

[For the range of dates that have been proposed as being represented in the ceiling, see the list at the end of this document.]

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San Lorenzo, Sagrestia Vecchia

*scarsella* cupola

fresco, 4 July 1442 (?)

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## Proposals for the date depicted in the *scarsella* of the Old Sacristy in San Lorenzo

### 1. Graff (Warburg) 1912

- proposed dates area 14 July 1422, 4 July 1423 or 7 July 1439 at 10:30 AM
- Warburg notes that the altar of San Lorenzo was consecrated on 9 July 1422
- latitude is  $45^{\circ}\text{N} \pm 1^{\circ}$
- precession is 1300-1400
- Sun is  $23^{\circ}$  days after summer solstice or 6 July  $\pm 2$  days
- Moon in Hyades, near maximum southern latitude, four days before a New Moon

### 2. Bing 1932

- proposed date is 6 July 1439 (concluding ceremony of the Council of Florence when Cosimo de' Medici was Granfaloniere and Andrea Pazzi was Priore)

### 3. Beer 1967

- proposed date is 14 July 1422 ('it can rather conclusively be stated that the painting was obviously intended to represent the appearance of the celestial constellations on this particular important day' (i.e.: the consecration of the high altar in San Lorenzo on 9 July 1422))
- latitude is 'nearly exactly'  $45^{\circ}\text{N}$ ; the celestial equator is below ecliptic
- precession = stars are added in 'an approximate manner', but able to date c. 1300-1400
- Sun is 23 days after the summer solstice or c. 6 July
- Moon in Hyades

### 4. Fraticelli and Salomone 1976

### 5. Heilbron (Fortini Brown) 1981

- 6 July 1439 OS, 'slightly after Noon' (celebrating the signing of the Articles of Union between Eastern and Western Christendom and ... 'the exact record of that highpoint in the relation between the Medici and the Unity of Christendom' (p. 180)).
- latitude is for Florence
- precession (not mentioned), uses *Tuckermann's Tables* 1964, p. 737.
- Sun's longitude is  $112^{\circ}$
- Moon's longitude is  $56.5^{\circ}$ , and latitude is  $-4.5^{\circ}$

**6. Pararonchi**

- proposed date is 16 July 1416 (the birth of Cosimo's eldest son, Piero)

**post- CLEANING and RESTORATION**

**7. Forti 19787**

- proposed date is 4-5 July 1442 at 10:26 AM
- latitude is a little less than 44°N (the latitude of Florence)
- precession is for 1400-1450 (regulus is located at 141.6°)
- Sun is 22° east of the summer solstice colure or 4-5 July in the Julian calendar
- Moon is near its maximum southern node and very low in the ecliptic  $\pm 5^\circ$  longitude
- planetary positions;

Sun	111.8°
Moon	56.8°
Mercury	100.5°
Venus	122.0°
Mars	167.5°
Jupiter	42.5°
Saturn	75.1°

**8. Lapi Ballerini 1988**

- proposed date is 4 July 1442 at 10:30 AM, and cites the visit of René d'Anjou to Florence commencing on 16 July 1442
- Sun is placed for 5 July
- Moon is located for 4 July
- planetary positions according to Alfonsine Tables collation

	<u>midnight</u>	<u>noon</u>
Sun	109.2°	110.30°
Moon	55.62°	63.03°
Mercury	91.77°	92.52°
Venus	114.55°	115.17°
Mars	116.15°	116.46°
Jupiter	42.06°	42.13°
Saturn	74.09°	72.15°

**9. Blume 2006 and 2016**

- follows Forti's date, citing Cosimo de'Medici patronage

**10. Bubay 2015**

- ‘most commonly accepted date’ is 6 July 1439, which is the conclusion of the Council of Florence, ending the east-west schism of the Church, but modern Florentine scholars have suggested a date of 4 or 5 July 1442.

**11. Gandolfi 2016**

- Toscanelli involved in calculations; possibly also Alberti
- See the Toscanelli drawings in Florence BNC, Magl. Banco Rari 320 to locate lacunae in stars that might be planets in the vault
- Forti’s analysis of the positions of the planets is *a posteriori* the identification of the date; Jupiter and Venus are fairly certain, but ‘Saturn’ is probably Taurus, Ptolemaic star 37; Mercury is problematic as to which of two small stars is the planet and which is the Ptolemaic Gemini, no. 12. There is also an unidentified planet at 139° (Leo); Mars may be visible in Virgo as one of two possible discs; either the Sun or the Moon is also incorrectly located
- none of the dates proposed work 100%, which might lead to wondering about other parameters, i.e.: possible astrological associations and predictions that connect to Florence, the Medici and the Pazzi.

**12. Wasserman 2019**

- 4 July 1442 = the date upon which Cosimo memorialized a family mortuary in the new part of San Lorenzo
- scallop shells as symbols of pilgrimage, guiding the souls to heaven

**13. Dekker 2021 (personal communication, March 2021)**

- notes that Heilbron’s suggestion of ‘slightly after Noon’ must be wrong since the Sun would be on the meridian at that time
- the time is actually 1.5 hours before noon, or c. 10.30 AM
- working from Fort’s identifications and comparing the data against possible tables

CP: The longitudes from the ceiling painting

1439: The longitudes from Tuckerman’s tables on 6 July 1439 10.5 AM

1442 T: The longitudes from Tuckerman’s tables on 4 July 1442 10.5 AM

1442 A: The longitudes from the Alfonsine tables on 4 July 1442 10.5 AM

	CP	1439	1442 T	1442 A
<b>Saturn</b>	<b>75,1</b>	34,4	72,7	74,1
<b>Jupiter</b>	<b>42,5</b>	291,9	41,2	42,1
<b>Mars</b>	<b>167,5</b>	43,1	167,3	166,4
<b>Sun</b>	<b>111,8</b>	111,8	110,4	110,2
<b>Moon</b>	<b>56,8</b>	55,5	65,5	62,1
<b>Venus</b>	<b>122</b>	135,0	115,0	115,1
<b>Mercury</b>	<b>100,5</b>	138,2	93,7	92,1

## FLORENCE

San Lorenzo, Sagrestia Vecchia

*scarsella* cupola

fresco, 4 July 1442 (?)

- 1442 is uniquely the year which matches the planetary configuration; though it should be noted that the longitudes predicted for the inner planets of Mercury and Venus, and the Moon differ by 5-10°, which is difficult to explain. It might reflect that the data was not derived from tables, but from observation and that the instrument may have been less precise for the faster-moving planets.
- Therefore, 'It strongly suggests an astrological connotation, not a connection with a commemorative event. Perhaps it is time that 4 July 1442 at 10.5 hours a.m. becomes the most commonly accepted date, also among art historians'.