

Michelangelo. La Dotta Mano: When the Renaissance Genius Becomes a Work of Art

Marina Melchionda (December 08, 2008)



"I believe that if Michelangelo lived today, it would be in New York city that he would sculpt his Pietà" said Marilena Ferrari when donating the book to the New York Public Library.



Last week the Fondazione Marilena Ferrari donated a copy of the book “La Mano Dotta di Michelangelo” to the New York Public Library.

The book, realized in collaboration with the FMR- Marilena Ferrari fine art publishing house, is a tribute to the Renaissance genius Michelangelo Buonarroti and to his Sistine Chapel frescoes, painted 500 years ago.

Its publication launched the Bookwonderful series, a collection of limited edition works of rare artistic and cultural value. The series itself is also part of a wider project, the Civiltà della Bellezza, started and sponsored by Marilena Ferrari. The aim of the program is to reproduce the beauty of original art works so to make of their uniqueness a shared and common experience enjoyable by art passionate.

Mrs. Marilena Ferrari introduced with pride this masterpiece published by her Foundation to a wide and at the same time selected public. Among those present, Paul Le Clerc, President of the New York Public Library; David Ferriero Andrew W. Mellon, Director of The New York Public Libraries, Michael Imman, curator of Rare Books of the New York Public Library; and Renato Miracco, Director of the Italian Cultural Institute.

Michelangelo. La Dotta Mano will be published in only 33 copies, for sale at 100,000 euro (about 136,000 \$). The New York Public Library is one of the few institutions to which it was donated: “It is a homage to this city: I believe that if Michelangelo lived today, it would be in New York City that he would sculpt his Pietà.” said Mrs. Ferrari during her introductory remarks.

Besides the New York Public Library, two other public institutions have already received the book in donation: the City Council of Bologna - the city that hosts the Foundation headquarters - and the [Prado Museum](#) [2] of Madrid, Spain.

The exceptional price of the book is wholly justified by a few characteristics that make of it a true work of art. Its cover for example, features a bas-relief that faithfully reproduces the Madonna della Scala (Madonna of the Steps). It is made of marble extracted from the Polvaccio quarries, the caves where Michelangelo himself used to go about five centuries ago. The work, measuring about 18”x28”x3” and weighting 61 pounds, features also silk velvet materials, silk-screen prints and images printed on 200-gram matte coated paper. The paper itself is 250-gram pure cotton and was created upon order for the book.

Michelangelo. La Dotta Mano will become part of the collection of the Rare Book Division of the New York Public Library that already includes more than 130.000 art books covering over 500 years of American and European art history.

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