

Vatican Museums Report

Report Volume LXI

Winter 2024

Office of Relations with the Patrons
of the Arts in the Vatican Museums



From the Director of the Vatican Museums

DR. BARBARA JATTA

Dear Patrons,

Another year together!

After a very busy yet fruitful summer, during which I traveled to the United States visiting Minneapolis, Detroit and the Mackinac Island in Michigan, I had the privilege of welcoming many of you to Rome for visits and various events in the Vatican Museums.

In early October, we had the pleasure of hosting the **Asia Chapter** led by their enthusiastic leaders Ben and Kim Chang who guided our energetic group of Patrons through both new and historic sites across the Eternal City. One of the many highlights, was a conference held in the Old Synod Hall, located in the Apostolic Palace, which focused on the unique and important project of renovation of the windows of the Loggias of the Apostolic Palace.

In mid-October, the restored and world-famous **Apollo Belvedere** was unveiled in the Octagonal Courtyard. Many of you would recognize this classical sculpture from the numerous evening receptions held in the birthplace of the Vatican Museums. This beautiful work of art has been restored thanks to the Bank of America, the Italian and International Chapter, and with contributions from the Illinois and New York Chapters for the preliminary studies. The restoration, coordinated by Giandomenico Spinola, Deputy Artistic-Scientific Director and Claudia Valeri, Curator of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, was undertaken by the Stone Materials Restoration Laboratory in collaboration with the Cabinet of Scientific Research, gave back to the public the beauty of a statue that had been covered by scaffolding for almost five years. The monumental work underwent a delicate and careful restoration which has been the result of the skillful balance between technology and philology. I was also privileged to travel to the Metropolitan Institute of Art in Manhattan to celebrate art, culture and spirituality. On this occasion I was delighted to meet Donna D'Urso and members of the New York Chapter board.

At the end of October, the Vatican Museums greeted the **Canada Chapter**, led by our dear friends Debra and Tom Mauro. A large group of dedicated Patrons traveled to



Rome to view their project, the **Loggias of the Apostolic Palace**. Their visit included a celebration of Holy Mass in the Pauline Chapel, followed by a concert featuring The Tenors held in the Braccio Nuovo. I am very grateful to the members of the Canada Chapter for the generosity and enthusiasm they have placed in this project that will bring new light to the Apostolic Palace.

At the beginning of December, the Vatican Museums hosted a day of studies and conferences dedicated to the marvelous **Hercules Mastai**, an ancient gilded bronze statue restored thanks to the generous support of Rick and Lisa Altig, from the Northwest Chapter.

Finally, I would like to share with you a few inspiring words from the Holy Father regarding the Jubilee Year 2025: *"The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire; that is why I have chosen as the motto of the Jubilee, **Pilgrims of Hope**."*

It is my sincerest wish that you find hope, happiness and joy within your hearts. Please know how deeply we appreciate you, and always remember that the Vatican Museums stand ready to welcome you with gratitude and love.

From the Coordinator of the Office of Relations with the Patrons of the Arts

MONSIGNOR TERENCE HOGAN

My Dear Patrons and Friends,

With hearts full of gratitude and anticipation, I write to you from Rome as we commence the wonderful Jubilee 2025. Your unwavering dedication to preserving the treasures of the Vatican Museums continues to inspire all who pass through our storied and treasured halls.

Reflecting on the past months, it is remarkable to consider the myriad ways our Patrons have enriched not only the Vatican Museums, but also their shared understanding of art, culture and faith. I particularly note our mid-September Patron Chapter Leaders meeting in New Orleans. This annual meeting brings together those who voluntarily dedicate themselves to the mission of the Patrons by their leadership. The Secretary General, along with other representatives of the Vatican City State, updated the leaders on the new Guidelines for Patron Chapters that are so critical for maintaining transparency and collaboration between the Chapters and the Vatican. A special thanks to Patrons of the Louisiana Chapter, led by Michael Vales, Denice Derbes, Phyllis Taylor and the entire Louisiana Board. In October, we welcomed the Asia Chapter under the leadership of Kim and Ben Chang, whose members travelled to Rome to visit their restoration projects within the Vatican, but also to renew themselves in spirit. Mid-October brought another significant moment as the newly restored Apollo Belvedere returned to its rightful prominence in the Octagonal Courtyard.

Later that month, the Canada Chapter under the guidance of Debra and Tom Mauro graced Rome with their presence. Across the Atlantic, our Patron family continued to weave its tapestry of connection. In late October, I travelled with the Secretary General to join members of the Texas Chapter at St. Thomas University in Houston. The gathering was beautifully hosted by Lori and Doug Wrinkle and Dr. Richard Ludwick, President of St. Thomas University.

I then traveled to Chicago for a celebration of the Illinois Chapter's *Integrating Art & Faith* event, now in its tenth year and started through the initiative of Anne and Jack Shea. It was a privilege to meet with the Illinois Patrons, along with those who attended, especially Cardinal Blase J. Cupich and Sr. Raffaella Petrini, F.S.E.

In the month of December, as I visited Patrons in Minneapolis, Cleveland, New York, Detroit, and Washington, D.C.. These are opportunities to thank the work of the Chapter Leaders and boards, as well as to update our beloved Patrons on the tireless work of restoration that continues every day in the Vatican. The support and dedication of our Patrons remain the lifeblood of our efforts. Together, we not only preserve art, but we also uphold the sacred tradition of sharing its beauty with the world. The Jubilee Year of 2025 is a time of pilgrimage, prayer, renewal and hope. Millions will come from around the world to Rome and stand in awe at its current and ancient wonders. Dear Patrons, know that you have contributed to this wonder and awe, to the joy and inspiration that pilgrims will experience. May the art that you have restored lift spirits and inspire souls, and may God abundantly bless you because of your dedication and generosity.



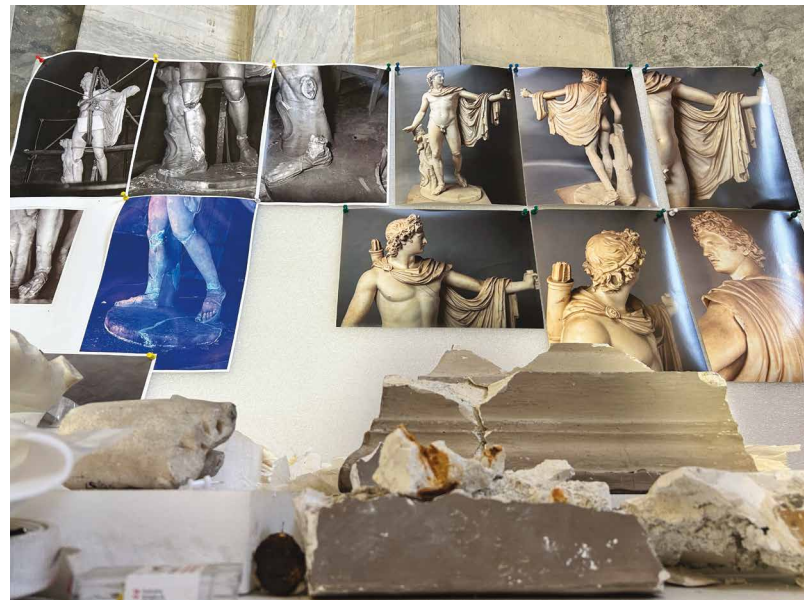
Thanks to Your Commitment

THESE PROJECTS ARE MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER

Apollo Belvedere

ITALIAN & INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER - Bank of America

The restoration of the Apollo del Belvedere, brought to the Vatican by Pope Julius II between 1508 and 1509, presented a significant challenge to the Vatican Museum Directorate. The statue was discovered in Rome on the Viminal Hill in 1489 and at the time Apollo must have been intact, missing only the left hand and fingers of the right hand. Between 1532 and 1533 a restoration was carried out by Montorsoli. The primary concern was to support the statue throughout the restoration process without disassembly or movement. A non-invasive approach was opted to support the sculpture. Under the supervision of master **Guy Devreux** from the Stone Materials Laboratory, with restorer **Valentina Felici** and the help of advanced technology, a rear element in carbon fiber was anchored



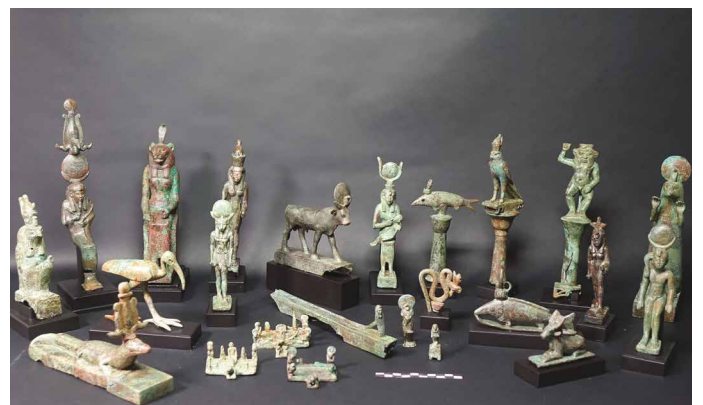
to the base utilizing existing holes and recesses. In 1954, hundreds of fragments belonging to an important copyist workshop were found in Baia, among these fragments the missing hand of the Apollo Belvedere was recognized. After many tests carried out by **Prof. Santamaria** and **Fabio Morresi** from the Scientific Research Laboratory, restorer **Andrea Felice** was able to cast the hand of Apollo. It seemed appropriate to take the opportunity to give Apollo his 'original hand' back (entirely reversible) and the result is very exciting and convincing.

Twenty-five Bronze Statuettes

FLORIDA CHAPTER - Thomas Zoppo & Family

These twenty-five bronze statuettes constitute one of the most characteristic artistic forms of Pharaoh dynastic Egypt. There are votive figurines, decorative elements, parts of objects made of bronze and wood, and animal sarcophagi. They are generally dated between the Late Period (XXV-XXVI dynasties) and the Greco-Roman Period (3rd century B.C. - 2nd century A.D.).

The statuettes were restored by restorer **Alice Baltera** coordinated by **Flavia Callori di Vignale** in the Metal and Ceramics Laboratory. The colors of the bronze were altered by waxes and colored putty in reddish tones that camouflaged the reconstruction work and the integration of missing parts, which had been carried out in recent times. The restorer decided to conserve some recent additions for static structural or aesthetic reasons and



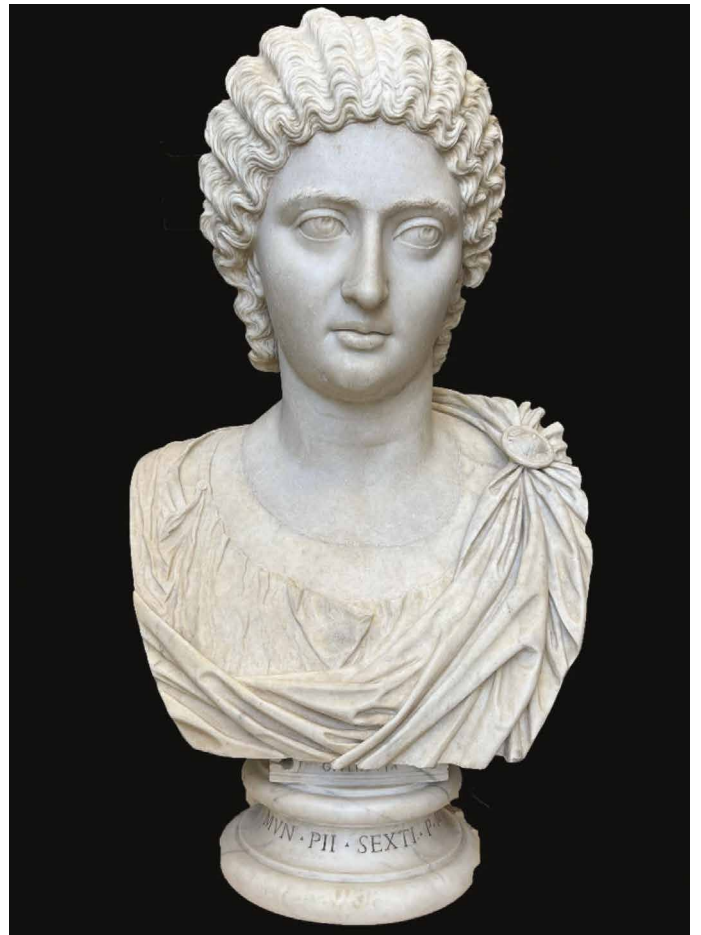
to document the early 20th century. The restorer, for the highly corroded objects and, in particular, for the small votive offering tablets performed a treatment to extract the harmful soluble salts, carried out using a washing cycle in demineralized water, lasting several weeks and concluded by a stabilizing chemical procedure, specific for bronze.

Colossal Portrait of Giulia Domna

CALIFORNIA & NORTHWEST CHAPTERS - Gail James

The portrait sculpture of Giulia Domna was found in 1780 by Giovanni Volpato and acquired by the Vatican Museums in 1781. Initially it was identified as the Augustan Empress Julia (Pia) Domna by Ennio Q. Visconti in the 18th century, but recent bibliography proposed a more plausible attribution to Giulia Sohemia, given the strong resemblance to the portrait of Emperor Heliogabalus, her son. The sculpture, restored thanks to **Agata Bordi** under the supervision of **Guy Devreux**, was very opaque and darkened and showed stains of various kinds and unevenness between the surface of the head because of ancient workmanship.

The restoration included the dry removal of deposits and cleaning with both gel and laser, after which the restorer was busy with sealing and micro-sealing with suitable materials compatible with the original and concluded the restoration with an application of a final protective coating.



Litanies of the Virgin Mary

CALIFORNIA AND NORTHWEST CHAPTER - in honor of Father Jordan Bradshaw

This painting was made by Mario Deluigi in 1949. The Litanies of the Virgin Mary represents an interesting example of a comparison between language influenced by abstract experience and the visualization of a prayer. The artist developed the theme with geometric shapes, spheres and hemispheres, rectangles of different sizes, and crosses. Mario Deluigi's work, is also a tribute to "Victory Boogie-Woogie" by Mondrian. The restoration consisted in four major phases: scientific studies by the Scientific Research Laboratory; consolidation of the pictorial preparation/color layer thanks to restorer **Rossana Giardina**, and for the wooden part our thanks to **Massimo Alesi** and **Marco De Pillis**. The cleaning of the painted surface to recover the original color relationship, and plastering chromatic reintegration and final painting



finalized the restoration. After these stages, the new aluminum frame was mounted on the original wooden structure to allow the painting to be displayed on the wall in a rhomboid shape, respecting the intention of the artist.

Ongoing Restorations

THESE PROJECTS WILL BE COMPLETED SOON

Adoration of the Magi Tapestry

MICHIGAN & NEW YORK CHAPTERS - Linda Del Rio

This tapestry is part of the so-called 'New School' series, consisting of 12 pieces depicting stories from the Life of Christ. Completed at the time of Pope Clement VII (1523-1534), the ensemble was made to design by Raphael's pupils in the atelier of Pieter van Aelst in Brussels.

A photographic campaign was carried out to document the state of preservation. To be able to photograph the front, the tapestry - in the Tapestry and Textiles Laboratory - was first unlined, and, where possible, restorers **Emanuela Pignataro**, **Laura Pace Morino**, **Viola Ceppetelli** e **Sr. Be Sau Nguyen** took care of washing



the tapestry. Restorers **Chiara Pavan**, coordinator of the laboratory with **Sr. Maria Smolen** and **Sr. Shiromi Weragoda** placed the tapestry on two frames. Stability tests were carried out on the yarns to see if there were any dyes that could cause problems during washing. All the restorers help in the important phase of the washing which consists of removing restorations that cause tension and deformation and, the removal of yarns that could lose their color during washing. This crucial and delicate operation can take up to several months.



Rospigliosi Triptych

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

Donated by Prince Altieri to Pope Leo XIII in 1888, this work consists of three panels executed in tempera and fitted with a richly carved and gilded frame made by Bartolomeo di Tommaso da Foligno. The triptych's central panel depicts the Coronation of the Virgin, and the two side panels illustrate the Nativity of Jesus (left) and the Adoration of the Magi (right).

The restorers **Massimo Alesi** and **Marco De Pillis** have completed the wooden restoration and the revision of the parquet on the central panel. Meanwhile restorer **Stefano Tombesi** is working on the carved and gilded frame.

Restorer **Alessandra Zarelli**, is working on the cleaning of the left and right panel. The removal of the oxidized varnish allows the splendid colors of the paintings to be restored and, at the same time, the correct depth of perspective planes and minute details to be appreciated again. The restoration of the central panel will begin by removing the protective varnish and cleaning the painted surface.

Silvers of the Regolini-Galassi Tomb

Hazelwood Family

In 1836 Archpriest Alessandro Regolini and General Vincenzo Galassi discovered one of the richest and most famously decorated Etruscan tombs. The main burial was for an interred woman with affluent clothing and fine jewelry. These countless fragments pertaining to silver vessels and ornaments were inside the tomb and are now undergoing studies for the first time. A long and careful study was carried out by restorer **Fabiana Francescangeli** of the Metal and Ceramics Laboratory, coordinated by **Flavia Callori di Vignale**, to identify the different pieces and divide them into groups with similar embossing, thickness, or geometric shapes. This identification was proven difficult due to the heavy brownish layer of oxidation. After reinforcing the silver foil with Japanese paper and reversible glue, the restorer cleaned the pieces in a chelating solution. Finally, after drying, a transparent reversible lacquer was applied to protect the silver surface.



Head of Faustina Major (the Elder)

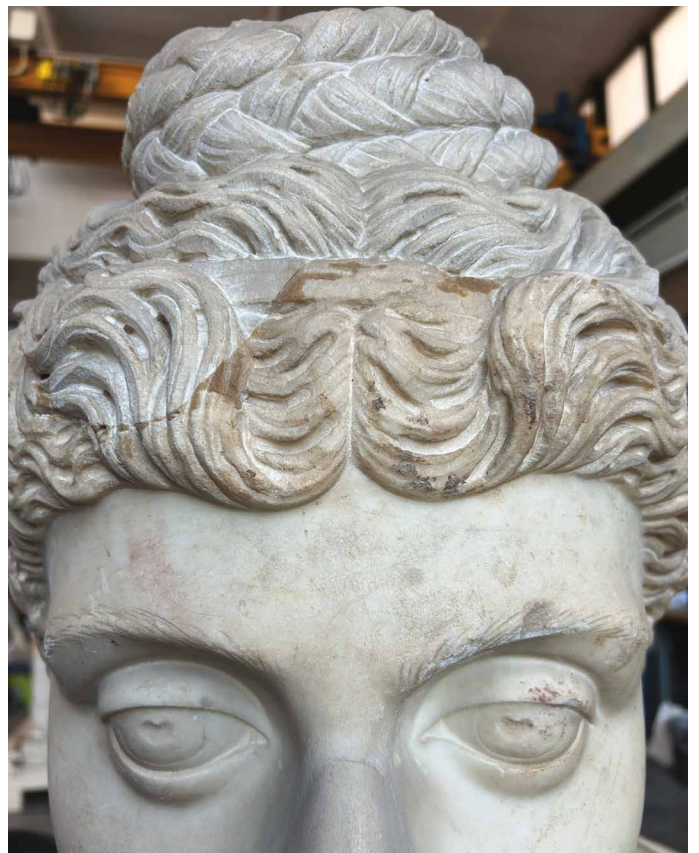
WASHINGTON D.C. CHAPTER

This portrait depicts Faustina Major (the Elder), who married Emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.).

The head was discovered in 1769 near the Greek Theatre of the Grand Villa Adriana by Gavin Hamilton and was sold to Pope Pius VI in 1776 and mounted on a bust executed by papal restorer Giovanni Pierantoni after which it was displayed in the Sala Rotonda.

After diagnostic investigations were performed by the Scientific Research Laboratory, the Stone Materials Laboratory, thanks to restorer **Michela Gottardo**, started working on the structural verification of the bond between the torso and head.

Then dry removal of incoherent surface deposits with specific micro vacuum cleaners and paint brushes was performed. Chemical and physical cleaning was applied to remove consistent and adherent surface deposits like greasy dusts, waxes etc. The final procedure in restoration consists of an application of a protective coat.



Chapter Visits

FALL 2024

The 2024 fall was marked by many Patrons' events and visits. On October 1-3 the ORPAVM welcomed the Asia Chapter with Ben Chang.

From October 28-31 the Vatican also received the Canada Chapter, led by Debra Mauro. Both the Asia Chapter and the Canada Chapter had the chance to explore not only the beautiful artistic collection of the Vatican Museums, but also other special venues within the Vatican City State, such as the fascinating Swiss Guard Barracks. Their visits were furtherly enriched by an in-depth conference on the special project for the renovation of the windows of the Loggias of the Apostolica Palace.

Moreover, on October 14th the Italian and International Patrons with Sabrina Zappia attended the preview of the

inauguration of the renewed Apollo Belvedere, brought back to its ancient beauty thanks to the Illinois and the New York Chapters (preliminary studies), and the Bank of America with the Italian & International Chapter (restoration).

To conclude the Chapter Visits' season, on November 12th Liana Marabini accompanied the Côte d'Azur Chapter with on an evening visit to the Sistine Chapel and to the Modern and Contemporary Art Department, followed by an elegant gala dinner in the Gallery of the Busts and Statues of the Vatican Museums. Once again, Patrons from all over the world, demonstrated their common passion for art and their devotion to the Vatican. Thank you!



From left to right: Mons. Terence Hogan, Andrea Felice, Valentina Felici, Guy Devreux, Fabio Morresi, Cardinal Fernando Vérgez Alzaga, L.C., Alberto Albanesi, Sabrina Zappia, Giandomenico Spinola, Barbara Jatta and Claudia Valeri



The Asia Chapter with Cardinal Fernando Vérgez Alzaga, L.C., in the Chapel of the Governorate



The Canada Chapter with Cardinal James Michael Harvey in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls



The Côte d'Azur Chapter in the Pio Clementino Museum

Patrons in the Vatican

OUR DAILY VISITS



Matthew Dawson and Family (MI) in the Tapestry and Textiles Laboratory



Mark and Julie Pulte (MI) in front of Apollo Belvedere



From Left: Lindy Nieuwpoort (ORPAVM), Ricardo and Dinah Calderon (CA) and PAVM guide, Caterina Zagaria



Maureen and Honora Shaughnessy (CANADA) with Mons. Terence Hogan in the ORPAVM office



From left: curator Micol Forti, Jan Vallone and Fr. Michael Glover (NW)



Delegation from the Thrivent Foundation and Johan van Parys (M&ND) in St. Stephen of the Abyssinians Church



From left: Restorer Stefania Colesanti with Julie and Bob Reveley (FL) and curator Micol Forti in the Painting and Wood Laboratory



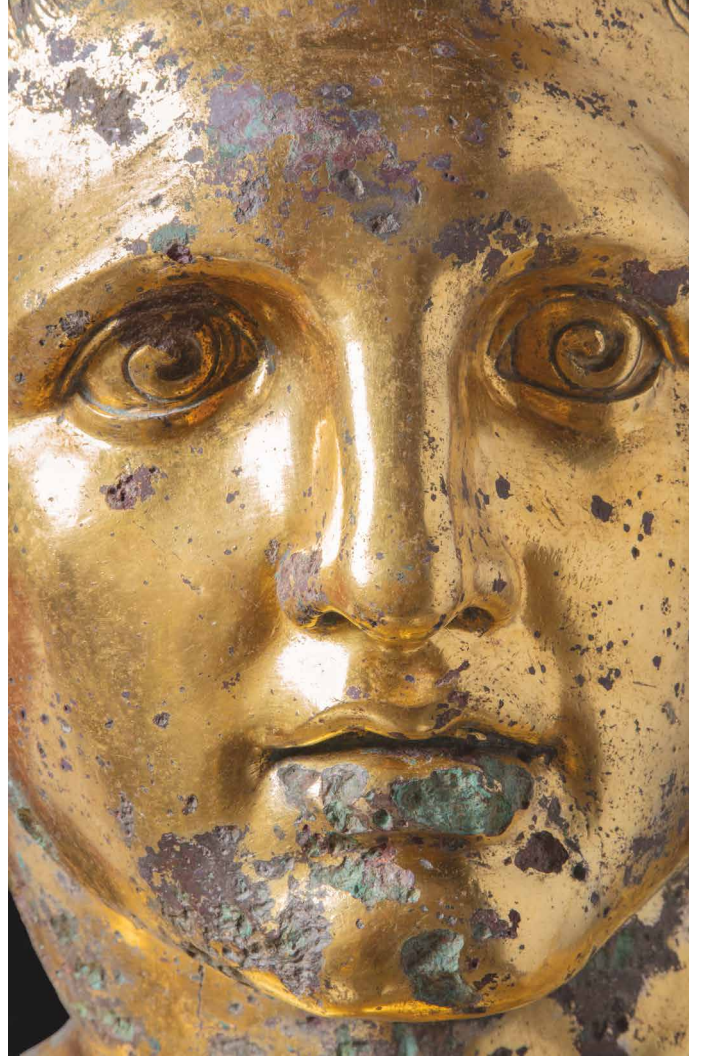
From left: Molly Fitch, Kevin O'Reilly, Meghan Fitch, Mark D'Urso, Anne Marie Fitch (NY) with Mons. Hogan on the ORPAVM terrace

Hercules Mastai

Focusing on the colossal bronze statue of the Hercules Mastai, in light of the recent conservation work carried out thanks to the generous support of **Rick and Lisa Altig** of the California & Northwest Chapter of the Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums.

Housed in the Round Hall of the Pio Clementino Museum, this imposing Roman-era statue (390–370 BC) has been the subject of an extensive and complex study and restoration project. The initiative was coordinated by the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities and executed by the Metals and Ceramics Laboratory, in collaboration with the Scientific Research Laboratory.

“We approached this restoration,” remarked Director Barbara Jatta, “with full awareness of the exceptional nature of this piece, located at the heart of the Pope’s Museums, among the masterpieces of the Pio Clementino’s collection of ancient art. Since its arrival, Hercules has occupied a place of honor in the focal niche of the Round Room.”





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OFFICE OF RELATIONS WITH THE PATRONS OF THE ARTS IN THE VATICAN MUSEUMS

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