

Archaeological Museum

On the 31st of May 2009 it was opened the new Archeological Museum: it is located in St. Lorenzo's basilical church and in the annexed Meli chapel, dating back to the 15th century. The Museum represents the development of the old archaeological section of the civic museum and it completes the exhibition, now in Palazzo Affaitati, of the "historical" non territorial collections, starting from the legacy of the Marquess Ala Ponzone.

The church of San Lorenzo, deconsacrated at the end of the 18th Century, was owned by the Benedictine Monastery and then by the Olivetani.

The church has a three-nave layout and it dates back to a period around the beginning of the 13th century. It presents the peculiar characteristics of Romanic architecture, like the wide organization of the spaces and the typical decoration of the apsidal fornixes.

The excavations, which started in 1962, allowed to find the remains of a previous church, probably the one cited in a parchment of 990, of a graveyard early Christian building and of a Roman necropolis of the 1st Century b.C., located in the first suburban area (east direction) of the ancient Postumia Street.

The decision to transform this building in the seat of a museum fostered its complete restoration, from the structural point of view and from the point of view of the decoration apparatus, for the part which is still stored.

At the moment, it displays what the core of Cremona's archaeological



collection: through the findings discovered from the 19th century to the recent excavations in Marconi square, it's possible to have a comprehensive idea of the town founded by the Romans in 218 b.C., the first one northern than the Po river.

Cremona was a rich town until the year 69 a.C., when it was destroyed by the civil war which ended with the crowning of Vespasiano. The town was then rebuilt and it participated to the monumental reconstruction which involved the majority of Northern Italy in the 3rd Century a.C.

These events are testified by more or less 500 objects which are exhibited in a thematic path divided in three sections; the public space (with the remains of a building, probably the theatre, located in Cesare Battisti Street); the private space (testified by the rich domus called domus del Labirinto e del Ninfeo, by the rich mosaic floors and by the high-quality wall-paintings); and, last but not least, the necropolis, with the slab of the funeral monument with the portrays of the Arruntii family, the funeral urns and the ceramic/glass/bronze (part of the funeral tools). The museum's setting, which is contemporary in the choice of the materials and in its organization, has a strong scenographic impact which contributes to show off the object exhibited.