

DescriVedendo Duomo Museum

“The Creation of the Animals”

“The Creation of the Animals” was produced between 1549 and 1557 by the glassmaker Corrado de Mochis based on a preparatory cartoon by Giuseppe Arcimboldi.

It is around 120 centimetres high and 68 centimetres wide and so forms a rectangle, with the vertical being the longest side.

This is an “antello”, that is, a glass panel made up of various pieces of different shapes and sizes put together and joined with lead to form a stained-glass window. To paint the details, such as faces, buildings, the folds of clothes, and to create chiaroscuro, grisaille was used, a compound of iron oxides and earth mixed with silica or glass. To produce different shades of colour, a special enamel known as silver yellow could be used.

The style of the work is realistic: that is, the artist has reproduced proportions, shapes and colours in the same way as the human eye perceives them.

It is part of a triptych centred on episodes from the Old Testament, exhibited in the Museum of the Duomo in the room dedicated to the glassmakers' art, where it appears along with "The Creation of the Firmament" and "The Creation of Man" by the same artist.

“The Creation of the Animals” is at the centre, between the two other panels.

The subject is God, portrayed standing at full length while blessing the animals to which he has given life and that populate a natural environment.

God's form fills the central and right part of the composition and occupies around four-fifths of its height. His body is in a frontal position while the face is turned in profile towards the left part of the scene, slightly bent over to look at the animals he has created. God has a pale, elderly face with wrinkled skin surrounded by thick, curly locks that fall over his shoulders and a wavy beard that reaches half-way down his chest.

He displays his left profile while intent on looking at his creatures with a concentrated expression that furrows the brow. A golden halo around the head gives off rays of light, like the corolla of a flower.

The right arm is folded, with the raised forearm ending with the fingers of the hand in an act of blessing addressed to his creatures. The left arm hangs at his side, the hand grasping the cloak. He wears a red tunic that reaches his feet, leaving his bare toes uncovered. Above, a large blue cloak covers the left shoulder and arm, while leaving the right shoulder uncovered, and reappears from the side where, as stated, the hand draws an edge of the garment over the front of his legs.

In the left part of the antello, alongside the figure of God, the natural environment is populated with various species of animals: a horse, a cow, a dog, a pig and some sheep can be made out. Fish are swimming in a pond at the lower left. In the background, various birds are perched on the branches of some leafy trees with tall, thin trunks.

The landscape in the background at the top left is completed by the outline of a hill and, on the other side, the shape of a higher mountain. Above, there is a band of blue sky.

The scene is very bright with an invisible light source from the direction of 10 o'clock that illuminates the face of God and the landscape. All the colours are vivid but the red and blue of God's

robes, the glow of his face and the coats of some of the animals stand out.



The morphological description drawn up and validated between September and November 2023, **certified by DescriVedendo**, was created by Team DescriVedendo with the National Association of the Visually Impaired ETS, in collaboration with Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano.

