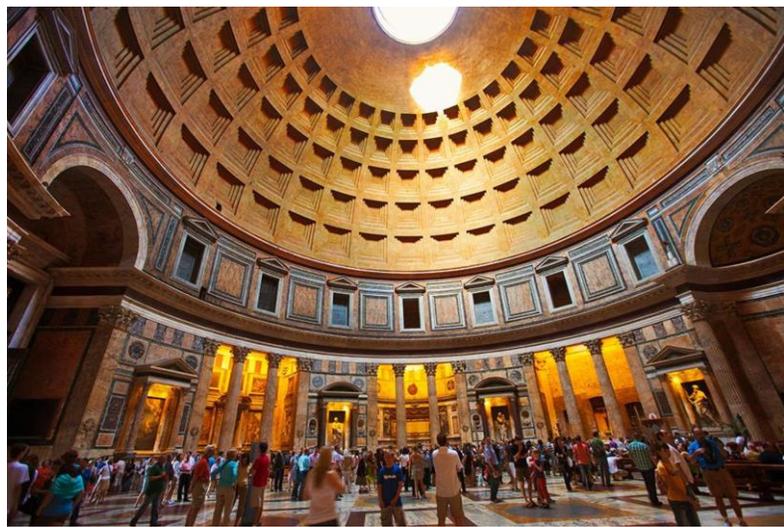


Heritage Choir Newsletter #6 – Rome, Italy

It's Wednesday, October 9th, during your 2019 Rome, Italy Performance Tour. During your Guided Tour you will visit the Roman Pantheon.....



The Roman Pantheon is the most preserved and influential building of ancient Rome. It is a Roman temple dedicated to all the gods of pagan Rome. As the brick stamps on the side of the building reveal it was built and dedicated between A.D 118 and 125.

The emperor Hadrian (A.D 117-138) built the Pantheon to replace Augustus' friend and Commander Marcus Agrippa's Pantheon of 27 B.C. which burnt to the ground in 80 A.D.

When approaching the front of the Pantheon one can see the inscription above still reads in Latin the original dedication by Marcus Agrippa. The inscription reads:

"M. AGRIPPA.L.F.COSTERTIUM.FECIT" - ("Marcus Agrippa son of Lucius, having been consul three times made it".)

Despite all the marvelous building projects that the emperor Hadrian produced during his reign, he never inscribed his name to any, but one, the temple of his father Trajan. That is why the Roman Pantheon bears the inscription of Marcus Agrippa, and not the emperor Hadrian.

The pediment, (the triangle section above the inscription) is blank today, but there would have been sculpture that acted out the battle of the Titans. Great bronze doors guard the entrance to the cella and would have been covered in gold, but it has long since disappeared.

The Roman Pantheon in its present state allows us a glimpse into the marvelous and stunning world of Roman architecture. The dome would have been gilded to look like the heavenly sphere of all the gods that the name Pantheon evokes. The oculus was an engineering gem of the Roman world. No oculus had even dared come close in size to the one in the Pantheon. It is still lined with the original Roman bronze and is the main source of light for the whole building. As the earth turns the light flows in to circle the interior making the viewer aware of the magnificence of the cosmos. The oculus was never covered, so when it rains, the rain falls into the interior and runs off the slightly convex floor to the still functioning Roman drainpipes underneath.

The Italian kings Vittorio Emanuele II and Umberto I as well as the famous Renaissance painter Raphael and his fiancée are buried in the Pantheon.

Next, you will visit the Coliseum..... **to be continued in next week's Newsletter.**

Rome "Fun Fact" #6 Concrete was a Roman invention used on many structures such as the Pantheon, the Colosseum and the Roman Forum, which are still standing today. The Romans first began building with concrete over 2,100 years ago and used it throughout the Mediterranean basin in everything from aqueducts, buildings to bridges and monuments.