

Panel: Art and Identity

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Vital Reproduction and Creative Conservation: The Shaping of Sieneese Identity in Rutilio Manetti's Crucifix from 1625 for the National Sieneese Confraternity in Rome

The shaping of identity in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Rome played a crucial role in the artistic patronage of both the universal and the national confraternities. The social, religious, and political meaning of these confraternities was discernable not only through their activities but also through artistic representation. Especially in mobile works of art, which were shown to the public during processions and feasts, the import of consciously embodied identity became clear.

One of these objects is the highly elaborated large scale crucifix of the Sieneese painter Rutilio Manetti (1571–1639). Today, it is placed in the oratory of the national Church of the Sieneese in the Roman Via Giulia, almost hidden from the public. The cross was donated from the Sieneese Confraternity Santa Caterina in Fontebranda to the Roman national confraternity, delivered in the Holy Year 1625 by means of a large procession. Surprisingly, the crucifix has been hardly studied although it represents a notable and intricate process of creating identity. On the one hand it reproduces a 13<sup>th</sup> century cult image of the crucified Christus, from who Saint Catharine (the patron of both the confraternities and the city of Siena) received the stigma. On the other hand it claims to depict the Saint AD VIVUM EXPRESSA as is inscribed on the backside of the crucifix where the Saint receives the stigma kneeling on a cloud which overarches the depiction of the city of Siena.

The paper investigates two different approaches in the creation of identity that are united in the work of Manetti. Firstly, the vital reproduction of an iconic object that, secondly, gives shape to a creative conservation of Sieneese religious tradition. The life-size depiction of the national saint, whose stigmatization was recognized as such by pope Urban VIII only in 1630, is a powerful manifestation of Sieneese nationality.

