

# prisma

HERTZIANA RESEARCH MAGAZINE



2022 | 2024





# Editorial

Just as a prism breaks down light into its component colors from red to violet, this first issue of *prisma* Hertziana Research Magazine aims to achieve something similar by making visible to readers the diverse spectrum of research activities that all find a home at the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History. Art historical research at the Institute takes many forms and is constantly changing in response to a society that is itself in continuous flux and that never ceases to pose new questions about the past and present. The topics discussed in this issue range from how the medium of film influences our conceptualization of place, landscape, and environment, to innovations in digital research, which are already impacting not just how we study art but also – and even more fundamentally – how we relate to it. Other articles will touch upon on technological changes in the early modern period, foreign communities in Jubilee Rome, and acts of care, maintenance, and repair, which on the one hand preserve the history of art while on the other posing interpretative challenges to art history.

The magazine, designed as a tool for scientific and academic communication, addresses different target groups. It seeks to reach an interested public, to inspire humanities scholars at different stages of their careers, and to inform our Scientific Advisory Board. It is also our intention not only to give a glimpse of our day-to-day research, but also to outline the structure of the Institute with its various Departments and Research Groups, buttressed by the Institute's Scientific Services that play a critical role in optimizing its research performance. Since space is limited, we have added QR codes at various points in this issue to provide quick access to our numerous digital offerings, which make our research results widely accessible and ensures that this accessibility is preserved. These codes lead to further information on publications

(digital and analog), to our documentary video series Hertziana Insights, to digital exhibitions (which often supplement analog exhibitions/publications), and to larger-scale collaborative projects with museums and other partner institutions in Italy, Germany, and worldwide. These resources demonstrate how the Institute is committed to public outreach in its research activities. This is evident in a wide range of initiatives, such as our strategies of putting the principles of Open Access into action or other efforts to stimulate and cultivate a broader audience through outward-facing communication and publications.

As a supplement to our digital Research Report (2022–2024), this magazine illustrates what a large amount of data from the Research Report can convey imperfectly: namely, that successful research is always based on individuals working together, exchanging ideas, engaging with each other's arguments, and ultimately inspiring each other. This is immediately apparent from the form of the contributions – many of them are already conceived as conversations within the Departments and Research Groups – and is then reinforced by the reflections of our early career researchers, which we have included as short testimonials. The close cooperation between Research Units and Scientific Services is illustrated by the collaborative projects listed here and the close intermeshing of topics.

We hope that this issue makes it clear that scholarship is built on cooperation and curiosity and is only successful when it thrives in constructive dialogue and is supported by excellent resources, such as those offered by the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History.

Rome 11.02.2025


*Tanja Michalsky, Tristan Weddigen*



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Department Michalsky Cities and Spaces in Premodernity

Tanja Michalsky

We are interested on the one hand in urban spaces as such and on the other hand in the media that not only represent spaces but create them in the first place. In other words, research in our Department focuses on questions of historical concepts of space and their transformation. The are five actual areas of research. The research area titled Scaling Southern Italy, which extends to the Mediterranean region, encompasses classic case studies of churches, palaces, and their furnishings in an urban context. This is combined with analyses of the layering of symbolic sites and artistic engagement with history. The focus on a geographical region makes it feasible to combine concrete historiographical and methodological studies. Cinematic Space deals with the question how the medium of film has contributed to the construction of concepts of place, landscape, or environment. (The article

“Framing Cinematic Space” in this magazine explores this approach.) The projects grouped under Historical Spaces are more general and apply the digital reconstruction of liturgical spaces and the text-critical annotation of historical city and country maps as novel methodological tools yielding new insights in this area. Epistemes of Cartography is concerned with cartographic studies and reflections on how maps enable a view of historical reality, what kind of space they create, and how object and design of cartographic representation permeate each other. Several of the department’s projects are part of the research area Middle Ages and Medievalisms; here too the methodological focus is on the relationship between sacred architecture, landscape, and historical actors. In general, the goal is to critically analyze our understanding of space, especially in the digital age.

- RESEARCH AREAS
- Scaling Southern Italy
  - Cinematic Space
  - Historical Spaces
  - Epistemes of Cartography
  - Middle Ages and Medievalisms

Department Weddigen Art of the Modern Age in a Global Context

Tristan Weddigen

The construction of Modernity, including the Contemporary, was underpinned by early modern experiments in art and theory. These, conversely, require today’s methodological approaches to be understood and activated anew. Moreover, in the longue durée of the Modern Age, art and its theory became increasingly defined by global, transcultural entanglements. Today’s methodological approaches – from queer, decolonial, to computational – help to address two kinds of challenges. One consists in what, by default, is the meaning of modern and contemporary art. The other is posed by major geopolitical and societal shifts that shape today’s fragmenting reality in its artistic, academic, and planetary dimensions. Thus, studying the history of art, early modern to contemporary, contributes to imagining and securing a livable future. The Department, directed by Tristan Weddigen since 2017, has defined five long-term Research Priorities. In the last three years, (1) Rome Con-

temporary has become a test field for innovative, integrated, digital research procedures and environments. (2) Materiality and Mediality continues to explore art’s intermedial discourses while (3) Italy in a Global Context divides its attention between Latin American art and architecture on the one hand and Italy’s fascist cultural heritage on the other. (4) The Transnational History of Art History is focused on the edition of Heinrich Wölfflin’s Collected Writings and the critical discussion of methodology. Finally, the Department has heavily invested in the emerging field of (5) Digital Visual Studies, both propelling innovation of the Institute’s research infrastructures through the DH Lab and building a dynamic research team that explores the intersection of Art History and Computer Science. As an additional initiative prompted by the geopolitical challenges of the current moment, #ScienceForUkraine has responded to the needs of scholars affected by the ongoing Russian war against Ukraine.

- RESEARCH PRIORITIES
- Rome Contemporary
  - Materiality and Mediality
  - Italy in a Global Context
  - The Transnational History of Art History
  - Digital Visual Studies

Max Planck Research Group Visualizing Science in Media Revolutions

Sietske Fransen

The Max Planck Research Group Visualizing Science in Media Revolutions investigates how technological change in the early modern period reconfigured both what scientific practitioners could observe and how they could visually communicate and validate these observations within their intellectual communities. The Research Group has thus far treated visualization as a mode of presenting scientific inquiry whose products were disseminated and circulated in a manner that increasingly

took advantage of the affordances of early modern print technology. In a final phase of the project, we will shift its focus from the “image as medium” to the “image as method.” In this phase we will investigate how images not only reproduce what we see but, more importantly, influence how we see. The Research Group’s work focuses on the late medieval and early modern period, probing into diverse scientific disciplines ranging from astronomy to the mathematical study of music.

- RESEARCH THEMES
- Diagrams in Science
  - Media Revolutions and Images
  - The Image as Method
  - Translation in the Early Modern World
  - Visualizing the Unknown

Lise Meitner Group Decay, Loss, and Conservation in Art History

Francesca Borgo

Funded by the Max Planck Society’s flagship Lise Meitner Excellence Program, the Research Group investigates how people in the past contended with the material lives of objects. Our focus is on European and colonial art histories from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, a period during which techniques and media were ranked based on their ability to last and decay was first recognized as a subject worthy of aesthetic and scientific attention. By probing a tradition that has always equated

durability with value, the project engages with the material vulnerability and impermanence of artworks, thereby promoting a deeper understanding of the mechanics of decay and loss. Our approach draws attention to acts of care, maintenance, repair, and the interpretative challenges they pose to the discipline. We consider these practices as sites of knowledge production and explore how they might work alongside or against processes of physical decay, damage, deterioration, destruction, and wasting.

- ANNUAL RESEARCH INITIATIVES
- 2022/23: Waste
  - 2023/24: Loot
  - 2024/25: Rework
  - 2025/26: Lacunae

Senior Scholar Foreigners in Early-Modern Italian Cities: People, Objects, Ideas on the Move

Susanne Kubersky-Piredda

Within the broader research area of Italian art history in a global perspective, Senior Scholar Susanne Kubersky-Piredda is particularly interested in the social contexts from which early modern art emerged and how it functioned within them. Over the past years she has been working on dynamics of cohabitation, interaction, and (self-)representation among foreigners in shared urban spaces. Italian cities like Rome and Naples were melting pots drawing foreigners from all over Europe. The

project focuses on the movement of people, objects, and ideas across cultural and territorial borders and the role of material culture as a means of expressing manifold and constantly shifting collective identities. The team, which includes a group of PhD students, is currently working on comparative case studies of two urban neighborhoods characterized by a particularly strong presence of foreigners: Via Giulia near St. Peter’s in Rome and the port area in Naples.

- RESEARCH PRIORITIES
- Foreign Communities in Italian Cities: Dynamics of Cohabitation, Interaction, and Representation
  - Economic and Social History of Art: The History of Art Markets, the Social Status of the Artist



# Framing Cinematic Space

Tanja Michalsky, Malvina Giordana, Adrian Bremenkamp in conversation with prisma

In addition to informing us, entertaining us, inspiring us, and all the other things it does, cinema profoundly influences our relationship to space. This influence is evident in the way the medium of film shapes our collective understanding of place, landscape, and environment. The Department’s research in Cinematic Space connects what we see on screen with what lies beyond it: the cultural, historical, and production contexts outside the frame that nevertheless define what is in the frame and how it is perceived. Alert to how concepts of space are formed and transformed throughout history, a research group within Tanja Michalsky’s department is analyzing the strategies that tie films to a specific territory, city, region, or era. Thinking about what is on-screen, what is off-screen, and how these categories relate to each other then becomes a way to parse cinematic space as practiced by several lines of research of the department: *Social Space in Italian Film*, *Paesaggi del Sud*, and *Media Devices of Spatiality*.

**Why is there a project on film and cinema in a Max Planck Institute for Art History?**  
**Adrian Bremenkamp:** Cinema belongs just as much to visual culture as more traditional artistic genres. It therefore finds an undisputed place in the field of visual studies that is known as “Bildwissenschaft” and that addresses all kinds of visual artefacts and media. As an art historian, I find the dual nature of film fascinating: on the one hand, it captures a slice of reality, almost like a documentary, even in fictional films. On the other hand, cinema is a deliberate construction designed to tell stories, evoke emotions, or even influence viewers. This duality makes film an invaluable tool for exploring how societies conceptualize issues such as urban space at different points in history.  
**Tanja Michalsky:** I’ve long been interested in how space is represented and conceptualized, from the Middle Ages to the



▲ A scene from *Sedotta e abbandonata* shows the local police chief of Sciacca (Sicily) standing in front of the map in his office and comparing the shape of Italy, first with and then without Sicily, which he covers with his hand: “Meglio, molto meglio!” he exclaims in frustration, while his assistant from Veneto looks on perplexed. *Sedotta e abbandonata* (Pietro Germi, 1964)

present day. Over the years, my focus has included historical maps, urban design, and the spatial identity of cities like Naples. Studying how cinema represents urban spaces is a natural extension of these interests. By studying film, we can explore how cities are imagined, shaped, and understood not just as physical places but as cultural and emotional landscapes.  
**What is “cinematic space”?**  
**Malvina Giordana:** Let’s travel in our minds to Monument Valley as shown in John Ford’s Westerns, to the Rome of post-war Italian Neorealism, to the Sassi of Matera in Southern Italy, which Pasolini transformed into Jerusalem in his *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (1964). In doing so, we are embarking on a journey that sets out from the intersection of visual and spatial experience and delves into a symbolic geography of the world that cinema provides with its pervasive imagery. In fact, we can

speak of virtual environments that come to life through moving images but that are a montage of different elements: on the one hand, shots that emphasize the environment, the landscape, the architecture – what in Italian we call “piani” – and on the other hand those that frame the human figure – called “campi” – are edited in the film to restore the spectator’s sense of unity. And yet this perceived unity extends beyond what the camera shows, enriching itself with the viewer’s experiences and cultural background. This is why cinematic space, which encompasses all these aspects, represents a rich interpretative opportunity. And the spatiality of cinema is by no means neutral or passive. Film is an aesthetic device to control, visualize, and produce space.

**Can you give an example?**  
**Malvina Giordana:** Over this last year, we have directed our attention to the relationship between Italian society and the urban transformations of Rome in the 1950s and 1960s by looking at films showing female characters at work. We explored, for example, the architecture of the staircase as a built space in which different social constellations and their respective transformations can exist simultaneously. Our examples ranged from the monumental stairs in Luciano Emmer’s film *Le ragazze di Piazza di Spagna*, where seamstresses sit during their break from work before returning to the suburbs, to the claustrophobic ones that collapse under the weight of dozens of unemployed women looking for work in Giuseppe De Santis’s film *Roma ore 11*. These are not just settings: they can be strong metaphors that, for example, evoke the women’s wish for social ascent in *Roma ore 11* and the tragic denial of this aspiration as the staircase collapses. At the same time, they function as places that are potentially real, connected to an experienced space, such as the Spanish Steps, now swarming with tourists who are no longer allowed to sit on these stairs. More generally, it could be argued that the relationship between these spaces and women’s bodies reveal the contradictions of a supposedly uniform and universally valid attitude towards modernity.

**Could you describe the different lines of research?**  
**Adrian Bremenkamp:** One of the first initiatives within the research focus *Social Space in Italian Film* was a curated cycle of six films on the phenomenon of migration in Italian Film from the 1950s until today. The selection of films ranged from *Il cammino della speranza* (Pietro Germi, 1950), which deals with emigration from Italy, to *Fuocoammare* (Gianfranco Rosi, 2016), which addresses immigration into Italy. Films not only visually construct the spaces we see depicted in them, they can also make visible the process by which spaces are created; in other words, it can show us the very mechanics of the construction of social spaces. So-called “migration films” make this especially



▲ Stairs shape and semanticize space. The chosen camera angle exploits the possibilities of two very different sets of stairs, first the Spanish Steps and then a Roman tenement staircase, for the mise-en-scène of female bodies in urban space. *Le ragazze di Piazza di Spagna* (Luciano Emmer, 1952) and *Roma ore 11* (Giuseppe De Santis, 1952).





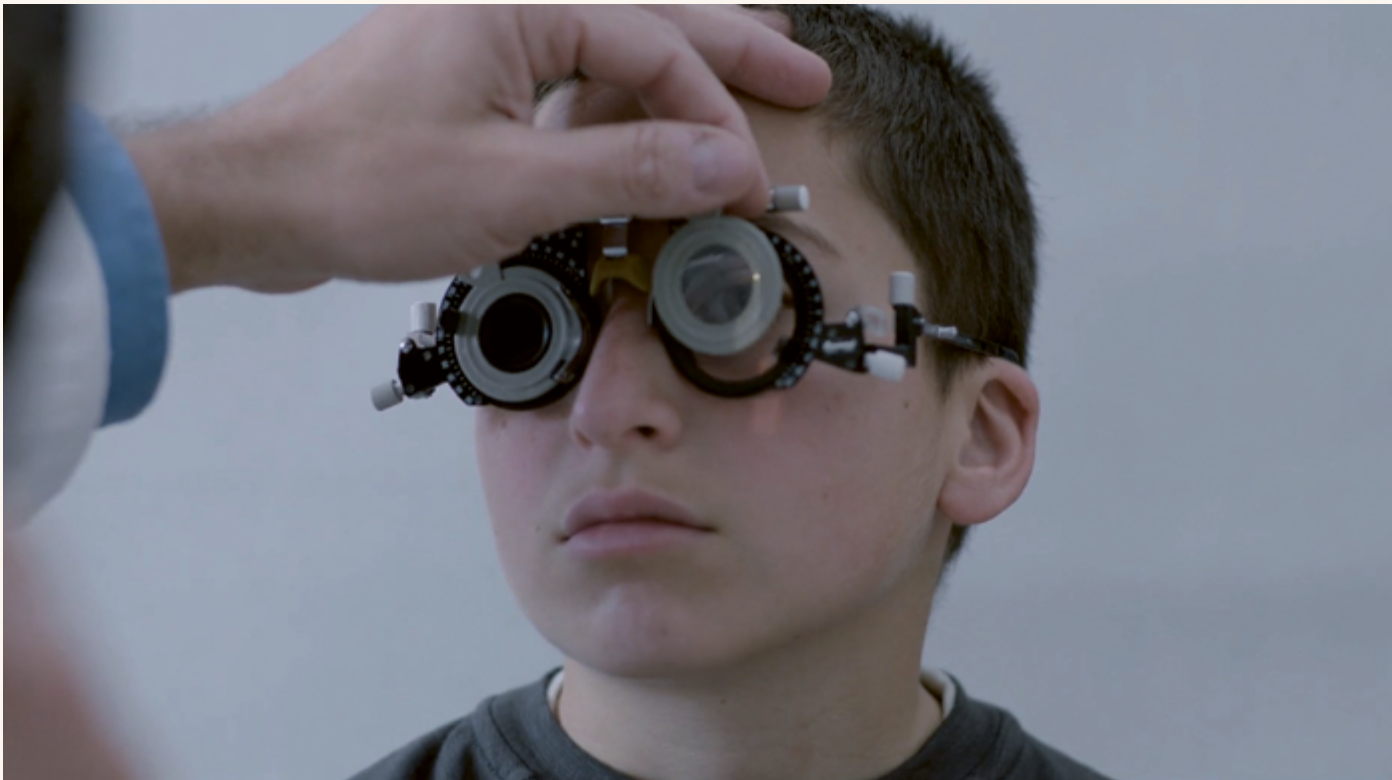
▲ Nino Manfredi’s character freezes when chewing on the movie’s eponymous “bread with chocolate” out of fear that the sound of the chocolate cracking between his jaws might disturb the chamber musicians performing in a Swiss park. *Pane e cioccolata* (Franco Brusati, 1974).

obvious as they often confront the social habits the migrant protagonist embodies with the new spaces he or she encounters. These films capitalize on this confrontation in driving forward the movie’s dramaturgical progression. Some films, such as *Pane e cioccolata* (Franco Brusati, 1974) – a film that treats the problems of an Italian seasonal worker in Switzerland in the genre of the tragi-comedy and that stars the famous actor Nino Manfredi – are able to address and even analyze how migrants struggle with the conundrum of constructing a social space that can function as a home to them within the host country’s social space – a space that demands integration and assimilation, and this to a degree that eradicates the very personality of the protagonist. Other films such as *Fuocoammare*, set on the island of Lampedusa, self-reflexively show the work of media and optical devices in the construction of contemporary geopolitical borders.

**Malvina Giordana:** More recently, we launched two new projects: *Paessaggi del Sud* and *Media Devices of Spatiality*. The former focuses on the role of the cinematic imaginary within the figurative palimpsest and discursive infrastructure that define the porous notion of ‘Meridione’ (South). The landscapes of Naples and Matera, as real places and film sets, are particularly suitable examples for discussing the material and symbolic strategies imposed on the South during a crucial period of post-war Reconstruction. We tried to understand how films shaped the tourist’s gaze, examining the role of state censorship on film themes that were meant to contribute to the representation of a newly born Italy. At the time, cinema was a widespread form of entertainment for an audience of all ages, classes, and genders. *Media Devices of Spatiality* has a more theoretical approach and was set up in collaboration with Tommaso Morawski, whose research has a more philosophical angle. It aims to study the technologies of space production, examining in particular how they function, the position they assign to the observer, and the operations and gestures they require or make possible. We intend to work with what we consider a crucial shift in the recent theoretical debate, especially in media archeology: a shift from the object – the medium – to its specific mode of functioning: mediation. Studying the history of spatiality in its multiple declinations and articulations is a way to question the medialities of the gaze at the heart of different spatial revolutions.

**How is this interdisciplinary project set up in terms of methodology, professional expertise, and personnel?**  
**Tanja Michalsky:** The origins of the project lay in the collaboration with Lorenzo Marmo and Malvina Giordana (Film Studies) and Tommaso Morawski (Philosophy). Working with researchers from different disciplinary fields – art history, film studies, philosophy – has proven to be very fruitful. Particularly in film studies it is important to consider different perspectives, as this ephemeral medium is all too often transformed into narratives that no longer keep present the materiality of the film and its appearance in individual perception.

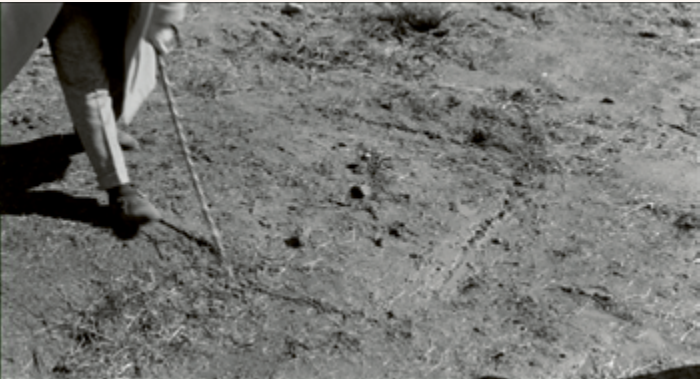
**How do you work? What methods and formats have proven useful in your research so far?**  
**Adrian Bremenkamp:** We started with a curated series of film projections around a given theme developed within the research group. In a second step we invited external collaborators on the basis of their specific expertise. The film screening in the evening would be followed by a close-reading seminar the day after, with one member of the group being in charge of hosting the seminar and initiating it off with a brief presentation. This person would also have prepared particularly relevant passages of the film to be replayed and discussed. This continuous collaboration can quite naturally grow into a publication project, as



▲ Two frames in which we see the staging of the work of media and optical devices. Below, the screen of the Lampedusa control tower overlooking the Mediterranean; above, a child living on the island being treated by a doctor for his “lazy eye.” *Fuocoammare* (Gianfranco Rosi, 2016).

it did for the volume *Geografie della migrazione* (published in the *Quaderni della Bibliotheca Hertziana* series) – but such an output does not have to be the immediate goal. We believe in the idea of little steady steps that give themes the time to ripen and mature.  
**Tanja Michalsky:** It is fundamental to reconstruct the historical and cultural horizon in which these films originated to understand them fully. And yet at the heart of our work lies a meticulous analysis of the image itself. Precisely the continuous zooming in and out – to use a filmic metaphor – connects micro-analysis with a macro-perspective and allows for new insights. The moving image demands special methods of investigation, but from the point of view of art history, the image and the cinematic space as such are too often pushed far into the background where they don’t receive the attention they deserve.  
**The concept of space is central to your department, which also deals with medieval art history and early modern cartography. Aren’t these very different spaces to what you call “cinematic space”?**  
**Tanja Michalsky:** This question goes right to the core of our research. On the one hand, space is a physical given, on the other, a category of perception, and last but not least a phenomenon that is historically defined and therefore constantly changing.





▲ *Le mani sulla città* (Francesco Rosi, 1963) illustrates in an almost didactic way how building speculation works and what its consequences are. In the shaky flight over the new development areas, we see the dangers – shortly afterwards, the protagonist explains that money can be made very quickly from one square meter of undeveloped land. The model of the new buildings in front of the city's construction sharks and the walled map behind the decision maker number among the filmic devices that put on display the media of an urbanism defined and determined by the interest of speculators.



Geografie della migrazione nel cinema italiano. Luoghi e immaginari del transito

Edited by Adrian Bremeenkamp, Malvina Giordana, Lorenzo Marmo and Tanja Michalsky and published in our series Quaderni della Bibliotheca Hertziana in 2022, this volume sheds light on the workings of cinema as a mythopoeitic machine that intervenes in geographic space. For more information: <https://www.biblhertz.it/de/pub/quaderni>

Since film creates a very specific space not only through the camera perspective but above all through the editing and montage of the individual images, it is perfectly suited to the investigation of spatial structures. It is only by switching between media and historical epochs that an understanding of the construction of social space becomes truly tangible – and that is what we are working on.

What role does the cultural and scientific landscape of Rome play in this project?

**Adrian Bremeenkamp:** Rome itself is a theme of some of the films we are analyzing in order to understand the conception of urban space at various times in the second half of the 20th century. This gives us the opportunity to compare the perceived reality of Rome today with earlier instantiations of the city preserved in film. The familiarity with the urban space of Rome and its historical evolution informs our investigation of Rome as a cinematic space. This is especially true if we take a transversal view of the different forms, genres, and modes of production with respect to such an intensely ‘cinematic’ city.

**Tanja Michalsky:** My personal research is much more centered on Naples, so analyzing *Le mani sulla città* (Francesco Rosi, 1963) is an obvious choice. But the specific features of this specific city in this particular film only become apparent in comparison with other films and cities – and since the production of films in and about Rome is much broader, it is very worthwhile to draw on them.

**Malvina Giordana:** We have established collaborative networks with the film departments of Università Roma Tre and the Università di Napoli ‘L’Orientale’, which are very important for the continuity and the ongoing development of our research.

Last year we also established a collaboration with the Casa del Cinema in Rome, which hosted a screening of *La montagna infidèle* (1923) by Jean Epstein. This reportage on the 1923 eruption of Mount Etna in Sicily and the catastrophic transformation of its landscape was shot by one of the most important personalities of the French avant-garde on commission by the production company Pathé. Rediscovered in 2020 in a 28mm Spanish version and restored by the Filmoteca de Catalunya, it had been considered lost for almost a full century. We organized a public projection and commissioned a new soundtrack by a composer of electronic music and now we have this extraordinary new material that also speaks to the broader department project Palimpsest Naples – a project whose range of interests encompasses volcanic eruptions and landscapes ravaged by catastrophe.

**Adrian Bremeenkamp:** Of course, this is a silent film, but originally it was projected with accompanying music – it needs a sound score to be viewed with. Otherwise, it is like a musical instrument without a resonance chamber – it remains two-dimensional. Since we do not have any records of historical scores for this film, Malvina had the idea to commission a new score, which was performed live by the musician – this is an established practice in silent film festivals. This experiment was very interesting for us researchers as it made it very obvious how strongly sound and music contribute to the creation of cinematic spaces. At the same time, it made the film much more accessible for a contemporary audience; the cinema was full, and the Roman public responded with enthusiasm.

What kind of results are you interested in?

**Tanja Michalsky:** The collaboration between film scholars and art historians who share an interest in cinematographic space is particularly promising because film, image, and space are considered and interpreted in equal measure. The cinematographic modelling of space thus becomes tangible for both sides in a new way while the focus on Southern Italy can also reveal clichés and stereotypes.

■ **Department:** Cities and Spaces in Premodernity  
**Research Area:** Cinematic Space  
**Direction:** Tanja Michalsky  
**Participating scholars:** Adrian Bremeenkamp, Malvina Giordana





# Understanding the Art of Our Age

Shifting research toward the contemporary

Our times challenge Art History in fundamental ways. Tectonic shifts in politics and society, in technology and the arts, on a local and planetary scale, cannot but affect the mission of a large research Institute like the Bibliotheca Hertziana. Since its establishment, Tristan Weddigen’s Department has programmatically pushed its Research Priorities towards the contemporary. In conversation with some of his collaborators, the Director seeks answers about the state of Art History today and tomorrow.

### How Artificial Intelligence will change Art History

**Tristan Weddigen:** Artificial Intelligence is one of the most significant technological, cultural, and political challenges facing humanity today. It will impact the humanities too, in ways yet to be understood. At the same time, Art History and its visual artifacts present AI with a challenge. This is because, until recently, Large Language Models have been trained and reared primarily on textual language. However, multimodal models are today beginning to catch up on this front by developing abilities to process images too. To make AI understand images as cultural artifacts and put it to work in advancing art historical research requires two things: first, new discipline-specific training datasets and methods, and, second, research into explainable AI. Since 2020, I lead a cutting-edge, interdisciplinary Max Planck research group at the University of Zurich, which opens a wholly new field, which we call “Digital Visual Studies”. Darío, how do you think AI will impact Art and Architectural History?

**Darío Negueruela del Castillo:** The latest advances in deep learning move in the direction of increasing complexity in the reasoning that makes it possible to tackle complex problems. It is crucial that we explore critically how the epistemological frameworks of the humanities can enrich and complement these advances. It is about understanding AI through art rather than the inverse. For instance, in our projects *CLIP* and *the City* and *World Gist* we propose a novel methodology to study the latent visual urban imaginaries embedded within contemporary AI models. We do this by specifically examining how two such models, namely Stable Diffusion and CLIP, are based on their training data, which is mostly huge unfiltered dumps

drawn from the internet. These models encode all types of biases, values, and schemas and reproduce culture-dependent urban knowledge. The insights we are gaining are helping us develop our own model pipeline for a more precise and accountable manner of analyzing urban imagery based on specialized knowledge. At the same time, our team is developing the pipelines and computational methods that Digital Art History will employ in the future; we are striving not only for excellence in the sources and references by working with the best available data but are also aiming to enlarge the reach and accessibility of the discipline and its knowledge, based on modular and approachable tools. It is all not only about AI’s capacity to process a million images at once, but also about our ability to pose the right questions to and with AI.

*The leading question informing my research interests concerns the material and intellectual conditions for the production of aesthetic things and ideas, past and present. This question entails the task of addressing the theoretical potential of works of art and the work character of theory.*

Tristan Weddigen



In her PhD thesis, Valentine Bernasconi explored the non-verbal iconography of hand gestures in early modern painting with the computational power of Machine Learning. She developed an experimental tool to navigate large photographic collections by using one’s own body language.



### On the uses and abuses of Art History for life

**Tristan Weddigen:** It is my firm belief that research in the humanities not only must include an explicit reflection on one’s own methodological standpoint, but that methodology also needs to be seen in both a historical and a transcultural perspective. Methods have a history, and they develop in and across specific socio-cultural contexts. They are part of what Michel Foucault called “the discourse”, or Ludwik Fleck a “Denkstil”, which shape many aspects of reality. Understanding both art and Art History is, thus, a way of understanding ourselves.

It is now ten years since we launched our work on the critical edition of the writings of Heinrich Wölfflin, who was one of the most influential art historians of the twentieth century. It is gratifying to see how this enterprise is changing the scholarly perception of his thought and of the age of “Kunstwissenschaft”, when Art History was tentatively grounded on leading sciences such as psychology. Tobias, with a nod to Friedrich Nietzsche, what do you think of the uses and abuses of art historical methodology?

**Tobias Teutenberg:** I think that we are all aware of the benefits of methodology in general and for Art History in particular. It helps us to approach questions systematically and provides a common ground of communication across the field, say, between specialists of medieval art and those of contemporary art. In short, methods not only enable a discipline to function but also hold its parts together. At the same time, I agree with you; they can also be counter-productive if they are not applied in a self-critical and reflected way. This is why editions, such as Wölfflin’s, are so important. They foster an awareness of the



Erna Adler, studio photograph of the blind student Morzi with his clay sculpture *Chess Player*, Vienna, Israelite Institute for the Blind, October 1936. Photo credit: Universität Wien, Institut für Kunstgeschichte.





In collaboration with the Institute's Library, the Department offers open access to the most important collection of Italian underground magazines of the 1970s, encompassing thirty-thousand scans drawn from the Echaurren Salaris Archive. Dedicated *Counterculture Fellowships* have resulted in diverse research activities and publications, inaugurating a new kind of "integrated research environment".



constructed and ideological nature of our research tools, be they established formalist procedures or data-crunching techniques freshly imported from Computer Science. It is our responsibility to pass this awareness on to the next generation, and I hope that our Research Seminars dedicated to *Methodology and Ideology* have helped to engender this willingness to reflect on method among younger scholars. Such introspection reveals how every method has blind spots determining both what it focuses on and what it disregards. We can consider, for example, case studies that critically examine the mechanisms of social and epistemic exclusion rooted in the methodology of our discipline. For example, my current research project studies clay sculptures made by students at the Israelite Institute for the Blind in Vienna in the 1930s, adding an art historical dimension to Disability Studies.

### Italy in a transregional context

**Tristan Weddigen:** From an art historical point of view, until the mid-seventeenth century papal Rome was the *Caput Mundi*. The emergence of the Nation-State, the spread of colonialism, the French and the Industrial Revolutions, the rise of fascism, and the two World Wars that frame this last episode have seemingly pushed Italy to the margins of the art historical discourse. However, research at the Department questions such "master narratives" of Art History. In doing so through the study of Italian postwar art, it reveals a vital, internationally connected art scene, in which innovative feminist, Marxist, countercultural, and art critical agendas were advanced. Moreover, research in transregional connections offers an alternative to a hegemonic, mostly US-centered historiography. Thus, the Department explores the manifold relations between Italy and Latin America, from colonial times to the age of modern dictatorial regimes and postwar, transcontinental movements of exile and diaspora. Lara, what is your perspective on scholarship about Italy in a global context?

**Lara Demori:** Let me begin by quoting Maurizio Nannucci's work at the Galleria civica d'arte moderna e contemporanea in Turin: "All art has been contemporary." This statement underscores the growing importance that the Contemporary has taken on in recent years within the Department and across the Research Priorities. This new focus has provided a fresh perspective for investigating other Research Priorities, such as Materiality and Mediality. This shift is closely linked to the accelerating globalization that began with migratory flows following the two World Wars, and later expanded with the rise of mass media. These developments have become indispensable to the study of contemporary art and its evolving frameworks. Initially, transnational studies in Italian art historical academia focused on the connections between Europe and the United States. However, over the last two decades there has been a significant shift toward exploring the Latin American context and



Caterina Martinelli's PhD project explores the political language of abstract sculpture in public spaces in Italy during the 1970s. It focuses on Mauro Staccioli's (1937–2018) early work, which is documented in 28,000 archival documents that the Institute has scanned, cataloged, and published in a Knowledge Graph database. The Predoctoral Fellowship, the new digitized material, various scientific activities, and a Research Exhibition integrate hitherto separate stages into one research workflow that completes the information life cycle.



Enrico Cattaneo, photographs of Mauro Staccioli's sculptures for the exhibition *Interventi nello spazio urbano*, 1973, Parma, Piazza della Steccata and for the *Biennale*, Venice, 1978. Photo credit: Associazione Archivio Mauro Staccioli/BHMPI.



other regions traditionally viewed as peripheral. The research conducted at the Institute seeks to challenge and overturn this subalternity, not only from a geographic standpoint by highlighting the global significance of Italian art, but also by considering how this art was entwined with politics in general and gender politics in particular. Projects such as *Now We Have Seen* foreground feminist narratives, while studies alert to the counterculture are exemplified by the digitization of the archive of militant artist Pablo Echaurren and public sculptor Mauro Staccioli. Both artists' works embody the innovative and transformative spirit of their respective eras.

Decolonizing Art History

**Tristan Weddigen:** Italy's "difficult heritage" from the fascist era calls for more critical studies, resisting the processes that seek to bestow on it a new political status and legitimacy. This also applies to the country's colonial past, which needs to be drawn more forcefully out of the shadows. Recently, this agenda has taken on an urgency that extends beyond Italy and goes to the heart of questions about the future of western democracies. I wonder whether we not only have to rethink the research methodologies and the mission of Art History but also question the institutional practices and the "attention economy" of academia in the face of today's multiple challenges. Carmen, how do you operate within this dynamic field of research?

**Carmen Belmonte:** Framing fascist cultural heritage as a "difficult" one in our recent publication, we highlight ruptures and discontinuities in the afterlife of the *ventennio's* art and architecture since the end of World War II. This study demonstrates how opaque the process of heritage-making of the 1980s, when, fifty years after their completion, these works began to fall under the protection of preservation laws. While a vibrant academic debate on politically charged heritage is currently taking place internationally, in Italy we are witnessing instead a politically motivated promotion of the art and architecture of Mussolini's regime. Recent major exhibitions dedicated to fascist visual culture and Futurism or far-right initiatives promoting the inclusion of Lazio's fascist urban settlements in the UNESCO World Heritage List betray a tendency to politically revise the past by reducing the meaning of fascist heritages to its aesthetic value. The nation's entanglement with the darkest chapters of modern history is being silenced. To stimulate a re-thinking of institutional practices, we have established a collaboration with Rome's Museo delle Civiltà. There, we conduct provenance research on the collections of the former Museo Coloniale. However, the heritage of colonial-

ism is a transnational issue that challenges institutions across Europe. In 2024, we established a partnership with the Centre Lucien Febvre at the University of Besançon, France, through the Max Planck Partner Group *Sports, Body, and Race in Fascist Visual Culture*, directed by Sara Vitacca. This collaboration aims to investigate how sport played a pivotal role in shaping the imagery of the athletic body and thereby put itself in the service of the fascist regime's hygienic and racial propaganda. **Tristan Weddigen:** Drawing on their past as a foundational part of western society, the Humanities are called upon to meet the moment by confronting the challenges that currently loom over and threaten our globalized society. By tapping into the capacity of contemporary art to question and reimagine reality, Art History has a crucial role to play in this mission.



Heinrich Wölfflin  
Italien und das  
deutsche Formgefühl

*Italien und das deutsche Formgefühl* from 1931 is Heinrich Wölfflin's last major book – and the least discussed. The volume provides important insights into the art and self-image of one of the world's most widely read art historians, as well as into the history and methodology of the subject itself. This critical edition, based at the University of Zurich and the Hertziana, includes all of Heinrich Wölfflin's publications and unpublished writings. It presents his work for the first time in its entirety and in its discursive context, both in printed and digital form. *Italien und das deutsche Formgefühl. Die Kunst der Renaissance 1931*, Heinrich Wölfflin *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 8, ed. by Tristan Weddigen, Oskar Bätschmann, and Joris van Gastel, Basel 2024.



HWGW - Heinrich Wölfflin  
Gesammelte Werke



A Difficult Heritage  
The Afterlives of Fascist-Era  
Art and Architecture

Many of the urban projects realized during the Fascist regime have remained part of the Italian landscape. Together with monuments and works of art, they are the surviving traces of Fascist imagery in contemporary Italy. Protected by preservation laws as part of the national cultural patrimony, these remnants have become the focus of a politically charged public debate. *A Difficult Heritage. The Afterlives of Fascist-Era Art and Architecture*, ed. Carmen Belmonte, Studi della Bibliotheca Hertziana, vol. 17, Cinisello Balsamo 2023.



Studi della  
Bibliotheca Hertziana

Predocctoral Fellow Giulia Beatrice studies the entanglements of Futurism with Italian colonialism, as illustrated by Elio Randazzo's 1934 painting *Libyan Landscape (Well in the Oasis)*, oil on jute canvas, Museo delle Civiltà – MPE Luigi Pigorini, Rome. Her research aims at tracing two threads running through Futurist visual culture: racialized and stereotyped representations of Africa, and images of imperialist warfare employed in the colonial conquest.



Department: Art in the Modern Age in a Global Context  
Direction: Tristan Weddigen





▲ The breathtaking view from the roof of the Hertziana provides an ideal setting for members of the Max Planck Research Group to experience how drawing intensifies the act of observation. This sketch was made by the artist and team member Nina Caviezel with a felt-tip pen and fineliner – *Drawing Research Group, Rome, 27.11.2024.*

# Drawing as Observation

Then as now, artists and scientists see not only with their eyes but also with their *hands*

The function of drawing might seem entirely self-evident: it is an age-old method of producing images. Yet in various historical contexts a secondary, less obvious function makes itself apparent; drawing is also a method for seeing and, more precisely, for cultivating and inculcating practices of observation. The act of drawing makes it necessary to look carefully and closely and to reflect upon how to transfer what one sees onto a paper sheet.

The members of the Max Planck Research Group Visualizing Science in Media Revolutions led by Sietske Fransen have investigated all kinds of images that were made by artists and scientists invested in both preserving knowledge and in generating and enlarging it. Our research interests have most recently zeroed in on the role drawing played in the act of seeing, or learning to see – and this for both artists and scientists. To refine our understanding of the process by which the observed is translated onto paper, part of the team participated this last summer (2024) in *Drawing Rome*, a practical course that was led by architect and artist David Dernie. This experience helped us to appreciate the practical implications of first looking and then abstracting elements of the observation that can be represented on a sheet of paper. Observation is not an automatic, mechanical process; instead, it is infused with imagination and reflection. In other words, art in general and drawing in particular are always a combination of both representation and expression. Although most of the team members do

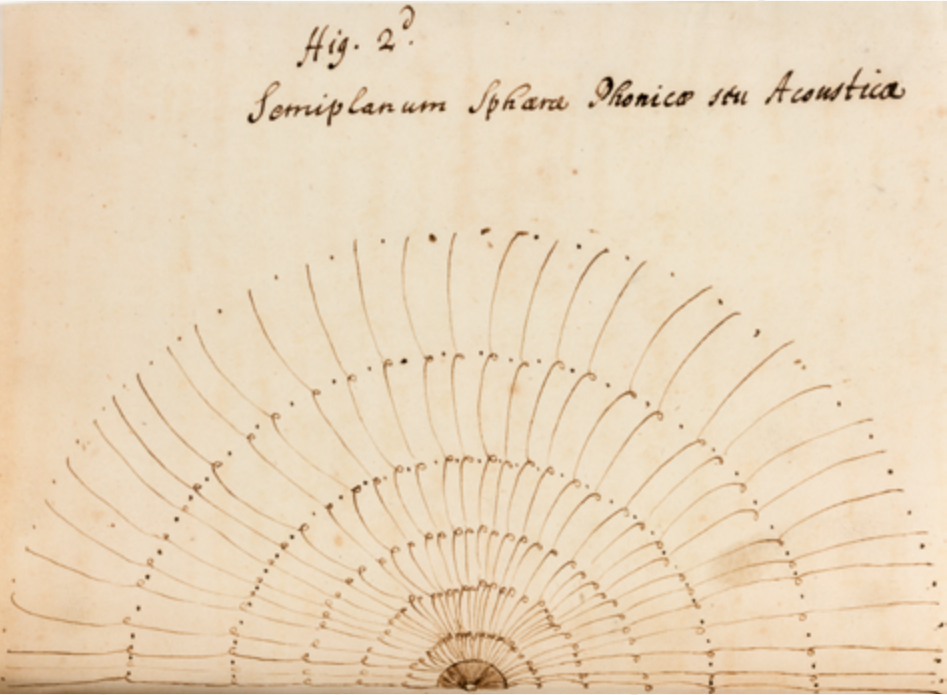
not consciously pursue the goal of becoming an artist, practical experience has been extremely useful in developing an understanding of the process of drawing that culminates in the moment of putting a pencil on paper. A huge amount of micro-decision-making, related to what to depict, what to leave out, how to render most effectively what is seen, and so on, is condensed into that critical moment.

The following three examples document how the members of our Research Group engage in discussions and exchange ideas about early modern drawings. The interdisciplinarity in the group means that none of the researchers have the same background (the group currently is comprised of art historians, a musicologist, and historians of science and medicine of both the early modern and the modern era). This diversity means that, when we look at drawings together, different interests are at play and different questions are posed. This “polyphony” is exactly what promotes a new understanding of the historical artefacts and documents.



Drawing the invisible

**Leendert van der Miesen:** Narcissus Marsh's 1683 diagram, sent to the Royal Society of London, illustrates sound spreading without interruption. The bird's eye view shows sound as curved lines forming loops, with increasing distances between them, suggesting how sound dissipates over larger areas. This image highlights the role of drawing as a practice capable of depicting more than the immediately visible.



What does sound look like? How does sound 'radiate' outwards? An unknown artist sketched this *Sphere of Sound* for correspondence that the clergyman and co-founder of the Dublin Philosophical Society Narcissus Marsh (1638–1713) sent to the Royal Society in 1683 – *Sphere of Sound*, ink on paper, 224 x 179mm, London Royal Society Archive. Photo credit: Royal Society of London.

**Nina Caviezel:** Looking closely at this drawing, I follow the ink trail, the sometimes lively, sometimes halting movement of the draftsman and listen to the lines and the sound field fan out. While the sound originally moved away from the sound source in the center of the semicircle in all directions, the artist carefully translated this transient, spatial, and time-based acoustic experience into a drawing on paper. Furthermore, the ink trace suggests that, in creating this image, the artist's hand moved inwards, or, in other words, counter to the direction of the sound.

**Leendert van der Miesen:** The drawing belongs to a larger essay on sound but it is not clear whether Marsh drew this himself or whether he instructed an artist to do so. He described the figure as "rude", suggesting it functioned as a sketch or outline, jotted down to aid his thinking.

**Nina Caviezel:** The fine dots arranged between the ink lines pose questions: Did they serve as reference points for the construction of the lines? Or are they to be understood as significant elements of the sound field?

The act of drawing as a moment of discovery

**Elisa Spataro:** This drawing belongs to a sketchbook by an anonymous Italian author from the first half of the 17th century. It shows the instrument that was built in 1557 by Baldassarre Lanci (Urbino 1510 – Florence 1571) and which still exists in the Galileo Museum in Florence (inv. no. 152, 3165).

**Jennifer Marine:** The act of drawing as a moment of discovery – in this sketch we see an artist at work, carefully tracing the contours of a building in the distance. While we, the viewers of the drawing, see a domed building over the artist's shoulder in the distance, we also see in the artist's drawing how it is part of a larger cityscape. Through his hand we discover something new about the surroundings. So we have a drawing about drawing that furthermore shows how drawing forges new relationships to the world around us and knowledge about it.

**Odile Lehen:** As in this image, the acts of drawing, observation, and discovery are often aided by instruments. Here, the draughtsman depicted is using a device that physically combines the practices of looking and depicting in one instrument. The draughtsman views the enlarged cityscape through the tube and moves the instrument along its outline, transferring this outline onto paper. To what extent does this mechanized process of inscription promote the (perceived) objectivity of a representation? Furthermore, this image prompts me to reflect on the challenge of simultaneously looking through an instrument (be that a microscope or telescope) and depicting what is seen. Can we understand this instrument as an attempt to overcome the way the observer's attention is otherwise divided between looking and drawing?



This image from a 17th-century Italian sketchbook on military art not only shows multiple levels of observation but how the act of drawing that link them could be mechanized. The instrument depicted in the image was built in 1557 by Baldassare Lanci (1510–1571) and still exists in the Galileo Museum in Florence – *Sketchbook on Military Art, Including Geometry, Fortifications, Artillery, Mechanics, and Pyrotechnics* fol. 480 r, ink on paper, 120x160 mm, Rosenwald 1363, Washington, Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.

**Elisa Spataro:** In its original configuration, this instrument came with two other tools: two lateral grading arms, which allowed the user to measure distances and produce a topographical map. What has always struck me in studying this kind of early modern procedure, even with a different drawing instrument, is the effort to connect the eye and the hand in the process of drawing. It seems to signify a new pragmatic approach in drawing practices starting between the 16th and the 17th centuries – a path that moves away from theoretical discussions about disegno towards practical implementation of what historians of science have come to call mechanical objectivity.





## Seeing and imagining Rome

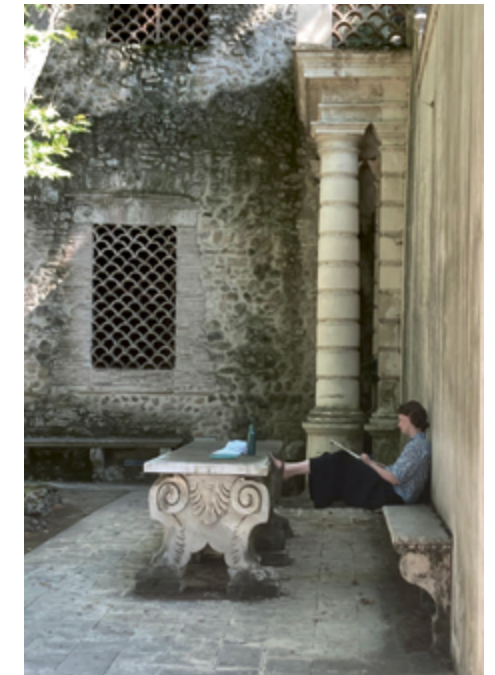
**Til Schmidt:** This very detailed drawing could be a draft for a painting that is now lost or that was never made. The raster on the paper that you can see in the background was used to transfer a draft image onto its next medium. In the lower left part, it seems like another piece of paper was affixed, maybe to make changes after the wish of the client.

**Sietske Fransen:** Against a recognizably Roman background (the Temple of Castor and Pollux on the Forum Romanum), the artist fuses a representation of Rome with an allegory about art and science. The draughtsman in the background is observing the ruins of ancient Rome in an attempt to reproduce the city on paper while the sculptor and the mason in the foreground each work stone and, in doing so, make their own contributions to the resurrection of the city's artistic and architectural glory. In this way they are honoring Rome as the city in which one encounters artistic perfection and in which one can best learn to replicate it.

**Marvin Bolt:** Drawing seems just a minor detail in a background made up of ancient, crumbling ruins. However, in the lower right, a set of scientific instruments such as dividers and a square, seem to represent the opposite and convey a more positive message. Here we see drawing tools and an armillary sphere, which reassures the viewer of celestial harmony and stability. All is in balance. All shall be well. Ironically, when Rottenhammer drew this, the telescope was making its first appearance, inspiring drawings that would rearrange the cosmos. It leaves me wondering what Rottenhammer intended by his allegory.

Rome has for centuries inspired artistic production and scientific inquiry; consequently, it has been the perfect setting to investigate how observation and drawing were mobilized to serve these ends. This allegory was sketched by the German artists Hans Rottenhammer (1564–1625) around 1608–1610. *Allegory of the arts and sciences*, black and brown pen on paper, 358 x 315 mm, Kupferstichkabinett Berlin, KdZ 16525. Photo credit: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett / Volker-H. Schneider Public Domain Mark 1.0.

**Max Planck Research Group:** Visualizing Science in Media Revolutions  
**Research Theme:** The Image as Method  
**Leader:** Sietske Fransen  
**Participating scholars:** Marvin Bolt, Nina Caviezel, Odile Lehen, Jennifer Marine, Leendert van der Miesen, Til Schmidt  
**External consultant:** David Dernie (British School at Rome)  
**Collaboration:** Dutch University Institute for Art History (NIKI, Florence)



Sietske Fransen drawing in the gardens of Villa d'Este, Tivoli, during the course *Drawing Rome*, Summer 2024. Photo credit: Anna Magnago Lampugnani





# The Many Lives of Paper

A week with the Getty Paper Project in Rome

How does paper, an ostensibly fragile and transient medium, embody centuries of care, intervention, and transformation? This question anchored the Getty Paper Project workshop *Touched/Retouched: Paper Across Time*, held in 2024 in Rome. Twelve emerging experts and twelve senior specialists in prints and drawings from across Europe and North America gathered to uncover the hidden stories embedded in works on paper, spanning the 1400s to the 1800s.

Each year, The Paper Project initiative sponsored by Getty works to promote the transmission of specialized knowledge in print and drawings and the collaboration of curators, scholars, and conservators of the graphic arts via an international open call. For the 2024 workshop, the Lise Meitner Group joined forces with the Istituto Centrale per la Grafica (ICG), the premier center for the graphic arts and their conservation in Italy. Participants examined how paper’s inherent vulnerability makes it a dynamic lens through which to study maintenance, adaptation, and care in the early modern period.



◀ Mauro Mussolin (Roma Tre) shares his expertise on papermaking at the Fondazione Fedrigoni Fabriano. Photo credit: Francesca Borgo



▲ A closer look at some works in the Hertziana graphic collection. Photo credit: BHMPI / Enrico Fontolan

**Fragile yet lasting**  
Paper affords insights that other supports do not. It is uniquely unstable, readily reflecting changes in ownership, taste, interest, and concerns over its durability and decay. Few media are as easily altered, whether by skilled or untrained hands: folding, pasting, trimming, bleaching, highlighting, or retracing require few tools and minimal expertise. Bureaucratic and archival practices also leave material traces as sheets are bound, strung, mailed, filed, inscribed, or stamped. This inherent vulnerability makes works on paper an ideal lens for studying early modern practices of maintenance and care, illuminating how these alterations sustain objects over time, both materially and metaphorically.

The week-long event is but one component of the Third Annual Research Initiative of the Lise Meitner Group, *Rework*, which centers on alteration and takes paper as its main case study. This focus reflects key concerns of the Research Group: an approach to works of art in terms of their instability and openness, and an engagement with the non-linearity of making – looking at error and revision, omission and repetition, neglect and intervention, damage and restoration.

*Paper is a uniquely malleable material. From simple folds to intricate retouching, each intervention tells a story about the object’s journey through time.*  
Francesca Borgo



A masterclass on viewing

The workshop brought to life these processes of revision and intervention – what was termed “retouching” in the broadest sense. Leading experts from institutions such as the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Sotheby’s, and the Louvre guided participants in analyzing traces of alteration on drawings from the Hertziana and ICG collections. Among prints and drawings specialists, detecting and dating traces of retouching is considered to be largely a matter of tacit knowledge for which no textual shortcut exists. To learn this process, you need to see it up-close and in action. And while reconstructing the chronological sequence of interventions (via close looking or the help of diagnostic technologies) is a daily practice in graphic collections worldwide, it remains virtually inaccessible to outsiders. To bring this knowledge to emerging scholars, an international cohort of senior experts led a series of close-looking exercises on drawings from the Hertziana and the ICG collections.

All hands on paper!

Informed by the fast-expanding use of historical reconstructions and reenactments as epistemic tools, the program incorporated hands-on remaking experiences. In Fabriano – the main center of premodern paper production in southern Europe – participants made watermarked, laid paper using techniques stretching back to the fifteenth century under the guidance of Mauro Mussolin (Università Roma Tre) and the *maistri cartai* from the Fedrigoni Fabriano Foundation. With the help of Jana Dambrogio (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), they made iron-gall ink and folded, sealed, and strung letters in a session dedicated to letterlocking, a practice of protecting epistolary writing from prying eyes that preceded the invention of the envelope. Elania Pieragostini, Senior Curator of the Devonshire Collections at Chatsworth, remarks on how these shared experiences sharpened her observational sensitivity: “They heightened awareness of the complexities of certain operations and deepened my understanding of the materials’ behavior and historical techniques.”



Close-up through a magnifying lens of Paolo Gerolamo Piola, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, 133 x 143 mm, pen and brown ink on oiled paper, Hertziana Collection. Once oiled, paper stiffens and is prone to tearing; these *lacunae* are being reintegrated by the ICR’s Miriam Pitocco using tinted paper, toned to match the color of the ground. Older *lacunae* were instead filled in with ink.  
Photo credit: Francesca Borgo



Hugo Chapman (British Museum) discusses techniques of alteration in drawings from the ICG collection.  
Photo credit: Enrico Fontolan

Letterlocking implements during the session led by Jana Dambrogio (MIT).  
Photo credit: Francesca Borgo

Lise Meitner Group: Decay, Loss, and Conservation in Art History  
Annual Research Initiative: 2024/25: Rework  
Leader: Francesca Borgo  
Featured cooperation: The Paper Project Initiative – Getty Foundation; Istituto Centrale per la Grafica  
Sponsored Workshop: Touched/Retouched: Paper Across Time, 1400–1800  
Leads: Francesca Borgo, Camilla Colzani, Alice Ottazzi  
Co-Leads: Giorgio Marini, Gabriella Pace (Istituto Centrale per la Grafica)  
Participants: 12 early career scholars and curators and 12 senior experts of prints and drawings from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK, USA  
Locations: Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History; Istituto Centrale per la Grafica; Fondazione Fedrigoni Fabriano; Fondazione Camillo Caetani







## Fellow Spotlight:

### Helen Buddensieg, Lise Meitner Group Predoctoral Fellow

In studying works on paper, I have always been fascinated by the multitude of traces left by different hands – not only those of the artist, but also those of collectors, archivists, conservators, and curators. This layered history of interaction between human as well as environmental forces playing out on the fragile paper field naturally dovetails with my long-standing interest in conservation. I am currently writing my dissertation at the Goethe University Frankfurt and working as a research assistant on the restoration project of Correggio's (ca.1489–1534) *Madonna of Saint Sebastian* (ca.1524) at the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden. The workshop deepened my appreciation of the critical distinctions between retouched works on paper and retouched paintings: differences

in past forms of care, maintenance, and repair, and the interpretative challenges they pose to art historians. In paintings, elements like overpaint or varnish can often be removed and distinguished from the original layer, as in the conservation project of Correggio's *Madonna*. In contrast, retouches on works on paper are virtually inseparable from the "original," due to the complete interpenetration of the graphic media with its support. During the workshop, Gabriella Pace, head of the ICG Paper Conservation Lab, used a UV magnifying glass to show us traces of old restorations that were otherwise invisible; this moment powerfully foregrounded the importance of recovering that depth of field that must not be flattened in our reading of the object.

These experiences have inspired me to approach Correggio's drawings in the Kupferstichkabinett in Dresden with fresh perspectives. I leave the workshop with more than just the laid paper I made in Fabriano and my 'locked' letters. I carry with me a network of junior and senior specialists from around the world, and a deeper understanding of how paper objects transform over time – how historical alterations change the way an object is cataloged and presented to the public, influence choices about acquisition and deaccessioning, and affect storage and conservation needs. This experience will shape not only my project on Correggio but my approach to objects in both my research and museum work for years to come.



Helen Buddensieg making laid paper at the Fondazione Fedrigoni Fabriano with the help of *mastro cartaio* Guido Agostino Biocco.  
Photo credit: Camilla Colzani



Close-up through a magnifying lens of Paolo Gerolamo Piola, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*. Magnified detail of an old lacuna filled in with tinted ink in a previous undocumented intervention. It is currently undergoing restoration at the ICG.  
Photo credit: Francesca Borgo



# Holy Hype

Rivalry and representation in Jubilee Rome



Rome has always been a city of movement and transformation. This is never truer than during its Holy Years. With 30 million pilgrims expected for the 2025 Jubilee, the city is once again undergoing a major facelift. A road that has seen countless pilgrims over the centuries is Via Giulia. In her research project *Inter-National Rome: Mapping Collective Identities in Via Giulia*, Susanne Kubersky-Piredda examines the social, religious, and cultural dynamics of foreign communities in early modern Rome and their influence on urban and visual culture on one of the earliest road axes of Renaissance Rome.

### A microcosm of foreigners

In 1508, Pope Julius II commissioned the famous architect Donato Bramante (1444–1514) to build a straight road axis through the narrow maze of Rome’s medieval streets. In honor of its patron and initiator, the new street was named Via Giulia. It was intended to connect some of the major governmental institutions and to facilitate the transport of goods. Another of its functions was to channel and manage the flow of pilgrims who crowded the city during the Holy Years. The neighborhood – located quite close to St. Peter’s – became a microcosm of foreigners: short-term travelers found accommodation in the numerous hospices built along the road; immigrants from various Italian and European regions permanently settled and worked in this area. Newcomers sharing common origins joined together to form confraternities and provide each other with mutual support. Some foreign communities, such as the Florentines, Neapolitans, Siennese, Bolognese, and Catalans, built representative churches along the street, and each Holy Year gave rise to further urban renewal. “Rome’s Jubilee history offers more than a glimpse into the past; it reflects how distinct communities from all across the Italian peninsula and from further afield in Europe adapted and presented themselves to each other, and – in constantly rubbing shoulders along this street – interacted in shared spaces”, explains principal investigator Susanne Kubersky-Piredda.

### Collective identities and urban space

“The façades of their churches were a distinctive element for the foreign communities, the ‘calling cards’ through which each community presented itself to the city and to the pilgrims who traveled along Via Giulia. Emblems, coats of arms, patron saints, and inscriptions on the façades ensured that the national affiliation was immediately recognizable,” points out PhD student Gaia Mazzacane. “The Neapolitan confraternity, for example, commissioned a new façade for their church Santo Spirito dei Napoletani with a distinctly Neapolitan architectural vocabulary that would combine magnificence with a display of identity.” According to team member Lilla Mátyók-Engel, “one of our aims is to develop tools that can bring to life both early modern material culture and a more elusive, intangible heritage. We hope to achieve this by making multisensory events like processions and the interactions of foreign communities in Rome accessible in new and innovative ways.” The documented 1625

Jubilee procession of the Siennese Confraternity, for example, was more than a merely devotional act; in following the route it did, it staked a strategic claim to urban space, asserting the presence of the confraternity among rival groups, and drawing the attention of the city’s public eye. The dynamics informing such practices and customs will be visualized on the project’s interactive research platform [romacommunispatria.eu](http://romacommunispatria.eu), which is currently in preparation.

### Jubilee business

The Holy Years were always a welcome source of revenue for Rome. All economic sectors turned a handsome profit from the Jubilee business, from small innkeepers to bakers and wine sellers, but artisans and artists also numbered among the beneficiaries. Of course, food, accommodation, and medical care were a major concern for any traveler who reached the city. “Studies have shown that the consumption of wine – and its price – increased drastically during Holy Years. Rents skyrocketed to three times the usual rates. The Curia profited from imports, taxes, and custom duties, thus enabling the Church to clear long-term debts faster,” emphasizes Tobias Daniels. As a recurring event, each Jubilee became a mirror of its time, revealing how power, belief, and identity collide in a densely packed and symbolically charged urban space. This project is an example of how the study of material culture and historical networks can uncover stories that resonate far beyond their origins, offering lessons in cultural adaptation and representation that are still relevant today.



- ▲ All foreign communities sought to showcase their patron saints as prominently as possible. This painting represents the Neapolitan San Gennaro in an altarpiece by Luca Giordano from 1705.
- ◀ In preparation of the Jubilee of 2025 a new square was built between Castel Sant’Angelo and St. Peter’s.
- ◀◀ A huge crowd flooded St. Peter’s Square at the opening of the Holy Year in 1575. The new Basilica was still under construction.



Antonio Tempesta's map of 1593 offers a detailed representation of the urban setting around Via Giulia. The Holy Years in particular spurred on construction and embellishment and thus fostered the rivalries between foreign communities.

1 - **St. Peter's Basilica** with the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles was Rome's most important destination for pilgrims. After 1450 it became necessary to create infrastructure for the growing numbers of visitors, especially during the Holy Years.

2 - **Via Giulia**, commissioned by Pope Julius II (1503–1513) in 1508 and designed by Donato Bramante, was one of the first straight road axes of Renaissance Rome.

3 - The construction of **Via della Lungara** was commissioned shortly before the Holy Year 1500 by Pope Alexander VI (1492–1503) and completed under Julius II. Also known as Via Sancta, the road was supposed to facilitate the traffic to St. Peter's. It runs symmetrically to Via Giulia on the opposite side of the Tiber.

4 - All of the foreign confraternities situated along Via Giulia had small hospices for the accommodation of pilgrims. However, the most important institution for charity and medical care in this neighborhood was the **Hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia**, which was renovated by Sixtus IV for the Jubilee of 1475.

5 - On the occasion of the Holy Year 1450, the balustrades of the **Ponte Sant'Angelo** collapsed under the weight of pilgrims, causing many deaths. Pope Sixtus IV had major urban renewal work carried out for the following Jubilee of 1475.

6 - Various foreign communities built magnificent churches along Via Giulia and also practiced their customary professions here. The area around **San Giovanni dei Fiorentini** was characterized by the presence of numerous Florentine banks.

7 - A **rope ferry service** close to the church of Santi Faustino e Giovita provided a constant link across the Tiber.

8 - Counter-Reformation Pope Gregory XIII (1572–1585) had a vision: to unite the diverse communities that professed spiritual allegiance to Rome into one universal Church. For the Jubilee of 1575, he put this vision into action by inviting foreign groups to establish a permanent presence in the city. Among the communities he promoted was the confraternity of the citizens from Brescia with their church **Santi Faustino e Giovita**.

9 - In view of the Holy Year 1650 and some 75 years after its founding, the Archconfraternity of the Neapolitans commissioned architect Cosimo Fanzago to design a new façade – now destroyed – for the church of **Spirito Santo dei Napoletani**.

10 - For foreign communities, national patron saints symbolized unity and showcased their identity to the wider public. **The Sienese confraternity** passionately promoted the veneration of St. Catherine of Siena, canonized in 1461. In 1600, they lobbied for her feast day to be included in the revised Breviario Romano. By 1625, they had intensified their efforts by commissioning the artist Rutilio Manetti to create a processional cross depicting St. Catherine's stigmatization – an unofficial miracle at the time.



11 - Long before the church of Santa Maria di Monserrato was founded in 1518, there were already two hospices for subjects of the Crown of Aragon in this neighborhood, both probably founded for the Holy Year of 1350.

12 - The medieval **English Hospice of the Holy Trinity and St. Thomas of Canterbury** was restored and expanded for the Jubilee of 1450.

13 - The Archconfraternity of the Bolognese citizens was founded during the Jubilee of 1575. In the following years the architect Ottaviano Mascherino designed their church **Santi Giovanni Evangelista e Petronio**.

14 - To facilitate the flow of pilgrims, Pope Sixtus IV commissioned a new bridge called **Ponte Sisto** at the lower end of Via Giulia in 1475, using blocks taken from the Colosseum.

Inter-National Rome. Mapping Collective Identities in Via Giulia  
Research Priority: Foreign Communities in Italian Cities: Dynamics of Cohabitation, Interaction, and Representation  
Senior Scholar: Susanne Kubersky-Piredda  
Participating scholars: Silvia Canalda Llobet (University of Barcelona), Tobias Daniels (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich), Lilla Mátyók-Engel (Staatliche Museen, Berlin), Gaia Mazzacane (Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa), Isabel Ruiz Garnelo (UNED, Madrid)  
Digital humanities project: Multi-author interactive digital platform romacomunispatria.eu  
Current publication project: Lilla Mátyók Engel, *Siena a Roma. Tradizioni, riti e cultura visiva della confraternita di Santa Caterina da Siena in Via Giulia (1519–1630)*, Roma communis patria, vol. 4



Via Giulia, commissioned in 1508, was designed and laid out in part to channel the flow of pilgrims.





Selected publications from our series

The Hertziana promotes a variety of publication formats depending on the type of academic content to be conveyed, from open access to print publications. Our editorial team accompanies the entire workflow from original manuscript to finished book, by acting as an intermediary between publisher and author, checking form and content, advising on titles and cover design, arranging peer-review and copy-editing, and checking the final quality of layout and print. The *Journal Römische Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* is one of the leading peer-reviewed academic journals in the field of Italian art history in a global context. Over the past few years, the chronological and thematical spectrum of articles has expanded significantly, ranging from topics like soundscapes of medieval Rome to political engaged artmaking in the 1970s. All volumes are made available in open access after a twelve-month embargo period.



Studi della Bibliotheca Hertziana  
Silvana Editoriale

The Volta Dorata is the vault of Room 80 in Rome's Domus Aurea, built by Emperor Nero in AD 64–68. The function of Room 80 as a luxury triclinium, its central location, and the artistic taste of its owner all played a prominent role in the elaboration and definition of the refined decorative system of the vault. This book provides a critical analysis and comparison of all graphic works – including drawings, watercolors, and colored engravings – depicting the Volta Dorata since its discovery in the 1470s by early Renaissance artists and antiquarians. Marco Brunetti, *Nero's Domus Aurea. Reconstruction and Reception of the Volta Dorata*, Milan 2022. The manuscript had been elected for the Publication Prize of the Bibliotheca Hertziana. Further volumes of this series will be presented here: <https://www.biblhertz.it/en/pub/studi>



Hertziana Studies in Art History  
Open Access

As technologies related to AI (Artificial Intelligence) rapidly advance, the hype surrounding the acronym 'AI' has become an evolving but persistent phenomenon. However, the reality of working with AI technologies often falls short of its idealized representation, not least because it involves many constraints and difficulties, which become particularly obvious in interdisciplinary research contexts. *From Hype to Reality: Artificial Intelligence in the Study of Art and Culture*, ed. by Eva Cetinić and Darío Negueruela del Castillo, DOI: 10.48431/hsah.03 <https://www.biblhertz.it/de/pub/hsah>



Bellori Edition  
Wallstein Verlag

Like no other, the painter Domenichino was able to depict states of mind and capture the senses of the viewer. Bellori's great admiration for his artist friend is evident not least in his breath-taking description of the Communion of St. Jerome, one of the most beautiful ecphrases in his Lives. And yet, a shadow lies over Domenichino's life. Although his boundless dedication led him to create numerous famous works, with each accomplishment, the hurdles in his way also grew. What began as an artistic competition early on developed into stressful rivalry, in which the envy of others increasingly revealed its threatening, even deadly, face. *Giovan Pietro Bellori, Vita di Domenico Zampieri, il Domenichino. Das Leben des Domenico Zampieri, gen. Domenichino*, edition, translation, commentary, essay by Marieke von Bernstorff, vol. 8, Göttingen 2022. The already published volumes of the Bellori Edition are presented here: <https://www.biblhertz.it/en/pub/bellori-edition>



Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana  
Hirmer Verlag

How does the world look at Europe? In which constellations does what kind of 'knowledge of Europe' arise – and how is it formally, thematically, materially, or technically visualized? This book explores these and other questions on the basis of thirty objects spanning a period from ancient Egypt to the present day and geographically encircling the globe. *Blick Richtung Europa? Dreißig „außer-europäische“ Objekte geben Antwort*, ed. by Tanja Michalsky and Matthias Weiß, Munich 2024. Further volumes of this series will be presented here: <https://www.biblhertz.it/en/pub/roemische-studien>



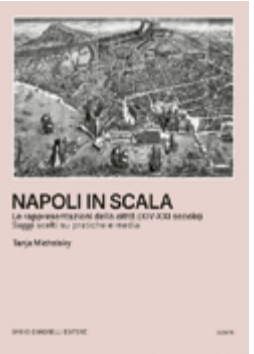
Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana  
Hirmer Verlag

More than any of its dubious companions and competitors, *invidia*, or envy, was characterized as the quintessential "artist's vice" in early modern art and art literature. This volume sheds light on the iconographic strategies of visualizing envy in the allegorical self-staging of painters, sculptors, and architects, as well as on its central role as a category in the contemporary discourse about art. Jana Graul, *Neid. Kunst, Moral und Kreativität in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Munich 2022. The manuscript had been elected for the Publication Prize of the Bibliotheca Hertziana. The book has been awarded with the Hans Janssen Prize (2020) of the Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Göttingen. Further volumes of this series will be presented here: <https://www.biblhertz.it/en/pub/roemische-studien>



Quaderni della Bibliotheca Hertziana  
Campisano Editore

Reproducing, representing, copying, or filming an artwork is the inevitable result of an interpretation, which can reveal neglected aspects of the original model, as well as disguising or changing others. This is due both to the intentions of those involved in making or requesting a copy and to the intrinsic difficulties of the translation from one medium to another. The ten essays contained in this book examine reproductions and copies in different media of Michelangelo Buonarroti's sculptures, exploring and investigating their visual historiography from the 16th century to the present day. *(Im)material Michelangelo: Toward a Visual Historiography of Sculpture Between Reproduction and Art-Historical Enquiry*, ed. by Giulia Daniele and Daniele Di Cola, Rome 2023. Further volumes of this series will be presented here: <https://www.biblhertz.it/en/pub/quaderni>



Scritti  
Dario Cimorelli Editore

This volume, published outside our publication series, presents a selection of essays dedicated by Tanja Michalsky to the history of art, urban planning, and architecture in Naples, written and published originally in German and presented here for the first time in Italian translation. Through a wide range of studies that explore different subjects, from individual tombs to family chapels and historical cartographic interpretations of the city to a critical analysis of commonplaces about Naples in the cinematic context, the book unfolds with the intention of understanding Naples and its defining features. *Tanja Michalsky, Napoli in scala. Le rappresentazioni della città (XIV-XXI secolo). Saggi scelti su pratiche e media*, ed. by Adrian Bremenkamp, Anna Magnago Lampugnani and Elisabetta Scirocco, Milan 2024. <https://www.biblhertz.it/en/pub/outside-the-series>





The two years as a predoctoral fellow at the Hertziana have allowed me to develop my PhD project in ways I could not have imagined. I arrived in Rome at the early stages of my PhD research working on a project on painted processional crosses from late medieval central Italy. I thought there were about fifteen such objects that survived; thanks to the labyrinthian Hertziana stacks and the kind librarians who were always willing to guide me through them, my dissertation now includes a catalog of seventy crosses. For the first time as a graduate student, I haven't been waiting for books to ship from other libraries or scans of articles; I've had everything I needed at my fingertips. A colleague of mine recently joked

"a ognuno la sua croce," teasing me for the flurry of books perpetually open on my desk depicting medieval crosses. And yet in all seriousness, writing a dissertation, and doing academic work more generally, can often feel arduous and lonely. For that reason, I have been all the more grateful for the Hertziana – to have found a productive work place, a stimulating program of events and trips, and a community of supportive colleagues. Whenever I go outside onto our sixth-floor terrace to watch the sun go down over Rome and its ramble of churches and clay-tiled roofs, I am sure to be greeted by a familiar face and a smile. Stephanie Wisowaty, PhD candidate in History of Art at Yale University

There's an old saying that the beauty of a library is finding that which you hadn't originally sought. That holds true at the Hertziana. For me, this research institution represents a space of possibility and discovery, not only in the rows of books upon its shelves, but in the conversations that permeate its interstices. Discussions over coffee and lunch proved remarkably fruitful and stimulating. The discoveries of others, peers and professors alike, led in new directions as seeming tangents turned into new, and suddenly essential, pathways. In other words, the Hertziana is a space where serendipity is valued - and where it may lead to insights. Alejandro Nodarse, PhD candidate in History of Art + Architecture, Harvard University



My research project involves studying cross-cultural exchanges in terms of historical photographs from the Province of Naples. Therefore, it is necessary for me to explore both the Italian historical context in which the photographs were produced and the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II's collection at Yıldız Palace as an archival space where they were experienced, contemplated, and interpreted. In achieving this, I have benefited immensely from the library holdings of the Hertziana, which has a large section devoted to books about the history of photography in Italy, the visual culture of Naples, and artistic depictions

of Mount Vesuvius. The library has also accelerated my research on the perceptions of Naples in Ottoman Turkish newspapers and magazines by enabling swift access to a recently established digital research platform. One of the surprising discoveries I made during my research was the habit in some Ottoman sources of drawing parallels between Naples and Istanbul. As my research progresses in the Ottoman periodicals, I suspect that it will reveal this analogy between these two cities to have played a deeper role in the Ottoman imagination than first supposed. Alev Berberoğlu, Postdoctoral Fellow

I discovered the Hertziana in the summer of 2018 and it was a turning point in my personal and professional life. It changed the way I worked on topics I've always been passionate about, such as the philosophy of space or the relationship between aesthetics and geography. The Institute offered me the ideal environment to develop my research project. I experienced for the first time what it means to be an autonomous scholar and the advantages of doing research in an international context that is attentive to the dialogue between different traditions and disciplines (art history, urbanism, history of cartography and architecture, media theory, film and visual culture studies). Tommaso Morawski, Postdoctoral Fellow



The Bibliotheca Hertziana has some of the most spectacular views of the Roman cityscape that Rome has to offer. One afternoon, as I stood on the sixth-floor terrace overlooking the Scalinata di Trinità dei Monti, it suddenly occurred to me that the obelisk within a stone's throw of my own office – the kind of object that now emblemizes the city itself – originated elsewhere, coming to Rome under the duress of conquest. I realized that the palimpsestic urban fabric at my feet was strewn with seized monuments and architectures of spoliation that are witness to Rome's long history as a city looted and looting, beginning with antiquity and continuing almost into the present day. When I eventually visited the Museo dell'Arte Salvata, the Palazzo Marina, and the Museo delle Civiltà with my research group, I realized that looted art of one kind or another – whether the result of continental wartime conflict, tomb-raiding for the black market, or the colonization of the Global South – can be found just about everywhere. Julia Vasquez, Postdoctoral Fellow

It has been extremely valuable to be at a place with experts on early modern visual culture. My "home disciplines" are musicology and the history of science, and although images have always played an important role in my research, the exchange with historians of art and visual culture has immeasurably enriched my postdoctoral project on images of sound propagation in early modern acoustical treatises. Their questions and observations on the sources I work with have not only broadened the kinds of questions I am asking, but also altered my approach and opened up new avenues for further research. Leendert van der Miesen, Postdoctoral Fellow



Although the humanities often avow a commitment to addressing questions of race and gender and to decolonizing knowledge, theory doesn't always translate into practice. What the Hertziana created for my colleagues and me through the #ScienceForUkraine initiative was something more: solidarity in action. This solidarity offered a much-needed safe harbour, intellectual stimulation, understanding, and a platform to voice our ideas through conferences, discussions, and study trips. Labels such as "academics in exile" and "scholars at risk" fail to capture how the anxious bodies to which they are attached rebel against distance as a key aspect of the traditional research paradigm. However, Russia's war of aggression isn't an

abstract occurrence but instead our lived reality. What I observe in myself is almost a constant split between being simultaneously here in Rome and there in Ukraine in my thoughts and projects. However, distance need not mean disengagement. Furthermore, this state of in-betweenness is actually accepted and welcomed by my fellows at the Hertziana. Even the walls of the Institute itself and the daily walk through the streets of Rome are a soothing reminder that, amidst all the uncertainty and precarity, there are things that withstand. It just takes care and attention. Oleksandra Osadcha, Postdoctoral Fellow and Curator of the Museum of the Kharkiv School of Photography MOKSOP, Kharkiv, Ukraine

**Video: Supporting Scholars at Risk**  
After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Hertziana decided to support seven Ukrainian and Russian fellows as part of the #ScienceForUkraine initiative. In this video the fellows speak about their pasts, presents, and future hopes from a professional and personal point of view. Their experiences remind us that peace is a precious privilege, and that freedom is the foundation of all research activity.





The Scientific Services are vital for the running of the Institute. Collaboration between them is just as important as their close cooperation with the research departments and research groups. The following pages will document their crucial importance to the life of the Institute and illustrate the synergies that can emerge on the basis of open internal communication across all areas of the Institute.

Photographic Collection

With a collection of more than 1,450,000 photographs, negatives, digital images and digitized material, primarily on Italian art and architecture from late antiquity until the present day, the Photographic Collection is one of the world's leading art historical photo archives. Scientific photographic campaigns using state-of-the-art technology support research at the Institute, anticipate future research projects, and set new standards for documentary photography. Furthermore, the collection grows systematically through the addition of photographic campaigns and acquisitions as well as donations and bequests. The progressive digitization and scientific cataloging of the collection implies its constant updating. Photographs are in the spotlight of scholarly discourse both as objects in their own right and as carriers of visual information, enabling far-reaching contextualizations.

Digital Humanities Lab

The Institute is committed to putting the principles of Open Access into action by making both the results of research and the material that this research draws upon available to the broader community of scholars and interested members of the public. The DH Lab coordinates the digital infrastructures of the Hertziana. Furthermore its members develop new methods and systems at the boundary between Art History and Computer Science. They maintain a network of researchers and developers, from within the Institute's Departments as well as from external institutions. Together they collaborate on a range of DH projects, including digital mapping, text and image digitization, computer vision, digital publishing, and Open Science. The DH Lab is member of the Consortium for Open Research Data in the Humanities (CORDH).

Library

The Library holds one of the world's most important collections of research and primary literature on the post-antiquity art and cultural history of Italy and the Mediterranean region as well as an archive of literary bequests. First created in the late 19th century as the library of Henriette Hertz, founder of the Hertziana, the collection today encompasses items ranging from rare incunabula to state-of-the-art digital publications. Its thematic orientation follows the long-term priorities of the Institute. Open stacks, thematic organization, reference information service, spacious work environments and long opening hours together with a well-developed technical infrastructure guarantee optimal research conditions. By acting as an essential interface between the Institute's Research Departments and experts from the art history world, the Library is an important center for international research and attracts up to one hundred users each day.

Publications, Public Relations, Reporting

The PPRR service unit is responsible for the outward-facing activities of the Institute; it attends to those tasks relating to the face that the Hertziana presents both to the larger research community and the broader public. By overseeing several publication series and journals, this unit offers suitable solutions in print and open access for the various research interests of the Institute and, if necessary, modifies existing publication series and adapts them to the requirements of specific research ventures. In addition, it plans and organizes publications in the respective publication organs and supports the quality assurance of the scholarship produced at the Institute. PPRR is committed to disseminating the research and results of our Institute to the academic community in the humanities and to presenting selected research projects and their results to a wider public. By adapting communication strategies, it acts as an intermediary between different stakeholders and thus contributes both to the internal communication within the Institute and the external communication that influences how the Institute is perceived in the wider academic community. The aim is to enhance the visibility of the Hertziana with all its international and interdisciplinary research activities, to strengthen its position in the discipline of art history, and to make a contribution to the broader appreciation of its achievements in the public eye.

Administration

The Administration attends to the day-to-day business of the Hertziana and supports the Institute in preparing and implementing decisions. It ensures that all Departments, Research Groups, affiliated scholars, and Scientific Services, can operate efficiently and smoothly. More particularly, it addresses the challenges that arise for a German institution domiciled in an Italian environment and dependent upon the integration of scholars and personnel from around the world. This entails a need both to craft responses to issues that affect the Institute as a whole and to find solutions to problems that can be highly specific to individual members of the Hertziana community.





# Now We Have Seen

Making research visible, reaching new audiences, opening up new perspectives

Picture this: You’re a talented female artist, but your work isn’t getting attention. This was the reality for many female artists in Italy (and elsewhere) during the 1970s. And then picture this: You’re researching this topic today, but it’s not capturing the public’s attention. That’s exactly the challenge we faced from day one of this research and publication project. We tackled it head-on, starting with our application for third-party funding from the Italian Council.

Let’s first go back to July 1970 when Romans woke up to find the street walls of their city plastered with the Manifesto di Rivolta Femminile. This manifesto was the joint work of the artist Carla Accardi, journalist Elvira Banotti, and former art critic and feminist activist Carla Lonzi. In *Sputiamo su Hegel* (in the ‘74 edition) Lonzi later wrote that the manifesto contained “the most significant phrases that the general idea of feminism had brought to our consciousness.” In particular, it declared “Abbiamo guardato per 4.000 anni: adesso abbiamo visto!” In other words, a radical act of *seeing* (vedere) had suddenly broken with the passive *looking* (guardare) that the patriarchy had imposed on women for four thousand years. The aim was to actively bring female perspectives into the discussion in order to initiate social change.

Half a century later, this call to action inspired the art historian Giorgia Gastaldon to undertake a research project that was alert not only to the transition from the passive *guardare* to the active *vedere*, but also to the phrases’s emphasis on the visual. This emphasis was to be expected, given that two of the manifesto’s authors were closely involved with the art scene and the history of art. Her research project probed the relationship between women and art in 1970s in Italy by examining how female artists tried to reach the public through art shows and exhibitions, how themes of the home and domesticity figured in their work, how editorial initiatives promoted women artists (past and contemporary), how abstraction became the preferred style of some of them because it promised freedom from patriarchal iconographical legacies, and what role photography played in the female emancipation movement. The funding application was crafted around Giorgia Gastaldon’s research project addressing the relationship between

women, feminism, and art in the 1970s. The publication as a printed book in the series *Studi della Bibliotheca Hertziana* stood front and center in the application; we then complemented it with an outreach campaign that ran in parallel with the scientific activity and preparation of the publication.

*The Publications, Public Relations, and Reporting Unit made significant contributions to the project by improving and expanding it. This lasted from writing the original application to promoting the closing events.*

Giorgia Gastaldon

**Giorgia, why did you consider the Hertziana series *Studi della Bibliotheca Hertziana* to publish your research?**

“The series is a conduit of research of the highest scientific quality, with a stable and effective publication rhythm. Publishing within this series is a guarantee of the academic quality of the proposed studies and therefore something very prestigious, even in terms of what it means for the personal CV. The series also has an excellent distribution, meaning that individual volumes reach an audience beyond the narrow circle of insiders. In addition – and this is very important to me – the series is characterized by the production of high-quality books both in terms of the graphic design and the printing materials adopted. This aspect should not be underestimated because the possibility of offering books that present themselves as scientific and authoritative while at the same time appealing to contemporary tastes is something as important as it is rare, especially for art historians”.



Before feminism entered art, no one had dealt with the power relations of intimacy, that is, with the power relations in interpersonal relationships. This is what I mean when I say that feminism in art led to a change in the means of expression in an artistic sense. So it wasn’t just a political battle, but also one revolving around purely artistic criteria.

Silvia Giambrone, artist, quote from the Hertziana *Insights* video Now We Have Seen



Social media enabled direct collaboration with partner institutions during project related events such as the book launch and conference at Magazzino Italian Art, Cold Spring.



From the beginning, the project was accompanied by a continuous social media campaign. The posts provided information about the project itself, its events, and participating scholars. The main goal was to provide insight into important achievements of the feminist movements in the 1970s, important exhibitions, the women artists, and their work.





The project’s unique appeal lies in its seamless integration of research and communication. We spearheaded the creative execution, effectively translating the scientific findings into a more accessible format for a broader audience. The campaign was split into two parts. First, there was a social media campaign that ran throughout the entire funding period of twelve months. The second part, a documentary video, was planned from the beginning and completed towards the end of the project, with the book’s finished essays at hand. The challenge was to release it in parallel with the book within the duration of the 12-month project.

The social media campaign provided information about the project itself, the art historians involved, and the project’s public events. More importantly, this campaign gave us the opportunity to enter into a dialogue with the historical era and to invite our followers to engage with the issues of this period. The aim was to make the female protagonists of this era better known and their artistic work more visible, in addition to drawing attention to certain achievements of the feminist movement in the sense of a more general preservation of historical memory. Anniversaries (#on this day), birthdays, and holidays set the pace, with the campaign starting on International Women’s Day, March 8, 2023.

In this project it was a central concern for us not only to promote the results of the study but also to tell stories from this specific historical period. This was especially important because today there is a tendency to take the achievements of this period for granted. Looking at history helps to raise awareness that emancipatory processes have not lost their relevance and timeliness. In view of this, we have supplemented the book publication with the video that addresses the topic of the research in a different way, both in form and content. As part of our Hertziana Insights series, *Now We Have Seen* presents both a scholarly reflection and an engaging narrative that reaches far beyond the boundaries of academia.

We started shooting towards the end of the research project, so that the video could draw upon the research results and supplement them with a different perspective. Giovanna Zapperi was recruited as a further expert, who, together with Giorgia Gastaldon in the video, provided new thematic insights. We placed particular emphasis on a narrative brought to life through the integration of historical film material. The personal statements of the contemporary artist Silvia Giambrone bridged the gap between the achievements of art and women in the 1970s and today’s art scene. The responses to the communication campaign were striking: there is a tremendous interest in exploring the work of these female artists and the achievements of their generation. However, tapping into this interest can only be achieved by making the artists and their work **VISIBLE**, thereby allowing them to **BE SEEN**.

*The narrative that feminism has introduced into art is a narrative of small, extremely powerful things, and as far as my work is concerned, it pushes into the very furrow that they, the feminist artists, have plowed.*

Silvia Giambrone, artist, quote from the Hertziana Insights video *Now We Have Seen*



▲ Giorgia Gastaldon during two crucial moments of the project: the presentation of the book at Magazzino Italian Art in Cold Spring, NY, and during the shooting of the video at the Collezione Farnesina in the headquarters of the Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale, one of the many emblematic filming locations.



▲ Photographer Carla Cerati portrayed fellow photographer Paola Mattioli in the many roles of her daily life in her work *Angelo del Focolare* (1977). Cerati wrote: “As easy as it is for men to keep private life separate from the public one, it is equally difficult for a woman to detach from what for centuries has been defined as her own nature, her destiny”, quote from *Now We Have Seen. Women and Art in 1970s Italy*, edited by Giorgia Gastaldon, p. 62.

■ Head of Publications, Public Relations, Reporting: Marieke von Bernstorff  
Project: Giorgia Gastaldon  
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Cooperation partners: Magazzino Italian Art, Cold Spring; Kunstgeschichtliches Institut der Ruhr-Universität Bochum; Fondazione Centro Studi sull’Arte Licia e Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti



Hertziana Insights  
*Now We Have Seen.*  
*Women and Art in 1970s Italy*



▲ Tomaso Binga during the performance *Poesia Muta*, Salerno, 1977.



# Embracing Digital Publications in the Humanities

Elisa Bastianello in conversation with prisma

In the world of the humanities, digital scholarly publications often don't get the recognition they deserve. Even in projects where digital formats make sense because they facilitate the collections of sources, links to databases, and interactive elements, many academic mentors still advise junior scholars to pursue the traditional route of paper publications. Elisa Bastianello, manager of Digital Publications at the Hertziana, wants to overcome this reluctance to embrace change by highlighting the advantages of digital publications in the humanities.

**Elisa, what is special about digital publications?**  
With my background in the humanities, I can objectively assess the value of digital proposals. The role I've held for the past five years since I started as Digital Publications Manager at the Hertziana was created with a clear understanding of the paper-versus-digital debate. Our goal is to produce scholarly works that take full advantage of the digital format, not just digital copies of printed books. A key advantage is that our publications are Diamond Open Access, meaning they are free and accessible to everyone, potentially forever, at no cost to authors or readers. This is in line with European research funding regulations and the vision of the Max Planck Society.

**In your opinion what are the most important advantages of Open Access publications?**  
Open Access means that these works can be more easily consulted, discussed and cited than traditional printed texts, which are often limited in availability. Digital formats also allow research to be shared widely. My PC hard drive is filled with thousands of pages of transcripts of unpublished manuscripts from libraries and archives that might be useful to other scholars, even those working in different fields. In the past, these were reduced to

mere citations or excerpts in print. I recall the challenges of converting my digital inventory into a printed form in my thesis. Sharing them in an open data repository linked to my publication would have advanced knowledge, while still fully honoring the duties of attribution. Furthermore, I often had to use my limited word count to add general information about people or places in papers, when a simple link would have sufficed.

**In what way are digital publications embedded in and connected with the Institute's general digital strategy?**  
Working at the Hertziana offers the privilege of being part of an institution with both a rich publishing history and cutting-edge digital humanities initiatives. Projects such as HumanitiesConnect's Digital Library, which offers over 4,000 digitized books, and the digital edition of the complete works of Heinrich Wölfflin demonstrate our innovative approach. The Hertziana Studies in Art History series, with three volumes published and more in progress, exemplifies our commitment to sustainable scholarly communication. Thanks to support from the DFG, we've developed a workflow that can be shared with other institutions, ensuring that high-quality research remains accessible and authoritative.

▶ The Digital Library allows readers to search the full text content of more than 4,800 rare books from the fields of Art History and the History of Science, with the possibility of checking the original image in parallel with the transcription.

**HumanitiesConnect Digital Library**  
The HumanitiesConnect Digital Library gives access to a collection of 4,800 digitized and transcribed rare books from the fields of Art History and the History of Science, drawn from the libraries of the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History (Rome), the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut (Florence), and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (Berlin).

🔍 Search... ➔



▲ Heinrich Wölfflin *Gesammelte Werke*: Digital critical editions go beyond mere full-text searching by allowing the integration of transcriptions, bibliographic annotations, and synoptic indexes generated from collections of linked named entities, such as people, places, and artworks. In this way, all research is made available to scholars and readers, and in turn becomes a source for further study. The Heinrich Wölfflin *Gesammelte Werke* digital edition is one such ongoing project, undertaken in collaboration with the University of Zurich.

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▶ Open Access aims to reach readers across national and institutional boundaries. We encourage Open Access by offering Hertziana scholars the possibility to publish their results in *Hertziana Studies in Art History*, the first digitally-born publication series at our Institute. Its goal is to provide the ideal environment for academic publications that gain the most from the native digital format through web links, semantic annotations, interactive content and open linked data connections. This volume focuses on digital models and their use in visualizing complexities that conventional methods of art history have been unable to capture thus far.



*For me, the transition from architectural history research to digital publishing did not mean trading my research for a more clerical job. Instead, it allowed me to focus on digital humanities and digital publishing for the humanities. Embracing digital publishing is about making knowledge more accessible and engaging for everyone. At the Hertziana, we're excited to be at the forefront of this change, ensuring that our publications are open to all and continue to inspire and inform. We invite everyone to join us on this journey towards a more connected and informed world.*

Elisa Bastianello

■ **Digital Humanities Lab (DH Lab)**  
Digital Publications Manager: Elisa Bastianello



The HumanitiesConnect Digital Library gives access to a collection of 4,800 digitized and transcribed rare books



# Rare Books Yield Rare Insights

## Why rare books are important for future scholarship

In a world of tweet, gifs, apps, and memes, it has become fashionable to forecast a grim future for books and libraries. And yet upon entering the hushed reading spaces of the Hertziana's library, a visitor quickly notices numerous fellows poring over open books at desks that groan under the weight of stacked volumes. Such a sight suggests that today's scholars continue to immerse themselves in

the world of printed books while embracing all the affordances that digital resources offer: easy accessibility, search functions, embedded links, and so on. In fact, instead of being at loggerheads, much contemporary scholarship demonstrates how old and new complement each other. One project at the library exemplifies this symbiosis of the digital and the analog: the *Rara Project*.



The *Rara Project*, like all good library projects, continues what has always been successfully practiced, but with new perspectives. Henriette Hertz herself acquired rara for her collection – old, rare, and valuable books – and every library director since has followed suit. Ludwig Schudt (1893–1961), the first librarian at the Hertziana, systematically expanded the collection of guide literature and in 1930 presented the fruits of his efforts to the public with the bibliographic standard work *Le Guide di Roma*. Thanks largely to Schudt, the Hertziana owns the world's most complete collection of guides to Rome – a collection that gives a unique insight into the changes in the city and the way it has been perceived over the centuries. As Head Librarian, Golo Maurer decided to carry on this tradition but with a different approach. In the past, before reprints or digital copies on the internet existed, old books were primarily collected for their content. In other words, they were treated primarily as sources of textual information. Today, in the digital era, these texts are easy and convenient to access – most have already been digitized somewhere. So why keep collecting?

**Materiality: key to hidden information**  
What is the significance of this historical material to contemporary research? Elisabetta Scirocco, permanent researcher in the Michalsky Department, addressed this question against the backdrop of her own research:  
**Elisabetta Scirocco:** Old books constitute an irreplaceable resource for historical research, and art history research is no exception. Even when they are not themselves the object of investigation, ancient books are not only a 'source' for direct information on works and monuments, but also offer the actors' view of past events and phenomena (what Michael Baxandall called the 'period eye') – a view that needs to be interpreted and decoded, also in a comparative manner.

In fact, since the material turn, researchers no longer just focus on content; they are also increasingly interested in the materiality of the objects that convey this content. Materiality provides different insights that can offer answers to numerous questions about historical context: How is the book made? How large or small is it? How much effort went into its production? Was it expensive or cheap? What was its target audience? Under what circumstances was it meant to be read? And how is the reading process materially organized?

◀ Night view of the eruption of Vesuvius, print with handwritten note "Eruzione accaduta la sera dei 12 Agosto 1805", pasted inside the book by G. Macrino, *De Vesuvio*, Naples 1693.



▲ Our team of book restorers is crucial to preserving the Hertziana's librarian heritage.

*In my specific case, as a researcher working on medieval and early modern art, architecture, and urban planning in Naples and Southern Italy, I found the library of the Hertziana to be the ideal environment for my investigations. Not only was the most recent research literature readily available, but an amazingly rich collection of rare books was suddenly at my disposal - city guides and travel literature that spoke directly to my interests in the Kingdom of Sicily (the focus of my department's research) and in volcanic phenomena in the Neapolitan and Phlegraean area (one of my fields of research is dedicated to natural disasters). This 'volcanic' collection is now one of the richest available to scholars, and it was specially enlarged in response to our research questions.*  
Elisabetta Scirocco

**Working with original rare books using digital techniques: online exhibitions**  
Working with old books is a cultural technique that must be preserved or even relearned. In contrast to former times, it has become ever more necessary to remind scholars of the advantages of working with original rare books (and not only with digital versions). From this work emerged the idea of organizing a scientifically curated online exhibition named *Paper Erup-*



tions. The exhibition took shape using the rare books of the Hertziana in collaboration with the Department Michalsky and in particular with Elisabetta Scirocco and the interdisciplinary ERC research group DisComPoSE (Disasters, Communication and Politics in Southwestern Europe: The Making of Emergency Response Policies in the Early Modern Age) based at the University of Naples.

This cooperation enabled a close integration of library expertise with current interdisciplinary research approaches and led to a cooperation between academic and research institutions. Two library scholars, Philine Helas and Hanna Stegemann, were also deeply involved in the research process, which generated a wide range of perspectives and questions. Moreover, the topic of Mount Vesuvius had a subtle and unnerving contemporary relevance; even if it is often ignored, the volcano looms over the city of Naples and continue to pose a threat to it. This project also gave us the opportunity to enlarge our collection with targeted acquisitions. All participants had direct access to the books – a privilege enjoyed by only very few today. Precisely this opportunity to study sources in their original materiality was decisive for the outcome and the results of the project.

Digital facsimiles

An important technical step was to transform the selected rare-books into digital facsimiles and to make them accessible to a wider audience in an online exhibition. The library’s experience in digitizing its holdings – a process originally initiated nearly twenty years ago by the former head librarian Andreas Thielemann – proved advantageous here since significant expertise had been accumulated during this time.

**Anna Wilkens:** First and foremost, the technical equipment is crucial: knowing which scanners are best suited for which materials. But they also need to be operated correctly, which requires a lot of knowledge, time, and experience. Post-processing ensures that the digital copies resemble the original colors as closely as possible. And, of course, the books must be digitized in their entirety. All of this takes time but distinguishes our work from cheap scans, the so-called ‘digital trash’ that clutters the internet.

Two exhibitions

Initially, the original books had been exhibited for internal researchers and collaborators. However, the material exuded a palpable fascination for all visitors, and we always encouraged these visitors not only to have a look on the open pages but also literally to pick up the rare books and to examine them. Over many years, with generous support from the Max Planck Society, we have carried out a comprehensive restoration project of our rare book collection. The books have now been stabilized to a sufficient degree for them to be handled. This was a particular highlight for younger scholars, who on this occasion



Scholars at Work, still under the shadow of the pandemic: our fellow scholars examining the rare books and enjoying the palpable sense of fascination they evoke.

Rare-Books: Form follows function: All our rare-books can always be consulted in original. This is an untitled travel diary of an English lady, 1826. It combines handwritten excerpts of text fragments, mainly by English, French, and Italian writers, and pictures of various kinds. Most of these are prints, with the exception of two gouaches on two consecutive pages, each depicting an eruption of Vesuvius.

Do interesting things and then talk about them: Book launch at the Museo di Roma - Palazzo Braschi.



experienced their first direct encounter with a large number of historic books on the same subject. Although this opportunity was only fleeting and lasted only for the two days of this very short exhibition, it was nevertheless valuable. By contrast, the online exhibition remains accessible.

Transforming the digital into print

The online exhibition was so successful that the idea emerged to turn it back into a printed book. This is not a contradiction but an expression of a post-digital approach: Every medium has its own qualities and possibilities; one does not replace the other. This undertaking required as much effort as the exhibition itself, as a book follows a completely different logic than a website, provides different information, is structured differently, and is used differently. The culmination of the project’s final metamorphosis was marked by a book presentation at the Museo di Roma - Palazzo Braschi, which attracted a considerable number of attendees. The original planning had not envisioned this last stage of the project, in which the digital exhibition resulted in a book publication. But ultimately it repeats what has happened in earlier media revolutions; one medium does not simply replace the other. Instead, there is a lively back and forth between the old and the new. Good historical scholarship learns to harness the energy of this two-way traffic and use it to advance our knowledge of the past.

**Head librarian:** Golo Maurer  
**Institutional affiliation:** Department Michalsky  
**Scientific project:** Philine Helas, Elisabetta Scirocco  
**Participating scholars:** Domenico Cecere, Philine Helas, Golo Maurer, Annachiara Monaco, Antonio Perrone, Elisabetta Scirocco, Milena Viceconte  
**Digitization of rare books & IT-support:** Anna Wilkens, Paola Filatro, Klaus Werner, Elisa Bastianello  
**Project coordination:** Hanna Sophie Stegemann  
**Exhibition website:** Tatjana Bartsch  
**Cooperation partner:** ERC Project DisComPoSE (Disasters, Communication and Politics in Southwestern Europe: The Making of Emergency Response Policies in the Early Modern Age); Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, P.I. Domenico Cecere  
**Third party funding:** European Union’s Horizon 2020, grant agreement No 759829



**Paper Eruptions**  
Four Centuries of Volcanoes in Print from the Library’s Rara Collection Online exhibition



# From Isolated Facts to Knowledge Graphs

Digital Humanities Scientist Alessandro Adamou explains how digital data connectivity may unlock new insights in the Humanities

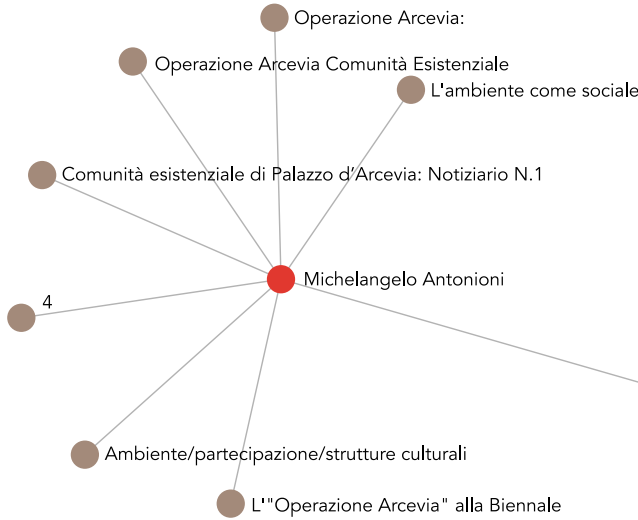
The Digital Humanities is the leading edge of a paradigm shift in the way scholars in the humanities go about their work, formulate their questions, and conduct the research that seeks to answer them. The methods it offers have now reached a level of sophistication that enables them to process not just text and numbers, but also the images and material objects that are the life blood of art history. The Hertziana’s DH Lab is committed to exploring the possibilities and embracing the potential that this development brings with it for art history.

**What is a knowledge graph and what is its significance for the work that the Hertziana DH Lab is undertaking?**

Traditionally, knowledge has been seen as isolated facts, but DH is teaching us to see facts as connections between entities. Many disciplines base their understanding of a database on a traditional notion – one in which the content of an entry consists of only the information that has been collected about it. The knowledge graph is a database paradigm that overcomes these limitations. It sees all entities (regardless of whether they are artworks or people or places or even events and personal relationships) not as collections of properties and values, but as single nodes that are connected together through arcs. The arcs have a label – for example, something that designates them as being of a certain type or design, or of being preserved at a certain place – that is globally understood by experts and by software systems alike because those labels observe a shared convention or, alternatively, are rooted in a common “ontology”. They are semantic links.

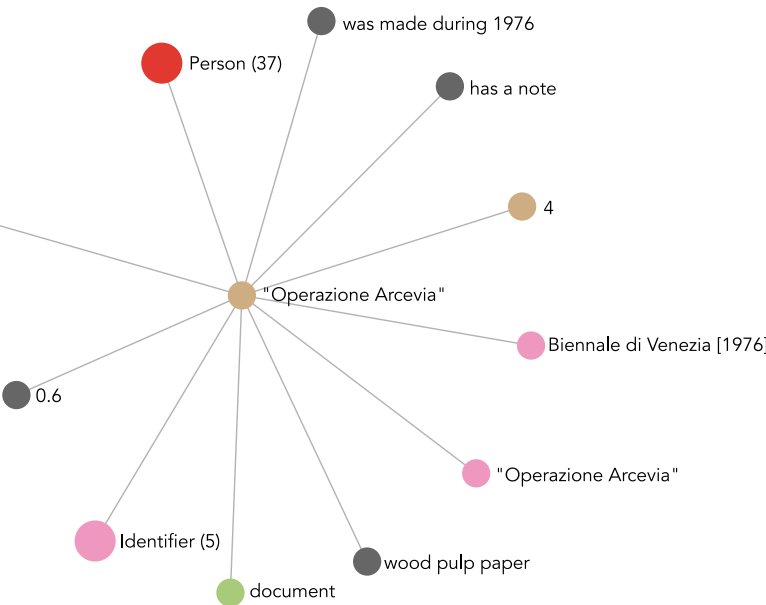
**What is semantic art history?**

It is the endeavor of reshaping the use of digital data in art history so that they are embedded in, and benefit from, a knowledge graph, thus breaking down the constraints of “data silos.” Of course, thus far we have essentially been talking about text. But images are also carriers of meaning. When observing a painting, or the photo of a religious building, in order to extract information about their iconography – what is being depicted – or iconology – how it is interpreted – one has to rely on background knowledge or on information supplied by, for example, an art historian, or read a treatise or historical source on that work. Those images, however, could be annotated with semantic information pointing to that knowledge, including what subjects are depicted, whether they are allegories of other subjects, or what alternative versions and photographs are being held in other collections. Specialized software systems can then perform an analysis or synthesis for the viewer, based on their inclination or research questions: for example, a rich bibliogra-



*When a researcher connects a known node to new ones, thus adding new knowledge from their research, then anyone else inspecting that node becomes aware of it. There are applications that do the work of retrieving this information for you, by using the Web as a vehicle. In the parlance of data science, we call this the Semantic Web.*

Alessandro Adamou



This knowledge graph captures the connected digital data of the Staccioli Archive, a collection of art and archival materials related to the sculptural practices of Mauro Staccioli (1937–2018). The Digital Archive formed the basis for the exhibition “Mauro Staccioli: Cementing An Artistic Legacy” held in Volterra from October 2023 until January 2024 in collaboration with the Mauro Staccioli Archive.

phy could be provided, or detailed data could be extracted by traversing the knowledge graph in depth, or even a summary might be generated by using a language model.

**Do you have an example?**

We bootstrapped development of {KG}<sup>2</sup>, the knowledge graph of the Bibliotheca Hertziana, in 2021 and began on-boarding some existing datasets, but it was the campaign to digitize the archive of sculptor Mauro Staccioli that truly boosted this development. On that occasion, several members of the DH Lab and other departments put their heads together in trying to devise a way to capture the digital data of the Staccioli Archive, reconfiguring it as a knowledge graph, and using it to power the digital companion to the exhibition that ran from October 2023 to January 2024. The result is an open access database, published using shared Web standards, that represents its data in a form that can be compared to the way, for example, Renaissance churches use Roman epigraphs as spolia.

**And what role does AI play in this research?**

Data that are structured according to a shared convention lend themselves readily to being processed by artificial intelligence systems. The more traditional, logic-based AI was always the basis for knowledge graphs that allow you to formulate simple inference rules; for example, if a material was used for the vault of a church, then it should appear as one of the materials of the church in general. In AI today, semantics and knowledge graphs play a crucial role. These models work best if they are fed with masses of high-quality data following consistent patterns, which is exactly the promise of knowledge graphs. Through a technique called embedding, these models are able to encode data, text, images, and more in a single, gigantic, virtual, or, more precisely, a vector space, which they use to generate their responses. Textual and visual content corresponds to the lion’s share of what these models are trained on when it comes to art history, but with the added value of embedded knowledge graph data, AI-based applications improve their ability to perform reasoning, interpretation, disambiguation, and contextualization. Another reminder that we’ve only begun to scratch the surface of the potential applications of AI in art history.



Digital Humanities Lab (DH Lab)  
Digital Humanities Scientist: Alessandro Adamou



Staccioli Digital Archive



# A Tale of Two Bequests

The Photographic Collection – an important address for researchers working on the history of drawing

The Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History houses the world's most comprehensive photographic archive on the art of drawing. This is due in no small part to two significant donations from two benefactors who pursued very different agendas in building their respective collections. In order to fully present the extraordinary wealth of photographs of drawings in our collection, a concerted effort at digitization has been made in recent years.



In 1937 the art historians Bernhard Degenhart (1907–1999) and Walter Gernsheim (1909–2006) – the former affiliated at the time to the Hertziana, the latter in London – independently alighted upon the same idea, namely to build up archives of photographs documenting the art of drawing that had always informed and sustained other forms of artistic endeavor. Each scholar was in his own way paying tribute to a conviction expressed by Giorgio Vasari in his famous *Vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti* (1st ed. 1550), where he celebrates drawing as the fount from which all other artistic activity flows. For that reason, Vasari called drawing – or disegno – “the father of our three arts: architecture, sculpture, and painting.”

To appreciate how in the Renaissance and following centuries Italian artists continued to esteem drawing, it is only necessary to enter the Sala del Disegno in the Palazzo Zuccari, which today forms the heart of the Hertziana. The frescoes adorning the ceiling were completed in 1599 and convey the message that their creator, Federico Zuccari, also emphasized in his writings, namely that drawing was fundamental to the creative process and foundational to artistic training.

The two collections that Degenhart and Gernsheim created share not only the same year of origin but also the same destination in their respective journeys; both archives have found a permanent home in the Hertziana's Photographic Collection. Already at the beginning of the 20th century, the Hertziana's founder Henriette Hertz and the Institute's first director Ernst Steinmann laid the groundwork by amassing thousands of photographs of drawings from the 16th to the 18th centuries. The collection grew to include holdings of hundreds of rare large-format carbon prints of drawings by the great masters. Since the beginning of the new millennium, its stock of images has tripled in size, not least due to the addition of Gernsheim's Corpus Photographicum of Drawings (also known as the Corpus Gernsheim) and Degenhart's Corpus of Italian Drawings 1300–1500.



A visitor to the Sala del Disegno in the Palazzo Zuccari can admire the frescoes adorning the ceiling, completed in 1599 by Federico Zuccari. He pictured the Personifications of Disegno and the Three Arts. The photo was taken by photographer Enrico Fontolan, who carries out the photo campaigns required for the Institute's art historical research projects.

The collection of photographs of drawings reflects a long tradition of research at the Institute and contains hundreds of rare carbon prints made from drawings by great masters, dating back to the photo collections of Henriette Hertz and Ernst Steinmann. This photo, made by the company Adolphe Braun et Cie. around 1860, shows Raphael's drawing of the Three Graces in red chalk (Windsor Castle) in a carbon print (inv. bh014346).



Extraordinary Fototeca, unparalleled collection of architectural drawings and prints.

Michael J. Waters, Columbia University New York

Donated to the Hertziana in 2002, the Corpus Gernsheim contains some 193,000 photograph sourced from 124 museums, archives, and private collections worldwide. As for the Corpus of Italian Drawings, its roughly 60,000 photographs were bequeathed to the Hertziana in 2019. In order to fully present the wealth of photographs of drawings in the collection, it was decided to digitize the photos, to enrich them with new research data, and publish them online. At the time of writing, the entire Corpus Gernsheim has been digitized and 50,000 records with full data have been made available in the online catalog, while good progress is being currently made for the Corpus of Italian Drawings. The two archives will benefit even more from additional visualization tools, which have advanced from a planning stage to a prototype phase in this last year.

The Photographic Collection of the Hertziana is not only the institution that holds the most extensive critical collection of reproductions of Michelangelo’s drawings, but above all it is the physical and virtual environment where under one and the same roof cutting edge research instruments co-exist with the resources used by generations of scholars. This allows daily comparisons and verifications, which would be impossible elsewhere.

Vitale Zanchettin, Superintendent of the Architectural Heritage of the Vatican Museums

As a scientific service department, the Photographic Collection sees its role not only in providing and cataloguing resources, but also in offering a place for the discussion and dissemination of current issues in research on drawings and providing a forum for scholarly exchange between young researchers and leading international experts from universities, museums, and photographic archives around the world.



Opening the cabinets of originals: In addition to the photographic drawing collections, the Hertziana’s art collection has also been digitized, cataloged, and researched in the Photographic Collection. The late 18th-century Rome vedute from the so-called Giani Albums were the subject of the research exhibition *Memories of Rome. Drawings as Souvenirs around 1800* in the Sala Terrena in 2024.

Parallels and contrasts

In surveying the respective histories of the Corpus Gernsheim and the Corpus of Italian Drawings, one is alternately struck both by parallels and contrasts. It is, for example, noteworthy how both archives took shape and attained their dimensions in large part thanks to the contributions made by the wife of each scholar. From 1954 onwards, Jutta Lauke Gernsheim (1921–2015) worked with her husband in building up the collection and later took over the task of administering it. As for Degenhart, in assembling an archive organized by artistic regions and disciplined by the connoisseur’s eye for detail, he relied upon his wife Hilde Bauer (1907–1999) for the photographic expertise that was crucial to such an undertaking. Both Degenhart and Gernsheim were natives of Munich, yet an enormous contrast presents itself when considering the specific circumstances under which each of them in 1937 launched their campaigns to systematically photograph artistic drawings. The antisemitic policies of the National

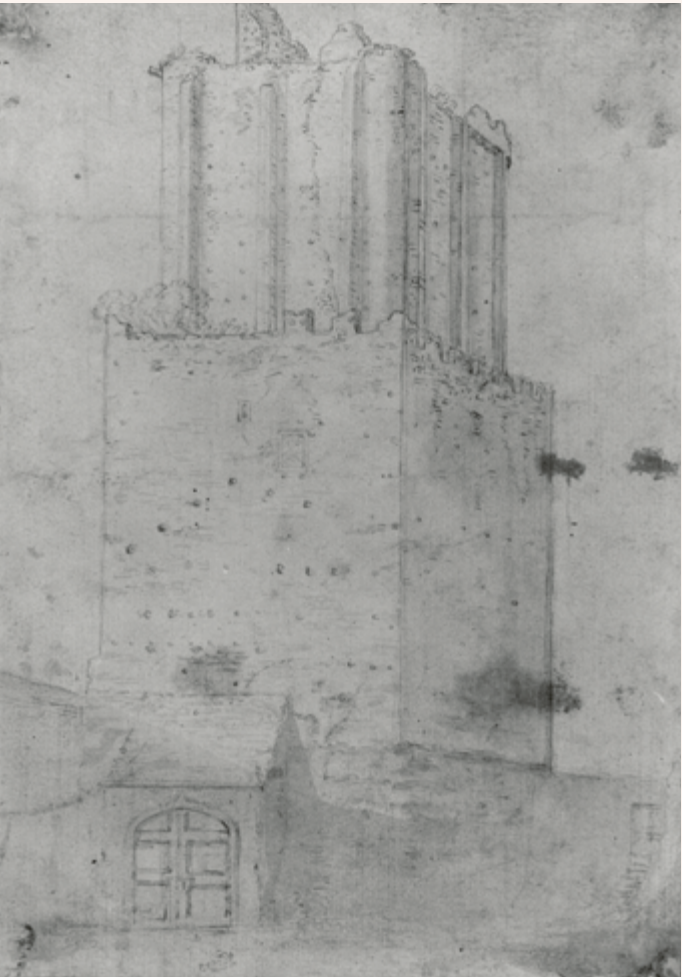
Gernsheim’s photograph no. 136284, taken in 1985 at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, is representative of the many hidden treasures of the Corpus Gernsheim. It shows an unpublished view of the Torre delle Milizie in Rome (Umbrian School, 16th century, pen and brown ink, inv. Hz 5334).

Socialist regime had forced Gernsheim, who was Jewish, to emigrate to London where he set up a gallery trading in drawings by the old masters. In Degenhart’s case, such policies supplied the tailwind for his own career ambitions. One stage of this career, from 1933 to 1939, unfolded at the Hertziana where he published his landmark essay on the graphology of hand drawing (*Zur Graphologie der Handzeichnung*). Yet even if Degenhart’s biography is directly entwined with the institutional history of the Hertziana, one of the ironies of this history is that the Photographic Collection now sees itself more committed to the spirit that informed Gernsheim’s project. By making his collection available to scholarly institutions around the world on a subscription basis, Gernsheim gestured in the direction of the principles of Open Access *ante litteram* that the Photographic Collection is following. With its Gernsheim Study Day, the Photographic Collection also encourages academic exchange that spans borders and builds bridges across divisions. Gernsheim’s own experience of dislocation had doubtless sensitized him to the obstacles that politics can place in the way of scholarship. Many decades later, the need persists for research resources that defy political and scholarly conflicts by making a common artistic heritage accessible to all.

Curator of Photographic Collection: Johannes Röhl



Memories of Rome. Drawings as Souvenirs around 1800, curated by Johannes Röhl



Publications on drawings on the initiative or with the support of the Photographic Collection 2023/2024

- Lorenza Melli, *I Disegni di Antonio e Piero del Pollaiuolo*, Petersberg 2023 (Corpus der italienischen Zeichnungen 1300–1500, vol. 16)
- The Architectural Drawings of Antonio da Sangallo the Younger and His Circle*, Vol. III: Antiquity and Theory, ed. Christoph Frommel and Georg Schelbert, Turnhout 2023
- The Allure of Rome. Maarten van Heemskerck Draws the City*, ed. Christien Melzer and Tatjana Bartsch, Munich 2024
- Facsimile-Edition: *Maarten van Heemskerck, The Roman Sketchbook*, ed. Tatjana Bartsch and Christien Melzer, Berlin 2024
- Stella Rudolph and Simonetta Prosperi Valenti Rodinò, *Carlo Maratti (1625–1713) tra la magnificenza del Barocco e il sogno d’Arcadia. Dipinti e disegni*, 2 vols., Rome 2024



# Greater Sustainability and an International Outlook

## The Hertziana in flux

For over a century, the Hertziana has been at the fulcrum of research into Italian art history. In more recent times, the Institute has undergone significant expansion, the discipline has continued to redefine itself, and the range of research topics has been substantially broadened by encompassing an ever wider range of subjects, geographical areas, and methodologies. These developments are not only evident in our day-to-day interactions, which in terms of language and themes have become increasingly diverse; they have also had a substantial impact on the administration's operations. To gain insight into the challenges of navigating such changes, we interviewed Brigitte Secchi, who, having served as the Head of Administration since 2004, has played a crucial role in making sure it all runs smoothly. We were curious to learn more about how her work has changed over these last two decades.

“When I started working at the Institute 21 years ago, there were employees with German and Italian nationality and occasionally an academic guest from a third country. This composition has changed dramatically over the years; in the 2022–2024 reporting period, we employed 273 people coming from 30 nationalities. In addition to requiring language skills in Italian and English, accommodating and supporting such a diverse group demands a high degree of flexibility. We strive to create a welcoming culture at the Institute and provide assistance in surmounting the bureaucratic hurdles of entry into Italy and finding accommodation in Rome. Everyone should feel at home at the Institute, which is why we have created spaces where colleagues can meet and exchange ideas in a friendly and uncomplicated way. In addition to bumping into each other in the several coffee kitchens and at the water dispensers in the building, they can also take advantage of our health

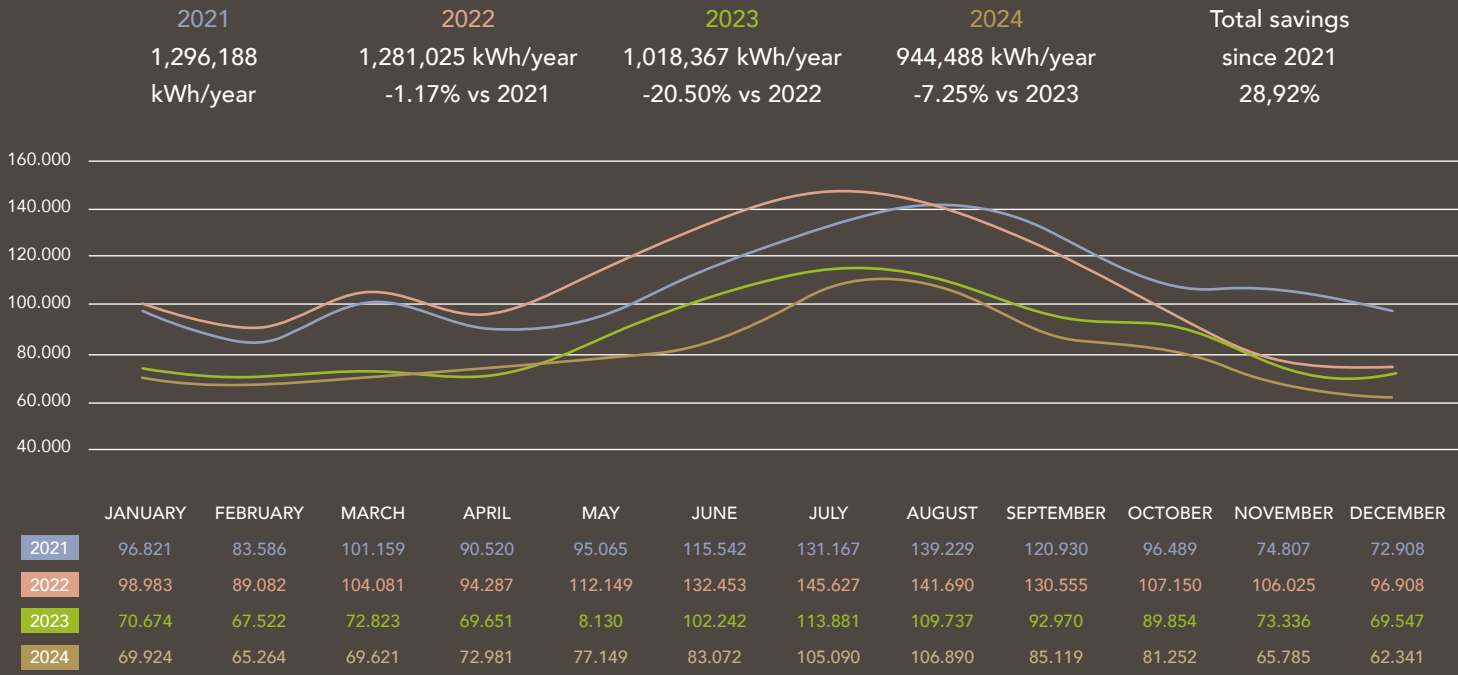
program, which includes yoga, back training, and Pilates. And, as the best meeting place of all, there is now a football table on the roof terrace.”

**In your opinion, what are the challenges facing the Administration of the Hertziana both in recent times and when we look towards the future?**  
“We are constantly dealing with highly complex tax and status issues that directly impact the Institute and its employees. A solution is now in sight. This involves registering the Institute with the Italian authorities, as has been discussed with the General Administration and external consultants. So far, the administrative team has been able to cope with the ever-growing volume, pace, and complexity of tasks by making evermore use of information technology to handle operational tasks. But as important as this technology might be, we are only able to meet the challenges posed by constant change by drawing upon the flexibility and motivation from administrative staff.”

Countries of origin of Hertziana employees (2022–2024)

Germany	99	United Kingdom	3	Ireland	1
Italy	99	Poland	3	North Macedonia	1
United States	13	Netherlands	2	Sweden	1
Russia	6	China	2	Czech Republic	1
Ukraine	6	Turkey	2	Austria	1
Brazil	5	Australia	1	Israel	1
France	5	Chile	1	Korea	1
Canada	5	Ecuador	1	Croatia	1
Switzerland	4	Greece	1	Luxemburg	1
Spain	4	India	1	Slovenia	1
				Total	273

Electricity consumption from 2021 to 2024:



### Sustainability at the Institute

In recent years, the issue of climate change has prompted a shift in thinking about resources and how they can be more economically managed. Angelika Gabrielli, Head of Facility Management, provides here some insight into the measures that have enabled the Institute to make significant savings in energy consumption in recent years. Particularly significant results were obtained by radically modernizing outdated technical systems. This included the following measures.

- ▶ Replacing the outdated ventilation and cooling systems and using the latest generation of web servers to modernize the BMS (Building Management System).
- ▶ Installation of modern control technology overseeing the existing systems.
- ▶ Intelligent lighting management with motion detectors, e.g., in corridors, bathrooms and other communal areas. Switching to energy-efficient devices, such as LED lights.

These savings were achieved not solely through investments in the renewal of technical systems; in addition to these measures, various parameters were also adjusted. These adjustments included a reduction of humidity levels by 5% during summer months and an increase of 5% during winter months, a decrease in the frequency of air exchange rates in offices outside designated office hours, and the implementation of temperature settings at 21°C during the winter months and 26°C during the summer months.

Furthermore, the Sustainability Group, which was set up in 2021, has led to an increased awareness of sustainability issues that can also be transferred to a private context (lighting, computers, climate, mobility, recycling, etc.) A particularly heightened awareness can be seen in the area of mobility. More and more employees are coming to the Institute by bike, virtual participation in events is being increasingly accepted, and the preference for travel by train rather than by airplane is also becoming more and more evident.

Employees’ awareness of measures to reduce energy consumption must be constantly cultivated. Best practice examples and communication measures (flyers, place cards, etc.) keep interest in sustainability measures alive.





▲ One of Henriette Hertz’s favorite artists was Raphael’s pupil Giulio Romano. She managed to acquire an entire fresco cycle attributed to Giulio’s workshop as well as this precious drawing representing the *Release of the Roman hostage Cloelia by the Etruscan king Porsenna*. The heavily damaged drawing was restored for the exhibition.

Research Exhibitions  
Giulio Romano’s Drawing – Hertz Collection

In 2022, the ground floor of the Palazzo Zuccari was converted into a space for research exhibitions. These are designed to provide Hertziana scholars with the opportunity to explore and experiment with innovative ways of presenting their research that extend beyond traditional academic publishing. The curatorial experience they gain from these exhibitions can be advantageous for their future careers. During the initial two-year period, eight exhibitions were conceptualized, implemented, and made accessible to both in-house scholars and the general public. Several of these exhibitions have transitioned into permanent online presentations on the Institute’s website.



◀ The exhibition *Giulio Romano – A Drawing from the Hertz Collection* staged in the historical premises of Palazzo Zuccari featured new research findings on the Institute’s founder Henriette Hertz (1846–1913) as an enthusiastic collector of Renaissance art and promoter of research into the history of art.

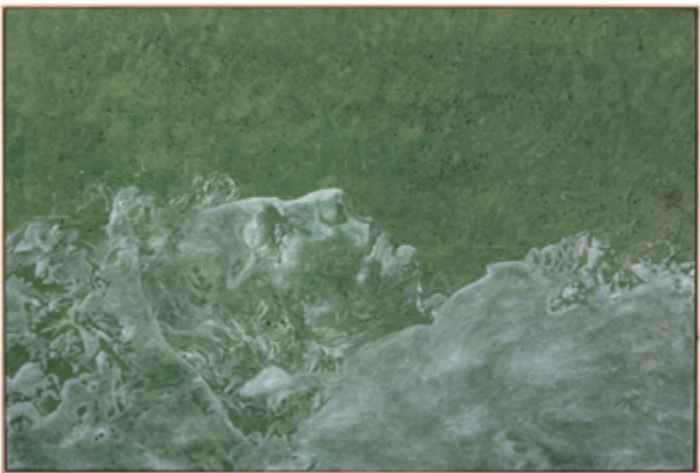
Faithless Etna  
Jean Epstein’s Film Practice and Theory

The screening of the restored version of *La montagne infidèle* (1923), directed by Jean Epstein, in the Casa del Cinema in Rome was followed by a workshop at the Hertziana, which reflected on the enduringly stimulating questions posed by the intertwining of practice and visual theory in Epstein’s film (*Ways of Landscape: Jean Epstein’s Film Practice and Theory*; 23–24 April 2024).

The eruptive landscape of Sicily’s Mount Etna as captured in Jean Epstein’s reportage. In 2020, almost a century after it had originally been filmed, *La montagne infidèle* was rediscovered in a Spanish 28mm version and restored by the Filmoteca de Catalunya. In April 2024 it was screened for the first time in Rome and was then the subject of a workshop attended by international experts on Jean Epstein’s cinema at the Hertziana.



Research on the transformative power of volcanic activity is well established in the Department Michalsky. This is evident from the documentary video *Hertziana Insights: Palimpsest Naples. Natural Disasters* with Tanja Michalsky and Elisabetta Scirocco.



▲ From the Institute’s photographic archives emerged Henriette Hertz’ ghostly profile on her deathbed like a spraying wave, to whose watery pigments Sungaux mixed ashes.

Post Scriptum  
Exhibiting Artistic Research

In 2018, Tristan Weddigen added Artistic Research to the Institute’s portfolio to incorporate contemporary practices of applied knowledge production. The 2023/24 Art Fellow, Swiss painter Grégory Sugnaux, conducted research on the visual history of the Institute, producing a series of paintings, a video, a catalog, and the Research Exhibition *Post Scriptum* curated by Lara Demori. Sugnaux offers an alternative, thought-provoking approach to the institutionalized history of art and its subconscious.



▲ Haunting motifs drawn from the Institute’s iconographic resources and on display in the modern ruins of the former art gallery and later disco at Via Gregoriana 9 before reconstruction starts to transform this space into a new extension to the Institute’s premises.

The Allure of Rome  
Maarten van Heemskerck Draws the City

The 450th anniversary of the death of Haarlem painter Maarten Van Heemskerck was the occasion to present for the first time to a general public the fascinating drawings from Heemskerck’s journey to Rome in the 1530s. Various Hertziana researchers participated in the preparation of this unique event, which was selected by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* as one of the top five exhibitions of 2024: Tatjana Bartsch was co-curator and co-editor of both a comprehensive catalog as well as a facsimile edition of Heemskerck’s Roman Sketchbook, while Pietro Liuzzo and Martin Raspe programmed a media station and set up the exhibition website. The Hertziana contributed three loans, including one of the earliest pilgrimage guides to Rome from 1500 and was also prominently featured in an accompanying television documentary produced by ARTE and ZDF. The Istituto Centrale per la Grafica will bring the show to Rome in 2025.



▲ The exhibition used “a colosseum-like glass structure erected in the center of the gallery” (*The Burlington Magazine*) to present the recently restored pages of the small sketchbook with its hundreds of ancient monuments, city vedute, and modern artworks. This cooperation between the Kupferstichkabinett – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and the Hertziana, ran from April 26, 2024, to August 4, 2024.



The exhibition lives on in a virtual format that merges *Heemskerck’s drawings* with the famous map of the city map by Ugo Pinard in 1550.



Mission

The Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History generates and promotes foundational research in the field of Italian and global history of art and architecture. It is part of the Human Sciences Section of the Max Planck Society, Germany’s largest scientific organization. Established in 1912 as a private foundation by Henriette Hertz (1846–1913) in Rome, it was bequeathed a year later to the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft, which, after WWII, was transformed into today’s Max Planck Society.

The Institute is spearheaded by two Research Departments headed by the two directors Tanja Michalsky and Tristan Weddigen. Taking Cities and Spaces in Premodernity as its title and Southern Italy and more specifically Naples and the Mediterranean region as its geographical focus, the Department Michalsky investigates historical concepts of space, how they have evolved from premodern to modern times, and how different media (for example, cinema as discussed in this magazine) have both provided the context for this evolution and determined the path it has taken. Under the heading Art of the Modern Age in a Global Context, Tristan Weddigen’s Department promotes research that maps the global relations of Italian art from the early modern period to the present, explores the intellectual and socio-political history of the discipline, and pioneers initiatives in Digital Art History.

Max Planck Research Groups are a cornerstone of the support the Max Planck Society is committed to giving early career researchers. The Hertziana currently hosts two research groups: Visualizing Science in Media Revolutions (Max Planck Research Group) led by Sietske Fransen, and Decay, Loss, and Conservation in Art History (Lise Meitner Group) led by Francesca Borgo. A third Research Group will join the Institute in 2025: Leonardo Impett’s Max Planck Research Group Machine Visual Culture will investigate the interplay between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and visual culture, thereby examining how AI is shaped by, and shapes, the history of seeing.

The exceptional holdings of the Library and Photographic Collection can be consulted by researchers and international guests. The research at the Institute is supplemented and supported by the Scientific Services such as the Library, the Photographic Collection, the Digital Humanities Lab, the Publications, Public Relations and Reporting Unit and the Administration. The Institute is committed to encouraging and promoting outstanding researchers through numerous funding programs for doctoral and postdoctoral candidates. In addition, internationally renowned scholars are regularly invited to the Hertziana within the framework of the Rudolf Wittkower and Richard Krautheimer Fellowships, and museum researchers also have the opportunity to receive museum grants. The Institute organizes seminars, workshops, and lectures on current research issues to support exchange and dialogue between members of the Institute and external researchers.

The Hertziana is committed to putting the principles of Open Access into action by making both the results of research and the material that this research draws upon available to the broader community of scholars and interested members of the public. Furthermore, it makes a strategic effort to stimulate and cultivate public interest in the history of art through a range of outward-facing initiatives in different formats.

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Independent advisors support the Max Planck Institutes in achieving the highest standards in research innovation by undertaking triannual scientific assessments. The President of the Max Planck Society appoints members of the Advisory Board from leading international research institutions and universities for a duration of up to six years.

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