

save the **artistic** heritage

**Save the Artistic Heritage**  
presents the DAW® (digital limited edition) of

***Basket of Fruit***  
by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio

in the Permanent Collection of  
Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan  
until 14 July 2019

replacing the original artwork  
currently on loan at the exhibition  
***Il meraviglioso mondo della natura. Una favola tra arte, mito e scienza***  
edited by Giovanni Agosti and Jacopo Stoppa  
at Palazzo Reale, Milan

**The operation is part of a wider framework for the valorization of Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana's Collection, following the signed agreement between the Milanese institution and the company Cinello**

*Milan, 3 April 2019* – Association **Save the Artistic Heritage** – a non-profit organization for the promotion and valorization of Italy's historical and artistic heritage – is proud to **exhibit for the first time** in Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana's **Permanent Collection** in Milan, the **DAW® (digital limited edition)** of Michelangelo de Merisi da Caravaggio's masterpiece, the ***Basket of Fruit***, currently on loan at the Palazzo Reale (Milan) until 14 April 2019 on the occasion of the exhibition *Il meraviglioso mondo della natura. Una favola tra arte, mito e scienza* edited by Giovanni Agosti and Jacopo Stoppa, organized to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death.

The *Basket of Fruit* is one of the most famous paintings by Caravaggio, an iconic work of art among the most celebrated pieces in the history of art of all time, generally considered as a perfect representation of the genre of still life. The painting is probably also the most famous work in cardinal Federico Borromeo's collection, the original nucleus of the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. It represents a wicker basket overflowing with a variety of fruits and leaves, presented with great realism and attention to detail, almost in contrast with the neutral and abstract background of the painting and the line of color on which the basket is placed. The Basket was added to Ambrosiana's founder's collection in 1607, as documented by the cardinal himself in a codicil of 17 September of the same

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year: “A painting one braccio wide and three-fourths braccia high, where on a white base there is a basket of fruit, some branches with leaves and some are detached/there are two bunches of grapes, one white and one black, figs, apples and others by the hand of Michele/Agnolo da Caravaggio”. Federico Borromeo mentioned several times this extraordinary painting in his writings and claimed that he had searched in vain for a work that could compare to it, but “for its incomparable beauty and excellence, it remained alone”.

Radiographic research has confirmed that the painting was made on recovered canvas, which was typical of him during the Roman period – when Caravaggio painted directly on his previous sketches – convincing Roberto Longhi that the painting was not cropped from a larger painting with a figure as a subject as it was believed until the mid-twentieth century. In fact, the subject was not very common at the time of Caravaggio and the Milanese artist became the initiator and the innovator of the concept of still life, taken in its uniqueness and naturalness and elevated to the level of the great masterpieces. There have been many interpretations of the *Basket of Fruit*, even of a religious nature: undoubtedly the extreme realism in which the fresh fruit and the worm-eaten ones are combined, the gradually drying crumpling leaves, make perceivable the inexorable flow of time.

While the original work is on loan, it will be replaced for the first time ever (until 14 July 2019), with a **DAW® – Digital ArtWork**, a **digital limited edition on a monitor**, numbered and certified, in 1:1 scale and in all respects faithful to the original one, **created by the company Cinello** in agreement with the Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana by using an **innovative patented technology**.

The initiative is promoted by Save the Artistic Heritage – a non-profit association that was founded with the aim of promoting the historical and artistic heritage, especially the Italian one, through actions, dissemination and sharing tools, together with new digital technologies, and to find new ways of support – and it is part **of a wider framework of valorization of Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana’s heritage**, which has already been brought into use last summer with the DAW® (digital limited edition) replacing the original artwork on loan (Resurrection of Christ by Marco Basaiti). In particular, thanks to **Cinello’s collaboration agreements with the most important Italian museums** – including the Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana – with the approval of MiBACT, Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, Save the Artistic Heritage **is able to circulate and exhibit these immovable masterpieces of our heritage in digital format, for educational and informational purposes. Half of the net revenues from the sales or circulation of DAW® will go to the museums who own the original copyrights** – in this case to the **Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana** – helping museums and partner institutes to preserve in the best possible way the priceless heritage which they are guarding.

This presentation is in collaboration with **Intesa Sanpaolo** and **Intesa Sanpaolo Innovation Center**. Special thanks to **Frescobaldi** as technical partner.

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Link to images: <https://goo.gl/bJHcdY>

## INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

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[www.ambrosiana.eu](http://www.ambrosiana.eu)

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

LOCATION: VENERANDA BIBLIOTECA AMBROSIANA | Piazza Pio XI, 2 - 20123 Milano

OPENING HOURS: Tuesday – Sunday; 10.00 – 18.00 (last entrance 17.30)

INFORMATION ON PRICES, DISCOUNTS AND RESERVATIONS: T. +39 02 6597728 (9.00 – 13.00; 14.00 – 16.00)  
[prenotazione.visite@ambrosiana.it](mailto:prenotazione.visite@ambrosiana.it)

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## **FOR EDITORS**

### **Save the Artistic Heritage non-profit association**

Save The Artistic Heritage is a non-profit association for promotion and valorization of the artistic heritage at national and international level, that of Italian in the first place. Their mission is to develop the education and knowledge of Artistic Heritage, especially visual arts, through actions, dissemination and sharing, together with new digital technologies.

Save The Artistic Heritage organizes exhibitions, events, reviews, essays, conferences, seminars, studies, presentations and manifestations with the purpose of discussing and increasing knowledge on topics related to associative goals; they develop educational and didactic activities in the art world, research, archives, exchange and collaboration with Italian and non-Italian institutions, which have similar or alike purposes, they promote contacts and collaboration with public institutions, museums, galleries, collectors, fairs and universities in Italy and in the world.

[www.savetheartisticheritage.com](http://www.savetheartisticheritage.com)

### **Cinello**

#### **How to valorize artistic heritage**

The company Cinello was founded in 2015 from the idea of two engineers with a long experience in the field of information technology, John Blem and Franco Losi, aforementioned the son of a famous painter from Piacenza, Cinello. Their adventure combines the skills they have developed in the field of digital technologies in thirty years of career in Silicon Valley and important multinational companies, and their passion for art and Italian historical artistic heritage, identifying element of Italy and an asset to valorize.

Starting from important masterpieces, Cinello creates the DAW® - Digital ArtWork: digital multiples in 1: 1 scale, in limited series, certified and impossible to copy thanks to a patented technology that guarantees its uniqueness. Each DAW® is unique, numbered, authenticated and uncopiable and it respects all the features and requirements of a work of art, starting from its uniqueness.

With the approval of MiBACT, Cinello has signed agreements with the most important public and private Italian museums - Monumental Complex of Pilotta of Parma, Gallerie dell'Accademia of Venice, Museum and Real Bosco di Capodimonte, Uffizi Galleries Pinacoteca di Brera, Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Museum of Palazzo Pretorio of Prato, Monte dei Paschi di Siena Foundation - which have authorized the reproduction of a wide selection of their most famous masterpieces. For every DAW® half of the net revenues will be shared with the museum that holds the original artwork, avoiding this way the possible dispersion of value of the artistic heritage that the digitalization could imply, and guaranteeing new resources for its preservation and valorization.

[www.cinello.com](http://www.cinello.com)

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## **Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana**

Pinacoteca Ambrosiana was founded in 1618 by cardinal Federico Borromeo, when he donated his art collection to the Ambrosiana library, which was founded by him as well in 1607. The building was named after the patron saint of Milan, St. Ambrose. It was the first museum in the world open to the public. The history of the Pinacoteca and the library goes hand in hand, as this was also the first library to be open to the public. The book collection includes prestigious volumes, among them Francesco Petrarca's version of Virgil with illustrations by Simone Martini and Leonardo's Codex Atlanticus, donated in 1637 by Galeazzo Arconati. In fact, cardinal's plan was to display art with its symbology and evocative power to serve Christian values reaffirmed by the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which were threatened by the diffusion of the Protestant reformation. The academy was added in 1637 and transferred to Brera in 1776. It was supposed to be an artistic school of painting, sculpture and architecture which would allow the students to learn from the great models of the history.

The building was designed by architect Fabio Mangone (1587-1629) and it is located in the city center. The space is expanded over 1500 square meters divided into twenty-two rooms. The cardinal himself illustrated the works and the objects of the collection in his book in Latin, *Museum* (1625), which still today represents the main nucleus of the Pinacoteca. Through commissions and purchases Federico Borromeo's collection grew with the paintings of Lombard and Tuscan schools, among them copies of Raphael, Correggio and Bernardino Luini and casts from Leone Leoni's workshop, arriving to a total of 3000 artworks of which 300 are exhibited. There are great masterpieces such as the *Portrait of a Musician* by Leonardo Da Vinci (1480), *Madonna del Padiglione* by Botticelli (1495), the cartoon for the *School of Athens* by Raphael (before 1510), the *Holy Family with St. Anne and Young St. John* by Bernardino Luini (1530) and *the Rest on the Flight into Egypt* by Jacopo Bassano (1547). A great part of the collection is dedicated to landscape and still life, because the cardinal saw the nature as an important tool raising the human mind into the Divine. For this reason, Federico collected Caravaggio's *Basket of Fruit* and the miniature paintings by Jan Brueghel and Paul Brill.

After the cardinal's death the collection was enriched with the donations of the artworks of 15th and 16th centuries, such as the removed frescoes by Bramantino and Antonio Canova and Bertel Thorvaldsen's marble self-portraits. Museo Settala, one of the first museums in Italy, founded by canonical Manfredo Settala (1600-1680), was joined to Pinacoteca Ambrosiana in 1751. The museum is a science history museum with a variety of curiosities of all time.

With the growing collection the museum required some structural and architectural changes as well, including the expansion of the exhibition halls between 1928 and 1931, which were decorated with 14<sup>th</sup> century miniature motifs of Ambrosian codes, and between 1932 and 1938 a new series of restorations was implemented under the guidance of Ambrogio Annoni. The renowned readjustment in 1963 was curated by architect Luigi Caccia Dominioni and the museum excursus was concluded with the current reorganization between 1990 and 1997.

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