

Renewed lighting for Piero della Francesca

The Polo Museale della Toscana (Tuscan Museum Authority) and iGuzzini have combined to make one of the greatest Italian Renaissance masterpieces “The Legend of the True Cross” shine again

4th October 2019 – The Tuscan Museum Authority and iGuzzini, a leading company in the field of architectural lighting, today unveil - on the occasion of the Feast of St. Francis Patron of Italy - the new lighting system for the extraordinary *Legend of the True Cross* cycle, painted by the artist Piero della Francesca between 1453 and 1459 in the Bacci Chapel of the Basilica of San Francesco.

An absolute masterpiece of Renaissance painting, the cycle illustrates some of the stories from the popular thirteenth century book, the “*Golden Legend*” by Jacopo da Varagine, an iconographic source that inspired many fourteenth century Tuscan and Italian artists. Scene by scene, the cycle narrates the legend of the wood used for Christ’s cross, from when the seed of the tree was placed in Adam’s mouth as he was dying to when the cross was won back from Khosrau by Heraclius and its return to Jerusalem. Landscapes dear to the artist, painted architectural structures and depictions of Arezzo perched on a hill and Sansepolcro with its buildings drawn in immaculate perspective and elegant, geometrical figures accompany the observer, scene by scene, as the artists tells his story.

“Being able to admire Piero della Francesca’s masterpiece and his ‘luminous painting’ shine again in all its crystal-clarity sparks an entirely new emotion, declared Stefano Casciu, Director of the Tuscan Museum Authority. And this is thanks to a lighting design that succeeds in simultaneously enhancing its forms, space and colour. We would, therefore, like to give our warmest thanks to our technical sponsor iGuzzini for this extraordinary result and its generous economic and cultural commitment that has enhanced Piero della Francesca’s masterpiece, and its long and complex restoration project. This project, one of the most advanced in Italy and the entire world, was conducted by the Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e per il turismo (Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism) in collaboration with the leading experts in the sector, and was finally concluded after years of work in 2000. Nevertheless, it remains a point of reference for the conservation of wall paintings created with a mixed fresco technique and oil and tempera paints.”

The new lighting system - designed by the Architect Antonio Stevan and realized in collaboration with the Architect Rossella Sileno, Director of the Basilica of San Francesco, and of whom iGuzzini is technical sponsor – enhances Piero della Francesca’s bright, crystal-clear paintings thanks to the incredible versatility of the special **Palco (62 mm diameter)** luminaires mounted in the chapel on **Low Voltage tracks**. According to the new technologies, the older lighting appliances have been substituted by new ones that guarantee a reduced visual impact. This allows the visitors to enjoy the work’s splendid creative expressiveness. Thanks to the greater efficiency of LED source luminaires (with a colour temperature of 3500K), the project has also resulted in significant energy consumption savings of approximately 80%, as well as a significant drop in maintenance costs. All the luminaires have also been fitted with DALI drivers and control systems that allow various light scenarios to be controlled remotely and by different mobile devices, when necessary.

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"We are extremely happy to have helped conserve and enhance the magnum opus of a great master with an exceptional sensitivity to light," stated Adolfo Guzzini, President Emeritus of iGuzzini illuminazione. "With this project we continue our commitment to researching and developing solutions that can enhance sites of great spiritual, artistic and cultural value, like the Main Chapel in the Basilica of San Francesco in Arezzo".

The new lighting system for Piero della Francesca's *Legend of the True Cross* is part of iGuzzini's *Light is Back* programme, through which the company **actively helps to enhance and safeguard cultural assets**, so the public can better enjoy the beauty of the world's artistic heritage. The programme that was launched in the 1990s has recently provided lighting for masterpieces, such as the Pontifical Sanctuary of the Holy Stairs in Rome (2019), Tintoretto's paintings at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco in Venice (2018), Michelangelo's *Pietà* (2018), the Museum of the Dancing Satyr in Mazara del Vallo (2018), the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua (2017) and Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* (2015).

Presiding over 49 museums and cultural sites, the **Polo Museale della Toscana (Tuscan Museum Authority)**, directed by Stefano Casciu, is considered to be the largest museum network in Tuscany with a rich cultural heritage and numerous sites featured in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Art galleries and centres, archaeological museums and sites, Medici villas, fortresses and sacred buildings all bear witness with their rich heritage to Tuscany's long and outstanding history. A heritage that ranges from ancient Roman and Etruscan settlements to the masterpieces of visual art that characterised Tuscan and Italian artistic production from the middle ages to the 19th century. In addition to the Basilica of San Francesco, the Tuscan Museum Authority also organises and coordinates: the "Gaio Cilnio Mecenate" National Archaeological Museum, the Vasari House Museum, the National Museum of Mediaeval and Modern Art, the Abbey of San Salvatore in Soffena, the Palazzo Taglieschi State Museum in Anghiari and the Sodo archaeological site and tomb of Camucia. Info: www.polomusealetoscana.beniculturali.it

iGuzzini illuminazione, fondata nel 1959, è un gruppo internazionale leader nel settore dell'illuminazione architettonica, con circa 1.500 dipendenti, che si dedica allo studio, al design e alla produzione di sistemi di illuminazione intelligenti per interni ed esterni in collaborazione con i migliori architetti, lighting designer, progettisti e centri di ricerca di tutto il mondo. Ha sede a Recanati (MC), e attività operative in oltre 20 paesi distribuiti in 5 continenti. iGuzzini opera per migliorare, con la luce, il rapporto tra l'uomo e l'ambiente attraverso la ricerca, l'industria, la tecnologia e la conoscenza, nei luoghi della cultura, del lavoro, del retail, delle città, delle infrastrutture e dell'hospitality & living. I ricavi consolidati nel 2018 sono stati pari a € 238 milioni, con una crescita del 20% negli ultimi 5 anni. Dal 2019 iGuzzini è parte del Gruppo Fagerhult. Per ulteriori informazioni: www.iguzzini.com

Press kit: iguzzini.com/pm-tos/piero-della-francesca-press-kit

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