

## The Collection of Clemente Susini's Anatomical wax models at the University of Cagliari

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Alike a few European cities, including Budapest, Cagliari houses a collection of anatomical models manufactured in the Florentine Museum of La Specola. The latter that, with the years, became a veritable "Officina di Ceroplastica" (wax modeling workshop), was created in 1780 by Felice Fontana (1730-1805) with the purpose of providing anatomical aids to the teaching of medicine and particularly of surgery, a discipline whose importance had been greatly emphasized following the publication (1761) of the *Sedibus and Causis Morborum*, the capital textbook by Giovanni Battista Morgagni that, by introducing the organ pathology, puts an end to the old holistic-humoral theory of medicine. The waxes of Cagliari, having been produced in Florence between 1803-1805, are later than those of the great collections of the La Specola in Florence and of the Josephinum in Vienna, and represent a work of the maturity of the great Clemente Susini (1754-1814) the chief modeler of the La Specola museum. The dissections reproduced by Susini are the work of Francesco Antonio Boi (1767-1865), the anatomist from the University of Cagliari who had been sent on purpose to Florence (Riva 2007) by the Viceroy of Sardinia Carlo Felice of Savoy (1765-1831). The models which arrived in Cagliari in 1806 are attached to 23 wooden tables that still bear the original tag with Susini's signature and date.

On the basis of the preparations displayed, the 23 showcases can be classified into 6 groups:

- 1 Microscopic and general Anatomy (case I).
- 2 Muscles (cases II; IV; V; VI, VII, VIII, IX, X).
- 3 Vessels and Muscles, with preparation of the left pectoral lymphnodes (case III).
- 4 Somatic -visceral nerves and vessels (cases XI, XII, XIII).
- 5 Sense Organs (cases XIV; XV; XVI, XVII, XVIII).
- 6 Abdominal and Pelvic Viscera (cases XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII).

No whole human figures are represented. The most complete preparations are those contained in cases III and XII which demonstrate the head and trunk of a female and of a male body, the latter with a detailed representation of the visceral nervous system. A distinctive character of the collection is the relevance given to both visceral and somatic nerves which are accurately shown in more than one third of the models. On the other hand, lymphatics, that are accurately demonstrated in the other collections of Florentine waxes, are shown marginally only in models III and XII. A description of the most interesting anatomical findings present in the models will be given here, particularly in regard to their scientific and didactic usefulness.

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