

On Monday 23rd December at 3 p.m. opens to the public the exhibition *Animals and fantastic figures between history, art and legend: an imaginary sampler of the Archivio di Stato di Roma*. Result of a collaboration between Archivio di Stato di Roma and Accademia delle belle arti di Roma, the exposition curated by Nunzia Fatone and Giovanna Mentonelli will be scheduled from December 23rd 2024 to February 13th 2025 at the Sala Alessandrina of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza.

The display originates from Liber Regulae of Ospedale di S. Spirito in Sassia, a marvelous illuminated manuscript from the 14th century kept in Archivio, and aims to promote the imaginary collection found in the Institute's documents. The depiction of animals and figures with both imaginative shapes and extraordinary chromaticism is the trait that connects archival and library sources of various kinds: from parchment miniatures to ancient books, from coat of arms to seals, from engravings to woodcuts, from star charts to cartographic atlases, from Seventeenth century drawings to graphic and sculptural works accomplished by contemporary artists.

Legendary and mythological creatures enclose in their fantastic forms a symbolic value: already in antiquity in the fables of Aesop and Phaedrus animals are allusions to man's vices and virtues but it is especially in the Middle Ages that the genre of the bestiary developed, following the model of the Physiologus, a treatise on the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdom of the second century. Real and fantastic, hybrid and monstrous figures - such as dragons, wolves, elephants, lions, griffins, unicorns and mermaids - also appear in sculptures and frescoes, from the classical world to modern art, and still inspire contemporary artists and illustrators.

The exhibition is divided into several thematic sections: *Fantastic and monstrous figures in heraldry*, *Animals and fantastic figures in the miniatures of the Liber Regulae*, *Celestial and terrestrial maps*, *Animals and music*, *Fantastic animals in literature and books from Sixteenth century*, *Drawings and prints of the Seventeenth century*; in which documents and volumes from Archivio di Stato di Roma are presented. The exposition is embellished by the creative proposals of the students of Scuola di Grafica d'Arte dell'Accademia delle Belle Arti di Roma and by the creations of contemporary artists such as Eleonora Cumer, Carlo De Meo, Stefano Iori, Rosa Pierno and Sabrina Ventrella.

The exhibition with free admission can be visited: on Monday and Thursday from 3 to 6 pm, Tuesday from 10 am to 1 pm.

Bookings for the schools: as-rm.didattica@cultura.gov

When: Dec. 23rd 2024 - Feb. 13th 2025: Mondays and Thursdays: 3-6 p.m.; Tuesdays: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Where: Sala Alessandrina, Corso del rinascimento 40

How: Free entrance, no reservation required

Info: as-rm.didattica@cultura.gov