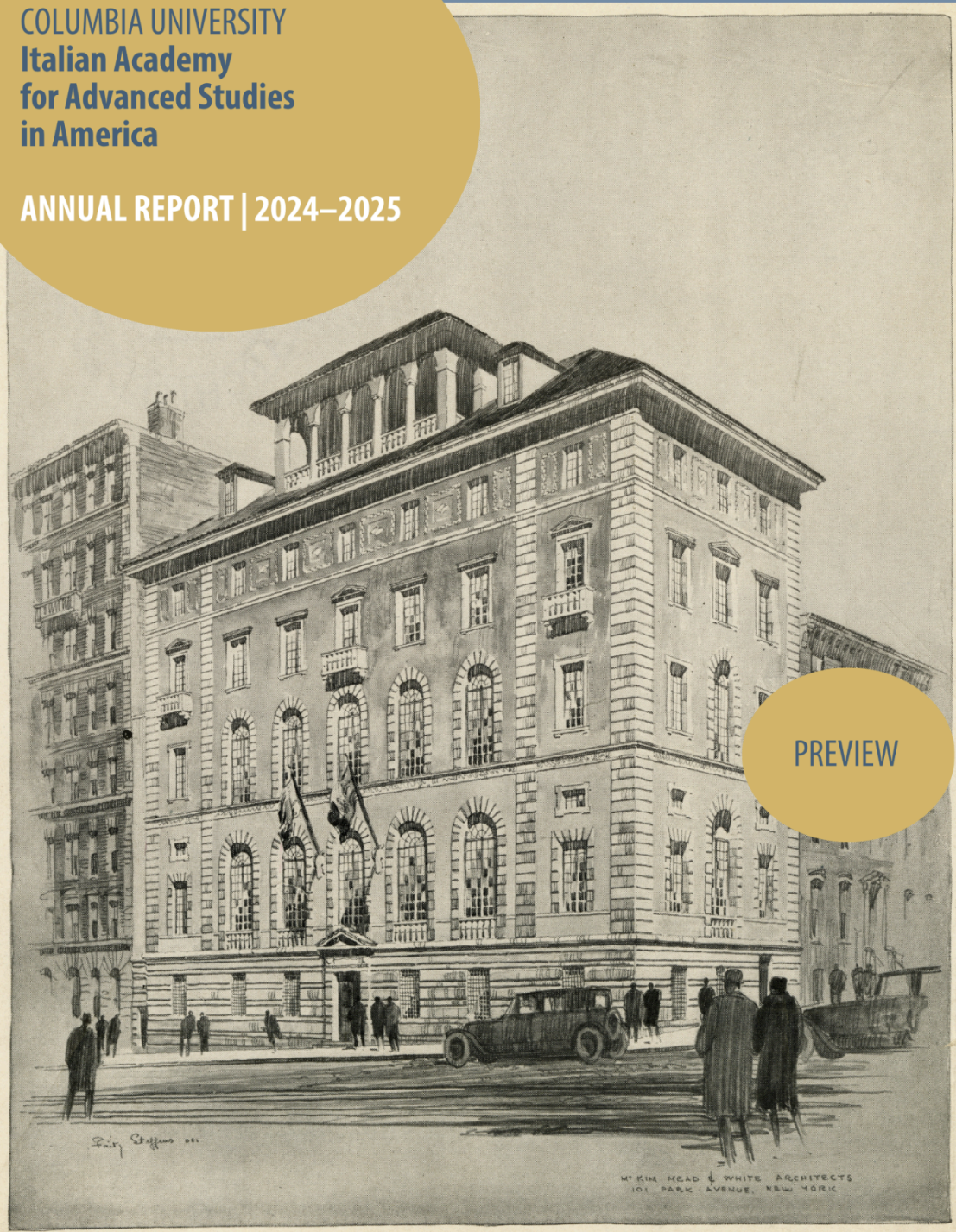


COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Italian Academy
for Advanced Studies
in America

ANNUAL REPORT | 2024-2025



PREVIEW

AT A GLANCE

Fellows are invited to contribute to the work of Columbia departments and programs including Anthropology, Art History & Archaeology, Comparative Literature/Italian, Economics, History, Math, Music, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Religion, Sociology, and Theatre, and in the Schools of Law, Business, Engineering, Architecture, and in the Earth Institute

Neuroscience Researchers at the Academy work in Psychiatry, Psychology, Biology labs and centers at the Columbia University Irving Medical Center; at the New York State Psychiatric Institute; and the Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute

Early-Career Fellows move on from the Academy to new professorships or other research opportunities

477 Fellows have been in residence since the founding of the Academy

Fellows come from the United States, Italy, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom

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Art, Humanities, and Neuroscience Project

International Observatory for Cultural Heritage

- Sardinia Cultural Heritage Project
- Weinberg Fellowships in Architectural History and Preservation
- Burke Fellowship in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage in Japan and Italy

Women Leaders Now – Annual Events: Women’s History Month & International Women’s Day

Annual Holocaust Remembrance

Special Fellowships

Digital Exhibitions

- Tharros in Sardinia
- Mont’e Prama in Sardinia
- Barumini in Sardinia
- History of the Casa Italiana and Italian Studies at Columbia
- Digital Serlio Project
- Amatrice Earthquake

Rule of Law initiative

Nomis Projects

- On Migrations and Mobility (Dušan Borić)
- On AI and 3D Vision (Paul Linton)

GOVERNANCE OF THE ACADEMY

The President of Columbia University serves as President of the Academy; the post of Honorary President is held by the President of the Republic of Italy. The Chairman of the Board is the Provost of Columbia University. The Director is the head of the Academy.

HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMY

Sergio Mattarella

President of the Republic of Italy

PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMY

Katrina Armstrong; Claire Shipman (Acting President from March 2025)

President of Columbia University

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GUARANTORS

Angela V. Olinto

Provost of Columbia University, Professor of Astronomy and of Physics

DIRECTOR OF THE ACADEMY

David Freedberg

Pierre Matisse Professor Emeritus of the History of Art at Columbia University

BOARD OF GUARANTORS

Mark Anderson

Professor of German, Columbia University

Daniele Bodini

Chairman Emeritus, American Continental Properties Group, New York

Jonathan Cole

Provost Emeritus of the University and Dean Emeritus of Faculties; John Mitchell Mason

Professor of the University, Columbia University

Alain Elkann

Writer, Journalist

Fabio Finotti

Director, Italian Cultural Institute in New York (*ad interim*, from January 2025: Consul General

Fabrizio Di Michele)

Anna Foà

Publisher, Tiqqun Edizioni, Milan

Marco Giudici

Former Director of RAI Italia

Mark A. Mazower

Ira D. Wallach Professor of History, Columbia University; Stavros Niarchos Foundation

Director, Columbia Institute for Ideas and Imagination

Katharina Pistor

Edwin B. Parker Professor of Comparative Law; Director, Center on Global Legal

Transformation, Columbia University

Gianni Riotta

Journalist; Pirelli Visiting Professor in Italian Studies, Princeton University

Sydney Houghton Weinberg

Trustee, Sidney J. Weinberg Jr. Foundation

Mariangela Zappia

Ambassador of Italy to the United States

SENIOR FELLOWS

Qais Al-Awqati

Robert F. Loeb Professor of Medicine and Professor of Physiology and Cellular Biophysics at Columbia University

Enrico Arbarello

Ordinario di Geometria, Sapienza Università di Roma

Richard Axel

Nobel Laureate and University Professor, Columbia University

Teodolinda Barolini

Da Ponte Professor of Italian, Columbia University

Lina Bolzoni

Ordinario di Letteratura Italiana, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa

Maria Luisa Catoni

Professor in Ancient Art History and Archaeology, IMT Institute for Advanced Studies Lucca

Victoria de Grazia

Moore Collegiate Professor Emerita of History

Paolo Galluzzi

Direttore dell'Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza, Firenze

Carlo Ginzburg

Ordinario di storia delle culture europee, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa

Anthony Grafton

Henry Putnam University Professor of History, Princeton University

Eric Kandel

Nobel Laureate and University Professor, Columbia University

Jhumpa Lahiri

Millicent C. McIntosh Professor of English and Director of Creative Writing, Barnard College, Columbia University

Edmund S. Phelps

Nobel Laureate and McVickar Professor Emeritus of Political Economy, Columbia University

Renzo Piano

Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Genoa and Paris

Giacomo Rizzolatti

Direttore del Dipartimento di Neuroscienze ed ordinario di Fisiologia, Università di Parma

Salvatore Settis

Già Direttore della Scuola Normale Superiore ed ordinario di Storia dell'arte, Pisa

Nadia Urbinati

Kyriakos Tsakopoulos Professor of Political Theory and Hellenic Studies, Columbia University

Marina Warner, DBE

Professor of English and Creative Writing at Birkbeck, University of London

STAFF

David Freedberg
Director; Pierre Matisse Professor of the History of Art, Columbia University

Barbara Faedda
Executive Director

Jacqueline Jenkins
Associate Director of Finance and Human Resources

Abigail Asher
Events and Communications Manager

Rick Whitaker
Events Manager

Adelle Parsons
Program Manager

Iqra Haroon; Mariko Shibayama (from April 2025)
Finance and Program Coordinator

Kathleen Cagnina
Administrative and Event Coordinator

Rashan Thompson
Operations Coordinator

STUDENT ASSISTANTS (PART-TIME)

Noor Ahmed
Olivia Avila
Regina Blenda Ayala
Nathan Mandell
Danielle P. Sung
Lelia Venable

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Over the years, we have been fortunate to have Fellowship cohorts that, with barely an exception, have been harmonious, cooperative, and committed to the cross-disciplinary exchanges across all boundaries that lie at the heart of the work of the Italian Academy. We have had groups of Fellows with a still higher proportion of famous and high-ranking colleagues previously, but the last two years, and even more particularly this past one, have been exceptionally congenial, dedicated, and mutually supportive. The result has been a group full of social and intellectual energy, and a determination to work together in innovative and enterprising ways. No Director could have wished for a better community in which to strengthen all the principles of free and unthreatened intellectual exchange on which the best research and innovative collaboration depend. The past five years have been exceptionally trying ones both for Columbia and for the country as a whole, but the Academy has remained a haven of stability and harmony even amidst the challenges we have all faced. In making these assessments, I could not be more aware of the incredibly constructive role of our ever-warm, helpful, and hospitable staff, to whom I—and all of our Fellows—could not be more grateful.

It is perhaps not surprising that, in the light of the stature and achievements of our Fellows over the last quarter century and the reputation we have garnered for the intellectual encouragement and social pleasures we afford, we had more top-quality Fellowship applications for the coming year than ever before. The ratio of applications to available places was around 12:1, but so many candidates were of such a high level that we could easily have filled the quota for 2025-26 as well, with no diminution of quality. Such results give one a clear sense of the potential of the Italian Academy for further growth and development, as well as the possibility of offering extra intellectual and academic resources for departments at Columbia, which have often enthusiastically welcomed our Fellows as members of their research groups, especially in the sciences (and the neurosciences, by long tradition, above all). See below for the list of our Fellows with further details of their backgrounds and topics, as well as the summaries of their research while at the Academy and the papers they presented at our weekly Fellows Seminars. For more details and statistics of our Fellowship Program, see the attached information sheet prepared by our Program Manager, Adelle Parsons—who graciously accompanies the Fellows daily in every aspect of their Fellowship.

Once again, our program of events (whether in our beautiful library or our magnificently restored theater) also testifies to the reach of our concerns and commitments. I offer more details than perhaps necessary for a few of our leading events this year, simply to give a sense of the many aspects of academic and intellectual life at the University in which we are involved and which we help both to stimulate and sustain. From the attached summary of the events, it will be noticed that the year began with a well-attended symposium organized by our NOMIS funded senior researcher, Prof. Dušan Borić, on the perennially complex and controversial issue of migration (Dušan is one of our great experts on the issue in prehistoric and early historical societies, especially in Eastern Europe). Ten authorities from institutions across the globe spoke on aspects of the topic of migration and mobility in the past. These of course supplemented not only our earlier conferences on this topic but also—and perhaps even more critically—those dedicated to the global dimensions of the vast problem of migration and mobility in the present. It was a rich semester for the history of art and music. We hosted the Keynote Lecture for the 50th Annual Byzantine Conference (cosponsored by the Department of Art History, the Sakıp Sabancı Center for Turkish Studies, the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program, the Program for

Hellenic Studies and the Byzantine Studies Association of North America); the conference on *Visualizing Science: The Impact of Art on Scientific Discovery* organized by Columbia Creative in collaboration with the Herbert Irving and Florence Irving Institute for Cancer Dynamics and cosponsored by the Columbia Data Science Institute, the Zuckerman Institute, and the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center; a spellbinding session on the life and work of the great historian Carlo Ginzburg, which we organized along with Columbia's History Department and Maison Française, in which Prof. Emmanuelle Saada interviewed Ginzburg himself (a frequent visitor to the Academy); and a stimulating morning devoted to the work of David Rosand, the distinguished late Professor of Art History at Columbia, on the occasion the posthumous publication of two of his most important works on Titian and Veronese. The semester concluded with a well-attended symposium on Art and the Market in 17th century Italy—organized to coincide with a brilliant exhibition of paintings made not for specific aristocratic patrons but rather, as the title of the event suggested, for the open market.

In addition, thanks to Executive Director Barbara Faedda, the Regione Sardegna and the Mont'e Prama Foundation sponsored a symposium on the prehistoric discoveries made at Mont'e Prama, which coincided with an exhibition on the topic in our exhibition spaces, following up on the previous year's exhibitions of spectacular Nuragic finds held both at the Academy and at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

As has become an annual custom, Dr Faedda ensured that Holocaust Remembrance Day was duly marked by an appropriate event, this year on the Ghetto in Venice, while for the Italian Day of Liberation she brought together David Forgacs of NYU and Nadia Urbinati of Columbia to discuss the continuing impact of the end of World War II in Italy.

In addition to the regular ever-stimulating, engaging, and well-attended events in our musical programs (almost all with Italian music, both ancient and modern, at their core) which were as always skillfully organized by our Theater Manager, Rick Whitaker, several other events relating to music and the history of music are worth mention. These included the roundtable on *Petrarch: Literature, Visual Arts, Music* organized by Prof. Giuseppe Gerbino, who along with our former Fellow musicologist Francesco Zimei of the University of Trento and another friend of the Academy, Claudio Orazi—now General Manager of Genoa's Carlo Felice Opera—arranged a marvelous set of performances by four extraordinarily talented young Italian musicians.

And finally let me thank Abigail Asher (the Manager for Events and Communications; producer of our books and public events) for conceiving the private tour each semester of the *inner sancta* of the Metropolitan Museum, in the Department of Prints and Drawings. Here we extend our particular thanks to Nadine Orenstein, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Met and Collections Manager Liz Zanis, who have so inspired and thrilled our Fellows for so many years. They have instilled in all who visit an appreciation of some of the greatest treasures of the Museum which the public so rarely—if ever—get to see.

All this—merely a selection of our work with other departments at Columbia and Institutions across the City, to say nothing of the events in our own theater—offers a sense, I think, of how rewarding a semester or two at the Italian Academy can be, even beyond the pleasures and challenges of all the scientific and scholarly work that takes place here.

As always, both the Center for the Study of the Ancient Mediterranean held their events at the Italian Academy, as did the Columbia Seminar in Modern Italian History, and life at the Academy is generally punctuated by one or another department holding activities of their own in our theater and library, events to which our Fellows almost always have access as well.

The above will give some sense of how we continued our work, our aims and our commitments, despite all the setbacks and distractions of the past year. It's worth recording that almost every one of the events mentioned above (as well as many of the concerts in our theater) were full houses, and sometimes even exceeded our capacity. For more specific details about our events and happenings described (or not described) here, see the accompanying pages entitled "Italian Academy Events."

If I began this report by expressing my pleasure at the cordiality, amity and spirit of enthusiastic collaboration for which this year's Fellows have been notable, I conclude by recording my profound gratitude to our wonderful staff at the Italian Academy. As I noted of our Fellows at the beginning, no Director could wish for a better, more dedicated or more gracious group of people: Jacqueline Jenkins (Associate Director of Finance and Human Resources), Iqra Haroon and then Mariko Shibayama (in the role of Finance and Program Coordinator), Kathleen Cagnina (Administrative and Event Coordinator), and Rashan Thompson (Operations Coordinator), along with the colleagues mentioned in the previous paragraphs. It has been an honor to work with them.

David Freedberg
Director

PUBLIC EVENTS

Sept 27

Symposium

Migration and Mobility in the Past: Global Perspectives

Organizer: Dušan Borić (Sapienza University of Rome and New York University; Former Fellow of the Italian Academy)

Co-sponsor: NOMIS Foundation

Oct 10

Recital

Sean Lee, Violin: Paganini and the Art of Improvisation

Oct 18

Roundtable

Petrarch: Literature, Visual Arts, Music

Organizer: Giuseppe Gerbino (Columbia University)

Speakers: Francesco Marco Aresu (University of Pennsylvania), Giuseppe Gerbino (Columbia University), Dennis Geronimus (New York University), Camilla Tassi (Projection Designer, Producer, Soprano)

Co-sponsors: Department of Music, Program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Department of Italian (all at Columbia University)

Oct 23

Recital

Marco Fusi, Violin: New Music by Yu Kuwabara and Salvatore Sciarrino

Oct 24

Lecture

Byzantine Studies Conference Keynote

(50th anniversary conference)

Organizer: Holger A. Klein (Lisa and Bernard Selz Professor of Medieval Art History, Columbia University)

Co-sponsors: Columbia Department of Art History and Archaeology, Department of History, Sakıp Sabancı Center for Turkish Studies, Center for the Ancient Mediterranean, Classical Studies Program, Program in Hellenic Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program; Byzantine Studies Association of North America (BSANA)

Nov 7

Symposium

Visualizing Science: The Impact of Art on Scientific Discovery

Organizers: Columbia Creative in collaboration with the Herbert and Florence Irving Institute for Cancer Dynamics

Co-sponsors: Columbia University Data Science Institute, Columbia Zuckerman Institute, Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Irving Institute for Cancer Dynamics

Nov 7

Recital

Jeanne Golan: An Italian Piano Recital—Bach, Busoni, Dallapiccola, Del Tredici, & Rota

Nov 13

Lecture/Conversation

Carlo Ginzburg on his Life's Work and the Writing of History

Speakers: Carlo Ginzburg (University of Bologna), Emmanuelle Saada (Columbia University)

Co-sponsors: Maison Française, French Dept., History Dept. (all at Columbia)

Jan 27

Interview (published online)

Holocaust Remembrance Day 2024—

Refuge in the Early Modern World: The Jewish Ghetto in Venice

Federica Francesconi (Associate Professor, Department of History; Director of the Judaic Studies Program, University at Albany, SUNY) talking with Barbara Faedda

Part of the Academy's 18-year Holocaust Remembrance series

Jan 30

Roundtable

The Art Historian's Mark: David Rosand's Writings on Titian and Veronese

Organizer: Diane Bodart (Columbia University)

Co-sponsors: Friends of Casa Muraro Fund, David Rosand Memorial Fund, Office of Alumni and Development, Department of Art History and Archaeology (all at Columbia University), University of Groningen

Feb 11

Performance and talks

200 Years of Italian Opera in the United States

Organizers: Giuseppe Gerbino (Columbia University), Francesco Zimei (University of Trento; former Fellow of the Italian Academy), Claudio Orazi (General Manager of Genoa's Carlo Felice Opera House)

Compositions by Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Paganini, and

Mezzo-soprano Giuseppina Bridelli, Violinist Giuseppe Gibboni, Pianist Valentina Messa

Feb 13

Recital

From the Gabrielis to Zosha di Castri: Magdalena Baczewska, Harpsichord and Piano

Music by Cavazzoni, Gabrieli, Frescobaldi, Rossi, Scarlatti, di Castri, Galuppi, Balter, Respighi, Kouyoumdjian, and Liszt

Mar 8

Interview (published online)

International Women's Day 2025

Interview with Barbara Faedda:

Roraima Andriani (Special Representative of the International Criminal Police Organization/INTERPOL to the United Nations)
Part of the Academy's series "Women Leaders Now—Annual Events for Women's History Month and International Women's Day"

Mar 13

Recital

The Bel Canto Piano, with Marc Peloquin

Music by Del Tredici, Mikhashoff, Mozart, and Dodge

Mar 27

Symposium and Exhibition Opening

50 Years Since the Discoveries at Mont'e Prama: Sardinia's 3000-Year-Old Culture

Organizers: Barbara Faedda (Italian Academy), Paolo Carta (University of Trento)

Speakers: Anna Depalmas (University of Sassari), Peter van Dommelen (Brown University),

Ilaria Orri (Mont'e Prama Foundation), Seán Hemingway (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Moderator: Steven Ellis (University of Cincinnati)

Co-sponsors: Autonomous Region of Sardinia, Mont'e Prama Foundation

Part of the Academy's Sardinia Cultural Heritage Program, International Observatory for Cultural Heritage (IOCH)

Apr 23

Conversation

Liberation! 80 Years Since the End of World War II in Italy

Organizer: Barbara Faedda (Italian Academy)

Speakers: David Forgacs (NYU), Nadia Urbinati (Columbia University)

Part of the Academy's "Rule of Law" initiative

Apr 25

Study Day

Beyond the Fringe: Art and the Market in 17th-Century Italy

Speakers: Caterina Volpi (Professor of Art History, Sapienza University, Rome), Lara Yeager-Crasselt (Curator and Department Head of European Painting and Sculpture, Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore), Matthew Hargraves (Director, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford), John Marciari (Director of Curatorial Affairs and Head of the Department of Drawings and Prints, Morgan Library & Museum, New York), Wayne E. Franits (Distinguished Professor of Art History, Syracuse University), Sheila Barker (Director of the Center for Women in Renaissance Archives at the Medici Archive Project; Adjunct Professor of Art History, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia)

Co-sponsor: Nicholas Hall Ltd.

Apr 28

Lecture

Zeynep Tüfekçi: "Protest Waves After the Arab Spring & Gezi Park" (Sakıp Sabancı Center Annual Lecture)

Speaker: Zeynep Tüfekçi, Princeton University

Organized by: Sakıp Sabancı Center for Turkish Studies

May 1

Recital

New Latin American Music for Solo Piano, with Joel Sachs

Music by Sierra, Desenne, León, and Syrse

The Academy's fifth collaboration with Carnegie Hall

Hosted groups

Seminar in Modern Italian Studies

Sept 13

'Le facce nere del festival': Black Musicians at Sanremo, 1964–1969

Speaker: Clifton Boyd, New York University

Respondent: Anna Harwell Celenza (Peabody Institute, Johns Hopkins University)

Oct 18

Rendering Solidarity in Italian Anticolonial Cinema

Speakers:

Luca Caminati (Concordia University)

Luca Peretti (University of Warwick)

Respondent: Silvana Patriarca (Fordham University)

Nov 15

The Italian Diaspora of Jewish Books and Collections (1860s-1950s)

Speaker: Martina Mampieri (University of Modena and University of Pennsylvania)

Respondent: Francesca Bregoli (Queens College; Graduate Center, CUNY)

Dec 6

Philosophy and Pandemics: Italian Biopolitical Thought From COVID-19 to HIV/AIDS

Speaker: Brian DeGrazia (New York University)

Respondent: Rebecca R. Falkoff (University of Texas at Austin)

Jan 17

Gatekeepers of Fascist Imperium: Archaeologists and Art Historians on the Inner Edge of Empire

Speaker: Matthew Worsnick (Vanderbilt University)

Respondent: Jorge Otero-Pailos (Columbia University)

Mar 7

Inventing Italian AIDS. Discourses, Narratives, and Representations of HIV/AIDS in Italy from 1981 to 2019

Speaker: Marco Rovinello (University of Calabria)

Respondent: Jennifer Brier (University of Illinois)

Apr 25

**Resisting Silence: Unveiling the Legacy of the Italian Resistance–
80th anniversary of the Giornata della Liberazione**

Panel and conversation:

Introductory remarks by Elizabeth Leake (Professor, Columbia University)

Chair, Marla Stone (Professor, Occidental College)

Speakers:

Brian J. Griffiths (Assistant Professor of Modern European History, University of California, Santa Barbara) with Amy King (Senior Lecturer in Modern Italian History, Bristol University): “Where Monsters Are Born: Documenting a Fascist Revival in the Streets of Rome, 2018-2019.”
Joshua Arthurs (Associate Professor of History, University of Toronto): “*Bella ciao* and the Power of Salutory Fictions: The Value of Resistentalist Memory Today”

Center for the Ancient Mediterranean

Oct 25

The Papyrology of Greek Cities in Egypt

François Gerardin (Universität Basel)

Nov 22

Student Presentations on the CAM 2024 Graduate Tour of Cyprus

Dec 6

Revisiting Ancient Pandemics: Papyrus Evidence and Egypt’s Role in the Transmission of Disease in the Roman World

Sabine Huebner (Universität Basel)

Feb 7

Implode/Explode: Forms of Violence in Gilgamesh and the Iliad

Sophus Helle (Princeton University)

March 28

Crafting Memory and Place: Pharaonic Rock Inscriptions and the Rhetoric of Space in Egypt’s Eastern Desert

Vincent Morel (Yale University)

Apr 18

Powerscape, Self-representation and Social Landscape at the Eastern Periphery of Rome

Francesca D’Andrea (Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa)

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE ITALIAN ACADEMY
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN AMERICA

Fall Fellows

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE ITALIAN ACADEMY
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN AMERICA

Fellows Spring 2025

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Jeremy Brotton

Queen Mary University of London (UK)

Project: Decolonising discovery: exploration, discovery and cultural exchange in the Italian Renaissance

Seminar, April 23, 2025: Decolonising Discovery

While working at the Italian Academy, Prof Brotton developed his work on the project entitled “Decolonising Discovery.” In his time at the Academy Prof Brotton utilised the libraries in Columbia (especially the Butler and Avery collections) to progress his research, while also working and presenting work in progress at the Newberry Library and the Yale Center for British Art. Prof Brotton finessed his project with the new title of “Voyager.” to expand the historical parameters of his research into the global history of migration, exploration and discovery, to include recent work on genomic sequencing to understand the “admixture” of people going back over 30,000 years. He also presented his research to the cohort of fellows, analysing a specific aspect of his project, focussing on Tudor England in the 16th century. His time at the Academy enabled him to begin the first draft of his book, that has already been acquired by Penguin (UK) and Grove Atlantic (US), as well as subsidiary rights in four different languages to date.

Jerry Brotton returns to the UK where he will take up a Leverhulme Research Fellowship to support ongoing work developed while at the Italian Academy on his book project, “Voyager,” He also continues to develop his work curating an international exhibition on the Tudor dynasty that will open at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford in December 2028.

Arianna Carannante

Weinberg Fellow in Architectural History and Preservation

Fall 2024

Università degli Studi della Tuscia (Italy)

Project: The astro-mathematical education of the medieval architect

Seminar, October 30, 2024: The astro-mathematical education of medieval architect

The main objective of my project is to increase the comprehension of the “architect” in the Middle Ages as a person responsible for project design and administration of medieval construction sites. In this case, as an architectural historian, my interest shifts from the architectural object to its “creator;” an intricate task because we can visit, photograph, and survey buildings, but our knowledge of architects is limited to their names (if we have them), without data regarding their training and skills.

The case study will focus on the 13th century southern Italy, specifically on the courts of Frederick II (first half of the century) and the Angevin court (second half of the century), which served as centers of knowledge circulation. In the written source, architects, known as *prepositi* in the court of Frederick II and *protomagistri* in the Angevin court, were treated with the same respect («*familiari, fideli nostri*»—our family, our faithful) as poets, writers, and scientists, implying their potential integration into courtly life. In particular, the court of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (1198-1250) emerged as a significant space for the exchange of knowledge between theory and practice. In this period, the mobility of scientists and architects, across the European context, offers the possibility of interpreting these two courts within a broader Mediterranean framework. The project will utilize a few written sources related to construction, historical-cultural studies, and architectural analysis. I will propose a connection between the history of science and the history of architecture.

Arianna Carannante has applied for a position of researcher on the tenure track at Sapienza University of Rome.

Giovanni Careri

Centre d'Histoire et Théorie des Arts (CEHTA), École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) (France)

Project: The painter as butcher: vivo and carne in early modern Italian painting

Seminar, March 26, 2025: Annibale Carracci. Painting as theoretical object

My stay at the American Academy was devoted to researching and writing part of my next book, provisionally titled “The Painter is a Butcher: The Ambition of Annibale Carracci.” On April 24, 2025, I presented some aspects of this work, focusing in particular on Annibale Carracci’s two Butcher Shop. My paper presents a rather bold hypothesis about the reasons and ambitions that led the painter to present himself and his family as butchers. Among these, I would mention the paradoxical elaboration of the vitality of painting, expressed here through the display of animal carcasses. The two paintings, and more clearly the large canvas in Oxford, present a sort of manifesto for a new form of painting in the way it allows access to the visibility of its own materiality and the consubstantiality between pigment and food. The ultimate consequences of this profound reform of tradition seem to imply the seemingly incongruous idea of painting assimilated to the Eucharist because of its capacity for transubstantiation and its effectiveness. The discussion of my presentation was full of valuable suggestions for my work. The conditions offered by the Italian Academy proved to be highly effective in terms of access to libraries and loans, but what was most important for me was the exchange with the other fellows and with the Academy’s management. From the very beginning, a situation of friendly intellectual complicity was created, which was ideal for accompanying the research work of each of us.

Stefano Cataldi

Fall 2024 and Spring 2025

Columbia University (USA)

Project: Habit and reward circuits in the basal ganglia

Seminar, October 2, 2024: Habit and Reward Circuits in the Basal Ganglia

During my eight-month fellowship at Columbia University, I completed and published a research project focusing on the striatum's role in motor skill acquisition, reward learning, and threat detection. My work explored the functional heterogeneity of striatal subregions—dorsal, ventral, and tail—using advanced techniques like fiber photometry, DeepLabCut, and custom Python coding. By studying these circuits in distinct behavioral contexts (treadmill running, operant conditioning, and fear/safety paradigms), I aimed to uncover how the striatum integrates sensory and motor information to guide adaptive behavior, with implications for understanding addiction, Parkinson's disease, and PTSD.

The fellowship provided invaluable opportunities for academic and personal growth. Conversations with fellow researchers and access to the Italian Academy's resources were intellectually stimulating, while attending events and networking with the Academy's community enriched my cultural experience. These interactions not only deepened my research perspective but also helped me secure a new position at Columbia. Professionally and personally, this experience was transformative, and I remain connected with many of the fellows, looking forward to future collaborations. My next steps involve expanding this research to further investigate striatal dysfunction in neurological and psychiatric disorders.

Stefano Cataldi continues in his position as Associate Research Scientist at Columbia University in the department of Psychiatry.

Paolo Celi

Università degli Studi di Padova (Italy)

Project: The vernacular and the rhetoric of science at the Accademia degli Infiammati in Padua Seminar, February 26, 2025: The vernacular and the rhetoric of science at the Accademia degli Infiammati in Padua

The research project I pursued at the Italian Academy on sixteenth-century mathematics originated during a previous fellowship at Villa I Tatti. The interdisciplinary environment of the Italian Academy provided the ideal context for further developing my research, allowing me to examine broader implications and engage in dialogue with scholars from diverse backgrounds. In particular, the Academy's unique community of neuroscientists, historians, and anthropologists enabled me to reflect more deeply on the transformations in the concept of science during the Renaissance, especially in the sixteenth century—an era often identified as the dawn of the Scientific Revolution. Conversations with neuroscientist colleagues prompted me to consider how scientific knowledge and cognition were historically constructed, while input from historians and anthropologists allowed me to integrate political dimensions into a project that had initially focused on linguistic issues.

This residency also offered me the valuable opportunity to engage with Columbia University at a pivotal moment in its institutional life. I established connections with the Department of Italian, participating regularly in its seminars. My own seminar at the Italian Academy was attended by a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and I was pleased to reciprocate by participating in a graduate seminar at Penn.

This residency significantly expanded the interdisciplinary reach of my research and opened new avenues for future collaborations. Looking ahead, the perspectives gained at the Italian Academy will inform my forthcoming monograph on early modern cognition and scientific representation. *Paolo Celi returns to his position as research fellow at the University of Padua.*

Gaetano Ciarcia

Spring 2025

Institut des mondes africains (IMAF), Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) (France)

*Project: Contemporary forms of *Damnatio Memoriae*: commemorative places of slavery in Guadeloupe, a French Caribbean region*

Seminar, April 2, 2025: Abolishing the name of the abolitionist, chronicle of a disappearance

During my stay at the Italian Academy, I have had the opportunity to deepen the research themes I put forward in my project on places commemorating slavery in Guadeloupe. More specifically, consulting numerous books and articles has enabled me to broaden—as I had envisaged before my departure—the study of the Guadeloupean case in a comparative perspective that also takes into account American situations within which the memory and commemorations of slavery are debated and problematic. What interested me was the analysis of a commemorative “grey zone” which, despite historical differences, the former French colonies of the Caribbean seem to share with some North American contexts. What I’m interested in focusing on in this “grey zone” is the current opacity or ambiguity of historical figures in the light of contemporary identity, political uses, and stakes of the past. On these themes, I’ve been working towards the presentation of my paper at the Italian Academy fellows’ seminar, and also towards the finalization of an article.

In conjunction with this aspect of my work, and as an extension of my earlier research, I have also been able to consult and annotate numerous texts on the relationship between documentary film and ethnography, which has also enhanced me to advance my thinking on the question of fiction in the filmic rendering of observed realities.

More generally, the daily exchanges with my colleagues from different scientific disciplines and the weekly meetings during the seminar have been fruitful moments of inspiration for me.

Gaetano Ciarcia returns to his position as Research Director at CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research)/IMAF (African Worlds Institute), Paris, France.

Pippo Ciorra

Weinberg Fellow in Architectural History and Preservation

Fall 2024

Università di Camerino (Italy)

Project: Follow the building! Architecture and the production of material worth

Seminar, December 4, 2024: Iconophobia. Architecture and the Politics of Representation

The initial goal of my term at the Italian Academy was to advance my research on how technology, political engagement, and artistic practices are changing the tools used to design, represent, and communicate architecture, eventually modifying the very nature of architecture itself. Digital design and AI, activism, and alternative techniques drawn from the art world are, in fact, challenging the old Alberti paradigm, which sharply separated drawing (*disegno*, also meaning “design”) from construction (*materia*, meaning “materials” or “building”). Why is this shift so significant? Because the traditional identity of architecture—as a discipline, a field of knowledge, and later, a medium—has been built on that very separation.

However, once immersed in environment of the Italian Academy and inspired by the work of fellow scholars, several transdisciplinary dimensions of my research began to take on new relevance. How does this architectural shift relate to broader conversations about the political and philosophical roles of representation? How might an architecture that rejects the autonomy of the image (iconophobia/iconoclasm) contribute to debates about “the [mutant] power of the image”? And how does this intersect with the work of [neuro]scientists and tech companies developing devices that connect the brain directly to an object—or even to another brain? By the end of my time at Columbia, I found that integrating disciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches was particularly productive. Bibliographic research, enriched by deep conversations within the Academy and occasional exchanges with local scholars, proved especially effective. A first tangible outcome of this experience is the exhibition *Stop Drawing: Architecture Beyond Representation*, which I curated for MAXXI (April–September 2025). A second result will be the exhibition catalog, scheduled for publication in the fall.

Pippo Ciorra returned to his positions at UNICAM; IUAV and MAXXI

Peter Clericuzio

Weinberg Fellow in Architectural History and Preservation

Spring 2025

Syracuse University (USA)

Project: Propelling Italy into a new century: Fiat, corporate identity, and Arte Nuova

Seminar, February 5, 2025: Propelling Italy into a New Century: Fiat, International Expositions, and Arte Nuova

While at the Italian Academy I was occupied with investigating the links between the nascent auto industry in Italy at the dawn of the twentieth century and the development of Arte Nuova or the Stile Liberty, the Italian strand of the artistic style called Art Nouveau, as an emblem of corporate and national identities. Italians were latecomers among European countries in working with Art Nouveau, only beginning to exploit it in 1899, but they soon made much of its possibilities. In this, the car company Fiat, founded that same year, led the way, swiftly adopting the style for its garages, factories, exhibition stands, and advertising; and was soon joined by many other automakers as well as the leading firms in other Italian heavy industries, including railroads, shipping, agriculture, and pharmaceuticals.

I spent much time in Columbia's Rare Books and Manuscript Library primarily examining the back issues of major periodicals such as *L'Illustrazione italiana* and *L'Edilizia moderna*, along with several official magazines of Italian international expositions before 1914. This was complemented by my research on the Touring Club Italiano and the first guides to motoring in prewar Italy. I also presented this research at the Collins/Kaufmann Forum for Modern Architectural History in Columbia's Department of Art History and Archaeology. This summer I will be visiting the Fiat archives in Turin; and I am preparing an essay on Fiat's displays at early international auto shows for an edited volume from the Università di Bologna, due for publication in late 2025.

Peter Clericuzio will continue teaching in the School of Architecture at Syracuse University.

Michele Cometa

Fall 2024

Università degli Studi di Palermo (Italy)

Project: The anxious storyteller: narrative as unburdening

Seminar, November 13, 2024: The Anxious Storyteller: Narrative as Unburdening, A Reading of Kafka's The Burrow

During this second stay at the Italian Academy I completed a project that I had begun as early as 2016, the result of which were two books on the cognitive preconditions of storytelling: "Why Stories Help Us Live" (2017) and "Literature and Darwinism. An Introduction to Biopoetics" (2018), both conceived during my first stay at the Academy. This year's project, on the other hand, consisted of applying these theoretical assumptions to literature itself, through a close reading of texts. Specifically, it was to study the nexus between literature and anxiety, taking into account both thematic aspects (the representation of anxiety in literature: Kafka, Bernhard etc.) and the meaning that narrative can have from a therapeutic point of view in controlling anxiety. Indeed, narrative is, from the perspective of Homo Sapiens' evolution, one of the most important tools to cope with anxiety, because through narrative humans make sense of the world, but more importantly, they exercise a form of control and distancing from reality that allows them a form of unburdening and relief (Entlastung).

The discussion with other fellows during the seminars and with other colleagues was, as always, rich in insights especially considering the cognitive basis of storytelling. From Prof. Rita Charon I drew valuable insights during my presentation on Kafka's short story "The Burrow" at the regular Wednesday seminar, as well as from a lecture given for the Humanities Program and the Film and Media Studies Program at Yale University.

Last but not least, this stay gave me the opportunity to access the valuable legacies of Vladimir Nabokov (New York Public Library) and Wladimir Weidlé (Butler Library), which are indispensable for the study of Kafka.

Michele Cometa returns to his position as full professor of Comparative literature and Visual Culture at the University of Palermo.

Beatrice de Gelder

Project: The body inside out

Seminar, December 4, 2024: The body inside out

The 'Body from Inside Out' project proposes a novel understanding of artistic experience by bridging three previously isolated research domains. **Species-Specific Human Body Perception:** This research moves beyond traditional visual perception, suggesting that the human visual system is uniquely tuned to encode human body movements. This implies a brain-wide model of the human body, incorporating representations of human biomechanics and the organization of body parts into functional clusters or synergies. **Self-Related Processing and Subjective Action Awareness:** Certain brain areas involved in species-specific body perception are also implicated in processing information related to the self and an individual's awareness of their own actions. **Interoception and Emotion Regulation:** The brain constantly processes internal bodily signals (respiratory, cardiac, intestinal), known as interoception. These signals are crucial for emotion regulation through their involvement in primary reward processes. Recent findings highlight interoception's role in how external environmental information is processed and its contribution to generating a sense of self and consciousness. The project posits that understanding the relationship between exteroception (external sensory input, as in classical body perception theories) and interoception (driven by an internal body model) is fundamental to comprehending aesthetic experience.

Beatrice de Gelder returns to her position at Maastricht University (NL).

Lucia Delaini

Northwestern University (USA)

Project: Thinking on one's feet: embodied cognition in early modern Italy

Seminar, December 11, 2024: Swift brains, fast feet: embodied cognition in early modern Italy

Seminar, April 17, 2025: Thinking on One's Feet: Training Thought through Action in Renaissance Italy

My time at the Italian Academy has been a fundamental step in my scholarly and personal trajectory. Coming out of an interdisciplinary PhD, I arrived with the urgent need to understand how much of that interdisciplinarity I could carry forward, and how. The Academy offered the ideal conditions for doing so: plenty of time for research, the freedom to follow connections, and a community of brilliant fellows open to exchange.

The weekly seminar established a ritual for passionate conversations, which helped me reframe ongoing work and inspired new directions. I came in thinking I should move on from my last project: instead, I leave knowing it holds much more potential, and with a clearer idea on how to develop it further and deeper. I have also had the chance to observe how dialogues between the humanities and the sciences are taking shape across institutions: what terms recur, where misunderstandings lie, and where real openings are. As I intend to keep building bridges, this was an invaluable knowledge to gain.

The Academy is exceptional in allowing interdisciplinary encounters to happen naturally, without pressure to simplify or produce specific outcomes. This is rare, and it works: I hope to reproduce at least parts of this process in the future. I immediately started translating this insight into practice by organizing my own event, with the support of Columbia's Heyman Institute for the Humanities, which proposed an ongoing dialogue similar to that experienced at the Academy. Importantly, in fact, the Academy offers access to Columbia's exceptional resources: not only texts and archives, but people, events, and conversations that made me feel fully included in the university's intellectual life.

I leave this wonderful fellowship period with abundant and clearer ideas, a stronger foundation, and a renewed sense of how I want to participate in the conversations ahead.

Rhoda Eitel-Porter

Fall 2024

Print Quarterly (UK)

Project: Natale Bonifacio's *Allusioni* for Pope Gregory XIII, 1579–1588

Seminar, November 6, 2024: From Drawing to Printmaking and Book Illustration in Sixteenth-Century Rome: Natale Bonifacio's *Allusioni* for Pope Gregory XIII, 1579–1588

“Delle allusioni, imprese, et emblemi ...” is a book of sonnets by Principio Fabrizi extensively illustrated with engravings by Natale Bonifacio. The fellowship at the Italian Academy allowed me to begin research on the genesis of these engravings, focusing on two series of preparatory studies. Columbia University's excellent library and staff facilitated my research, while exchanges with Columbia scholars, including a lecturer in English and Comparative Literature with expertise in religion and race, proved invaluable. I also met the Director and Associate Director of Columbia's LeRoy Neiman Center for Print Studies to explore current printmaking and potential synergies. A Columbia graduate student has since been accepted into a seminar offered by *Print Quarterly*, and I was able to advise a lecturer on their forthcoming publication in the journal. Discussions with other fellows may lead to print-related collaborations. Visits to New York and Boston institutions revealed surprising material, including evidence that the prints were also published separately, not solely as book illustrations. Weekly seminars at the Academy and the multidisciplinary interests of the Fellows created a stimulating environment, while their companionship, along with in-house concerts and lectures, enriched the experience. During my fellowship, I completed an exhibition review and texts on Italian drawings for a collection catalogue of a German museum, due out in 2026. Previously written entries appeared in *Italian Renaissance Drawings from Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam*, the catalogue for an exhibition held at the Fondation Custodia in Paris, 2024–2025. I plan to continue research on the *Allusioni* imagery; a publisher has already expressed interest in a book on the topic.

My heartfelt thanks go to Professors Freedberg and Faedda for this extraordinary opportunity and to the staff for their exceptional support and efficiency.

Rhoda Eitel-Porter returns to her position as editor of the academic journal Print Quarterly.

Anna Ferrando

Spring 2025

Università di Pavia (Italy)

Project: Building the West: literary agents as Italian and American Cold War players

Seminar, April 16, 2025: Building the West: Literary agents as Italian and American Cold War players

The fellowship here at the Italian Academy has been of indispensable benefit to my research project. Here I have had the opportunity to explore not only the incredible library system of New York and Columbia, but especially the archives at the Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library, where there is a large section devoted to the history of publishing, specifically the archives of important literary agents who were in contact with Italy from the postwar period until the 1980s. Through the study of these records, I was able to lay foundations for my research on the role of literary agencies in building a shared imaginary of the “West” during the Cold War. Being here for a semester has also given me easier access to the Federal Archives in College Park to verify how the United States Information Agency collaborated with private U.S. literary agencies or how direct the state’s influence on them was in controlling the transatlantic book market. It was very important to present the first results of my research at the Italian Academy and I’m deeply grateful to David Freedberg and to all my colleagues for their suggestions and feedback during my seminar.

One of the aspects I have enjoyed most is the interdisciplinary environment: the Wednesday seminars were particularly inspiring for me and I learned a lot from all my colleagues. It was a very supportive group of fellows and they were also a great stimulus to explore New York in all its dimensions: lectures, exhibitions, music, theater and dance performances were all part of the enriching training here. Moreover, I have been able to create and strengthen relationships with professors at Columbia University, as well as at other universities. I have also had the opportunity to get in touch with different cultural institutions such as the Primo Levi Center, the Italian Cultural Institute and the Calandra Institute.

Anna Ferrando returns to her position of tenure track researcher in Contemporary History at the Department of Political and Social Sciences, University of Pavia, Italy.

Maurizio Forte

Fall 2024

Duke University (USA)

Project: Ruinscapes and neuroartifacts

Seminar, September 25, 2024: The Shifting Boundaries of Art, Ruins and NeuroArtifacts

My research focuses on the convergence of artificial intelligence, neuroaesthetics, and archaeology. One of my primary inquiries is to study human perception across temporal and spatial dimensions. Neuroaesthetics and neuroarchaeology examine the cognitive effects of art, artifacts, places, and landscapes; artificial intelligence and machine learning create prediction models that assist in validating certain ideas in our research. During my tenure at the Academy, I focused specifically on the investigation of ancient Etruscan cities and the pre-urban patterns of Nuragic culture. I created specialized Python code for ChatGPT-4 to analyze human vision using affordances, eye-tracking, and saliency maps.

Saliency maps, a computational technique used in computer vision and neuroscience, highlight regions of an image that attract the most attention. They play a crucial role in understanding how humans and machines perceive art by identifying areas that stand out due to factors such as color, contrast, texture, or spatial relationships. This has significant implications for the study, creation, and appreciation of art. In neuroaesthetics, saliency maps are used to bridge the gap between perceptual processes and emotional responses to art. Researchers can determine how attention mechanisms in the brain correlate with aesthetic experiences.

In a recent article, just published in the journal *Humans (MDPI)*, I discussed the combination of AI and eye-tracking technology to analyze how viewers engaged with the Etruscan Sarcophagus of the Spouses, revealing key patterns of visual attention and engagement. OpenAI's ChatGPT-4 was used in conjunction with Colab–Python in order to elaborate all the spreadsheets and data arising from the eye-tracking recording. The results showed that viewers primarily focused on the central figures, especially on their faces and hands, indicating a high level of interest in the human elements of the artifact.

Maurizio Forte will start a new 1-year appointment as special advisor for cultural heritage and neuroaesthetics at the State Department (bureau of Overseas Building Operations)

Yu-chih Lai

Burke Fellow in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage in Japan and Italy

Academia Sinica (Taiwan)

Project: Chinese Baimiao painting and European drawing at the Qing Dynasty court

Seminar, September 18, 2024: Chinese Baimiao Painting and European Drawing at the Qing Dynasty Court

During my fellowship at the Academy, I examined not merely the impact of European painting practices on Chinese art, but more importantly, how the Manchu court strategically appropriated European methods to fundamentally rewrite and transform Chinese visual traditions. This fusion marked a profound visual turn at the Qing court, where the relationship between images and reality shifted decisively: “seeing became believing,” and images emerged as powerful evidence of reality.

This new attitude, deeply indebted to European traditions after the Renaissance, reflects the rise of modern science and the Enlightenment emphasis on empirical observation. In the Qing context, the integration of European shading and mimetic techniques into baimiao (白描) painting did not simply enrich aesthetic vocabulary—it became a political and epistemological tool for the Manchu rulers to reshape cultural narratives and reinforce imperial authority.

My research, focusing on works like *Two Paintings of Deer Antlers and Dzungars Offering a Horse in Tribute*, explored how this hybrid visual language redefined artistic hierarchies and transformed images into instruments of governance and truth. The rich intellectual environment at Columbia greatly enriched this inquiry. Lively discussions with colleagues on the birth of modern science and mind, the memory palace, cognitive neuroscience, and David Freedberg’s seminal work on the psychological responses to art helped me reconsider the “new power of images” at the Qing court.

Ultimately, my stay fostered a deeper understanding of how global artistic exchanges intersected with knowledge production and imperial strategies, offering critical insights into the visual and epistemic revolutions of 18th-century China.

This study connects to my forthcoming book project on “Visual Governance” and contributes to my preparation for the international workshop, “Colorless: A Global History of Monochromatic Drawing from the 11th–18th Century,” to be held at Academia Sinica in Nov. 2025.

Paul Linton

Project: A new approach to 3D vision

Seminar: January 29, 2025: Four Illusions Challenge Our Understanding of Visual Experience

This, year, 2024–2025, saw the launch of the Italian Academy’s new four-year project on a “New Approach to 3D Vision” sponsored by the NOMIS Foundation, and my appointment as a NOMIS Foundation Fellow at the Academy. The year was spent developing Five New Visual Illusions that cover a significant range of visual experience:

1. Visual Inference: Whether different sources of information (stereo vision, perspective, shading) are combined into a single coherent percept.
2. Visual Shape: How we extract the 3D shape of objects given the different perspectives of the two eyes.
3. Visual Scale: How we extract the size and distance of a scene given the different perspectives of the two eyes.
4. Size Constancy: How we account for apparent distortions of 2D space caused by perspective distortions in pictures.
5. Color Constancy: How do we account for the same surface ‘looking’ different colors depending on its context.

The aim is to provide a “New Theory of Visual Experience” that explains our visual experience in these different contexts. In 2025, I was awarded the David Marr Medal by the Applied Vision Association (the UK’s leading Vision Science association), awarded once every two years to “recognize the achievements of an outstanding vision scientist in the early part of their career.”

Paul Linton continues as a NOMIS Foundation Fellow at the Italian Academy.

Isabella Matticchio

Sveučilište u Rijeci (Croatia)

Project: The speech rhythm of Italian Americans

Seminar, March 5, 2025: Italian Abroad: Studying the Italian Language in Istria and New York

I am a linguist interested in the sociolinguistics of the Italian language outside of Italy, and in bilingualism/multilingualism. By building on my previous research on the Italian language in Istria (Croatia), my research project has (so far) focused on understanding the contemporary status of the Italian language in New York by analyzing language use and attitudes.

I presented my research at two conference panels that I organized—at Princeton University (AATI Annual Conference, April 2025) and later at the University of Bologna (CAIS Annual Conference, June 2025).

At the Academy, I received valuable feedback from my fellow colleagues. What made the experience unique was the interdisciplinary environment and the opportunity to receive feedback from colleagues working in different but related fields: anthropology, art history, history, philology, and neuroscience. I also benefited from attending Columbia Seminars —Studies in Modern Italy, and Language and Cognition.

I met colleagues from the Italian Department at Columbia University and other universities both in the US and in Italy who enthusiastically shared their knowledge and sources, and provided precious advice. With some of them I am discussing future joint projects.

The first output is an article on the past and present of Italo-Romance varieties and the Italian language in New York, which has been accepted for publication. In the meantime, I am also finalizing my book on bilingual speech.

Being a Fellow here was a great opportunity to grow as a scholar, but above all, a huge honor; I look forward to continuing to contribute to the Academy as a former Fellow.

I am endlessly thankful to Professors Barbara Faedda and David Freedberg, and to the entire team at the Academy for their incredible support and generous assistance throughout this journey!

Isabella Matticchio returns to her position as Assistant Professor at the University of Rijeka, Croatia. In Fall 2025, she will spend a month as a Visiting Professor at the University of Regensburg, Germany.

Tommaso Munari

Università di Torino (Italy)

Project: The last dragomans: teaching Oriental languages in late nineteenth-century Venice
Seminar, April 10, 2025: The Last Dragomans: Teaching Oriental Languages in Late-Nineteenth Century Venice

When I arrived at the Italian Academy in January 2025, the project I was working on – tentatively titled *The Last Dragomans: Teaching Oriental Languages in Late Nineteenth-Century Venice* – was already well underway. I had completed a thorough review of the relevant literature, carried out a substantial portion of the archival research, and outlined the book’s overall structure. Or so I believed. Conversations with the other fellows – despite coming from disciplinary backgrounds different from mine (or perhaps precisely because of that) – helped me sharpen key historiographical questions and situate the project within a broader intellectual network. Equally important was the opportunity to engage with several faculty members at Columbia, particularly Pier Mattia Tommasino, who invited me to present my research at the Italian and Mediterranean Colloquium. The story of a chair in living Oriental languages, established shortly after Venice’s annexation to Italy (1866) and just before the opening of the Suez Canal (1869), has thus become a window through which to observe a moment of profound transformations in Orientalist studies not only in Italy, but across Europe. The persistence of the figure of the dragoman from the early modern period to the modern era; the continuity in the study of Oriental languages, evolving from missionary to commercial purposes; and the deeply rooted polycentrism of Italian Orientalism, shifting between Venice, Rome, Naples, and Florence – these are just a few of the new research avenues I identified during an unforgettable semester at the Italian Academy.

Tommaso Munari returns to his position as adjunct professor at the University of Turin.

Paolo Pecere

Fall 2024

Università Roma Tre (Italy)

Project: The autonomy of mind and reason: a neglected philosophical legacy in cognitive neuroscience

Seminar, October 9, 2024: Modern Science and the Autonomy of the Mind

My research at the Academy has focused on a neglected philosophical tradition in cognitive science and its contemporary significance. Initially, I concentrated on the philosophical critique of neuroscientific reductionism concerning consciousness and the capacities of the mind, which has played a prominent role in cognitive science over the past few decades. Subsequently, I explored the roots of this approach within a German non-metaphysical and non-materialist philosophical and scientific tradition, beginning with Kant and culminating in the 20th-century scientific philosophy of the Vienna Circle.

I have completed a paper on Kant and Alexander von Humboldt, arguing that the latter was a pivotal figure in the development of Kantian philosophical ideas within 19th-century neuroscience. Furthermore, I have prepared the remaining material for a book proposal, which I plan to submit to Oxford University Press in the coming weeks. The proposal is titled:

“Organization and Autonomy of Mind: The Kantian Legacy in Life Sciences and Psychology.”

During my time at the Academy, I have greatly benefited from its excellent interdisciplinary environment, learning a great deal from Fellows across various disciplines. Overall, my experience here has been exceptionally stimulating and productive. I also managed to complete additional papers, including two on topics related to ethnophilosophy, and I have established academic relationships that I intend to pursue in the coming months.

I am deeply grateful to both the Staff and the Fellows for making these months such a pleasant and fruitful experience. I truly hope to return in the future!

Paolo Pecere will return to his position as Associate Professor at the University of Roma Tre.

Antonio Maria Pusceddu

ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (Portugal)

Project: Popular ecologies in southern Europe: a bottom-up approach to socio-environmental change

Seminar, March 12, 2025: Popular Ecologies in Southern Europe: Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Cases

My research project aimed to develop conceptual frameworks that emerged from over a decade of ethnographic research carried out in industrialized regions of Italy and Portugal. While researching the interplay of political economy and socioenvironmental change—and how their scales and dimensions are interwoven and experienced in everyday life and across generations—I began reflecting on the heuristic potential of the notion of popular ecologies. Specifically, my work at the Italian Academy engaged with the idea of popular ecologies as a generative framework for exploring the tension between hegemonic narratives of socioenvironmental change and the experience of intersecting inequalities—economic, environmental, political—and how such tension unravels crucial configurations for understanding the socioecological frictions of our era.

During my stay at the Italian Academy, I could benefit from the vast library resources at Columbia University to undertake a thorough examination of the popular and its genealogy—starting from the seminal reflection of Antonio Gramsci and Stuart Hall to the multifaceted debate on the different declinations of the popular—from popular economies and popular ecologism to environmental populism. The stimulating interdisciplinary environment at the Italian Academy and the challenging intellectual exchanges with other fellows encouraged me to expand the intellectual scope of my project and refine its concepts. The fruitful work I did at the Italian Academy formed the basis for the draft of two scientific articles and the outline of a book manuscript on popular ecologies, on which I will work in 2025 and 2026.

Antonio Maria Pusceddu returned to his position as Senior researcher at the Center for Research in Anthropology, ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon, Portugal.

Lorenzo Sabetta

Fall 2024

Sapienza Università di Roma (Italy)

Project: Recurrent feelings: unmarked emotions and reactive sensations

Seminar, December 11, 2024: Recurrent Feelings: Affective Regularity and Calm Emotional States

My stay at the Italian Academy was delightfully transformative. The serendipitous intellectual microenvironment of Columbia, NYC's charm, the comradeship among fellows (*un detto greco dice: "Non ci sono amici." Ma che m'importa dei greci*), a daily Vietnamese diet, the possibility to stay primarily focused on research activities – all this concurred to make my fellowship such an unforgettable experience, and (also by missing some unmissable art and cultural events) to get some writing done.

The project I worked on (which benefited tremendously from the guidance and feedback of Peter Bearman) zeroes in on the kind of emotions people have when they would say they don't have any emotion at all. Therefore, I elaborated on the concept of unmarked emotional states to identify unobtrusive forms of affectivity that, though emotionally driven, do not catch the eye (still less the heart), and whose main point is precisely that: to maintain conditions that, while emotionally scaffolded, allow prolonged durability, plateau situations, and preserve the path most travelled. Moreover, to provide further substance to the affective underpinning of continuity, I analyzed calming processes as a form of emotional contagion *so sui generis* as to verge on its opposite.

Almost everything in the Academy's building is conducive to learning and thinking: it was an honor to work there for four months. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to David Freedberg and Barbara Faedda, as well as to Abigail Asher, Kathleen Cagnina, Iqra Haroon, Jacqueline Jenkins, Adelle Parsons, Rashan Thompson, and Rick Whitaker.

Pradyumna Sepulveda

Fall 2024 and Spring 2025

Columbia University (USA)

Project: Toward a neuro-computational account of context-dependent visual aesthetic experience

Seminar, October 2, 2024: From decisions to aesthetic values in cognitive neuroscience

My time at the Italian Academy during the 2024–2025 Fall and Spring semesters has been an extraordinary experience in my academic career. This year, I was privileged to work on understanding how humans make aesthetic judgments from a cognitive science perspective. During the Fall term, my focus was to characterize, using a computational approach, the integration of fundamental visual features of artworks (such as color or symmetry) to construct preference judgments. During the Spring term, my initial ideas grew beyond expectations, branching into additional questions such as how computational models can help understand people’s emotional assessments of paintings or the impact of personal traits on the diverse strategies people use to judge art. All this work is the basis of what I hope will become a series of articles exploring the computational aspects of aesthetic judgment.

The inviting and intense multidisciplinary environment that the Italian Academy and Columbia University offer has been a matchless opportunity to develop my project and to grow as a researcher and scientist. Each of the fellows has been an inspiring presence who renewed my curiosity every week. Putting my questions into a broader context and connecting with other researchers with questions tightly linked to my work (about anxious storytellers, body cognitions, and unmarked emotions, among so many others) will be pivotal in defining my future research agenda and directions. I’m deeply thankful to Prof. Freedberg, Prof. Faedda, and the incredible staff of the Italian Academy for creating a place where these unique communities can grow in enriching ways.

Pradyumna Sepulveda returns to his position as Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University.

Ufuk Serin

Weinberg Fellow in Architectural History and Preservation

Fall 2024

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (Turkey)

Project: Constructing memory in Byzantine architecture: spolia as a mnemonic device

Seminar, October 23, 2024: Constructing Memory in Byzantine Architecture: Spolia as a Mnemonic Device

My current research examines the role of spolia in constructing memory in Byzantine architecture and explores how these memories influenced the interpretation of architecture by Byzantine observers. Drawing on textual and archaeological evidence, it reinterprets the role of spolia as a dynamic source of stylistic inspiration, integrating building techniques, materials, and traditions inherited from antiquity while imbuing them with new forms and meanings. It also seeks to identify the perception of architecture of memory and transcendence enriched with new meanings and qualities by the Byzantine viewer and understand how structures built with spolia could have created or reinforced collective memory.

My research has greatly benefited from Columbia University's extensive collections and the Italian Academy's vibrant, international, and interdisciplinary community. The art institutions and architectural and urban sites I visited in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia during this period have provided me with new research perspectives, deepening my understanding of the contemporaneity of spolia (and spolia studies) in terms of time, space, architecture, and memory. The modern use of spolia has offered valuable insights into its significance within the broader context of historical preservation. During my residency at the Italian Academy, I also had the opportunity of participating in numerous lectures and colloquia hosted by the Academy and other research institutions in New York City.

I am profoundly grateful to the Weinberg Foundation for their generous support of my work. I also wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to Professors Holger Klein and Marc Van de Mierop for their constructive feedback on my research. I am deeply indebted to Professors David Freedberg and Barbara Faedda, as well as the Italian Academy staff, for their intellectual guidance and administrative support throughout this enriching experience.

Ufuk Serin will continue working on her current project at the Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED) at Koç University in Istanbul during the spring of 2025, before resuming her role as an associate professor of architecture at Middle East Technical University (Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi) in Ankara.

Katharine Stahlbuhk

Università degli Studi di Padova (Italy)

Project: Between simplicity and magnificence: a friar in mercantile Florence

Seminar, February 12, 2025: Between Simplicity and Magnificence A Friar in Mercantile Florence

Being a spring term fellow at the Italian Academy of Columbia University has been an experience that proved intellectually enriching and personally meaningful. The interdisciplinary nature of the community was key to advancing my research on the Dominicans in 15th century Florence. Engaging with fellows from diverse academic backgrounds working on completely different epochs and topics offered new perspectives and unexpected connections, which let me reevaluate different aspects of my approach.

Beyond the Italian Academy, it was to a certain extent possible to take advantage of the broader Columbia University environment and in general enjoy New York City's intellectual landscape. Attending different types of events, lectures, and seminars both within Columbia and at other universities across the city allowed me to make meaningful professional connections. These encounters have already started to shape the next steps of my academic journey (especially my project on the reception of humanism in the 20th century) and hold promise for future collaborations.

Anyway, what made the months at the Academy especially unique, was the welcoming and supportive atmosphere. The staff was efficient and helpful, but also incredibly kind and attentive on a working level and concerning personal needs or concerns. The sense of community between the fellows was very strong, and the environment felt both stimulating and familiar. We gained a lot of new, but true friends. It was also a privilege to be part of the last group under the current directorship, whose human approach and leadership fostered a space of genuine exchange and collegiality. Looking ahead, I sincerely hope that this New York experience is only the beginning of lasting relationships with American academic circles.

Luca Zipoli

Spring 2025

Bryn Mawr College (USA)

Project: Middle-Eastern Neo-Platonic manuscripts and migrant intellectuals in the circle of the court of Lorenzo il Magnifico/de' Medici

Seminar, February 19, 2025: Resistance to Neo-Platonic innovations and deviant intellectuals in the circle of Lorenzo de' Medici: the case of Luigi Pulci

My research project for the Spring 2025 at the Italian Academy focused on the Florentine poet Luigi Pulci (Florence, 1432-Padua, 1484), who was sponsored by Medici household and wrote his chivalric epic «Il Morgante» in Florence at the behest of Lucrezia Tornabuoni (Lorenzo De Medici's mother) between 1461 and 1482. The aim of my project was to investigate the complex relationships that occurred between Pulci's oeuvre and the cultural, political, philosophical, and religious context of its time.

As a literary historian and critic, during the semester I refined my epistemological tools of textual analysis and literary exegesis to investigate this complex period of the Italian culture and to understand how Pulci negotiated his literary identity within the new philosophical trend (Marsilio Ficino's Neo-platonism) that was becoming a cultural mainstream of those years. At the same time, I also had the privilege to establish an interdisciplinary dialogue with related epistemic fields in Renaissance studies (book history, history, art history, history of philosophy, history of religion) that was very beneficial for my project. The seminar that I gave on February 19, 2025 was particularly generative in this regard, because it allowed me to gather feedback from experts in related fields, broaden my horizons, and include further research questions in order to delineate a more nuanced and articulated image of a well-known and long-studied period like Medicean Florence.

Finally, the generous support of the Academy allowed me to accomplish two major scholarly outcomes of my research agenda. The first one is the forthcoming publication of *Lettura del «Morgante»* (Florence, Olschki, 2025, 2 vols.) – a close reading canto by canto of Pulci's epic that I co-edited with an international steering committee – and the second one is the advancement of my book project *Luigi Pulci's Last Epic: Power, Magic, and Religion in Early-Modern Florence*.

Luca Zipoli returns to his position as Assistant Professor in the Department of Transnational Italian Studies at Bryn Mawr College.

PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, AND INITIATIVES

Art, Humanities, and Neuroscience Project

This initiative at the Italian Academy is one of the oldest cross-disciplinary programs of its kind in the world. It was conceived in 2001 by David Freedberg; since 2006, it has also been the framework within which the Academy welcomes its annual Alexander Bodini Research Fellows in developmental and adolescent psychiatry.

This year, neuroscientific work was done by Fellows Paolo Pecere (he worked on modern science and the autonomy of the mind) and Pradyumna Sepulveda Delgado (who focused on decisions and aesthetic values in cognitive neuroscience).

Paul Linton, who had begun at the Academy as a Columbia Presidential Scholar in Society and Neuroscience, went on with his research thanks to support from the Nomis Foundation; he challenges prevailing theories of visual perception.

Alexander Bodini Foundation Fellowships

For nearly two decades, the Alexander Bodini Foundation has (with the guidance of Daniele Bodini, a Guarantor of the Academy) supported researchers in developmental and adolescent psychiatry at the Academy. The Alexander Bodini Fellow chosen to arrive in the following year is Valeria Fascianelli, who presented a proposal called *The neural geometry of emotions: cognitive implications and individual variability*.

Nomis Initiatives

The Nomis Foundation has been engaged with the Italian Academy for nearly a decade. In this academic year, Nomis supported a full-day conference on Migrations and Mobility (organized by Dušan Borić—see the Events pages earlier in this Report) and worked with the Academy to launch a four-year project on a New Approach to 3D Vision (see more details on the Fellow page for Paul Linton).

Gerda Henkel Foundation Fellowships

This year we finalized the planning for the start of the Gerda Henkel Foundation Fellowship in the History of Art; the two scholars chosen for that position are set to arrive in September 2025.

International Observatory for Cultural Heritage

The IOCH is dedicated to all issues relating to the survival, protection, and conservation of cultural heritage. Conceived by Barbara Faedda (the Academy's Executive Director) in 2016, the IOCH speaks to large audiences with its public events and published volumes, while also supporting the daily research—in the quiet of the Academy's offices—of the Fellows.

Among these scholars were the **Weinberg Fellows**; their work in the area of architectural history and preservation is detailed here below. Also described here below is the **Sardinia Cultural Heritage Project**.

This year the Academy began a new collaboration with Columbia's Department of Art History & Archaeology: we welcomed the first **Burke Fellow in the conservation of cultural heritage in East Asia and Italy**, Yu-chih Lai, from Taiwan's Academia Sinica, who came with project on Chinese Baimiao painting and European drawing at the Qing Dynasty court.

Sardinia Cultural Heritage Project

This project was enormously productive once again in this academic year. We signed an agreement with Columbia University Press to publish the second in our series of books about Sardinia, and we offered an online exhibition—on Sardinia’s UNESCO site, Barumini. In the Spring semester, we presented a symposium and a gallery exhibition marking the 50th anniversary of the discoveries of colossal statues at the Mont’e Prama site—and we were proud that we drew an audience twice the size of the group we had attracted with the previous year’s Sardinia event.

Weinberg Fellowships

Designed in 2017 with a gift from the Sidney J. Weinberg Jr. Foundation to bring as many as four new scholars and practitioners to the Academy each year, this program moved forward on its publishing program, finalizing all essays for a forthcoming sequel to our previous year’s book, *A Shared Global Heritage: Architectural History, Conservation, and Preservation*.

The Weinberg fellows this year were: Arianna Carannante (of the Università degli Studi della Tuscia), with her project on the astro-mathematical education of the medieval architect; Peter Clericuzio (from Syracuse University) with his project called Propelling Italy into a new century: Fiat, corporate identity, and Arte Nuova; Pippo Ciorra (of the Università di Camerino) with his project titled Follow the building! Architecture and the production of material worth; and Ufuk Serin (from Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi) with her project on constructing memory in Byzantine architecture: spolia as a mnemonic device.

PREMIO NEW YORK

The Premio New York program once again brought emerging Italian artists to New York; this time the winners had a five-month residency at the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, centrally located in Manhattan.

This initiative, now in its third decade, has had a total of 50 winning artists in the city. It is an initiative of the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Culture, the Directorate-General for Public and Cultural Diplomacy of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and the Italian Cultural Institute of New York, along with the Italian Academy.

These were the Premio artists:

Adji Fatou Amdy Dieye

She is a multidisciplinary artist who lives and works between Milan and Dakar. Her practice examines the forms of construction of national epistemologies by observing public and institutional spaces through archival materials, architecture and advertising. Among the main themes proposed by Dieye, a particular interest emerges in the relationship between a national collective imaginary inscribed in an idea of progress and its influence in understanding the self and collective identity.

Her work has been exhibited at Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw 2024, Fotomuseum Winterthur (solo show) 2023, Fondation H (solo show) 2023, C/O Berlin (solo show) 2021, Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon 2022, Dak'Art Biennale 2022, Rencontres de Bamako 2022, Foam Museum 2020, Kunsthalle Wien 2020.

She earned a Bachelor's degree in New Technologies for Art from Milan's Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera and a Master's degree in Fine Arts in Zurich from the ZHDK, Zürcher Hochschule der Künste.

Eleonora Luccarini

She lives and works in Bologna. Her research is interdisciplinary, systemic, and focused on the performative potential of language, mainly explored through fiction, meta-narrative strategies, and the crafting of alter egos, often mediated by poetry writing.

She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, IUAV University of Venice and Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam.

Recent exhibitions include: MACTE – Museo di Arte Contemporanea di Termoli (Museum of Contemporary Art of Termoli, Italy, 2024), MACRO - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Roma (Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, 2022), Baleno International (Rome, 2022; solo show), Fondazione smART (smART Foundation, Rome, 2022; solo show), Manifattura Tabacchi (Florence, 2021), Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo (Foundation Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, 2021) and Quadriennale di Roma (Quadrennial of Rome, 2020).

She recently performed at Fondazione Adolfo Pini (Adolfo Pini Foundation of Milan, 2023), PAV – Parco Arte Vivente (Park of Living Art of Turin, 2022) and Istituto Svizzero (Swiss Institute of Milan, 2021). In 2021 she also took part in the residency project Nuovo Forno del

Pane (New Bread Oven) at MAMbo – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (Museum of Modern Art of Bologna).

She is the winner of the Pini Art Prize 2021–2022 from Fondazione Adolfo Pini in Milan and the ClubGAMec.

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