



Press Release

Announcing the First Friends of Florence Award Grant for the Protection of the Florentine Artistic and Cultural Heritage – Florence Art and Restoration Fair 2012.

The non-profit Friends of Florence Foundation, in cooperation with the non-profit Association Istur-CHT, the secretariat of the Florence Art and Restoration Fair, announces the first *Friends of Florence Award Grant* for the restoration – conservation of artworks in Florence.

Italy's cultural and artistic heritage is deeply rooted in the country's history and identity: conserving this heritage is essential for future generations. Florence, universally acknowledged as the cradle of Italian art, is one of the most vibrant areas for research in art restoration and conservation, and for the proper promotion of culture. This first *Friends of Florence Award Grant* will offer new impetus for protecting and conserving the region's artistic heritage. At the same time, the grant will promote the art of restoration itself, by supporting and rewarding the efforts and expertise of restoration professionals. A project such as this sends a positive signal in this crucial period in Italy's economic reality: today, more than ever before, art and culture risk being sacrificed and relegated to the bottom of the list of the country's needs. The Award Grant offers an excellent opportunity for work and development in a field that requires constantly updated knowledge and skills and which unfortunately, more than any other, is subject to the vicissitudes of the international economic situation.

Established in the United States in 1998, the **non-profit Friends of Florence Foundation** is fully committed to preserving and enhancing the cultural and historical integrity of the arts located in Florence and Tuscany and to increasing public understanding and appreciation through educational programs and events. The Foundation works with public and private entities, universities, schools and cultural associations active in the fields of the fine arts and cultural heritage. Friends of Florence also produces Dvds and publishes books and monographs dedicated to various completed projects.

Conservation and enhancing public understanding are the principles that inspire and guide Friends in Florence in choosing projects to support and it is precisely in harmony with these values that the partnership with the Associazione non-profit Istur-CHT, Salone di Restauro was born.

The Biennial Florence Art and Restoration Fair is an event dedicated to restoration firms which, by sharing their experiences and expertise, interact and help strengthen a system that is still vital in Italy for creating art, training young people and providing services for conservation and restoration. The fair is also an excellent vehicle for promoting and enhancing cultural and environmental heritage, for keeping Italy's traditions alive and for making sure that all this is duly recognized as an essential part of our society's present and future.

The *Friends of Florence Award Grant – Salone Restauro di Firenze 2012*, is a monetary prize of € 20.000,00 (including VAT) to cover the restoration of a work of art in Florence. Individual professionals or firms, with at least 5 (five) years of documented experience with the Soprintendenze, may submit projects for consideration either alone or in conjunction with public and/or private entities. Submissions can be for full or partial projects, or for projects that have

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8 - 10 Novembre 2012 - Fortezza d Basso



already been started. The application form, regulations and information are available at www.salonerestaurofirenze.org; the deadline for submitting applications is July 31st 2012. A judging panel will evaluate all the submittals and announce the winner during the Florence Art and Restoration Fair that will be held at the Fortezza da Basso in Florence from 8-10 November 2012. The adjudication will mark the symbolic start of the work that must be finished by the end of 2014.

This program, one of the first to award a grant through a competition supported by a non-profit organization, is an important step in the ongoing efforts to protect and preserve the artistic heritage in Florence. The cooperation between the Friends of Florence Foundation and the non profit Istur CHT is creating a new synergy between the worlds of philanthropy and restoration professionals. Working together they will make it possible to restore another of the city's masterpieces – be it large or small – to its original splendor. And, this will be possible thanks to the commitment of those who know that cultural heritage is the cornerstone for building the future.

Florence, 10 May 2012.

To learn more about the Friends of Florence Foundation please visit:

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For information about the Friends of Florence Award Grant and the Florence Art and Restoration Fair 2012 please visit:

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