



FRIENDS of FLORENCE

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**For Immediate Release
October 18, 2016**

**UFFIZI'S BOTTICELLI ROOM REOPENS OCTOBER 18 AFTER RESTORATION
THANKS TO MAJOR GRANT FROM FRIENDS OF FLORENCE**

**Galleries housing beloved epic paintings, including
The Birth of Venus and *Primavera* by Italian master Botticelli, upgraded and reinstalled**

Washington, DC.... After a significant series of upgrades and retrofitting made possible by a major grant by Friends of Florence, the Botticelli Room in the Uffizi Gallery, in Florence, Italy, reopens to the public on October 18, 2016. The \$910,000 grant raised by the Washington-based organization enabled most of the 19 paintings by Sandro Botticelli, among the most widely recognized in the canon of Western art, to remain on display in Room 41 in the Gallery. Restoration of Room 41, also funded by Friends of Florence, was completed in July 2015.



The Botticelli Room, Uffizi Gallery, renovated in 2016 with funds from Friends of Florence. Courtesy Uffizi Gallery.

Among the most popular in the Uffizi Gallery's collection, masterworks like *The Birth of Venus* (c. 1482-85) and *Primavera* (c. 1482) were seen by some two million visitors in their temporary space over the course of the sixteen-month restoration of the Botticelli Room.

Features of the restored and newly reinstalled galleries include improved lighting, general systems up-grades, new alarm system, and the replacement of glass framing the artworks with state-of-the-art glass that is more protective and technologically advanced. Several of the paintings not on view during the upgrade were examined and, when needed, underwent conservation as part of the project.

Simonetta Brandolini d'Adda, co-founder and president of Friends of Florence, said, "We are thrilled that these beloved masterpieces by the great Florentine artist will be presented to their best advantage in the restored Botticelli Room. We are deeply grateful to our board members and other supporters who gave so generously to ensure a rigorous process that allowed



The Botticelli Room, Uffizi Gallery, renovated in 2016 with funds from Friends of Florence. Courtesy Uffizi Gallery.

the heart of the collection to remain on display. These magnificent paintings viewed within the context of the Uffizi Gallery's distinguished holdings and the extraordinary pageant of Renaissance art in Florence is a must-see experience."

Prior to renovation, all the Uffizi's 19 paintings by Botticelli were in one room alongside masterpieces by other artists. They are now divided into two rooms devoted exclusively to Botticelli.

The creation of two spaces is designed to improve flow and, therefore, enhance the visitor experience. Two other rooms were also renovated as part of the project with funding from Friends of Florence to showcase Pollaiuolo's works and other works by Botticelli and artists of his time.

The de-installation and move to Room 41 can be viewed in a video produced by Vincenzo Capalbo for Friends of Florence. <http://youtu.be/PW0LYGmL23c>

About Friends of Florence

Friends of Florence is a non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., supported by individuals from around the world who are dedicated to preserving and enhancing the cultural and historical integrity of the arts in the city and surrounding area of Florence, Italy. To date, the organization has raised and donated \$10 million for conservation projects in the region.

Friends of Florence provides financial support directly to the city's restoration laboratories to restore, safeguard, and make available to the public a broad range of art from paintings and sculptures, to architectural elements and collections of smaller objects.

Other project highlights for 2016, include the conservation of 48 drawings by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo from the Horne Museum in Florence, to be completed in November, and the restoration,

completed in September, of *The Madonna and Child Enthroned with Angels* in the Galleria Palazzo Cini, in Venice, an important panel painting of the early 14th century attributed to the Master of Badia a Isola. Organized and supported in collaboration with Save Venice, the two projects commemorate the 50th anniversary of the floods that devastated Venice and Florence in November 1966, and compromised or destroyed aspects of the region's singular cultural heritage.

Through educational programs and events and by working closely with local and national partners—including the City of Florence, Italian Ministry of Art, and numerous international committees and organizations—Friends of Florence strives to increase public understanding and appreciation of Florence and Tuscany's abundant treasures.

www.friendsofflorence.org

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