

Buon Natale

Choreografien der neapolitanischen Weihnacht

A book about the fine art of Italian nativity scenes

Anyone who wants to get into the Christmas mood, even during the hottest of southern summers, has to go to Via San Gregorio Armeno in Naples. Here, the high art of crafting nativity scenes is practiced, just as it was two hundred years ago, albeit with a modern edge. In December, the street is clogged with thousands who are there to marvel at the colorful figures and vivid presentations. In a special Neapolitan tradition, a hilly landscape is the showplace for a moving scene, including the Annunciation to the Shepherds, the Adoration of the Magi, and the lives of the people. The Diözesanmuseum Freising has such an elaborate nativity scene dating from the second half of the eighteenth century. It consists of around 130 figures, 70 animals, and more than 350 *finimenti*—tiny models of musical instruments, market baskets, furniture, and crockery. The delicate figures are made of terra cotta; the animals have glass eyes and specially made horns. The three kings and their attendants are splendidly clad, and the peasants presented in loving detail.

First-class photographs capture the Christmas atmosphere of the city. Accompanied by diverse, informative texts they immerse the reader in southern European Christmas tradition—convivial, theatrical, colorful, and cheerful.

An advent calendar and two card boxes featuring the themes *Christmas in Naples* and *Neapolitan Nativity Scenes* will be available with the book.

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Ed. Diözesanmuseum Freising

Texts by Nina Gockerell, Schoole Mostafawy,
Christoph Kürzeder, Erri de Luca, Dieter Richter,
and Alessio Zanon

Photos by Heike Ollertz, Jens Bruchhaus,
and Thomas Dashuber

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Contact: presse@sieveking-verlag.de

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