

American Students Help Preserve Italian Heritage



]Modified from [original blog](#) by Lara Barnes.

Architecture is a true reflection of the people it serves. As the years go by, culture and humans change, but the architecture often remains. **This incredibly valuable piece of history is constantly deteriorating and it is our responsibility to make sure this piece can be preserved to serve the generations to come as it has served us.**

CyArk was founded in 2003 and **operates internationally as a non profit organization with the mission of using new technologies to create a free, 3D online library of the world's cultural heritage sites** before they are lost to natural disasters, destroyed by human aggression or ravaged by the passage of time. CyArk works with experienced teams worldwide to record heritage sites using reality capture technologies such as **3D laser scanning, photogrammetry** and traditional survey. The resultant 3D, engineering-grade data can then be used to create highly accurate documentation drawings for site conservation and realistic visualizations for education and interpretation.

CyArk recently



] **supported a class of 30 American students in Italy, in learning the digital preservation trade.** The course was held at **La Verna**. It is a Catholic sanctuary located in the Tuscan Appennines atop Mount Penna.

Santa Maria degli Angeli is a church in the sanctuary that was founded by Saint Francis in 1216.

It was here that Saint Francis received the Stigmata, and after that it became a pilgrimage site for Franciscans and followers of Saint Francis. As it stands today, La Verna Sanctuary is engulfed in nature and has breathtaking views looking down on the valley of Casentino. The Sanctuary is used as a monastic complex with a monastery, church, museum and chapels.



The weekly course included lectures educating the students on digital preservation and how the programs and scanners worked.] They spent 3 days at the sanctuary where **they sketched and digitally scanned the church Santa Maria degli Angeli. They digitally drew floor plans, sections and elevations of the church as well as producing a digital 3D model, and 3D image scans with the help of the CyArk technology.**

This contributes to the conservation of the sanctuary because if something happens to La Verna in the future, **the information that has been collected through the means of the 3D scanner and drawings would allow our future generations to have the opportunity to witness the architecture and culture that once was there.**



It is difficult for a student to appreciate the value of historical architecture and the importance of preserving it. **Studying in Italy, these American students changed their perspective contributing to the conservation of the sanctuary.**

For more information visit <http://archive.cyark.org/>