

THE VALORIZATION PROCESS OF THE BASILICA DI SAN LORENZO IN CREMONA: FROM STATIC DYSFUNCTION TO NEW REUSE

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Abstract.

The Archaeological Museum of Cremona, hosted in the ancient ex-Basilica of St. Lorenzo, is part of the cultural institutions of the city. The Basilica, realized at the end of the 12th century, had different modifications during the history and was the object of extensive archaeological campaigns during 1962 and 1965. Furthermore, the presence of a public school in the nearby buildings drove to the transformation of the church into a gym in the 20th century, imposing some changes to the main structures. As a result, the building appeared deeply fragmented, conserving a Renaissance chapel along the north side of the 12th century naves body and the apse remains of the previous Early-Christian church emerging from the excavation realized in the transept. This condition, together with periods of abandonment, produced negative effects on the building, afflicted by diffused crack patterns on the walls and the vault system. The situation required an intervention for evaluating the state of conservation of the building and the development of a design for introducing new proper functions in the ex-Basilica. This work describes the preservation process carried out on the Basilica, considering the first analysis phase for characterizing the structures, the interventions set for reinforcing some elements and the final conversion of its spaces into the archaeological museum. By the synergic efforts provided by the superintendence conservators and the designers, the rich variety of the masonry stratifications were preserved and are today put in direct relationship with the settings realized with contemporary materials.

Keywords: *Basilica di San Lorenzo, Cremona, Diagnostic, Reuse, Valorisation, Archaeological Museum*