
ITALIAN ART SOCIETY

*Dedicated to the study of Italian art and architecture
from prehistory to the present*

NEWSLETTER XXXV, 2, SPRING 2024



President's Message from Tenley Bick

June 10, 2024

Salve a tutti,

I hope this message and spring issue of the IAS newsletter finds you all well and enjoying the start to summer. I am sure many of you have exciting plans for research, travel, and hopefully, some relaxation. I am writing you en route to Sorrento for the AAIS conference, where several IAS members and officers will also be speaking. I'm especially looking forward to the IAS-sponsored session, "Cultivating Sacred Vision: Body-Mind Practices and Devotional Art in Early Renaissance Italy," organized and chaired by Holly Flora (Tulane University).

Whatever your summer plans, I hope you will join me, in person or online, for the Thirteenth Annual IAS/Kress Lecture, to be delivered Friday, June 28, from 3 to 4:30pm (ore italiane) in Turin at the Musei Reali by Dr. Luis Javier Cuesta Hernández of the Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico City). Dr. Cuesta Hernández's lecture, entitled "Guarino Guarini and Early Modern Hispanic Americas:

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Books, Images, and Architecture between Torino and Mexico," will examine the dissemination of Guarini's architectural ideas in late seventeenth/early eighteenth-century colonial New Spain. I am delighted to be hosting the lecture in its first iteration in Torino and broader Piedmont, where Dr. Cuesta's lecture will also coincide with the four-hundredth anniversary celebration of Guarini's birth (1624–1683). The city's dazzling Baroque architecture, including two Guarini domes (in the Cappella della Sindone and Real Chiesa di San Lorenzo), both on the site of the lecture, will provide an exciting backdrop for Dr. Cuesta's lecture on one of Italy's greatest architects. The lecture will be followed by a visit to the exhibition *Guercino: Il mestiere del pittore* at the Galleria Sabauda and a cocktail reception featuring Piemontese specialties and other appetizers in the royal café. I've been very happy to receive RSVPs and messages from those of you who will be attending in person; many of you will be making your first trip to Torino to attend the lecture! I look forward

to sharing great Piedmont cuisine, recommendations for walks through Torino's parks and along the River Po, and other tips for visits to the many beautiful sites in the historic center and beyond with you. For more information on the lecture, please visit our [website](#). A livestream link will be distributed to members in advance of the event.

The upcoming IAS/Kress Lecture comes on the heels of many successful panels this past spring, at CAA and RSA in Chicago, and ICMS in Kalamazoo. The organization also held a highly attended reception in association with RSA, where members gathered for drinks, food, networking, and merriment.

I am also thrilled to share that we received eight applications for the inaugural IAS Book Prize. Thank you to our applicants and especially the anonymous jurors of the Premi Committee, without whose generous service this prize would not be possible.

As ever, thank you for your membership and dedication to the Italian Art Society. I wish you all a safe and enriching summer ahead, and I hope to see you soon.

Un caro saluto,

Tenley

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ITALIAN ART SOCIETY NEWS

2023 IAS/KRESS LECTURE

Our thirteenth IAS/KRESS lecture will take place on June 28, 2024 in Turin with support from the Musei Reali. Luis Javier Cuesta Hernández from the Universidad Iberoamericana/ Mexico City will present “Guarino Guarini and Early Modern Hispanic Americas: Books, Images, and Architecture between Torino and Mexico.”

IAS AWARDS

We are pleased to announce our latest grant recipients:

Dissertation Research Grant

Jessica Mingoia, Rutgers University (Ph.D. Candidate)
“In Pergula Natus: Apartments of Pompeii and Herculaneum”

Research and Publication Grant

Sarah Nair James, Professor Emerita, Mary Baldwin University
“The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Medieval Italy: Art, Devotion, and Liturgy in Orvieto”

IAS Conference Grants for Emerging Scholars

Savannah Marquardt, Yale University (Ph.D. Candidate)
“The Ritual Ecology of Metaponto: Pantanello, Tomb 126” for CAA.

Charline Fournier Petit, University of Maryland (Ph.D. Candidate)
“Elisa Bonaparte Baciocchi and the Revival of Carrara” for RSA.

Congratulations!

Four **IAS/Kress Foundation International Travel Grants** to present at CAA, RSA, or other affiliated conference are available to IAS members on a rolling basis for work on a topic from prehistory through the early nineteenth century. Applicants must be travelling intercontinentally from their country of residence. If grants remain after the first cycle of funding, those eligible and speaking in a session at SCS have a deadline of June 15 to apply.

Please check our [Grants and Opportunities](#) page for any updates.

IAS-SPONSORED CONFERENCE SESSIONS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ITALIAN STUDIES (AAIS)
Sant'Anna Institute, Sorrento, 6–9 June 2024

**Cultivating Sacred Vision: Body-Mind Practices and
Devotional Art in Early Renaissance Italy**

Chair: Holly Flora, Tulane University

Papers:

Rebekah Compton, College of Charleston, The Ascetic Body: Alignment and Composure in Art for the Camaldolese Order

Holly Flora, Tulane University, Franciscan Poverty and the Body in Illustrated Manuscripts of Bonaventure's Legenda Maior

Allie Terry-Fritsch, Bowling Green State University, Fra Angelico's Last Judgment and Visual Touch

Please consult the [IAS website](#) for future Calls for Sessions, Calls for Papers, Submission Guidelines, and the IAS Submission Portal.

Further information, including specific times and venue, session and paper abstracts, is available on our [Conferences at a Glance](#) page.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Angelo Lo Conte, Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Visual Art Studies Division at Hong Kong Baptist University presented new research on the careers of prelingually deaf painters active in Italy from 1590 to 1720 as part of a lecture series on broad questions about Italianist art history and disability studies organized by the **Emerging Scholars Committee** on April 18.

Christopher Platts, Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Cincinnati, founded an Art History Outreach Program at the University of Cincinnati offering interactive, audience-centered presentations on medieval and early modern art and culture for students at local public high schools and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) in Cincinnati.

Elizabeth Mangini, Professor of Art History at California College of the Arts (CCA), was the lead organizer for a Terra Foundation for American Art-funded symposium, "The Materiality of Resistance," at CCA, San Francisco on March 7–8. Participants included **Silvia Bottinelli**,

Christopher M. Bennett, and Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (MAMbo) director Lorenzo Balbi.

Shannah Rose (Ph.D. Candidate, Institute of Fine Arts, NYU) has received the 2024-2025 Samuel H. Kress Foundation/Marian and Andrew Heiskell Rome Prize in Renaissance and Early Modern Studies at the American Academy in Rome.

Congratulations and best wishes from the IAS community!

SPECIAL FEATURES

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Empoli 1424: Masolino and the Dawn of the Renaissance

Chiesa di Santo Stefano degli Agostiniani and Museo della Collegiata di Sant'Andrea, Empoli

By Livia Lupi



Masolino, St Julian, c. 1423, tempera, gold and silver on panel, 115 x 54 cm. Deposito Diocesano di Santo Stefano al Ponte, Florence.

This exhibition on Masolino da Panicale is the largest ever dedicated to the artist. The show's starting point is Masolino's work in Empoli in 1424, emphasizing this year as one of the very few firm dates in his career. This becomes a pivot around which one can examine the rest of his production in Empoli and beyond, including his collaboration with Masaccio in the ground-breaking Brancacci Chapel, begun a year later in 1425. The curators' main aim is to contextualize Masolino's work in order to better understand his role at a crucial historical junction for the development of the arts. Split between two locations, the exhibition shines a spotlight on the church of Santo Stefano degli Agostiniani, where the majority of the show's works are displayed, and the small, though impressive, collection of the Museo della Collegiata di Sant'Andrea.

At Santo Stefano, the space of the nave is transformed by large dark panels where paintings and detached frescoes are hung. These represent the main body of the show and include outstanding pieces. These include the detached frescoes of the *Man of Sorrows (Pietà)* (1425 or c. 1427 – 1428), originally located in the baptistery of the collegiate church and now

housed in the Museo della Collegiata, the panel with St Julian (c. 1423) for the Carnesecchi Chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore in Florence, now in the Deposito Diocesano di Santo Stefano al Ponte, Florence, and the *Madonna of Humility* (c. 1415), now at the Uffizi.

Surrounding these key pieces, and others whose attribution to Masolino is either confirmed by documents or convincingly argued in the catalog, are numerous works by both well and lesser-known artists, such as Lorenzo Monaco, Lorenzo di Bicci and Scolaio di Giovanni. Lorenzo



Masolino, *Madonna of Humility*, c. 1415, tempera and gold on panel, 113 x 63 cm. Gallerie degli Uffizi, Florence.

Monaco's polyptych for San Donnino in Empoli (1404) represents the Virgin Mary comfortably sitting on a cushion like Masolino's *Madonna of Humility*. Lorenzo di Bicci's *Assumption of the Virgin* (c. 1395 – 1400) for Santo Stefano stands out thanks to the Virgin's white robe, painstakingly decorated with a blue and gold pattern. Scolaio di Giovanni's saints for the St Ives Chapel in the collegiate church demonstrate high levels of craftsmanship.

These are all paintings created for locations in Empoli and therefore provide a particularly specific framework for the interpretation of Masolino's contribution to the town. Visitors can examine these alongside the wall paintings that Masolino carried out for the church of Santo Stefano in 1424, although only the *sinopie* remain of what must have been a remarkable cycle of the True Cross in the Chapel of the Cross. The church also includes figures of saints' frescoes by Starnina (c. 1402 – 1404), which stand out for their prominent and three-dimensional tabernacles. There are also paintings and sculptures dating from later periods, most notably Bernardo Rossellino's marble sculptures for an *Annunciation*. While these are not part of the exhibition, the show offers an opportunity to more freely admire these works since Santo Stefano is rarely open to the public.

The portion of the exhibition at the Museo della Collegiata is much smaller. It is unclear why curators chose to split

the show between the two locations if not to encourage visitors to explore the Museo della Collegiata. This decision is all the more jarring since many of Masolino's works normally on display in the Museo have been moved to the church of Santo Stefano for the exhibition. Visiting the Museo nevertheless presents an opportunity to view other artworks created for the Collegiata after Masolino's time: Bernardo Rossellino's remarkable baptismal font and Francesco and Raffaello Botticini's *Tabernacle of the Sacrament* deserve special mention.



Lorenzo di Bicci, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1395 – 1400, tempera and gold on panel, 124 x 71 cm. Museo della Collegiata di Sant'Andrea, Empoli.

The overall argument of the exhibition does not change current interpretations of Masolino's work: he is described as a liminal though remarkable figure bridging the gap between Gothic and Renaissance. This is emblematically reflected in the title, which defines Masolino's work as the dawn of an era—not just chronologically but also in terms of his approach. While it is certainly true that Masolino's approach considerably differs from, say, Masaccio, this interpretation reiterates teleological readings of the history of art, celebrating Masolino's achievements in light of

the later development of artistic practice and therefore implicitly belittling them.

That said, the exhibition is to be commended, not just for bringing the public's attention to Empoli and its collections (which deserve more consideration than they have been given so far), but especially for the material it gathers. This is a unique opportunity to see in one place and directly compare panel paintings that have been dispersed around lesser-known parts of Tuscany from Pistoia to San Donato and from Incisa Valdarno to Signa. The show therefore presents a very local re-contextualization of Masolino's work, without necessarily decentering Florence. This enables the curators to place Masolino within a circumscribed artistic milieu where the level of craftsmanship was high, while at the same time singling him out for his skill and innovation.

While this is the show's major contribution to scholarship, its tight focus might have benefitted by broadening slightly: one is left with the impression that Masolino only worked locally, whereas his experiences in Rome, Castiglione Olona, and Hungary testify to the high regard in which he was held by a refined, international circle. Although much of his work outside Tuscany consists of frescoes still in situ (and therefore impossible to borrow for the show), the inclusion of paintings like the *Foundation of Santa Maria Maggiore* (1423 – 1425, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples) or large printouts of his frescoes for the Baptistry at Castiglione Olona (1435) would have raised the level of the exhibition to construct an argument about the extent to which Masolino's work in Empoli informed his prestigious commissions outside the region and vice versa.



Livia Lupi is an art and architectural historian of early modern Europe. Her book, [Painting Architecture in Early Renaissance Italy](#), will be published this summer, while her digital exhibition, *Beyond the Painter-Architect: Artists Reinventing Architecture in Renaissance Italy* (Sir John Soane's Museum, London), will be launched in the fall. livialupi.com.

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Piero della Francesca. The Augustinian Polyptych Reunited at Last

Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan
20 March – 24 June 2024

By Lorenzo Mascheretti

Curiously, when the Milanese Count Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli purchased Piero del Pollaiuolo's *Portrait of a Young Woman* shortly before 1872 (which became the symbol of his house-museum and the institution's logo), this work of

art was erroneously attributed to Piero della Francesca (1412–1492). The attribution rightfully belonged to another piece: the *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino*, which the collector had instead acquired as a work by the con-temporary artist Fra Carnevale from Urbino. It wasn't until 1912 that the art historian August Schmarsow correctly attributed the *Saint Nicholas* to Piero. Later the panel would be connected to a single large complex: the polyptych for the high altar of the Augustinian church in Borgo San Sepolcro, the artist's birthplace, begun by Piero in 1454 and completed in 1469, but prematurely dismantled by the end of the sixteenth century. The agreement with the commissioning party envisaged the reuse of the structure of an old fourteenth-century polyptych, which the painter completed with the creation of several panels, possibly thirty-one. Of these, the eight currently surviving pieces are divided among European and American museums. *Saint Augustine* belongs to the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon, *Saint Michael the Archangel* to the National Gallery in London, and *Saint John the Evangelist* to the Frick Collection in New York. The Frick Collection also owns the *Crucifixion*, which was part of the predella, *Saint Monica* and *Saint Leonard*, which adorned the polyptych's pillars. Additionally, *Saint Apollonia*, from a side pillar, is now part of the National Gallery in Washington.

The difficulty of coordinating a reconstruction of these scattered parts is evidenced by multiple previous attempts. The Museo Poldi Pezzoli tried in 1996, the Frick Collection tried in 2013, and the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg also made efforts in 2018, which resulted only in a virtual reconstruction. Yet now, after more than five centuries, the



Piero della Francesca, *Saint Nicholas of Tolentino*, 1454-1469, oil on panel, 31.5 x 58 cm. Milan, Museo Poldi Pezzoli ©Marco Beck Peccoz

physical reconstruction of Piero's Augustinian Polyptych has finally been realized in Milan, thanks a concerted collaboration between the aforementioned international museums. The exhibition, conceived by Alessandra Quarto, director of the Poldi Pezzoli Museum, is curated by Machtelt Brüggen (Rijksmuseum and University of Amsterdam) and Nathaniel Silver (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston), internationally renowned scholars who previously proposed its reconstruction in 2013 at the Frick Collection in New York based on investigations conducted up to that point. The

organization of the exhibition has been overseen by curator Lavinia Galli and Poldi Pezzoli collection manager Federica Manoli with further support from Arianna Pace of the exhibitions office.



The first room of the Milanese exhibition, where the paintings are displayed ©Marco Beck Peccoz

The evocative exhibition arrangement is the work of architect Italo Rota, who sadly passed away in April 2024, but who collaborated on this project with the international design studio CRA-Carlo Ratti Associati. In the first room, the panels are arranged within their own frames, the supports that have accompanied them for five centuries of history. They are not grouped on a single support to simulate the original polyptych, but are kept separate and staggered on different planes. In this way it is possible to perceive them autonomously, albeit with some difficulty due to the small space. From the entrance wall, however, they can be appreciated as a unified whole. In the second room, visitors are offered a video projection that brings together all of the known panels of the masterpiece, explaining the genesis of the project and some significant results that were obtained from an analysis conducted thanks to funding from the Fondazione Bracco.

Scientific investigations carried out on the San Nicholas panel by the Museo Poldi Pezzoli (with the participation of a team of researchers from the University of Milan, the IUSS Pa-via DeepTrace Technologies spinoff, in collaboration with the Conservation and Restoration Center La Venaria Reale, and coordinated by Isabella Castiglioni) spurred the London, New York, and Washington museums to initiate further research. This has clarified some of the questions still surrounding the polyptych and put forward a new hypothesis about the iconography of the central panel. In particular, the almost exclusive use of walnut oil as a binder, which Piero adopted from the Flemish tradition, has been confirmed. This material allowed him to render those masterful

transparencies and reflections of light. The research has provided clarity about the aforementioned condition of the 1454 contract stipulating that the wooden structure was to be reused and has highlighted how Piero must have conducted significant planning work to realize the work, which is surprisingly modern in conception. Finally, use of a stereomicroscope has revealed the presence of fragmentary pink and blue wing tips extending from the center to the figures of Saint Michael and Saint John the Evangelist. These were found along the edges of the side panels adjacent to the central image, erased when the polyptych was dismantled and the panels became independent works. This new evidence, together with the presence of a porphyry step and a crimson bro-cade velvet lining trimmed with ermine at the



The virtual reconstruction of the Augustinian Polyptych by Piero della Francesca in its original aspect

bottom of the same panels, suggests that the main scene did not depict a *Madonna and Child* but rather a *Coronation of the Virgin*.

The exhibition extends through the rest of the remarkable permanent collection of Count Poldi Pezzoli. A pedagogical path titled "Piero's Itinerary" has been created to guide visitors in a discovery of other objects that can be linked to the panels of the Augustinian Polyptych, allowing them to investigate its small details. For example, a German helmet of the second half of the sixteenth century in the armory hall with an eastern-inspired flair, recalls that worn by one of the Roman soldiers seen gambling for Christ's robe in the predella. The collection holds swords, hoods and clasps, armor, crosses, rings, and belts, all of which help the visitor to "touch" Piero's universe.

Lorenzo Mascheretti received his PhD in Humanistic Studies from the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Milan. He is a

Teaching Assistant in the History of Modern Art and History of Architecture at the Catholic University and Politecnico di Milano. He has collaborated with Accademia Carrara (Bergamo) and Museo Nazionale di Palazzo Venezia (Rome). His research focuses on Renaissance wooden marquetry and contextual analysis of commissions, productions and circulations of art.

CENTENNARY CELEBRATION

One Hundred Years of Carla Accardi

By Giorgia Gastaldon



Accardi, *Assedio Rosso* no. 3, 1956, enamel on casein on canvas, 97 x 162 cm. Private collection.

This year marks the first centenary of the birth of Carla Accardi (1924–2014): an abstract artist of crucial importance and one of the very few women whose professional merits were recognized during her lifetime

with career milestones comparable to those of her male colleagues. Born in Trapani, Sicily, in 1924, but active in Rome as early as 1946, she had her first solo exhibition in 1950, aged only twenty-six. She was introduced at the Roman Galleria Age d'Or in objectively patronizing tones by Giulio Turcato, but her career thereafter became unstoppable: it progressed via continuous monographic exhibitions and constant participation in collective shows both national and international. The painter's first solo show abroad was held in 1958 in Lausanne, Switzerland, and a fruitful collaboration with critic Michel Tapié led to multiple exhibitions in Paris over the years. She was also present at the Venice Biennale from 1948 onward and at major museums like the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome, where she exhibited for the first time 1949.

Her work was characterized by extraordinary quality and rare creative commitment to rigorous abstract research. She was active in this sphere from the beginning, becoming the only woman signatory of the Manifesto of the Forma group in 1947. Her early work was marked by a neo-Cubist language of signs that gave way to organic black-on-white works in the fifties. By the sixties, she had developed color-filled paintings that were characterized by surfaces of chromatic vibration and this was followed by works made in transparent plastic with the use of fluorescent or metallic paints that brilliantly reflected and refracted the light. Rapidly evolving on the threshold of

the seventies, she produced her most radical and conceptual works: the *Transparenti*. This series was made of simple wooden frames spanned with sheets of transparent plastic, called sicofoil, devoid of sign or color. The artist came to love this material, which she also used in three-dimensional installation experiments such as *Cones* and *Rolls*. It later became a constructive material in early environmental works such as *Tenda* (1965-1966), *Ambiente arancio* (1966-1968) and *Triplice tenda* (1969-1971). Following this experimental and conceptual phase, she returned to the joy of abstract painting, focusing on elegant and unprecedented juxtapositions of extremely modern colors and signs that harked back to her early experiments of the fifties while evoking key artistic reference points (Henri Matisse in primis). From the eighties onward she was engaged in the creation of major large-scale works, which arose in the context of the international "return to painting" phenomenon, of which Accardi represented a founding mother in the Italian context.

The artist attracted the most important contemporary art critics of her day. Germano Celant would publish her catalogue raisonné in 1999 (supplemented in 2011). Although perhaps written into history later than her male peers, the process began with a series of retrospectives, the first organized in Ravenna by Vanni Bramanti, who also edited the first critical anthology on the artist in 1983. This was followed by *Carla Accardi. Grandi dipinti 1965-1990*, curated by Giuseppe Apella at the Museo Civico di Gibellina in her native Sicily in 1990 and, four years later, *Carla Accardi* at the Castello di Rivoli, organized by Ida Gianelli and Giorgio Verzotti. A Roman tribute followed at the MACRO Museum in 2004, which was curated by Danilo Eccher. *Carla Accardi. Sign and Transparency*, conceived by Luca Massimo Barbero for the Palazzo Valle (Puglisi Cosentino Foundation) in Catania was the last major retrospective organized with Accardi's participation during her lifetime. She passed away at almost ninety years of age and with almost seventy years of painting activity behind her.



Pietro Consagra, Ugo Attardi, Mino Guerrini, Carla Accardi, Achille Perilli, Antonio Sanfilippo, and Piero Dorazio. Photographed in Rome, 1947.

Preserving her legacy fell to the Accardi Sanfilippo Archive, supported by the work of numerous other institutions and scholars. In 2020 the Museo del Novecento in Milan conceived the first institutional retrospective after her death, which unfortunately coincided with the Covid epidemic. Curated by Maria Grazia Messina,

Anna Maria Montaldo, and myself, the exhibition emphasized philological criteria, offering historical context for her production and presenting the works comparatively with peers. It also adopted a chronological ordering, which Accardi herself had always shunned.



Accardi, *Tenda*, 1965-66, sicofoil. Private collection.

Now it is Rome, Accardi's adopted home, that pays tribute to her. Curated by Daniela Lancioni and Paola Bonani at Palazzo delle Esposizioni, the current centenary retrospective brings together what is perhaps the largest number of her historical works ever presented. It has the distinction of allowing an in-depth

understanding of her installation practices, including the aforementioned *Tenda*, the *Triplice tenda* (1969-1971), and the feminist-oriented photographic installation *Origine* (1976). These have been brought together for the first time. Exhibition catalogues have always represented one of the most important sources of study on the artist and, with its impressive anthology of critical texts, this catalogue will be no exception.

Only in recent years have Italian and international scholars like Silvia Bottinelli, Maria Bremer, Leslie Cozzi, Laura Iamurri, Teresa Kittler, and Giovanna Zapperi begun to analyze Accardi's career through the lens of gender theory. Yet she was among the founders of one of the most important neo-feminist groups in Italy: *Rivolta Femminile*. Together with Carla Lonzi and Elvira Banotti she formulated some of the most crucial theoretical texts of the movement. It is this conjunction of her art and politics that makes her such a relevant artist in the present and has catalyzed so much interest in a new generation of scholars.

Giorgia Gastaldon is assistant professor in Contemporary Art History at Insubria University. Previously she was a post-doctoral researcher at the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome, the Fondazione Ragghianti in Lucca, the University of Udine, and an adjunct professor at L'Aquila University. In 2014 she received a Ph.D. in Art History with a dissertation on Mario Schifano's Painting 1958-1964 (2021). She also works as an independent curator.

2024 EXHIBITIONS

The Enigma of the Master of St Francis: The Stil Novo in Thirteenth Century Umbria

[Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia](#)

March 10, 2024 – June 9, 2024



Sixty masterpieces reveal the secrets of the most important artist to have worked in Central Italy after Giunta Pisano and before Cimabue. The

thirteenth was a century of enormous social, economic, and cultural upheaval in Umbria, marked by a religious and cultural revolution generated by the birth of the mendicant orders: in particular, the Franciscans. Umbria and Assisi became the new fulcrum in the production of European arts. It was here that a mysterious figure emerged as the Master of Saint Francis, an artist explored for the first time in this exhibition. The name of this pivotal painter is still unknown, linked to the wooden panel with the effigy of Saint Francis. Preserved in the Museum of the Porziuncola at the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Assisi, the panel is included in the Perugia exhibition with other works by the master and his contemporaries.

Carla Accardi

[Palazzo Esposizioni, Rome](#)

March 6, 2024 – June 9, 2024



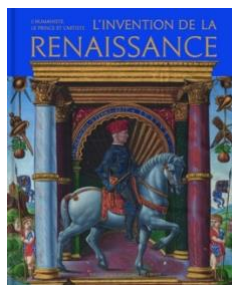
This anthological exhibition is dedicated to the major postwar abstract painter Carla Accardi on the centenary of her birth. It includes over a hundred works, selected to highlight her earliest inventions and later radical pieces, which are pioneering in both

Italian and international contexts. It includes works from some of the most important public and private collections, both in Italy and abroad, as well as a nucleus of historic works that remained in her possession and are now part of the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo collection.

The Invention of the Renaissance: the Humanist, the Prince and the Artist

[Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris](#)

February 20, 2024 – June 16, 2024



What was later referred to as *humanism*, developed in Europe between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries and is linked to an intellectual, artistic, and scientific blossoming. The BnF exhibition explores the “invention” of the Renaissance from its humanist roots, and its dissemination through books, collecting, and arts. A rich selection of more than 240 works, including manuscripts, printed books, prints, drawings, sculptures, art objects, and coins, offers insights into the origins of a key period in European art history.

Nanni Balestrini: Art as Political Action – one thousand and one voices

[Center of Italian Modern Art, New York](#)

February 22, 2024 – June 22, 2024



Curated by Marco Scotini, this is the first retrospective of Nanni Balestrini (1935-2019) in the United States. The Italian experimental visual artist, poet, and novelist is known for his revolutionary artistic practice and passionate involvement in the social-political movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Balestrini was a key protagonist in postwar Italian literary and social avant-garde movements. He approached experimental poetry with a visual sensibility stemming from the artistic use of collage and with a compositional practice that gave importance to the editing and recombining of existing texts (especially newspapers, magazines, and political slogans).

Piero della Francesca the Augustinian Polyptych Reunited

[Museo Poldo Pezzoli, Milan](#)

March 20, 2024 – June 24, 2024

Piero della Francesca finished painting his polyptych for the high altar of the church of the Augustinians in Borgo San Sepolcro in 1469. Among his most outstanding works,



the altarpiece would already be dismembered and dispersed by the end of the sixteenth century. This exhibition reunites all eight extant panels of the altarpiece for the first time, representing

a major international collaboration between five museums and allowing unique new insights into one of the most important works of Italian Renaissance painting.

Pre-Raphaelites: Modern Renaissance

[Museo San Domenico, Forlì](#)

February 28, 2024 – June 30, 2024



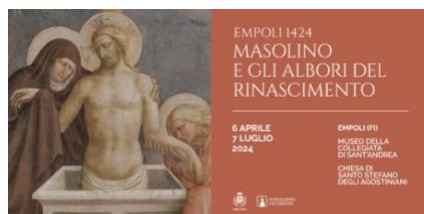
The exhibition traces the profound impact of historical Italian art on the Pre-Raphaelite movement between the 1840s and the 1920s. This topic has not been extensively explored in Italy and is demonstrated by placing Italian masterworks alongside British ones. This was permitted by generous loans from the most important Italian museums as well as museums and private

collectors in Britain, North America, Ireland, Germany and Austria. On display for the first time are works by Italian artists of the late nineteenth century who were inspired by their British precursors. Edward Burne-Jones, Ford Madox Brown, and Frederic Leighton are explored in depth, while other painters are represented by a selection of works that highlight specific points of connection.

Empoli 1424: Masolino and the dawn of the Renaissance

[Musei di Empoli](#)

April 7, 2024 – July 6, 2024



With this show the Museo della Collegiata and the Church of Santo Stefano in Empoli bring together the largest body of works by Masolino

da Panicale ever assembled. His crucial role in the initiation and development of fifteenth-century Florentine Renaissance

is celebrated alongside Masaccio and Beato Angelico. The artist lived for a significant period of his career in Empoli, creating several iconic works there. The exhibition aims not only to highlight Masolino's exceptional artistic talent, but also to provide a detailed overview of the cultural and artistic influences that shaped his work.

Hidden Faces: Covered Portraits of the Renaissance

[Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York](#)

April 2, 2024 - July 7, 2024



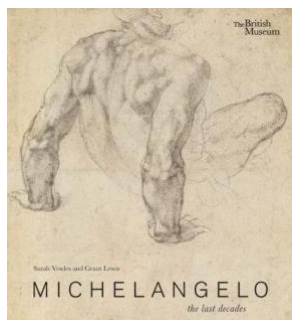
This exhibition is the first to examine an intriguing phenomenon of Renaissance painting: multisided portraits in which the sitter's likeness was concealed by a hinged or sliding cover, within a box, or by a dual-faced format.

The covers and reverses of these small, private portraits were adorned with puzzlike emblems, epigrams, allegories, and mythologies that celebrated the sitter's character and they represent some of the most inventive and unique secular imagery of the Renaissance. The viewer had to decode the meaning of the symbolic portrait before lifting, sliding, or turning the image over to unmask the face below. This tradition is explored through approximately sixty examples, some painted by celebrated artists such as Hans Memling, Lucas Cranach, Lorenzo Lotto, and Titian, shedding light on the intimate and interactive nature of Renaissance portraiture.

Michelangelo: the last decades

[The British Museum, London](#)

May 2, 2024 – July 28, 2024



Michelangelo left Florence for Rome in 1534, never to return. At fifty-nine years of age, many thought him old, but the move marked the beginning of a dramatic new chapter in his life. This exhibition focuses on the last thirty years when, having been summoned to

paint *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel, he received new commissions and reunited with close friends. Alongside studies for his grand architectural projects, the exhibition includes

drawings, poems, and letters, revealing personal passions and anxieties. This exhibition demonstrates the astonishing dynamism that Michelangelo brought to his work in the final decades of his life as he explored salvation and confronted his mortality.

Art and Fascism

[Museo dell'arte Rovereto e Trento \(MART\)](#)

April 14, 2024 – September 1, 2024



Art and Fascism analyses the variety of ways in which the Fascist regime influenced Italian figurative language and used art for propaganda purposes. Curated by Beatrice Avanzi and Daniela Ferrari, the exhibition recalls

the main occasions on which the artists of the period gave voice to the ideology, themes and myths of fascism through their participation in Biennials, Quadrennials, trade union exhibitions, competitions and public commissions. The exhibition displays over three hundred works by artists and architects such as Mario Sironi, Carlo Carrà, Adolfo Wildt, Arturo Martini, Marino Marini, Massimo Campigli, Achille Funi, Fortunato Depero, Tullio Crali, Thayaht, Renato Bertelli and Renato Guttuso from public and private collections.

Sergio Strizzi: The Perfect Moment

[The Estorick Collection, London](#)

May 15, 2024 – September 8, 2024



Sergio Strizzi (1931-2004) was a still photographer who worked on some of the most important film sets in Italy and abroad from the 1950s to the early 2000s. He documented iconic films like Vittorio De Sica's *The Gold of Naples* and *The River Girl* starring Sophia Loren. Strizzi collaborated with Michelangelo Antonioni, chronicling the production of his great trilogy of alienation *La notte*, *L'eclisse*, and *Red Desert*. His later work on James Bond films brought him to the attention of international directors. Organized in collaboration with Rome's Archivio Sergio Strizzi, this show comprises some eighty images spanning the photographer's entire career and is the first survey of his work in the UK.

Art and War in the Renaissance: The Battle of Pavia Tapestries

[Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth](#)

June 16, 2024 – September 15, 2024



These seven monumental tapestries are on view in the United States for the first time. Made to commemorate Emperor Charles V's victory over the French King Francis I, each piece individual work measures about twenty-seven feet in width and fourteen feet in height. They were designed by court artist Bernard van Orley and woven in Brussels by Willem and Jan Dermoyen. Each is filled with figures that include richly adorned military leaders, horsemen, and mercenary foot soldiers armed with swords, pikes, and firearms all inhabiting beautiful, undulating landscapes dotted with hills, towns, and forests. The immersive scale of the tapestries draws viewers into the world of Renaissance history, military technology, and fashion and they will be complemented by impressive examples of arms and armor from the period.

Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael: Florence c. 1504

[The Royal Academy of Arts, London](#)

November 9, 2024 – February 16, 2025



At the turn of the sixteenth century, Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Raphael, briefly crossed paths, competing for the attention of the most powerful patrons in Republican Florence. On January 25, 1504, Florence's most prominent artists met to advise on an appropriate location for Michelangelo's nearly finished *David*. Among them was Leonardo da Vinci, who, like Michelangelo, had only recently returned to his native Florence. Starting with Michelangelo's celebrated *Taddei Tondo*, this exhibition explores the rivalry between Michelangelo and Leonardo and the influence both had on the young Raphael. The exhibition will include some of the finest examples of Italian Renaissance drawing, including Leonardo's *Burlington House Cartoon* and the studies by Leonardo and Michelangelo for the murals commissioned by the Florentine government for the Palazzo Vecchio.

Drawing the Italian Renaissance

[The Kings Gallery Buckingham Palace, London](#)

November 1, 2024 – March 9, 2025



The Royal Collection has one of the world's greatest groups of Italian drawings. Through around 160 works on paper by artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael and Titian alongside lesser-known artists, this exhibition will reveal the diversity and accomplishment of drawing across Italy during this revolutionary period.

NEWS & NOTES

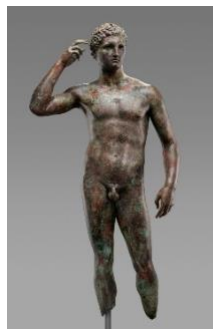


Art historian and geologist Ann Pizzorusso has proposed that distinct geological features reveal that [Leonardo's Mona Lisa \(1504\) depicts a region near Lecco on Lake Como.](#)

Among the features are a body of water, which she has identified as Lake Garlate, and rock formations that align with those of a local area of the Alps.



Archaeologists from the University of Tokyo who have been excavating for two decades have now uncovered new evidence at [Somma Vesuviana](#) about an older villa used by Emperor Augustus and buried during the eruption of 79 CE. The older site contains a furnace that may have been used to heat a private bath, a likely imperial amenity.



A Greek statue known as the Victorious Youth (300-100 BCE)

[currently at the J. Paul Getty Museum](#) has been ruled the rightful property of Italy by the European Court of Human Rights. The statue was discovered in the Adriatic Sea in 1964 and purchased by the Getty in 1977, but Italian authorities claim the statue was smuggled out of the country prior to the purchase and that they tried at the time to stop the

acquisition. The legal deliberation will continue, as institutions in the United States are not under the authority of the European Court of Human Rights.



[Pope Francis became the first pope to visit the Venice Biennale](#) on April 28. He visited the Vatican City exhibition, “With My Eyes,” curated by Chiara Parisi and

installed in the women’s prison on Giudecca. He met with the women incarcerated there, some of whom are serving as guides to the exhibition. The show includes works by artists Maurizio Cattelan, Claire Fontaine, Corita Kent, Bontou Dembele, Simone Fattal, Sonia Gomes, Claire Tabouret, and a film by Marco Perego starring Zoe Saldana.



[Archaeologists in Pompeii have uncovered a banquet room with elegant black walls](#) depicting heroes and deities from the Trojan War. The murals are in the Third Style and located in insula ten of Regio IX, which is now completely visible



[The new excavations in Pompeii have also revealed a fresco of Phrixus and Helle](#) in a domus near the House of Leda and the Swan. In the tale, siblings Phrixus and Helle ride a golden ram to escape from

their stepmother, Ino, who was plotting to kill them. The fresco depicts the moment that Helle has fallen into the water and reaches toward her brother before drowning in the sea.



[Eike Schmidt, former director of the Galleria degli Uffizi, has officially announced his candidacy for Mayor of Florence.](#) Running as a center-right

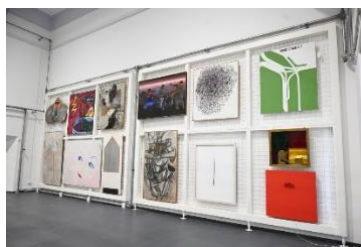
candidate, he has received support from numerous right-

wing parties, including Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni’s Fratelli d’Italia party. The election will take place on June 8–9. If elected, Schmidt will vacate his current position at director of the Capodimonte Museum in Naples.



[Jewelry and metal sculptures from an exhibition on sculptor Umberto Mastroianni has been stolen](#) from the Museo d’Annunzio Segreto near Lake Garda on March 6. The value of

the objects is estimated to be over \$1.3 million. All but one piece from the exhibition was stolen, while the thieves took nothing from the museum’s permanent collection. The Carabinieri continue to investigate.



[The Florence Civic Museums](#) have opened a new depository within the Santa Maria Novella complex in which works previously kept in off-site storage will be on display to the public. The

space may eventually display as many as 4500 works and was a project created by the Technical Services and Cultural Department. The depository is open on Saturdays by reservation, which can be made by emailing info@musefirenze.it.



[A new museum dedicated to Giorgio Morandi](#) is being established in Bologna at the Palazzo Pepoli Vecchio. The museum will relocate from its current site at the Museo d’Arte Moderna di Bologna (MAMbo).



[The Italian culture ministry announced that it will no longer allow works to be loaned to the Minneapolis Institute of Art.](#) In the MIA’s collection a marble copy of Polykleitos’ Doryphoros, purchased in 1986 for \$2.5 million. Italy claims that the

statue was looted in the 1970s from Stabiae, while the MIA

maintains that the statue was discovered in international waters.



[Students have made a major breakthrough in deciphering ancient scrolls.](#) Using A.I., students of the Vesuvius Challenge, a competition begun by

University of Kentucky professor Brent Seales, have been able to read text recorded on carbonized ancient scrolls from the Vesuvius eruption. Scholars hypothesize that the scroll under examination may have contained a text written by Philodemus of Gadara. It was found with hundreds of others in Herculaneum. Too fragile to unwrap, the scrolls are instead digitally unrolled using powerful CT scans that are then digitally straightened.



In celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Aeroporti di Roma, [three fragments of stained glass attributed to Giotto are on display at Fiumicino airport.](#) The fragments depict the prophet Aaron and two deacons, and are on

loan from the Opera di Santa Croce in Florence. The c. 1310 glass, attributed to Giotto by Miklos Boskovits, were once installed in a window on the right aisle of the church.

[Following years of discussions, Venice began charging a fee to tourists entering the city for day trips on April 25.](#) This year the fees (5 EUR per person) will only be charged on certain days within the high season, but the program may expand. Those spending the night in the city will not be charged the fee, but must register for an exemption. The fee may be paid on the Comune di Venezia website <https://cda.ve.it/en/>. Proof of payment may be printed or can be displayed on a smartphone.



[Leaders in Rome are proposing a plan to revitalize the city center as a more pedestrian-friendly area,](#) allowing tourists easier access to the

Colosseum, Fora, and other ancient sites. Eventually, the plan would lead to the permanent closure of Via dei Fori

Imperiali to traffic, creating a massive archaeological site. It has met opposition from Romans who fear that closing the road will increase congestion in nearby areas and inconvenience locals.

Italian Art Society Membership and Donations

Please [join or renew your IAS membership](#) today. Memberships run on the calendar year with an expiration date of December 31. Members are encouraged to pay online through our user-friendly website. If you wish to send a check, contact our Treasurer [Lucia Colombari](#). While the IAS will continue to offer student membership at \$20.00 and regular membership at \$35.00, there are now several levels of membership for both individuals and institutions or businesses. In addition to our *Sospeso* membership, our Patron and Donor memberships, at \$100.00 and \$250.00 respectively, allow members to generously support programming, awards, scholarship, and additional endeavors. We have also added three further levels of individual membership for especially munificent benefactors, and two kinds of institutional memberships. Institutional members include programs, organizations, or universities that want to promote the study of Italian art and architecture through support of the IAS. Thank you for your continued membership. Please encourage students, colleagues and organizations to join.

As a non-profit organization, the IAS seeks donations from individuals and organizations wishing to promote the study of the visual arts and architecture of Italy, from prehistory to the present. Funds help support the IAS's annual operations, including travel grants for graduate students and emerging scholars who are presenting their work at conferences in the USA and abroad, as well as research and publication grants. The IAS seeks general operating contributions and is also happy to work with donors to direct contributions toward specific purposes, including travel grant support and the establishment of research or publication funds. If you have questions, please e-mail our Treasurer [Lucia Colombari](#).

The IAS is grateful to its institutional supporters:



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Newsletter Contributions and Notices

IAS members are warmly encouraged to write for upcoming issues of the IAS Newsletter. The Newsletter's special features include exhibition and book reviews, interviews with curators and reflection pieces on methodology or specific research topics. Members can also share their news, such as reception of major awards, by filling in the dedicated [form](#) on our website. If you are interested in writing a feature (approximately 800 to 1200 words), please contact the [editor](#) at any time, or by May 7, 2024 for the next issue, Spring 2024. Deadlines for IAS Newsletters are: Fall Newsletter: content deadline September 7/publication date October 7; Winter Newsletter: content deadline January 7/publication date February 7; Spring Newsletter: content deadline May 7/publication date June 7.

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