

**The Musei e Gallerie di Milano series: a methodical and scientific exploration of the city's artistic heritage also with the aim of safeguarding it.**

The series represents an actual census of the Milan's artistic heritage featuring **high cultural and civil values**. These books are a basic tool for finding out about, studying and enhancing an asset that should be made available to the majority of people. A publishing work of pure patronage that for the first time opens up to the public the entire network of museums, including those that are more hidden and 'invisible'. It is an unparalleled series of books even on the international scene.

The museum collections in Milan are wide and comprehensive, but the increase in locations and names sometimes causes the invaluable and heterogeneous heritage to be hardly singled out. This led to the start of an unusual cultural project in 1973: the cataloguing of Milan's museums and galleries prompted by Raffaele Mattioli and by the Banca Commerciale Italiana in collaboration with Electa. The project was continued by Banca Intesa in 2001 and is currently being carried forward by Intesa Sanpaolo. During **thirty-seven** years, **sixty-eight** books have been published in order to methodically report the heritage located in large and small museums. This work defines a very large outline ranging from archaeology to contemporary art and consolidates the considerable international importance of collections on display. The series covers all Milan's museums and examines both famous and minor collections that form the connective tissue of the city's immense artistic richness. The complete documentation of the works of art of 'public' ownership or use is illustrated together with a general introduction to the historical background of the collections. The scientific cataloguing is carried out by **several hundred** specialists, including many young people, who have examined tens of thousands of objects: paintings, altar pieces and rugs, tapestries and book bindings, armour, Egyptian sculptures and ivories, portraits and jewellery, fans, furniture and coins, pottery and timepieces, scientific instruments and fabrics. Extremely precise indications are given about characteristics, measurements, techniques, origin, changes of ownership, attributed events and critical fortunes through exhibitions and publications, a meticulous bibliography and index of contributors.

### Pinacoteca Ambrosiana

Our commitment to the project of sharing the methodical exploration of the city's vast artistic heritage continues. From 2005 to 2010, six books about the collections of the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana have been published:

- Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. *Paintings from the Middle Ages to the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century* (392 pp., 289 plates)
- Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. *Paintings from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century* (429 pp., 320 plates)
- Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. *Paintings from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century* (434 pp., 636 plates)
- Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. *Paintings of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Miniatures* (464 pp., 500 plates)
- Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. *Archaeological collections. Sculptures* (448 pp., 750 plates).
- Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. *The Settala and Litta Modignani Collections. Applied arts from various donations. Numismatics* (448 pp., 720 plates).

Prompted by Cardinal Federico Borromeo almost three centuries ago, the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana has maintained its characteristics and continues to be unique among Milan's galleries and museums.

Standing on the site of the forum - the vital centre of the city in Roman times - the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana is a cultural island surrounded by the hustle and bustle of life, business, traffic and trade.

The Gallery has one of Milan's most original and systematic collections of art.

Supported by academic aims, the collections chosen by its founder are a long-standing and important reference point for the city, as demonstrated by the numerous donations that have contributed to the growth of the Gallery.

The quality of the works by the most prestigious Italian and European artists – Rafael, Leonardo, Botticelli, Caravaggio, Brueghel – and the variety of genres – paintings, writings, *naturalia*, *artificialia*, minor arts in general – confirm the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana's original vocation as a *Musaeum*, a place of inspiration par excellence.



The first volume in the *Musei e Gallerie di Milano* series covers the collection of works that was donated to the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana in 1618 by Federico Borromeo. This founding nucleus was presented by the Cardinal in his *Musaeum* published in Milan in 1625. In this book he describes the first setting of the collection, explains the reasons for his selections and also provides some important critiques. The collection includes the paintings of the Veneto school and those by Leonardo, which were preferred by Borromeo and were used as examples for the young artists at the Accademia. They include the *Adoration of the Magi* by Titian and the *Holy Family with St. Anne* by Luini. There is also an important core of Italian paintings, especially those of the Renaissance period, which were bequeathed to the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana subsequent to the first collection and include Leonardo's famous *Portrait of a Musician* as well as important Florentine and Venetian works such as the *Madonna and Child with Three Angels* by Sandro Botticelli.



Second volume: the continuation of the complete cataloguing of the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana whose important works of the Veneto and Lombard schools of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries make it one of the most visited galleries in Milan. From unique works by Morazzone to the wider nucleus of works by Daniele Crespi and Giuseppe Vermiglio to subsequent works that are still to be defined. Standing out among them is the Gallery's icon, the *Basket of Fruit* by Caravaggio.



Third volume: the scientific cataloguing of Milan's artistic heritage, the extraordinary documentation of the cultural, civil and ecclesiastical worlds of Milan during the Enlightenment and the Austrian domination of Lombardy in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A gallery of over 200 chiaroscuro portraits ranging from Evaristo Baschenis to Luigi Scaramuccia, Antonio Busca and Francesco Londonio.



Fourth volume: the traditional work of cataloguing becomes an opportunity to discover the city's treasures and cultural documents. From Romanticism to works by Andrea Appiani, Francesco Hayez, Domenico Induno, Angelo Inganni and Giovanni Migliara, to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Milan was actively involved in the artistic avant-garde. The volume documents the collection of miniatures, paintings on enamel depicting small portraits and views, pocket-sized marvels in porcelain, ivory and other materials.



Fifth volume: an important examination of the nucleus of marble, bronze and ivory sculptures. Indeed, since 1621, the Gallery has included a sculpting academy with plaster casts of the Laocoön and Michelangelo's *Pietà* from the collection of the famous 16<sup>th</sup>-century engraver Leone Leoni. In addition to gilded bronzes and Neoclassical sculptures, there are important remains of the *lapidarium*.



Sixth volume: in addition to cataloguing the applied arts from various donations (arms, ornaments, Oriental art, Islamic art, the goldsmith's art, glass and furnishings), the numismatic collection, archaeological remains and paintings, the collections donated by historical Milanese families are also analyzed. They include the vast Settala collection founded by Canon Manfredi Settala in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (but brought together and organized only in 1906), which is part of the collection known as the "Wunderkammer" or chamber of marvels. The Litta Modignani collection consists of 142 invaluable pre-Columbian items. These are rare examples in terracotta from the ancient Moche, Huari, Chancay and Chimú civilizations that flourished in Peru before the Spanish conquest.