

FRANCAVILLA AL MARE

2) Mu.Mi

Piazza San Domenico 1, 66023 Francavilla Al Mare (Chieti), 085 4911161

Mumi stands for the Michetti museum and it is held in a building which was built in the first half of the sixteenth century. It was a Dominican convent which was adjacent to the Sanctuary "Madonna delle grazie" which used to be where the lookout of Piazza San Domenico is now.

The German troops destroyed the church and almost all of the convent during the second world war. After the war it was rebuilt in a classic style and it became the home of the Francavilla town council.

The council offices were later transferred across the road and the building was extended thanks to a design by Mose Ricci and Filippo Spaini. In 1997 it became the Michetti Museum. The entrance is formed with a cloister with a pointed arch and various cultural events are held here all year round.

On the first floor there is the permanent art exhibition of the winners of the Michetti prize, an annual art competition held in Francavilla every summer. It was established in 1947 and is one of the most important events on the national and international calendar.

Going back to the cloister there is the entrance to the hypogeum and it is split into two levels. The top one holds art exhibitions and the Michetti prize. The bottom floor has two enormous canvases that Francesco Paolo Michetti painted for an international art exhibition in Paris in 1900. On the right of the entrance there is a painting by the Storpi showing a group of pilgrims heading to the sanctuary who see some beggars showing their illnesses in the hope of receiving money. On a slope there are two young girls who curiously watch this scene and in contrast there are two oxen which demonstrate the indifference of nature towards human suffering.

On the opposite wall there is a painting of the snake procession held in Cucullo, a small village in the Abruzzo mountains on the first Thursday in May. Snakes are captured and then put onto and completely cover the statue of Saint Domenico. The whole procession made up of all sorts of people and various colours seems in itself a slithering snake.

Abruzzo Audioguide

