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## Santa Maria Del Popolo CD Set by Jane's Smart Art Guides Brings Rome's Past to Life!

**This Great Roman Church is Covered in an Entertaining, but Informative Way by Jane McIntosh**

By Roy Barnes

For those who want a comprehensive audio history of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome, Jane's Smart Art Guides: Sta. Maria del Popolo cd set (Santa is abbreviated "Sta." in the title for the audio product) is a product well worth the twenty dollar investment. Santa Maria Del Popolo is one of Rome's more fascinating churches, and one of Jane's Smart Art Guides' recent titles. Santa Maria del Popolo of Rome, according to the timeline included with the audio set, has its origins all the way back to 1099.

### Takeaways

➤ An audio tour of a great world venue can be the next best thing to actually being there!

➤ Jane McIntosh not only founded Jane's Smart Art Guides, but she narrates the audio tours.

➤ Jane's Smart Art Guides also come in downloadable MP3 format.

After listening to 20 minutes of the first cd, one can tell that Jane McIntosh, creator of the audio guides and also narrator of this audio set, knows her Italian architectural and customs history very well. Jane made me feel like I was in Rome itself, even though I was on the windy plains of southeastern Wyoming as I listened to her almost 2 hours of narration about Santa Maria del Popolo. McIntosh's voice is very friendly and pleasant to hear, and won't put you to sleep like some live tour guides have the tendency to do! She combines education and entertainment, calling it "Edu-tainment" on her website.

I'll admit that I'm not a great fanatic of European churches except for the ones that really stand out like St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City or Westminster Abbey in London, yet Jane's production for Santa Maria del Popolo made me realize that practically every church built is so influenced by the politics, customs, and values of those in power that can span centuries.

McIntosh intermixes anecdotes, facts, and tales about the saints and not-so saintly who influenced the church's evolving design and notable occurrences over time very well. She even gives interesting information about some other venues in Rome, like explaining who the Sistine Chapel was named for, and how those other Roman landmarks helped to influence the building and design of Santa Maria del Popolo. Listeners even learn that the word "grotesque" is rooted in a positive meaning, rather than by today's association for the word. "Grotesque" is also in the glossary, which makes up part of the included booklet that contains other interesting architectural terminology.

Each of the 2 cd's runs just under an hour in length, and comes in two protective, easy to open transparent sleeves, encased in a protective plastic box. The first disc has 14 tracks that give a pre-tour orientation, including opening advice to those actually in front of the church on how to safeguard themselves against pick-pockets. Disc 1 then elaborates about the church's exterior, before we are led into the church to go over some more important history about Rome and Catholicism itself which shaped the designing of the church. Disc 2 covers the rest of the interior of this great edifice via 17 tracks.

Listeners will hear the tolling of a church bell during the playback. The tollings serve as special tour alerts that will aid those actually touring the church, or bring back another sound of the "old country" for those of us not lucky enough to be in Rome. One can follow along with the booklet's floor plan of Santa Maria del Popolo, its sections corresponding with the appropriate track listings. No seemingly inconsequential detail gets by Jane McIntosh, even breaking into a special lecture about a tapering spire which makes up part of the church's exterior.

For those who love Italian history and architecture, Jane's Smart Art Guides: Sta. Maria del Popolo cd set is a must, even if you never visit Rome. But if you do visit the church while in the Eternal City, this audio guide is a must-pack! Her products are also available in downloadable MP3 format. If you aren't satisfied with your purchase, Jane's Smart Art Guides will refund your money.

### More resources

For more information on Jane's Smart Art Guides, visit [www.janessmartart.com](http://www.janessmartart.com)

Informative art history site: [www.artcyclopedia.com](http://www.artcyclopedia.com)

Loaded site about Rome's churches: <http://roma.katolsk.no>



