

# La Quadreria- Palazzo Rossi Poggi Marsili

## ASP Città di Bologna





## **A speaking heritage:**

### **the history of ASP and of its cultural heritage.**

“ASP- Città di Bologna” is the Public Company for Services to the Person, that takes care of reception and social integration of non-self-sufficient elderly, adults and minors in need, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

The Company originated in 2014, from the merging of some of the oldest institutions of the city, “ASP Giovanni XXIII”, “ASP Poveri Vergognosi” and “ASP IRIDeS”, that, in turn, derived from historic charitable institutions created in Bologna from the XV century on.

Over the centuries, these institutions have benefited from bequests and legacies that today constitute a rich and diverse historic and artistic heritage, that includes furniture, supplies, textiles, sculptures and paintings.

“La Quadreria - Palazzo Rossi Poggi Marsili” too is the fruit of a donation: it was the city residence of Rossi Poggi Marsili family, that the Count Giovanni Francesco decided to donate, after his death, in 1716, to the “Opera Pia dei Poveri Vergognosi”, with the clause that it would become its headquarter, and that’s the way it was till 2014 (when the Institution became part of “ASP Città di Bologna”).

The Institution of “Opera Pia dei Poveri Vergognosi” (lit.: “Charity of Ashamed Poor”) was founded in 1495 to provide assistance to noble citizens who fell in disgrace and misery and were ashamed to beg.

From now on appears, through the efforts of the “Company”, a strong care towards the vulnerable social categories and a peculiar sensitivity towards the need, that will be the core of the action of the Institution.

The name itself, through the adjectives “poor” and “ashamed”, reveals a regard not only for the material need, but also for the protection of the dignity of the assisted person.

Today, the Palace is a renewed Museum that in 2016 ASP Città di Bologna opened to the city.

It hosts an exposition of artworks that represents a unique opportunity for the visitor who, for the first time after decades, has the chance to enjoy artworks that were hidden, conserved in deposits and reproduced only in catalogs.

The history of this collection is deeply intertwined with the Bologna’s history itself: the exposed paintings, in fact, were produced by the *Scuola Bolognese*, that constituted an extraordinary artistic innovation, able to strongly influence the following generations.

The particularity of these artworks lies not only in their artistic and stylistic value, but mainly in their provenance.

Some of the paintings come from the donations of noble families to the charitable institutions that today constitute ASP. Others, instead, come from “Santa Marta” and “Baraccano” Girls’ Schools, institutions created with the aims of safeguarding the moral integrity of young girls and of providing for their future integration in society: so, these institutes were not shelter neither schools, but instead a true bet on one of the weaker social categories, namely very young women, almost children, and, furthermore, poor.

The city economically invested on these girls through an education program that included the teaching of reading, writing, basics of arithmetic and embroidery.

In this way, not only the girls were fully included in the economic life of the city not anymore as passive objects, but as active players of production; moreover, this situation gave life to fine artworks, able to get out the boundaries of the schools, realized by discovered and encouraged hands, and came to us. This cultural heritage, tangible medium of identity and memory, is exposed and shared with the community, to develop culture, sharing and civic awareness.

This artistic exposition for the intellectual and cultural pleasure is linked to the original values of solidarity and hospitality that, from 1495 on, characterize the community of Bologna through the activity of the institutions from which ASP derives, and provides a an additional meaning to the daily mission of the Public Company for Services to the Person.



## **“La Quadreria”**

### **The Rooms**

La Quadreria returns to the city paintings of artists of Bologna between XVI and XVIII century, that belonged to the wide cultural heritage of the Ancient Charity.

Paintings are distributed in 8 rooms at the ground floor. Each room groups together artworks that are similar in style or period.



## **The Foundling Wheel**

The seventh room, together with paintings, from 2017 houses the Foundling Wheel.

It is a kind of structure that spread in Europe from the XII century; its function was to provide for the possibility to women who couldn't keep their children, to anonymously abandon them, within institutions that could take care of them.

The Wheel exposed in the Palace dates back to the XIX century, it was found in "Baraccano" Girls' School and restored by "ASP Città di Bologna".

The inauguration of its exhibition took place in the context of the campaign "Bologna with open arms", promoted by ASP Città di Bologna and the municipality, together with Open Group and AMISS.

This historical object has in fact a profound meaning, it links the artistic exposition with ASP's action, and it allows to retrace family care's story, from the past till today.

## **The Room of the Ancient Maps**

"La Quadreria" houses the Room of the Ancient Maps, inaugurated on 26 may 2017.

In the Room is displayed a set made of five original maps, realized in Italy at the end of the XVII century. They represent the globe, in the big world map named "*Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis Tabula*", and the four continents known at that time. These maps derive from Dutch wall maps produced in Amsterdam by Frederick de Wit and Willem Janszoon Blaeu, engraved by Carlo Scotti and Pietro Todeschi, and printed in Bologna by Giuseppe Longhi: these works are particularly relevant for both the completeness and the good conservation of the series. The Room opening was held during the 9th edition of "It.a.cà – Migrants and Travellers: Festival of Responsible Tourism", and it was realized with the collaboration among "ASP Città di Bologna", the municipality and the various organizations that participated ("Urban center Bologna", "University of Urbino", "USE-IT Bologna", "La Girobussola", "Museo Tolomeo", "Next Generation Italy", "The Bottom Up"). The inauguration of the Room was accompanied by the conference titled "*The identity of places between reality and representation: Bologna through its maps*", whose aim was to illustrate the different possible perspectives and points of view on the territory, as it happened in the past in the drafting of a new land's geographical map.

The maps reflect a synthesis of the artistic and scientific flowering of that century marked by explorations and discoveries.

They were given the role of “windows on the world”, they show the world seen by European men of the Seventeenth century: their sheets enshrine values, symbols, knowledges and representations about both the self and “the other”, combining the geographical study and the cartographic representation with the artistic and figurative one, and with true or imagined representations of landscapes, flora and fauna, and populations that characterized the depicted lands.

The exposition of these maps in “La Quadreria” constitutes another way for ASP to give back a cultural heritage that till now was hidden, and another mean of historical knowledge and analysis on identity and representation.



## **Not only a Museum:**

### **the activities of “La Quadreria”, between cultural heritage and social life.**

The interweaving between social life and cultural heritage, embodied by the palace itself, constantly lives in the cultural activities and events that are realized here.

It is a polyvalent place, in which the profound value of cultural heritage as material support of identity, memory and culture comes alive in various activities that tie into the wide ASP's work, and implements the objectives of promotion of culture, sharing, and civic awareness.

All this materialized in the **inaugurations of the Room of the Maps and of the Foundling Wheel**. The first one, realized in the context of the 9th edition of “It.a.cà – Migrants and Travellers: Festival of Responsible Tourism”, has been accompanied by reflections about territory and the different possible perspectives on it, responsible tourism and intercultural contact, and concluded with a theatre performance by “Cantieri Meticci”. The second one was held in the context of the campaign “Bologna with open arms”, an initiative to talk about the family care and to provide an accurate information about it, with the involvement of the actors of the project (welcoming families, parents and received kids, operators, citizens and associations), and it concluded with a performance by “Teatro Pratello”.

“La Quadreria”, especially the Room of the Maps, is a place that, in many ways, connects the cultural heritage with the ASP's **activities of reception and integration**.

Here it was performed the theatrical representation *“The whole life in one sheet”*: the performance is based on the memories of some refugees, and it is the result of a laboratory organized by “ASP Città di Bologna” with the students of Luigi Galvani High School, in the context of a study-work program. The project was promoted by the ASP's International Protection Service, with the collaboration of subjects involved in the Bologna's Sprar project, as “Cooperativa Camelot”, in the context of the program “Bologna Cares” (the local communication campaign on asylum and humanitarian protection). The laboratory and the final performance have been handled by the theatre company “Cantieri Meticci”, that carried over the text from the memories of some refugees, written on the homonymous book published in 2014 by “Cooperativa Laimomo”.

In the Room of the Maps it was held the consignment of certificates to the girls and boys who participated in the project *Migrantour “Passageways in the city”*. The laboratory was promoted by ASP in collaboration with the Association “Next Generation Italy”, the Cooperative “Camelot”, “It.a.cà.” and “Cantieri Meticci”, and it was mainly dedicated to

asylum seekers and refugees who are welcomed in Bologna's SPRAR structures. It is a project that aims to design integration in a new way and to acquire a knowledge of the territory through different perspectives and points of view; a territory that, fully involved in the processes related to international migrations, and part of an ongoing change, isn't an indifferent container, but it influences and is influenced, it displays new linkages, opportunity and codes that need to be analyzed, understood and shared.

The objective was to create a participative itinerary, to propose a knowledge of the city space by beginning from personal capacities and stories, to deconstruct prejudices and stereotypes through the encounter, the promotion of dialogue and the personal narrations.

The laboratory path concluded with a tour open to citizenship in the streets of Bologna.

"La Quadreria" welcomed, in May 2018, the **visit to ASP Città di Bologna of the delegation led by Stefan Grüttner, Ministry of the Federal German Länder Hesse for Social Policies and Integration**. Here, it took place a moment of presentation of ASP and its services to the person, made by Center Administrator Gianluca Borghi, followed by a visit to the collection that witnesses a history of assistance and charity in Bologna that goes back to Middle Ages. The delegation, led by the Ministry and composed of managers of Welfare and Healthcare, was visiting the twinned region Emilia-Romagna for a comparison and an exchange about the themes of welfare. The afternoon was therefore dedicated to a focus on refugees and migrants integration and reception, with a visit to the Regional Hub in via Mattei and to the Community "Casa Murri" (High Autonomy for Unaccompanied Minors SPRAR).

The Room of the Maps houses **courses, laboratories and meetings** aimed at promoting reception, dialogue and interculturalism through art: among them, a series of meetings titled "*Reading man... in a page*", by the Association APUN - Humanistic Psychology of Narrations - , free and open, with the aim of promoting the culture of hospitality, dialogue and listening. Moreover, the Room housed the free course realized by FAI Emilia-Romagna with ASP's patronage "*Art as a bridge between cultures*", mainly addressed to citizens of foreign origin interested to know and to make know Bologna's history, culture and monuments, with the purpose of training, through lessons and visits, artistic-cultural mediators who can accompany tourists in different languages, leading people to the discovery of the city.

In the Room took place a seminar dedicated to the ASP's operators of the services to the person, about the theme of "*Combating the violence against women*", in the context of a series of projects for equal opportunities and for contrasting the gender-based violence realized by ASP in these years.

“La Quadreria” hosts various **events and performances**, characterized by the juxtaposition of figurative arts, history and music.

In the context of the XIV Edition of the **International Festival of History**, it took place the event *“The represented Nature”*, realized through the collaboration of “ASP Città di Bologna” with the Cultural Association “Lucerna”. In the Room of the Maps, Davide Righini, professor of History of Architecture at the University of Bologna, held a conference on a kind of documents called *cabrei* (ancient documents that today constitute a precious source to witness the changings of landscape and to study the territory), titled *“Bologna historic cartography from ‘600 and ‘700: the cultural heritage of the Ashamed Poor Institution, now ASP Città di Bologna”*, followed by a concert of XIX century Bohemian music.

The juxtaposition of classical music and figurative arts was repurposed in the event *“Welcome Summer!”*, realized by the Association “Lucerna”, with songs by Vivaldi, Scarlatti, dall’Abaco, Cesti, Carissimi and Handel.

The Room of the Maps hosted various **conferences**: *“The Metamorphosis of Atlantide”*, held by Marco Ciardi, professor of the History department of the University of Bologna and member of CICAP (Italian Committee for the Control of the Assertions about Pseudo-sciences), in which the history of the mythical city through centuries and its influences on the different arts were analyzed; *“Arts, sword and charity”* held by Paolo Cova, who investigated the relationship between religious-chivalry orders and secular fraternities for assistance.

The Palace houses **temporary exhibitions** in cooperation with the institutions of the art scene of the region.

One of these was the exhibition *“La Quadreria in blu”*, aimed to go through the pictorial tradition of the city from the XVI century till the present day. The exposition, realized by two very different institutions, namely “La Quadreria” of “Asp Città di Bologna” and the art gallery “Blu Gallery”, was projected with the intention of showing Bologna as art city, uniting painters from the centuries XVI and XVII with eight young painters of today. From their constitution, both ASP Città di Bologna and the Blu Gallery handled the promotion of the young, even if in different context and with different projects, and “La Quadreria” from this point of view constitutes the perfect place as a point of contact, through the universal language of art. Each room hosted an artwork, and in the exposition was integrated the multimedia language through the projection of a short film. The Palace hosted also the exhibition *“Il tempo di Arianna”*, born from a project of the protected laboratory for people with disabilities by the Cooperative Open Group, Marakanda, with purposes of artistic experimentation; it produced an installation exposed in the Room of

the Maps, whose main theme was *the time*, developed through the relationship between artworks and photography.

“La Quadreria” is a step of the series of free guided visits “*Walking around in Museums*”, an itinerary through various museums in collaboration with Civic Museums of Ancient Art, that involves the collections of the Medieval Civic Museum (“Museo Civico Medievale”), the Municipal Art Collections (“Collezioni Comunali d’Arte”), the Museum Davia Bargellini and of “La Quadreria- Palazzo Rossi Poggi Marsili”.

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