



VILLA I TATTI

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EXTRA
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The Deborah Loeb Brice Loggiato is on its Way

On October 20th, 2005, surrounded by many of ITatti's friends, Deborah Loeb Brice laid the cornerstone of the new building which will bear her name. Despite the weather, which had turned gray and rainy after ten days of glorious Indian summer, this symbolic moment was a ray of sunshine after the many years of waiting for the permits to arrive. The ugly and dilapidated 1960s garages, which are still standing and which will remain so until we can build a service road on which to cart off the rubble and bring in the building materials for the new construction, were hidden from view by a screen representing a sketch of the new Loggiato. After warm words of welcome from Director Joseph Connors, Debby



An almost full-size rendering of the Deborah Loeb Brice Loggiato as it will look from the entrance to the Biblioteca Berenson (from a sketch by Steve Ziger)

Brice thanked former director Walter Kaiser for his vision and initiative, architect Charles Brickbauer for his beautiful design and infinite patience, the many

donors (by name) whose generosity has made the project possible, and Joe Connors whose final negotiations with the officials in Fiesole had brought us to this happy occasion. Joe thanked the local dignitaries, some of whom were present, and Nelda Ferace for taking on the role of project manager, after which Debby donned a yellow hard hat and slapped several generous dollops of cement from the yellow bucket provided by our contractor, Giorgio Piazzini, onto the concrete footing. The cornerstone was then lowered into place as many glasses were raised in its honor. The



Joseph Connors, Giorgio Piazzini, and Deborah Loeb Brice as the cornerstone is placed.



Giorgio Piazzini, Margrit Freivogel, Claudio Tozzetti, Françoise Connors & Eve Borsook

Another morning was spent at the Biblioteca Laurenziana among the manuscripts collected by Cosimo de' Medici and his descendants. Two of last year's I Tatti Fellows, Silvia Fiaschi (Università di Pavia) and Maurizio Campanelli (Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo), and one of this year's, Agata Pincelli (also from the Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo), explained to the group their scholarly interests and the importance of the manuscripts they use. We were able to examine

festivities continued with a lovely reception on the Villa's south terrace, thankfully under a marquee as the heavens opened shortly thereafter.

Several special friends and members of the I Tatti Council travelled to Florence for the occasion. Frederick Koontz came from Baltimore as did Charles Brickbauer and his partners Steve Ziger and Jamie Snead. James Cherry Jr and Virgilia and Walter Klein flew in from New York City. Sylvia Scheuer joined us from London. To thank them for their support and for coming to Florence, we were delighted to arrange a special selection of interesting events for them over a period of three days.

A fascinating visit to the restoration laboratories of the Opificio delle Pietre Dure on the

Thursday morning provided an unforgettable opportunity to see at close hand some real gems, among which were the Giotto crucifix from Ognissanti, Fra Angelico's Linaiuoli Tabernacle from the Museum of San Marco, Raffaello's *Madonna del Cardellino* from the Uffizi, and the earliest known Tuscan crucifix (12th century) from Rosano which, miraculously, has never before been restored and is in remarkably good condition. Dott.ssa Cecilia Frosinini, the Vice

Director of the Laboratory, devoted a whole morning to explaining these works of art and the elaborate investigations that are undertaken prior to beginning the intricate work of restoration, and introduced us to a number of her colleagues who further illuminated these jewels for us.



Steve Ziger, Charles Brickbauer & Fred Koontz

at close quarters the most beautiful Latin and Greek texts, some written in a humanistic hand in Carolingian-style decorative borders, some presentation copies with detailed and beautiful illustrations, others with fascinating notes written in the margins. The



Cecilia Frosinini, Jim Cherry, Stefano Pernice & Sylvia Scheuer examine the Raffaello



Debby Brice flanked by Walter & Virgilia Klein

interest Renaissance humanists had in classical antiquity was very apparent in these extraordinary volumes and in the enthusiasm of these three scholars. And the Library itself, of course, is not to be forgotten. As we climbed the monumental staircase in the vestibule on our way to the magnificent reading room, Joe Connors invited our guests to look at Michelangelo's drawings for this space.

A third morning was spent with Julian Gardner of the University of Warwick, a Visiting Professor at I Tatti this year, who took us through the church of S. Maria Novella. After first visiting the Spanish chapel in the Chiostro Verde, we took a chronological tour of some of the church's highlights beginning with Giotto's spectacular crucifix suspended over the aisle, and continuing with the Strozzi chapel painted by Orcagna in the mid-14th century and Masaccio's *Trinity* with its masterful use of perspective, and finishing with Ghirlandaio's late 15th-century frescoes in the choir.

A visit to Villa La Pietra, former home of Sir Harold Acton and now belonging to New York University, provided an intriguing insight into the life of the collector. Sir Harold's parents, Arthur and

Hortense Acton, had purchased with passion and Sir Harold had added to their collection with objects he had acquired during his stay in China. Their villa is full of a wonderful assortment of fine art, household objects, books, textiles, furniture, and souvenirs and displayed with an eye to the interplay between various themes and motifs that they enjoyed.

Eve explained, prompt further inquiry as to the frescoes' authorship. This small but choice exhibition was on view in the Berenson Fototeca on the afternoon of the Loggiato celebrations, along with some early photographs of Florence showing buildings no longer in existence, and bomb damage from the Second World War.



Examining the Giotto crucifix at the Laboratorio di Restauro

Undaunted by the weather, the intrepid visitors enjoyed the beautiful Renaissance revival gardens overlooking Florence.

Fiorella Superbi, Eve Borsook, and Giovanni Pagliarulo (Agnes Mongan Curator of the Fototeca Berenson, Senior Research Associate, and

Photograph Librarian respectively) had arranged a fascinating exhibition of photographs of the Assisi frescoes taken during the recent restoration. The photographs show details of the frescoes attributed to Giotto but, as

The three days afforded us all the great privilege of looking in



Agata Pincelli (VIT'06), Miguel Gotor (VIT'06) & Maurizio Campanelli (VIT'05)

depth at some extraordinary works of art in the company of a number of magnificent teachers. Now we look forward to the construction of the new building and the opening ceremonies in a couple of years' time.



In the Spanish Chapel or chapter house with Julian Gardner

THE SCHOLARS' COURT PROJECT

We wish to take this opportunity to thank the many donors who have so generously underwritten various parts of this project.

The Ahmanson Foundation (Fototeca Reading Room)
 Anonymous Gift (Loggiato Study)
 Anonymous Bequest (Loggiato Study)
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 Deborah Loeb Brice (Loggiato)
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 Paul & Harriett Weissman (Fototeca Office)
 Steve Ziger & Jamie Snead



Towards a Fellows' Study

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