

The Museum: rooted in history, open to the territory

At present, the Museum intends to leave a mark as a place for preservation, production and dissemination of both culture and research. Since our 2009 exhibition "Antichidentità" – a name concealing within itself a plural into a singular – we gave our museal activities new momentum through a series of initiatives, events, guided tours, internships, research projects, publications and data dissemination over the Internet.

These highly cultural initiatives focused on many topics (e.g. environmental issues, green energy, Arts, Literature, History – namely those moments in the Italian unification history when our territory has had a leading role – scientific research), and involved active participation by schools and educational institutions, whose students were able to interact with artists, academics and experts in order to enhance and enrich their education.

Amongst the events which took place: conferences, panels, temporary exhibits, themed concerts inspired by literary masterpieces, music contests, conventions, book launches. The aim of these events was to give people a new image of the Museum as a place where culture can be produced and disseminated, throughout a process of regaining cultural identity.

Guided tours along with theoretical and practical archaeology workshops for schools are arranged by the Museum for a more specific knowledge of the collection.

Internships represent a further resource in order to plan both the promotion and dissemination of the Museum's collection and overall activities. The Museum is an important attraction for academics and students from both Italian and European Universities, especially those whose speciality is the Archeology of Basilicata. Their research will be sponsored and published by the Museum.

An extremely interesting booklet about the artistic, archaeological and documentary heritage of the Museum and Art Gallery (also available in English) has been recently published; also, a brand-new, dedicated section on the *Provincia di Potenza* institutional website with information, picture galleries, description of all the items on display, has been implemented and launched.



PROVINCIA DI POTENZA

The Provincial Museum of Archaeology "Michele Lacava" Potenza

Via Lazio, 18
Potenza PZ 85100
Telephone +39 0971 444833
Fax +39 0971 444820

E-mail:
museo.provinciale@provinciapotenza.it

Website:
<http://www.provincia.potenza.it>

Opening days and hours:
Tue-Sat 9:00-19:00
Closed on Sundays and Mondays

Free guided tours, for single visitors or groups (up to 30 people), can be arranged upon request.

Editorial project by:
Maria Cristina Caricati, Director of the Museum
Anna Grazia Pistone, Chief Archaeologist at the Museum

Translation:
meta/phr (eI) Ze.com



PROVINCIA DI POTENZA

The Provincial Museum of Archaeology "Michele Lacava" Potenza

***No growth is viable
without culture***

History

Standing in the heart of Potenza's *Santa Maria* district, between Via Lazio and Via Ciccotti, the Museum is dedicated to Michele Lacava, a physician, historian, politician, writer, excavation supervisor and surveyor. Archaeological research in Basilicata has remarkably grown up since the Eighteenth century, as a result of the work of scholars and collectors of the so-called "antiquities". But their fervour did not abide by the regulations of scientific research nor the criteria for the preservation of the finds and has caused a huge dispersion of items and ended up enriching private collections, encouraging the black market of archaeological finds and increasing the collections of more important museums in Italy (Naples, Reggio Calabria) and abroad (London's British Museum and Munich's Staatliche Antikensammlung). In 1901, a first for Basilicata, the Museum of Archaeology comes to life with the purpose of protecting and preserving the heritage of the Lucanian area. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Museum has experienced many adventures; remarkable was the contribution of three directors: *Vittorio Di Cicco*, to whom, along with Michele Lacava, we owe the acknowledgment of the first museal institution here in Basilicata, the passionate activity of recording and disseminating and the foundation of a specialised library; *Concetto Valente*, who gave a more scientific slant to the collections through the reorganisation and the cataloguing according to a chronotypological criterion (thanks to his work the Museum became one of the finest in Southern Italy); *Francesco Ranaldi*, who started crucial excavation campaigns in the hinterland of the city: he located the necropolis of Serra del Carpine near Cancellara, discovered the pictorial complex of Tuppo dei Sassi in Filiano and began excavations in the Atella basin with Professor Edoardo Borzatti von Löwenstern from the University of Florence. Thanks to their cognizance and conduct, the Museum has gained high scientific value and has been hailed by scholars as a landmark in the knowledge of the fundamental ancient historical stages of Lucania and has stood out as a must-see Museum.

2009 marks a pivotal moment in the history of the Museum, as the entire collection was completely recovered, reorganised and catalogued as a result of the conjoined efforts achieved by some highly qualified technical personnel of the Province and a team of interns.

The documentary exhibition "Antichidentità: retrieving history", dedicated to the work of late directors Vittorio Di Cicco, Concetto Valente and Francesco Ranaldi, encapsulated this unparalleled and excellent systematic research.

The building

The building

The building stretches across a ground level, two upper floors, a basement, and an underground floor with a large storage area, restoration and reference facilities.

On the first floor a documentary and bibliographic reference room is named after director Vittorio Di Cicco.

On the second floor our 200-seater, air-conditioned conference hall is equipped with a PA and audio-recording system as well as an overhead video projector. A wing of this floor is used for temporary exhibitions.

Heritage

The Museum's heritage is both rich and heterogeneous, witnessing a thorough and zealous work of recovery and preservation over time.

Archaeological heritage

The whole Basilicata region, a territory which has known different forms of human settlements in a process of continuous cultural interaction, proves to be a variegated container of archaeological evidence, which can be dated from Prehistory to the Middle Ages.

The Museum owns a huge and very fascinating archaeological collection: finds and works of art from the Paleolithic, the Late Antiquity, the Medieval period and even from the Sixteenth century.

After a long, constant and strenuous work of cataloguing and inventorying, we have been finally able to identify finds belonging to precise geographical areas, such as Serra and Rossano di Vaglio, Serra del Carpine near Cancellara, Braida di Vaglio, Lavello, Oppido Lucano, Banzi, Latronico, Irsina, Metaponto, Torretta di Pietragalla, Garaguso, Banzi, Anzi, Potenza, Atella, Filiano, Montescaglioso, Monticchio, Terra Nera di Venosa.

These areas witnessed the continuous stream of historical, cultural and economic events throughout the several populations who dwelt in the territory, such as the *Uomo di Atella*, the native populations of the Archaic Age (Peukekiantes, Oenotrians), the Greek settlers of Metapontum, the Lucanians, the Romans, whose extensive range of material evidence, found all over our region, is safeguarded and enshrined by the Museum.

Documentary heritage

Documentary heritage

The reference room stores all the documents and records issued under the direction of Vittorio Di Cicco, Concetto Valente, Francesco Ranaldi, which certify the activity of research, acquisition of the finds, scientific debates with other scholars. A record of the whole collection of finds in the Museum can be referred to, as well as specialised journals and reviews, magazines, a photographic archive of past exhibitions and events.

In the restoration room you can find all the technical, graphical and photographic documentation of the archaeological artifacts.

Demo-ethno-anthropological heritage

A collection of rural artifacts, mostly made of wood, attesting the activity of farms and dairies in the province of Potenza during the second half of the Nineteenth century.

Furthermore, the watercolours by Vincenzo Loira, who painted them during King Umberto I's 1881 visit to Potenza, portray traditional local costumes and typical landscapes of our territory.

Photographic heritage

The photographic collection is one of the most important parts of our heritage, and includes unequalled and distinctive pictures in different styles, from the socio-cultural shots by Franco Pinna, Ugo Lo Pinto, Guy Jaumotte and Mario Carbone to modern ones by Pasquale Modica, Philippe Antonello, to the chromatic and iconographic photos by Aldo La Capra, Arcangelo Palese and Ottavio Chiaradia.

Military heritage

After the closure of the “Lucania” military base, which implied the shutdown of the annexed military museum, the Province of Potenza, eager to preserve and promote a huge amount of finds, particularly significant for the history of Basilicata from 1860 to WWII, signed an agreement with the Centro Studi Storico-Militari “G. Salinardi” for the acquisition of all material, equipment and assets, in order to preserve, study and exhibit them. This collection includes various and very interesting relics: uniforms, medals, canvases, weapons, items of military equipment.

Permanent exhibitions

Permanent exhibitions

Ground Level

At the bottom of the stairs, on the Via Ciccotti entrance, it is possible to see, since its unveiling during the 2012 European Heritage Days, the reconstruction of a segment of the Aragonese aqueduct of Potenza.

The hollow stone blocks which served as pipes of the ancient Ancilla aqueduct have been brought to light by chance during some roadworks, as it often happens to archaeological artifacts.

On March 2012 the Museum completed the acquisition of these artifacts and covered their cleaning, set-up and outfitting, with the supervision and scientific advice from experts of the government department in charge of archaeology and antiquities.

Our *Lapidarium*, a display of significant stone artifacts located in the Museum's inner courtyard, includes honorary and funerary inscriptions in Latin, related to the city of *Potentia* over a period spanning between the Roman Republic and Late Antiquity. They have been extremely helpful in outlining a more precise chart of local settlements in this chronological context.

Entering the building from Via Ciccotti, you can see a fragment of a funerary stela in aedícula engraved with an inscription in Greek symbols and Oscan language, found in Anxia (Anzi). The stela is clearly influenced by Greek art, specifically Attic sculpture, although it comes in an *Italic* fashion. Palaeography helped dating it to III century BC.

Given the many lacunae in the inscription, two possible interpretations have been suggested: it could be either the dedication by Kahas, the sculptor of the stela, to his wife/lover Ahere, or, more likely, a curse aimed to those who tried to violate the tomb. The inscription must have continued in the missing lower section of the stela and must have been written in Greek, not in the local idiom.

On the same floor you can visit the exhibition “L'eterno rinnovarsi della vita: i segni e i simboli” (The eternal renewal of Life: signs and symbols), a themed exposition which displays artifacts from the Latronico caves, dated from Neolithic to the Middle Bronze Age.

The exhibition's main theme is the Spiral, “symbol” and formal abstraction of a specific life-style: the material culture of these prehistoric and protohistoric populations features the four elements of Nature (EARTH, WATER, FIRE, AIR). They always accompany human activities that must have been a mixture of ritualism and concreteness.

First Floor

On the first floor you can visit our permanent exhibition, which illustrates the chrono-cultural journey of the three main populations of ancient Lucania (the natives known as Peukekiantes, the Greeks from the Achaean colony of Metapontum and the Lucanians), who inhabited our region from the Archaic Age to the romanisation; you can also enjoy an audio commentary during your tour of the exhibition.

The finds on display are just a part of the results of many years of research and excavations in the entire territory, yet they well represent the styles, fashions and technologies of each population.

A particularly interesting find is the small temple with goddess from Garaguso, sculpted by Greek artisans, which has also been displayed in Washington, DC and Rome, as a piece of the “Mostra delle Regioni e testimonianze d'Italia” (Exhibition of the Regions and testimonies of Italy), on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Unification of Italy.

The temple and a marble torso of Kouros, sculpted by Greek artisans as well, are two items the Museum can be particularly proud of, considering their typological and territorial unicity.

Other finds of primary interest are the Lucanian armour, the Knight's frieze and all the ceramics of native, Greek and Lucanian manufacture.

Second Floor

On the second floor you can visit an exhibition of uniforms, medals, pictures and documents from private collections by local notable families (such as Lacava, Riviello, Galasso), retracing and attesting the historical events which took place in Basilicata from 1860 to WWII.