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FLORENCE LOCAL ENGLISH NEWS

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Restoration project revealed imperfections in marble.

The restoration of Michelangelo's *Bandini Pietà* at the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence's cathedral museum, has been completed.

Researchers working on the marble sculptural group, on which Michelangelo worked from 1547 to 1555, found numerous microfractures in the marble which they believe forced Michelangelo to abandon the work.

During the first months of the restoration, which began in late 2019, visitors were able to [observe restorers](#) at work on a specially-built stage installed around the base of the sculpture, which was completed when the Italian High Renaissance master neared the age of 80.

However the [covid-19](#) pandemic stalled the conservation project which was financed by the philanthropic group Friends of Florence and commissioned by the association Opera di S. Maria del Fiore.

Also known as *The Deposition*, the sculpture was undertaken by Michelangelo 50 years after his first *Pietà*, housed in St Peter's, and he intended it for his tomb.



According to a tradition handed down over the centuries, the elderly artist destroyed sections of the sculpture in a fit of frustration due to the flawed quality of the marble.

Restorers say they did not find any evidence to support this story, unless the damage was covered up by Tiberio Calcagni who worked on the sculpture in 1565.

Central to the restoration was the removal of centuries of accumulated grime and candle wax, as well as tackling discolouration resulting from a cast made of the work in the late 19th century.

The *Bandini Pietà* depicts Jesus after his descent from the cross, supported by the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene and an aged Nicodemus, who bears a resemblance to Michelangelo himself.

The restored Pietà can be seen by visitors until 30 March. *Photos La Repubblica.*

