

Santa Maria Annunziata del Gonfalone

Oratorio del Gonfalone

(deconsecrated)



Santa Maria Annunziata del Gonfalone is a deconsecrated oratory at Via del Gonfalone, just off the Via Giulia in the rione Pont. It should not be confused with the church of Santa Lucia del Gonfalone. The dedication was to SS Peter and Paul. (1)

History:

It was built in the 1544 as the headquarters of the Archconfraternity of the Gonfalone, which had been founded by supporters of Papal rule in the 14th century at a time when the popes were at Avignon in France. “Gonfalone” means “banner”, referring to the papal colors which they carried in procession. They became responsible for organizing many of the outdoor religious processions and celebrations in the city, and were especially famous for the passion plays they performed in Holy Week. They also were involved in charity towards the poor and needy and, in the period 1581-1765, of freeing Italians enslaved in Muslim and Slavic lands.

When the oratory was built, the site was previously occupied by the ruins of an abandoned church called Santa Lucia Vecchia (St Lucy the Old) to distinguish it from Santa Lucia del Gonfalone, originally known as Santa Lucia Nuova (St Lucy the New) until the activities of the confraternity based in its parish led to the change of name. This former church was indeed old, as it can be traced back to the 8th century. (1)

The church was restored in 1861 by Francesco Azzurri. (3)

The confraternity was dissolved in 1890, and its property confiscated by the State. The oratory was abandoned, and ended up as a refuse store. However, it was proposed as a possible music venue in 1960, and after much effort was finally fully restored and re-opened in 2002 as a concert hall for performances of classical music by the "Coro Polifonico Romano". (1)

Exterior:

The small stucco façade unusually has three stories. The first storey from the 16th century, has four Composite pilasters supporting an entablature with a strongly projecting cornice. A pair of large rectangular windows with raised projecting lintels are between each pair of pilasters. The entrance door has a marble doorcase incorporating a relief of a winged putto's head, and over that is a damaged relief in a roundel with a dedicatory inscription. The second storey, designed by Domenico Castelli, has four Ionic pilasters with swagged capitals and supporting an empty triangular pediment. There are three identically sized rectangular windows, the middle one having a raised segmental pediment over swags and the two outer ones being crowned with winged putto's heads again under little gables. Above the pediment rises the third story, which displays a blank rectangular tablet with chamfered corners under a segmental pediment. This is flanked by a pair of gigantic volutes, and beyond those a pair of empty plinths on the corners. (1) (3)

Interior:

The interior layout involves a narthex or entrance hall, then a simple rectangular nave with a tiny rectangular apse. (1)

The interior is one of the best examples of a 16th century Roman mannerist decorative scheme. The simple rectangular hall is lined by wooden choir stalls, and above them is a fresco cycle in twelve episodes depicting the Passion of Christ. The Passion panels are flanked by quadratura spiral columns (said to have been of the type found in the Temple of Solomon) and surmounted by images of prophets and sybils. The restored frescoes demonstrate are vivid in coloration, but show the crowded and muddled incongruencies of Mannerism. (1) (5)

A team of prominent Mannerist painters were recruited between the years 1569 and 1576 by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese when he was Protector of the Oratory, to complete the elaborate wall frescos. (1) (5)

The fresco cycle is as follows: (1) (3)

Giacomo Zanguidi

The Entry of Christ into Jerusalem

Livio Agresti

The Last Supper

The Journey to Calvary

Marco Pino da Siena

The Crowning with Thorns

The Resurrection

Cesare Nebbia

The Agony in the Garden

The Ecce Homo
 Raffaellino Reggio
The Capture of Jesus
 Federico Zuccari
The Flagellation
 Daniele da Volterra,
The Crucifixion
The Deposition from the Cross
 Matteo da Lecce painted
David

The carved and gilded wooden ceiling was executed in 1568 by Ambrogio Bonazzini, one of the greatest specialists of the time, is an example of a rare and valuable quality. . It depicts Our Lady with SS Peter and Paul, and the coat of arms of Card. Farnese. (1) (5)

The main altarpiece is painted by Roviale Spagnolo. The site has been called the *Sistine chapel of Mannerism*

In the crypt are visible some remains of the original mediaeval church of Santa Lucia Vecchia. (1)

Artists and Architects:

Ambrogio Bonazzini (16th cent), Italian architect
 Cesare [Nebbia](#) (1536-1614), Italian Mannerist painter
 Daniele Ricciarelli [da Volterra](#) (1509-1566), Italian Mannerist painter, sculptor and architect
 Domenico [Castelli](#), aka *Fontanino* (1582-1657), Italian architect
 Federico [Zuccari](#) (1541-1609), Italian Mannerist painter and architect
 Francesco [Azzurri](#) (1827-1901), Italian architect
 Jacopo [Bertoia](#) aka Giacomo Zanguidi or Jacopo Zanguidi or Bertoja (1544-1574), Italian painter of a late-Renaissance or Mannerist style
 Livio [Agresti](#) aka Ritus or Ricciutello (1508-1580), Italian painter of the late Renaissance or Mannerist period
 Marcantonio dal Forno (16th cent), Italian painter
 Marco [Pino](#) da Siena (1521–1583), Italian painter of the Renaissance / Mannerist period
 Matteo [Perez d'Aleccio](#) aka Matteo da Lecce (1547-1616), Italian painter of the Mannerist period
 Pedro [de Rubiales](#) aka Roviale Spagnolo (16th cent), Spanish painter
 Raffaellino Motta [da Reggio](#) (1550–1578), Italian painter from Emilia, active in a Mannerist style

Location:

Address: Via del Gonfalone 32A, 00187 Roma
 Coord: [41° 53' 50.8"N, 12° 27' 58.7"E](#)

Info:

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Web site: www.romeguide.it/oratoriogonfalone/oratoriogonfalone.htm

Email: service@romeguide.it

Notes:

The oratory can be visited from Monday to Friday 10.00am-4.00pm

Booking is mandatory at no. 06.85301758 - Fax 06.85301756

Links:

1. http://romanchurches.wikia.com/wiki/Santa_Maria_Annunziata_del_Gonfalone
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oratorio_del_Gonfalone
3. http://www.info.roma.it/monumenti_dettaglio.asp?ID_schede=106
4. <http://www.italiannotebook.com/local-interest/oratorio-del-gonfalone/>
5. <http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://www.romeguide.it/oratoriogonfalone/oratoriogonfalone.htm>
6. <http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/l/lippi/flippino/index.html>
7. <http://www.060608.it/en/cultura-e-svago/luoghi-di-culto-di-interesse-storico-artistico/cattolici/oratorio-del-gonfalone.html>
8. <http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://www.fabrianostorica.it/contributi/vari/gonfalone.htm&ei=3>
9. http://translate.googleusercontent.com/translate_c?depth=1&hl=en&ie=UTF8&prev=_t&rurl=translate.google.com&sandbox=0&sl=it&tl=en&u=http://www.oratoriogonfalone.com/index.php%3FID%3D5%26menu%3DL%25C2%25B4ORATORIO&usg=ALkJrhjaJDyb54AZuyPWvEiAol65mmb-Pw