

50th NATIONAL MADONNARI FESTIVAL PARTICIPATION CRITERIA (year 2024)

INTRODUCTION

The 2024 National Madonnari Festival will be the 50th edition of the event. On this special occasion, the Municipal Administration of Curtatone (with decision no. 215 dated 28/10/2023) have conceived of a project titled “The Divine Comedy painted by Madonnari” (in collaboration with the Mantua-based Committee of the “Dante Alighieri” club, the association “Amici di Palazzo Te” and the Mantua museums, the association Postumia from Gazoldo degli Ippoliti, and the association “Associazione per i Monumenti Domenicani di Mantova”, with the support of the diocese of Mantua and the municipalities of Mantua, Borgo Virgilio and Goito). The project is a first time ever event intended to convert the parvis of Grazie into an itinerary, which visitors will be able to walk along, dedicated to the representation of characters and episodes narrated in Dante’s cantos, starting from Inferno (Hell), passing through Purgatorio (Purgatory) and eventually reaching Paradiso (Paradise), in the vicinity of the sanctuary Santuario della Beata Vergine delle Grazie.

The yard will be divided into three areas, each corresponding to one of Dante’s cantos (Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso), in which works will come to life. Each area will then be divided into spaces in which themes and situations will be represented, as specifically selected and suggested by the Dante Alighieri club designated by the Rome-based headquarters, with which the project was shared.

DEFINITIONS

Article 1

The National Madonnari Festival is a painting contest that takes place on the yard of the sanctuary Santuario della Beata Vergine delle Grazie in Grazie di Curtatone (Mantua, Italy), in a reserved area that is divided into spaces (300×250 cm each) for the contest.

Article 2

The contest officially begins at 10.00 a.m. on 14th August and finishes at 4.00 p.m. on 15th August, the Holy Virgin Assumption festival. The award ceremony will take place later in the evening of 15 August. Should the weather be rainy or should any other occurrence prevent the event from being officially opened by **12.00 on 15th August**, it will be put off to 16th August or to any such date within the days of the Ancient Fair of Grazie that the municipal authorities shall specify based on the scheduled events. The new event start and close times shall be defined by the organisers.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Article 3

As this year event has a predefined theme, each Madonnaro shall be asked to view the contest criteria and then express their interest in participating in the contest (preliminary registration) by way of filling out the form at the following link <https://forms.gle/uAW1fkXrBhbM5f8a9> no later than **31/3/2024**.

On **13/4/2024** a draw will be made by the municipal Cultural Office before the municipal secretary with the purpose of giving each Madonnaro a theme, which the Madonnaro will be required to accept incontestably.

With reference to the Maestro Madonnaro and Madonnaro Qualificato categories (master and qualified levels), whose expressions of interest will be accepted on a priority basis, they will be drawn and sorted into the three cantos so that their distribution is balanced.

As for the Madonnaro Semplice category (base level), a draw procedure will be used to give out themes until all the spaces in the yard are covered. Any exceeding applicant shall be included in a Reserves list and they shall be contacted in the event of applicants missing or waiving their place.

At the end of the draw process, the applicant-theme matching will be timely notified to all participants in order for them to send their sketches to the email address **concorso.madonnari@curtatone.it**, no later than **15/5/2024**, and to formalise their application using the form available at <https://forms.gle/tS6j9YsaWts4wX3t8>.

Please be informed that the sketch shall be approved by a panel who will evaluate its consistency with the principles of the contest, and this approval shall be binding for acceptance before the artist can register. Final acceptance shall be notified by **25/06/24**.

Article 4

Registration to the contest is opened to people over the age of 16. A consent form duly signed by the parents is required for participants under 16.

Registrations are individual. Works made by a team are only admitted from the lower category, i.e. Madonnari Semplici - for the breakdown into categories, please refer to Article 9 and subsequent in these criteria. A maximum number of three team members in each space is admitted. The team leader's name shall be notified who shall be the exclusive receiver of prizes and reimbursements, if any. The team members, i.e. people helping the team leader, must not have previously competed in the Grazie contest as individuals.

Article 5

For organisational reasons, actual attendance of the registered participants must be confirmed at the Madonnari Museum in the following days:

- **13-08-2024 from 4 to 7 p.m.;**
- **14-08-2024 from 8 to 10 a.m.**

This will help the organisers to arrange for replacements, if necessary (ref. Art. 3).

On this occasion, participants can submit the following documents if they have not done so yet:

- ✓ identity card;
- ✓ tax reg. card;
- ✓ IBAN code;

- ✓ travel ticket;
- ✓ car registration number (where applicable).
- ✓ Participants are also kindly requested to inform the Contest Office about their intention to use the Madonnari Campus and specify any other diet-related matters (vegetarians or vegans).

MATERIALS, TECHNIQUES, THEMES AND SUBJECTS

Article 6

The drawings on the yard:

- must be made exclusively using chalks, water-soluble oil pastels, chalk powder, or powder pigments;
- when creating their work, participants shall fully occupy the area they have been given - the max. distance admitted from the space edge is 10 cm - so that the three cantos can be read uniformly; the use of liquid media for the above purpose is admitted this year.
- The use of liquid media is permitted in the preparation phase and for the base coat; the media will only consist of water without any additives such as glue, settling agents or thickeners. The use of any other substance from pigments and water shall cause the participant to be disqualified. Additionally, where the materials used damage the yard, as also recognisable at a later stage, the involved Madonnaro shall be asked to pay for the cleaning costs and shall be denied the possibility to apply for the next contest.
- Please be informed that the term “base coat” means the preparation coat, i.e. the homogeneous colour base on which the artist will work with chalks and oil pastels.
- For the sake of avoiding the use of non-conforming substances with those specified in relation to liquid media, the organisers have decided to give the liquid media to the Madonnari in order to prevent offering particular advantages, as further explained and instructed before the event.
- A grid can be drawn or other transfer systems used to make the preparatory drawing: moulds or pouncing, on the other hand, are not admitted.
- The use of spray, acrylic and oil-based paints is prohibited. Any Madonnaro using these unauthorised and harmful techniques will be excluded from the contest.
- Designated staff shall check that the admitted materials and techniques, as specified in the previous sections, are used.

Article 7

For the 2024 edition, the theme commissioned by the Municipal Administration of Curtatone, which was shared with the officers designated by the diocese, shall be interpreted using the techniques and expressing the characteristics that are typical of the Madonnaro Art.

CATEGORIES AND PRIZES

Article 8

Three contestant categories have been identified:

- Maestri Madonnari (master level),
- Madonnari Qualificati (qualified level),
- Madonnari Semplici (base level).

Article 9

The base level category is the Madonnari Semplici. Applicants who register in the contest and do not belong to any of the other two categories (qualified or master levels) are included in this category, without any other test or institutional process being required.

The first 3 artists in the ranking of the Madonnari Semplici category shall be admitted to the Madonnari Qualificati category; the first 3 artists in the ranking of the Madonnari Qualificati category shall be admitted to the Maestri Madonnari category.

The Santuario Madonna delle Grazie Award and the Special Creativity Awards (1 per canto) can also include promotion to a higher category, only at the indisputable discretion of the panel of judges.

The three winners of the Maestri Madonnari category will be asked to make the sketch used to create the poster of the next contest edition: they will be free to decide to collaborate with the other winners of the category, failing which one of them will be drawn and thus selected as the author of the sketch. During the 2024 contest, the panel of judges will be split into three boards. Each board shall be in charge of determining the prizes (Madonnari Semplici, Qualificati, Maestri categories) for each single canto of Dante's Divine Comedy. The end result will be three winners in the Madonnari Semplici category, three winners in the Madonnari Qualificati category, and three winners in the Maestri Madonnari category. As for **nominated works**, they shall be allocated to the three boards also taking into account the number of spaces occupied in each canto. With reference to **special awards**, each board shall suggest and select them, and the awards will be given during a plenary session.

Article 10

The prizes for the 2024 contest include the following.

- **Prizes for Maestri Madonnari**

- The winner of each of the three cantos will receive a medal, will be designated to make the sketch for the poster of the 51st edition of the contest, as specified in Article 9 of these criteria, and will be awarded a prize of € 1,500.00 (including the intended compensation).
- The second and the third in the ranking will receive a medal.

- **Prizes for Madonnari Qualificati**

- The winner of each of the three cantos will receive the Madonnaro Trophy, the original of which will be stored at the Madonnari Museum in Grazie for one year, will be admitted to the top category of Maestri Madonnari, and will be awarded a prize of € 1,000.00 (including the intended compensation).
- The second and the third in the ranking will receive a medal and will be admitted to the top category of Maestri Madonnari.

- **Prizes for Madonnari Semplici** The winner of each of the three cantos will receive a medal, will be admitted to the higher category of Madonnari Qualificati, and will be awarded a prize of € 750.00 (including the intended compensation).

- The second and the third in the ranking will receive a medal and will be admitted to the higher category of Madonnari Qualificati.

Article 11

Receivers of prize money shall send the organisers a copy of their winning work, either on canvas or panel (approximate size 100x120 cm) using the chalk technique, **no later than 30th November 2024** at the address of the Cultural Office of the Curtatone Town Hall: cultura@curtatone.it

REIMBURSEMENT OF DOCUMENTED OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES AND/OR COMPENSATION

Article 12

The organisers shall offer each Madonnaro the opportunity to have lunch and dinner free of charge at the Campus on 14th and 15th August.

Article 13

The National Madonnari Festival is an artistic contest where each participant is awarded a compensation.

At the end of the contest, a panel of judges shall define compensations for each Madonnaro, based on the amounts below:

- up to € 430 (four hundred thirty), net*, for Maestri Madonnari;
- up to € 380 (three hundred eighty), net*, for Madonnari Qualificati;
- up to € 270 (two hundred seventy), net*, for Madonnari Semplici*. Compensation for team work will be paid in one single amount.

Compensation will be paid under occasional service conditions.

The panel of judges may, at their sole discretion, identify works whose execution fails to meet the minimum required standard, based on which the above-mentioned compensation is re-calculated.

Compensation shall be paid on **16th August** (or the day after the end of the contest where it is postponed) by wire transfer to the IBAN number specified at the time of registration.

***This year the compensation per capita is greater than in the previous editions as an additional budget was allocated exclusively for the 2024 edition as it is the 50th anniversary of the contest.**

ADDITIONAL AWARDS

Article 14

In addition to the prizes listed above, the Festival includes a variety of awards, as illustrated below.

- Nominated works: up to maximum 21 prizes, without ranking
- Santuario Madonna delle Grazie Award
- Special Creativity Awards, for first-time and original works
- Parco del Mincio Award
- People's Choice Award
- Rotary Club Award

Article 15

No joint award or prize shall be given to two or more artists. All special awards, excluding nominated works, shall be individual prizes.

Article 16

The appointments and qualifications awarded are exclusive of the place of origin of the event National Madonnari Festival in Grazie di Curtatone.

PANEL OF JUDGES

Article 17

The panel of Judges is appointed by the Town Hall of Curtatone, in their capacity as owner of the Festival and provider of prizes.

The Panel of Judges consists in a Chair and judges. The Chair acts in his/her capacity as *primus inter pares*. For the 2024 edition, the panel of judges shall be divided into three judging and independent boards (one per canto).

Article 18

The Panel of Judges shall take office, in full respect of their established rights, the morning of **15th August**. The judges are required to oversee the work of Madonnari, with special reference to the use of their artistic techniques, in order to check consistency with the criteria laid down herein -- exclusive use of water as liquid media, limited to the preparation of the base coat.

The Panel of Judges are responsible for evaluating the drawings and shall be entitled to watch them at least three times. On 15th August, tentatively in the morning and afternoon, and in any case by 4 pm, the judges shall visit the yard to check the work progress and to make the assessments required to eventually create the ranking.

The Panel of Judges shall be entitled to use photographs of the works of art, as taken from time to time for updates. This tool shall be in support and not in replacement of direct viewing of the works of art; photos shall form the base for assessment should the contest be concluded beforehand.

After the evaluation process, a report shall be drafted and signed by all Panel members, which will be filed at the municipal offices.

The Panel members are required to attend and provide their support during the award giving ceremony that will take place in the evening of the contest end day.

Curtatone, 2024

Curtatone Town Hall

The Mayor
Carlo Bottani