

## 40 Years of Patrons' History from 1983 to 2023

For 40 years, the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums have been passionate about arts' ability to inspire, elevate, and reveal the depths of the human spirit.

The Patrons' mission from the beginning has been to restore and conserve the cultural, spiritual, and historical works of art found throughout the Vatican Museums and to maintain the Museums facilities and multiple collections. We need to go back in time with an idea, an inspired project brought to the USA in 1969, when Monsignor Pasquale Macchi, secretary to Pope Paul VI, indicated to a small group of individuals that the Pope himself wished to create a collection of Modern Art within the Vatican Museums.

A committee, Friends of American Art in Religion, under the leadership of Cardinal Cooke, Larry Fleischman, and other prominent figures, was formed in New York to encourage artists, collectors and foundations to acquire new works of art for the Vatican Museums.

Their work continued to flourish with 54 new acquisitions, and the lingering idea of bringing a grand exhibit of Vatican art to the United States. Eventually, in 1983, it became a reality and the exhibition traveled to New York, Chicago, and San Francisco under the patronage of Saint Pope John Paul II.

The exhibition, The Vatican Collections: The Papacy and Art, consisting of 237 items, was warmly welcomed. People throughout the country witnessed Raphael's tapestries; sculptures such as the Apollo Belvedere and the Belvedere Torso; paintings by Fra Angelico, Perugino, Da Vinci, Caravaggio; modern works of Matisse and multicultural examples from the Ethnological Museums.

Toward the end of this spectacular tour, a collaborative idea was born between Walter Persegati from the Vatican and a small group of dedicated benefactors and philanthropists from New York, California, and Chicago. After twenty years of securing modern art - there was a drastic need for conservation. In 1983 the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums was formally launched in California, New York and other locales.

From the beginning, patronage has been fundamental to the restorations taking place within the Vatican Museums and the surrounding City State. Representing all corners of the world, we've been able to have a presence that goes beyond the galleries and gardens. Our Patrons have restored hundreds of various artworks and projects: marble statues, paintings, mosaics, altarpieces, fountains, and tapestries.

Our laboratories are internationally renowned for their excellence and for the professionalism of their restorers, scientists, and technicians. With several different laboratories, our Patrons have the opportunity to witness their work in an intimate and personal manner.

Along the way, we've been able to establish strong relationships with our committed members from around the globe for four decades, creating a vibrant Vatican Association that attracts Patrons, whose common passion is a love of art and a noble wish to pass on the joy, spirit, and beauty of its great works of the Vatican Museums for generations to come.