



## *Online Window into the Library*

*«Avvisi» dalla Vaticana*

### *The Durbeck Archive, music and more*

The Durbeck Archive, the world's largest private collection of classical vocal music on long-playing records, documenting the entire LP era 1950 to 1990, was recently donated to the Vatican Library.

Since the advent of long-playing records (LP - 33 1/3rd RPM) in 1949, Edward F. Durbeck III (1934-2021) had a single purpose: to create the most comprehensive representation of recorded classical vocal music. This repository now comes the Vatican Library with its 60,000 records and accompanying materials. All genres of music in the development of classical western vocal art from the first centuries to the 20th century, both sacred and secular music are represented.



The archive's goal of "having it all" constitutes a resource of great importance for the discographer, researcher, or pedagogue, such vast comparative material is invaluable for understanding music interpretation, era stylization, and other various technical and cultural developments of vocal performance. Consideration is also given to the LP jackets and liner notes. In this regard, the Durbeck Archive is a formidable first-edition library. Edition variations of the printed collateral provide an important contribution to the significance and understanding of the recorded music and conveys an entire cultural *milieu* which transcends the mere sound in the grooves.



The Durbeck Archive is assembled by the passion of a connoisseur of the subject, who worked in the world of discography and rare editions. Throughout his life, the collector was aided by his spouse, Klara, while the collection grew to represent a uniqueness *sui generis*. In addition to the records are some 6,000 volumes representing "the footnotes to the sound in the grooves" consisting of biography of singers, conductors, directors, composers, and other performance figures, vocal treatises, literary scores of opera, opera scores, record discographies, annals and histories of opera houses. In addition to the records and books, there are collections of personal papers, correspondence, photographs, and concert programs from notable singers.

This completeness and intricate interrelation for all its components makes it "the reference beyond the reference". Moreover, thousands of discs and books bear the autographs of composers, singers, conductors, accompanists, directors, librettists, poets, musicologists, and writers. These autographs are the *imprimatur* of the artist - a personal endorsement of the work - and provide a spiritual link and a historical presence to the epochs of many artists careers.



Edward F. Durbeck, III, 1934-2021

Mr. Durbeck wished his Archive to have a suitable home, and for this reason, his wife of 35 years, Klara, who shared his vision and dedication, approached the Vatican Library with enthusiasm and trust in our institution, which has always been committed to the preservation and protection of cultural heritage.

Until now the Apostolic Library has preserved very few audio documents in its audiovisual section. Like other libraries, and even more than other libraries, the Vatican Library experiences a great problem of space when it comes to the preservation of its collections, since it is located in a sixteenth-century building with no possibility of expansion. The question arose about whether to accept such a gift, which was generous but not exactly in line with the tradition of the Vatican Library, which does preserve many musical works, but mostly ones in manuscripts and printed works.

Right around the time when the offer arrived from Mrs. Durbeck, people inside the Vatican were beginning to talk about the possibility of establishing a "Vatican Mediatheque."

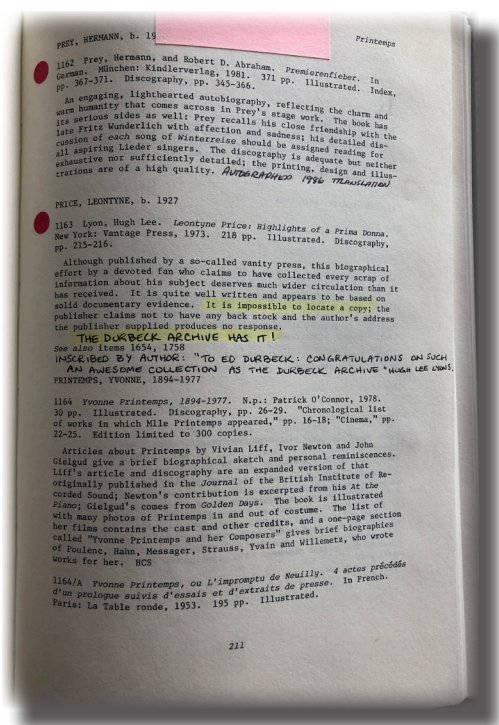
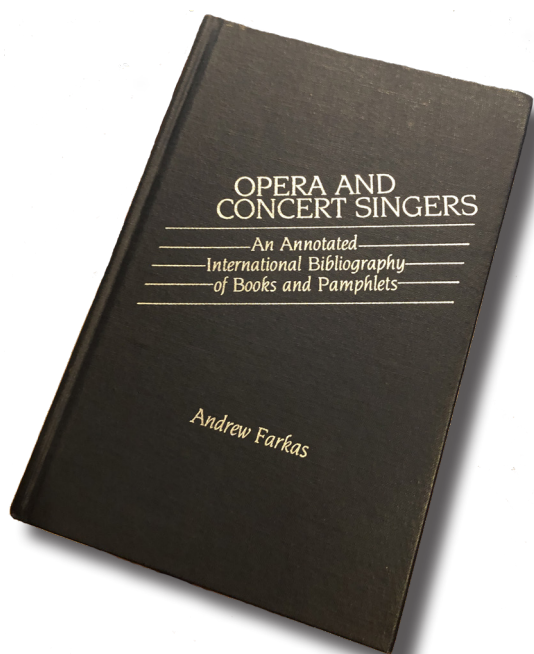


This helped in the discernment process, and it was decided that such a gift could not fail to be accepted. With the arrival of this collection, the Library launches a new collection of musical materials, with the desire to make it available to scholars and music lovers.

Coming from halfway around the world from Oceanside, in San Diego County, California, the Durbeck Archive will now be housed in the Vatican. To accommodate it, a temporary, but completely adequate storage facility has been made available to the Apostolic Library. Later, a media library with ample space will be created to preserve music with rooms for listening and study, but also, possibly, for musical performance.



Part of the Durbeck Archive



We are grateful to Mrs. Durbeck, not only for the munificent gift, but also for the way in which her enthusiasm inspired the finding of a "home" for the proper preservation and enjoyment of the Durbeck Archive. A special acknowledgment also to Mr. Frank Castagna, of Cave Creek, Arizona, without whose inspiration for the initial communication we would not have met Klara.

Moreover they provided for the transportation of the archive to the Vatican, and personally oversaw all the packaging of the material for transport, marked each of the boxes, and prepared an inventory of their contents.

Heartfelt thanks to Klara and Frank!



Klara Durbeck

## *Anniversaries of the Schools of the Archives and Library 140 and 90 years after their foundation*



n celebration of the anniversaries of the School of Paleography and Diplomatics (and later School of Paleography, Diplomatic studies and Archivistics) of the Apostolic Archives and the School of Library Science of the Vatican Library, 140 and 90 respectively since their founding, an event was held on May 13 at the Pontifical Urbaniana University. The two institutions have a long history, shaped by educational proposals for archives and library professionals and one that has always aimed to adapt to the times and needs of research and scholars.

The day was opened by the meeting with the Holy Father, who greeted all the participants by highlighting the importance of the work of librarians and archivists in supporting “with all willingness, people who, as the evangelist Luke says in the prologue of his Gospel, decide to follow all things closely ... that you may know the truth. Yours is truly a service to the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed in the Christian and human sense (cf. Lk. 1:3-4),” Pope Francis stressed.

In his remarks, H.E. Msgr. Sergio Pagano, prefect of the Vatican Apostolic Archives, quoted Msgr. Isidoro Carini, the first professor of the School of Paleography, who worked in the Archives and was later Prefect of the Vatican Library: “The true study of history is the study of its sources. Archives and libraries are the repositories, paleography is the key that introduces, diplomatics is the torch that allows you to see.”

The School of the Archives was established by Leo XIII Pecci, who had opened the Archives of the Holy See to scholars in 1881 so that they could learn about historical realities through the study of documents, sources, and as

Pope Pecci emphasized at the time, “so that bare accounts be set against laborious and patient investigation; the superficiality of judgments against the maturity of judgments; the fickleness of opinions against the sobriety of a critical spirit. Let all that is possible be done in order that misrepresented or supposed facts be set to true light by taking recourse to sources.”

And the School of Paleography and Diplomatics, which came into being only three years later, was part of that climate full of new creations aimed “to promoting and refining the solid studies of history concerning the Pontificate and the Church, and to training young Clergy in the knowledge and illustration of the documents that refer to it.”

The Vatican Library’s School of Library Science was established by the librarian pope, Pius XI Ratti, in 1934, after the experience gained through collaboration with American institutions that led to the modernization of the Library, which was carried out between 1927 and 1947 in various areas. Among other things, new ways of working were in place for cataloguing and re-cataloguing of printed collections in accordance with the most modern regulations then available. An internal cataloguing code of norms, the *Norme per il catalogo degli stampati*, was published in 1931 and became a subject of teaching in the School. With eminently practical objectives, it aimed to teach Library services: how to care for books and increase collections, how to describe them in order to make them usable and enhance their value, by means of procedures developed through experience gained by collaboration and exchange with others.





*The Prefects of the Library and Archives and directors of the respective schools: don Mauro Mantovani and H.E. Msgr. Sergio Pagano*

“With the work of training the cataloguers, who applied and spread the knowledge of the new norms,” recalled Library Prefect Don Mauro Mantovani, “the School increasingly distinguished itself as a modern and appreciated scientific institution in the field of library science.”

The day provided an opportunity for the two centers of higher education to compare and deepen their knowledge, “to review the history and purpose of the two schools with a vision toward future prospects,” stated H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani, who represents both institutions as the Archivist and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church.

In recent years, new possibilities have opened up for the schools, thanks to technology that is evolving ever more rapidly and proposing new instruments and new approaches to the cultural sphere as well. Other methods of service will have to be experimented and proposed. The Schools will be a point of reference as a kind of “living” laboratory in order to rethink how to reach the users of the historical and cultural records that archives and libraries preserve.


The indisputable importance of the humanistic dimension of memory to be preserved, enhanced, and promoted for generations to come will have to be reconsidered in the light of the new situations that are approaching, which will further modify our view of things and present new demands.



*The former sites of the Schools of Library Science and Paleography, Diplomatics and Archival Studies*

*Preservation of historical documents and technology:  
ten years of collaboration between the Vatican Library and NTT Data*



 In the afternoon of April 10, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the collaboration between the Vatican Library and NTT Data Group Corporation, the well-established relationship between the parties was celebrated in the Sistine Hall in the presence of the authorities of the Library and the Japanese company. A group of guests of the company from different countries also participated. The meeting was structured around the theme, “How innovation and technology help preserve and disseminate human heritage.”

After a brief historical introduction by the Librarian, H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani, the President of the society, Kazuhiro Nishihata, welcomed the participants. Paola Manoni, head of the Library’s Information Technology Services Coordination, briefly reviewed the most prominent phases of the project, which over time has developed and been enriched with the possibility of carrying out comparative studies on different sources through interoperability among institutions that share the IIIF (International Image Interoperability Framework) standard.

Some features of the digital library ([DVL](#)) and the possibilities that the site allows through software like AMLAD (Advanced Museum Library Archives Deposit) were highlighted, while it was also mentioned how new implementations are being studied for the further development of the project through Web3 technology. The head of AMLAD's development, Asahi Hasabe, highlighted the importance of preservation and the support of digitization to sustain and disseminate it. Through the initiative undertaken for the better preservation of ancient documents and their dissemination through digital version, the Vatican Library has so far digitized and published nearly 30,000 manuscripts online of the 80,000 stored in its repositories, for all to consult from their computers.





## *Interdisciplinary studies on the statue "of Saint Hippolytus"*

The statue known as "of St. Hippolytus", a historical monument that came as a product of the sixteenth-century assembly of Roman and contemporary components, was placed in a space of the ancient Vatican Library in 1581 and was subsequently transferred to the Lateran Museum. It remained there until 1959, when it returned to the Vatican. It was then placed in the library of Sixtus V by virtue of its link with the Institution, and collocated in the atrium at the base of the monumental staircase created by Luca Beltrami for the new entrance to the Library that was inaugurated by Pius XI in 1928. For decades "Hippolytus" welcomed several generations of scholars to the Library.

The iconic sculpture has been the subject of interest and study since its discovery in Rome in the mid-sixteenth century, consisting only of the lower part of the body of a figure seated on a throne that bears the inscriptions of the Easter count and a list of attributed works to St. Hippolytus. The first to conceive the idea of the workmanship that was then carried out on the statue was Pirro Ligorio (1512/13-1583). Even today it exerts its charm, despite its new location that is less visible than in the past to those entering the papal library: in the niche to the right of the entrance, where it was placed in 2010.

The Vatican Library promoted new studies on the sculpture, and involved specialists from different disciplinary fields, especially experts from the Vatican Museums, in order to offer an interdisciplinary "reading" of the work through the examination of all the parts that compose it, down to the smallest fragment, with the help of the most advanced technological tools ([program](#)). We mentioned the initiative in issue no. 21 of [OWL](#) (January-March 2022, p. 6).



The new research perspectives were outlined in an article that appeared in the 2023/1 volume of *The Vatican Library Review*. The authors, an art historian and an information technology specialist, presented the 3D virtual model of the statue created in 2021 to inspire new investigations.





Last May 16, an international conference was organized in the Sistine Hall of the Vatican to present the studies carried out on the statue in recent years. Patristics scholars expounded on the figure of Hippolytus and his works; mathematicians presented their work on computation; an epigraphist examined the statue's Greek inscriptions in depth, surpassing previous studies. For the more strictly archaeological aspects, the restorers of the Vatican Museums produced a chart of the components that make up the work and the interventions carried out to assemble them, while the archaeologist gave a historical and artistic interpretation of the pieces.



The conference also proposed a historical and archival study on the circumstances of the statue's arrival in the Vatican and the intellectual environment that "produced" it. At the end of the day we can say that we have gained a better knowledge of this emblematic sculpture, but it is hoped that further insights and comparisons will help reveal other enigmas still to be deciphered.





## A lecture on Arabic manuscripts



Vat.ar.213, ff. 1v-2r



Borg.ar.78, ff. 1v-2r

On Wednesday, April 10, in the Manuscript Study Room, the Vatican Library hosted students from the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI) as part of a course taught by Prof. François Déroche, a specialist in Arabic codicology and paleography from the Collège de France, where he teaches The History and Transmission of Quranic Texts. He was invited by PISAI to give a series of lectures and conferences at the Institute.



Vat.ar.709, ff. 1v-2r



Vat.ar.215, ff. 108v-109r

One of Prof. Déroche's lectures on the codicology of Quranic codices was organized in the Vatican Library. The professor was thus able to make direct reference to some of the artifacts preserved here. The Library showed a group of manuscripts to illustrate the history of those documents.

We are pleased with this opportunity for in-depth study for PISAI students, who quite exceptionally were able to attend the lecture before the Library's usual opening hours.



Barb.or.28



Barb.or.28, front cover



Vat.ar.221, ff. 1v-2r



*A forum with ORSALC (UNESCO):  
“Territorial social responsibility.  
Contribution of educational institutions  
to a context of peace”*



The Observatorio Regional de Responsabilidad Social para América Latina y el Caribe (ORSALC), established by UNESCO in 2012, aims to be a reference for effective integration through a reliable database for the social responsibilities of governments, associations, and universities. The organization monitors and promotes activities concerning culture, education, or university institutional life in all Latin American and Caribbean countries. Last April 16th, it organized a meeting of the various members and guests of the organization with H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani in the Sistine Hall of the Vatican Library, the “Gran Vaso” which speaks to us of the universality of the Church and human culture through its frescoes. The group was accompanied by the general coordinator of the Observatory, Humberto Grimaldo Durán.

In his introduction to the works, the Librarian sought to underline that: “The cultural heritage collected in all libraries, whether university or national, constitutes the basis and the historical source on which people and institutions can draw. In particular, educational institutions foster their training and academic proposals through the ancient and modern documents kept in libraries.”



In 2019, Pope Francis had launched the “Global Educational Pact” to encourage a dialogue that helps build the future of our planet. The changes that come from such an initiative include an educational path that develops a new universal solidarity in a society that must become more welcoming. “One of the fields in which the educational pact can and must be implemented is precisely that which concerns peace and citizenship,” underlined the Librarian.

In his 2023 Zewede report, “Re-imagining our futures together. A new social contract for education,” UNESCO highlighted the need for higher education to be based on long-term perspectives, which from university classrooms supports students to become better citizens, fueling awareness of their civil, social, and environmental responsibilities, in a collaborative context, where everyone relates to each other and together we can build a world of solidarity, peace, and harmony.

Among the participants in the forum on May 16 were Stefania Giannini, deputy director general of education, the United Nations organization for education, science and culture UNESCO; Beatriz Gonzáles de Bosio, vice-president of the Paraguayan Academy of History; Mirian Nicado García, rector of the University of Havana, Cuba; Javier Alberto Ayala Amaya, rector of the Military University of Nueva Granada, Colombia; Hermenegildo Cohene, rector of the National University of Itapúa, Paraguay; Walter Ramiro Mazariegos, rector of the University of San Carlos, Guatemala; Rosa Teradellas, chair of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, Banco Santander, University of Girona, Spain; Antonio Imeneo, Vice President of IADPES (International Académie Diplomatique Pax et Salus, Italy); and H.E. the Ambassador of Paraguay, Mrs. María Leticia Casati Caballero. Best wishes to them all for the next steps.





### *Cooperative Credit Banks*

Last April 11, a large representation of the Cooperative Credit Banks met with the Librarian, H.E. Msgr. Angelo Vincenzo Zani, who spoke to the guests about the history of the Library. The group was able to visit the historical rooms of the Papal Library and appreciate the stories illustrated by the frescoes in the hall of Pope Sixtus V.



### *Guests from Sweden*

Our connection with Sweden has been established for some time, and not infrequently a guest from the Scandinavian country comes to visit the Vatican Library to better comprehend what the Library is and how much it is doing to make its collections more and more usable. Such was the case with the project that carried out the digitization of the manuscripts that belonged to Queen Christina of Sweden's collection, now available in our digital library.

Last April 12, Fredrik Posse and Nils Bildt came for a visit. Nils Bildt is the grandson of Carl Nils Daniel Bildt (1850-1931), whose works on the sovereign of Sweden are among the Library's collections.


Guests were able to view some documents related to the history of their country, including the work *Suecia antiqua et hodierna*, by Erik Jonsson Dahlbergh (1625-1703), given Gustavus III of Sweden to Pope Pius VI during his visit to the Vatican on New Year's Day in 1784.



## *Entrepreneurship and philanthropy: visit of the Brenninkmeijer family*



*La sede della Draiflessen Collection*

 small group of guests representing the Dutch Brenninkmeijer family, who have long been involved in philanthropic activities at an international level, met H.E. Angelo Vincenzo Msgr. Zani on last April 25th to learn more about the Vatican Library and explore the possibility of collaboration in the near future. The guests arrived at the Library after visiting the Apostolic Archives.

The family, which among other initiatives gave birth to the Porticus Foundation in 1995, also represents the Draiflessen Collection, an art museum based in Mettingen, Westphalia. The museum was built in 2009 and organizes periodic exhibitions with a strong impact on the social aspect. In the collections preserved in Mettingen, there are also manuscripts, miniatures, incunabula and prints, especially linked to the German-Dutch area.

Art, education, the protection of cultural heritage are topics that are dear to our guests, who after the meeting with the Librarian were able to visit the historical rooms of the Library and find out about the mission of our Institution.

We hope to be able to resume and deepen the conversation that emerged from the meeting soon, with a view toward working together on initiatives aimed at the conservation and valorization of cultural heritage for the academic education of the younger generations.

## *Guests from Taiwan*



H.E. Matthew Shieh-Ming Lee, ambassador of the Republic of China (Taiwan) to the Holy See, returned to the Library on April 29th with two pairs of gracious guests, H.E. Gin-Fa Lo and his wife Mrs. Li-Chieh Lo and H.E. Wei-Lun Chiang and Mrs. Feng-Tsu Wei. The small delegation met our Librarian and were able to visit the Vestibule and the Sistine Hall of the Library.

Mr. Gin-Fa Lo was a judge in Taichung District who is currently engaged in public affairs and legal assistance for charities, while Mr. Wei-Lun Chiang is the founder and president of Lien Jade Real Estate Cooperation Group in Taichung City, Taiwan.





A meeting that turned out to be a nice surprise was the one we had with Suzanne and Steve Cameron, who on their recent trip to Italy from California, also came to visit the Vatican Library to learn about its history and activities.

Following their visit, our kind guests decided to participate in a project developed on the occasion of the celebrations of the Jubilee Year 2025, which will soon be implemented and which we will describe in the next issue of our bulletin.

We are very grateful to Suzanne and Steve for sharing the initiative, for their support, and above all for their moving commitment.



### *St. Thomas Aquinas College*

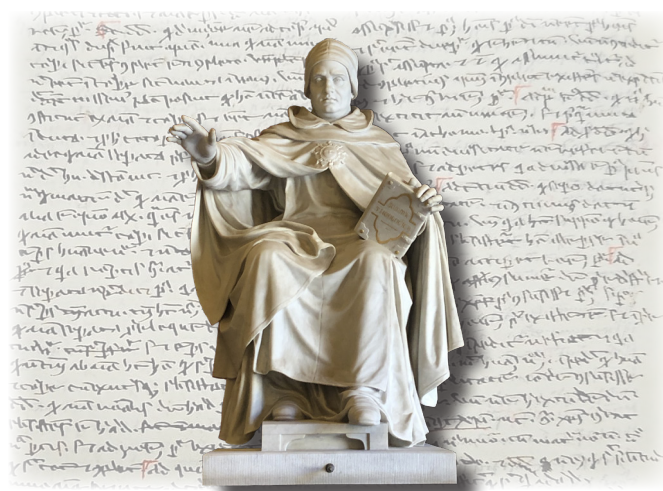


A group of guests from St. Thomas Aquinas College, based in California and Massachusetts, was welcomed to the Vatican Library on April 15. Members of the University's Board of Governors, benefactors, students and friends of the College decided to make a pilgrimage to Rome on the occasion of the 750th anniversary celebration of the death of the Angelic Doctor to visit the places where the saint who inspires the mission of the college lived, studied, and preached. Destinations included the Vatican Library, which holds some of Aquinas' autographs, and the imposing statue, created by Cesare Aureli on the occasion of Pope Leo XIII's priestly jubilee, which encourages and protects studies in the Printed

Books Reading Room of the papal library.

At the core of the St. Thomas Aquinas College curriculum are the "great books," the original works of great minds, both ancient and modern, that have explored and continue to explore the natural world and consider the deepest truths about the person.

A stop in the Vatican Library for this highly driven group of people was quite a likely choice; and for us it was a pleasant opportunity to meet all the participants.





## *Emanuele Filiberto of Savoy*

On the morning of 26 June, almost by surprise, Prince Emanuele Filiberto, nephew of Umberto II, the last king of Italy, who reigned from 19 May to 18 June 1946, came to visit the Apostolic Library.

The welcome guest was accompanied by a delegation made up of Msgr. Franco Camaldo, ecclesiastical assistant of the Circolo di San Pietro, an association founded in 1869; the professor. Alberto Bochicchio, Vice President of the Club; Msgr. Stefano Sanchirico, official of the Apostolic Archives; Mrs. Cesara Buonamici, journalist, and her husband Joshua Kalman; Massimo Leonardelli; and the prince's secretary, the kind Ms. Beatrice Guarnieri.

After visiting the Lapidary Gallery, the Vestibule and the Sistine Hall, the guests went down to see the Library's Consultation Room and then went to the other Apostolic institution, the Vatican Archives, where they were able to view some related documents to the Savoy family.

The occasion of the visit was offered by the presentation of the volume *"I romani pontefici al Circolo di San Pietro - allocuzioni, discorsi, lettere, autografi - un prezioso magistero"* (*The Roman Pontiffs at the Circle of Saint Peter - allocutions, speeches, letters, autographs - a precious magisterium*), edited by Msgr. Camaldo, and which took place



in the afternoon of the same day in the gallery of Palazzo Colonna, in the presence of Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Secretary of State.





### *Valuable tables made by architect Valadier*

Giuseppe Valadier (1762-1839) was born in Rome to a family of goldsmiths of French origin from Aramon, a town not far from Nîmes.

A master of neoclassicism, a lecturer in the Academy of St. Luke and a chamber architect, Valadier was not only a constructor of buildings but was also a restorer of Roman artistic beauties such as the Arch of Titus. He was also a distinguished urban planner, and it was in this capacity that he made his own contribution to the beauty of Rome by enhancing ancient monuments. He advocated maintaining or creating oases of greenery, not centralizing public buildings, and enhancing the river of Rome with wide tree-lined avenues, now known as street of Lungotevere.

In Rome, in addition to dedicating himself for a long time to the urban planning of Piazza del Popolo, which constitutes his most interesting work, he worked on several constructions, including the tower of Ponte Milvio and the Casina that bears his name, on the terrace of the Pincio. He also worked on the facade of the churches of San Pantaleo and San Rocco, the Valle theater, and the palace of the Calcografia Camerale.

A multitalented artist, Valadier was also a valuable goldsmith, and produced, among other works, the chalice of Card. Henry Benedict Stuart, Duke of York (1725-1807), preserved in St. Peter's.

Valadier also made valuable furnishings, such as the two precious twin tables preserved in the Sistine Hall of the Vatican Library. Commissioned by Pius VI (1775-1799) and made between 1786-1787, they are believed to be the finest examples of the furniture crafted in the late 18th century. They illustrate important events in the pontificate of Pope Braschi, whose coat of arms is in the center of the long sides of the tables.

The friezes contain six reliefs in gilded bronze. The plaques depict: (1) the pontiff opening the Holy Door during a ceremony; (2) the construction of the sacristy of St. Peter's, undertaken in 1776; (3) the expansion of the Vatican Museums; (4) the growth of commerce; (5) the drainage of the Agro Pontino and the restoration of the Appian Way, work on which began in 1777; and (6) the Venetian ambassador receiving his knighthood.

The herculean figures supporting the Egyptian granite table tops were cast in bronze; it appears that the tops were cut from a block of stone found in a wall of the Pantheon. On the first table are two vases of Sèvres given by the French President Marie François Sadi Carnot (1837-1894) to Leo XIII (Feb. 19, 1893). In the center is a block of malachite with a gilded bronze pedestal. "The work was made from the remnant of a large malachite boulder donated to Pius IX by Prince Konstantin Nicolaevič Romanov, son of Tsar Nicholas I of Russia, along with other pieces so that they could be used for the decoration of the new basilica of St. Paul's Outside the Walls, consecrated in 1854. The pontiff had the tribune and the two large altars of the transverse nave decorated with it." The sculpture, composed of a group of three bronze figures supporting the block, was made by Pietro Paolo Spagna (1793-1861), a talented silversmith, who was a pupil of Giuseppe Valadier. The base of the sculpture has three animals (a deer, a panther and a lion); in the upper part, two cherubs support the papal arms of Pius IX.

On the second table are two German porcelain vases donated by Frederick William IV of Prussia (1795-1861) to Pius IX. In the center is a malachite and silver-gilt crucifix offered to Pius IX by Prince Anatolij Nikolaevič Demidov (Demidoff, 1812-1870).



## *An old city to imagine the future: the Getty Global Forum at LUMA Arles*



Arles, the *Arelas* of the Romans, the architectural traces of which have defied the centuries and can still be admired in such iconic monuments as its amphitheater, its ancient theater or its baths, is open to modernity. Here one can find an ultra-modern, multipurpose building, called LUMA Arles. It is a “creative campus” within the Parc des Ateliers, an old industrial site. Designed by Frank O. Gehry, LUMA Arles opened in June 2021.

This futuristic tower, which takes inspiration from various sources, from the ancient Roman theater in its floor plan to Van Gogh’s “The Starry Night” in Rémy-de-Provence, with reference to the shape of the Alpilles, the mountains of that area, houses a theater, exhibition spaces, conference rooms, and various venues that “provide artists with the opportunity to experiment in close collaboration with other artists, curators, scientists, innovators and the public: a large experimental cultural complex in the south of France.” It is a place to promote and exchange ideas.

In this beautiful building, the inaugural Getty Global Forum took place from 24 to 26 of May. The forum, hosted by Katherine E. Fleming, President and CEO of the J. Paul Getty Trust, and John Studzinski CBE, a member of its Board, in partnership with Maja Hoffmann, Founder and President of the LUMA Foundation and LUMA Arles, focused on the most important global issues related to cultural heritage, art ownership, and the new language of culture. A small group from cultural, financial, and government institutions around the world took the opportunity to get to know one another or deepen previous relationships, exchange ideas, and converse informally about the proposed topics from their proper perspectives.

The responsibility of preserving cultural heritage is exhausting. Such is done particularly in order to transmit it, to facilitate increasing partnerships in different spheres, to accomplish the fundamental task of building awareness, and to foster more well-informed decisions.

The participants spoke about the circulation of ideas, people, and works of art, regardless of their affiliation, about cultural development, and about art as an instrument of diplomacy, one that is cooperative and non-competitive in order to have a positive impact on people and countries.

Few museums in countries east of Rome preserve objects from other places beyond the vestiges of national culture. A project undertaken by the Chhatrapati Shivaji Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) in Mumbai is an example of the circulation of culture. In collaboration with the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, the British Museum, and the Getty Museum, it mounted an exhibition of art entitled *Ancient Sculptures: India Egypt Assyria Greece Rome* (2 Dec. 2023-1 Oct. 2024), the purpose of which is to promote the interconnectedness of the ancient world. Culture Travels.



It is only the beginning, but the initiative is a very promising and stimulating; the forum has offered and will offer insights for new exchanges and new projects to be implemented in the cultural sphere, taking into account the changes that impose new strategies to be studied together.

Our institution, that participated in the meeting, would like to thank the entire organization of the forum, especially Katherine E. Fleming, John Studzinski CBE, Maja Hoffmann, and all those who worked to make this initiative a success.





## Lapidaries in the manuscripts of Queen Christina of Sweden

Recently the Vatican Library has digitized and published online the collection of manuscripts belonging to Queen Christina of Sweden, thanks to the generous contributions of the Marcus and Amalia Wallenberg Foundation, and the Swedish Academy. We offer our readers a particular manuscript to consult and observe “closely” on the site of the digital library. This is a text contained in the [Reg.lat.1316](#), a “lapidary,” with the description of the gems which in the Middle Ages were also appreciated for their *virtutes*, those properties which, according to beliefs, could influence the state of mind of those who carried them mounted on jewels, and protect from the ailments and disorders that today we would define as psychosomatic. The manuscript forms part of the group of manuscripts purchased by the sovereign when the assets of the House of Aragon were put up for sale. It was created in Naples for Ferdinand I (1423-1494); it has a beautiful frontispiece, incomplete in the decorative part. The text on the stones occupies folios 1r-14r; there follows a *herbarium*, with the description of the properties of each plant and from f. 42r on the miniatures of the plants themselves.

The variegated collection of manuscripts of the highly cultured Swedish sovereign includes four other works on



Reg.lat.1316, f. 1r

these materials, mainly made up of colored minerals or particular rocks. These are found in the *Reginensi latini* [598](#), [1106](#), [1150](#) and [1200](#), which have all been digitized and can be consulted online.



### Greetings to Danilo Filice



The moment of saying goodbye is always sad, especially when the people with whom we have shared so much time leave us. When a colleague leaves us, something of us goes with him, of the years spent together in this large and splendid home that is the Vatican Apostolic Library.

Danilo Filice left us last June 11th. We had seen him only a few months ago, when he seemed in good health, but the recent loss of Giancarlo, his firstborn, had left an inexorable mark on him. Danilo was born on June 29, 1934; he joined the Library as a collaborator on February 8, 1954 and was hired on August 1, 1960, with the title of carrier. Appointed as a doorman on April 11, 1968, he was promoted to custodian on March 11, 1972 and vice head custodian on 10 March 1980. With this qualification he became responsible for the Printed Books Reading Books and Stacks until his retirement on February 1, 1997.

Appreciated for his “diligence, earnestness, and dedication to duty”, on 24 July 1984 he was awarded the title of Knight of San Silvestro Papa.

Danilo was a very refined, simple, and reserved person; he never lost his patience and had a direct and trusting relationship with his superiors. Always present at his workplace, he made himself available to scholars with great humility. The two colleagues who took his position after him were formed by him. Goodbye, Danilo.



*«In June, the daily bread is still in the ears of the fields, still part of parables, proverbs, myths, with no relation to bakers and silos. Sparrows visit it by day, fireflies by night. It covers the fields with its pale bronze color, with its appearance of unattended treasure, exposed to thieves, it bends heavily; it is unclear whether the wind passed over it, or whether the symbols, allegories, memories, that bind it to us, touched it.*

*It is thought that the day on which wheat was first ground and flour was kneaded marks a date even more important than October 12, 1492, or the day on which Gutenberg devised movable type, or when the American Armstrong set foot on the moon.*

*It is fitting that the feast of Corpus Christi is celebrated in June. The singing of processions is answered from the fields by the rustling of ears of corn ... The bread that sustains the body is now only a figure, a prophecy, the real bread is this; Corpus Christi; the human body decays, the soul remains.*

*June is a sacred month; the lazy, radiant sense of sung Masses pervades it from top to bottom, overflowing from the shadow of the churches in the sun-white squares; the smoke of incense, the smell of lilies linger in the air of the long evenings.*

*It is the month of Pentecost; no heaven other than his can be foreseen for the descent of the Holy Spirit, who is a dove, but his wings in flight roar like thunder».*

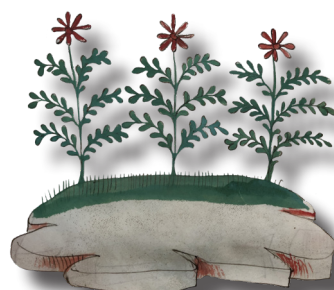
Orsola Nemi (1903-1985)





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