
ITALIAN ART SOCIETY

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

NEWSLETTER XXXVII, 1, WINTER 2026



Detail from Fra Angelico, *Last Judgement*, 1425 – 1428, Museo di San Marco, Florence.

President's Message from Antje Gamble

7 February 2026

Ciao Tutti,

I hope everyone was able to get some rest over the holidays amid all the various festivities. As we celebrate a new year, we look back at the last and forward to the next. IAS has a lot to celebrate about last year: engaging panels across disciplines, a successful Kress lecture in Naples, record membership numbers, and much more. This coming year, I will work with the IAS leadership to continue and expand these amazing opportunities in support of our members' scholarship.

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American Association for Italian Studies
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International Congress on Medieval Studies
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One major announcement that needs to be shared is that we received a very generous donation at the end of 2025. An anonymous donor has contributed over fifteen thousand dollars to the IAS Endowment. This is the largest single donation we have received as an organization and we are unimaginably grateful to our generous donor. With their support, we are sure to be able to continue (and hopefully expand) our granting initiatives.

Our endowment secures the financial stability of the organization's programs in these unprecedented times without increasing regular membership fees. We will continue to work to support rich programming, provide travel grants, and accommodate the widest number of member needs, especially as the broader field continues to change in the twenty-first century. Special thanks to our Membership Outreach and Development (MOD) committee

chairs Sheryl Reiss and Nick Camerlenghi for all their work in growing our endowment and institutional members.

With the good news of 2025 announced, let's look forward to great things coming in 2026. First up is a busy third week of February when both the College Art Association (CAA) and Renaissance Society of America (RSA) conferences take place. CAA is in Chicago, IL this year, and RSA is in San Francisco, CA. In addition to excellent panels at each of these conferences, we will be holding a reception and a business meeting at RSA and CAA respectively during that week.

During CAA, we will hold our Annual Business Meeting, scheduled for Friday 20 February 1:00pm (central). This meeting will be on Zoom (a link will be circulated prior to the event). We are continuing a virtual meeting because CAA is still unable to support a hybrid event (despite the hybrid note on the CAA program). Too many of our members cannot attend CAA in person, which is doubly true this year since the conference is concurrent with RSA. We will continue to advocate for more flexible options at CAA because we all miss seeing everyone in person at the business meeting. In person, the next day, Saturday 21 February at 4:30pm (central) will be our IAS-sponsored session on "Blue Worlds & Italian Art" chaired by Jillianne Laceste of Boston University. If you are at CAA, make sure to check it out.

We will open the conference at RSA on Thursday 19 February with a joint reception with the Historians of Netherlandish Art. It will take place across the street from the conference hotel at the Parc 55. Space is limited, so RSVP will be required (details will be circulated soon). I want to take a minute to thank Vice President Kelli Wood, Chair of Development Sheryl Reiss, and incoming Events Coordinator Rebekah Compton, who have done a lot of amazing work in making this event happen in the absence of an event coordinator. IAS also has two sponsored panels at RSA, both on Saturday 21 February: "New Horizons on Federico Barocci: Historiography, Materiality, and the Workshop of a Renaissance Master" chaired by David J. Drogin of the Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY and Benjamin Weil of the Medieval Academy of America will be held in person at 9:00am (pacific) and "Bologna Circa 1400" chaired by Anna Maria Ambrosini Massari of the University of Urbino and Barbara Agosti of the University of Roma Tor Vergata at 11:00am (pacific). If you are at RSA, don't miss these excellent panels.

A new addition to our program is a sponsored panel at the Association for Art History (AAH) in the UK, which will take place at the University of Cambridge this year. The idea was spearheaded by member and inaugural panel co-chair

Arlene Leis. With the growth of our international members and other domestic shifts in the USA, the Board had already been discussing ways to increase our programming outside the USA. We are excited that the AAH panel joins the Kress lecture as part of our European-based programming. Chaired by Arlene Leis and Miriam Al Jamil, both independent researchers, "Eighteenth-Century Italian Art and Artists in Global Contexts," will be held on Wednesday 8 April at 10am (Greenwich Mean Time). We are especially excited to have a panel focusing on the eighteenth century. We look forward to continuing this programming at AAH.

In May, we will have a panel at ICMS titled "Picturing the Aldilà: Italian Last Judgements Revisited" chaired by Claire Jensen of the University of Toronto, and Alison Locke Perchuk of California State University Channel Islands. Also in May, we will hold our 15th Annual IAS-Kress Lecture in Italy. We are thankful for the continued support of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for the 2026 session. The 2026 lecture will be taking place in Bologna, Italy and I hope to see you all there. I've been working with our Treasurer and Bologna-native Lucia Colombari on a local partnership, which will be announced as soon as it is finalized.

After CAA, we will open applications for the 2026 Kress Lecture speaker. Applications will be invited from senior and established scholars based in North America. As usual, proposed lectures may address any period in Italian art and architecture from antiquity to the early nineteenth century (1800–1830) and must be related to the host city of Bologna or its environs (i.e. the broader Emilia-Romagna region). The presenter will receive an honorarium of 800 dollars and 2200 dollars in supplementary lecture allowance for travel, lodging, or translation expenses (this travel stipend is an increase from previous years to offset the higher costs of travel). We're excited to have the Kress back in Bologna.

We are also pleased to be able to announce this year's travel award winners in this issue. Thank you to the Awards Committee and their Chair Silvia Bottinelli for their work to review all the applications and congratulations to the great scholars who will benefit from these awards. As a reminder, the 2025 Premio Book Prize will be announced during our Business Meeting at CAA. Also, if you're speaking at Sixteenth Century Society & Conference (SCSC) next fall, the awards committee will be accepting applications for the second 2026 IAS Renaissance and Baroque Topics Travel Grant in June (details forthcoming).

Thank you to all our new and returning members! Let this celebration serve as a reminder to everyone who has not yet renewed for the 2026 year. We had one of the largest memberships in IAS history for 2025 and have launched our "Campaign for Seicento" to help us reach 600 by the end of

2026. Thanks to the Chair of Membership Nick Camerlenghi for spearheading this initiative.

As we begin 2026, I want to thank all of our outgoing IAS leadership. To everyone who has dedicated time to supporting this organization: it has been a pleasure to work with you and I thank each of you for your generosity in support of the Italian Art Society.

A presto,

Antje Gamble



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Contents

Italian Art Society News

- 4 IAS Awards
- IAS-Sponsored Conference Sessions
- 6 News from our Committees

Special Features

- 6 Exhibition Review
Beato Angelico
By Anne Leader
- 8 Exhibition Review
Manu-Facture: The Ceramics of Lucio Fontana
By Greta Boldorini
- 10 Exhibition Review
Filippino Lippi and Rome
By Rose Brookhart
- 11 **2026 Exhibitions**
- 14 **News and Notes**

ITALIAN ART SOCIETY NEWS

IAS AWARDS

We are pleased to announce our 2026 grant recipients:

Conference Grants for Emerging Scholars

Roberta Minnucci, Bibliotheca Hertziana Max Planck Institute for Art History
“Excavating Rome: American Artists and the Postwar Fragment” (AAH)

Or Vallah Gabaev, Independent scholar
“Disability and the Ideal Body” (RSA)

Dorothy F. Glass Travel Award

Gloria Rusconi, Università della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli
“Judged by the Cover: Sin and Social Control in Italian Last Judgments” (ICMS)

Conference Travel Grant for Modern Topics

Elisabetta Rattalino, Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History
“Displaying the sea to question the shores: Pino Pascali’s 32mq di mare circa in 1960s Italy” (CAA)

Renaissance and Baroque Topics Travel Grant

Camilla Colzani, Università degli Studi di Urbino “Carlo Bo”
“Sources as Method in Drawing: Open Temporality in Federico Barocci’s Graphic Art” (RSA)

Congratulations!

Please note that SCSC has a timeline for paper acceptance beyond our general travel grant deadline so applications for eligible scholars presenting at that conference have a deadline of **June 15, 2026**. All applicants must have received their Ph.D. by the time of application; they must be presenting on a topic related to Italian Art in the Renaissance or Baroque periods, and must not have received an IAS award in the previous two years.

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

IAS-SPONSORED CONFERENCE SESSIONS

COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION (CAA)
Chicago, 18–21 February 2026

Blue Worlds and Italian Art

Session Chair: Jillianne Laceste, Boston University

Papers:

Margaret A. Morse, Augustana College
"The Waters of Baptism in the Venetian Domestic Sphere"

Camilla Pietrabissa, Università Ca' Foscari
"Canaletto's 'fluid paint' and the lagoon capricci"

Elisabetta Rattalino, Bibliotheca Hertziana - Max Planck
Institute for Art History
"Displaying the sea to question the shores: Pino Pascali's
32mq di mare circa in 1960s Italy"

Silvia Bottinelli, Tufts University
"Polluted Waters in Rome: Anna Esposito and Goldschmied
& Chiari's Ecofeminist Views"

RENAISSANCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA (RSA)
San Francisco, 19–21 February 2026

**Session I: New Horizons on Federico Barocci:
Historiography, Materiality, and the Workshop of a
Renaissance Master**

Session Chairs: Anna Maria Ambrosini Massari, University
of Urbino and Barbara Agosti, University of Roma Tor
Vergata

Papers:

Stuart Lingo, University of Washington, Seattle
"Federico Barocci's 'bella maniera,' Mannerism, and Art
Historical Periodization"

Valentina Balzarotti, Link Campus University Rome
"Late Maniera in Arezzo: from Vasari to Barocci"

Camilla Colzani, Università degli Studi di Urbino "Carlo Bo"
"Sources as Method in Drawing: Open Temporality in
Federico Barocci's Graphic Art"

Mattia Giancarli, University of Siena-University for
Foreigners of Siena
"Echoes of the Master: Federico Barocci's Workshop"

Session II: Bologna circa 1400

Organizers: David J. Drogin, Fashion Institute of
Technology (SUNY) and Benjamin Weil, Medieval Academy
of America

Chair: David J. Drogin, Fashion Institute of Technology
(SUNY)

Papers:

Nancy Turner, J. Paul Getty Museum
"Artistic Identity Between Bologna and Paris: A
Reassessment of the Master of the Brussels Initials"

Caroline Ellen Paganussi, University of Sydney
"Manuscripts, Monuments, and Memory: Visualizing
Identity in Bolognese Art, ca. 1400"

Benjamin Weil, Medieval Academy of America
"Images of Saint Petronius and Bolognese Identity Beyond
the Commune"

Peter Weller, Independent Scholar
"Alberti in Bologna: What He Saw, What He Learned"

ASSOCIATION FOR ART HISTORY (AAH)
Cambridge, UK, 8–10 April 2026

**Eighteenth-Century Italian Art and Artists in Global
Contexts**

Organizers: Arlene Leis and Miriam Al Jamil, Independent
Scholars

Papers:

Hardeep Singh Dhindsa, Birmingham Museums Trust
"'Nero Asiaticus': Navigating Anglo-Indian Politics through
the Grand Tour of Sir Robert Clive"

Elisa Cazzato, University of Naples Federico II
"Ephemeral Itineraries: Theatre Decorators and the
Mobility of Artistic Practices in Eighteenth-Century
Europe"

Agnieszka Anna Ficek, Southern Methodist University and
the University of Texas at Dallas
"The Global Lives of Porcelain: Maria Amalia of Saxony and
the Circulation of Artistic Knowledge between Naples,
Dresden and China"

Maja Jackson, Independent Scholar
"Art, Science, and Spectacle: Pietro Longhi's Exotic Animals
in Eighteenth-Century Venice"

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON MEDIEVAL STUDIES (ICMS)
Kalamazoo, 14–16 May 2026

Picturing the Aldilà: Italian Last Judgements Revisited

Organizers: Claire Jensen, University of Toronto, and Alison
Locke Perchuk, California State University Channel Islands

Respondent: Janis Elliott, Texas Tech University (Emerita)

Papers:

Alexis Wang, Binghamton University
“Medial Ruptures in the Aldilà”

Gloria Rusconi, Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli

“Judged by the Cover: Sin and Social Control in Italian Last Judgments”

Philip J. Earenfight, Independent Scholar

“The Last Judgement with the Madonna della Misericordia: Variations on the Aldilà in Early Italian Painting”

Please consult the [IAS website](#) for all 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 COMMITTEES

The Membership, Outreach, and Development Committee (MOD)



MOD wants to remind you that our “Campaign for Seicento” is ongoing. As 2026 is speeding along, it is now (past) time to renew your Italian Art Society membership—if you have

not done so already! Our “Campaign for Seicento” hopes to bring our membership to an historic high of 600 members or more. Please help us reach our goal of 600+ members by the end of this year by sharing this with friends, students, and colleagues. Click [here](#) to renew or join anew! Forza IAS!!!

The Emerging Scholars Committee (ESC)

Each spring, the ECS hosts a professionalization event focused on benefitting early career scholars. This spring, our event is “Demystifying Graduate School” and planned for late April. The public, especially undergraduate students, and all members of IAS are welcome to attend. “Demystifying Graduate School” will be advertised on the IAS and ESC social media pages, as well as over email. We hope you can join us. Please watch for our Zoom link ad do encourage your students to attend as well!

SPECIAL FEATURES

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Beato Angelico

Palazzo Strozzi and Museo San Marco, Florence
26 September 2025 – 25 January 2026

By Anne Leader



Fra Angelico, *San Marco Altarpiece*, 1438 – 1442, tempera and gold on panel, Museo di San Marco, Florence. ©Ela Bialkowska, OKNO Studio

Florence houses the largest collection of works by the Observant Dominican friar Giovanni da Fiesole (d.1455), but the splendid retrospective *Beato Angelico*, co-hosted in 2025 by the Palazzo Strozzi and the Museo di San Marco, was the first held in the city in seventy years. Following monographic exhibitions in New York (2005), Rome (2009), and Madrid (2019), the Florence show was the most ambitious. Curator Carl Brandon Strehlke, with Stefano Casciu and Angelo Tartuferi, assembled objects from sixty-one institutions and several private collections in eight countries, producing a catalogue with 108 entries interspersed with fourteen essays. While remarkable, the significance of this curatorial feat lay in reuniting panels from altarpieces and ensembles, some seen together for the first time since their separation. New graphic reconstructions based on historical and technical evidence persuasively suggested the original settings for seven altarpieces. Thirty-one restorations and diagnostic analyses revealed Angelico’s undeniable talent, and *Beato Angelico. Restauri per una mostra* was published by Marsilio in December 2025. Strehlke’s international, multi-generational team have interpreted Angelico’s career from his beginnings around 1415 to his triumph as painter to rulers and popes in the 1440s and 50s. The artist was praised soon after his death as *angelicus pictor* for his brilliant color and compelling Christian narratives that use

space, light, and thoughtful attention to naturalistic detail to draw viewers into deep and sustained devotion.

Especially pleasing reunions included Angelico's exquisite and rarely lent Frankfurt *Virgin and Child with twelve angels* (c.1422–23), which was displayed alongside the copy by Andrea di Giusto (c.1430), restored specifically for the exhibition. The *Funeral and Assumption of the Virgin* (1430s) was shown next to its companion tabernacles from Santa Maria Novella for only the second time since their separation; the first being Nathaniel Silver's 2018 exhibition at the Gardner. The remarkable gathering of all but one of the surviving fragments of the San Marco altarpiece (1438–42) from eight museums across Europe and the United States was installed and lit so that viewers could truly appreciate the unified space shared by Mary's throne and surrounding throng of angels and saints.

Angelico's pictures carry neither dates nor signatures, and we do not know when he was born, who taught him to paint, or what his earliest career produced. At the San Marco portion of the exhibition, Tartuferi beautifully reinstalled the usual Fra Angelico gallery at San Marco to argue that Gherardo Starnina (d. 1412) played the central role in Angelico's artistic formation, with one side of the gallery dedicated to the friar-painter, the other, to his contemporaries. Tartuferi's proposal contradicted Laurence Kanter's long-held view that Lorenzo Monaco was Angelico's teacher, a proposal adopted by Strehlke in Madrid and maintained in Florence. Two curated sections of manuscripts were in Michelozzo's library upstairs.

If Angelico's birth year was indeed the commonly accepted c.1395, he would have been aged between ten and twelve when Starnina painted the panels included in the exhibition – the *Virgin of humility crowned by two angels* in Milan (c.1405) and the Acciaiuoli altarpiece pinnacles (c. 1406–07) – and no more than seventeen when Starnina died in 1412. The question of what Angelico did during the five years before joining the confraternity of St. Nicholas of Bari as Guido di Piero dipintore in 1417 was not answered convincingly. The paintings by Starnina and the Uffizi *Virgin of humility* by Masolino (c. 1410–15) showed little resemblance to Angelico's works exhibited at San Marco, save perhaps the heterogenous group of the *Thebaid* (c. 1415–20), the Griggs Crucifixion (c. 1418–20), and the *Madonna di Cedri* (c.1418–20). However, these three pictures attributed to a young Angelico were hard to reconcile with the lucidity and brilliant hues of Angelico's Fiesole high altarpiece (1420–23), restored for the exhibition and reunited with four framing elements, or the jewel-toned robes of *Sts. Catherine of Alexandria and John the Baptist* and *A Bishop Saint and St. Agnes* from a private collection (c. 1422–23). The color and line of these two

securely attributed works bear resemblance not so much to Starnina but to Lorenzo Monaco's Uffizi *Coronation* (not exhibited) and Lorenzo Ghiberti's *St. Andrew* and *St. Francis of Assisi* from the reliquary of the arms of St. Andrew (c.1415–20), shown opposite Angelico's saints.



L: Masaccio, *San Giovenale Triptych*, 1422, tempera and gold on panel C: Lorenzo Ghiberti and Fra Angelico, *Tabernacle of the Arte dei Linaioli*, 1432 – 1436, tempera and gold on panel R: Fra Angelico, *San Pietro Martire Altarpiece*, c. 1422 – 1423, tempera and gold on panel ©Ela Bialkowska, OKNO Studio

Tartuferi's beautiful placement of Masaccio's S. Giovenale triptych (1422) next to Fra Angelico's S. Pietro Martire altarpiece (c. 1422–23), reunited with its predella from the Courtauld Gallery, vividly showed these two fathers of the Renaissance painting as complementary but fundamentally distinct artists. Viewers could see the tabernacle for the Arte dei Linaioli e Rigattieri by Angelico and Ghiberti (1432–36) through an opening between the two altarpieces, which evocatively suggested a rood screen before a high altar.



Fra Angelico, *Franciscan Triptych*, 1428 – 1429, tempera, gold, and silver on panel. ©Ela Bialkowska, OKNO Studio

The display at San Marco alone would have constituted a worthy exhibition, but the eight galleries at Palazzo Strozzi made the retrospective extraordinary. The first presented the Strozzi altarpiece, cleaned for the exhibition and strikingly displayed in the center of the

room. The subsequent section reunited the Franciscan triptych with its five predella panels extraordinarily loaned by the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, the Vatican Museums, and the Lindenau-Museum Altenburg. The heavily damaged but

impressively restored side panels framed the central panel (1428-29), and for the first time since its dismemberment, the triptych rose over its predella devoted to the life of St Francis installed in a new non-narrative sequence based on X-radiographs.

The largest gallery showcased the San Marco altarpiece after which visitors were led into two smaller rooms. The first contained a stunning tricolon of silhouetted crucifixes by Lorenzo Monaco (c.1420), Angelico's bloodier version (c.1427-30), and the restored and mostly unknown example by Pesellino (c.1450).



Installation view, L: Fra Angelico, Montecarlo Annunciation Altarpiece, c. 1432 – 1435, Museo della Basilica di S. Maria delle Grazie, S. Giovanni Valdarno; R: Filippo Lippi and workshop, Martelli Altarpiece, c. 1440, S. Lorenzo, Florence. Photo: Anne Leader

The subsequent gallery offered a fascinating contrast of humble yet magnificent Madonnas opposite bloody portrayals of Christ crowned with thorns. The Hildesheim triptych, which combined both, was likely unknown to most visitors prior to the exhibition.

The installation of Angelico's Montecarlo Annunciation (c.1432-35)

adjacent to Filippo Lippi's Martelli altarpiece of the same subject (c. 1440) provided an unexpected realization. Next to Angelico's work, Lippi's composition appeared cluttered with distracting detail, especially the cheeky angels and plunging perspective that take the viewer's gaze away from the Incarnation. By contrast, Fra Angelico's balanced setting creates a believable three-dimensional space that focuses attention on Mary's humble response to Gabriel's momentous message, a clarity echoed in the beautifully restored terracotta *pala* by Bernardo Rossellino that was displayed nearby (1433 or 1445).

Eighteen objects represented Angelico's Roman sojourns (1445-48 and ca. 1453-55), like the moving *Crucifixion with the Virgin*, *St Bridget of Sweden* and *Nicholas of Bari* (c.1453-55), shown to the public for the first time. The exhibition concluded with additional Medici commissions, including the restored and well-lit *Scenes from the Life of Christ* from the Annunziata silver chest (c.1450-52), more legible and evocative of the Christian narrative than ever.

The entire show, with its sugar-paper blue walls and exquisite lighting, allowed Angelico's work to shine and made manifest the spiritual power of his art. The exhibition clearly demonstrated that Fra Angelico stands alongside



Fra Angelico, *Crucifixion, with the Virgin and Saints Bridget of Sweden and Nicholas of Bari*, c. 1453 – 55, tempera and gold on panel, 70.5 x 41.5 cm, private collection. Photo: Anne Leader

Filippo Brunelleschi, Donatello, Ghiberti, Luca della Robbia, and Masaccio as a key figure in the development of the Italian Renaissance. Each gallery showed him to be an innovative and eloquent artist whose dazzling colors, delicate yet powerful depiction of light, shadow, and space, attention to quotidian detail, and laconic yet engaging storytelling reveals him to be not only an *angelicus pictor*, but also an *angelicus praedicator*, an angelic preacher speaking through unmatched visualizations of heaven, earth, and hell in radiant color and splendid light.

Anne Leader is Visiting Fellow at the University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities (IATH), where she curates *Digital Sepoltuario*, an interactive website that chronicles the memorial landscape of medieval and Renaissance Florence.

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Manu-Facture: The Ceramics of Lucio Fontana

Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice
11 October 2025 – 2 March 2026

By Greta Boldorini



Installation view, *Manu-facture: The Ceramics of Lucio Fontana*. Courtesy of Peggy Guggenheim Collection. Photo by Claudia Corrente.

Lucio Fontana (1899–1968), widely known for his celebrated slashed canvases, was also—and above all—a sculptor. *Manu-facture: The Ceramics of Lucio Fontana*, currently on view at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice and curated by Sharon Hecker, focuses exclusively on Fontana's sculptural production. Hecker is one of the leading international authorities on modern and

contemporary Italian art (specifically on sculpture) and the exhibition represents the first monographic museum show devoted solely to the artist's ceramic works.

Sculpture was not marginal to Fontana's artistic career, but rather the central and enduring constant of his practice. It began in Argentina in the aftermath of the First World War, a conflict in which Fontana was directly involved and which profoundly marked him, and continued in Italy. With the outbreak of the Second World War, unwilling to relive the trauma and shock of war, he again sought refuge in Argentina, where he remained until 1947. It was in that year that he returned to Italy, writing in a letter a now-iconic phrase, aptly recalled and cited in the exhibition: "Between suicide and the journey, I chose the latter, because I hope to realize once again a series of ceramics and sculptures that may give me the pleasure or the sensation of still being a living man." The same year, he founded the Spatialist movement.

The exhibition layout follows a chronological order, opening with *La Ballerina di Charleston*, Fontana's first sculpture, created in 1926: a small plaster statuette glazed in black. From this point onward, a varied and heterogeneous body of work unfolds, both in terms of the techniques employed and the subjects represented. Abstract forms, portraits, crucifixes, animals are painted, unglazed, or executed using the craquelure technique, all of which testify to the artist's continuous experimentation.

Around the mid-1930s, Fontana's work exploded with forms and creatures rendered in vivid colors, as in *Cocodrillo* or *Farfalla*. These were the years in which the artist began a fruitful collaboration with Tullio d'Albisola and the Mazzotti workshop in Albisola, and in 1936 he spent a period working at the Sèvres porcelain manufactory in Paris.

His production then rapidly shifted toward different subjects, increasingly shaped by and responsive to the historical and political context of the time. This is evident in the reinterpretation of the *Augusto di Prima Porta* in the celebrated *Torso Italico* (1938), which incorporates striking painterly motifs such as a winged Victory—likely an allusion to Fascist triumphalism—as well as references to the equestrian monument of Marcus Aurelius.

The artist's relationship with the Fascist regime has often been interpreted as ambivalent and ambiguous. The curator also subscribes to this reading, according to which Fontana never displayed an explicit adherence to Fascist ideology, despite accepting commissions from the regime. He was perhaps driven by sheer opportunism, as made explicit in a letter to the aforementioned Tullio d'Albisola: "I

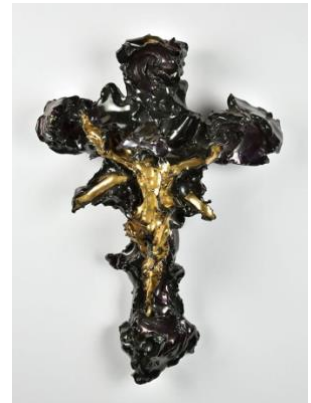
am working on a sketch for a statue of the Duce and I hope to make a good profit from it."

In postwar Italy, amid the years of reconstruction, Fontana sought a form of catharsis in sculpture to relieve the trauma of war. This emerges with force in the evocative *Battaglia* and later in the white *Guerriero*, in which a deep cut slashing through the material appears to prefigure his imminent cuts in the canvas as part of an investigation into depth and three-dimensionality.

A similar serial approach can be observed in the remarkable crucifixes, produced from the late 1940s onward for Milanese domestic interiors. Here, starting each time from a fixed pattern, the material takes on new and original forms, suspended between abstraction and figuration. The *Crucifixion* and the *Deposition* of 1955, both executed in white, anticipate those cuts that Fontana had begun to realize at the end of 1958, bearing witness to a process and an osmotic exchange between painting and sculpture—never conceived as separate practices, but rather as integral parts of a single reflection on matter.

From these same years, special mention should be made of the three exquisite female half-busts *Ritratto di Teresita*, *Ritratto di Esa*, and *Ritratto di Milena Milani*, which testify to the artist's remarkable ability to engage with portraiture, capturing his subjects while simultaneously sustaining a high degree of formal experimentation.

In the sculptures produced during the final decades of the artist's career, we witness a return to what might be described as the zero degree of sculpture: simple forms and roughly finished surfaces, all subsumed under the designation *Concetti Spaziali*. The painted round terracottas of the 1950s and 1960s are marked by holes and cuts that tear through and shape the material. In the early 1960s, Fontana produced engobed terracottas that are almost



Lucio Fontana, *Crucifix*, 1952, glazed terracotta, 44.5 x 30.5 x 15 cm, International Museum of Ceramics, Faenza.



Lucio Fontana, *Ritratto di Esa*, 1953, glazed terracotta, 57 x 43 x 28 cm, private collection. Courtesy of Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

two-dimensional, conceived to be wall-mounted and tending toward the picture plane, and here cuts and perforations echo the experiments that Fontana had already been conducting on canvas with *Spatial concepts*. This final room confirms the permeability between visual languages and techniques that can be found in Fontana's art.

Greta Boldorini is a researcher in contemporary art at the University of Padua, where she is carrying out a study on public artworks created by women artists. At the same university, she earned her PhD with a dissertation on the relationship between art and feminisms in 1990s Italy, which is soon to be published.

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Filippino Lippi and Rome

Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH
26 November 2025 – 22 February 2025

By Rose Brookhart



Gallery View of Filippino Lippi and Rome at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Courtesy of CMA.

The Filippino Lippi (1457 –1504) show at the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) surveys the Florentine painter and his transformative period in the Eternal City. Curated by Alexander J. Noelle, it brings together twenty-five paintings, drawings, and antiquities from the CMA's permanent collection, as well as loans from the U.S. and Europe. This focused show, contained in one room, engages audiences with landmark artworks. *The Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist and Saint Margaret* (c. 1488 – 93), is celebrated as a cornerstone of the CMA's collection and here forms the heart of the exhibition. Recognized as the most important painting by Filippino outside of Europe, the Cleveland tondo has been reunited with its sole surviving preparatory drawing for the first time.

A first area analyzes the artist's Florentine origins. Artworks by Fra Filippo Lippi (the artist's father), Sandro Botticelli, and his workshop show the influence of these mentors on his independent works. Several of Filippino's early paintings

demonstrate his popularity amongst powerful patrons like Lorenzo de' Medici. On display for the first time in the United States are his *Annunciation* tondi from the town hall of San Gimignano. This section acknowledges Filippino's illustrious predecessors, while rightfully ascribing the painter's early success to his autonomous skill and enduring inventiveness.

The Cleveland tondo is the centerpiece of an investigation of Filippino's engagement with Roman antiquities. He traveled to Rome in 1488 at the request of Cardinal Oliviero Carafa, where he completed his famous fresco cycle in Santa Maria sopra Minerva. The Cleveland tondo is the only independent painting that he is known to have completed while in Rome. This exhibition debuts a stunning new frame for the Cleveland tondo, hand-carved and painted by Florentine artisans. This historically accurate frame is modeled after the original wooden frame surrounding Botticelli's *Madonna of the Pomegranate* (c. 1487) in the Uffizi.

A joy of this show is to examine the Cleveland tondo alongside a single sheet of paper with three sketches that are the only known preparatory studies. Roman antiquities from the CMA's collection, including a torso and head from two Venus figures, are brought together in this space to demonstrate the types of ancient objects that Filippino



Filippino Lippi, *The Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist and Saint Margaret*, c. 1488–93, tempera and oil on wood, diam. 153 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art. Courtesy of CMA.

took inspiration from. The ancient figures on display correspond to figures illustrated on the preparatory sketches for the Cleveland tondo. Other artworks in this section include studies of the ruins of Nero's Golden House, rediscovered in 1480, and drawings that showcase the artist's imaginative pastiches of ancient *groteschi* and other designs. This array of paintings, drawings, and antiquities shows visitors the correlation between ancient and Renaissance aesthetics and robustly introduces them to this convergence in art by Filippino.



Filippino Lippi, *Muse Erato*, c. 1500, tempera on poplar, 62.5 x 51.8 cm, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Filippino continued to draw on his Roman experience after his return to Florence in 1493. Visitors encounter his painting of the *Muse Erato* (c.1500), shown in contrapposto. A drawing by Filippino's student, Raffaellino del Garbo, includes figures that emulate the physiognomy and poses of those in the Cleveland tondo. Reinforcing the influence of *the Holy Family*, such correspondences suggest the impact of Filippino's classically inspired style. A drawing of *the Death of Laocoön* (c.1493), a

fresco made for Lorenzo de' Medici's villa Poggio a Caiano, appears alongside didactic reconstructions of the *spolvero* technique. This helps audiences appreciate artworks that remain *in situ* and points to the importance of Renaissance wall painting. This reconstruction provides an up-close experience with an unfinished and less well-known fresco.

Accompanying this exhibition is an equally strong catalog that presents new art historical and technical research with four essays by curators, conservators, and scholars. The essays provide original analyses of the iconography and innovative landscape in the Cleveland tondo, demonstrating a shift in Filippino's iconographic and visual vocabulary. One essay diligently traces the Cleveland tondo's provenance before joining the collection in 1932, explicating the tondo's impressive reputation among early twentieth-century collectors. In 2024, conservators and imaging scientists completed the first technical investigation of the tondo. Their chapter elucidates his iterative revisions revealed by the newly accessed underdrawings, which are highlighted in a final installation for the exhibit wherein visitors witness a retelling of Filippino's design process as projected in a full-scale digital model of the tondo.

This small but splendid show puts Filippino's Roman experience into the spotlight, demonstrating its impact on his style. *The Holy Family* is dynamically showcased and visitors will appreciate the artist's ingenious draftsmanship and engagement with antiquity.

Rose Brookhart is an emerging scholar of early modern Italian art history. She is a recent graduate of the Syracuse University Florence Graduate Program in Italian Renaissance Art.

2025-26 EXHIBITIONS

Filippino Lippi and Rome [Cleveland Museum of Art](#)

November 26, 2025– February 22, 2026



Filippino Lippi and Rome reconsiders the lasting impact of the painter's time in the Eternal City, juxtaposing Filippino's Roman artworks with their Florentine precursors and successors. The exhibition places twenty-five paintings, drawings, and antiquities in

direct conversation with important loans from national and international lenders, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, His Majesty King Charles III, the National Gallery in London, the Uffizi, and the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, among others. The Cleveland Museum of Art's seminal tondo by Filippino, *The Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist and Saint Margaret*, is at the center of the exhibition. Commissioned by Carafa while Filippino was frescoing the cardinal's chapel, this important painting is the only known independent work produced by the artist in Rome. This is a unique opportunity for scholars and the public alike to discover the artistic processes and iconographic ingenuities of one of the most gifted and accomplished Renaissance painters.

Elisabetta di Maggio: Frangible

[Galleria Civica Moderna e Contemporanea, Torino](#)

October 29, 2025 – March 1, 2026



This exhibition traces the career of Elisabetta Di Maggio (b. 1964), presenting both historical works and new pieces created specifically for the museum's spaces. Cutting, an essential

element of Di Maggio's artistic practice, is at once a method of exploring and caring for materials, and a violent gesture, one that incises without allowing the slightest reconsideration. Her works include walls of incised tissue paper, soaps sculpted into urban maps, mosaics of wax and glass, delicate porcelain, botanical elements, and mandalas composed of postage stamps. These blur the boundaries between abstraction and figuration, nature and artifice. Perceptual instability lies at the heart of the experience of Di Maggio's work, inviting a sensory immersion made of scent, sound, and contemplation.

Piero Manzoni: Total Space

[Robert Olnick Pavilion, Magazzino Italian Art, New York](#)

September 8, 2025 – March 23, 2026



Piero Manzoni (1933–1963) began searching for what he described as a “new language” and a “total transformation” in 1957. That is when he began to create achromes: works of

gesso on canvas in which white had no allusive or symbolic value but was a colorless surface. He experimented further with “neutral” spaces using materials including kaolin, cotton wool, polystyrene, synthetic fibers, and fur. He envisioned an art of “total space,” in letters to his friend, Dutch artist Henk Peeters describing his wish to create a room of white fur and another room coated in white fluorescent paint. These projects were unrealized at the time of Manzoni’s death in 1963, at age twenty-nine. However, in 2019, Rosalia Pasqualino di Marineo curated the exhibition *Piero Manzoni: Materials of His Time* in Los Angeles. For the exhibition, Hauser & Wirth and Fondazione Piero Manzoni commissioned New York-based architect Stephanie Goto to realize these two rooms and it is these two works of art that make up a new exhibition at Magazzino.

Wax upon a time. The Medici and the arts of ceroplastics
[The Uffizi Galleries, Florence](#)

December 18, 2025 – April 12, 2026



This is the first exhibition on Florentine collections of wax sculpture from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It aims to shed light on an lost creative field: that of the production of wax images,

which experienced a particular renewal of interest among the ranks of fine arts in Florence from the fifteenth to the late seventeenth centuries. The production of wax images was widespread but examples of this art form were largely lost, due to the perishability of the material as well as to the fact that it is not one included among the so-called major arts of the period. The exhibition aims to make wax sculpture better known, as it was at the moment of its greatest splendor, when it was avidly sought after by collectors like the Medici.

Giovanni Bellini's "Pietà" Restored
[The Frick Collection, New York](#)

January 15, 2026 - April 19, 2026



The *Pietà* (or *Dead Christ Supported by Angels*) (ca. 1470) by Giovanni Bellini will be on view in the United States for the first time. On loan from the Museo della Città in Rimini, Italy, its

presentation follows a comprehensive conservation treatment made possible by Venetian Heritage, Inc. The painting will be displayed in J. Pierpont Morgan’s Study within the Morgan’s historic library, alongside highlights of Morgan’s own Renaissance collection, including paintings by Hans Memling and Perugino and sculptures by Antonio Rossellino.

Meraviglie del Grand Tour
[Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan](#)

January 30, 2026 – May 4, 2026

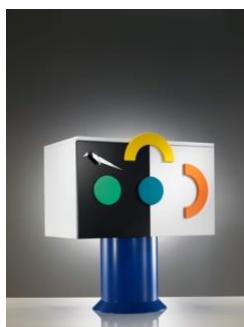


Organized in collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, this show centers around Giovanni Paolo Panini's masterpiece *Ancient Rome* (1757). The painting is put into dialogue with the museum's

collections and important new acquisitions: Panini's *Interior of the Pantheon*, views by Van Wittel, a third-century Roman sarcophagus, a Ginori porcelain Laocoon, and a previously unseen selection of Grand Tour fans. The exhibition culminates in a surprising video installation *Tutti gli Dèi* (All the Gods) by award-winning filmmaker Ferzan Özpetek, who offers the public a Grand Tour through time with the powerful language of cinematography.

Alessandro Mendini
[The Estorick Collection, London](#)

January 16, 2026 – May 10, 2026



This will be the UK’s first solo exhibition dedicated to Alessandro Mendini (1931–2019), one of postwar Italy’s most creative and influential designers and architects. Bringing together around fifty key works, including furniture, drawings, paintings, rugs and design objects, the show celebrates Mendini’s playful and poetic approach to design across

his extraordinary career and via his iconic collaborations with companies such as Alessi and Swatch. The exhibition also includes a number of Mendini’s whimsical,

anthropomorphic creations, like the now-ubiquitous Anna G. and Alessandro M. bottle openers and corkscrews (first marketed by Alessi in 1994), which capture his philosophy of “treating objects as if they were human beings; I make them smile.” An illustrated catalogue with an essay by the exhibition’s curator Alberto Fiz accompanies the show, which has been made possible in collaboration with the Archivio Alessandro Mendini. This represents a chance to glean new perspectives on the life and ideas of a figure whose projects have changed the face of modern society.

Liberty: The Art of Modern Italy

[Palazzo Martinengo, Brescia](#)

January 24, 2026-June 14, 2026



This show, curated by Manuel Carrera, Davide Dotti and Anna Villari, offers a broad overview of the arts between the late nineteenth century and the first fifteen years of the twentieth century, highlighting how new European sensibilities influenced painting, sculpture, advertising graphics, fashion, photography, and applied arts.

The exhibition includes more than one hundred works, including paintings by Vittorio Matteo Corcos, Gaetano Previati, Plinio Nomellini, Ettore Tito, Amedeo Bocchi, and Cesare Tallone; there are also sculptures by Edoardo Rubino, Leonardo Bistolfi, and Liberto Andreotti, posters by Giovanni Battista Carpanetto, Leonardo Dudovich, and Leopoldo Metlicovitz, and ceramics by Galileo Chini. The intent is to outline the evolution of Art Nouveau taste, which was widespread at the turn of the twentieth century, and to analyze how international currents intertwined with Italian artistic production.

Bernini e I Barberini

[Palazzo Barberini, Rome](#)

February 12, 2026 - June 14, 2026



Curated by Andrea Bacchi and Maurizia Cicconi, this exhibition explores the extraordinary relationship between Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Maffeo Barberini, his first and

most influential patron, who took the name Urban VIII upon his election to the papacy in 1623. It will offer an opportunity to reconsider the birth of the baroque style through the privileged lens of the artistic, political, and

personal dialogue between Bernini and Pope Urban VIII. The event also coincides with the four-hundredth anniversary of the consecration of new St. Peter’s Basilica (1626), a landmark moment in Bernini’s career and in the history of Roman Baroque.

Giotto and Saint Francis. A Revolution in Fourteenth Century Umbria

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

March 14, 2026 – June 14, 2026



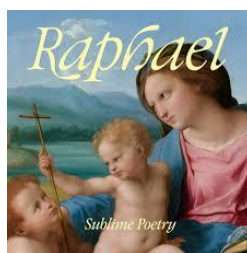
This exhibition forms a part of the year of celebrations marking the eighth centenary of the death of St Francis of Assisi. Focusing on the moment when Giotto’s work in Assisi brought a radical new artistic style to Italian art, the exhibition brings together over sixty works, including paintings, panels, and fresco fragments, by the

protagonists of this extraordinary period. It follows every phase of Giotto's presence in Assisi: from his early works, documented by the Madonna and Child from Borgo San Lorenzo and the Madonna of San Giorgio alla Costa, to his maturity, represented by the fragment with an allegorical figure now at the Szépművészeti Museum in Budapest. Alongside these, standout loans will include the Madonna and Child from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the Pentecost from the National Gallery in London, evidence of a mysterious, dismembered Franciscan altarpiece.

Raphael: Sublime Poetry

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

March 29, 2026-June 28, 2026



This will be the most comprehensive exhibition on the artist ever staged in the United States. It will bring together over 200 of Raphael’s greatest works including some rarely seen paintings, drawings, and tapestries from worldwide public

and private collections. Curated by Carmen Bambach, the show will pay particular attention to Raphael’s portrayal of women—from his use of nude female models for the first time in Western art to his tender depictions of the Madonna and Child. Using recent scientific discoveries made with state-of-the-art technology, this exhibition offers a rare opportunity to experience the genius of an artist who helped shape the course of art history.

Pintoricchio Magnified: An Immersive Conservation Experience

[Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland](#)

August 10, 2025– August 23, 2026



Via this immersive digital experience, visitors will step into the conservation studio for a behind-the-scenes look at the materials and techniques used by conservators at the Cleveland Museum of Art. For almost fifty years, Pintoricchio's *Virgin and Child* (c.1490–1500) was in storage at the CMA, its last original layers of blue

paint hidden beneath a mask of restoration treatments undertaken in the twentieth century. Although considered one of the most significant paintings within the early Italian collection, its complicated restoration history and physical state rendered it largely unexhibitable. In the most recent conservation treatment, original paint layers were revealed, allowing unparalleled access to Pintoricchio's original composition, freed from past interventions. This allowed conservators to embark on the rediscovery and reexamination of one of the more damaged paintings in the museum collection and use cutting-edge technologies to better understand the materials and techniques used by the artist. Through a large digital display, visitors traverse the layers of the painting and its conservation treatment, examining changing details as if magnified under a microscope.

NEWS & NOTES



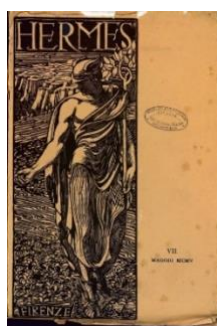
The [Ca' Dario in Venice](#), designed in the late fifteenth century by a follower of Pietro Lombardo for Giovanni Dario, is for sale with Christie's International Real Estate following a restoration. Dario, a Venetian official who was instrumental in negotiating a peace agreement with the

Ottomans, was given a large sum of money by the city, which he used to begin the palazzo. In its illustrious history, the Ca' Dario has been described by John Ruskin, painted by Claude Monet, and owned in the 1970s by Kit Lambert, manager of The Who.



Magnifico 1492, [a major exhibition about Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici](#), known as "the Magnificent" (1449-1492), will open this fall at

the Uffizi. The exhibition aims to be an authentic and detailed reconstruction of the extraordinary Medici collection, as described and inventoried in 1492, upon Lorenzo's death. An able politician and extraordinary promoter of arts and culture, he embodied the very idea of patronage, and surrounded himself with the leading intellectuals of his time: Angelo Poliziano, Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and artists such as Botticelli and Michelangelo. Florence became the undisputed center of the Renaissance under his rule. As the director of the Uffizi, Simone Verde, points out, Lorenzo represents a "true watershed: his life closes where the world of modern history that we still inhabit today opens. That is, in the year of the discovery of the Americas."



The Università degli Studi di Firenze has launched [Impronte Digitali](#), a new platform designed to grant online access to 200,000 images from more than 4,000 objects including printed books, drawings, and photographs. The collection includes twenty-two fifteenth-century incunabula as well as manuscript volumes of guild and municipal statutes from the Library of

the College of Lawyers of Florence. The platform is open to all and contains advanced search and digitization functionalities.



Beginning February 1, 2026, tourists will have to pay two euro to approach the [Trevi Fountain](#) in Rome. The fees will go to the city in order to pay for upkeep and management of visitors, and the goal is that the fee will allow for the crowds to be more easily managed. Young children and visitors with disabilities will not be charged.



Scholars at the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria of Perugia with the engineering department of the Università degli Studi di Perugia are attempting to use [AI in order to reconstruct Cimabue's fresco of Saint Matthew](#) from the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi. The fresco was destroyed and broken into 120,000 fragments during two devastating earthquakes in 1997. Adjacent frescoes of Sts. Luke, John, and Mark were damaged to a much lesser degree and have already been reconstructed. The fragments of the Matthew fresco were collected and catalogued following the earthquake, and scholars are

trying to determine if existing AI technologies can piece them together or if further development is needed.



The [San Antonio Museum of Art has repatriated nine works of art to Italy](#) after years of research and discussions with Italian cultural heritage officials. As part of a cultural agreement signed in 2023, eight will

remain in Texas for the time being, on loan from Italy. These works were identified from photographs taken from disgraced dealer Giacomo Medici. The remaining work has been returned to Italy: a marble head of Hercules excavated in the nineteenth century and sold to Gilbert M. Denman Jr. in the 1970s, who subsequently donated it to the museum.



[The roads system of the Roman Empire](#) may have been more extensive than previously thought. A study published in the Nature journal *Scientific Data*

estimates that the roads system may have encompassed 187,460 miles – a much greater distance than the previously understood (120,000 miles). The database tallies all roads that existed during the span from around 312 BCE to 400 CE. The authors of the study have also published a digital atlas, Itiner-e.



A late fifteenth-century manuscript page stolen from [Santa Maria in Aracoeli](#) in Rome has been returned. The folio, attributed to Fra Antonio di Monza, depicts the Virgin and Child and was part of a gradual reported stolen in 1987. It was discovered when listed for sale at a London auction house. The folio had been documented by

Bellarmino Bagati in the 1930s. The remainder of the gradual is still missing.



Fashion designer [Valentino Garavani](#) has died in Rome at age ninety-three surrounded by his loved ones. His body was laid in state at his Rome headquarters, Palazzo Mignanelli, near the Spanish Steps, and thousands queued over the two days to bid their farewells

to the iconic fashion designer who was known as the “Sheikh of Chic.”

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