

The Colosseum tells its own story for the first time in a major exhibition. From March 8, 2017, to January 7, 2018, in the ambulatory of the second order, the millions of visitors to the Flavian amphitheater will be able to explore the whole history of the monument.

The event ***Colosseum. An Icon*** goes beyond recounting its **history under the Caesars** to retrace the site's long and intense life over the centuries. From the bustling yet little-known commercial, residential and religious activities that characterized the Colosseum in **the Middle Ages** to the fascination exerted over the great architects and painters of the **Renaissance**. Then from its transformation into a mythical place of martyrdom, **beginning in the sixteenth century**, the setting for the ritual of the Via Crucis, to its ascendancy **from the eighteenth century** on as the favored destination of the Grand Tour by poets, writers and painters. It was turned into a romantic place of the imagination, with dreamers in the moonlight and daring visitors dying of malaria transmitted by the mosquitoes that proliferated in its recesses. **The late eighteenth century** saw its archaeological rediscovery, excavation and restoration, leading to the construction of the great spurs that still shore up the structure. With the advent of **fascism**, the Colosseum once again became, as in olden times, the ideological setting for displays of power. **In the postwar period** there grew up a new myth of the Colosseum: the Flavian Amphitheatre burst into the cinema with sword-and-sandal movies and the masterpieces of Italian neorealism, while Roman Pop Art consecrated it in the role of an icon, which it continues to perform seamlessly to **this day**. Even contemporary art continues to recount the history of the monument, an emblem of the city and of Italy, in paintings, installations, performances, videos and photographs by internationally renowned artists.

The Special Superintendency for the Colosseum and Rome's central archaeological area, with Electa, is promoting this exhibition about the life of the monument enriched with the previously unpublished results of recent excavations and restoration work, confirming the evidence of archival documents about the medieval period: the Colosseum teemed with life, crypts, churches, shops and workshops, the mansions of great aristocratic families and humble dwellings, which found and built new spaces amid its leafy arches and high vaults.

The exhibition is curated by Rossella Rea, Serena Romano and Riccardo Santangeli Valenzani. Exhibit design by Francesco Cellini and Maria Margarita Segarra Lagunes.

Twelve sections arranged in chronological order reveal the historical and cultural influence of the amphitheater in the most diverse fields: from painting to restoration, architecture urban planning, entertainment, literature, sociology and politics. Over time, the monument has become an outstanding symbol of eternity and power, civilization and culture. **Still making international headlines today, the Colosseum lives in the collective imagination, not just of Italians but the world: its myth continues.**

COLOSSEUM. AN ICON

8.3.17 – 7.1.18
ROME, COLOSSEUM

Some one hundred works are on display, including ancient artifacts, drawings, paintings, reconstructions in models, photos and a movie projected on the vaults of the ambulatory, where masterpieces of world cinema alternate with rare images from the Istituto Luce – Cinecittà, edited by Giorgio Gosetti and Lorenza Micarelli – Casa del Cinema.

The exhibition is accompanied by ***The Colosseum Book*** and will be followed by the **catalogue, published by Electa**. *The Colosseum Book* includes a large and original collection of images and literary passages arranged by eloquent associations, the presentation of numerous little-known and even unpublished materials in continuous and coherent rapport with the monument. The catalogue, with numerous scholarly contributions, traces the monument's long and complex history: from the unpublished records of the recent excavations, the studies of the Christian Colosseum and the monument as an icon of the Grand Tour, and ending with an anthropological focus on the contemporary amphitheater, which is still the destination of the first trip to Italy for millions of tourists. The pages of this substantial volume reveal how, in the changing city, the Colosseum has always stood at the center of power, in an urban context marked by changes in society.

COLOSSEUM. AN ICON

8.3.17 – 7.1.18
ROME, COLOSSEUM

INFO SHEET

Title

Colosseum. An Icon

Place

Rome, the Colosseum

Curated by

Rossella Rea
Serena Romano
Riccardo Santangeli Valenzani

Promoted by

Special Suprintendency for the Colosseum
and the central archeological area of Rome
with Electa

Period

March 8, 2017 – January, 2018

Organization and catalogue

Electa

Opening hours

8.30 am – 5 pm March 8–15
8.30 am – 5.30 pm March 16–25
8.30 am – 7.15 pm March 26–August 31
8.30 am – 7 pm September 1–September 30
8.30 am – 6.30 pm October 1–28
8.30 am – 4.30 pm October 29 2017–7 January 2018

Last entrance one hour before closing time.

Admission charge

Full € 12.00; reduced € 7.50 including the exhibitions
held in the archeological area of the Roman Forum–
Palatine–Colosseum.

Reductions and free admissions in keeping with the
rules in force.

The ticket is valid for 2 days and gives a single
admission to the Colosseum, and the single admission
to the Roman Forum and Palatine.

Tickets can be bought online at the website
www.coopculture.it. To avoid the queue read the
QR code for entry with smartphone and tablet.

Information and guided tours

tel. +39.06.39967700
www.coopculture.it

Press Office

Electa
Gabriella Gatto
tel. +39.06.47497462
press.electamusei@mondadori.it