



FRIENDS of FLORENCE
Conserving Art for Over 25 Years

25th Anniversary Tributes – A Sampling

“The best way to thank you for these splendid 25 years of love, care, generosity and interest (from which San Miniato al Monte, among others, has benefited in a very special way and in perfect synchrony with the first millennium of its own existence) lies, therefore, in our good resolution to imitate you: intelligence, sobriety, industriousness, and solicitude are the primary qualities that have always been your hallmark and that we would like not only to applaud but, above all, to emulate in order that we too, together with you, can offer our superb heritage of humanistic beauty a radiant future for the whole of mankind.”

– **Abbot Padre Bernardo** and the Monastic Community of San Miniato al Monte

“One thing that has always struck me is that the Friends’ interest in, and care for, art has never been an end in itself; there has always been room for the spiritual, or what I might call ‘mystic’, element, thus ensuring that my feeling of gratitude is even more unique and special.”

– **Father Giuseppe Pagano**, Prior of the Basilica of Santo Spirito

“With the support of the Friends of Florence, Palazzo Strozzi’s exhibitions on ancient and Renaissance art have benefited from the restoration of masterpieces by Donatello, Verrocchio, Michelangelo, Pontormo, Giambologna and Bronzino, to name but a few. These masterpieces have been the object not only of crucial restoration but also of in-depth scientific analysis, thus contributing to the furtherance of our knowledge in the field of conservation.”

– **Ludovica Sebregondi**, Curator with the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi

“Ten large frescoes [in the Cloister of the Vows in Santissima Annunziata] of the highest quality and of unparalleled historical importance are by their hand [Andrea del Sarto, Rosso Fiorentino and Pontormo], yet there was no one to fund their restoration because sponsors generally tend to reason thus: before committing, they ask how many visitors a site attracts, and if the numbers guarantee a suitable return in terms of image, they bear the cost of the project; otherwise, they look elsewhere. The Friends of Florence, on the other hand, bore the cost of the entire project without asking or

expecting anything in return, because that is the dignity of a true patron of the arts. That is what marks them out from other sponsors.”

– **Antonio Natali**, art historian and Director of the Uffizi Gallery 2006-2016

“In these ten years, I have been able to perceive the extent to which the Foundation’s work is both valuable and unique, differing from that of other sponsors in that it supports not only the restoration of a work of art, but also the demands of study and conservation that such restoration frequently spawns. These latter aspects, though less high-profile than the restoration itself, nevertheless complete it and ensure the work’s proper conservation over time.”

– **Lucia Biondi**, restorer

“One of the Foundation’s many richly deserved merits, which I would like to highlight in particular in view of its very special nature, is the amenability to restore works of art which are not in the limelight, which cannot be listed among the city’s masterpieces, yet which are important for Florence’s history and for the conservation of its splendid monumental sites, for example the 17th century frescoes in the Chiostro di Sant’Antonino in the Museo di San Marco, one of the restoration projects in which I was able to share personally with Friends of Florence. If this is not true – yet discreet – love for Florence, then what is?”

– **Magnolia Scudieri**, former Director of the Museum of San Marco

“We are delighted, this year, to celebrate the first 25 years since the Friends of Florence Foundation was established! The Committee for the Decorum and Restoration of Tabernacles – a section of the Association of Friends of Florentine Museums and Monuments – has had the pleasure and the honor to cooperate with the Foundation, the most effective concrete expression of the desire to preserve and to hand down artistic and cultural heritage, on the part of enthusiastic and sensitive donors.

– **The Committee for the Decorum and Restoration of Tabernacles**

“I have shared rare sentiments with you [Friends of Florence and its supporters] and the artists, first and foremost, and all the institutions involved thank you because their works of art are restored to a new life thanks to you and your contributions. My team and I continue to be watchful observers and to work together to delight the eye and, more especially, the mind. We thank you for all these emotions that make every effort worthwhile...”

– **Daniele Rossi**, restorer