

President's Message from Cathleen Fleck

May 1, 2014

Dear Italian Art Society Members:

Spring greetings to all after what has seemed an endless winter! I would like to start by thanking all of the officers and committee members whose terms ended in February 2014: Secretary: Catherine McCurrach; Nominating Committee: Niall Atkinson; Program Committee: Sarah Kozlowski; Awards Committee: Catherine Hess and Ian Verstegen; and Graduate Student and Emerging Scholars Committee (GSESC): Gilbert Jones (departing Chair), David Boffa (departing former Chair). Following our January elections, we will continue to benefit from the many contributions of those newly reelected: Alison Perchuk (Treasurer and Membership Coordinator); Kay Arthur (Newsletter Editor); and Anne Leader (Webmaster). Newly elected Secretary Sean Roberts will be joined by Liliana Leopardi on the Nominating Committee; Karen Lloyd on the Program Committee; Sally Cornelison and Judith Steinhoff on the Awards Committee; and on the GSESC, Kristin Strehle and Antje Gamble (with Sarah Wilkins continuing on the committee, now as Chair). Please consider [becoming more involved](#)

sponsored sessions at the annual meeting of the

Thanks are due especially to Sheryl Reiss, Anne Leader, and Gilbert Jones for their work to organize a reception at RSA (see below for details). Please know that Nick



SPECIAL FEATURES
Diary of a Research Trip through Sicily

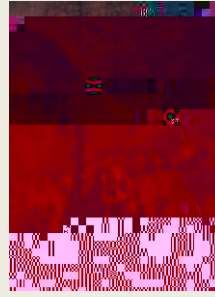
By Danielle Carrabino (Harvard Art Museums)

According to Caravaggio's biographers, the artist visited the three Sicilian cities of Syracuse, Messina and Palermo, where he left behind four large-scale altarpieces. These paintings hardly ever leave the island,

which means any serious scholar must visit Sicily to view them first-hand. While writing my doctoral dissertation concerning Caravaggio's life and works in Sicily, I had the opportunity to conduct on-site research with the support of a Samuel H. Kress Foundation Travel Grant. The plan was to retrace Caravaggio's footsteps during the last four years of his life when he made his way between Rome, Naples, Malta, and Sicily. The goals were to reconstruct what the artist had seen during his time in Sicily, to determine how much of an impact his brief presence there had on Sicilian art and artists, and to conduct research in the libraries and archives. Having previously used libraries in Florence and Rome, where generations of art historians have helped locate sources, I soon learned that the same was not true in Sicily, where very few non-Italian scholars have ventured. What began as a "Caravaggio expedition" led to an exploration of various other topics, including the lay confraternity oratories of Palermo. Upon my arrival in Sicily, I began to understand why this field has been somewhat neglected for so long. On the other hand, I also realized how much there was still to explore and how little we know about the art that remains a testament to a bygone age of glory.

Visits to Syracuse and Messina began in the archives, which proved fruitless and frustrating, although the libraries are rich in resources. In Syracuse, much ~~seventeenth-century~~ material is preserved, but the volumes concerning the months when Caravaggio was present in the city were somehow mysteriously missing. In Messina, on the other hand, less archival material predating the twentieth century is available due to a series of devastating earthquakes, including those in 1693 and 1908, when the city was razed. Furthermore, damage from World War II bombings is still visible in various parts of the island. When archival research proved less useful, secondary sources became more important. The libraries in both Syracuse and Messina hold precious volumes that are difficult to access in other parts of the world. Of course, navigating them was a challenge and there were the usual problems of erratic opening times and no direct access to the stacks. In addition, I encountered suspicious questions about why I had

decided to work on a topic that was firmly in the realm of Sicilian scholars!



After taking stock of the situation, I decided on another approach, taking to the streets to explore whatever art could be found. From that moment forth, the artworks still present in Sicily became the primary sources. This practice of substituting visual sources for missing or non-existent documents became part of the methodology of the doctoral project.

The Burial of Saint Lucy TJ ET BT 1 0 0 1 399.1993 575588(Lu)-3



Oratorio del Santissimo Rosario at San Domenico (seen above) and the Oratorio del Santissimo Rosario in Santa Cita contain altarpieces by Anthony van Dyck and Carlo Maratti, respectively. These and other oratories, which have now become the focus of my research, are among the treasures of Palermo.

Since completing my dissertation, I have returned to Sicily on two other occasions to continue my exploration of the art still remaining on the island. I was able to see the interior of the Oratory of San Lorenzo, re-opened with a copy of the still-missing Caravaggio altarpiece. My experiences in Sicily taught me that one must be persistent, patient and creative when conducting research there. Constructing a history of early modern art in Sicily is not easy, however discovering the art in this somewhat uncharted territory has been well worth the effort.

RESEARCH--LIBRARY NEWS

The Getty Research Institute Theme for 2014/ 2015: Object—Value—Canon

Art-historical interpretation has traditionally proceeded from the description of an object; to discussions about its artistic, cultural, or commercial value; and then to attempts to place the object in a canon with other works. From Vasari to Gombrich and up to today, this process has been the established path of art-historical writing. With the movement of art history from a Western-oriented discipline to a more global discipline to

friends play a role in spreading ideas about reform? We welcome contributions dealing with works Vittoria Colonna did for Michelangelo, works she requested from other artists, as well as examples of her influence in Michelangelo's late oeuvre. We are also interested in the distribution and reuse

A Self-portrait by Titian--Questions of Attribution

[L Q 7 L Drawings V Museo Correr, Venice](#)
March 2–June 15, 2014



The exhibition presents a recently rediscovered Self-portrait drawing attributed to Titian by leading international scholars, including David Rosand and Luba Freedman. It was exhibited to the public for the first time in the Tiziano ultimo atto

(Belluno, 2007, curated by Lionello Puppi) exhibition. The exhibit at the Correr Museum will offer an opportunity for debate and investigation into the problematic field of Titian's drawn work, especially in his mature years, and will help scholars focus their critical judgment too on this fine drawing. A study day is planned for June 5, 2014.

Baccio Bandinelli Sculptor and Master

[National Museum of the Bargello, Florence](#)
April 9–July 13, 2014

Baccio Bandinelli, “artist of eternal fame,” as Vasari called him in his *Lives*, is the focus of this exhibition which aims to restore Bandinelli's position of merit in the panorama of Italian sculpture of the *Maniera*, and re-establish the truth about an artist

that the critics of the past two centuries, even up until today, have condemned. The biography of Bandinelli – after those of Michelangelo, Vasari and Raphael – is the longest in Vasari's *Lives*. It is also a troubled piece of writing, given that the two artists despised each other. In the end though, Vasari was forced to admit Bandinelli's greatness, referring to him as “terribile di lingua e d'ingegno.”

Building the Picture: Architecture in Italian Renaissance Painting

[National Gallery of Art, London](#)
April 30–September 21, 2014



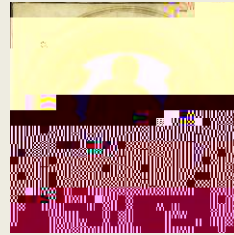
The exhibition is the result of a research partnership between the National Gallery and the University of York, and offers a fresh

interpretation of some of the National Gallery's own Italian Renaissance collection. In addition, other masterpieces are featured – such as Sebastiano del Piombo's 'The Judgment of Solomon' (Kingston Lacy, The Bankes Collection, National Trust), on display in London for the first time in thirty years, and The Ruskin

Madonna by Andrea del Verrocchio (National Gallery of Scotland). Five short films have been commissioned to coincide with this exhibition, providing modern perspectives on real and imagined architecture from award-winning Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, film-maker Martha Fiennes, art historian T. J. Clark, film historian John David Rhodes and computer game cinematic director Peter Gornstein.

Italian Renaissance Drawings from the Robert Lehman Collection

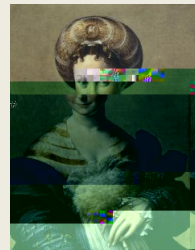
[Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York](#)
May 12–September 1, 2014



This exhibition features masterpieces of Central and Southern Italian drawing spanning the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Among the forty-five works, Florentine drawings will be especially well represented by such celebrated Renaissance masters as Leonardo da

Vinci and Antonio Pollaiuolo, while among the Southern Italian examples is a rare sheet by Antonello da Messina. Explorations of the human form through figure studies and portraits, as well as expansive compositional sketches for biblical and mythological narratives, present a wide spectrum of drawing types and subjects, both sacred and secular. The ensemble will highlight a broad range of

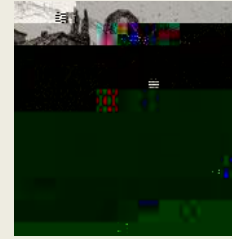
drawings from the collection.



From Neoclassicism to Futurism: Italian Prints and Drawings 1800-1925

[The National Gallery, Washington, D.C.](#)

September 1, 2014 – February 1, 2015



After centuries of singular genius and absolute primacy, the quality of Italian art continued in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although it was much less known in America. This exhibition proposes that the decades between 1800 and 1925 produced some of the most vital and diverse schools since the Renaissance. In recent years, the gallery has taken on the task of developing a broad, deep, and exceptional collection of modern Italian prints, drawings, watercolors, and collages that prove this point. This selection will celebrate many of the gallery's finest works of the period.

For a complete listing of exhibitions currently on view in Italy, see the "Mostre in Evidenza" section of [the Ministero dei Beni Culturali website](#).

NEWS AND NOTES

Special thanks to Italian Art Society donors Jodi Cranston, Julia DeLancey, Peter Fogliano, Anne Leader Guether, Sheryl E. Reiss and two anonymous donors for their gifts.

Congratulations to Italian Art Society members who recently have published books: A. Victor Coonin and Debra Pincus, Douglas N. Dow, Diana Hiller, Sarah Blake McHam, Ara H. Merjian, Anita Fiderer

Italian Art Society Membership and Donations

If you have not joined IAS for 2014, please do so at your earliest convenience. Members are encouraged to pay on-line through [our user-friendly website](#). Alternatively, checks may be mailed to Dr. Alison Perchuk, Art Program-Madera Hall 2414, CSU Channel Islands, One University Dr., Camarillo CA 93012. Annual membership costs \$30. Students receive a special discount rate of \$20. Thank you for your continued membership. Please encourage other colleagues 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 antiquity to the present. Funds will 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, and a lecture series that fosters exchange between the North American and Italian scholarly communities. The IAS seeks general operating contributions, and is also happy to work with donors to direct contributions toward specific purposes, including