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<http://www.artbyjoycejackson.com/bella-vita.html>

This is my moment to shine some Italian family names in a positive light and to salute the majority of honest, law-abiding, assiduous Italian people. I signed the fresco using my maternal family's original name, Castiglia. Castiglia is a derivation of the word "castle". I chose an Italian castle as subject because of this connection.

I don't know the extent of my family's involvement in the Italian County of Castile, which is Castiglia in Italian. An old running family joke is that we were probably the ones who grew tomatoes in the fields below the castle.

I added a D. to stand for DiGiacomo, my paternal family name. Jackson, the last name in my signature, is my paternal family's adopted name.

I thank my Italian predecessors who devoted their lives to honest, hard work for the sake of their families' welfare. By their example, ignorance and misconceptions about Italian Americans have been diffused. I'm eternally grateful that because of them, I have been able to live out the bulk of my life securely and free of ethnic persecution.

More About the Artwork The edges of this fresco were intentionally left rough, revealing bits of exposed plaster, as though it is a freshly unearthed artifact. Any visible black dots are charcoal. It is pounced onto the plaster through pinholes poked into pencil sketch lines. Most of the dots are concealed under permanent colors by the time the work is completed. The remaining charcoal can be removed at any time after the plaster dries. This is a composite of locations. The castle is based on Rocca Maggiore. I added the young couple in the foreground from my imagination for a personal touch.

About the Artist Joyce Jackson I've been a lifelong artist, working in a wide range of media. I've received prizes and awards for my fine ceramics and have had my artwork, pottery, jewelry, and other craftwork on display in exhibits and sold in galleries in the Capital District for over 35 years. Website: <http://www.artbyjoycejackson.com>. Email: agelesspages@earthlink.net.