and the panel depicting the Madonna by Jacopo da Valenza²⁵¹.



75 Salotto della Duchessa, c.1946 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

²⁵¹ Rotondi 1948 pp. 65-66.



76 *Salotto della Duchessa*, 1963 (Unknown author, G.F.N. Serie F 15905, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

The photographs preserved in the Rotondi collection confirm that there was a polyptych depicting the Coronation of the Virgin Mary, received from the municipality of Osimo, a scene depicting the Crucifixion by Girolamo di Giovanni da Camerino, and the polyptych depicting the life of Saint Bartholomew.

Giovanni Antonio da Pesaro still occupied the space next to the door, replaced by Antonio di Guido's Madonna and Child only in a second phase, then there was the banner with Saints James and Anthony, the polyptych with the Adoring Virgin, St. Agatha, and St. Anthony, moved for from *Santa Chiara* due to its less delicate coloring²⁵².

The subsequent room was conceived as a space for comparative analysis. It was largely devoted to religious subject matter and, in particular, opened on the right side of the entrance with a group of representations of the Crucifixion: the panel and cross by Francesco da Rimini on the first wall, followed by the cusp and triptych by the Master of the Coronation of Urbino, interspersed with the cross by Francesco da Rimini (formerly Maestro di Verucchio²⁵³).

Then there were the Saints Michael the Archangel and John the Baptist by Andrea di Bartolo, the polyptych by Baronzio, and the third painted cross from Rimini (Pietro da Rimini).

²⁵² Rotondi 1948, p. 71.

²⁵³ Boskovits 1993, pp. 163-183.



77 Stanza da letto della Duchessa (Author, unknown S.G.U. N. 1098-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)



78 Stanza da letto della Duchessa, c.1963 (Author, unknown, Serie F, N. 15904, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Finally, there was a chest and, on the last wall, fragments of frescoes from the church of San Francesco in Urbino. In 1948, the painting with the head of a Dominican saint replaced the panel with the crucifixion by Francesco da Rimini, which was moved to the other side of the room near the frescoes in the Paltroni chapel.

The tour continued in the *Guardaroba della Duchessa*, exactly as seen in the photograph. To the right of the entrance were the *Annunciazione* by Olivuccio di Ceccarello, the Madonna, and a triptych by Allegretto Nuzi from the Cathedral of Macerata.



79 *Guardaroba della Duchessa* (Author, unknown, S.G.U. N. 1099-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

The *Vade mecum* then suggests that there was a half-length painting of the Madonna, a Madonna del latte on temporary loan from the Pinacoteca civica of Ancona, and a *Dormitio virginis* from the church of S. Maria in Piazza²⁵⁴. The last room of the apartment was arranged with roughly the same works left by Serra in his last installation. Rotondi wanted to remove Brandani's ceiling from this space, to restore it to its original appearance, but in the end he didn't²⁵⁵.

Access to the *Realissimo* (or *Duca*) apartment required going back to the Sala degli Angeli. Here there was a series of Flemish tapestries, a rare Gothic piece of furniture placed in dialogue with a Renaissance chest, and then one continued straight on to access the proper Duke's apartment, in the rooms where he slept.

²⁵⁴ Rotondi 1946, p. 66.

²⁵⁵ Rotondi 1946 p. 68.



80 Sala degli Angeli,, c.1946 (Author, unknown, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).



81 Sala degli Angeli, c.1946 (Author, unknown, Fondo Rotondi, 4, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

Gathered in the *Camera da letto del Duca*, number 122 according to the numbering given by Rotondi himself, were works related to the government of Duca Federico, such as *Salvator Mundi* (attributed to Melozzo), the *Eucharist* by Giusto di Gand, the predella by Paolo Uccello, the tapestries of the *Annunciation* and the one with hunting scenes that probably adorned the palace at the time of the Duca, and finally the double

portrait with his son Guidobaldo. The tapestries do not correspond to the one that stood out above the predella in Pacchioni's time, and there is no certainty that Salvator Mundi was previously in this room.

In the adjacent wardrobe, as before the conflict, the great masterpieces of the Galleria could be seen: the Flagellation, scenically placed in the niche from the *Salone del Trono*, and on the other walls, the architectural perspective, the Madonna of Senigallia, and the marble bust of Francesco di Simone Ferrucci depicting a young St. John²⁵⁶.

The *Sala delle Udienze* featured Raphael's portrait of a noblewoman, accompanied by a Perugino Annunciation and two pairs of banners by Titian and Luca Signorelli, so the works remained on display in a manner quite similar to Pacchioni's arrangement. The *Madonna della Ghiara* also remained in the chapel. Although there may have been some minor changes, the *Duca* apartment under Rotondi essentially retained the same display logic as the previous arrangement.

In the Renaissance, the series of the Illustrious Men originally adorned the Duke's studiolo. In the immediate aftermath of the conflict, however, the studiolo required renewed scholarly investigation in order to determine the original collocation of the panels. For this reason, Rotondi did not immediately reinstall the Illustrious Men in their original location. Instead, he undertook a thorough examination of the surviving carpentry and began drafting a hypothetical reconstruction.

Within this context, Rotondi's postwar exhibition displayed the Illustrious Men in the first room of the *Ospiti* apartment (Room 131), where visitors were welcomed by the figures that had once inhabited the Duke's *studiolo* - namely, in order: Cicero, Hippocrates, Homer, Bartolo Sentinate, Euclid, Boethius, Moses, Petrarch, Ambrose, Gregory, Solomon, Albertus Magnus, Pius II, and Scotus. This research process ultimately culminated in 1973 with a historic conservation intervention that finalized the reconstruction²⁵⁷. The measurements of each panel, the details of the paintings and the restoration findings lead him to the intuition of the correct sequence of the portraits. Also, he realized that there must have been a wooden frame with columns and capitals similar to the inlays below, so he produced some detailed sketches to present the original setup.

Photographs of the room from Rotondi's period also indicate that the hood above the fireplace had been reconstructed. This contrasts with earlier evidence documenting Serra's layout (figure 36), in which the hood was clearly absent and the space above the frieze was instead occupied by a painting, effectively compensating for the void.

²⁵⁶ Rotondi 1946 p. 74.

²⁵⁷ Russo 2022, p. 239. In determining the sequence, Rotondi also took into consideration the account of the German scholar Lorenz Schrader, who visited Urbino in the sixteenth century and recorded the order of the Illustrious Men as they appeared at that time.



82 Sala degli Uomini Illustri, c.1946 (Author, unknown, S.G.U. N. 1114-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino).

The second *Ospiti* room (132) featured Giovanni Santi's six Apostles interspersed with a Saint Sebastian at the Column. The panels were displayed symmetrically, three and three, around Pedro Berreguete's martyred saint. The same criterion of apparent balance was applied to Tobiola and the Angel by Evangelista di Piandimeleto, separated from Saint Roch, with whom it was usually paired: the former was located immediately to the left of the entrance, while the latter was placed symmetrically on the opposite wall.



83 Second Ospiti Room, c.1946 (Author, unknown, S.G.U. N. 1115-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale Delle Marche, Urbino)



84 *Sala del Re d'Inghilterra*, c. 1946 (Author, unknown S.G.U. N. 1116-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

In the *Re d'Inghilterra* room, there were four small paintings by Giovanni Santi: two Pietàs, a Saint Martyr, and a Dead Christ with the Virgin. Rotondi claimed that the fresco of the Virgin enthroned with baby Jesus could be associated with Santi, in fact today it is attributed to his follower Baldo de Sarofini²⁵⁸.



85 *The fourth room in the Ospiti Apartment*, c. 1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1166-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

²⁵⁸ Rotondi 1946, p. 82.

Upon inspection of the photograph of the adjacent room, designated number 134, it becomes evident that the distinctive checkered floor, a vestige of the Subprefecture, had not yet undergone refurbishment. At the corners of the checkerboard were the two wooden statues that make up the diptych of the Annunciation from the parish church of Rotella, encased in glass display cases. On the walls, clockwise, are the Arrivabene altarpiece, Saint Apollonia by Timoteo Viti, and the Buffi altarpiece. These were followed by a Madonna by Bartolomeo di Gentile, a small Saint Sebastian from the school of Giovanni Santi, and a large martyrdom of Saint Sebastian from the same school (now at Casa Raffaello Museum).

As clearly explained in the *Vade mecum*, a small door led to the penultimate part of the palace, the *Melaranci* apartment, which once corresponded to a loggia. In the small room numbered 135 were the stained glass window painted by Timoteo Viti, St. Vincent Ferrer, the partial replica of the Communion of the Apostles by Giusto di Gand, and a 15th-century group of the *Madonna della Misericordia*, perhaps the one now in the Diocesan Museum of Urbino. The *Melaranci* section is was also where the exhibition of the first reliefs with war machines sculpted by Ambrogio Barocci based on a design by Francesco di Giorgio Martini began.



86 Melaranci apartment, Sala dei rilievi bellici, c. 1950 (Unknown author, MPI6216684, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

The others were displayed in the following rooms, at the end of the apartment, where they were placed in dialogue with the Madonna by Francesco di Simone Ferrucci and one attributed to Domenico Rosselli.

Finally, the *Appartamento della Jole* began with the view of the *Alcova* in room 152, around which were arranged the head of Agostino di Duccio, the Byzantine banner, the fifteenth-century group with the *Madonna della Misericordia* from Camerino from the second half of the fifteenth century, and the ducal hunting sash. A photograph allows us to distinguish the alcove in the position it still occupies today, next to which the banner was hung on the wall and the wooden Madonna stood out in the corner.



87 Sala dell'Alcova, c. 1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1206-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

In the next room, Giovanni Boccati's men-at-arms had finally come to light. The enthusiastic director conveyed the news of the discovery in a telegram to the Superintendency of Monuments in Ancona on November 14, 1939, and the following day he crowned the discovery with a registered letter containing more detailed explanations²⁵⁹.



88 Sala degli Affreschi, c.1939 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1924-B, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

²⁵⁹ Appendix 2 – 1939 Rotondi

Finally, in the *Sala della Jole*, the architectural reliefs by Michele di Giovanni da Fiesole were placed in dialogue with the Madonna he sculpted in a stone aedicule with traces of polychromy. There were also reliefs by Tommaso Fiamberti, Agostino di Duccio, and two wooden Madonnas from Camerino and Corinaldo. Finally, there were the 'family' portraits, namely the oval depicting Battista Sforza, the lunette with Federico and Ottaviano Ubaldini, and finally the young Guidobado.

In comparison to Pacchioni's minor reconfiguration of the room, which involved retaining the majority of Serra's configuration, Rotondi adopted a radical approach. This entailed the removal of the alcove from the room, a modification that is more aligned with the original purpose of the space during the Ducal era.



89 *Sala della Jole*, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 942-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

At this stage, the upper floor was not fully visible, but the first four rooms in front of the main staircase had been set up. The so-called *Roveresche* rooms set an important precedent for future directors, who maintained most of Rotondi's choices. The first room of the itinerary of the second floor is presented in figure 90. It featured Pellegrino Tibaldi's Virgin and Saint Elizabeth on an easel, and leaning against the walls were two cartoons by Domenichino and Agostino Carracci.



90 Prima sala roveresca, c.1946 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 1, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

In the second room, there was Gentileschi, three altarpieces by Guercino, Guerrieri's Saint Sebastian, Sassoferrato's small crucifixion, and Federico Barocci's sketch of the Deposition of Christ.



91 Seconda sala roveresca, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1245-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

The third room was entirely dedicated to Barocci: only the sketch depicting an 'evanescent' Eternal Father, placed in a prominent position on an easel at the end of the row of rooms, is mentioned²⁶⁰. Two photographs refer to the layout just described and confirm the presence of St. Francis Receiving the

²⁶⁰ Rotondi 1946, p. 92.

Stigmata, next to which were placed the sketch for The *Perdono* of Assisi, the Madonna now attributed to Cimadori, and the cartoons of the two Bishops.



92 Terza sala roveresca, c.1946 (Unknown author, S.G.U. N. 1247-A, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

In 1949, Rotondi was transferred from the Superintendency of Urbino to that of Genoa, where he took up his post on October 1, and Pietro Zampetti arrived at the gallery in Urbino from Genoa²⁶¹. One of the major contributions of the now former director to the study was published in 1950-51: the substantial two-volume research entitled “Il Palazzo Ducale di Urbino”.

It is still considered a cornerstone of the field, as it contains the most rigorous study of the construction phases, the history of the decorations and the materials used, as well as presenting a map of all the floors, attributing the numbering still used for the rooms today. The second book presents an impressive selection of photographs that allow the reader to examine many decorative and architectural details of the palace and also show an overview of some of the rooms, which is essential for reconstructing the appearance of the museum during those years.

The exhibition layout established by Rotondi was consistently regarded as a point of reference by his successors. For approximately three decades, the conceptual structure of the permanent display was maintained, with only limited adjustments, reflecting the perceived coherence and effectiveness of the original curatorial framework. This continuity attests to the durability of Rotondi’s interpretative approach and to its capacity to integrate both the existing collections and subsequent acquisitions within a rigorous scholarly framework, while adopting a modern display language suited to contemporary audiences.

²⁶¹ Di Ludovico 2009, p. 180. Zampetti 1992, p. 15.

1949–1979: Impulses of Innovation at the Palazzo Ducale

4.1 Restitution and Collection Management: Pietro Zampetti

After Rotondi's tenure, the permanent collection of the Galleria Nazionale was in a sound state of conservation and coherently displayed, while research on the building and its decorative apparatus had never been so advanced. Given there was no intention to make drastic changes in the setup established by Rotondi, the museum in those years may appear static. Nevertheless, the museum kept growing and adapting to the ever-changing social, institutional and conservation situation.

Every successive management tackled these aspects in a peculiar way. Directors made choices oriented towards expanding what they inherited, with creativity and personal taste. The elements that are mentioned in this chapter are testimonies to the topics that each one cared the most about, some valued the relationship with the Istituto d'Arte otherwise than their predecessors, or had a different take on temporary exhibitions²⁶².

Pietro Zampetti was the first superintendent that came after Pasquale Rotondi and the first director of the Galleria Nazionale native of the Marche region. In the early stages, his work reflected the devotion to his origins: he focused on the exploration of lesser-known areas and supported the reorganisation of the civic galleries in Fabriano and Sanseverino²⁶³.

Also, he promoted the enhancement of the Galleria Nazionale's profile on the European stage. In pursuit of this objective, he curated a guide-itinerary, that was disseminated in 1951. Notably, this initiative was not confined solely in the Italian language; the publication was also reprinted and translated into French and German, thereby ensuring a broader dissemination of its contents to a diverse international audience²⁶⁴. Regarding the museum layout it stated: "le opere non sono esposte secondo una rigorosa sequenza storica, ma secondo le esigenze degli ambienti. Oggi Galleria e Palazzo – in gran parte riscattato-costituiscono una armoniosa unità artistica: la più cospicua, senza dubbio, che le Marche posseggano"²⁶⁵.

The artworks were positioned within the designated rooms of the palace in a manner consistent with Rotondi's conceptualisation, whereby precedence was accorded to the edifice over that of the collection. Nevertheless, the second sentence claims harmony and unity among the building and the gallery. This was the achievement of the new director, who made significant contributions to the study of numerous pieces. The programmatic text provides an accurate representation of the collection's state in accordance with Zampetti's critical approach²⁶⁶. Indeed, he demonstrated a firm commitment to the study and reattribution of a number of artworks exhibited in the Palazzo Ducale. The rediscovery and restoration of

²⁶² Mosco 1977, p. 37.

²⁶³ Zampetti 1977, p. 69.

²⁶⁴ Mosco 1977, p. 35.

²⁶⁵ Zampetti 1951a, p. 8.

²⁶⁶ Zampetti 1992, p. 17. Zampetti 1977, p. 70.

several paintings led to a reconfiguration of certain rooms. The objective of these modifications was to emphasise the novelties that emerged from the research, thereby facilitating a clearer reception of both the collection and the palace.

The most illustrative cases are a *Madonna col Bambino e Santi* from the Veneto region and a Florentine *Madonna col Bambino*²⁶⁷. The first painting underwent an attribution change after an article was published by Zampetti himself on «Emporium»; the painting was thereafter exhibited in the *Duchessa* vestibule, and was consistently catalogued as Giovanni Bellini's work²⁶⁸. On the other hand, the *Madonna* of the Florentine school was reevaluated by the director with a definitive attribution to Andrea del Verrocchio. Rotondi did not include this painting in the itinerary, while Zampetti highlighted the novelty in attribution by placing the panel on an easel in the *Sala degli Angeli*²⁶⁹.



93 *Mercurio e Prometeo* tapestry, photographed at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, 1945-1960 (Omero- Urbino, MPI6216498, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche)

The museum acquired two paintings that had been at risk of being lost. The polyptych by Alvise Vivarini, originally housed in the church of the Convent of Montefiorentino, was installed in the *Salotto della Duchessa*, while Marco Basaiti's *Sacred Conversation*, originating from the church of Mombaroccio, was placed in the *Sala delle Veglie*²⁷⁰. The placement of Basaiti's work served to occupy the space left vacant by Francesco Bissolo's altarpiece (figure 72), which had been returned to Croatia, since several paintings that had found refuge in the Palazzo during the war had not yet been restituted to their original contexts. The *Veglie* also exhibited tapestries from the Pinacoteca of Ancona, which had been recovered in Sassocorvaro during the war and subsequently deposited at the Galleria Nazionale²⁷¹. These installations reflect the complex challenges of managing the museum's holdings in the immediate postwar period, as many works were still in transit

²⁶⁷ Zampetti 1951a, p. 10.

²⁶⁸ Zampetti 1950, pp. 79-84.

²⁶⁹ Zampetti 1951b, pp. 154-162.

²⁷⁰ Zampetti 1977 p. 70. Mosco 1977 p. 35 reports that Zeri's studies made it possible to attribute the *Annunciazione*, which was in the *Guardaroba della Duchessa*, to Carlo da Camerino. It had previously been attributed to a generic "artista marchigiano del sec. XV".

²⁷¹ Paparello 2016, p. 649 provided testimony that the tapestries illustrating the Life of Prometheus were located in the Palazzo Ducale until 1948. This date marks the request by the heirs of the original owner of the tapestries for the official registration of the new position in Urbino. Recent reevaluation of the sources has confirmed the presence of the tapestries to be pushed slightly forward in time. This realignment is primarily attributable to the guidebooks of Zampetti (1951) and Mariotti (1953) that substantiate their position continuously in the *Sala delle Veglie* up to 1953.

or awaiting formal restitution. Zampetti's guide confirms that these works were made accessible to the public in 1951, marking an important step in the restoration of the Galleria's display and the reestablishment of its role as a site of cultural continuity.

The booklet included fifty black-and-white illustrations; however, many details mentioned in the text were not reflected in the photographs. For instance, easels were absent from the locations indicated in the captions. It is possible that these images were not produced specifically for the publication of the museum itinerary and may instead date to Rotondi's tenure. While this documentation did little to advance knowledge of the museum's appearance between 1949 and 1953, I was able to recover, on the antiquarian market, a set of three postcards more closely associated with Zampetti's direction.

This series provides visual evidence of the Palazzo in the 1950s and, notably, offers the first color representation. The walls are rendered in a warm orangey-pink hue, harmonizing with the terracotta floors, and conveying a vivid sense of the interior atmosphere during that period.



94 Postcard of the Sala delle Veglie, c. 1953 (Unknown author, Edizione Scala, Firenze)

The *Duca* apartment was also cleared of works of art that had been brought to Urbino during the conflict. In the *Sala delle Udienze*, a 17th-century chest and the hunting belt took the place of Pietro Perugino's *Annunciazione* from the church of Santa Maria Nuova in Fano²⁷².

The 1946 guidebook by Rotondi did not mention Lotto's *Pala dell'Alabarda*, however at a certain point it was in deposit at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche. It remained in the *Duca* apartment for just some

²⁷² Mosco 1977, p. 36.

years and then was restored and restituted. A document in the Galleria's archive attests that Zampetti commissioned to A. Torrini the removal of repainting, cleaning and plastering of all the ruined parts of the painting²⁷³. Torrini concluded the works on 6 May 1950 and as a demonstration of the final result we can inspect the photograph preserved in the fototeca Zampetti. The director's collection of documentary photographs, now held at the Università Carlo Bo in Urbino, serves as valuable evidence of the artists to whom he devoted the most sustained scholarly attention. An avid photographer, he personally produced a significant portion of the visual documentation related to the reorganization of the Palazzo Ducale that he helped implement. When colleagues or friends required images of specific works, he readily shared his photographs, a practice noted by Cesare Brandi²⁷⁴.

His *fototeca*, collects over 40.000 photographs from several different funds other than his own, like Fratelli Alinari, Gabinetto delle Stampe del Ministero and iconographic appendices to the Scuola di Perfezionamento in Storia dell'Arte's thesis. All this material is now preserved at the University of Urbino because while he was Director at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche he also started teaching undergraduate classes and even after this transferal to the Direzione delle Belle Arti in Venice, he progressed his academic activity in Urbino up to the 1990s.



95 *Pala dell'alabarda*, Lorenzo Lotto (Unknown author, Università Carlo Bo, Fototeca Zampetti, Urbino)

²⁷³ Urbino, Galleria Nazionale, 527 PS, folder #6

²⁷⁴ Brandi 1954, p. 257, note n.7.

According to the guidebook, three of the most renowned works in the collection were concentrated in the *Guardaroba del Duca*: the *Madonna of Senigallia*, the *Prospettiva Architettonica* or Ideal City, and the *Flagellazione*²⁷⁵.

Piero della Francesca's paintings were restored in 1953 by the Istituto Centrale del Restauro, and their condition was meticulously documented through multiple forms of photography, including black-and-white, life-size, color (recto and verso), and ultraviolet fluorescence imaging²⁷⁶.



96 Postcard of the Sala degli Angeli, c. 1953 (Unknown author, Edizione Scala, Firenze)



97. Postcard of the Camera da letto del Duca, c. 1953 (Unknown author, Edizione Scala, Firenze)

²⁷⁵ Zampetti 1951a, pp. 16-18.

²⁷⁶ Brandi 1954, p. 242.

Upon their return to Urbino, the works were reinstalled in the same gallery as before, though not in an identical configuration. The *Flagellazione* was positioned within a niche, allowing for a “telescopic” view that engaged directly with the surrounding architecture²⁷⁷. This installation was exceptional in its integration of artwork and architectural setting, a relationship not replicated elsewhere along the exhibition route²⁷⁸. The director personally documented this display, underscoring the deliberate visual dialogue between the painted architecture of the *Flagellazione* and the architectural ornamentation of the Palazzo Ducale itself. The room was kept this way at least until July 1968, when a photograph by Lamberto Vitali immortalized again this setup²⁷⁹.



98. *Flagellazione* by Piero della Francesca in context, c. 1953 (Zampetti P., Università Carlo Bo, Fototeca Zampetti, Urbino)

The *Ospiti* apartment remained largely unchanged, except for Room 142, identified as the twentieth stop in Zampetti’s itinerary. In Rotondi’s original layout, this room had featured minor works by Giovanni Santi and Timoteo Viti, intended to maintain a visual and thematic dialogue with the preceding galleries. Zampetti, however, reconfigured the space to display three vitrines containing ceramics from Urbino and Castelli²⁸⁰.

²⁷⁷ Mosco 1977, p. 35.

²⁷⁸ The official guidebook makes reference to the niche, and indeed immediately after the Flagellation, but does not explicitly state that the work was embedded there. Zampetti 1951a

²⁷⁹ The photograph is in Milano, Raccolte Grafiche e Fotografiche del Castello Sforzesco. Civico Archivio Fotografico, fondo Lamberto Vitali Fotografo, LVF 352.

²⁸⁰ Zampetti 1951, pp. 21-22.

The only elements retained from the earlier display were four stone reliefs from the War Machines series, which had previously been exhibited in the *soprallogge*. Rotondi had relocated these reliefs -along with the rest of the antiquarium- to protect the lapidary collection from the threats posed by wartime conditions. The two adjacent rooms continued the presentation of the *Macchine da Guerra* reliefs, allowing a view of the remainder of this distinctive collection.

After that sequence of rooms, visitors reached a junction: to the left lay the *Jole* Apartment, while to the right extended a large space that, at the time, housed a selection of thematic volumes, materials that would later form the nucleus of the museum's library. The tour continued into the *Jole* Apartment, thereby concluding the visit to the ground-floor galleries. From there, visitors had the opportunity to ascend to the second floor, although only three rooms, located directly opposite the grand staircase, were included in the official guidebook.

The first of these, referred to as the *Gentileschi Room*, displayed not only the altarpiece *Madonna col Bambino, Santa Francesca Romana ed un angelo* but also preparatory cartoons by Domenichino and Annibale Carracci. To this ensemble, Zampetti added Taddeo Zuccari's *Cristo morto sorretto da angeli*. The angels by Federico Barocci, which Rotondi had previously exhibited in the first room, were relocated to the adjacent chamber²⁸¹. This curatorial decision reflected a deliberate intention to dedicate the second and third rooms on the upper floor to the work of Federico Barocci, thereby emphasizing his artistic significance within the collection.

In 1953 an unofficial guidebook of the Galleria Nazionale was published by Giuseppe Mariotti. He situated the visit to the Palazzo Ducale within a broader tour of the city and approached the collection from the perspective of a general visitor. It confirms that, as in previous itineraries, visitors began their tour at the *Trono* and entered the *Veglie* Room, continuing on to the *Duchessa* Apartment and then the *Sala degli Angeli*. From there, they passed through the *Camera da Letto del Duca*, proceeded to the *Guardaroba*, and descended to the chapels located on the ground floor. "La parte del palazzo che qui sotto è descritta non è accessibile al pubblico nei giorni festivi e negli altri giorni a chi non ha pagato l'apposito biglietto d'ingresso anche a questo scopo"²⁸².

Upon returning upstairs, the tour led through the *studiolo* and the *Sala delle Udienze*, before arriving at the *Ospiti* Apartment. After completing the tour of the entire western wing, the itinerary continued into the southern wing, where, according to Mariotti, in three rooms "dovrà essere sistemata l'armeria"²⁸³. The proposed establishment of a new armoury is not substantiated by any other sources, and, in fact, the plan was never realized. The official guidebook, curated by the museum director, makes no reference to such

²⁸¹ Zampetti 1951a, pp. 25-26.

²⁸² Mariotti 1953, p. 103. The information on ticketing is quite scarce in the official sources, this guidebook instead offered this disclaimer for potential visitors. So, the museum offered differentiated tickets excluding the entrance to the *torricino* in specific days and requested a higher fee. The precise number is not available.

²⁸³ Mariotti 1953, p. 112.

an initiative and presents the rooms of the *Jole* Apartment in a form largely consistent with Rotondi's earlier arrangement of the exhibition.

Mariotti's guidebook confirms the condition of the second floor at the time. The three rooms situated above the *Jole* Apartment had undergone only minor alterations since 1946, while the remaining spaces on that level were accessible solely for research purposes. Mariotti noted that these rooms were "privi di qualsiasi importanza architettonica"²⁸⁴. Despite this rather dismissive assessment, which suggests a limited appreciation for the historical value of the palace in its entirety, the opportunity to access this part of the building was nonetheless meaningful. It reflected an early gesture of openness on the part of the relevant authorities, specifically the tax office administrators, who, just a few years later, would come under pressure to transfer these properties to the Galleria.

A comparison between the 1951 guidebook, promoted by the director himself, and the 1953 edition edited by Giuseppe Mariotti offers useful insights into the location of the library holdings and the proposed arrangement of the armoury. Notably, he included the following disclaimer regarding the display of works: "N. B. Siccome le opere esposte nelle varie sale del palazzo vengono sistemate come crede più opportuno il Sovrintendente alla Galleria, è facile che l'elenco qui esposto non corrisponda più in modo preciso alla sistemazione delle singole opere al momento della visita"²⁸⁵. This statement reflects the fluid and provisional nature of the display practices at the time, as well as the evolving curatorial decisions that shaped the visitor experience in the postwar period.

4.2 The "garbato gusto personale" of Giuseppe Marchini²⁸⁶

Between 1954 and 1964, the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche was directed by Superintendent Giuseppe Marchini, under whose leadership a series of targeted restoration and reorganization works were undertaken. These interventions were crucial in consolidating the museum's museological identity and in restoring the architectural integrity of the Palazzo Ducale.

Among the principal operations carried out were the reopening of the loggia on the *Cortile del Gallo*, the repair of cornices and friezes, and the restoration of several monumental fireplaces²⁸⁷. Through these works, Marchini was able to highlight the significant contributions made to the palace's construction by architects trained in the Tuscan school, notably Maso di Bartolomeo and Francesco di Giorgio Martini.

²⁸⁴ Mariotti 1953, p. 122.

²⁸⁵ Mariotti 1953, p. 87.

²⁸⁶ This is a reference to the closing sentence of his intervention in the catalogue *Storia di un Museo* (1977).

²⁸⁷ Mosco 1977, p. 36.



99 Opening the loggia overlooking the Cortile del Gallo, work in progress. 1938-1955 (Unknown author, Fondo Rotondi, 1, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

A major intervention concerned the reconstruction of Guidobaldo's chapel, where a philological approach guided the reinstatement of the original decorative program. The marble inlays of the base and floor were reintegrated, and the three paintings attributed to the Zuccari school were returned to their historical placement above the altar niche. In consequence, the terracotta relief of the Madonna della Ghiara, which Guglielmo Pacchioni had installed around 1938, was removed. Marchini also supervised the protection of the grand staircase with a new guide rail and improved the monumental doorway by installing ball bearings to enhance its operability.

Efforts were made to clear the palace's ground floor, with the aim of establishing a lapidary museum in the rooms adjacent to Piazza San Domenico. At that time, these spaces served as storage areas for miscellaneous objects, which were subsequently transferred to the so called "Cantinone". Under Marchini's supervision, the museum began to equip itself with modern technological systems, including an electric lighting network used for evening events. This innovation had already been envisioned by his predecessor, Zampetti, who in 1952 had expressed to Riccardo Pacini, Superintendent of Monuments in

Ancona, his desire to illuminate the palace for the return of the Madonna Pellegrina. The initiative had been postponed then for lack of funds, but Marchini was finally able to realize it²⁸⁸.

The Gallery's holdings expanded during these years through purchases, state allocations, and deposits, which enriched both the collection and its regional significance. Among the newly acquired works were a fifteenth-century painted cross and a small Madonna attributed to Ghiberti. These additions strengthened the museum's relationship with the Marche territory, emphasizing the region's contribution to Italian art history. The updated layout ensured improved visibility of the artworks while preserving the architectural rhythm of the surrounding spaces. Despite successive adjustments since Rotondi's time, the overall coherence of the display remained perceptible and effective.

A particularly significant achievement of Marchini's directorship was the acquisition of the entire eastern wing of the palace's second floor. Archival documents from Ancona record that, on 26 March 1960, the Minister authorized the payment of two million lire to the Cassa di Risparmio di Pesaro for the purchase of the rooms previously occupied by the Tax Register. Concerned that other tenants might claim these spaces, Marchini instructed the official Alberto Rossi to "esporre al più presto le opere di miglior qualità ed in buon stato di conservazione dei secoli XVI, XVII, XVIII e XIX - tra quelle custodite nei depositi della Soprintendenza"²⁸⁹. Architecturally, the newly acquired rooms were restored by reinstalling sixteenth-century fireplaces of varied provenance in the first, second, and fourth room. With this expansion, six new rooms were incorporated into the museum's itinerary on the upper floor, which had previously included only three.

The rearrangement followed a chronological criterion, modifying the previous layout to better represent artistic developments from Mannerism to Baroque. Works by artists such as Federico and Taddeo Zuccari, Federico Barocci, Giovan Francesco Guerrieri, and Giuseppe Lazzarini were distributed accordingly. Rossi, assisted by custodial staff and skilled craftsmen from the Superintendency, completed the installation with remarkable economy of means, reusing capitals and frames as supports for paintings and sculptures.

The first room on the second floor—situated opposite the staircase—had undergone numerous transformations over the centuries, including its conversion into a courtroom in the nineteenth century. During the refurbishment, a monumental columned fireplace was reassembled from fragments long stored in the museum's reserves, its reinstatement made possible by relocating Domenichino's *cartone*. Alongside works already installed by Rotondi and Zampetti, the room came to include Madonna and Child by Pomarancio and Madonna with Saints Francis and John the Baptist by Simone de Magistris.

²⁸⁸ In the late 1950s, heritage conservation officers throughout Italy found themselves in a dire situation due to the financial constraints imposed on them by the government. Guglielmo De Angelis D'Ossat, Direttore Generale delle Antichità e Belle Arti, wrote on this subject: see De Angelis D'Ossat 1957, and Mazzi 2009, p.140.

²⁸⁹ Rossi 1977, p. 73.



100 Prima sala Roveresca, 1963 (Unknown author, F15956, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Federico Barocci dominated the second and third rooms. The second was entirely dedicated to his oeuvre, while the third juxtaposed his works with those of Antonio Cimatori and Alessandro Vitali. Notably, this room displayed *The Stigmata of St. Francis*, *The Eternal Father*, and *St. Lawrence*, the latter now considered a workshop piece.

The fourth room, marking the beginning of the newly annexed spaces, extended the Baroccian theme with *The Deposition* and *The Angels*, displayed alongside Cimatori's *Nativity of St. John the Baptist*, Bellini's *Madonna in Glory*, and Ridolfi's *St. Catherine*, thereby bridging the transition to seventeenth-century art. The subsequent rooms continued the chronological progression, presenting works by Ridolfi, Viviani, Algardi, Cialdieri, Cantarini, Guerrieri, Gentileschi, and Sassoferrato, culminating in late Baroque and nineteenth-century painters from Urbino and Ancona.

In *Storia di un museo*, Marchini summarized his exhibition principles, emphasizing harmony between artwork, space, and viewer. He explained that "all'ordinamento espositivo sono state introdotte solo lievi

modifiche perché esso corrispondeva assai bene alle esigenze fondamentali di una soddisfacente visibilità delle opere pittoriche e scultoree, e della piena godibilità dell'ambiente architettonico a loro cornice"²⁹⁰.



101 Quarta sala Roveresca, 1963 (Unknown author, F15951, Iccd Fondo Archivio Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma)

Also, he insisted on the frame as an essential mediating element: the appropriate setting, necessary for connection with the environment²⁹¹. For instance, the small wooden frames around Francesco di Giorgio Martini's War Machines were removed to restore their sculptural integrity. In his view, artworks were always to be attached directly to the wall, regarded as their "natural support", while maintaining subordination to the architectural structure²⁹². Spatial proximity was governed by chronological and stylistic affinity, and spacing was carefully calibrated to achieve visual harmony and sobriety.

Lighting followed the principle of natural lateral illumination, particularly effective for varnished paintings, ensuring both visual quality and economy. Another guiding rule, which Marchini termed "common sense" was the separation of artistic techniques: paintings and frescoes were not to be displayed on the same wall, since their differing material qualities demanded distinct lighting conditions.

The director later referred to the precautions taken with regard to frames, lighting, and the technique used to enhance the artworks as "garbato gusto personale", a principle that anyone programming or setting up

²⁹⁰ Marchini 1977, p. 71.

²⁹¹ Since the 1950s, the frame has emerged as an architectural issue, rather than just a painting issue. See: Mazzi 2009, p. 142.

²⁹² One of the most famous interventions on the topic of the frames is in Brandi 1958.

a gallery should apply²⁹³. However, it is important to emphasise that his perspective is inextricably linked to his involvement in the global dialogue about museums. It would be hard to accept the idea that Marchini would adhere to these principles without giving due consideration to Carlo Scarpa's notable work at the Accademia di Venezia or without reading the extensive issue of «Museum» of 1959, which was entirely devoted to the topic of museum organisation.

During Marchini's tenure, photographer Antonio Sansone captured the museum. The images he produced demonstrate the equilibrium of the exhibition and the effect of natural light, as well as the typological division. In the *Udienze* room, where the Muta stands out on a wooden support close to Tiziano's Resurrection of Christ, painting is in evidence.

Another interesting feature of Sansone's photographs is that they include visitors, showing the conditions that the public actually encountered in the Galleria. The photographer's approach of depicting the museum with people interacting with the artworks, sometimes crowding around one piece or walking past distractedly, foreshadows the growing interest in the relationship between institutions and their audiences, expressed in museology studies in the 1960s²⁹⁴.



102 Sala delle Udeinze, 1951-1964 (A. Sansone, extract from *Il mondo*, a. 16(1964), n. 24, "Urbino: dipinti e campane nelle sale del Palazzo Ducale", preserved at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Firenze).

103 Sala delle Campanie, 1951-1964 (A. Sansone, extract from *Il mondo*, a. 16(1964), n. 24, "Urbino: dipinti e campane nelle sale del Palazzo Ducale", preserved at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Firenze).

²⁹³ Marchini 1977, p. 72.

²⁹⁴ See: Becherucci 1968.

Despite the clarity of the Director's curatorial intent, the reorganization of the upper floor was constrained by a shortage of custodial staff, particularly at the end of Marchini's tenure and the beginning of his successor's. This shortage led to the periodic closure of some rooms and limited public access. Nevertheless, the installation succeeded in achieving a coherent and functional layout that balanced chronological rigor with visual enjoyment. Above all, Marchini's intervention aimed to ensure continuity with Rotondi's foundational display on the first floor, while gradually expanding the museum's scope to encompass the later artistic traditions of the Marche—from Mannerism to the nineteenth century—thus broadening the historical narrative and deepening the institution's regional identity.

4.3 Institutional Expansion in Constrained Spaces. Piero Torriti

Marchini's incisive theoretical framework was reinforced by the vibrant museological debates in which he actively participated during those years. Evidence of this engagement can be seen in his collaboration, right after his tenure in Urbino, with the "Centro di Studi per la Museologia, l'Espressione e la Comunicazione visiva"²⁹⁵. Parallel to the student movements and workers' struggles for rights at the end of the 1960s, the social function of museums became an increasingly central topic of discussion²⁹⁶.

In 1966, Piero Torriti was appointed Superintendent of the Marche Galleries. After an initial transitional period, the long-anticipated organizational renewal finally took shape. Together with increased funding from the Ministry, this enabled the opening of all the museum's rooms and facilitated the establishment of a library, a photographic archive, a restoration laboratory and the new lapidary museum at the ground floor²⁹⁷.

In 1967 the funerary monuments of public property present in the rooms at ground level of Palazzo Ducale were moved, restored and reset. The operation was conducted in collaboration with Architect Maria Luisa Polichetti, superintendent to the monuments of the Marche since 1973. A paper she sent to the Ministry in accordance with Torriti attests to the idea of changing the monuments place after restoration. The moving was considered functional both for the palace and the objects:

«La Soprintendenza alle Gallerie di Urbino ha fatto presente la opportunità di spostare nel nicchione a sfondo del sottoportico del cortile del Pasquino, le cosiddette tombe degli "avi" cioè i quattro monumentali sepolcri ora sistemati in una sala terrena del Palazzo Ducale ove subiscono degradazione (...)»²⁹⁸.

The Ancona Superintendency archive preserves a series of documents related to the establishment of the new lapidary museum, encompassing Polichetti's technical and financial assessments of the works carried out in Urbino. These records provide valuable insight into both the administrative planning and the

²⁹⁵ Gioli 2010, pp. 143-177. Dragoni 2016, p. 154.

²⁹⁶ See for example, Bucarelli 1972.

²⁹⁷ Mosco 1977, p. 37. Torriti 1977, p. 76.

²⁹⁸ Document 24. 2. 1969, #1363, PS-284, ASAN.

execution of the project, reflecting the coordination between institutional oversight and practical implementation. There is also a document containing estimates of the cost of the various restoration works on the rooms intended to house the lapidary museum attests that this first phase required a significant financial outlay of 4,000,000 lire. The project of “Sistemazione del Museo Lapidario nel Palazzo Ducale di Urbino” was executed following the *perizia* 358 of 27 July 1968. This operation was conducted with discretion, devoid of any publicity or advertising. The Lapidarium remained inaccessible to the general public. However, Torriti's vision and efforts were instrumental in establishing a museum-like environment in the area facing San Domenico church, situated on the eastern side of the *Corte d'Onore*.

He also created three departments that gave new energy to the Galleria Nazionale: the library was intended to stimulate research on the palace and its collections; the photographic archive was essential for organizing documentation of the heritage; and the restoration laboratory continued the renewed attention to conservation that had intensified after 1966²⁹⁹. All restoration interventions were meticulously documented, attesting to the progress of conservation methodologies introduced into Italy following the Florence flood³⁰⁰. Beyond the adoption of new technologies, the director had a particularly lucid understanding of the importance of restoration, which allowed numerous frescoes, polychrome wooden sculptures, and paintings from various locations in the Marche region to be preserved from deterioration—an experience that proved highly instructive.

These additions provided the Galleria with more modern and effective tools for communicating with the public. In 1968, restoration campaigns confirmed the attributions of works by Allegretto Nuzi and Antonio Alberti da Ferrara, while in 1969 the cleaning of a painting definitively demonstrated that Gentile da Fabriano was not the author of the Madonna and Child with St. Rose³⁰¹. The Illustrious Men were also restored, and the *studiolo* was dismantled and cleaned piece by piece³⁰². Two new acquisitions enriched the core of the permanent collection: Raphael's Madonna della Palma in 1968 and Andrea Lilli's San Rocco in 1969³⁰³.

All newly restored or rediscovered works were studied in depth - primarily by the museum's officials and by the director, but also with contributions from the newly founded *Scuola di Specializzazione* of Art History at the University of Urbino and the Istituto d'Arte, which “fu rilanciato nella sua funzione educativa”³⁰⁴. This statement shows the director's appreciation of the educational role of the Istituto,

²⁹⁹ Ciatti 2008, pp. 359-379.

³⁰⁰ Torriti 1992, pp. 31-32. The peculiar connection between Urbino and Florence in those years was due to the circulation of artworks and professionals. The previous director, Marchini, was responsible for managing the Uffizi collection in 1966, and he worked with Paolo dal Poggetto, who became director in 1985. On this see: Romagnoli 2017, pp. 35-36.

³⁰¹ Mosco 1977, p. 37. Rossi 1969, pp. 38-43.

³⁰² The restoration of the *studiolo*, the last before the restoration of 2025, is not sufficiently documented. However, in folder 1 kept at the Galleria in Urbino, there is a document signed by Marisa Caprara certifying the return of the parts of the study in 33 packed boxes on 2 June 1973.

³⁰³ Purchase documents are available in the folder 6, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino.

³⁰⁴ Torriti 1977, p. 76.

nevertheless, the relations with the school were not particularly harmonious during Torriti's tenure, especially due to the damages it caused to the palace. For example, during the night of September 29–30, 1970, a significant quantity of water inundated the floor of extensive part of the second floor, due to a defect in a tank and the absence of a drain. The vault underneath and a wall of the Galleria Nazionale were completely damp, water was dripping in the hall of bas-reliefs by Francesco Di Giorgio Martini (rooms 143-144)³⁰⁵.

Preliminary assessments indicated that the works of art remained undamaged, however further instances of leakage were observed in the entrance of the Superintendency and in the library. It is fortunate that the works of art were not damaged. The gallery had previously experienced several similar incidents attributable to the school's presence in the Palazzo Ducale. This episode further reinforced the necessity of relocating all parts of the institute to alternative facilities.

Between 1970 and 1972, Giancarlo De Carlo designed a new building intended to house the Istituto del Libro of Urbino (the contemporary designation of the former Istituto d'Arte), and construction began in 1973. Although the project progressed significantly, work was suspended in 1982, with only the rear half of the structure completed. This incomplete state shaped the subsequent relocation of the school's activities: at first, only the laboratories of editorial and advertising graphics were transferred from their long-standing premises in the Palazzo Ducale. Consequently, throughout the entire period examined in this chapter, the management of the Galleria Nazionale continued to contend with an architectural complex that remained physically and functionally shared with the Scuola del Libro.

The guide to Urbino that Torriti published in 1986 reiterated this issue, thereby bringing it to the attention of a wider public: "l'ultimo passo, volto alla completa valorizzazione del palazzo meraviglioso, non potrà attuarsi se non con il trasferimento in più idonea sede dell'Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Decorazione del Libro, che occupa, con le sue aule scolastiche ed i suoi uffici, quasi metà del monumento"³⁰⁶.

Meanwhile, director Torriti focused on research and dissemination. With State support, annual exhibitions of rediscovered works from the Marche region were organised between 1967 and 1973, presenting them to both the public and scholars³⁰⁷. These initiatives aligned with the directions issued by the Ministero dei Beni Culturali: before Torriti's arrival, nine editions of the Exhibition of Restored Works of Art had already been held during museum week, between April and May, under ministerial patronage. In the first catalogue of restored works compiled after his appointment, Torriti expressed warm thanks to his predecessor Giuseppe Marchini³⁰⁸.

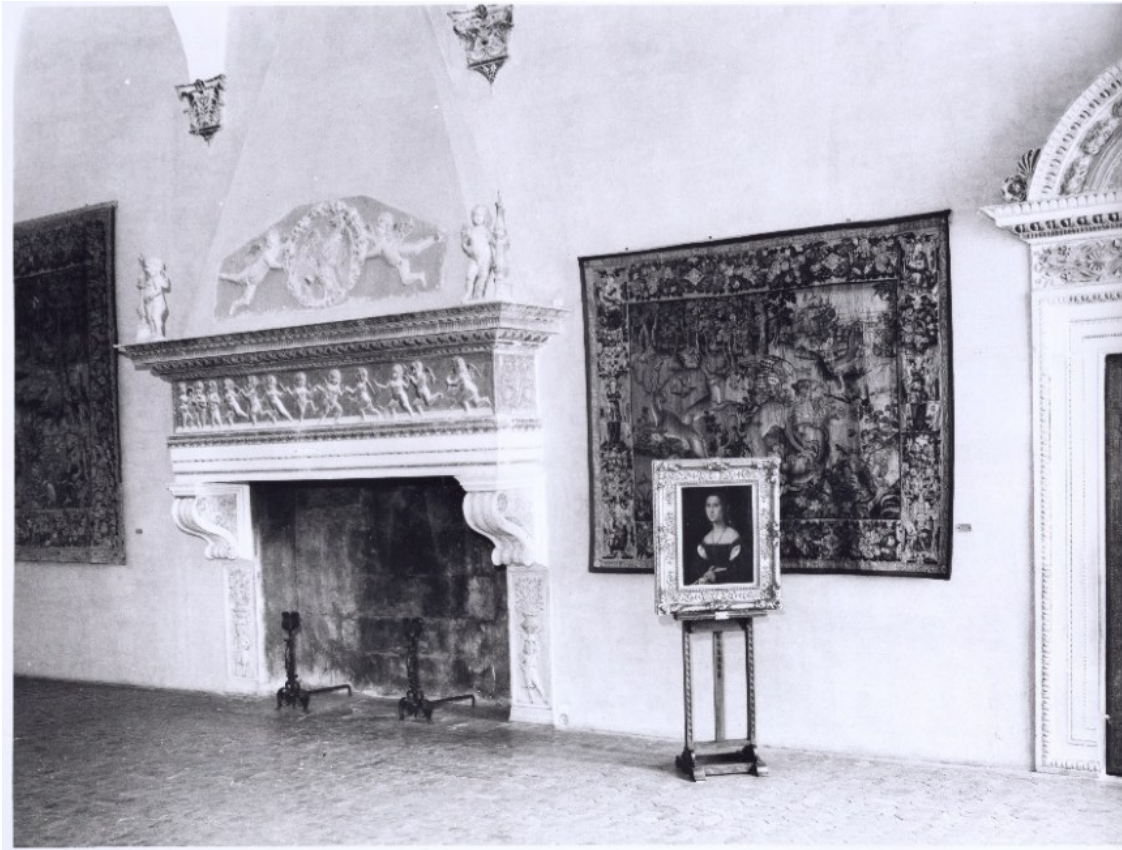
³⁰⁵ Document 5 .09. 1970, #6731, PS- 284, ASAN.

³⁰⁶ Torriti 1986, p. 8.

³⁰⁷ Torriti stated "Né le opere restaurate potevano riprendere la via del ritorno verso le loro antiche sedi senza che il mondo degli studi fosse messo al corrente delle nuove scoperte, delle attribuzioni e degli stessi lavori di restauro cui le opere stesse erano allora state sottoposte."

³⁰⁸ Torriti, 1967, p. 6.

The exhibitions are well documented through dedicated publications, yet information concerning the layout of the permanent collection at that time remains fragmentary. It would be valuable to understand how the rooms were managed between one restoration campaign and another: for instance, whether absent works were temporarily replaced, and how the arrangement of the permanent display evolved.



104 *Sala degli Angeli*, 1973-1975 (M. Hutzl, 256, box 383-385, Accession no. 86.P.8, *Foto arte minore*: Max Hutzl photographs of art and architecture in Italy, 1960-1990. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute)

A useful clue comes from the unofficial Guide to Urbino, edited by Alma Pigrucci Valentini. The volume, published in 1973, described all the rooms, bringing together numerous details and anecdotes about both the Ducal Palace and its principal artworks in a format accessible to visitors. It attested to the location of Raphael's *La Muta*, displayed on an easel in the *Udienze* room up to 1973³⁰⁹. Later, it was moved to the *Sala degli Angeli*, as shown in Max Hutzl's photograph of the room (figure 104).

³⁰⁹ Pigrucci Valentini 1973, p.33. This detail was of interest when compared with photographs of the Ducal Palace taken by the German-born photographer and scholar, Max Hutzl. The documents, held by the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, were dated broadly between 1960 and 1990. However, this research narrows the timeframe of the photographs to after Pigrucci Valentini's guide and before the infamous 1975 theft.



105 *Sala degli Angeli*, 1973-1975 (M. Hutzel, 255, box 383-385, Accession no. 86.P.8, Foto arte minore: Max Hutzel photographs of art and architecture in Italy, 1960-1990. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute)

Equally important was confirming how the works returned to their respective rooms after restoration and resumed their usual exhibition placements. Several such works were listed within the itinerary in Pigrucci Valentini's guidebook, such as Alvise Vivarini's *Madonna and Child* and the triptych with the *Annunciation* flanked by two saints by Nicola di Maestro Antonio da Ancona.

The guide also describes the itinerary of the Ducal Palace at the end of Torriti's superintendence. The map included in the inside- front cover traces a route beginning in the *Salone del Trono*, followed by the *Duchessa* rooms, the *Duca* Apartment, the *Ospiti*, and the *Jole*, before ascending to the second floor for the final section³¹⁰. The page clearly indicates the admission fee of 150 lire, which granted access to the entire first-floor tour and nine rooms on the upper floor, while some ground-floor rooms were open only at specific times and required an additional fee³¹¹. Access to the *Cappella del Perdono* and the *Tempietto delle Muse* was allowed on weekdays only, upon payment of an extra 100 lire through the entrance located in the *Duca* Apartment, descending via the north tower. The fee was modest: 100 lire, that corresponded roughly to the cost of half a liter of milk or 300 grams of bread.

³¹⁰ Pigrucci Valentini 1973, p. 1.

³¹¹ Pigrucci Valentini 1973, p. 29.



106 Sala degli Angeli, 1973-1975 (M. Hutzler, 25, box 383-385, Accession no. 86.P.8, Foto arte minore: Max Hutzler photographs of art and architecture in Italy, 1960-1990. Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute)

Nevertheless, the museum needed to do more to meet public needs and expectations. Up to the early 1970s, there were instances where some rooms of the itinerary were not open to the public due to a shortage of security guards. It is worth noting that the 18th of May, 1971, marked the beginning of a significant phase in terms of accessibility at the Galleria Nazionale of Urbino.

This development followed the submission of an *interrogazione parlamentare* by Senator Righetti, which was intended to address concerns regarding staff issues and to request appropriate action³¹². It appears that political interest in the Urbino case contributed to increased funding for the museum, which by the end of the year made it possible to guarantee regular opening hours and an expanded weekly schedule. Indeed, on 21 April 1972 «Il Resto del Carlino» ran the headline “Anche il lunedì a Palazzo Ducale” expressing satisfaction with the museum’s decision to remain open every day of the week, in the interest of promoting tourism in Urbino³¹³.

³¹² Urbino, Galleria Nazionale, PS-284, #3954, 21 maggio 1971.

³¹³ Nonni 1972.

4.4 The Directorship of Italo Faldi beyond the *Heist of the Century*

Meanwhile, in Siena, the retirement of Enzo Carli had left the Superintendency without leadership. To fill this institutional void, Pietro Torriti was appointed, while Italo Faldi was transferred to the Marche region to assume direction of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche. Faldi, an accomplished art historian, had previously directed major Roman museums such as the Galleria Spada and the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica at Palazzo Barberini. His scholarly contributions, particularly on Roman Baroque painting, had appeared in leading journals including the *Bollettino d'Arte*, *The Burlington Magazine*, and *Commentari*, where he also articulated notable reflections on nineteenth-century Italian art.

Faldi's tenure in Urbino was brief and has been overshadowed by the so-called "Furto del Secolo", which saw the disappearance of three of the museum's masterpieces. Yet, in retrospect, it is important to acknowledge that the media frenzy surrounding the event has often obscured the director's broader institutional vision and the key issues he had been pursuing since his appointment.

The first of these concerns was the internal fragmentation of the Galleria. Despite its prestige and cultural significance, the museum remained only partially accessible to the public, preventing fruition, that Faldi described as "una lettura che dovrebbe essere completa e di tutti"³¹⁴. The source of this limitation lay in the persistent occupation of large portions of the Palazzo Ducale by external institutions. Even the *Piano Nobile* was occupied in many parts by various entities with differing opening hours, which severely hindered coherent visitor circulation. The presence of the Istituto d'Arte and the Archivio di Stato on the ground floor also prevented the relocation of the ceramics and lapidary collections to those areas and to the rooms overlooking the Pasquino courtyard.

Faldi lamented that the upper floors of the palace had been transformed into "feticci da adorare", representing an exclusively aestheticized vision of the Montefeltro court³¹⁵. His goal was instead to restore the palace's full spatial and functional integrity- its anatomy- by opening to the public not only the ceremonial halls but also the service spaces that sustained courtly life. In his view, the recovery of kitchens, cellars, stables, armories, bathrooms, and secret gardens was essential to convey the complete social and technological context of Renaissance Urbino. However, the simultaneous presence of multiple institutions within the palace, each with independent control over its assigned areas, made this integrative vision impossible to realize.

A second crucial aspect of Faldi's directorship was his attempt to modernize the museum's electrical infrastructure, an indispensable preliminary step toward the installation of an effective anti-theft system. Plans were drawn and decisions finalized, but implementation was delayed, and the work never began.

The night of 5 February 1975 marked a tragic turning point: Raphael's *La Muta*, along with Piero della Francesca's *Flagellazione* and *Madonna di Senigallia*, was stolen from the Galleria Nazionale. The event shocked the nation and delivered a devastating blow to the newly established Ministry for Cultural and

³¹⁴ Storia di un Museo, p. 78.

³¹⁵ Faldi 1977 p. 79.

Environmental Heritage (Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali), created only days earlier by Law No. 5 of 29 January 1975. In the following weeks, Italy suffered additional museum thefts—most notably the disappearance of twenty-eight Impressionist paintings from the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan on 17 February. Within a mere fortnight, the country's artistic heritage endured two catastrophic losses, prompting «Il Giornale Nuovo» to denounce a war against national museums, termed “offensiva contro i musei nazionali”. The paper emphasized not only the gravity of these events but also the alarming scale of previous thefts: more than ten thousand works reported stolen in 1974 alone. Public opinion was deeply shaken. As the same article observed, “il furto di Urbino, come altri del genere, ha non diciamo commosso, ma interessato l'opinione pubblica. Forse non è la malinconia degli uomini di cultura cui ha accennato il ministro Spadolini ma è certo che ci siamo sentiti tutti defraudati di qualche cosa”³¹⁶.

Photographic evidence from the time indicates that, at the moment of the theft, the museum's layout still largely reflected Pasquale Rotondi's postwar design. Raphael's *Gentildonna* had been moved to the Sala degli Angeli, and Piero della Francesca's works had undergone minor adjustments, though they remained within the *Appartamento Realissimo*.



107 The Palace the day after the theft, 1975 (Unknown author, extract from Danese 2015)

³¹⁶ Buono 1975, p. 1.



108 *The Palace the day after the theft, 1975 (Unknown author, extract from Danese 2015)*

At the time, Italian law did not require museums to install anti-theft systems. This national vulnerability was soon addressed through the enactment of Law No. 176 of 27 May 1975, which introduced stricter security standards for state museums. Faldi immediately initiated plans to install a protection system in several of the palace's principal rooms. Nonetheless, the magnitude of the Urbino theft made it impossible for the Ministry to overlook administrative responsibility. Within a few months, Faldi was relieved of his position, his tenure ending as abruptly as it had begun, overshadowed by the dramatic events that had defined it.

4.5 Dante Bernini's Unexecuted Project

A year after the theft, the museum's masterpieces were recovered in Locarno, Switzerland, and subsequently returned to Urbino under the directorship of Dante Bernini. His arrival was marked by both celebration and challenge: the joyous recovery of the stolen paintings coincided with the complex aftermath of the event. On one hand, the theft had unexpectedly heightened public interest. Visitors flocked to the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, some drawn even to view the empty spaces where the paintings had once hung. On the other, the episode prompted an institutional reckoning with issues of security, conservation, and infrastructure. In response, the Ministry allocated substantial funds for the installation of a new electrical and security system. However, the implementation of these works required the dismantling of walls and floors, resulting in periodic closures and extensive temporary relocations of

the collection. The combined pressures of heightened visitation and ongoing construction made Bernini's early tenure particularly demanding.

Meanwhile, serious disruption was caused by the need to clear the entire *Duchessa* section, which was occupied by consolidation work on the so-called "Castellare", and by the urgent need to complete the refurbishment of the electrical system begun by Superintendent Faldi. Overall, the museological structure conceived by Pasquale Rotondi three decades earlier had become increasingly unrecognisable. The cumulative effects of time, pragmatic interventions, and infrastructural decay had eroded the coherence of his original plan. Moreover, conservation needs and technical obsolescence exposed the limitations of the aging museum infrastructure, underscoring the necessity for a fundamental rethinking of the gallery's spatial and conceptual organisation.

The ensuing reorganisation programme sought not merely to restore order, but to redefine the dynamic relationship between the collection, the architectural environment, and the visitor's experience. Bernini therefore began to design a new permanent exhibition with a futuristic approach and chose the Turinese architect Giorgio Raineri (1927-2012) for this task, perhaps on the suggestion of archaeologist Enrica Fiandra, central inspector for architecture at the Ministero dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali³¹⁷. The appointment of Raineri marked a pivotal shift towards an approach that acknowledged both the autonomy and the interdependence of artworks within their architectural context³¹⁸. His plan envisioned the redistribution of the permanent collection within the palace's most historically significant spaces, while dedicating the upper floors to modular, temporary exhibitions designed to accommodate evolving pedagogical and curatorial objectives. In this way, the visitor would encounter not a static display, but a living sequence of thematic constellations.

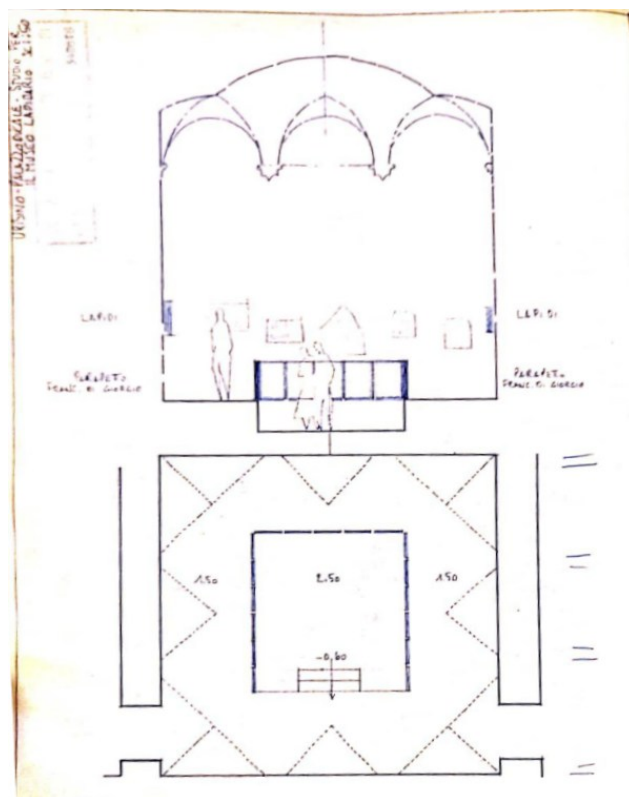
At the ground level, Bernini and Raineri revived a long-standing proposal for a lapidary museum, integrating epigraphic and sculptural materials, including the celebrated reliefs drawn by Francesco di Giorgio Martini. The aim was to transform the important stone collection, which had remained in storage since Rotondi's time, into a publicly accessible display. Central to this vision was the reinstatement of the seventy-one relief panels depicting war machines designed by Francesco di Giorgio. Raineri's design process unfolded through a series of creative phases, documented in the surviving correspondence between architect and director, preserved in the archives of the Palazzo Ducale.

One of Raineri's initial proposals involved dividing the intended lapidary room into two levels: the Stoppani collection—comprising coats of arms, fragments, and inscriptions—would be mounted along the walls, while a recessed central basin, approximately half a metre deep, would house the reliefs of war machines. Given the strict conservation regulations governing the palace, such structural interventions proved unfeasible. A subsequent iteration of the project retained the conceptual duality of wall and central display but placed both at the same level.

³¹⁷ Ghoddusi 2021, p. 21.

³¹⁸ Raineri 1979, p. 124.

In this version, the room was to be entirely devoted to Ambrogio Barocci's reliefs after designs by Francesco di Giorgio, arranged in a three-armed portico composed of tension rods and modular elements. This solution too was ultimately rejected, likely due to conservation risks and architectural constraints.



109 Project for the Lapidarium by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

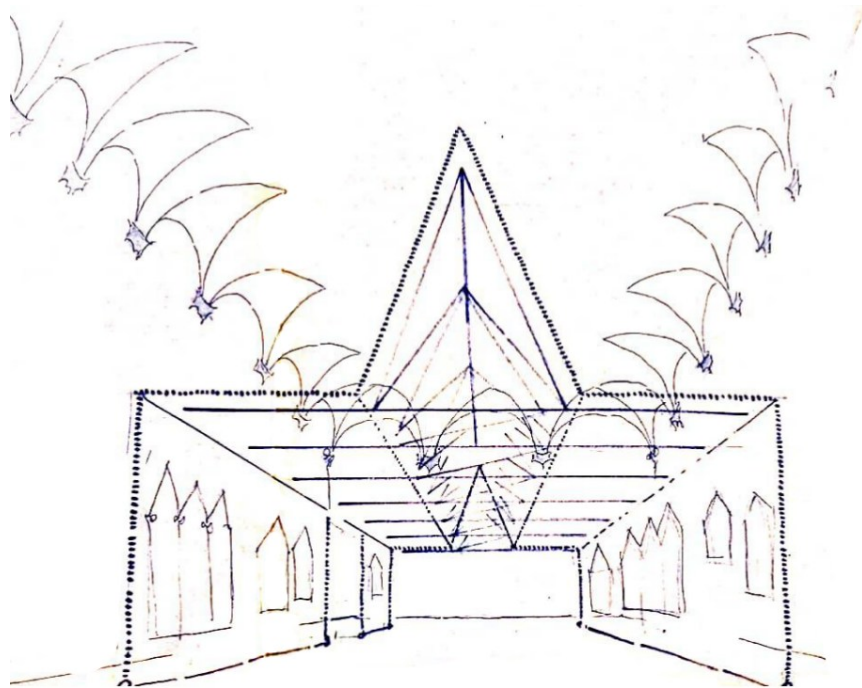


110 Project for the Lapidarium by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

The final approved design provided for a more restrained and structurally compatible solution: two parallel tracks for mounting the panels on the wall, supported by steel profiles anchored to a truss spanning the room³¹⁹. Along the outer edge of the truss, electrowelded meshes were suspended vertically to display the epigraphic collection. This approach balanced curatorial visibility with conservation safety, realising Bernini and Raineri's ambition to integrate sculptural heritage within the architectural logic of the palace itself.

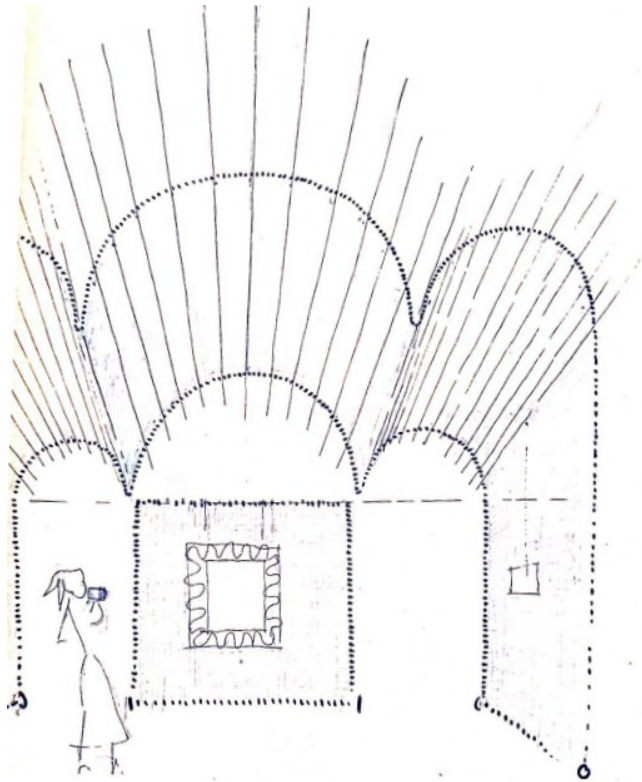
On the main floor of the Palazzo Ducale, architect Giorgio Raineri confronted what he termed "inappartenenza di contenitore e contenuto", the disjunction between container and content. In his view, much of the Galleria Nazionale's collection was only tenuously related to the palace's original history and functions, resulting in a sense of estrangement between the artworks and their architectural setting. His conceptual response was both symbolic and material: by physically detaching the works from the walls, Raineri sought to restore the spatial autonomy of the Renaissance interiors and to allow the architecture to speak with its own voice.

To this end, he devised a flexible exhibition system based on a network of suspended cables anchored at the height of the vaults. These acted as a support structure for telescopic metal tubes fixed to the floor and ceiling, from which the artworks were hung. The resulting display emphasised the separation between the paintings and the building, inviting visitors to experience the collection within a spatially dynamic and conceptually layered environment. Yet even in the preliminary drawings, it was evident that this solution -though ingenious- risked competing visually with the architectural grandeur of the palace. The cables and tie rods, while elegant in conception, introduced a modern graphic presence that could potentially distract from the purity of Laurana's Renaissance spaces.



111 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

³¹⁹ See Ghoddusi 2021, p. 22 for reference to the final solution for the lapidarium.



112 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

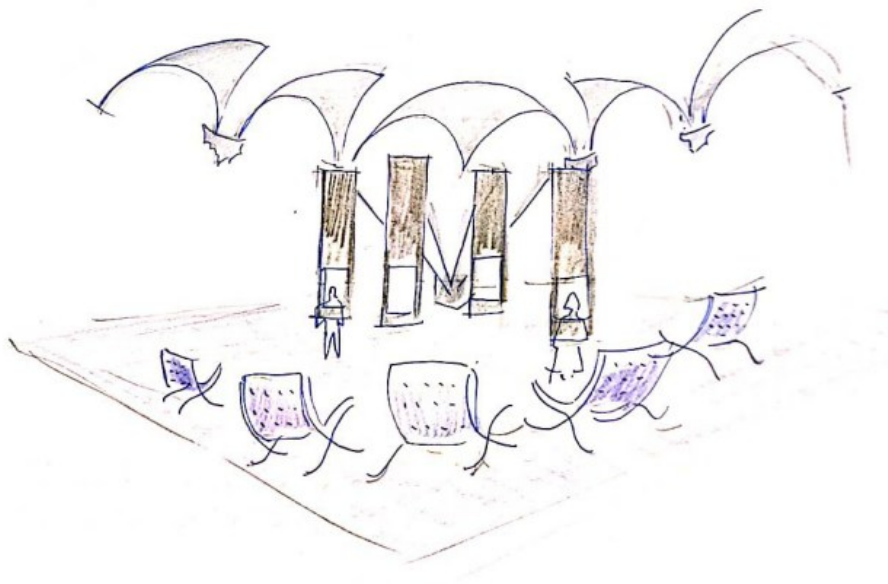
An illustrative case is the proposed arrangement for the Gothic altarpieces, where Raineri envisioned a series of cable frameworks that would simulate architecture within architecture. Similarly, in his design for the display of Raphael's *La Muta*, the architect introduced a system of circular arches composed of tensioned wires, framing the painting within a perspectival focus anchored to a large freestanding panel. In both cases, the exhibition apparatus functioned not merely as a neutral support but as a mediating device. It was like a spatial commentary on the encounter between art and architecture.

Raineri's design philosophy, as articulated in his writings and correspondence, rejected the notion of permanence traditionally associated with museography. Hanging a painting directly on a wall, he argued, might appear the simplest of gestures, yet within the immaculate white architecture of Urbino's most refined palace, such an act verged on the sacrilegious³²⁰. The freshly restored walls, in his view, demanded reverence rather than ornamentation; they could not simply serve as backdrops for pictorial display.

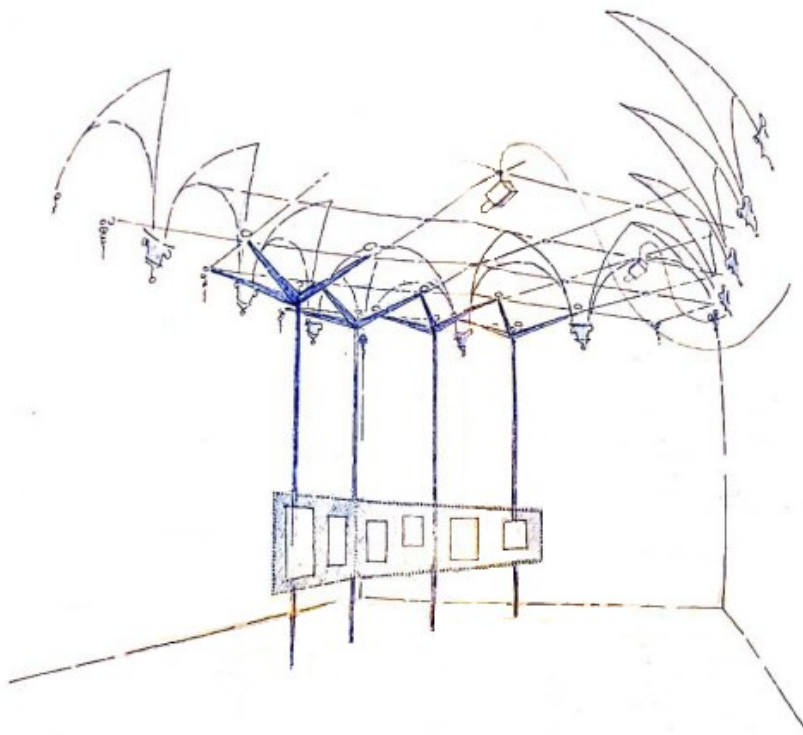
It is interesting to note the architect's design approach, which starts from the concepts of flexibility and temporariness to imagine new ways of exhibiting works. In the first design phase, Raineri put forward various proposals based on cable structures that evoked "spaces within spaces" and in which modular panels served as a presentation base for one or more works. These could be arches or intersections on the

³²⁰ Raineri 1977, p. 86.

ceilings or sometimes even tensioned elements that converged at a corner of the room, creating exhibition areas not throughout the room but only in one part of it. A perspective drawing shows the design for the corners, enriched with a number of seats reminiscent of the Barcelona Chair designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich in 1929.



113 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

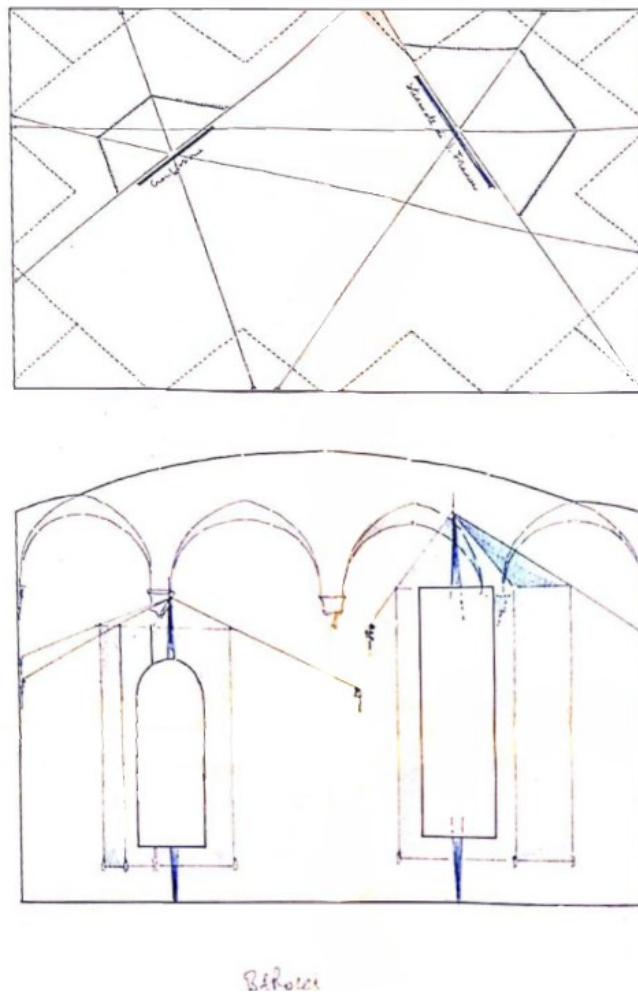


114 Project by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino).

His alternative was a system of slender metal supports he called *alberelli logici*, literally, logical trees. These vertical, branching structures, at once mechanical and poetic, were designed to sustain and isolate each artwork while leaving the surrounding architecture untouched. The “trees” formed a forest of delicate metal stems that inhabited the Renaissance rooms with a deferential lightness.

Constructed from modular rods, joints, and threaded connectors, the system could adapt to irregularities in the palace’s geometry while absorbing vibrations to protect the artworks. Each painting thus appeared to hover in space, illuminated from small lighting devices mounted atop the supports, encouraging an immersive and contemplative mode of viewing.

Crucially, the modular structure was conceived to be entirely reversible. It could be dismantled and reassembled as research, conservation, or curatorial needs evolved. Raineri’s installation, deliberately non-monumental, renounced material permanence in favour of transience and adaptability. Its elements were recyclable and easily removed, expressing what the architect described as a system always ready to leave “sempre pronto ad andarsene (ha per così dire le valigie in mano) non appena si sente superato”³²¹.



115 Project for Barocci’s room by Raineri, 1976 (File 6, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

³²¹ Raineri 1977 p. 87.

In one of the extant design drawings, a model of the *alberelli logici* can be examined in application to the so-called Barocci Room, where the names of the works- *Crocifissione* and *Stigmate di San Francesco*- are explicitly indicated. Most of Raineri's sketches, however, do not correspond to specific artworks. Rather, they function as conceptual studies, exploratory exercises intended to determine, in agreement with the director, the museological direction that the new project might take. The Barocci drawing represents an exception: it reveals a deliberate attempt to establish a dialogue between two large panels, arranged symmetrically within an asymmetrical system of suspension cables. Each painting occupies roughly half of the available space, suggesting a compositional equilibrium within the dynamic framework of the installation. The proportions and configuration of the room indicate that this design likely referred to a gallery on the second floor, where these works had already been displayed since their postwar return.

Despite the conceptual innovation and experimental spirit underpinning the project, Raineri's system was realised only in a single sample room, located in the *Ospiti* wing of the Palazzo Ducale. According to the numbering adopted during Pasquale Rotondi's directorship, this was room 132. Archival photographs, published in «Atti e Rassegna Tecnica della Società degli Ingegneri e degli Architetti in Torino» in 2021, document the installation before its early dismantling³²².

Several factors contributed to the limited implementation of this design and its subsequent removal. On one hand, the installation's originality undoubtedly introduced an atmosphere of renewal and curiosity. The presence of the slender "trees" generated unexpected spatial rhythms, transforming each room into a newly animated environment. Such an approach could have encouraged a rediscovery of the collection, presenting familiar works through continually shifting spatial relationships. On the other hand, the system required numerous structural attachments to the floors, ceilings, and walls, which conflicted with established conservation principles governing interventions in monumental architecture. The proposal to excavate the floor of the lapidary room, a central element of another phase of Raineri's project, similarly betrayed an insufficient sensitivity to the building's historic fabric, revealing a tension between architectural preservation and exhibition experimentation.

From a theoretical standpoint, Raineri's proposal remains an ambitious and intellectually rich contribution to the museological renewal of the Galleria Nazionale. Its conceptual premises, such as reversibility, modularity, and respect for architectural autonomy, anticipated key developments in contemporary museum theory. Yet in practice, the visual prominence of the installation risked overshadowing the very architecture it sought to honour. The delicate metallic structures, though intended as deferential, inevitably imposed a modernist aesthetic that drew the visitor's gaze away from the Renaissance proportions of Laurana's interiors. These tensions, combined with limited ministerial support and the absence of a fully shared institutional vision, prevented the project from evolving beyond its experimental phase.

Nevertheless, the work of Bernini and Raineri can be read as a prophetic step toward later conceptions of the "open museum" understood not as a fixed repository, but as a dynamic organism in perpetual dialogue with its context. Their proposal embraced mutability as a sign of vitality: a recognition that the

³²² Ghoddusi 2021, pp. 22 and 25.

museum's mission extends beyond the static preservation of objects to the continual renegotiation of meaning through display.

In this sense, the Raineri installation stands as a precursor to the interpretative museology of the late twentieth century, where exhibition design is understood not as decoration but as a mediating discipline, a field situated between art, architecture, and communication. It exemplifies the transformation of museography from a craft of display into a form of architectural thought, mediating between artwork and space, between permanence and change, and between historical heritage and contemporary perception.

The Steps Forward Towards Modernity

5.1 Paolo Dal Poggetto

The evolution of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche's display, culminating in the reorganization of the 1980s, represents one of the most conscious attempts to reconcile the dual identity of an inhabited monument, simultaneously a palace and a museum. The 20th-century rediscovery of the palace as a unified organism deeply influenced the exhibition design. From the earliest installations under Lionello Venturi, Luigi Serra and Pasquale Rotondi to the interventions by Giuseppe Marchini and their successors, the challenge was to integrate the movable heritage -paintings, sculptures, ceramics, tapestries- with the surviving fixed decorations: portals, fireplaces, inlaid doors, and coffered ceilings. The guiding idea was not to superimpose the museum upon the palace, but to restore continuity between its historical spaces within the building and its present function as locus of display.

When Dal Poggetto assumed the directorship of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche in 1978, it was initially in an interim capacity. In the early years of his tenure, he took a largely preservative approach, making few changes to the existing arrangements. He notably retained the single-room installation designed by Director Bernini and architect Ranieri until 1980, despite its distinct character compared to the rest of the museum itinerary³²³. This approach reflects a cautious curatorial strategy, initially aimed at maintaining continuity while overseeing the museum's collections.

By the end of August 1979, as the restoration works consolidating the walls of the *Duchessa* apartment neared completion, the Director's Office proposed the Ancona Superintendency a new reorganization of the Galleria's collection layout³²⁴. The project envisaged a new arrangement of the exhibition rooms, including the replacement of provisional display structures made of mixed materials and a revised presentation of the works in line with updated curatorial criteria.

The project included the installation of iron supports with plexiglas finishes for the display of paintings, to be placed on the second floor of the palace as well as in the *Duchessa*, *Duca*, *Ospiti* and *Jole* Apartments. The project also included iron and plexiglass bases for the wooden sculptures in the same collection and installed glass display cases, showcases, and panels to exhibit drawings. To enhance visitor experience, red velvet-covered benches were also introduced, allowing visitors to sit and contemplate some of the most significant rooms.

³²³ Archivio Galleria Nazionale Urbino, Fadone 6, N. di Prot 4520, Posiz. 414-PS, 17/10/1980. Oggetto: Urbino Galleria Nazionale- Sala degli Ospiti - Allestimento campione.

³²⁴ See Appendix 2 – 1979 Dal Poggetto.



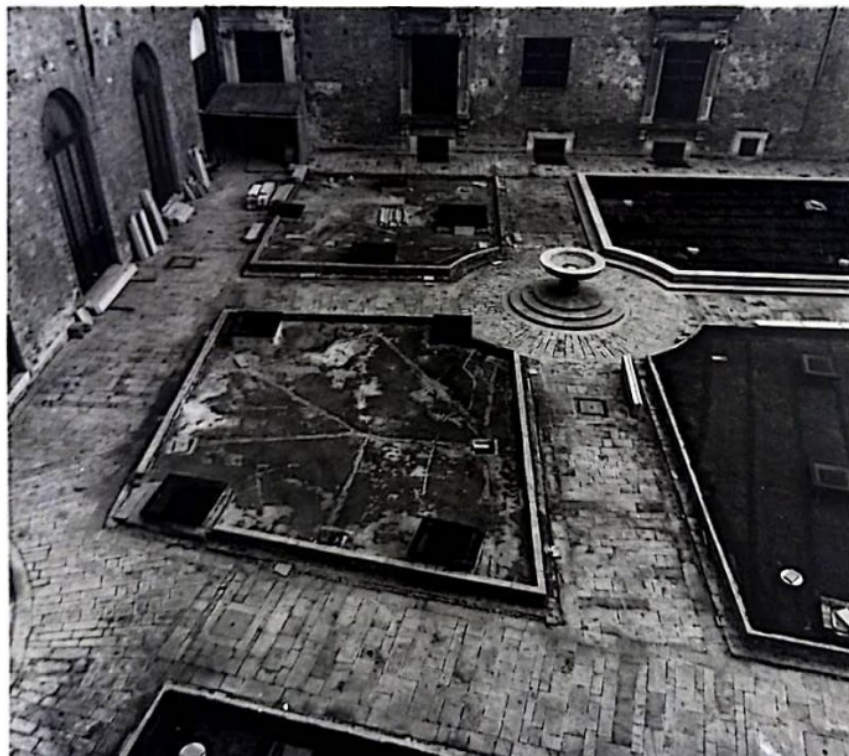
116 Sala delle Veglie, 2003 (extract from *Dal Poggetto* 2003, figure 185)



117 Sala con statue lignee, 2001 (M. Magliani, CAL-F-009890, Archivi Alinari, Firenze)

In parallel, the plan addressed the upgrading of the restrooms on the ground floor of the Ducal Palace in order to accommodate the increased needs of gallery visitors. Particular attention was devoted to the underground rooms, where the restoration of subfloors, floors, walls, and ceilings was envisaged, together with the installation of electrical and lighting systems in preparation for their future opening to the public. Finally, restoration works were planned for the room known as the “Cantinone” including interventions on the subfloor, floors, walls, ceiling, and plasterwork.

Kitchens, stables, pantries, and baths revealed the infrastructure that sustained the court’s refinement. By inviting visitors to descend into these once-hidden spaces, the Galleria offered a narrative of Renaissance life that encompassed both ceremony and routine, grandeur and labor. The reasoning behind the communication of such layered history to the public, a concept already embraced by his predecessors, reached new heights with Paolo dal Poggetto.



118 Giardino Pensile, 1985 (Author unknown, the photograph is included in M.PS 67-284, Perizia 1044/85, “Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie”, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona (as a document for the project “Fornitura e posa in opera di pavimenti, cornici e chiusini per il Giardino Pensile”))

In 1993, the works of reevaluation of the area above the *Salone del Trono* also began. This job entailed the discovery of a conspicuous number of objects of ordinary use, lost or thrown away in this unfinished attic, during the XVI, XVII and VXIII century. On September 13, a *minuta* letter was sent to the firm ICRE -that was carrying out the restoration and cleaning- requesting that all the findings would be accurately collected in 50 boxes³²⁵. These were entrusted to professor Monacchi of the University of Urbino for

³²⁵ M.PS 67-284, prot. 10512, “Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie”, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona (Oggetto: Urbino, Palazzo Ducale, Ritrovamento materiali nel sottotetto del Salone del Trono- Consegna in deposito)

preservation and a first identification. The palace, though miraculously preserved architecturally, had been emptied of its original furnishings and movable treasures by centuries of dispersal, from the Medici transfers of 1631 to the depredations of later centuries. The remains retrieved over the Trono hall, like shoes, food scraps, seashells, this favoured the rediscovery of ordinary life in the Renaissance palace and enhanced the reevaluation of the historic functional underground spaces.

Paolo dal Poggetto confronted the problem of absence of the original collection in a peculiar way, too. Rather than attempting a literal reconstitution, he opted for an analogical reconstruction of some areas: works were not necessarily of original provenance but were picked to evoke the aesthetic and intellectual climate of the Montefeltro-Della Rovere court and the wider artistic geography of the Marche.

The museum took a significant step toward a more accessible and educational mission; however, the exhibition devices continued to maintain a certain distance between the visitor and the works. Despite the explicitly stated didactic intentions, the palace largely retained its role as a shrine, allowing visitors to trace the evolution of regional art within the broader narrative of the Italian Renaissance.

The most tangible sign of a shift in curatorial perspective was the inversion of the traditional visitor route. It was a radical reconfiguration of the museum itinerary that amounted to a true ‘Copernican revolution’ for the Galleria Nazionale³²⁶. The reversal of the traditional order of visit was not merely functional; rather, it articulated a renewed architectural and curatorial alignment with the museological research undertaken at the Palazzo Ducale during the second half of the twentieth century.

The revised itinerary began in the *Appartamento della Jole*, a residential suite constructed during the early years of Federico da Montefeltro’s life, prior to his accession to the ducal title. From there, the tour progressed in a chronological sequence that mirrored both the successive phases of the Duke’s life and the stages of the palace’s construction. This configuration was deliberately calibrated to synchronize the visitor’s experience with the historical development of the building itself, thereby fostering a coherent understanding of its architectural and institutional evolution. Through this approach, the spatial organization of the palace and the chronological presentation of its contents were effectively realigned.

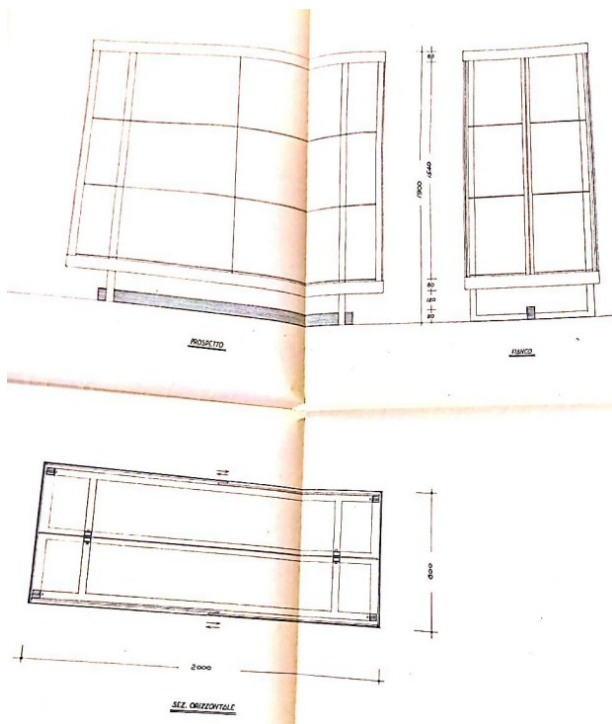
The southern *Melaranci Rooms* hosted 14th-century works, tracing the origins of the regional school, while the *Ospiti Apartments* introduced the dialogue between the Venetian and Marchigian traditions of the Quattrocento. Then the visitor accessed the western rooms corresponding to Federico da Montefeltro’s private quarters. This area was devoted still to the early Renaissance, the period most closely associated with his patronage, perpetuating the intuition of the first director Venturi.

The itinerary on the *piano nobile* concluded with the *Appartamento della Duchessa*, where the chronological narrative reached the early sixteenth century through works associated with Giovanni Santi and Raphael. The visit then continued to the second floor, where the exhibition spanned the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These rooms displayed works by artists active during this later period, including

³²⁶ Words of Giovanni Russo, when he introduced me to Urbino and we discussed the previous setups for the first time.

Federico Barocci, Orazio Gentileschi and Simone Cantarini. This completed the chronological progression of the museum itinerary. These artists' association with the second floor was not novel; the layout of this floor did not undergo a dramatic transformation comparable to that of the level below.

The expansion of the ceramics collection in 1988 highlighted the museum's need for additional display cases, which the Director formally communicated to the Ministry. Two types of showcases were already in use in the galleries; accordingly, he initiated the necessary administrative procedures to acquire new examples of both models: one artisanal, constructed in tubular iron, and another in aluminum, manufactured by the firm MEP of Fano³²⁷. The cases were created specifically for the new setup of the Galleria in 1982 the project was curated by Arch. Claudio Gaudenzi, internal worker of the Superintendency of Urbino³²⁸.



119 Project for the showcases, 1981 (C. Gaudenzi, Faldone 6, document of October 28, 1981, Archivio Soprintendenza Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

120 Showcases, 1989 (Unknown author, extract from Emiliani 1989, p. 171)

The accompanying small volume, produced in conjunction with this museographic reorganization, presents the curatorial intention in a synthetic and concise form. Its necessarily limited scope required the authors to adopt a selective approach, privileging clarity over encyclopedic completeness. The interspersed individual artwork entries with connective texts follows the logic of the physical display,

³²⁷ Perizia di spesa N. 1/L.449/87 "Valorizzazione Musei- Anno fin. 1988. Acquisto vetrine espositive per ceramiche e disegni", 22.3.1988, project by Dr. Maria Giannatiempo approved by Dr. Paolo dal Poggetto. (Archivio Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino)

³²⁸ Dal Poggetto 1987, p. 28.

situating each work within a coherent and continuous narrative that unfolds across spatial and historical contexts.

Published in 1987, the booklet offered visitors cultural and historical guidance, providing an overview of the works preserved at the time and the museum's institutional structure. As it was intended for the general public, the text did not discuss all the paintings in depth, only the most significant ones in each room. This selection made it clear that the exhibition was based on the idea that each work should be contextualised within its own era and the movements and trends that led to its creation.

The works presented in the guide were considered significant examples of the evolution of figurative art. Renaissance paintings played a particularly prominent role in the exhibition narrative as they illustrated the transition from medieval models to a new sensibility based on perspective, observation of nature, and the centrality of the human figure. Fifteenth-century panels showed a growing interest in constructing space and defining bodies in three dimensions, while High Renaissance works conveyed an ideal of harmony and formal perfection, which the museum considered one of the highlights of its collection at the time.

The second floor continued to devote ample space to Baroque works, in which dynamism, intensity of light and emotional impact were expressed through visually striking paintings. The first rooms on this floor were dedicated to Barocci's works and those of his school, alongside the painters Lilli, Gentileschi and Guerrieri.

The Pasquino gallery presented cartoons by Annibale Carracci and Domenichino, as well as the gallery's ceramic collections. The other rooms recovered for exhibition purposes on the second floor were not particularly promoted in the book, nor were the underground rooms, to which only the last page was dedicated. This limited representation suggests that the direction was still considering further modifications. The revaluation work on the second and ground floors at that stage was mainly structural, but the vision for the use of these spaces and their organic integration into the visitor experience would improve as the collection increased in size.

The museum had just received, in 1987, some artworks of the Cini collection, and the donation would grow even more in the future. The implementation was realized by attracting several donations, among which the two Volponi donations of 1991 and 2003, were very significant both for the history of private collecting in the second half of 1900s and for the representation of the Seicento painting within the Galleria³²⁹. This caused several modifications through the years in the museum's setup, compared to the first guidebook published by Dal Poggetto.

There was also the aggravating factor that many spaces were still occupied by the Istituto d'Arte³³⁰. As demand for exhibition space increased, the Istituto was evicted. Giancarlo De Carlo designed a

³²⁹ For further information on the Volponi donations, see Varese 1992, Varese 2003 and the catalogue *Volponi Corporale* 2024.

³³⁰ Dal Poggetto 1987, p. 30.

functionalist building for the institute. Although it was inaugurated in 1983, it was only partially ready for the students. It was intended to comprise four pavilions, but only two were completed. Following the 1997 earthquake, the ceramics workshop and the artistic photography and printmaking laboratories were also moved from the Palazzo to the new facility. Dal Poggetto's efforts to communicate the purpose of the museum to all kinds of people, from politicians and scholars to the humblest visitor, were essential in securing the Palazzo Ducale's current, fully museum-oriented function.

The guidebook was the reference point for visitors for several years of Dal Poggetto's directorship. By the ending of his post in 2003 he managed to produce a complete catalogue that would sustain and integrate the information of the little guidebook. Finally, each artwork was presented separately, and bibliography was available, grouped in a room-by-room format. The rich catalogue was published both in Italian and English versions. For twenty years it was a crucial reference point for the advancement of art history studies concerning the collections of the Galleria Nazionale. The visitor's route became an interpretative instrument: the architecture taught history as effectively as the artworks themselves.

By the end of the twentieth century, a national debate had emerged in Italy concerning the opening hours and accessibility of museums, libraries, and cultural institutions more broadly. In 1995, the removal of restrictions on the recruitment of security personnel enabled many institutions to extend both their daily opening hours and the number of days they were open to the public. Within the archival records of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche is a letter addressed to the Minister for Cultural Heritage, Walter Veltroni, in which, in July 1997, a member of the *Amici di Urbino* association expressed support for the proposal to introduce late-evening museum openings. Although there is no evidence that this initiative was subsequently implemented, the minister's reply and the positive public reception of the proposal are nevertheless indicative of a broader shift in attitudes toward museum accessibility.

Contemporary documentation also allows for a reconstruction of the Gallery's standard opening hours during this period. At the end of 1998, the director announced the schedule for the winter holiday season: the museum was generally open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., including Christmas Eve and the eve of Epiphany, and closed only on 25 December and 1 January. It was open on 28 December and 3, 4, and 6 January. A good practice, that was confirmed by the end of the year with the *legge finanziaria* of 23 December 1999 (Law no. 488), which established the principle of guaranteed daily museum opening, with extended hours even on public holidays. Following negotiations with trade unions and staff, this policy was implemented at the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, marking a further step toward the regularization and expansion of public access.



121 *Specimen of painting support in the Duchessa Apartment, 1980-2023 (A. Fapanni)*

The Duchessa Apartment, one of the last sections to be closed to the public for the renovation campaign that marked a significant phase of Director Luigi Gallo's tenure, preserves several display structures installed during Dal Poggetto's directorship, as can be seen in the photographs taken in 2023. These elements, rather than being discarded, were incorporated into subsequent museographic updates across the decades, reflecting a curatorial approach grounded in continuity, economy of resources, and adaptive reuse.

Although not always fully aligned with the aesthetic and interpretive sensibilities of exhibition design in the 2020s, these devices nevertheless proved remarkably adaptable and functionally resilient. Their persistence demonstrates how the exhibition framework established in the late twentieth century was not only preserved but also reinterpreted to accommodate the evolving needs and narratives of the museum in the twenty-first century.



122 A Plexiglas shield protecting a tapestry in the Duchessa Apartment, 1980-2023 (A. Fapanni)



123 Example of a structural base for a statue in the Duchessa Apartment, 1980-2023 (A. Fapanni)

5.2 Epilogue. Luigi Gallo's latest layout (2020-2026)

5.2.1 Introduction

The recent transformation of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche in Urbino represents a compelling case study in contemporary museology, where curatorial innovation, institutional reform, and architectural heritage converge. To illuminate the complexities of this modern museum transformation, this chapter examines the Urbino project through these three interrelated perspectives. Ultimately, it demonstrates how the contemporary redesign remains deeply intertwined with the historical trajectory this thesis seeks to contextualize.

Since the appointment of Luigi Gallo as director in late 2020, the museum has undergone a profound reconfiguration that extends beyond the mere reordering of its collections. These interventions have redefined both the interpretative strategies applied to the artworks and the very perception of the Palazzo Ducale, which is no longer treated solely as a container for art but as an narrative agent within the visitor's experience. The palace thus functions simultaneously as an object of preservation, and as an active participant in narrating the cultural identity, historical continuity and the artistic production of the Marche region.

The reorganization of the second floor constituted a foundational phase, establishing the spatial and conceptual principles that would guide later interventions. Secondly, this chapter considers the reconfiguration of the Piano Nobile, realised with the support of the Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza (PNRR), where the curatorial team explicitly foregrounded the dialogue between artworks and their architectural environment, thereby restoring the historical integrity of the palace's spaces. Finally, the discussion situates these museological strategies within their institutional and administrative context, tracing their relationship to the 2014 reform of Italian state museums and to broader debates on governance, autonomy, and the evolving public role of cultural institutions. It also underscores the decisive role played by the PNRR in shaping not only infrastructural priorities but also favoring the renovation of curatorial methodologies.

Interviews with key officials of the Galleria - Giovanni Russo, Francesco Primari, Claudia Plattegger, and Director Luigi Gallo - offered valuable insight into the recent and ongoing transformations. Giovanni Russo, an art historian, discusses the reorganisation of the collections, emphasizing the intention to foster a dialogue between the artworks and the architecture of the palace. This approach moves away from the traditional chronological display in favour of thematic groupings that enrich the interpretive experience. Francesco Primari, an architect, focuses on the spatial redevelopment of the museum, highlighting efforts to integrate contemporary technological systems and improve accessibility, while maintaining aesthetic coherence. Claudia Plattegger, an administrative officer, details the bureaucratic and managerial challenges involved in securing and managing PNRR funding for the museum's renovation. Director Luigi Gallo, also an art historian, articulates a strategic vision aimed at repositioning the museum within both national and international cultural networks. His plan centres on renewing the display strategies and developing a focused exhibition programme to better promote the region's heritage.



124 F. Primari, G. Russo, dir. L. Gallo and an architect overseeing the setup of the first Ospiti room, 2024 (A. Fapanni)

Under Gallo's leadership, the spatial and curatorial layout of the Galleria Nazionale has undergone a substantial reconfiguration, departing from the merely chronological arrangement established in the previous century. The new museological direction encouraged a more meaningful interaction between the artworks and the architectural context of the Palazzo Ducale. This transformation reflects broader trends in museums today, its principles are aligned with national and European strategies for cultural heritage innovation.

5.2.2 *Second floor*

Even before the activation of PNRR, the institution had already begun a process of renewal that intertwined architectural restoration, curatorial rethinking, and infrastructural modernisation. This phase, which began under the directorship of Peter Aufreiter (2015–2019), laid the conceptual and logistical foundations for the museum's current configuration. It reflected a growing awareness that the museum could no longer function solely as a space of preservation, but had to become an evolving platform for research, participation, and interdisciplinary dialogue.

Aufreiter's decision to entrust the preliminary reorganisation of the Galleria to the architect and designer Italo Rota was particularly significant, aligned with an emerging European discourse that conceives museums as participatory ecosystems rather than static repositories of art³³¹. As an internationally renowned architect, he had curated several museums and temporary exhibitions, like the Museo Novecento in Milan, Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia and the Kwait pavilion at Expo 2015. Even though he couldn't finish his project for the Urbino gallery due to health issues that led to his demise in 2024, his idea of museum was multifaceted, he claimed: "i musei si stanno trasformando in un componimento a più voci, tra memoria, ricerca, scienza, industria, arte e umanesimo, mediato e reso possibile dalla partecipazione personale e dall'intervento del singolo, per testimoniare la libertà e la responsabilità che il futuro ci invita a considerare ogni giorno, nel presente, sia come individui sia come collettività"³³².

This vision is worth mentioning because it was a *fil rouge* in the project that today has seen the light in Palazzo Ducale. Also, Aufreiter promoted a collaboration with the University of Urbino and Anna Maria Ambrosini Massari to develop a museum itinerary, including the new contents for the Piano Nobile. These projects remained unimplemented, due to a lack of internal staff to supervise the external collaborations. Before concluding his mandate, he had great care of closing some contracts for the construction works and for renovating the lighting and air conditioning systems. The interim director Marco Pierini kept pushing the realization of the works that laid the basis for the setup finalized under Gallo's guidance.

The reorganisation of the second floor, completed in 2022, marked a turning point in the interpretative strategies of the museum. Under the direction of Gallo, with the collaboration of Giovanni Russo and Francesco Primari, more meaningful dialogues between works of art and their audiences were established. Architect Primari oversaw the restoration and refurbishment of approximately 1,200 square metres: some spaces that had previously served as offices were converted into exhibition rooms, expanding the museum's usable surface. Also, a lift was installed to make the second floor accessible.

³³¹ Irace, Rota, 2008, p. 210.

³³² This is an extract from the presentation of the book *Io sono Museo*, held in June 2022 in Reggio Emilia, see: Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia 2022, and Grassi 2021, p. 5.

The Director and Russo faced the challenge of integrating new collections within the itinerary. Artworks from the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Pesaro, from the ministerial project “100 opere tornano a casa”, and the Volponi collection were placed in dialogue with the existing holdings. At the same time, works that had languished in storage, such as those by Pier Leone Ghezzi, were brought into public view, extending the chronological representation of the gallery into the eighteenth century.



125 New rooms at the second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni)

The monumental paintings by Ghezzi were installed in an area that had previously been inaccessible to the public, musealised and opened to visitors for the first time in 2022. The western wing of the second floor presented considerable structural challenges, as the irregular floor levels created significant safety hazards in a museum context where both the movement of heavy artworks and high visitor traffic are routine. To address these issues, the architect undertook a detailed study of strategies for levelling the ancient floors, with the aim of minimising the risk of trips, falls, and accidents, and thereby ensuring a secure environment for visitors and staff alike. This intervention was particularly important given that the exhibition design envisioned the placement of several central elements within the rooms.

The project also required a careful assessment of the load-bearing capacity of the underlying vaults, combined with the refurbishment of the flooring, in order to provide a reliable structural foundation for the new display. The inclusion of central exhibition elements not only enhanced the architectural perception of the palace as a lived space but also fostered a more dynamic and engaging visitor experience. This approach established a curatorial and architectural model that would later be further refined and extended in the reorganisation of the *Piano Nobile* of the Palazzo Ducale.

The renewal of the second floor was equally notable for its thematic reconceptualisation of the galleries. Portraiture and landscape, for example, were treated as distinct categories, enabling the visitor to follow

interpretative itineraries that were both historically informed and conceptually coherent. A similar approach is now visible at the Uffizi as well, where in 2023 director Schmidt curated a section of the first floor dedicated to self-portraits³³³. Sixteenth-century painting, which had previously been dispersed across the collection, was brought together in a dedicated space. Similarly, the Volponi collection was accorded two entire rooms, a decision that acknowledged the specificity and integrity of this nucleus within the broader collection.

Particular attention was devoted to the ceramics gallery. During the architectural restoration of the southern corridor, the removal of plaster revealed the original battlements of the castle. The parapet, with its alternating crenels and merlons, was found to be preserved within the masonry and, once uncovered, re-emerged as a significant architectural feature, enhancing appreciation of the historic character of the space. The decision to situate the ceramics collection in this location was informed both by practical and conceptual considerations.

The corridor receives abundant heat and natural light throughout the day - conditions unsuitable for paintings and drawings but advantageous for ceramics, which are not damaged by exposure to such elements. On the contrary, the natural illumination accentuates the vivid colours traditionally associated with the majolica production of Urbino, Casteldurante, and Castelli, while also reducing the need for artificial lighting and thereby lowering energy consumption.



126 Southern corridor, second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni)

³³³ Le Gallerie degli Uffizi 2023.

The reorganisation of the majolica section was carried out in collaboration with Timothy Wilson of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and local scholar Claudio Paolinelli. This partnership underscored the value of scholarly exchange and facilitated a presentation of the ceramics not merely as decorative objects but as cultural artefacts embedded within wider artistic and historical networks. The inclusion of long-term loans further enriched the display, broadening the material and visual scope of the gallery and offering visitors a more comprehensive understanding of the significance of ceramic production in the region.

The curatorial team also sought to enhance contextual understanding by grouping works that shared regional and artistic affinities. In the first room of the second floor, Barocci's paintings were exhibited alongside works by Simone Cantarini received in loan from the Pinacoteca di Brera, thereby constructing a more resonant narrative of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century painting from the Marche region. These paintings were enhanced also organizing temporary exhibitions: a great monographic on Federico Barocci opened the way in 2023 and Simone Cantarini followed in 2025.



127 *The first room on the second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni)*

According to the director, the recent renovation of the museum was, in part, catalysed by the arrival of two paintings by Federico Barocci from the Brera collections³³⁴. In this sense, the artist's presence has functioned as both a guiding principle for the reorganisation of the rooms in the *Roveresca* area and as a focal point for subsequent curatorial strategies. The major exhibition dedicated to Barocci, prepared over the course of three and a half years, for example, was closely connected to the permanent display: it emerged from an analysis of the existing layout and, in turn, prompted a reconsideration of it. In this way,

³³⁴ This is an extract from an interview I conducted with the director and officials Russo, Primari and Plattegger in October 2024, whilst gathering material for this chapter.

the relationship between permanent and temporary exhibitions is presented not as hierarchical but as reciprocal, with each informing and enriching the other.

This trend continued and was amplified by the subsequent temporary exhibition. The photograph, taken in 2025, shows an artwork on the entrance wall that is not part of the permanent collection (*Erminia fra i pastori*, by Simone Cantarini³³⁵). However, it was strategically positioned in the first room on the second floor, where it serves as a meaningful point of reference, in dialogue with Barocci and the other Cantarinis.



128 *The second room on the second floor, 2025 (A. Fapanni)*

5.2.3 *Piano Nobile*

While the second floor reorganisation introduced the criteria for the design of the spaces of Palazzo Ducale, the reconfiguration of the first floor, which was underway during the interviews (October 2024), represents its most ambitious articulation. The conceptual renewal of the display has been accompanied by an equally decisive programme of technological modernisation, largely funded by the PNRR. The administrative complexity of these endeavours required a careful division of responsibilities: Gallo himself acted as RUP for the lighting project, Giovanni Russo for the microclimate initiative, while Francesco Primari supervised the architectural aspects of the refurbishment. Claudia Plattegger played an essential role in navigating the tender procedures and contractual processes, ensuring that the technical and administrative dimensions of the projects were effectively coordinated.

The electric system was completely revised in order to install new lighting within the rooms. The lighting design was entrusted to Lightstudio in Milan, under the direction of Iskra and Giuseppe Mestrangelo, distinguished professionals whose expertise proved fundamental in guiding the project. Their

³³⁵ On loan (comodato) from the Banca Intesa San Paolo collection.

recommendations led to the adoption of a system already successfully implemented on the second floor: a solution in which light descends from above, ensuring that the works are illuminated evenly and without glare, while simultaneously providing indirect ambient lighting that enhances the spatial qualities of the rooms.

Also, an advanced microclimate monitoring system has been installed, allowing the museum to track environmental conditions through a network of sensors connected to dedicated software. These measures are fundamental for the long-term conservation of the collections, particularly in a historic building such as Palazzo Ducale, where environmental conditions can be difficult to regulate.

Visitor comfort has also been enhanced through the installation of heated seating, replacing earlier basic solutions. Winters in Urbino are notoriously harsh, and given both the vast scale and the historic fabric of the palace, it was impossible to implement a conventional heating system capable of warming the entire interior. The initial proposal for localised heating in specific rooms involved installing heating plates within the original fireplaces, allowing radiant heat to diffuse into the space. However, this solution was soon deemed unsuitable from a conservation standpoint, as it risked generating uneven temperature gradients potentially harmful to the artworks and the building materials.

During the subsequent design phase, an alternative and more sustainable concept was developed: the introduction of modern seating elements incorporating discreet heating systems. Traditional radiant platforms function by warming the surrounding air, which could still compromise the microclimate of the exhibition areas. To address this, the design team adopted a different technological principle -contact-based irradiation heating- similar in concept to microwave systems, which only produce heat when in direct interaction with a target object. In this case, the benches remain inert until occupied, at which point they transfer warmth solely to the person seated, without affecting the ambient air temperature³³⁶.

This innovative approach provides a finely controlled thermal balance, ensuring the comfort of visitors and staff while maintaining the environmental stability essential for the conservation of the artworks. It thus represents an exemplary integration of technological innovation within a heritage context - resolving a long-standing environmental challenge without compromising the authenticity or preservation of the historic interiors.

Accessibility has been significantly improved with the installation of a lift connecting the second floor, and further plans are underway to eliminate both physical and cognitive barriers. A new digital infrastructure has been established to support both administrative tasks and future public-facing projects, such as downloadable audio guides. At the same time, conservation measures have been advanced through the use of anoxic pest control treatments for wooden works, supported by entomological monitoring. In order to reduce visual disruption, these technological systems have been concentrated into discrete so-called “totems” underscoring the commitment to making technology serve the visitor and the

³³⁶ The description of the project’s development stages is taken from the account that architect Francesco Primari kindly shared with me during our interview in October 2024, in which he explained, step by step, the design process behind the refurbishment of each floor of the museum

collection without compromising the aesthetic integrity of the galleries. The images show the phases of installation of some of the hardware that those structures encapsulate (March 2024).



129 Detail of the totem containing electrical systems, 2024 (A. Fapanni)



130 Detail of the totem containing electrical systems, UV insect trap, 2024 (A. Fapanni)

The conception and design of the metal casing represented one of the most complex aspects of the project, precisely because it had to fulfil a highly specific and millimetric technical function while also meeting a minimum standard of aesthetic quality. The metallic carter encloses a dense technological infrastructure, beginning with the lighting system and extending to include safety and surveillance equipment, electrical sockets for maintenance devices such as vacuum cleaners, and anti-woodworm lamps designed to protect wooden artefacts from insect damage. It also houses a network of sensors introduced as part of the second phase of the PNRR, which continuously monitor air quality, temperature, and humidity levels.

By collecting such a heterogeneous array of technological systems within a single structure in the totems, the museum was able to rationalise its technical apparatus while minimising its visual impact on the historic environment. From a purely aesthetic perspective, the presence of so much equipment is far from ideal; yet the casing provides a solution that allows these indispensable systems to be present without disrupting the perception of the rooms. The totem is visible, but discreet: its slightly moulded form enables it to integrate more harmoniously into the architectural context, ensuring that the spaciousness of the galleries remains perceptible while the technological requirements of conservation, security, and visitor comfort are fully met.

Structural works went hand in hand with the rethinking of the visitor experience. The aim was to offer different “levels of visit”, for example now the Galleria can be visited as a tour of the ancient residence, or to discover the single masterpieces, to roam the evolution of the arts in the Marche region or with specific attention to Duke Federico's sculptors³³⁷. All of these itineraries are now available in the museum, allowing visitors to perceive the complexity of the palace and the collection in a more layered way.



131 Room 151, 2024 (C. Ripalti)

The Piano Nobile extends the use of thematic rooms first introduced on the second floor. In this case though it is not by genres, but some rooms are dedicated to highlighting specific masterpieces in the museum, placing them in dialogue with elements that enrich their understanding. For example, Piero della Francesca's *Flagellazione* has been accorded a dedicated room, allowing the work to be experienced in isolation and within an architectural context that recalls the historical context that viewed the commission of the painting. In fact, the studies of the table recently attested that it was conceived much earlier than the *Madonna di Senigallia*, the museum setup reflect this chronological distance by situating each one in a different area of the palace.

Next to the *Flagellazione* a chimneypiece was reconstituted where it originally was. The architectural works led to the rediscovery of a cavity in this masonry which, during the Renaissance, had been used as a chimney flue. At the same time, the lintel of a fireplace was found in the storerooms, whose sculptural

³³⁷ The historical and critical analysis underlying the rehang of the collection is drawn from the interview that the curator Giovanni Russo kindly granted me in October 2024, in which he outlined the development of the re-staging in terms of content.

reliefs were consistent with Jole's apartment. Therefore, the team's idea was to recreate the fireplace through the exhibition design and, next to it, a living space reminiscent of a cosy sitting room, with seating to encourage visitors to pause in front of the *Flagellazione*. On the back of the masterpiece is presented the byzantine banner dedicated to S. Michael the Archangel, restored in 2022. It was plausibly donated by the cardinal Bessarione to the Abbey of S. Croce in Fonte Avellana, detail that enriches the narrative of the cardinal's presence at the court of Duke Federico and his representation in the painting by Piero.

The Flagellazione Room so becomes a gem embedded in a larger discourse. The apartment of the Jole was the first reopened after reevaluation with PNRR funds in April 2024. The new layout favoured several layers of understanding of the collection and the palace. In the reorganisation, certain structural and material constraints inevitably delimited curatorial choices. Portions of the collection, by virtue of their dimensions, fragility, or established exhibition history, must be regarded as effectively immovable. The *San Domenico* groin vaults frescoes, attributed to the so-called Master of Bellpuig/Master of Mombaroccio or possibly Antonio da Siena, exemplify this condition. Currently housed in the final room of the east wing, these works could not be relocated without endangering their conservation or confronting insurmountable logistical obstacles, given their monumental scale. In such cases, curators were compelled to accept the inherited placement as a legacy of prior display traditions and to construct a new interpretative framework around this fixed point.

This recognition also invited a reconsideration of past curatorial strategies, particularly those of Pasquale Rotondi and subsequently Paolo Dal Poggetto, who sometimes divided ensembles of works that were originally conceived as coherent. A notable example is the usual separation between the so-called Master of the Coronation, the *Triptych of Saint Bartholomew*, and works by Antonio da Ferrara, objects that share not only a common chronological horizon but also a stylistic continuum rooted in painting from the later fourteenth century through the early fifteenth century. Reuniting these works within a coherent itinerary enables the public to develop a more integrated and historically informed understanding of late Gothic and early Renaissance artistic production.

The question of how to achieve this, however, was one to which the museum's leadership devoted particular attention. In close collaboration with the museum's conservation department, the architect Francesco Primari designed a layout that presents the polyptychs detached from the walls and mounted on specially constructed supports. These structures allow visitors to view the reverse of the panels, thereby revealing aspects of their material composition and assembly that are normally concealed. This solution not only facilitates routine maintenance and conservation but also provides scholars with the opportunity to study the back of these fragile works without subjecting them to the risks of movement.

Figures 132 and 133 show the same room during two distinct phases: the installation of the display structures and the completed exhibition. In the latter, the artworks have been positioned and are fully accessible within the newly refurbished gallery space. The central display structure leaves the reverse side of the polyptych visible for inspection and maintenance, while the structures on the right incorporate a pivoting mechanism that, when unlocked, enables movement along a vertical axis, allowing the panel to open like a door. This solution facilitates access to the backs of the paintings for conservation purposes while eliminating the need to dismantle the display.



132 Room 148 during renovation, 2024 (A. Fapanni)



133 Room 148 after renovation, 2025 (A. Fapanni)

Such an approach also carries important didactic implications. The so-called *fondi oro*, paintings characterised by gold-ground backgrounds, often pose interpretative challenges for contemporary audiences, as their intricate iconographies, dense with references to saints and biblical narratives, no longer resonate as they did in the devotional culture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. By foregrounding the physical and constructive dimensions of these objects, the new display encourages a renewed appreciation of their craftsmanship and materiality. This shift from purely iconographic to structural and technical interpretation offers a productive means of engaging visitors, bridging the distance between medieval artistic languages and the perceptual habits of a modern public.



134 Curator G. Russo and conservator G. Papini on duty during the Iole Apartment setup, 2024 (A. Fapanni)

The provenance is further confirmation for this grouping, as many of the paintings originated in the museum attached to the Istituto di Belle Arti. They constitute a section with a strong identity, closely bound to the civic and cultural milieu of Urbino. Situating these artefacts within a designated area of the palace allows for a coherent narrative of the development of local painting between the later Trecento and the first half of the Quattrocento, culminating in Piero della Francesca's *Flagellation* as an emblematic point of arrival.

Nonetheless, challenges remain with regard to the architectural setting itself. The rooms proposed for this section have been substantially altered by successive renovations, resulting in significant spatial and conservation issues. Despite these limitations, the concentration of a homogeneous corpus of works in these spaces represents a valuable opportunity to counteract earlier fragmentations and to articulate a more robust critical interpretation of the collections—one capable of restoring to visitors the continuity and distinctive character of artistic production in the Marche and Emilia regions at the threshold between the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance.

The first three rooms of the apartment constitute the only spaces in which the original sculptural decorations are well preserved. The bas-relief lintels, historiated friezes, and finely articulated window frames all served as visual statements of Federico da Montefeltro's ambitions, revealing, even before his

elevation to ducal status, his desire to appear as a cultivated patron. Acknowledging this, the curatorial team has underscored the architectural and decorative programme of the Jole room by exhibiting Renaissance sculpture, notably the reliefs by Michele di Giovanni da Fiesole and Luca della Robbia, whose forms resonate particularly well with the spatial and ornamental character of the apartment.



135 Camera Picta, new setup, 2024 (A. Fapanni)

The second room centres on frescoes by Giovanni Boccati, whose works are further contextualised by two additional paintings from his hand. While the museum's collection is insufficient to sustain a comprehensive narrative of the Camerino school as a whole, this more focused approach highlights Boccati's artistic presence in Urbino, offering a nuanced perspective on the painter's local impact rather than an incomplete survey of the broader school. In the centre of the space a contemporary design structure serves a dual purpose. It facilitates the interpretation of the frescoes while simultaneously generating a diffuse, ambient lighting throughout the room.

The adjoining space houses Fra Carnevale's panel, received through the Cini donation, displayed in direct relation to the Alcova. This curatorial decision responds to the complex history of the alcove's attribution. In Paolo Dal Poggetto's arrangement, it remained listed under Giovanni Angelo d'Antonio da Bolognola, despite the fact that Federico Zeri had already, in 1961, suggested its association with the so-called Maestro delle Tavole Barberini³³⁸. At that time, the artistic profile of this anonymous master was still under scholarly construction, with Giovanni Angelo considered a plausible candidate.

Later research, however, identified the Maestro delle Tavole Barberini as Bartolomeo Corradini -better known as Fra Carnevale- one of the foremost painters active in Urbino in the fifteenth century. This attribution was definitively consolidated by the 2004 monographic exhibition, which established Fra Carnevale's authorship and affirmed his centrality within the city's artistic milieu³³⁹. The present display, therefore, reflects this crucial historiographical update, situating the Alcova within a coherent narrative of Fra Carnevale's oeuvre and integrating recent scholarship into the permanent display.

³³⁸ Zeri 1961, pp. 42-43.

³³⁹ De Marchi 2004, p. 72; Zappasodi 2022, p. 276.



136 Sala dell'Alcova, 2024 (A. Fapanni)

Taken together, these interventions have resulted in the renewal of the Jole apartment. The new arrangement honours the achievements of earlier curators while critically updating attributions and strengthening the interpretative narratives that emerge both from the palace itself and from the collections it houses.

Proceeding into the *Realissimo*, the itinerary once again underscores the political and cultural image of Federico da Montefeltro, as articulated by court artists such as Pedro Berruguete, Giusto di Gand, and Paolo Uccello. Since the inauguration of the Galleria Nazionale, the interpretative thread most consistently emphasised in this area has been its close association with the figure of the Duke. The revised display retains this focus, while also incorporating important new findings. One such example concerns the *Salvator Mundi*, previously attributed to Bramantino, which is now reassigned to Bartolomeo della Gatta³⁴⁰. Furthermore, the parallel study of the palace architecture with archival documentation has led to the significant relocation of the so-called “lavabo del Duca” to the room historically identified as Federico’s bedchamber, an important discovery which awaits full publication by Giovanni Russo and Francesco Primari.

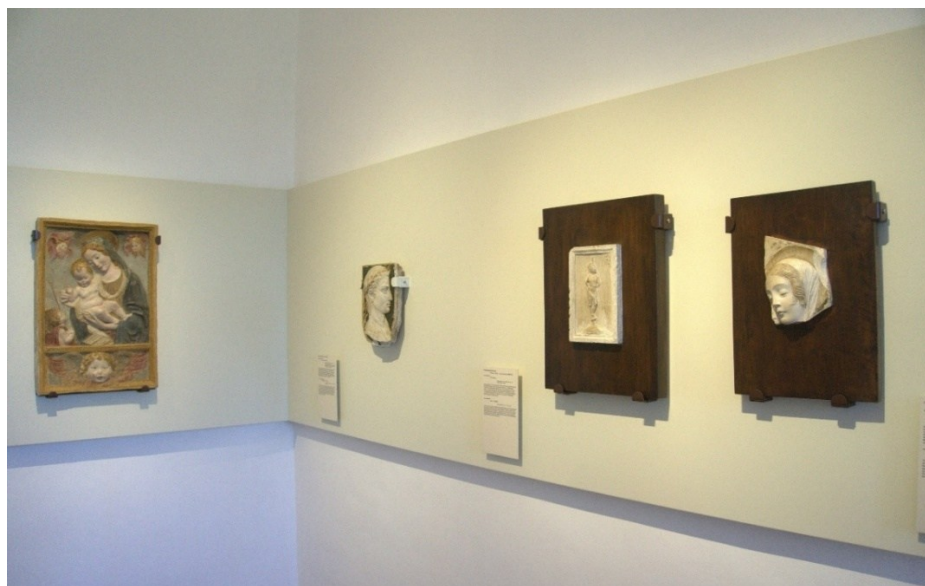
Finally, the curators have addressed the problematic attribution of certain sculptural fragments. The fragmentary female head, formerly associated by Dal Poggetto with Agostino di Duccio, has now been reunited with the Saint Sebastian relief and reattributed to Domenico Rosselli. This significant reassessment is made tangible in the installation by presenting the sculptures together in the *Realissimo*, the very space in which Rosselli himself was historically active.

³⁴⁰ Martelli 2022, pp. 154-155.

Through these choices, the curatorial team has sought not only to refine scholarly accuracy but also to re-establish the resonance between artworks, architectural spaces, and historical context, thus offering visitors a more integrated experience of the artistic and cultural world of Federico da Montefeltro's Urbino.



137 *Basreliefs pre-setup, 2024 (A. Fapanni)*



138 *Basreliefs in the new permanent exhibition, 2025 (A. Fapanni)*

The curatorial strategy aims to establish a resonance among the artworks within each room, in dialogue with all the possible itineraries that the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche offers. This approach seeks to restore a sense of historical and spatial authenticity, allowing the palace to function as both a setting and a narrative framework for the collection. A key example of this principle is found in the first *Ospiti* room, where one of the most celebrated masterpieces of the Galleria Nazionale, the *Madonna di Senigallia* by Piero della Francesca, is displayed.

The painting serves as a pivotal point in the exhibition's itinerary, linking the section devoted to the Duke's history in the *Realissimo* with the subsequent one focused on the Venetian influence in the Marche region. The work corresponds to a later phase in Piero's artistic production and anchors a broader dialogue within the room around representations of the Virgin Mary. In this context, the *Madonna di Senigallia* is not merely presented as a famous painting but as an element that informs the study of contemporary wooden sculpture from Camerino and the surrounding province, thereby enriching the interpretative discourse.

In previous installations, the itinerary grouped the *Madonna di Senigallia* together with the *Flagellazione* and the *Città Ideale*, forming a kind of symbolic "shrine to the Urbino Renaissance" While evocative, such an arrangement risked reducing the complexity of Urbino's cultural history to three canonical masterpieces. The new display instead situates the *Madonna di Senigallia* within a carefully articulated chronological and stylistic framework, embedding it in a thematic context that reflects the evolving currents of fifteenth-century artistic production. Moreover, other rooms now offer complementary opportunities for deepening the visitor's understanding of the collection, encouraging a more nuanced reading of the Renaissance in the Marche.

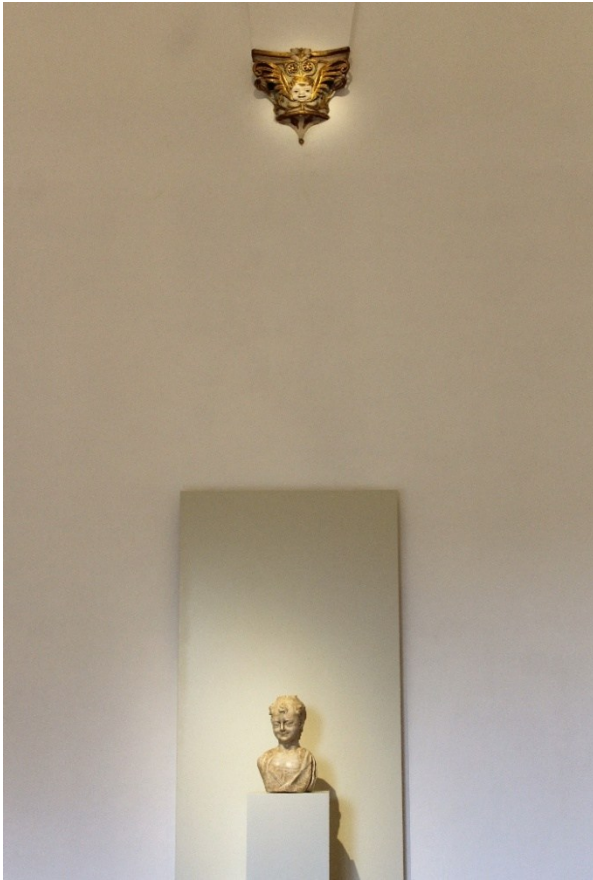


139 Ospiti apartment, 2024 (A. Fapanni)

Within the *Ospiti* apartment, particular attention has also been paid to the relationship between the artworks and the architecture of the palace. Just as Michele di Giovanni da Fiesole's sculptures are displayed in the *Sala della Jole*, the very space where he once worked, and Domenico Rosselli's reliefs occupy the *Realissimo*, the rooms of the *Ospiti* apartment host the sculptures of Gregorio di Lorenzo. These works have been reinstalled in direct dialogue with the decorations that the artist himself executed in the

same rooms, thereby reinforcing the sense of historical continuity between artistic creation and architectural setting.

This curatorial principle extends to the *Soprallogge*, where the *Macchine da guerra* by Ambrogio Barocci have been relocated to the area animated by his workshop's original decorative programme. Such site-specific placements enable the palace itself to act as a co-narrator in the museum experience, integrating the memory of its spaces into the interpretative fabric of the exhibition. The restoration of the quadrangular corridor system as a distributive and connective space further enhances this narrative complexity, inviting visitors to explore the palace and its collections across multiple layers of historical and artistic meaning.



140 Ospiti Apartment, exhibition detail, 2024 (A. Fapanni)



141 Soprallogge, 2024 (A. Fapanni)

The reorganisation of the *Duchessa* apartment reflects recent historiographical advances that had not been fully integrated into Paolo Dal Poggetto's earlier curatorial layout. In the previous arrangement, Giovanni Santi was displayed in the *Sala delle Veglie*, a curatorial decision that served as a prelude to the discussion of Raphael in the *Camera da letto della Duchessa*. The adjoining *Salotto* presented Santi in dialogue with Timoteo Viti and Girolamo Genga, thereby emphasising the formative influence of Raphael's father within the broader Urbino milieu. The overarching narrative of this section thus revolved around the theme of artistic lineage and paternal influence.

In the new configuration, however, *La Muta* by Raphael has been relocated to the *Salotto della Duchessa*, where it is now surrounded by works created by artists collectively identified as the “friends of Urbino.” This curatorial choice draws directly on the interpretative framework proposed in the 2019 exhibition *Raffaello e gli amici di Urbino*, held in the same palace. As curator Barbara Agosti observed, “seguire in parallelo il percorso di Timoteo Viti, Girolamo Genga e Raffaello Sanzio, accomunati dalla provenienza urbinata e da una medesima appartenenza generazionale, se pur con una leggera scalatura, permette di rileggere con ben maggiore vividezza da un lato l’eccezionalità dello sviluppo di Raffaello, e dall’altro le divergenti reazioni dei suoi due amici di fronte alle sbalorditive novità della *maniera moderna*”³⁴¹.

By integrating this perspective into the permanent display, the current reorganization of the *Piano Nobile* achieves both spatial coherence and historiographical renewal. The new arrangement transforms the apartment into a space that embodies the dynamic exchange of ideas among Urbino’s Renaissance masters.

The ongoing transformation of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche demonstrates how a museum can reimagine itself through the combination of thematic curation, architectural contextualization, and technological renewal. The restructuring of the second floor provided the initial testing ground for abandoning strict chronological structures, while the Piano Nobile has extended these principles, embedding the collection within the historical and architectural identity of the palace³⁴². Technological innovation has strengthened conservation, accessibility, and comfort, ensuring that the visitor’s experience is both intellectually and physically enriched.

What emerges is a museum conceived as a multi-layered institution, one that resists reductive narratives in favour of contextual itineraries, one that situates art within its architectural and cultural setting, and one that uses technology to enhance rather than overshadow the encounter with heritage. In this sense, the National Gallery of the Marche under Gallo’s direction may be regarded not only as an exemplary case within the Italian context but also as part of a broader international tendency towards museums that are at once historically grounded, technologically advanced, and open to diverse forms of visitor engagement.

5.2.4 *Autonomous management and sustainability*

The museological renewal of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche was made possible by a new distribution of resources and significative changes in management. These circumstances must be situated within the wider framework of Italian museum reform. Prior to 2015, the gallery was administratively dependent on the *Soprintendenza di Urbino*, an institution characterised by limited resources and an essentially custodial role.

With the abolition of the Superintendency of Urbino in 2015, its functions were absorbed by a new body, the *Polo Museale delle Marche* (later renamed *Direzione Regionale Musei Marche*). According to Claudia Plattegger, an administrative officer who arrived in 2017 when the situation had already been settled for

³⁴¹ Agosti 2019, p. 11.

³⁴² The restoration of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche attracted a great deal of interest from the museum community, to the extent that it was the subject recent articles in the Burlington Magazine and Il Giornale dell’Arte. For reference see: Brüggén Israëls 2026, pp. 596-603. Luppi 2026.

two years since the abolition, the pre-reform body was very embryonic and mainly dealt with basic needs such as the payment of utilities and necessary maintenance³⁴³. Although the *Soprintendenza* was not originally conceived in such a limited capacity, decades of declining funding and staff shortages had gradually eroded its ability to pursue scientific, curatorial, or strategic projects. Its abolition and the creation of the *Direzione Regionale Musei Marche*, sought to provide greater coherence and autonomy, though these new structures initially faced challenges of staffing and bureaucratic rigidity. The persistence of state accounting procedures, whereby peripheral institutions remained dependent on central offices in Rome for authorisation of payments, continued to produce bureaucratic delays that limited the flexibility of the new system.

The new legal framework assigned to each autonomous museum the responsibility for its own *valorisation* strategies, requiring institutions to define and pursue their cultural, educational, and managerial objectives independently³⁴⁴. On one hand, this reform opened a wide range of opportunities: museums could now directly manage their financial resources, organise exhibitions, develop public programmes, and initiate partnerships with greater flexibility and responsiveness. On the other hand, the immediate post-reform years proved challenging for public officials, who were suddenly required to acquire managerial and strategic competencies that had not been necessary under the previous, highly centralised ministerial system.

In Urbino, institutional autonomy translated into a productive synthesis between the long-standing *Soprintendenza* tradition and the distinctly international, mittel-European expertise introduced by Director Peter Aufreiter. As Giovanni Russo recalls, in just over two years more than thirty temporary exhibitions were organised under his direction, projecting the Gallery's staff into a global network of institutional loans, insurance procedures, and new heritage protection protocols³⁴⁵. This exposure significantly elevated the professional standards of the internal team and strengthened the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche's reputation within the international museum community.

The consolidation of these administrative and curatorial competencies later converged with the vision of Luigi Gallo, under whose leadership the Galleria undertook a comprehensive reorganisation of its permanent displays. This ambitious project required not only substantial financial investment but also a high degree of curatorial foresight, interdisciplinary collaboration, and strategic coordination.

³⁴³ Extract from Plattegger's testimony during the October 2024 interview.

³⁴⁴ On the Ministry of Culture reform see: Casini 2024.

³⁴⁵ Extract from Russo's testimony during the October 2024 interview.

Each phase of the project demanded the simultaneous orchestration of architectural restoration, exhibition redesign, and logistical management, while ensuring that the museum remained open to the public throughout the process. Director Luigi Gallo's determination to maintain accessibility at all times shaped a particularly complex operational framework: the museum was reorganised one apartment at a time, with artworks temporarily relocated so that the core of the collection would remain visible. This decision reflects a curatorial philosophy centred on continuity of public engagement and on the conviction that accessibility constitutes a fundamental aspect of cultural stewardship.

Although this logistical solution may appear secondary to the artistic and architectural aims of the project, it embodies a profound commitment to the principle of *fruizione continua*—the uninterrupted availability of cultural heritage to its audience. This principle resonates with current international discussions on the ethics of museum closures during refurbishment. For instance, during the major renovation of the Rijksmuseum in

Amsterdam (2003–2013), a similar effort was made to keep a reduced yet meaningful selection of masterpieces accessible through the Philips Wing, ensuring that the public could continue to engage with the collection even as the main building underwent restoration³⁴⁶. The Louvre adopted comparable strategies during the refurbishment of the Salle des États - home to Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, by temporarily redistributing key works within adjacent galleries to maintain narrative coherence and visitor flow³⁴⁷.

In Urbino, the curatorial team's approach combined logistical pragmatism with an environmentally conscious methodology. The temporary display of masterpieces during the refurbishment of the *Realissimo* and *Ospiti* apartments required innovative solutions: the museum's permanent walls were already fully occupied, leaving no immediate space to host displaced artworks. To address this, the curators repurposed modular display structures previously used for temporary exhibitions. These wooden panels—originally fabricated and painted in deep green for the exhibition *Federico Barocci Urbino. L'emozione della pittura moderna*, were reused to create a provisional installation in the Sala del Trono.



142 Sala degli Angeli work in progress, 2025 (A. Fapanni)

³⁴⁶ Reference to the website URL in bibliography: Divisare 2014.

³⁴⁷ Reference to the website URL in bibliography: Louvre 2019.



143 Salone del Trono work in progress, 2024 (A. Fapanni)



144 Città Ideale in the Salone del Trono (work in progress), 2024 (A. Fapanni)

This adaptive strategy exemplifies a sustainable model for museological practice. The reuse of exhibition materials extends beyond mere cost-efficiency: it reflects a growing awareness within the museum sector of the need to minimise environmental impact and optimise internal resources. Temporary exhibitions typically involve extensive production of bespoke partitions, lighting systems, and graphics that are often dismantled and discarded after the event. Even if the museums wanted to save some components, these would occupy valuable storage space that could otherwise be dedicated to collection care. By contrast, the Urbino project demonstrates how temporary architecture can be effectively recontextualised within a long-term refurbishment framework.



145 Federico Barocci exhibition at Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino, 2024 (C. Ripalti)

Similar practices are used also in other important museums in Europe, like the Louisiana museum near Copenhagen, that mentions on its website “In 2024, Louisiana achieved a total CO2 reduction of 34% compared to the baseline year 2019. Rebuilding the museum’s ventilation system and experiments with AI monitoring of air conditioning systems have also contributed significantly to this consumption reduction. District heating was installed on two of the museum’s land plots in the spring of 2024. The museum is working to reuse and recycle materials to the greatest extent possible, also when it comes to installing new exhibitions”³⁴⁸.

These examples collectively suggest that sustainable exhibition design is emerging as a defining feature of 21st-century museology, balancing aesthetic quality with environmental responsibility and public accessibility. In this framework, technological advancement is key for the monitoring of emissions and reducing the waste of resources.

The Galleria Nazionale delle Marche offers an Italian model of how logistical constraints can be transformed into opportunities for methodological advancement. Through the conscious reuse of materials, the careful phasing of restoration works, and the prioritisation of continuous public access, the museum articulated a holistic vision of sustainability that integrates care for the building, the collection, and the visitor experience alike.

³⁴⁸ Reference to the website URL in bibliography: Louisiana 2024.



146 Città Ideale in the Stanza da letto del Duca, 2025 (A. Fapanni)

In conclusion, the rethinking of the Palazzo Ducale also demonstrates a growing awareness of the political and symbolic role of cultural institutions in Italy. By asserting the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche as a dynamic cultural player rather than a static repository, Gallo's leadership aligns with broader heritage policies that seek to decentralize cultural authority and promote regional identity within a European framework.

Moreover, the palace's dual identity - as both a historical monument and a modern museum - invites ongoing negotiation between conservation and innovation. The current transformation respects the palace's architectural integrity while adapting it to contemporary expectations of accessibility, sustainability, and public engagement.

The ongoing reorganisation of the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche offers a compelling model for other museums housed in historic buildings. It demonstrates how interdisciplinary collaboration, thematic reinterpretation, and strategic funding can converge to produce a museum experience that is historically grounded, intellectually engaging, and accessible to diverse audiences.

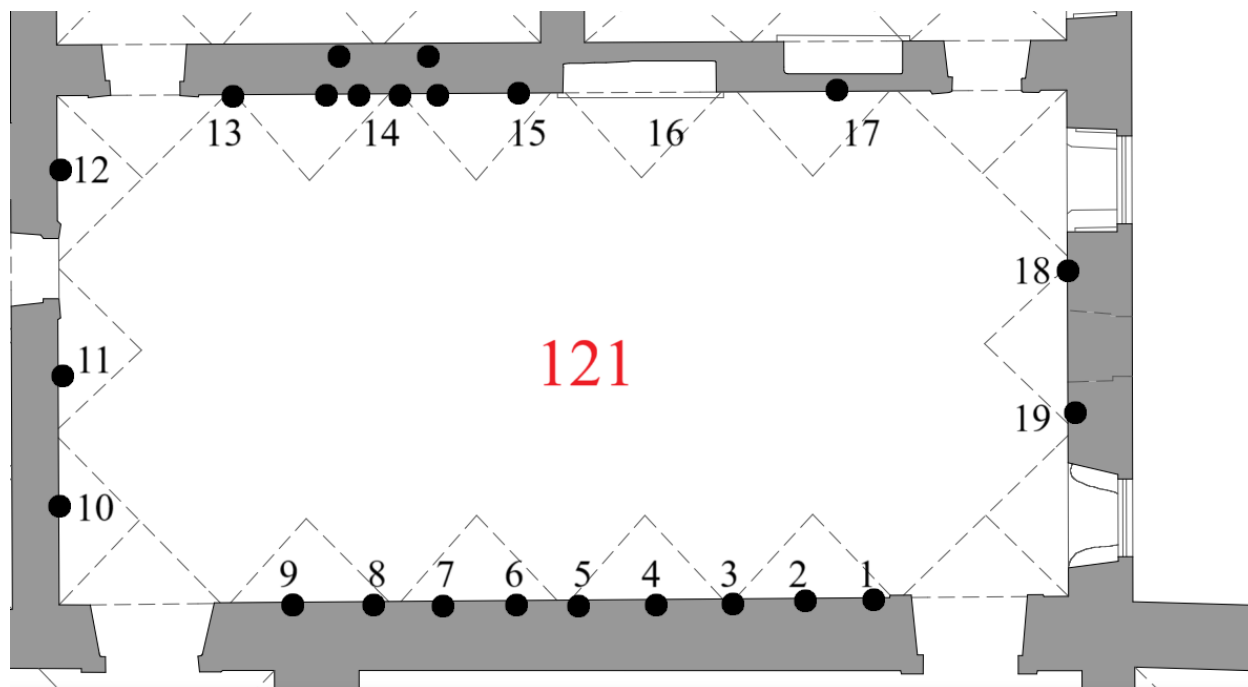
As European museums continue to adapt to post-pandemic realities and sustainability goals, Urbino's experience underscores the importance of flexible, responsive, and locally-rooted museological practices that nonetheless speak to a global audience.

Appendix 1. Maps of the Museum's Early Itineraries (Venturi and Serra)

The following maps illustrate the layout of the rooms and the location of the works, accompanied by their respective titles, attributions, and numbering (where available) as they were during the specified period.

Appendix 1.1 - Lionello Venturi's directorship

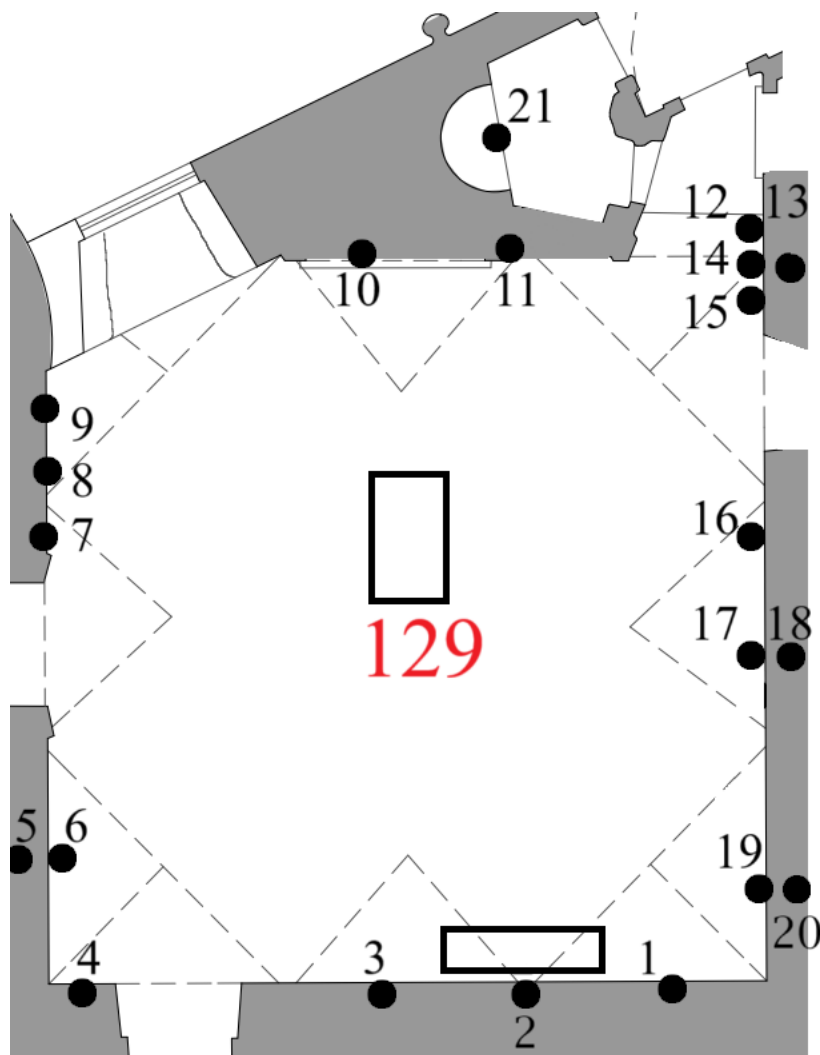
SALA DEGLI ANGELI – 1st room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)



1. Giovanni Baronzio, Madonna col Bambino e Santi (N. 1)
2. Lorenzo Salimbeni, S. Chiara (N.2)
3. Giovanni Baronzio, Crocefisso (N.3)
4. Scuola senese sec XIV, Crocifissione (N.4)
5. Barna da Siena, S. Giovanni e S. Michele (N.6)
6. Pietro Lorenzetti, Crocefisso (N.7)
7. Antonio Alberti, S. Agata (N.13)
8. Pietro da Rimini, Crocefisso (N.9)
9. Scuola Gentile da Fabriano, Madonna col Bambino e scene (sacre?) (N.10)
10. Giuliano da Rimini, Incoronazione (N.5)
11. Scuola Fabrianese sec XV, Madonna col Bambino e Santi (N.102)
12. Scuola Bizantina sec XVI, Madonna col Bambino (N.103)
13. Lorenzo Salimbeni, S. Antonio (N.8)
14. Pittore marchigiano sec XIV e Antonio Alberti da Ferrara, frammenti di affreschi (N.12)
15. Madonna col Bambino (Maestro di Bellpuig) (N.11)
16. Camino/cassone

17. Antonio Alberti da Ferrara, Madonna col Bambino e Santi (N.14)
18. Antonio Alberti da Ferrara recto S. Giovanni, verso Battesimo di Cristo (N.15)
19. Antonio Alberti da Ferrara recto Crocifissione, verso S. Jacopo e S. Antonio (N.16)

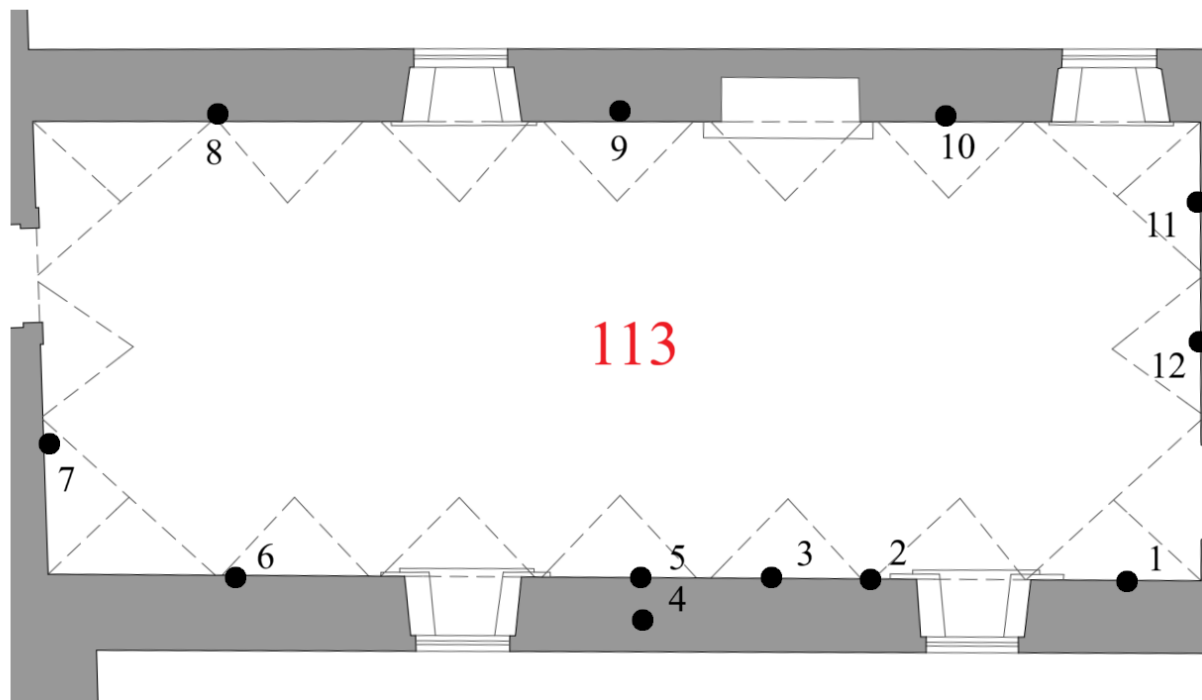
SALA DUCA FEDERICO /UDIENZE – 2nd room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)



1. Giovanni Santi, Madonna col Bambino affresco (N.19)
2. Giovanni Santi, Madonna col Bambino e Santi (N. 17)
3. Giovanni Santi, S. Sebastiano (N. 17)
4. Scuola di Piero della Francesca, testa di monaco (N. 104)
5. Scuola di Timoteo Viti, S. Giuseppe e S. Rocco (N. 34)
6. Piero della Francesca, Veduta prospettica (N. 33)
7. Andrea Verrocchio, Madonna col Bambino (N. 32)
8. Timoteo Viti, S. Apollonia (N.31)
9. Timoteo Viti, S. Sebastiano (N. 30)

10. Evangelista di Pian di Meleto? Tobia e l'Angelo (N. 29)
11. Evangelista di Pian di Meleto? S. Rocco (N. 28)
12. Scuola di Giovanni Santi, una martire (N.26)
13. Evangelista di Pian di Meleto, Pietà (N.27)
14. Giovanni Santi, Gesù e S. Chiara (N.25)
15. Melozzo da Forlì, Cristo benedicente (N. 24)
16. Carlo Crivelli, Beato Giacomo della Marca (N. -)
17. Paolo Uccello, La profanazione dell'Ostia (N.22)
18. Giusto di Gand, La comunione degli Apostoli (N.21)
19. Scuola di Giusto di Gand, Cristo comunicante (N.20)
20. Scuola di Giusto di Gand, S. Pietro e S. Paolo (N. 23)
21. Calco del teschio di Raffaello (in cappellina)

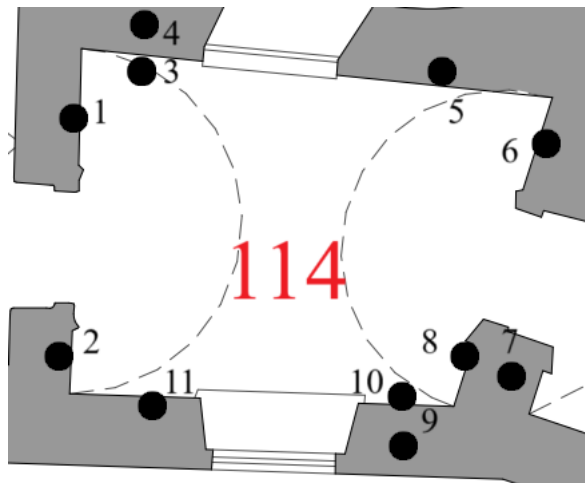
SALA DEL MAGNIFICO/ VEGLIE – 3rd room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)



1. Scuola Bolognese sec XVI, Presepe (N.39)
2. Scuola di Tiziano, Ritratto (N.40)
3. Palmerini, Madonna col Bambino e Santi (N.41)
4. Scuola di Jacopo Tintoretto, Ritratto di senatore (N. 43)
5. Palmerini, S. Antonio (N.42)
6. Sacra Famiglia Arazzo
7. Arazzo
8. Arazzo
9. Raffaellino del Colle, Madonna col Bambino e Santi (N.35)

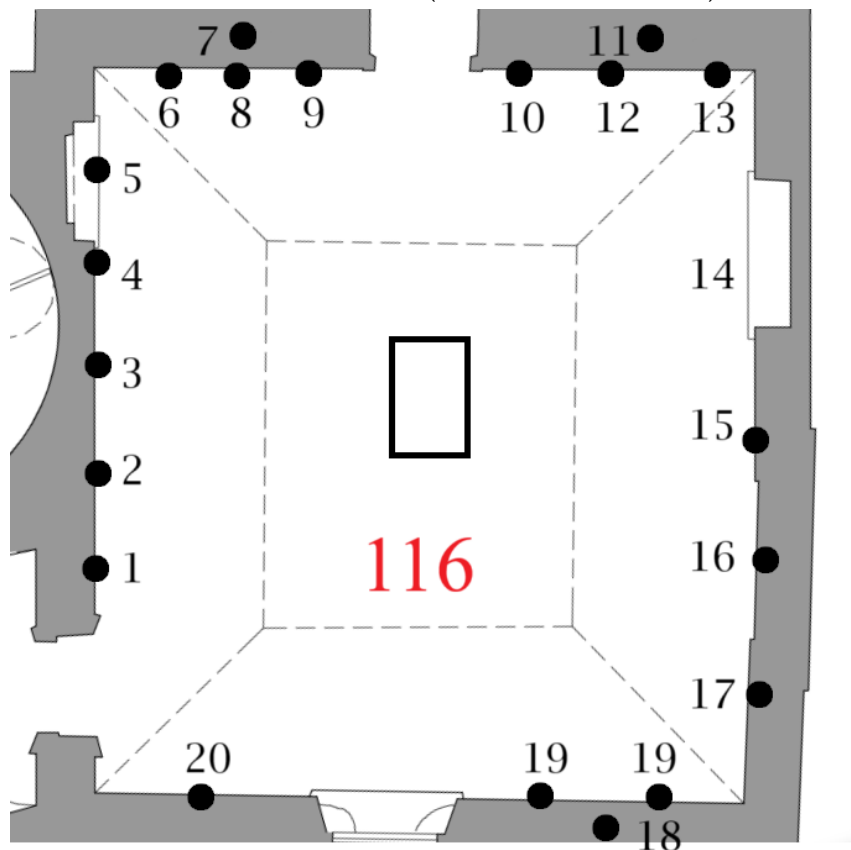
10. Camino
11. Federico Zuccari, Cristo morto ed angeli (N.36)
12. Tiziano Vecellio, La Cena
13. Tiziano Vecellio, La Resurrezione

VESTIBOLO DELLA DUCHESSA – 4th room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)



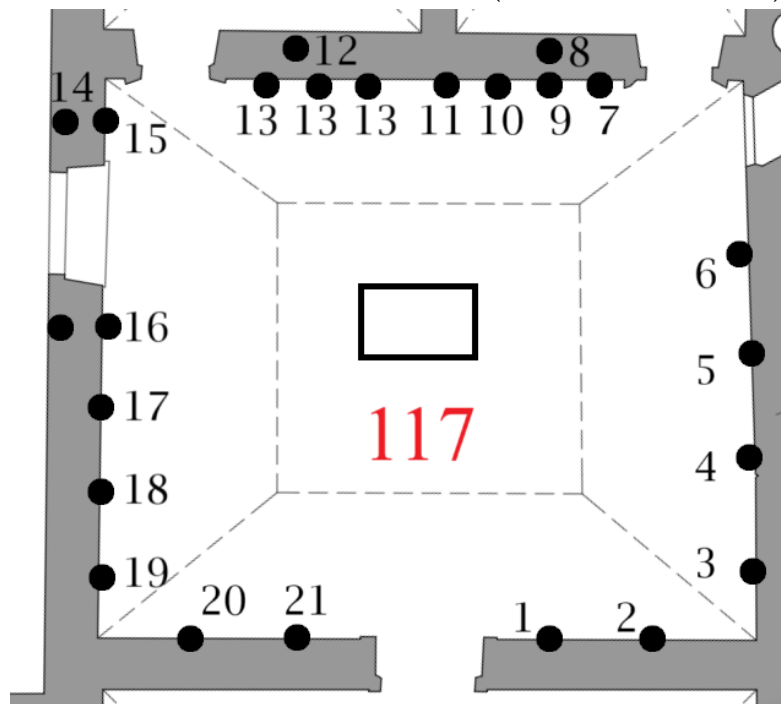
1. Scuola Bolognese sec XVI, S. Sebastiano (N.53)
2. Maniera di Francesco da Santacroce, Madonna col Bambino (N.44)
3. Giovanni Mansueti, Pietà (N.45)
4. Bartolomeo Ramenghi detto il Bagnacavallo, Sacra famiglia (N. 54)
5. Scuola di Lorenzo di Credi, Madonna col Bambino e due angeli (N. 46)
6. Scuola fiorentina sec. XVI, Madonna col Bambino e S. Giovannino (N. 47)
7. Scuola di Girolamo Romanino, Busto di giovinetto (N. 48)
8. Scuola veronese sec. XVI, Adorazione dei Magi (N. 49)
9. Scuola romana sec XVI, Adorazione dei pastori (N.51)
10. Adorazione dei magi (N.50)
11. Scuola umbra sec. XVI, Madonna col Bambino (N.52)

SALA DI BAROCCI – 5th room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)



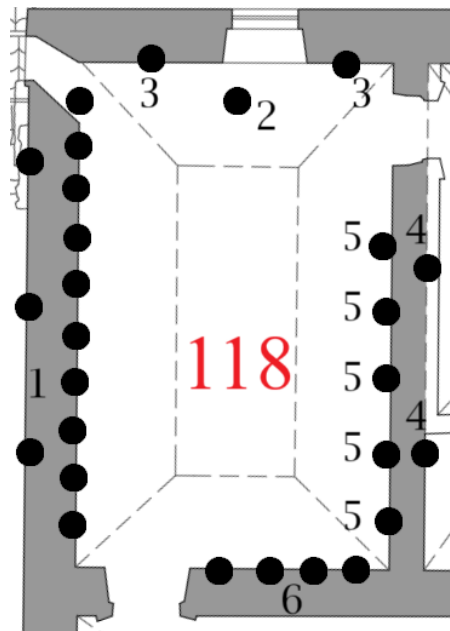
1. Federico Barocci, Madonna col Bambino e Santi Simone e Giuda (N.55)
2. Federico Barocci, angelo (N.58)
3. Federico Barocci, L'Immacolata (N.57)
4. Federico Barocci, angelo (N.56)
5. Federico Barocci, Madonna col Bambino e santi (N.59)
6. Federico Barocci, Il perdono di Assisi (N.57)
7. Scuola Barocci, Ritratto del Barocci (N.62)
8. Scuola Barocci, Padre Eterno ed angeli (N.61)
9. Scuola Barocci, La Visitazione (N.63)
10. Federico Barocci, La Deposizione (N.64)
11. Federico Barocci, Testa di Cristo (N.66)
12. Scuola Barocci, La Visitazione (N.65)
13. Federico Barocci, Madonna col Bambino e S. Giovanni Evangelista (N. 67)
14. Camino
15. Alessandro Vitali, S. Agata (N. 68)
16. Federico Barocci, Le stimmate di S. Francesco (N. 69)
17. Federico Barocci, Il Crocefisso (N. 70)
18. Scuola Barocci, Natività di Maria (N.73)
19. Federico Barocci, Due Vescovi (N. 71, N. 72)
20. Scuola Barocci, L'Assunzione (N.74)

SALA DIVERSI PITTORI – 6th room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)



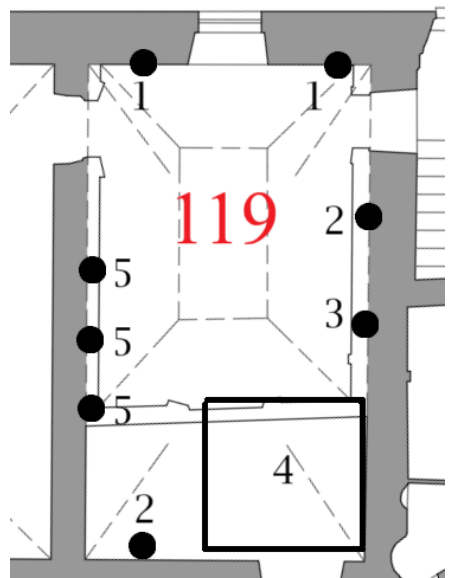
1. Francesco Trevisani, La Pietà (N. 92)
2. Giuseppe Marchetti, S. Agostino, S. Onofrio, il Beato Nicola da Forca Polena (N. 91)
3. Giandrea Lazzarini, S. Giovanni a Patmos (N. 90)
4. Claudio Ridolfi, S. Filippo elemosiniere (N.89)
5. Giandrea Lazzarini, Battesimo di Cristo (N. 88)
6. Giandrea Lazzarini, La Madonna e Santa Chiara (N. 87)
7. Scuola Giuseppe Crespi, Monache giardiniere (N.86)
8. Scuola Bolognese sec XVII, Assunzione (N.83)
9. Sebastiano Ricci? Resurrezione Tabita (N.85)
10. Scuola Giuseppe Crespi, Monache lavandaie e giardiniere (N.84)
11. Ciro Ferri, Apparizione di Cristo (N.82)
12. Giovanni Battista Passeri, S. Agata (N. 75)
13. Vincenzo Nini, Paesaggi (N. 76-81)
14. G. B. Gaiulli, Ritratto di Cardinale (N. 100)
15. G. B. Salvi detto il Sassoferrato, Madonna col Bambino (N. 101)
16. Scuola di Rosalba Carriera, Ritratti (N. 99 e N. 98)
17. Scuola Barocci, S. Rosa (N. 97)
18. Giovanni Francesco Guerrieri, S. Vittore (N. 96)
19. Scuola Bolognese sec XVII, Cristo e S. Chiara (N. 95)
20. Giuseppe Marchetti, S. Teresa (N.94)
21. Giuseppe Marchetti, il Beato Nicola da Forcapolena (N. 93)

SALA DELLA SCULTURA – 7th room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)



1. Stucchi del Brandani
2. Agostino di Duccio, frammento di Madonna
3. Federico Brandani
4. Calchi
5. Scultura toscana Quattrocento
6. Arte romanica sec. XIII-XIV

SALA DELLE MAIOLICHE – 8th room (L. Venturi, 1912-1914)

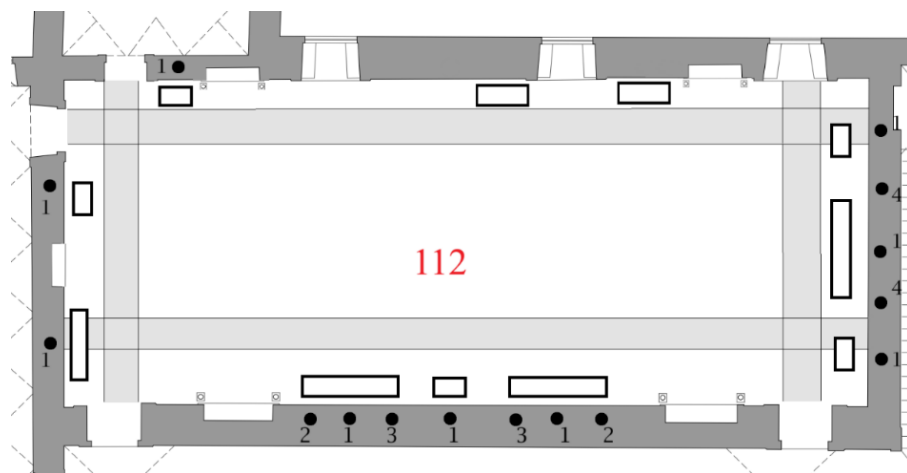


1. Maioliche
2. Maioliche
3. Cinta da caccia (fascia venatoria)

4. Alcova
5. Maioliche

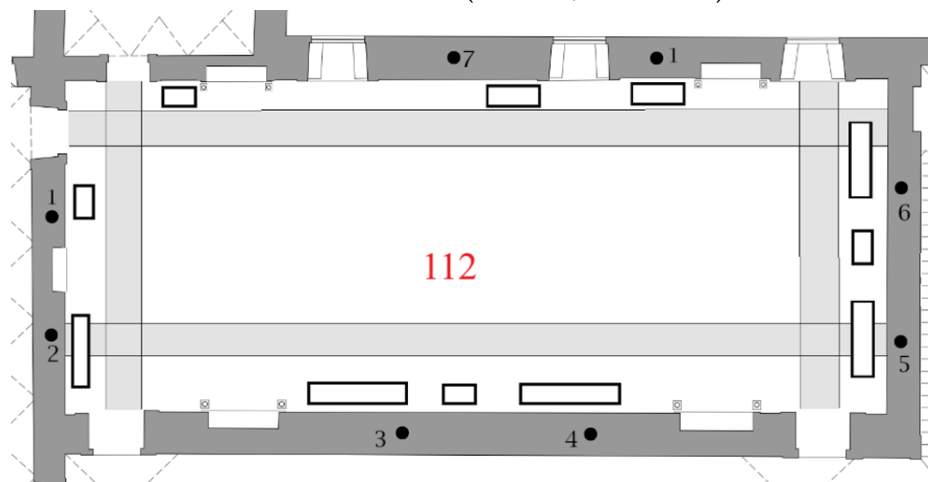
Appendix 1.2 - Luigi Serra's directorship

SALA DELLE ARMI/ SALONE DEL TRONO – 1st room (L. Serra, 1919-1923)



1. Panoplie di alabarde con scudi, elmi e spade
2. Dardi e portafiasca da polvere da sparo
3. Pistole e archibugi
4. Spadini e pugnali

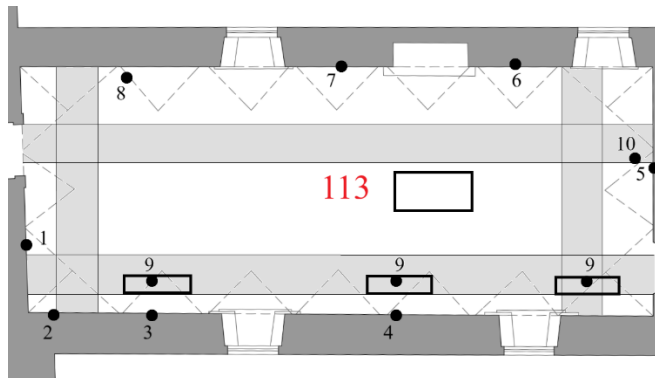
SALONE DEL TRONO – 1st room (L. Serra, 1923-1933)



1. Panoplie di alabarde con elmi e spade
2. Arazzo, Cristo consegna le chiavi a S. Pietro
3. Arazzo, Il sacrificio in Lystra
4. Arazzo, La guarigione del paralitico
5. Arazzo, Acciecamiento del mago Elima

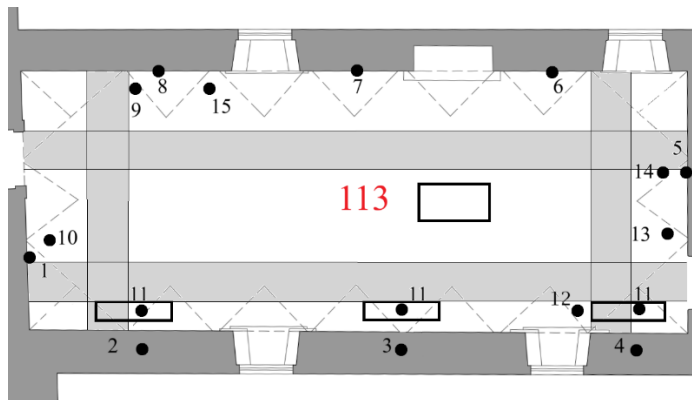
6. Arazzo Morte di Anania
7. Arazzo, Predicazione di S. Paolo ad Atene

INDICE SALA VEGLIE – 2nd room (L. Serra, 1918-1923)



1. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 348 x 394
2. Arazzo, Felino cattura un uccello cm 161 x 105
3. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 331 x 335
4. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 346 x 534
5. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 236 x 282
6. Arazzo, Due personaggi orientali cm 167 x 96
7. Arazzo, Grifone assale un cervo cm 95 x 167
8. Cassone intarsiato con prospettive architettoniche
9. Ceramiche nelle vetrine
10. Cassone nuziale

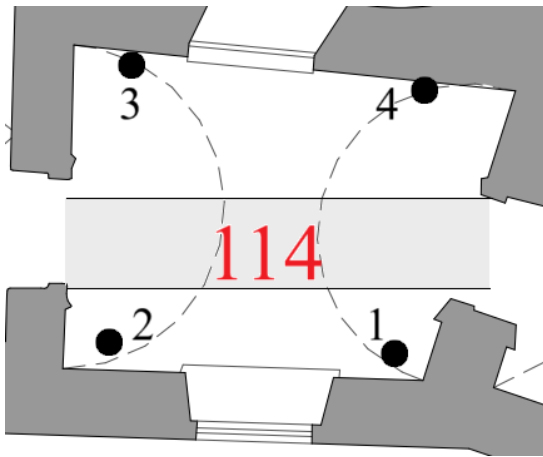
INDICE SALA VEGLIE – 2nd room (L. Serra, 1923-1936)



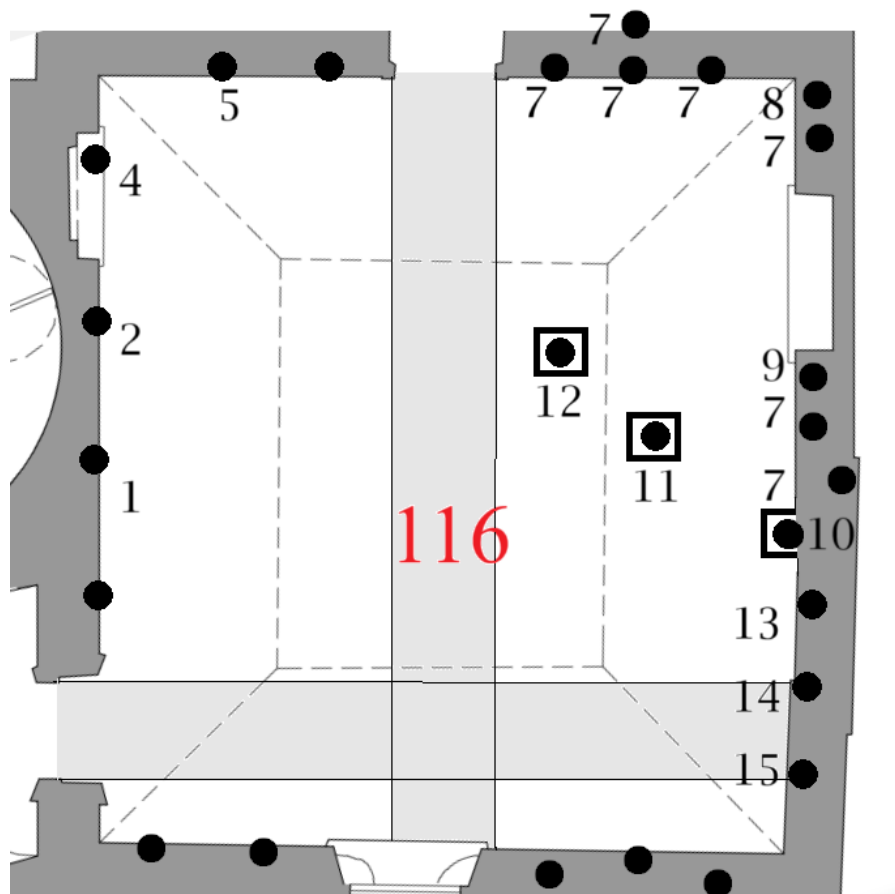
1. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 348 x 394
2. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 331 x 335
3. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 346 x 534
4. Arazzo, Felino cattura un uccello cm 161 x 105
5. Arazzo, Animali e vegetazione cm 236 x 282

6. Arazzo, Due personaggi orientali cm 167 x 96
7. Arazzo, Grifone assale un cervo cm 95 x 167
8. Arazzo, L. Febvre, Pesca Miracolosa
9. Cassone intarsiato con prospettive architettoniche
10. Mobile gotico
11. Ceramiche nelle vetrine
12. Madonna col Bambino toscana (in realtà marchigiana sec. XV-XVI) da Corinaldo
13. Madonna della Misericordia da Treja
14. Cofano nuziale
15. (Statua San Crescentino)

VESTIBOLO CHE CONNETTE LE VEGLIE – 3rd room (L. Serra, 1918-1932)



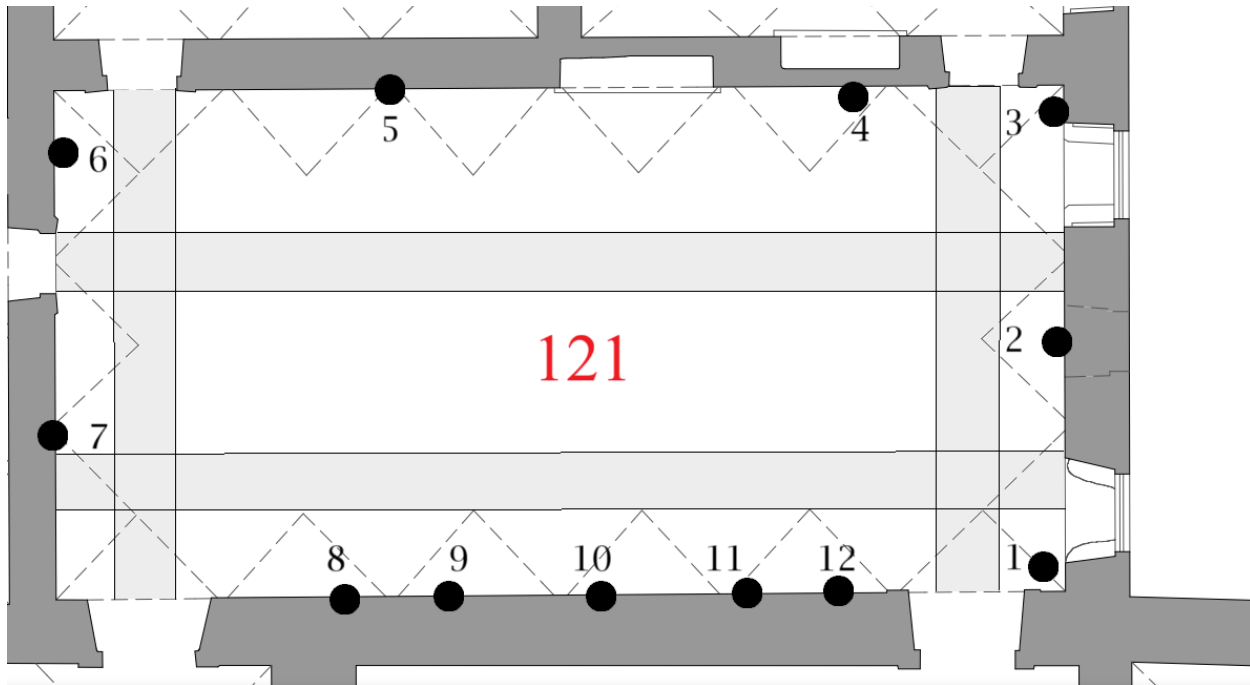
1. Annunciazione di Rotella: Angelo annunciante
2. Annunciazione di Rotella: Vergine Maria
3. Stauroteca in argento dorato con decorazioni a niello
4. Vessillo con l'Arcangelo Michele



1. Domenico Rosselli (1930), Madonna col bambino sulle ginocchia e 3 testine angeliche sullo sfondo, stucco (oggi copia tarda da Tommaso Fiamberti)
2. Domenico Rosselli (1918) / Tommaso Fiamberti (1930), Madonna con Bambino adorato da quattro angeli sotto un'arcata
3. Maniera toscana seconda metà sec XV, Edicola con Madonna col Bambino, angeli escono dalle arcate laterali (oggi Michele di Giovanni da Fiesole)
4. Coeva Madonna col bambino e S. Giovannino
5. Tommaso Fiamberti (1930) Madonna col Bambino, su fondo striato di nuvole e due testine angeliche
6. Agostino di Duccio, Testa muliebre
7. Frammenti in stucco del soffitto del Brandani
8. Maniera toscana fine sec. XV, San Sebastiano legato ad un tronco d'albero e flagellato
9. Bassorilievo con San Giovanni Battista annunciante
10. Mosè "risente di Michelangelo" (oggi Giovan Battista della Porta)
11. Arte fiorentina sec. XV (1918) / Tommaso Fiamberti (1930), Busto di bambino
12. Arte fiorentina sec. XV (1918) / Francesco di Simone Ferrucci da Fiesole (1930), Busto di S. Giovanni Battista
13. Madonna della Ghiara, collezione Mauruzi

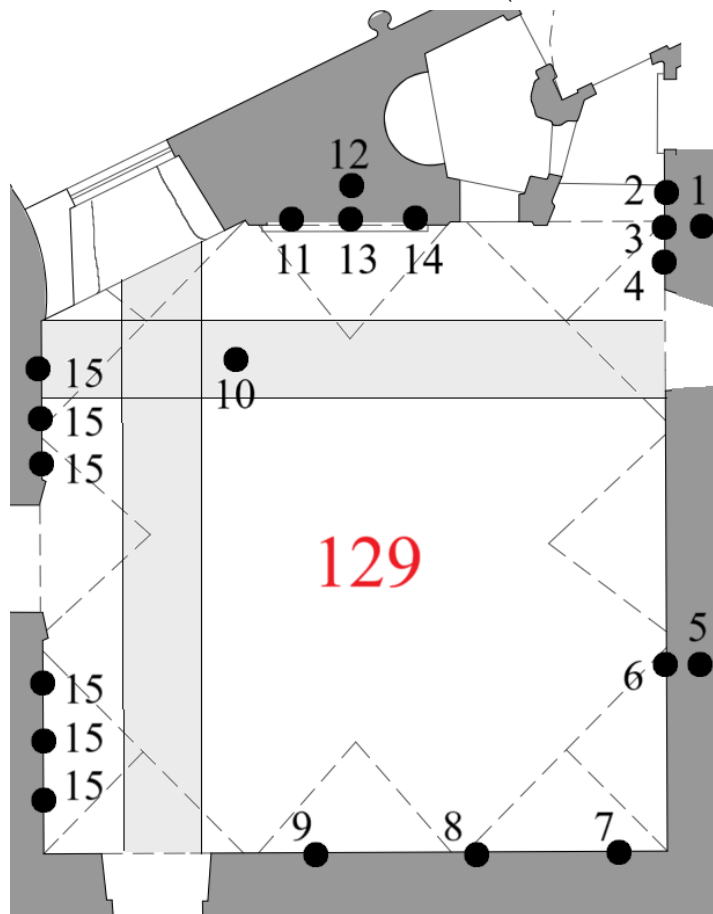
14. San Lorenzo, Federico Brandani, collezione Mauruzi
15. L'Andata al Calvario in terracotta, collezione Mauruzi.
16. Arte romanica sec XIII-XIV: 12 Apostoli in 2 bassorilievi, Madonna col Bambino, Assunta in mandorla sorretta da angeli

SALA DEGLI ANGELI 121 – 8th room (L. Serra, 1918-1932)



1. Allegretto Nuzi, Madonna con Bambino
2. Giovanni Baronzio, Trittico con incoronazione della Vergine
3. Scuola senese sec. XIV, tavola cuspidata Crocifissione e Annunciazione
4. Tra la porta e il camino doveva essere collocato il polittico Giovanni Baronzio, Madonna con Bambino e Ss. Luigi da Tolosa, Francesco, storia della vita di Cristo
5. Arte marchigiana sec. XV, affresco con crocifissione di S. Maria della Bella
6. Antonius Magister, Madonna col Bambino
7. Pittore marchigiano del XIV secolo forse Lorenzo e Jacopo de Sanseverino, Madonna allattante il Bambino assistita da Angeli
8. Pietro da Rimini, Crocefisso
9. Barna da Siena, San Giovanni Battista
10. Pietro Lorenzetti, Crocefisso
11. Barna da Siena, Michele Arcangelo
12. Giovanni Baronzio, Crocefisso

SALA DELLE UDIENZE – 11th room (L. Serra, 1918-1933)



1. Copia da Giusto di Gand, Cristo comunicante
2. Scuola di Giovanni Santi, Santa Martire
3. Cristo sorretto da Santa Chiara
4. Cerchia di Giovanni Santi, i Santi Pietro e Paolo a mezzobusto
5. Giusto di Gand, Comunione degli Apostoli
6. Paolo Uccello, Profanazione dell'ostia
7. Giovanni Santi, S. Sebastiano (oggi Pedro Berreguete)
8. Giovanni Santi, Pala Buffi
9. Martirio di San Sebastiano della scuola di Giovanni Santi
10. Piero della Francesca, Flagellazione (1918) / Raffaello Sanzio, La Muta (1927)
11. Evangelista di Pian di Meleto, S. Rocco
12. Evangelista di Pian di Meleto, Cristo morto tra due angeli
13. Giovan Francesco da Rimini, Testa di monaco
14. Evangelista di Pian di Meleto, Tobia e l'Angelo
15. Evangelista di Pian di Meleto, Sei tavolette con gli Apostoli

Appendix 2. Documents from the archives

1929 Luzio (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

N°1306 di prot.

Urbino, 11-1-1929 (Anno VII)

All'ill.tre Sig. R. Sovrintendente

all'Arte Medievale e moderna per le Marche e Zara

ANCONA

OGGETTO – URBINO – Palazzo Ducale

Trasmetto l'unito rapporto del capo di servizio relativo al piccolo incendio, subito estinto, che stamani si era sviluppato nella canna fumaria dell'antico camino (già esistente nell'attuale sala delle armi), nella qual canna fumaria si immette il tubo della stufa dei nostri uffici.

L'incendio è stato cagionato da un grumo di fuligine accesa caduto sull'architrave in legno di una delle due porte ora chiudenti il vano dell'antico camino.

Fortunatamente i danni sono lievi, come vengono determinati nel rapporto del capo servizio.

Segnalo alla S.V. l'opera pronta, fervida e sagace dell'applicato Giuseppe Pompei, efficacemente coadiuvato soprattutto dal custode Dionisio e poi dagli altri custodi Bearzi e Bertucci alla quale opera si deve il rapido isolamento e spegnimento del fuoco.

Propongo pertanto che le singole benemerienze dimostrate dal personale in questa circostanza abbiano un adeguato riconoscimento nella misura e nella forma che Ella crederà più opportuna. Secondo me non sarebbe da escludersi anche la proposta di gratificazioni da avanzare al Ministero.

Quanto alle spese per le riparazioni ai danni verificatisi prevedesi la somma di L.400, compreso il compenso dovuto ai due militi pompieri venuti in soccorso. Intanto per il ripristino del funzionamento della stufa si sono eseguiti di urgenza le opere indispensabili.

Cordiali ossequi.

IL R. ISPETTORE

L. Luzio

1932 Ministero Educazione Nazionale (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Roma, 23 apr. 1932

Al Provveditorato Generale dello Stato e per conoscenza:

Alla Soprintendenza all'Arte Medioevale e Moderna ANCONA
Divisione II, Prot. N 3092, posiz. 6 Pesaro
OGGETTO Urbino – Palazzo Ducale

I locali del secondo piano del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino, che fanno parte dell'appartamento di Guidobaldo e corrispondono all'appartamento di Federico e alla Sala del Magnifico nel piano inferiore, sono stati da tempo sgombrati dagli Uffici del Registro e delle Ipoteche che vi avevano la loro sede.

Ora, poiché tali locali comunicano con le Soprallogge e sovrastano la Galleria Nazionale che necessita, per l'incremento dei dati e per le molte opere d'arte di cui si è arricchita in questi ultimi tempi, di altri ambienti, sarebbe opportuno ch'essi venissero dati, a tale scopo, in consegna alla Soprintendenza all'Arte Medioevale e Moderna di Ancona, in rappresentanza di quest'Amministrazione.

Si prega, pertanto, di cotesto on. Provveditorato Generale di volersi compiacere di esaminare con particolare benevolenza siffatta possibilità, tenendo, peraltro, presente come la grande importanza storico-artistica degli ambienti di cui trattasi esiga ch'essi vengano adibiti soltanto ad usi confacenti alla loro dignità e come questo Ministero non potrebbe, nell'interesse della tutela monumentale, consentire che in essi si compissero eventuali lavori di adattamento a sede di uffici pubblici.

Sarà gradito un cortese cenno di riscontro in proposito.

IL MINISTRO

G. Balbino

1932 Intendenza di Finanza (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Intendenza di Finanza di Pesaro

27 giugno 1932 anno X

Alla R. Soprintendenza ai monumenti e Antichità Ancona

E per conoscenza: All'ufficio per il Registro Urbino

Prot. N 7017 rip. II

OGGETTO Palazzo ex Ducale di Urbino- Consegna di Locali al Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale

Con foglio N. 105117 in data 9 corrente mese trasmesso

per conoscenza alla Direzione Generale delle Antichità e Belle

Arti, l'On. Provveditorato Generale dello Stato ha autorizzato

la consegna al Ministero dell'Istruzione Nazionale dei locali

disponibili al secondo piano del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino che

fanno parte dell'appartamento di Guidobaldo e corrispondono all'appartamento di Federico e alla Sala del Magnifico nel piano inferiore.

Pregasi pertanto di riferire in qual giorno un funzionario

di cotesta R. Sovrintendenza potrà recarsi in Urbino per ricevere

in consegna i locali suaccennati e per firmare i relativi

verbali.

Questa Intendenza delegherà il Capo dell'Ufficio Registro

di Urbino a rappresentare l'Amministrazione Finanziaria sia per

la consegna dei locali sia per la firma degli accentati verbali.

L'Intendente

Morbelli

[handwritten note at the bottom of the page] possibilità di lasciare temporaneamente

2 locali al disopra della saletta del Re d'Inghilterra e la sala di dipinti del Barocchi.

E.C. (ndr. Enrico Cardelli³⁴⁹)

1932 Procuratore (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Procuratore del Registro di Urbino

N. 755

Oggetto: Consegna locali Palazzo ex Ducale di Urbino al Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale

Urbino, li 19 luglio 1932-X

Informo cotesto On.le Ufficio che l'On.

Intendenza di Finanza di Pesaro a messo

di telegramma ha dichiarato accettabile

la proposta fatta ieri dal Sig. Ing. Cardelli

in merito al collocamento dei mobili e

registri di quest'Ufficio nei due vani da

Lui prescritti.

Resto quindi in attesa di conoscere il gior-

³⁴⁹ The signature by initials was verified by confrontation with the drawings published in the article by Cardelli (1929-1930) p. 299.

no in cui vorrà procedere alla regolare consegna dei locali.

Il Procuratore
Pagliara

1933 Podestà (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Urbino, 19.X.1933=XI=

ON.SIG.SOVRINTENDENTE ARTE MEDICEVALE E MODERNA PER LE MARCHE

OGGETTO: Urbino Galleria Naz.delle Marche Provvedimenti per la Direzione

Ancona

Dal 1928, dopo la morte del compianto Prof. Luzi, cui era affidata la direzione di questa Galleria d'arte, detto ufficio a tutt'oggi è privo del titolare, quantunque quest'amministrazione direttamente al Ministero o pel tramite di cotesta R. Soprintendenza abbia sollecitato più volte in provvedimento.

E' vivissimo il desiderio dei cittadini ed anche dei forestieri che s'interessano delle cose d'arte della Città, che da parte del Ministero per l'Educazione Nazionale si provveda ad assegnare alla nostra Galleria un Funzionario che possa degnamente sostituire il defunto Direttore: di ciò prego la S.V.

far premure presso l'On. Direzione delle Belle Arti.

Qualora però il provvedimento dovesse ritardare, mi permetto proporre in via provvisoria venga affidato l'incarico della Direzione all'Ispettore Onorario dei Monumenti di questa Città Gr. Uff. Luigi Renzetti.

Con ossequio

IL PODESTA

1934 Pacchioni a (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

2 Aprile 1934

L'ON. MINISTERO DELL'EDUCAZIONE

NAZIONALE-DIREZIONE GEN. AA.e BB. AA.

OGGETTO: URBINO-GALLERIA NAZIONALE DELLE MARCHE

Nessun ordinamento è in corso e neppure allo studio relativamente alla Galleria sopra indicata.

Suppongo sia stata segnalato a codesto on. Ministero, come opera di

riordino, il fatto che il Polittico del Crivelli (il quale dovrà poi essere restituito a Massa Fermana) si dovette cambiar di posto perchè la parete su cui stava appeso era invasa dall'umidità.

Fu anche rimosso il quadro del D'Alessandro che stava su cavalletto ed era collocato in un luogo di passaggio così che in casi di affollamento correva pericolo d'essere rovesciato. Fu portato in altra sala; e per posto si spostarono altri due dipinti: una tela di Tiziano che venne portata a riscontro di altra dello stesso maestro e due Signorelli che dal cavalletto vennero, appesi alla parete.

Queste le informazioni datemi dal Gr. Uff. Renzetti, incaricato della Direzione del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino al quale, per quanto mi constasse che nessun ordinamento era in corso in quella Galleria, ho ritenuto di dover subito trasmettere l'espresso ministeriale al quale ora rispondo.

Per parte mia posso dare all'on. Ministero la più ampia assicurazione che non ho alcun proposito di intraprendere ordinamenti di alcuna Galleria marchigiana, salvo che per il Museo di Pesaro. la cui suppellettile si trova in parte da più di un anno accatastata nei magazzini, per causa di restauri eseguiti nel Palazzo della Amministrazione della Provincia e dallo on. Ministero degli Interni.

A suo tempo invierò regolare progetto di massima.

IL SOVRINTENDENTE

1934 Renzetti (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Urbino, 12 Maggio 1934

Alla R. Soprintendenza all'Arte

Medioevale e moderna per le Marche e la Dalmazia

ANCONA

N. prot 485

OGGETTO: Restauri Sala Campana

Come da telegrammi odierni, spediti subito in seguito a vostra comunicazione telefonica, invio qui unito preventivo presentato dal Prof. Catalucci; preventivo già pronto da vari giorni e non inviato e ricevuto in attesa del promessoci sopralluogo, che ci avrebbe permesso di stabilire definitivamente ampiezza e necessità restauri volta, come a vostra assicurazione verbale.

Abbiamo di continuo tale atteso sopralluogo da un giorno all'altro,

da un momento all'altro. Abbiamo anche fatto inviare deposito richiesto ed occorrente dal Comune.

Siamo assai dolenti che vi siate dispiaciuti, mentre è stato fatto quanto occorreva.

Ora la sala è sgombra da varii giorni, gli stucchi sono in gran parte distaccati e questa sera saranno tutti tolti e posti in luogo sicuro, sotto la direzione e la vigilanza del Prof. Catalucci e nostra. L'Istituto del Libro sta procedendo allo sgombrò dei locali sottostanti, mentre ripetiamo, la sala in restauro fu sgombrata per intero la sera stessa del giorno in cui fu qui l'ingegner Nardone, che non diede nessun ordine di staccare immediatamente gli stucchi, invece riteneva di poter in qualche modo assicurare e proteggerli.

Colgo l'occasione per riverire distintamente

IL DIRETTORE

Luigi Renzetti

1934 Pacchioni b (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Ancona,

20 maggio 1934 XII

MINUTA

All' On. Ministero dell'Educazione

Nazionale- Direzione Generale AA.BB.AA

Divisione II

ROMA

Risposta a 1521

Posiz. 4-Pesaro

OGGETTO: Urbino Palazzo Ducale Restauri Volta della Sala delle Campane

Facendo seguito al mio telegramma in data di ieri, comunico all'On. Ministero che, ottemperando alle sue disposizioni, avevo dato incarico al Genio Civile di Pesaro di attuare il consolidamento della volta di cui in oggetto, quando improvvisamente -durante i lavori- essa precipitava per intero, non apportando però alcun altro danno, se non una leggiera incrinatura nella volta sottostante. Urge ora provvedere alla rimozione di tutte le macerie e alla ricostruzione della volta stessa, la quale è stata pure affidata al sullodato Genio Civile di Pesaro,

che redigerà al più presto un preventivo di spesa.

Tutti gli stucchi sono stati salvati.

Segnalo al riguardo la coraggiosa benemerenza dei muratori Gino Rossi e Carlo Ugolini.

IL SOVRINTENDENTE

(G. Pacchioni)

1936 Pacchioni (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

R. SOVRINTENDENZA ALL'ARTE MEDIOVALE E MODERNA
PER LE MARCHE E LA DALMAZIA

7 dicembre 1936

Al Ministero D v. II

N. di Prot 3099

Roma

Posiz. 4-Pesaro

OGGETTO: Urbino - Palazzo Ducale - Sala delle Campane

Comunico all'on. Ministero che per il lavoro di ricostruzione della volta della Sala delle Campane nel Palazzo Ducale di Urbino si è riconosciuto l'opportunità di ricostruire detta volta in materiale leggero

non solo perchè sovrastata da un solaio portante indipendente

ma soprattutto al fine di non sollecitare troppo le murature di perimetro che si trovano in condizioni non buone, vero è che il Genio Civile di Pesaro ha ritenuto necessario includere detti muri nel lotto di lavori di consolidamento con iniezioni di cemento di cui terrò informato l'on. Ministero non appena mi perverrà copia della perizia.

Come pure per la ricostruzione del solaio sovrastante sarà bene reimpiegare quelle parti della grande armatura in legno che è già in opera in ottime condizioni.

Ove il Ministero approvasse tale mie proposte darò il nulla osta al Genio Civile per l'immediato inizio dei lavori dato che le piogge i venti e le nevi potrebbero produrre danni non lievi alla sala in questione e dato anche che la somma occorrente è stata già messa a disposizione di quell'ufficio dall'on. Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici.

1937-38 Pacchioni (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Proposta di ripartizione del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino tra l'Istituto d'Arte e la Galleria Nazionale delle Marche.

Relazione

Dall'esame dei grafici allegati potrete a colpo d'occhio vedere quali siano le condizioni del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino secondo la ripartizione attuale (Galleria Nazionale delle Marche; Scuola del Libro; Archivio Notarile; Monte di Pietà; Ufficio del Registro; Conservatoria delle Ipoteche ufficio delle Imposte e Catasto) e quali sarebbero quando, attuato un programma che l'on. Ministero ha in via di massima già approvato, (lettera ministeriale N12525 in data 16.12.36) le varie parti del Palazzo rese libere da uffici e locazioni di qualsiasi genere, venissero ripartite tra i due istituti che, per il loro carattere e la loro finalità sono più idonei a trovar sede nel monumentale edificio senza danneggiarne l'aspetto o comprometterne la conservazione.

L'esame dei grafici mostrerà anche a quali criteri io abbia ubbidito nello stendere la ripartizione proposta e quali intenti mi sia prefisso, intenti e criteri che possono essere riassunti in questi due punti principali.

1939 Toso (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Murano 27 Aprile 1939 XVII

ESPRESSO

Ill. mo Signor Prof/ PACCHIONI

R. Sovrintendenza ai Monumenti

Palazzo Ducale di URBINO

Vi ringraziamo innanzitutto per la gentile accoglienza riservata al ns/ Rappresentante Cav/ Carnelutti.

Ci preghiamo informarvi che sotto busta a parte Vi abbiamo spedito alcuni schizzi riguardanti la lampada per il Salone e due bracci a muro per la illuminazione dei quadri.

Sottoponiamo tutto al Vs/giudizio e Vi preghiamo informarci delle vostre impressioni e suggerimenti.

Siamo a Vostra completa disposizione per quanto riguarda disegni e campioni e, se lo credete necessario, uno dei ns/ Sigg/ Toso potrà personalmente visitarvi per accordi.

La spedizione di questi primi schizzi ha subito un certo ritardo dipeso dalle prove effettuate per superare le difficoltà tecniche inerenti alla costruzione del grande vaso in un solo soffio. Abbiamo ridotto le dimensioni richieste nel limite del possibile, ma osserviamo nondimeno che la lampada non ne perde in proporzione e riesce complessivamente armonica.

Restiamo in attesa di leggervi con le Vostre impressioni e frattanto Vi preghiamo gradire i nostri saluti distinti.

p. Fratelli Toso

1939 Bottai (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Roma, 15 mag. 1939

Al Soprintendente all'Arte Medioevale e Moderna, ANCONA

Divisione II

Prot. 4162 Posiz. 6 Pesaro

Del 1/5/39

OGGETTO: Urbino- Palazzo Ducale- Progetti di illuminazione

Ho preso in esame l'iniziativa di illuminare alcune sale del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino, per rendere possibile la visita serale dell'appartamento Ducale.

Approvo quanto proponete ed il preventivo per L.16.300 allegato alla lettera cui rispondo.

Vi autorizzo pertanto ad eseguire i lavori in parola, assicurandoVi che questo Ministero provvederà al relativo finanziamento nel prossimo esercizio.

Il MINISTRO

1939 Pacchioni (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Prot. 1582

5 luglio 1939 XVII

Azienda Cura e Soggiorno PESARO

Urbino- Palazzo Ducale- Illuminazione serale all'Appartamento del Duca Federico

In occasione della recente visita di S.E. il Ministro Bottai al Palazzo Ducale di Urbino furono presentati alcuni modelli di illuminazione dell'Appartamento del Duca Federico, che costituisce il nucleo principale della Galleria nel Palazzo Ducale di Urbino.

S.E. il Ministro approvò il progetto e consentì che esso avesse subito attuazione.

I lavori sono stati perciò alacremenente condotti e a buon punto di essere compiuti.

Scopo della illuminazione sarà di poter aprire durante la stagione estiva e l'affluenza balneare sulla spiaggia adriatica il Palazzo Ducale di Urbino dalle ore 21 alle 23 del sabato e della domenica.

L'intento è particolarmente di valorizzazione turistica e di diffusione e avvicinamento alla Cultura Popolare.

Salvo contrattempi imprevedibili conterei di poter inaugurare queste manifestazioni domenica 16 luglio.

Mi riservo darVi prossimamente informazioni più precise e particolareggiate circa la cerimonia inaugurale e circa lo svolgimento

che questo servizio potrà avere in seguito prendendo con Voi tutti gli accordi che saranno opportuni e valendomi dei suggerimenti che mi Vorrete fornire e della collaborazione Vostra che io mi auguro attiva e fervida.

RingraziandoVi.

IL SOPRINTENDENTE

1939 Renzetti (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Per il Palazzo Ducale di Urbino e per la
Regia Galleria Nazionale delle Marche

Memoria

Il Palazzo Ducale di Urbino e la Regia Galleria delle Marche, che vi risiede, hanno, di recente, subito radicali cambiamenti, che ne hanno mutato l'aspetto. Tale aspetto dovrà cambiare ancora, se i lavori in corso e quelli progettati potranno essere compiuti e nuove opere d'arte verranno ad arricchire l'insigne raccolta.

Certo i tempi attuali, così pieni di minacce guerresche, non fanno sperare troppo che si possa pensare a ciò, comunque auguriamoci che un'iride di pace si distenda su noi e ci consenta di provvedere all'incremento delle nostre opere d'arte, dei nostri Istituti artistici, dei nostri insigni monumenti.

Detto questo, veniamo a parlare, alquanto diffusamente, dei lavori in corso nel Palazzo e per i quali esistono già le relative pratiche.

Lasciamo in disparte i lavori compresi nel vecchio progetto dell'ingegner Cirilli, che, pur avendo ricevuto una prima approvazione dal Consiglio Superiore, non è mai stato attuato. Come è noto, esso riguardava in parte la sistemazione delle logge prospicienti il cortile del Pasquino e il ripristino -assai discusso- della merlatura, sulla facciata dei Torricini e in altri luoghi del Palazzo.

Occupiamoci invece dei restauri e dei lavori più recenti, parte in corso, parte attuati e parte progettati, dovuti alla iniziativa, veramente lodevole, del sovrintendente Prof. Pacchioni.

Tra i lavori riguardanti il Palazzo, vi sono in corso la riapertura delle due logge situate ai lati dei Torricini e l'apertura della finestra nella Sala degli Angeli. Tali lavori dovrebbero essere ultimati per togliere il loro carattere di incompiutezza, Intendimento del Prof. Pacchio-

ni era anche di liberare la facciata dei Torricini dal tetto che la sovrasta, riportandola all'antico aspetto, valendosi della ritrovata copertura più bassa, esistente tutt'ora. Tale lavoro non fu tentato dal Pacchioni, occorrendo una notevolissima spesa, soltanto per le grandi armature. Il ripristino darebbe certo alla facciata, il suo antico aspetto, sul quale l'aquila feltresca, liberata dalle circostanti tettoie, tornerebbe a dominare. Il Prof. Pacchioni aveva pure divisato di riaprire, prima o poi, le loggette situate nel cortile del Pasquino. Speriamo che ciò possa farsi quanto prima. L'opera del Pacchioni è stata notevolissima per altri due fatti: la sistemazione dell'appartamento del Duca Federico e la illuminazione a luce elettrica del medesimo, con intendimenti modernissimi. Detto appartamento con il ripristino dei due vecchi camini già situati nella sala del Trono, con la sistemazione della nicchia, esistente pure nella sala suddetta, portati gli uni e l'altra nei dovuti ambienti, ha ricevuto un mirabile ordinamento superiore ad ogni elogio e formante la meraviglia di tutti i visitatori. Ma l'opera del Pacchioni è rimasta, purtroppo, incompiuta. Egli aveva ben compreso di quali inconvenienti e di quali pericoli sia la coesistenza nel Palazzo di due istituzioni: la Regia Galleria e l'Istituto di Belle Arti con l'annessa Scuole di Arte e Mestieri. Per tacere di altro, egli, vedeva chiaro il possibile pericolo di incendi e notava di continuo la anomalia della esistenza nello stesso luogo di scuole, di officine e di sale adibite a Galleria, aventi finalità diverse fra loro. Per togliere radicalmente tale inconveniente, egli aveva divisato, con la approvazione del Superiore Ministero, di dividere in due patti il Palazzo, adibendo la parte monumentale a Galleria, museo ecc, l'altra a Istituto di Belle Arti e Scuola d'Arte. La parte che, secondo il progetto suddetto deve essere ceduta all'Istituto di Belle Arti, comprende gli ex locali della Direzione, la scala d'accesso situata presso il voltone degli Svizzeri (portone dell'ex Sotto Prefettura) occorrendo, anche il cosiddetto appartamento di Guidobaldo, l'ufficio dell'assistente Pompei, la sala delle armi, la sala Viviani e la grande Galleria dei quadri secondari fino alla porta dell'andito oscuro che verrebbe chiusa, separando, con apposito muro divisorio, i locali da cedere all'Istituto. Siccome nella sala Viviani trovasi la scala interna, ora chiusa, che conduce ai locali superiori, l'Istituto avrebbe da questa, accesso ai medesimi. Tali ambienti sono ora usati dagli Uffici Demaniali che dovrebbero abbandonarli, trovando sede altrove. Al di sotto del cortile del Pasquino, i locali usati ora come magazzino dai custodi, (formanti una volta le antiche scuderie), dovrebbero essere adibite ad officine con accesso interno dalla parte dell'ingresso dell'ex Sotto Prefettura, in-

gresso che diverrebbe quello dell'Istituto. Sempre da tale ingresso, attraverso un passaggio coperto, o semicoperto, si accedrebbe all'altro locale, da adibirsi pure ad officine, ricavato dal fabbricato abitato ora dai custodi i quali verrebbero collocati altrove. E qui cade in acconcio parlare di un'altra sistemazione che il Prof. Pacchioni aveva, d'intesa con il Sovrintendente Prof. Edoardo Galli, in animo di attuare: la rimozione dalle sopralogge delle lapidi sepolcrali che ne deturpano e ne alterano il carattere. Tali lapidi si vorrebbero collocare nelle sale a pian terreno, attigue al grande cortila ove ora sono raccolti i cippi e i monumenti sepolcrali, cippi e monumenti che verrebbero trasportati sotto il porticato del cortile del Pasquino ed in parte anche nello stesso cortile, insieme ad altre antiche statue delle sopralogge.

Così il cortile - ora disadorno e indecoroso- acquisterebbe un aspetto artistico e monumentale. Per tale sistemazione il prof. Galli ha pronto il relativo progetto. Siccome non tutte le lapidi potranno trovare sede nei locali degli attuali cippi e monumenti, sono stati posti gli occhi su altri locali attigui posseduti dal M.di Pietà, che ora sembra propenso ad alienarli.

Detto questo, nei riguardi della sistemazione della parte archeologica, torniamo a parlare della divisione del Palazzo Ducale con l'Istituto risponderrebbe pienamente allo scopo.

Prima che il lavoro di divisione del Palazzo con l'Istituto di Belle Arti sia compiuto, converrà pensare alla collocazione dei nuovi uffici della sovrintendenza. Intanto essa potrebbe venire situata nelle sale attigue alla sala della Jole che ne formerebbe l'accesso monumentale e svolgersi fino alla sala Viviani.

Veniamo ad altro. Una delle preoccupazioni del Prof. Pacchioni, era quella di lasciare il Palazzo senza una continua conveniente custodia, senza possibilità di comunicazioni con l'esterno, in caso di bisogno, furti, incendi od altro. Per provvedere a simili casi, aveva stabilito di collocare un custode responsabile, nella persona dell'Assistente Pompei, nel quartiere abitato prima del custode Ciocca, munendolo di linee telefoniche con la Caserma dei Carabinieri, con le Guardie di Città, coi Pompieri e con la possibilità di chiamata dalla porta d'ingresso situata di fronte a S. Domenico. Il provvedimento era quanto mai necessario ed urgente, ma i lavori di adattamento di un tale quartiere non furono ultimati, per quanto richiedessero una modesta spesa, trattandosi di porvi due o tre persone al massimo...

Sistemato con pochi, ma pregevolissimi quadri l'appartamento di Fede-

rico, converrà trovare posto agli altri quadri nelle sale dell'appartamento superiore, che abbiamo potuto ricuperare dall'Ufficio delle Ipotecche e nel quale è già stata collocata la collezione delle ceramiche e la collezione dei quadri Viviani. Per le stampe, fotografie od altro, che non trovassero più posto negli attuali locali, potrebbe essere usato il corridoio che gira sopra le soprallogge, oggi ripulito e restaurato, ed occorrendo, anche il cosiddetto appartamento di Guidubaldo.

Naturalmente per tali ambienti nuovi, occorrerà richiedere altro personale di custodia.

Siamo certi che la nuova Sovrintendenza non mancherà di provvedervi, come pure non mancherà di provvedere a tutto l'insieme dei lavori, dei progetti che abbiamo cercato di delineare.

Urbino ottobre 1939 XVII

Luigi Renzetti

1939 Rotondi (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

RACCOMANDATA

15 novembre 1939

Al Ministero dell'Educazione Nazionale. Direzione Generale AA.BB.AA - ROMA

Per conoscenza: Al soprintendente ai Monumenti – ANCONA

Oggetto: Urbino-Palazzo Ducale (scoperta affreschi)

Le vane ricerche a lungo effettuate dai miei predecessori, e per ultimo dal Soprintendente Pacchioni, sugli intonaci del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino, nella speranza di rintracciarvi le dipinture originarie, avevano lasciato dubitare che l'edilizio fosse completamente privo di decorazioni ad affresco, così comuni invece nelle dimore principesche del Rinascimento. Ma tale dubbio è definitivamente sorpassato dopo la scoperta che ho avuto la fortuna di compiere e di cui Vi ho dato notizia col mio telegramma n. 409 in data di ieri.

Il Palazzo, come è noto, nacque, per volontà del Duca Federico o per l'arte illuminata di Luciano Laurana, con la fusione di due precedenti costruzioni medioevali e cioè del Castello e del Palazzo del Podestà: due costruzioni di cui ancora si scorgono le tracce strutturali lungo le cortine murarie del nuovo edificio che le assorbì, senza distruggerle.

Nel vecchio Palazzo Podestarile furono ricevute alcune sale, tra cui quella cosiddetta "della Jole", ed altre ne furono aggiunte in epoca posteriore dalle fine del sec. XV al sec. XVI. Di questo complesso di sale, che erano

adibite a sezioni secondarissime della Galleria e che comunemente erano chiuse ai visitatori, avevo ordinato la pulitura ed il riattamento, anche perchè, in quelle più secondarie, potevano, come per lo passato, svilupparsi gli uffici della Soprintendenza. Di tale pulitura fa parte il rinnovo della tinteggiatura, che si attua naturalmente dopo di avere asportato dalle pareti i numerosi strati di carte che vi erano stati sovrapposti durante questi ultimi anni, quando le aule erano adibite ad uso di privati appartamenti. Asportate tali carte, ho provveduto ad ordinare, prima della nuova tinteggiatura, delle ricerche sui vecchi intonaci, sempre nella speranza di poter rinvenire tracce della decorazione originaria. E l'accurata indagine doveva essere coronata da pieno successo quando, passato dalle parti più recenti dell'edificio a quelle più antiche e precisamente alla sala attigua a quella detta "della Jole", mi è stato possibile rintracciare anzitutto dei lievi accenni di colore e quindi zone sempre più vaste di pitture sparse sulla intera sala.

La decorazione, eseguita ad affresco, imita un drappeggio di damaschi gialli a fiorami, su cui si staccano solide figure di guerrieri, a grandezza maggiore del naturale. I loro attributi li fanno sembrare simboli del potere podestarile, dato che essi stavano appunto a decorare la vecchia residenza del Podestà, il loro stile ha i caratteri inconfondibili dell'arte quattrocentesca della metà del secolo (forse ferrarese?), la loro grandiosità è indice di una paternità non mediocre. Sono state finora scoperte frammentariamente cinque figure di guerrieri disposte lungo tre pareti della sala e, sulla cappa del camino, sono stati rinvenuti due angioletti che sollevano lo stemma dei Montefeltro. Il drappeggio, che fa da fondo alla decorazione, è sospeso ad un'asta che scorre tra le lunette entro le quali sono figurati vasi di fiori dorati. Il soffitto, per quel che si è potuto scoprire, sembra anch'esso decorato.

Le fotografie allegate documentano la prima fase del rinvenimento, il cui studio sarà reso possibile dalla sua continuazione e dalle indispensabili opere di restauro, a cui spetterà di rivelare anche se l'attigua sala della Jole sia anch'essa affrescata: cosa che alcune tracce di colore affioranti dagli intonaci sembrano lasciare sperare.

IL SOPRINTENDENTE

Rotondi

1941 Ceccato (M-PS-67-238. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

7-III-41

Soprintendenza Galleria Urbino

Fotog. Cav. Ceccato,

Nei primi della prossima settimana, l'“Economo” della Soprintendenza verrà in Urbino per consegnarti gli strumenti di controllo tarli-----. Con l'occasione ti invierò anche le 17 negative con otturatore positivo, eseguite dal Cav. Ceccato nel Palazzo Ducale di Urbino per ordine del Cav. Pacchioni. Verso la fine della settimana poi verrò su io. Fai in pace i lavori di risistemazione alla grondaia del Cortile LauranESCO dato che la direzione Generale ha messo a disposizione i fondi. Saluti cordiali.

Sigla (forse I. di Invernizzi soprintendente di Ancona)

1944 Rotondi (M-PS-67-238. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

SOPRINTENDENZA ALLE GALLERIE DELLE MARCHE

Urbino, 7. gennaio 1944, A XXII (Palazzo Ducale)

Prot. 01805 15.1.44 ANCONA

Carissimo Pacini,

poichè l'altro giorno mi dicesti per telefono che non avevi avuto la mia lettera del 15 dicembre, nel timore che tu non l'abbia ancora ricevuta, te ne invio un duplicato, non senza però comunicarti che la situazione, per quanto riguarda la monumentalità dell'edificio, è notevolmente cambiata in seguito alle mie insistenze ed in seguito anche alla ragionevolezza del Podestà di Urbino.

Difatti sono riuscito a fare escludere dal progetto di sistemazione tutto l'appartamento del Duca, tutto l'appartamento delle Duchesse e tutto l'appartamento della Jole. (La mancanza delle porte ha contribuito moltissimo a tali riduzioni). Verrà perciò preso soltanto l'appartamento dov'è -se ricordi- la stanzetta del Re d'Inghilterra: e cioè il lato sud-occidentale della fabbrica. Vi sarà ospitata l'Intendenza di Finanza e cioè un ufficio che, come io richiedevo, non abbia eccessivi contatti col pubblico.

A pianterreno invece l'Istituto del Libro cederà tutte le aule corrispondenti a quelle del piano superiore e vi sarà ospitata la Banca d'Italia e la Tesoreria con ingresso dal cortile nobile.

All'ultimo piano andranno i sindacati agricoli, ma

sto facendo del tutto per ottenere che essi entrino dalla scaletta del Registro e non dunque dallo scalone nobili. Speriamo che io riesca anche in ciò.

Certo, te l'assicuro, a momenti mi pare d'impazzire.

La lettera n.4 di oggi, scritta al Prefetto, ed inviata per conoscenza al Ministero ed anche a te, è certamente un inutile sfogo che non approderà a nulla, ma soltanto potrà valere per eliminare responsabilità dalla mia persona.

D'altronde io avevo avvertito il Ministero fin dal 15 dicembre. Perché non mi hanno risposto?

Se tu potrai fare qualche cosa, affrettati! So che il 14 cominceranno ad affluire gli uffici; ma io ho dichiarato che per tale giorno - se il Ministero non avrà risposto e se non vi sarà almeno un preciso decreto prefettizio - io non aprirò il Palazzo se non con la forza.

Ma, vedrai, ci sarà il decreto. Chi vuoi che s'interessi più dei nostri monumenti e del pericolo che essi corrono?

Intanto a Padova, invece di pensare con serietà ai nostri problemi, organizzano convegni... Ho difatti saputo che l'8 febbraio ve ne sarà uno per noi...

E tu che fai? Hai trasportato poi a Loreto?

Ciao, buon anno e tanti cordialissimi saluti

tuo Rotondi

1951 Zampetti (M-PS-67-238. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

31.7.51

Al Soprintendente ai Monumenti -ANCONA

OGGETTO Urbino: Palazzo Ducale – Museo lapidario

Questa Soprintendenza, in collaborazione con quella alle Antichità, sta riordinando il Museo Lapidario nei locali a pianterreno del Palazzo, prospicienti Piazza del Rinascimento. Perché il materiale abbia una sistemazione adeguata e definitiva sarebbe opportuno

poter usare anche degli ambienti -oggi vuoti- di proprietà della Cassa di Risparmio di Pesaro, usati fino a qualche tempo fa come sede della Esattoria Comunale di Urbino.

Si propone pertanto alla S.V. di ottenere in affitto dal predetto Ente gli ambienti in questione, in attesa che essi possano, come è auspicabile, essere acquistati dallo Stato.

IL SOPRINTENDENTE

Pietro Zampetti

1952 Zampetti (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Urbino 17.4.52

PROTOCOLLO 1299 PS/280 19-4-52

Caro Pacini,

qui riflettevo sul chiodo dell'illuminazione del Palazzo in occasione del ritorno della "Madonna Pellegrina". A parte ti mando copia della lettera pervenutami dalla Curia. Qualcosa penso bisognerà far perché le feste si annunciano grandiose.

1952 Pacini (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

PS/280

Al Soprintendente alle Gallerie di Urbino

Urbino- Palazzo Ducale-

Ho ricevuto il tuo biglietto; sono anch'io d'accordo sulla opportunità di illuminare il Palazzo, ed in questo senso esprimo parere favorevole, devo farti però presente che questa Soprintendenza non ha alcuna possibilità finanziaria per provvedere direttamente alla illuminazione.

Se verrà risolta sul posto questa difficoltà ti prego sorvegliare perché non vengano comunque arrecati danni al monumento.

Grazie e cordiali saluti.

IL SOPRINTENDENTE

1961 Ministro (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

All' avv. Giulio Giovannelli

Presidente della CASSA DI RISPARMIO DI PESARO
E p.c. Soprintendente ai Monumenti – ANCONA
OGGETTO Avviso di pagamento cap. 29 eserc. fin. 1961-1962 resti 1960/61

Si partecipa che questo Ministero ha provveduto al pagamento della somma di Lire 2,000.000 ... a favore alla Cassa di Risparmio di Pesaro quale pagamento per l'acquisto di una porzione dell'immobile monumentale denominato "Palazzo Ducale" sito in Urbino di cui al contratto stipulato in data 26/3/1960 n° 455 di repertorio fra l'Intendenza di Finanza di Pesaro questo Ministero e la Cassa di Risparmio di Pesaro. Il relativo mandato di pagamento sarà esigibile Presso la Tesoreria Provinciale di Pesaro dopo che la Corte dei Conti lo avrà registrato.

D'ordine del MINISTRO

1964 Marchini (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

11 Novembre 1964
N. di Prot. 1470
Posiz. 4 / Pesaro

OGGETTO: Urbino - Palazzo Ducale Locali del "Cantinone"-
al MINISTERO DELLA PUBBLICA ISTRUZIONE
Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle
Arti, Div. Monumenti
ROMA
alla Soprintendenza ai Monumenti di
ANCONA

I dirigenti dell'Istituto Tecnico di Urbino, che è adesso ospite della locale Curia Arcivescovile, intenderebbe assumere in affitto altri locali dalla stessa Curia (nel Palazzo del Seminario) attualmente affittati ad un garage (con scarso decoro, in una zona monumentale della città, come già segnalato al Vice Direttore Generale con lettera del 1° giugno c.a.). Per coincidenza di interessi, quei dirigenti e la Curia hanno fatto disegno di spostare il

garage in un locale del Palazzo Ducale (nel cosiddetto "Cantinone") prima ancora di sentire il parere della Soprintendenza e pretendono adesso di imporre tale soluzione con ogni sorta di pressioni, attraverso ad esempio sul Prefetto e l'Intendenza di Finanza.

Tanto si significa nella presunzione che si tenti anche la via della

Direzione Generale delle Belle Arti e allo scopo di prevenirla.

Informando nel contempo che l'atteggiamento negativo di questa Soprintendenza è motivato dal fatto fondamentale che quel locale serve ai suoi usi e alle sue necessità, come magazzino; al tempo presente tanto più irrinunciabile in quanto l'ufficio si è successivamente spogliato di un gran numero di locali a favore della Scuola statale del Libro, fino a non avere più -per le crescenti esigenze- un locale capace e sano per deposito di opere d'arte. Considerazione marginale, quei locali su cui si sono appuntati i desideri non si prestano in alcun modo per uso di garage in quanto l'entrata e la struttura interna ne è così angusta da non permettere l'entrata e la manovra se non di piccole auto utilitarie. Come programma ulteriore si porrebbe quindi l'esigenza di modifiche murarie con conseguente allargamento di apertura nel prospetto esterno del Palazzo Ducale, cosa manifestamente impossibile.

Con osservanza-

IL SOPRINTENDENTE

-Giuseppe Marchini

PROTOCOLLO

4975-Ps/283

13 NOV. 1964

1966 Torriti (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

URBINO, 3 Maggio 1966

al MINISTERO DELLA PUBBLICA ISTRUZIONE
Direzione Generale Antichità e Belle Arti, Aff. Gen.

N. di Prot. 844

ROMA

Posiz. 4 / Pesaro

OGGETTO URBINO - Palazzo Ducale. Alloggio del Soprintendente. Manutenzione ordinaria

In riscontro alla ministeriale n.2698 A.G. del 26 aprile u.s., non

si può che confermare quanto comunicato dal Soprintendente ai Monumenti delle Marche con lettera 3197 del 28 aprile.

L'alloggio del Soprintendente nel Palazzo Ducale di Urbino è, allo stato attuale, inservibile. Viene usato fin dal 1953 a deposito di opere d'arte in attesa di restauro, a deposito di materiale vario e, in una stanza, a laboratorio di restauro. Manca di qualsiasi pur modesto confort. In bagno è costituito da una piccolissima stanza con una vasca antiquata e mac-

chiata di ruggine, non esiste alcun sistema di riscaldamento, le ragnatele hanno invaso le stanze dagli intonaci cadenti; nello stesso stato trovansi l'impianto di illuminazione elettrica e gli infissi.

Grato se codesto On. Ministero vorrà prendere in considerazione il caso sopra esposto disponendo per una sovvenzione con cui il sottoscritto possa almeno far fronte alle prime e più urgenti necessità, avendo ormai deciso di trasferire, entro l'estate prossima, la propria famiglia da Genova ad Urbino.

Rinnovando i ringraziamenti, si resta in attesa.

IL SOPRINTENDENTE REGGENTE

-Piero Torriti

PROTOCOLLO

N. 3399-PS 283

A dì 5. V. 1966

1967 Torriti (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

Al Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione

Urbino, 4 gennaio 1967

DIREZIONE GENERALE ANTICHITA' E BELLE ARTI - Div. Musei - ROMA

OGGETTO: MUSEI: Tutela. Urbino, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche sita nel Palazzo Ducale

In riscontro al telegramma del Ministro n. 56 del 2 gennaio scorso e a numerosa, precedente corrispondenza intercorsa particolarmente fra la Soprintendenza e la Div. Musei, ritengo opportuno segnalare come la conservazione del Palazzo Ducale di Urbino in cui risiede la Galleria Nazionale delle Marche non sia certo ideale per la presenza nel palazzo stesso dell'Istituto d'Arte.

Mi riferisco in particolar modo a recenti avvenimenti come ad esempio;

- a) allo scoppio di tubature dell'acqua sopra il Salone del Trono (scoppio che causò allagamenti e bagnò uno degli arazzi della serie raffaellesca esposti nel suddetto Salone) e sopralogge;
- b) alle gravi infiltrazioni d'acqua che deteriorarono gli splendidi stucchi del Fiamberti nel cosiddetto "Appartamento della Duchessa" (infiltrazione dovuta ad incuria di un bidello dell'Istituto che lasciò un rubinetto aperto dei gabinetti di decenza malauguratamente posti proprio sopra le volte stuccate del suddetto appartamento);
- c) allo scolo di acque di un tubo proprio sopra la grande volta del Salone degli Angeli (inconveniente fortunatamente subito riparato);
- d) all'incendio avvenuto il primo dicembre 1965 all'ultimo piano della ala ovest del Palazzo, causa il calore sprigionatosi da un tubo di

una stufa in un'aula dell'Istituto d'Arte:

e) al grave pericolo che presentano le condutture di scarico di liquidi del reparto fotoincisioni (condutture che vengono a passare proprio sopra lo splendido soffitto ligneo dello Studiolo del Duca Federico;

f) alla installazione di sempre più grosse e pesanti macchine che con le loro vibrazioni mettono in pericolo le cadenti strutture del Palazzo, strutture oltre tutto sollecitate da cedimenti del terreno verso i celebri torrioni.

Ciò premesso, e poiché il Comune di Urbino sembra favorevole ad uno spostamento dell'Istituto stesso in sede idonea e razionale da costruirsi ex novo, lo scrivente riterrebbe opportuno che codesta Direzione Generale intervenisse presso il Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (Direzioni competenti) affinché tale saggia decisione venga presa al più presto possibile anche contro il parere del Consiglio dei Professori di detto Istituto che, a quanto risulta privatamente allo scrivente, si sarebbe espresso negativamente per motivi storico-ideali a detto trasferimento.

IL SOPRINTENDENTE R.

- Piero TORRITI -

1979 Dal Poggetto (M-PS-67-283. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

URBINO, 30 AGO. 1979

N. di Prot 3412

Posiz. 414-PS

V

Al Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali

Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Ambientali, Architettonici,

Archeologici, Artistici e Storici Div.

ROMA

OGGETTO: URBINO Palazzo Ducale. Trasmissione programma "Sistemazione Musei" da imputarsi sul Cap.8005/ 1980.

Col recupero nei prossimi mesi, dopo i lunghi restauri dovuti alle necessità di consolidamento delle strutture murarie del cosiddetto Appartamento della Duchessa, questo Ufficio intende procedere alla nuova sistemazione della quadreria e delle opere d'arte.

Tale sistemazione comprende la sostituzione di tutti i vecchi supporti creati, in maniera del tutto provvisoria, in materiali diversi (angolare Safim, legno, pietra, ecc.).

Si prevede inoltre l'esposizione alla pubblica fruizione di opere cosiddette di arte minore, finora non godibili.

Si prevede infine la bonifica degli importantissimi ambienti

sotterranei per una futura ma ravvicinata apertura permanente al pubblico.

Si trasmette pertanto l'unito programma della nuova sistemazione della Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, da imputarsi sul Cap. 8005 per l'anno finanziario 1980 per complessive £.172.000.000.

IL SOPRINTENDENTE REGGENTE

(Dr. Paolo Dal Poggetto)

1979 Polichetti (M-PS-67-284. Urbino Palazzo Ducale, Varie, Archivio Storico ai Monumenti, Ancona)

6 dic.1979

N. prot- 8954 (PS 284) 13 dic.1979

SISTEMAZIONE LAPIDARIO DI URBINO

I sottoscritti Archi dr. Maria Luisa Polichetti, Soprintendente per i Beni Ambientali Architettonici delle Marche; Prof. Paolo dal Poggetto Soprintendente Reggente per i Beni Artistici e Storici delle Marche e Prof. Delia Lollini Soprintendente Reggente per i Beni Archeologici delle Marche, a seguito di vari incontri effettuati anche in Urbino, si sono trovati d'accordo (cadute le precedenti lievi difformità di visione) nel constatare che non esistono più ragioni per ritardare ulteriormente la sistemazione e l'apertura al pubblico del lapidario di Urbino. Infatti, con il recupero già avvenuto da parte della Soprintendenza per i Beni Artistici e Storici di Urbino oltre che della biblioteca, anche delle due sale adiacenti alla stessa (piano terreno lato nord del cortile), è possibile sistemare nelle due sale suddette, in corso di avanzato restauro, le formelle di Giorgio Martini, che per ragioni storiche (raccolta Stoppani), sempre stato auspicato fossero esposte non lontano dal resto del nucleo fondamentale del Lapidario. Con la sistemazione proposta, pur non essendo possibile legare i due gruppi di materiali in stretta continuità, essi verranno ad essere separati soltanto dallo spazio dello scalone e le formelle quattrocentesche avranno una loro esposizione che rispetterà la sequenza originaria.

Quanto alla sistemazione delle sei sale del lato est del cortile, sempre previste per contenere il materiale archeologico del lapidario, non essendo possibile alterare con nuove porte la struttura monumentale del cortile, sarà in esse riaperta una seconda serie di porte

interne che consentirà al visitatore un circuito a senso unico in cinque delle sale suddette. La sesta sarà poi destinata a materiali di recenti scavi e darà direttamente accesso al cortile del Pasquino, dove verrà esposta (al coperto del loggiato) una parte dei cippi di maggiori dimensioni.

Detta sistemazione permetterà anche la pubblica fruizione da giardino del Pasquino già da tempo auspicata dalla Soprintendenza di Urbino.

L'esposizione del materiale archeologico vero e proprio sarà effettuata mediante una serie di griglie di ferro a moduli di m. 1 x 2 suddivise in quadrati di cm. 10 ciascuna, già richieste sul capitolo 8005 ed in parte già eseguite. Queste griglie sono state costruite in modo da scaricare il loro peso sul pavimento per non aprire molteplici, inutili e dannosi fori nelle pareti e si prevede che saranno tinteggiate di bianco, per non sovrapporsi come fatto di architettura emergente.

Il riscaldamento degli ambienti del lapidario è già stato approntato dal Provveditorato alle OO.PP. mediante termo convettori che sono in fase di installazione; inoltre, in tutti gli ambienti è già presente l'impianto antifurto.

Quanto al problema dell'illuminazione i sottoscritti pensano di poterlo meglio risolvere effettuando prove con i materiali già sistemati nelle griglie, essendo già pronti tutti i punti luce.

Per tutte queste ragioni si ritiene possibile, oltre che auspicabile, l'apertura e la pubblica fruizione del lapidario per la prossima estate.

Nell'occasione uscirà anche un catalogo completo del materiale, già tutto schedato.

M.L. POLICHETTI

P. DAL POGGETTO

D. LOLLINI

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