

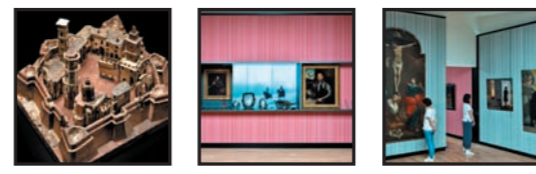
With the opening of the second floor of Palazzo dei Musei (Palace of Museums), the Musei Civici di Reggio Emilia (Municipal Museums of Reggio Emilia) has brought a long redevelopment phase to an end for its collections and for the meaning which the museum has acquired

within the community, in an increasingly complex and ever-changing world. It has been a decade of collective work where Italo Rota and the curators of the collections have used the Museum's heritage in a continuous dialogue between visions of exhibitions,

scientific requirements and encouragement to participate. In the new layout, visitors are invited to immerse themselves in a huge archive of common heritage: this approach organises the items through various narrative levels, links

between space and time, and meetings between different worlds and subjects. This is the image of the New Museum, a shared collective space for the 21st century, where history, cultural heritage, images and technology share one space and one idea for the future.

The history of Reggio Emilia is deeply intertwined with the history of the Este family, which controlled the region from 1409 up to the Unification of Italy, stimulating the city's economic recovery and the development of knowledge and culture, but also decreasing its prestige and autonomy. These halls therefore feature the figures who characterised the centuries of Este control.



WE AND THE ESTE



CONNECTS YOU WITH:

PARMEGGIANI GALLERY
ZOOLOGY COLLECTION
C-LAB
MUSEUM OF THE TRICOLOUR FLAG
MUSEUM OF THE BEATA VERGINE DELLA GHIARA SANCTUARY



CONNECTS YOU WITH:

PANIZZI LIBRARY
EUROPEAN PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO AFFECTION



This journey had to include a reflection on photography, considering the role that it plays in the city's history, which is reflected in the important, rich Photo Library at Biblioteca Panizzi (Panizzi Library), in the European Photography festival, in the Young Italian Photography project and in the heartfelt participation in Circuito Off. Palazzo dei Musei (Palace of Museums) therefore decided to allocate permanent space to Ghirri's work and to showcase the European Photography Collection, while also creating "meeting" spaces between objects and photography all throughout the exhibition, which interact to create new food for thought. For preservation, the photography sections will be regularly reorganised, which will help create different new juxtapositions with the museum's works every time.

THE NEW ACCESS



I AM MUSEUM



CONNECTS YOU WITH:

PARMEGGIANI GALLERY
MUSEUM OF THE TRICOLOUR FLAG
ARTS LIBRARY
MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF PSYCHIATRY



CONNECTS YOU WITH:

GAETANO CHERICI
MUSEUM OF PALETHNOLOGY

ARCHEO-LOGOS



The new spaces dedicated to the ancient world tell the story of people from around Reggio Emilia, identifying their origins and dynamics with the territory, climate and environment, from the Prehistoric Period to the Early Middle Ages. The factor that affects development in the region more than anything else is communication routes, which have passed through this stretch of the Po Valley since time immemorial, a real connection between the Mediterranean world and Continental Europe. The exhibition plan opens up new ways of understanding the content on display, allowing comparisons and connections between different eras and cultures, and revealing the region's identity from unexpected perspectives.

ENTRANCE FROM SECOND FLOOR

ARCHEO-LOGOS

- 1 The skeleton of *Ursus spelaeus*, with its back turned towards a stone-chipping workshop, introduces you to the age of Palaeolithic hunters, whose hunting stations were concentrated on the high plain. Then in the Mesolithic Period, the end of the Ice Age also opened up the mountainous ridges of the Apennines to mankind. A wolf follows a man as he hunts for small prey around the mountain lakes, as that domestication process had now begun which turned wolves into dogs. The special varied environment in this area is key for the arrival of fixed groups of humans, who introduced agriculture and livestock there for the first time and influenced the development of Chalcolithic culture.
- 2 In the "parallel corridor" to the one used for the main narrative journey, there is a special focus on the Neolithic necropolis of Chiozza in Scandiano, with seven tombs on display, immersed in the dark and with a mirror above so visitors can just see a reflection of the dead.
- 3 The first cart paths, which retraced pre-existing transit routes, connected the network of large Bronze Age villages, known as Terramare settlements.

- 4 The fall of Terramare civilisation, a devastating event that led to a long demographic and cultural crisis and to the end of that world, is shown as a real "crash", described through the reconstruction of an abandoned hut. This narrative journey through Prehistoric Reggio Emilia really links back up with the historical collections through the Prehistoric archaeologist Father Gaetano Chierici. An absolutely key figure in Italian culture of the 1900s and one of the first people to apply scientific methodologies to archaeology, Chierici, whose 200th birthday was recently celebrated by the Musei Civici (Municipal Museums), founded the Museo di Storia Patria (Museum of National History) of Reggio Emilia in 1870. The new prehistory and protohistory section "splits in two", creating a parallel, complementary journey to the chronological route, which shows the subjects of Chierici's scientific work: stratigraphy, taxonomy, the contribution offered by natural and earth sciences, and comparativism. Placed in contrast to these issues, objects and contexts are on display from archaeological digs in Reggio Emilia carried out in recent years, which have been scientifically conducted and documented.
- 5 The journey continues by dealing with the archaic period of the Iron Age, introduced through the small bronze praying statue known as the "Guerrigero di Reggio Emilia" (Warrior of Reggio Emilia) and shown through the oldest evidence of Etruscan civilisation, such as engraved tomb stones from Rubiera, an incredibly rare bronze cooking pot and funerary vases with a selection of grave goods.

- 6 The adjacent area has five women's *parures*: necklace beads lined up on the chest, shoulder clasps, bracelets on the arms, hair pins on women with faint outlines created by the light in an everlasting back and forth between life and death which reminds us what these wonderful items were used for.
- 7 The engraved inscriptions on display show early "literacy" around Reggio Emilia through the spread of traditional local and Etruscan names. They are followed by items from the full Etruscan period from homes and funeral monuments, made locally or with Greek and South Italian imports. They are gathered together in a display that evokes an ancient *emporium*, including food pots, metals and pottery: at this time, settlements were organised along a special route, which would later be retraced by the Roman *Aemilian Way*. The period before Romanisation ended with a series of events that took place on the peaks of the Reggio Emilia Apennines, the scene for the final dogged Ligurian resistance before the arrival of Roman power. The "Monta Solare" by Fausto Melotti is the perfect end, with its references to original myths from Western culture, a period of history in this region that gives way to another one, Romanisation.
- 8 The age of Roman domination is introduced through the reconstruction of a field tent, a *praetorium*, which symbolises the conquest of the Cispadane Republic, led by the consul Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, who the region of

- 9 Emilia Romagna was named after and the founder of the city of Reggio Emilia. His portrait is on display inside the tent.
- 10 This section is dedicated to the history of the region in Roman times, with a special focus on roads and evidence from other urban centres around Reggio Emilia, such as *Brixellum*, *Tanretum* and *Luceria*. A special display is reserved for the late antiquity treasure of Reggio Emilia, which includes precious jewellery and gold coins, hidden during the war between Odoacer and Theodoric, bringing in a new period of cultural and demographic crisis that would drastically change the region's settlements, economy and administration. The archaeological section ends with an exhibition of finds from the Early Middle Ages, including early Christian inscriptions on display with Christian objects from different eras and sources, together with Lombard grave goods. In connection with the Roman *Aemilian Way*, this section displays a selection of works from "Esplorazioni sulla via Emilia" (Explorations along the *Aemilian Way*), a major photography project from 1980 involving, among others, Olivo Barbieri, Gabriele Basilico, Luigi Ghirri, and Mimmo Jodice.

- 11 This huge 20-metre diorama includes a sort of glossary of the collections and subjects of the museum, a space where works of art, photographs, documents, taxidermy, objects of industrial art and from other cultures help us understand the working method. The photographs taken from the "Ersatz Lights" series by Olivo Barbieri, through pictures taken from all over the world, convey the global context with which the museum objects ideally interact. This large display, halfway between museum exhibition and installation, makes the local dimension resonate with the international side, starting with objects from artistic, historical and scientific collections, as well as loans from several incredibly important public and private cultural collections in the region. The history of the city and museum is compared with objects from all over the world and with the most significant products of material culture, linking masterpieces with documents. The museum is an "archive of common heritage", according to the famous definition by Claire Bishop, which groups together works, objects and history without any hierarchies or subject limits in a united universal concept of culture. The storage room therefore becomes an essential element, intended as a space that is alive and a wealth of history which poses interesting issues and questions to the community and citizens about who we are, where we come from and where we are going, new residents can understand and immerse themselves in these issues, making the museum productive as it expresses itself through visitors' creativity.

- 12 The history of Reggio Emilia is deeply intertwined with the history of the Este family, which controlled the region from 1409 up to the Unification of Italy. These halls therefore feature the figures who characterised the centuries of Este control. The first one is the great Renaissance poet, Ludovico Ariosto, who surpassed the boundaries of space and time with his "Orlando Furioso"; he stayed in Reggio Emilia at the family villa known as Il Maurizioano, whose garden contains the first collector's example of ancient art in the city. The poet's portrait forms the backdrop for a rare sixteenth-century edition of Chivalric poetry, from the priceless collection of ancient editions of the "Orlando Furioso" held at Biblioteca Panizzi (Panizzi Library).
- 13 The seventeenth century saw women take centre stage. Firstly, there is the Madonna della Ghiara, which protected the city during the plague, but also brought about major art commissions: the collection of the Basilica della Ghiara has provided a priceless chalice drape showing the Tree of Jesse, a chasuble made with the wedding dress of Beatrice Ricciarda d'Este, and a cross that is part of an altar furnishing donated by Francesco I d'Este. Some of the greatest works of art from the period can be traced back to this climate, such as "Compianto sul Cristo morto" (Mourning over the dead Christ) by Palma il Giovane commissioned by countess Camilla Brami for her chapel at the Cathedral, for which the preparatory sketch is on display. This journey is completed by the display case dedicated to the art of silk, the memory of a tradition which has continued up until the present day.
- 14 The eighteenth century is packed with history and culture, and saw the construction of the Reggia di Rivaita palace by Francesco III d'Este and his wife Charlotte d'Orléans. The development of the theatre made the city an important centre for the production of the performing arts, with the Museums holding many important items, as proven by an impressive display. This century was also characterised by the development of science: firstly, there was Lazzaro Spallanzani, but tribute is also paid to Bonaventura Corti, Antonio Vallisneri, Giovan Battista Venturi and Leopoldo Nobili: the Age of Enlightenment accompanied Reggio Emilia with the key event of the first Italian flag heading

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- 16 The hall entitled People is a meeting point and connection between comparing eras. Evidence of the Risorgimento from the Museo del Tricolore (Museum of the Tricolour Flag) are referred to in the works "Così va il mondo" (That's how the world goes) by Cirillo Manicardi, which portrays rural traditions, and "Gruppo di comornenti" (Group of members of the Painters' Cooperative of Reggio Emilia) by Augusto Mussini. On the opposite side, daguerreotypes of soldiers from the Risorgimento interact with people from Reggio Emilia in the "Emilia" photography project, which leads into the photography section.

- 17 Organised into themed sections, the nineteenth-century hall lets you follow the major subjects of art from that century: the oeuvres of portraits and self-portraits of painters goes deeper into the role of the artist, while the reconstruction of Alfonso Chierici's studio describes the foundations of academic culture, and the salon with its purplish walls brings together paintings from Reggio Emilia artists according to nineteenth-century exhibition methods. Antonio Fontanesi's famous stay in Japan creates a comparison with a large Japanese screen, while in the name of music and its patriotic function, Giraud's Indian costumes, a tenor from Parma, are brought back to life.
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- 19 Designed in collaboration with the Archivio Eredi Luigi Ghirri, this section dedicated to him will permanently display his works, offering an annual exhibition that seeks to pay tribute to his rich, structured production. Ghirri is considered one of the most influential contemporary photographers. His research, which focused on issues relating to perception and representation, is examined by an extensive theory which presents elements of reflection on the basic rules of images. The first selection presented comes from the album "Paesaggi di cartone" (Cardboard Landscapes, 1971-1973), recently rediscovered by the Museum of Modern Art in New York: they include poster pictures, shop windows, advertising signs, and other images that describe the increasingly frequent use of photography in those years. The goal of this theoretical system, which results in simple, seemingly small colourful images taken in urban spaces, is to reflect on the complexity of reality that became increasingly layered and hard to interpret. The Photo Library at Biblioteca Panizzi (Panizzi Library) holds Luigi Ghirri's collection of negatives and slides, with over 180,000 items.
- 20 > 24 This section of photographs opens with the exhibition "La trama del visibile" (The weave of the visible) and starts from the European Photography collection, together with loans and specific patronages to create an evolving journey which,

- through different interpretations each time, questions photography and the future of images. The first subject addressed is materiality and it highlights how photography is, first and foremost, an object that exists in space and time by presenting authors' work who, including through direct action, questioned the subject matter that constitutes photography, revealing the essence of the image and its metabolism. This section is inspiration for wider research that seeks to update and explore the problems tackled by authors such as: Luigi Veronesi, Nino Migliori, Franco Vaccari, Paolo Gioli, Davide Mosconi, Aldo Tagliaferro, Franco Vimercati, Marina Ballo Charmet, Paola Di Ballo, Paola de Pietri, Joan Fontcuberta, Patrizio Esposito, Bernard Plossu, Mario Dondero, Klavdij Sluban, Sarah Moon, Seba Kurtis, Arianna Arcara, Luca Santese, Batia Suter, Simone Schiesari and Lorenzo Vitturi.

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