

STATEMENTS

Luca Bagnoli, Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore's President

"The Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore was founded in 1296 to oversee the construction of Florence cathedral and its bell tower. The main task of this Institution is to preserve the monumental complex of Santa Maria del Fiore and this is precisely why the conservation and restoration of its historical and artistic heritage are its *raison d'être*. It is with great pride that we can add the restoration of Michelangelo's *Pietà* to the list, which is one of the greatest masterpieces of this unique artist in the world".

Simonetta Brandolini d'Adda, Friends of Florence Foundation's President

"Friends of Florence was established to safeguard the art heritage of Florence and of Tuscany. Our benefactors are frequently passionate about a given artist and Michelangelo, a true genius, is unquestionably one of the most important figures on whom we have focused in recent years: witness the restoration and preservation of his *David* or our work on his *River God*, on his *Prisoners* and on a number of his youthful drawings and sculptures. The restoration of the *Pietà*, which instantly met with our benefactors' enthusiastic support because the sculpture is at once so intimate and so powerful, has revealed not only the artist's superb mastery of his medium but also the anguish of his tormented soul. On behalf of the Friends of Florence I would like to thank the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore and its museum for involving us in the restoration of this immense masterpiece".

Andrea Pessina, Soprintendenza ABAP per la Città Metropolitana di Firenze e le Province di Pistoia e Prato's Director General

"A fundamental restoration to allow a complete legibility of Michelangelo's last great masterpiece and capture its troubled history"

Antonio Natali, Board of Directors

"At the end of 2018, the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore decided to undertake the restoration of Michelangelo's *Pietà*. This decision was immediately seconded by the American non-profit organization 'Friends of Florence', which offered to sustain the cost. The restoration was careful and non-invasive, providing new information and matter for reflection on this work. The image of the *Pietà* that the restoration gives allows the insightful reading of a treatment received at different stages of work, from rough-hewn to almost finished".

Timothy Verdon, Director of the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo

The *Pietà* in the Opera del Duomo in Florence bears clear and unmistakable signs and scars of its story and of the events that have marked its 470-year history. The traumatic events narrated by historians and a collecting history consisting of various changes of hands and many changes of place have made this sculptural group an enigmatic work that is remarkably difficult to study or to understand in terms of the details of its execution, and have inevitably marked and altered its original aspect.

Samuele Caciagli, Works Manager and Technical Area Manager

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Beatrice Agostini, Restoration Director

“For this restoration, Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore chose to build an "open laboratory" in order to allow visitors to the museum to track the various phases of the work. A multi-disciplinary group was set up to conduct the investigations and inspections required for us to gain an understanding of the deterioration suffered by the sculptural group, to identify the most appropriate restoration methods and to document and study the group. That study is going to continue over the coming months because restoration has meant that the every single detail of the sculpture is now visible once again”.

Paola Rosa, Restorer

“The criterion we adopted led to the careful and balanced removal of surface deposits and to the gradual lightening of chromatic alterations that interfered with the pictorial character of the surfaces, which Michelangelo’s masterful use of his tools had achieved. The restoration sought to recover the clear and uninterrupted legibility of all the surfaces, and to re-propose Michelangelo’s original idea of the *Pietà* as a work carved *ex uno lapide* (from a single block)”.