





BEAUTY AND CULTURE



Fresco depicting Sogliano al Rubicone

The *Museum of Arte Povera* and the *Museum of Vintage Records* are a priceless treasure for the Municipality of **Sogliano al Rubicone**. They represent a perfect union between the beauty of art and the culture it retains.

The *Museum of Arte Povera* collects precious books, ancient manuscripts, nineteenth-century printings and objects of typographic art coming from various parts of the world.

The Museum of Vintage Records is dedicated to

music and to the history of sound recording.

The museums, located inside the Palazzo della Cultura, were set up in 2006 as a result of the collaboration between the collector Roberto Parenti and the Municipal Administration of Sogliano al Rubicone.

Roberto Parenti as a young boy used to go and clean the cellars and attics of the Bologna homes; he was not paid, but he could take home what he liked. It was in that period that

he learned how to preserve and keep ancient objects tidy. Over the years, his collections have grown more and more, being enriched with wonderful, precious and sometimes unique objects.



Inspired by Fedor Dostoevsky's famous sentence "Beauty will save the world", Roberto Parenti was able to collect a priceless heritage linked to the graphic, musical and literary arts.

The *Museum of Arte Povera* and the *Museum of Vintage Records* are the emblems of a modern idea of investing in culture: art objects are revived, books can be leafed through, old recordings listened to again. So, the permanent exhibitions become interactive libraries, through which it is possible to know the history, admire the masterpieces of the past, be inspired by new forms of creativity.

Sometimes it happens that visitors to the museums of Sogliano al Rubicone,

fascinated by the works and care they are preserved with, decide to donate antiques or ancient books, so that they become part of the collective cultural heritage. The small Italian museums are in fact a great wealth for all, their importance in recent years is actually growing. The most influential art critics in their articles are promoting the rich cultural heritage of Italy and exploring the country in search of art treasures to be rediscovered and reaffirmed. The precious collections of Sogliano are part of this huge treasure and constitute an irreplaceable cultural investment



MUSEUM OF ARTE POVERA





The beauty of art, in all its forms, witnesses what is most elevated in human soul. The Museum of Arte Povera can help rediscover the authentic sense of beauty.

It's a unique collection in its kind. Besides ancient manuscripts of great value, it houses a precious collection of poor papers: love valentines, eighteenth-century calendars, Liberty-style posters, pop-ups, refined art deco prints. **Poor papers** became widespread between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, thanks to the development of chromolithography; they are characterized by

an attractive exterior beauty that used to convey an advertising message and arouse the consumer's appetite.

Chromolithography was created in 1837; this name comes from the Greek terms chroma (colour), lithos (stone) and graphia (from graphein, to draw). Thanks to this technique, it became possible to quickly print images in colour, with greater shades and much brighter tones than those obtained with the previous techniques. For each colour it was necessary to use a different stone. These matrices in stone, made by skilful artists, were often considered masterpieces of craftsmanship.

The collections of **facsimiles** and **art books** are of major aesthetic and historical interest. Normally untouchable and inaccessible books can be consulted and admired in a dedicated museum space that becomes a treasure chest of our history. An avant-garde library available to everyone.







ALMANACS ET CALENDARS

The Museum of Arte Povera contains a precious collection of ancient almanacs and calendars, of Italian, French and English origin. Almanacs are small objects, featured by a fine graphic and editorial layout. The oldest one in the museum dates back to 1699; another one, shortly afterwards, dates back to 1741. The almanacs were printed on plain, monochrome paper, using the first movable types; the decorations were made in xylography or by means of punches. Because of their low cost and the useful information

provided, they became widespread in the homes of the working classes. During the nineteenth century, with the development of printing and lithography, the calendar appeared and became widespread. It took two different forms: the wall calendar and the **pocket calendar**, designed as an advertising tool especially for perfumes, cosmetics and soaps, it was normally donated in barber shops and perfumeries. There are accordion-folded calendars, star calendars, with perforated covers, dedicated to important historical events, sports, great operas and especially to female beauty.



LOVE VALENTINES



In the fourteenth century English lovers were used to exchanging small gifts on Valentine's Day, 14 February; these gifts were called Valentines. In the eighteenth century, this tradition also spread to other Anglo-Saxon countries and Europe too. Presents were gradually replaced by symbolic gifts, such as letters, love sonnets or engraved, watercoloured, hand-carved notes; love cards were often decorated with romantic symbols. Between 1800 and 1930, with the evolution of the paper and chromolithography industry, Valentines reached their peak of popularity, enriched with imaginative decorations and pop-ups; these are authentic masterpieces of manufacture, which over time gained in value as collector's items. The Museum of Arte Povera exhibits several hundreds rare and wonderful Valentines.

POP UPS

Pop-ups are animated books from which, once opened, three-dimensional figures emerge. They may include mechanical and optical devices stimulating the reader's interaction. Today, animated books are mainly addressed to children, but in reality the first examples were born for scientific and educational purposes, in the Renaissance period. Only around the late eighteenth century a production of pop-up books began, which dealt with issues related to entertainment and traditional or fantastic storytelling. Pop-ups became very popular in the nineteenth century, especially after the discovery of colour printing. The main production centres were located in Germany and England;



in Italy there was a production of good artistic value, but of limited edition. The precious three-dimensional animated books of the Parenti collection are still able to convey their charming appeal to those who admire them.

TRADING CARDS



The modern practice of collecting trading cards first appeared in France in 1865, when a merchant, in order to increase his sales, had the wise idea of accompanying his purchases with the gift of a coloured card. This example was immediately followed by a multitude of imitators, including Liebig, a company specialized in the trade of canned meat. Originally printed with the technique of chromolithography up to 12 colours and issued for the first time in 1872, the cards of Liebig soon became famous and gave rise to a large collecting movement on a worldwide scale, which today still involves thousands of collectors. In Italy, this phenomenon exploded in 1934 with the first large national collection of trading cards combined with the radio program "I Quattro Moschettieri", sponsored by the food company Buitoni-Perugina. The huge interest was further enhanced by the fact that some cards were rare or impossible to find, first of all the one of the Fierce Saladin. From 1953 onwards, the trading cards were associated to the relative collection albums.

ART BOOKS

In the twentieth century, with the improvement of four-colour industrial printing, alongside the classical publishing industry, a prestigious publishing industry developed, specializing in the production of high-quality books in limited editions. The Museum of Arte Povera houses great literary works in artistic editions, such as the Divine Comedy, the Odyssey, the Iliad, the Decameron, the Song of Songs and the Leonardo da Vinci' Codes; works made with great craftsmanship, enriched with luxury covers and illustrated by great artists of the twentieth century, such as Giorgio De Chirico, Giacomo Manzù and Ugo Nespolo.



Palatine 313 Codex

Particularly interesting is the **Palatine 313 Codex**, containing the text of the Divine Comedy with commentary by Jacopo Alighieri, the first illuminated manuscript of Dante's masterpiece, made around 1325-1350.

Of remarkable beauty is the **Libro con le pagine d'oro** (Book with the pages of gold), made thanks to a patent of Mitsubishi, which managed to bring the purity of gold in liquid state to 999.99 per thousand (24 Kt). The book, totally engraved on gold leaves, symbolically evokes the path of man over the centuries, from prehistory to the modern era.

Among the works kept in the museum of Sogliano we can find, for artistic and economic value, two books donated by the Marilena Ferrari Foundation, dedicated to **Michelangelo** and **Canova**, great artists of the past revived through the images of two internationally renowned photographers, Mimmo Jodice and Aurelio

Amendola. Realized in a few dozen copies, the books feature a cover in Carrara marble

carved by hand. They represent the synthesis of the two greatest Italian strengths: the immense artistic and cultural heritage of our country and its centuries-old tradition of top-level craftsmanship. Some of these books were donated to the Heads of State present at the 2009 G8 Summit in L'Aquila, the others are preserved in the most important museums around the globe. Only the Museum of Arte Povera has received both specimens, because it is the only museum that allows the public to leaf through the priceless pages.





ORIGINAL BOOKS

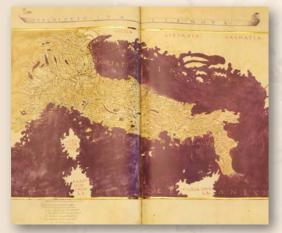


The museum preserves unique books and original texts of outstanding cultural interest. We would like to point out some of them.

- Libro di Pregbiere di Sant'Ignazio di Loyola of 1609; written in Latin, including valuable decorations engraved with a burin.
- *Museo Fiorentino* of 1762; this ancient book contains self-portraits and descriptions of painters of that time.
- Editions of Giovanni Pascoli's poetic collections now impossible to find, including the rare *Albo Pascoliano* of 1911 with illustrated panels by Vico Viganò and a unique edition of the work Carmina.
- Two rare collections from the fascist era: *Scritti e discorsi* by Benito Mussolini, published in 1939 in about thirty copies, containing the journalistic writings of Mussolini; the only edition of the book *Benito Mussolini Apologia di mio padre*, written and donated by Romano Mussolini, a renowned jazz musician who performed several times in Sogliano al Rubicone.
- Apocalisse, a fine work printed in 1977 in a limited edition, with illustrations by Giorgio de Chirico.



FACSIMILES



Geografia by Tolomeo - Map of Italy

The *Museum of Arte Povera* exhibits a rare and rich collection of *facsimiles*: ancient books reproduced in a totally faithful way to the original. Thanks to the progress of technology, in fact, in recent decades it was possible to create *original copies* of extremely rare works jealously kept in museums around the globe. The *facsimiles* are made with the help of computers, which store every single detail and colour of the original; the printing process, carried out with high-tech methods, uses various inkjet superimposed matrices for each page. The work is completed thanks to the finishing process of skilled craftsmen; the gold leaf used for the decorations is laid on the miniatures using the ancient amanuensis techniques.

The facsimiles allow

scholars, but also the general public, to benefit from a heritage that would be difficult to consult in any other way. The aim of the *Museum of Arte Povera* is precisely to give everyone the opportunity to appreciate the beauty and writings of these ancient books, which are definitely a world heritage.

Geografia by Tolomeo Our journey to discover the unreachable beauty starts from the ancient book *Geografia* by Claudio Tolomeo (100-175 A.D.), an Alexandrian astronomer who collected the legacy of the extraordinary knowledge of Greek culture, in particular of the astronomers Eratosthenes (276-194 B.C.) and Hipparchus (200-

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Geografia by Tolomeo - Note the coordinates of the ancient Rubicone River

120 B.C.). The work, the oldest of its kind, contains an overview of the theoretical bases of mathematical geography

and the latitude and longitude coordinates of 8000 locations in the ecumene (the world known at that time), from the Canary Islands to China.

Bodmer VIII Papyrus. On this ancient Egyptian papyrus dating back to the third century A.D. the *Beati Petri Apostoli Epistulae* are written. It is the oldest complete copy of the two canonical epistles of Peter. The codex, written in ancient Greek, is part of a group of twenty-two papyri discovered in Egypt in 1952.

Codex Purpureus Rossanensis. Manuscript written in Greek dating back to 550 A.D. containing the Gospels of Mark and

Papiro Bodmer VIII

Matthew. It is embellished with a series of miniatures, making it one of the oldest illuminated codices of the New Testament to be preserved. It is recognized as *a World Heritage Object* and it was included by Unesco in the documents of the *World Memory Register*.

Lorsch Gospel Book. Illuminated Gospel written between 778 and 820 A.D. Probably commissioned by the Emperor Charlemagne, it is considered as a masterpiece of Carolingian miniature. Of particular value is its carved ivory cover.

Book of Kells. Illuminated manuscript created around 820 A.D.



Codex Purpureus Rossanensis



Book of Kells



by Irish monks, considered as one of the most important works of art of that time. It contains the text of the four Gospels in Latin, accompanied by explanatory notes and by numerous illustrations and richly coloured miniatures.

Psalter of San Ruperto. Composed at the end of the nineth century, the Psalterium Sancti Ruperti is a Carolingian illuminated codex containing the Psalms of

David. The book is extremely small: 3.7×3.1 cm. A full-page miniature depicts King David with his psalter, the stringed instrument that traditionally accompanied the psalms.

Codex of Medicine and Pharmacy of Frederick II. A thirteenth century manuscript created with the aim of collecting and preserving the medical and pharmacological knowledge known at that time. It is illustrated with 510 miniatures of plants and animals considered as true works of art. Commissioned by Emperor Frederick II and subsequently purchased by Cosimo de Medici the Elder, the codex is evidence of a love for science and art that, in

the name of the revival of classicism, was a prelude to the flourishing period of the Renaissance.

Skevra Gospel Book. An illuminated codex dating back to 1198, composed to celebrate the union between the Catholic Church and the Armenian Church, established to oppose the advance of the Muslims and allow the passage of the Crusaders who were heading for the Holy Land. The Gospel Book, which had been hidden for many years to protect it from the prosecution of the Armenian people, was brought back to light in 1991. Some facsimiles were produced: one was donated to the Armenian Patriarch Karekin II, another one to Pope Benedict XVI, and another copy is held by the Museum of Arte Povera. The decoration of the Gospel Book is attributed to Gregory of Skevra; it contains the four Gospels and the tables of Eusebius of Caesarea. Every golden detail of the codex is reproduced by hand with gold leaf 23 ct. The blanket was reproduced by using red silk velvet and two kilos of solid silver, later gilded.

Psalter of De Lisle. Masterpiece made around 1320 in England, it contains biblical stories accompanied by wonderful miniatures of particular grace and refinement. The *Vergine con bambino* and the *Crocifissione*, splendid works present in the Psalter, are considered among the greatest painting masterpieces of that time.

Stiffeth Soft Builds

Psalter of San Ruperto



Skevra Gospel Book

Historia Plantarum. This fascinating manuscript dated 1380 is an encyclopaedia of natural sciences containing descriptions of plants, minerals and animals, with particular reference to their medical and therapeutic properties. It was executed at the court of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, who donated it to Wenceslas IV, King of Bohemia and Germany. Five hundred illustrations of plants, eighty illustrations of animals and thirty of minerals make it a valuable reference work.

Codex of Resta. Also known as *Galleria Portatile*, this is the paper codex in which Sebastiano Resta (1635-1714), great collector of graphics, collected 289 original drawings and miniatures, sorted according to the artistic field of origin. The work is a real miniature museum dedicated to the history of the art of drawing, a precursor of what the Museum of Arte Povera is today.



MUSEUM OF VINTAGE RECORDS



Music has accompanied the human being since its origins, it is part of its deepest nature; it is not simply a means of escape or a recent product of our cultural history; it is a universal language that runs through cultures and history, because it talks directly to the emotions.

Initially, the musical heritage was handed down for direct learning from one generation to another; over time, a codified system for writing the notes making up a melody was devised and improved, but only in the nineteenth century a device was invented to reproduce the sounds, thanks to which today we can listen to the concerts of the greatest artists while staying comfortably at home.

The Museum of Vintage Records is dedicated to the evolution of sound recording, from 1877, with the first wax

cylinders, up to the modern laser discs. One of the peculiarities of the museum is the possibility not only to observe, but also to listen directly to the rare records jealously preserved.

Opened to the public in 2008, the collection had been started many years earlier, growing year after year thanks to the passion and perseverance of Roberto Parenti. Today it includes over 50,000 vinyls, mostly catalogued, as well as ancient wax cylinders, gramophones, a collection of 3,000 opera booklets, platinum records, autographed guitars belonging to great artists and art objects of various kinds. Here it is possible to admire authentic rarities: 50 cm diameter Pathè records, original tickets for the Woodstock Festival, guitars autographed by Bruce Springsteen, Jimmy Page and Robert Plant, gold and platinum records awarded to the most prestigious rock musicians.

The exhibition also includes a large number of terracotta statues representing the most famous personalities in musical history, such as Maria Callas, Alessandro

Bonci, Enrico Caruso, Luciano Pavarotti, Fabrizio De Andrè, Giorgio Gaber, Beatles, Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin. The museum also contains an impressive photographic archive of notable historical and cultural value: a gallery of autographed portraits of dancers and artists of the Paris theatre, dating back to the twenties and fifties.



A glimpse into the future

Sound recording has had and will have a fundamental role in the spreading of culture. This collection tells the story of the evolution of this important technology, without forgetting its connections with the lively contemporary world; from the first pioneering and inaccurate recordings to the most recent innovations. The museum itself is constantly evolving. In addition to constantly collecting and classifying new collector's items, a possible project for the future is being defined:

an online music archive, thanks to which the Museum of Vintage Records would become an interactive library, giving the opportunity to a vast public to know its immense musical heritage.

THE BIRTH OF SOUND RECORDING





The history of recording took origin in 1857 when Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville designed a device, the phonoautograph, capable of graphically transcribing the sound waves onto a visible medium, yet not reproducing the recorded sound. Thomas Alva Edison succeeded in this goal, inventing in 1877 the **phonograph**, which recorded and reproduced sounds on thin cylindrical sheets of tinfoil through the rotation of a **cylinder**. The nursery rhyme Mary had a little lamb, the same sung in the film "Sister Act 2", was the first thing that Edison managed to record, to his great surprise.

In 1880 the Bell laboratories refined this instrument using a layer of wax, which replaced the sheet of tinfoil. In the museum it is possible to admire various wax cylinders of the period 1898-1906 and to listen to lyrical works by Enrico Caruso and Alessandro Bonci from Cesena, among the many others. In 1887 Emile Berliner conceived, as a recording support, the **record** with circular grooves (78 rpm) and in 1889 he developed the **gramophone**. Cylinder and record lived together until 1929 when, due to the higher diffusion of the record, Edison stopped the production of the cylinders. Berliner records were the most widely used sound support until the end of World War II. From this historical period, the museum preserves rare and precious collectibles:

- 12 cm diameter disc recorded in 1893 with a song performed in honour of the marriage of George V and Mary of Teck, the grandparents of the present Queen Elizabeth of England; the disc features a bas-relief engraving of the faces of the newlyweds.



- -Berliner L-4 *God Save The King* record realized in 1902 on the occasion of the coronation of King Edward VII, great-grandfather of Queen Elizabeth. In the area normally used to attach the label there is a sculpture in relief depicting the traits of the King and Queen; for this reason the record does not have the classical hole in the centre.
- Recording of Lt-Col. Giuseppe Galliano leaving the siege of the fort of Macallè (Ethiopia, 1896).
- -Ancient gramophone from 1903.
- Speech dated 1900 made by Umberto I on the occasion of the departure of the Italian Bersaglieri battalion for China (Boxer war) with the fanfare of the bersaglieri and the band of Milan. The King was killed in an attack a few days later.
- Speech by His Majesty Vittorio Emanuele III on the occasion of his settlement on the throne (1900).
- Record dated 1913 dedicated to the jubilee (25 years from the ascent to the throne) of the emperor of Prussia and Germany William II, with a bas-relief portrait instead of the label.
- Adolf Hitler's recording of 1933, when he was not yet Führer of the Third Reich.
- Message of Benito Mussolini to the North American people and to the Italians of America collected from the Chicago Tribune. In 1992, Sergio Zavoli, to produce the TV program *La notte della Repubblica*, made use of this rare recording kept in the museum of Sogliano.
- Speech recorded in 1938 of the Duce to the fighters for the 20th anniversary of the victory.

h. Gebent platte

Gramophone



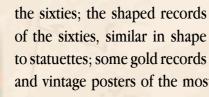
THE MICROGROOVE



The vinyl record, or microgroove (33 rpm or 45 rpm), was officially introduced in 1948 by Columbia Records in the United States as an evolution of the previous 78 rpm record. Compared to the latter, the micro groove is lighter and stronger, allowing longer-lasting and betterquality recordings. The name comes from the speed of rotation (rpm); the 33 rpm (or long playing) was generally used for recording albums, while the 45 rpm had only two tracks, one on each side. For about thirty

widespread support for the audio reproduction of pre-recorded material, from the eighties it was progressively replaced by cassette tapes; finally, in the nineties, compact-disc definitively imposed itself.

Among the many collectibles belonging to the fifties and subsequent years kept in the museum, we would mention the first magnetic recorders, wire and tape, of the famous house Geloso; a reel recorder of the Revox; the first portable reproducers such as the Mini 10 that reads vinyl of just 10 cm in diameter and lasts a few minutes; a pair of McIntosh tube amplification of



of the sixties, similar in shape to statuettes; some gold records

years, vinyl has been the most

and vintage posters of the most famous musical groups of the sixties and eighties.

In the last few years, vinyl has become more popular, as many fans consider the sound produced by it warmer than the CD's, more realistic and of better quality.

Among the thousands of vinyl records kept in the museum, those of Armando Stula (real name Armando Biagetti), singer, actor and painter, born in Sogliano al Rubicone, deserve a special mention.



THE PICTURE DISCS

In the fifties and sixties the picture disc fashion spread, a special type of vinyl record on the surface of which, contrary to the usual black colour, an illustration was incorporated. The first picture discs, produced in limited numbers, were the evolution of coloured and transparent discs. The



illustrations depicted the artist or images related to the song recorded. They were of variable size depending on the label that recorded them. The specimens in the museum were produced by Vogue Saturne and Pathè. A particularly rare and

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precious record is the one designed in 1948 by Pablo Picasso, depicting a dove, symbol of peace.



OPERA BOOKLETS



The museum contains a vast collection of ancient opera booklets: about 3000 pieces dated from 1650 to the beginning of the twentieth century. The booklet is the verbal text, almost always written in verse, used for the composition of a musical work. In addition to the words to be sung, it also includes captions and sometimes a preface and notes. Thanks to the booklets, we have now received works that have not been performed for a long time and whose memory could have been lost.

SACRED MUSIC

The museum houses hundreds of works of sacred music, written by great composers of the past and recorded on microgroove. Almost the entire opera omnia of the Canti Gregoriani is present, as well as a rare recording of a Mass sung by the Lutheran church, the existence of which was unknown until a few years ago.

It is possible to listen to rare tracks by important composers, among which Msgr. Lorenzo Perosi (1872-1956), director of the Cappella Sistina in the thirties and forties. Perosi was master of the Soglianese Msgr. Teodoro Onofri (1909-1987), appreciated music director, in memory of whom the Don Onofri Museum was created, set up in the rectory of the Church of Santa Maria Riopetra, hamlet of Sogliano al Rubicone.



THEATRE AND OPERA

The museum houses rare recordings involving the most diverse fields of sound communication, including radio comedies broadcast in the fifties and later reported on microgroove, or songs performed by great names in Italian theatre, such as Giorgio Albertazzi, Anna Proclemer, Aldo Fabrizi and Marcello Mastroianni. Of great importance are the recordings in the field of opera, among which ancient operas and operettas now forgotten that, thanks to the Museum of Vintage Records, the connoisseur and the curious can now listen, reviving emotions of the past.

Madama Butterfly. Teatro alla Scala, 2007

Information and opening times

Palazzo della Cultura, Piazza Garibaldi 19, Sogliano al Rubicone FC.

The Museum of Arte Povera and the Museum of Vintage Records are open on Sundays from 15.00 to 19.00, August excluded. For reservations and visits at different times or in August, call at least three days in advance 0541-948418.

Municipal Tourist Office: 0541-817339.

Internet sites: www.museodiartepovera.com - - www.museodeldiscodepoca.com

Free entrance.

