

# La tomba a due facce di Roberto d'Angiò e altri sepolcri opistoglittici

In ricordo di Norma

## Abstract

This article examines the role of the double-sided tomb in fourteenth-century sculpture, with particular reference to the mausoleum of the Angevin king Robert of Anjou (1309–1343) in the basilica of Santa Chiara in Naples. The mausoleum contains a nun's choir behind the sovereign's tomb, which is in turn beyond a dividing wall, where a second side of the sepulcher most likely existed. The article argues that the choice of a double-sided tomb for the king was the result of not only the need for a visual reference for the nuns, but also of the development of an important artistic tradition of double sepulchers. The two components – divided by the wall but conceptually united – both contain elements that match the original uses of the two different sacred spaces. The only sculptural element that remains in the choir is a *gisant*, sculpted by the Bertini brothers like the tomb on the other side, that we can now study thanks to a photographic campaign by the Bibliotheca Hertziana. The paper presents other examples of double-sided tombs – from France to Tuscany and Catalonia – that confirm the importance of not only the Neopolitan tomb's ability to bridge religious spaces of different functions, and to unite them both metaphorically and literally, but also of its place in the history of fourteenth-century sculpture more broadly.