



## Giacomo Leopardi at Palazzo Mattei di Giove



*Palace of the Mattei Dukes*

The Istituto Centrale per i beni sonori ed audiovisivi (ICBSA) is housed in the Palazzo Mattei di Giove in Rome, a historic palazzo built by Carlo Maderno between 1598 and 1611 for Asdrubale Mattei, Duke of Giove, on the occasion of his second marriage to Co-stanza Gonzaga (1595).

Palazzo Mattei di Giove is a treasure trove of priceless treasures and interesting stories. The palace and its inhabitants were witnesses to the restless life of Caravaggio, to the mastery of artists such as Pietro da Cortona, Domenichino and Giovanni Lanfranco, who left their mark with wonderful frescoes.

The palace was also home to one of Italy's greatest 19th-century poets, Giacomo Leopardi, who, as well as being one of the most important figures in world literature, was also one of the main exponents of literary romanticism, although he always criticised the romantic current, considering himself closer to classicism.

His reflections on existence and the human condition also make him an outstanding philosopher. The lyrical distinctiveness of his poetry made him a protagonist in the international literary and cultural panorama, influencing far beyond his time and the very short, long-suffering stay in Rome.

Between November 1822 and April 1823, Giacomo Leopardi, the Italian poet, philosopher, writer and philologist, stayed in the rooms on the third floor of his uncles' Antici-Mattei palace, where the ICBSA offices are now located. The poet writes: *'The Roman stay in Palazzo Antici Mattei in a corner room on the third floor is a list of all the city's ills'*.

The stay was an opportunity for Leopardi to write letters to his loved ones communicating his impressions of the capital and giving a personal interpretation of the spirit that hovered around him, starting with the observation of the daily life of the family of his maternal uncle, Carlo Antici, who had acquired the palace through his marriage to the last Mattei heir, Marianna, hence the name Antici Mattei given to the palace at the time.

The ICBSA has dedicated a short documentary to the poet's stay in Rome in which, through the words of the first letter sent to his mother, the Marquise Adelaide Antici, as soon as he arrived in Rome on 23 November 1822, some of the treasures and glimpses of the palace and its interiors are shown.



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The fact that the palace is imposing and towers above the small houses and the narrow, smelly alleys of the ghetto is in eternal contrast and challenge with the nearby Palazzo Cenci and becomes for Leopardi a golden prison whose beauty he cannot appreciate, the de-chorus of the frescoes on the piano nobile of this palace, painted by Dominichino and Pietro da Cortona, because as he wrote to his sister Paolina on 3 December 1822: *all the greatness of Rome serves only to multiply the distances (.....) between men.*



<https://youtu.be/946DeEgAqPY>

*Credits: by Bianca Maria Zaccheo*

*The documentary was made by: Produzione Video Fabbrica di Note directed by di Antonio Buldini; Actor and narrated voice Massimo Di Vincenzo; Dop Armando Brecciaroli; Drone Saba Basharuli; Video Editing FDN Video; Color Technobox; Production Secretariat Riccardo Buldini; Executive organisation Alberta Di Marco; Coordination and Institutional Relations ICBSA Bianca Maria Zaccheo*

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