

Émilie Passignat, *Stupire e meravigliare l'imperatore durante l'apparato festivo fiorentino del 1536: da invittissimo cavaliere a indomito destriero*

Summary

Triumphal entries undoubtedly constitute one of the most tangible moments of representation of power in the cities. The organisation of the festive decorations often mobilised, as Giorgio Vasari points out, «tutti gl'artefici, buoni e cattivi», namely all the artists active at this time, and sometimes with the help of teams of foreigners. The lack of surviving works, because they were not conceived for lasting fruition, is partially compensated for by textual sources of fundamental descriptive value in order to reconstruct the physiognomy of such events. This contribution aims to emphasise the reception of these festivities, relying, as a starting point, on the words with which Vasari records the Mantuan entry of Charles V on 25 March 1530 in the Vita di Giulio Romano: «Nella venuta di Carlo quinto imperatore a Mantova, per ordine del Duca fe' Giulio molti bellissimi apparati d'archi, prospettive per commedie e molte altre cose; nelle quali invenzioni non aveva Giulio pari, e non fu mai il più capriccioso nelle mascherate e nel fare stravaganti abiti per giostre, feste e torneamenti, come allora si vide, con stupore e meraviglia di Carlo imperadore e di quanti v'intervennero». A significant passage in which the receptive aspect stands out, providing the point of view of both the beneficiary of the events and the creators involved. Due to the abundance of descriptive material, this essay focuses on Charles V's triumphs in 1536, in the Florence of Alessandro I de' Medici still wounded by the construction of the fortress of San Giovanni and where the ugly memory of the siege of 1530 certainly hovered. Giorgio Vasari's rich experience in this field allows to consider a paradigmatic case of discrepancy to be found among the descriptions of the equestrian monument in Piazza Santa Trinita entrusted to Tribolo, left unfinished. And in a context of such high diplomatic tension, I propose to analyse how much this incompleteness may have mattered.

Chiara Savettieri, *Girodet et Delacroix : Néoclassicisme ontre Romantisme?*

Summary

*The article focuses on the relationship between the neoclassical painter Anne-Louis Girodet et Eugène Delacroix, the most important romantic painter in France. The aim is to demonstrate the complexity of this relationship, that is not an opposition between Neoclassicism and Romanticism. In fact, Delacroix was interesting in the orientalist production of Girodet in which expressivity and colors are very important, for instance *la Révolte du Caire* (1808).*

Paolo Bolpagni e Raffaele Piero Galli, *1915: il viaggio di Marcello Piacentini negli Stati Uniti*

Summary

This text aims to analyse, on the basis of existing documents, the journey of the architect Marcello Piacentini in 1915 to the United States. He went there to attend the final stages of preparation of the Cittadella Italiana at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco and to participate in its inauguration. However, the essay does not focus on this aspect, which has already been studied, but on all Piacentini's stages, from his arrival in New York on 7 March 1915, to his stay in Chicago on the way to San Francisco, and then on his return trip. On May 28, 1915 he left for the east coast, with stops (some of which are probable but not certain) in Chicago, Buffalo,

Boston, Philadelphia and Washington, until arriving, at the beginning of June, in New York, from which he he'd be shipping off on June 5th. The purpose of this contribution is also to investigate what Piacentini has witnessed, also based on historical images related to urban landscapes in which the young architect could come across in 1915. Piacentini's stay in the United States could be defined as positive, considering the Grand Prix victory at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. In the letters he sent from America there is a certain superficiality, but he was a focused traveller. He had already been to France, Belgium and Germany, he knew the crisis of historicist languages, the new European modernist trends and the major Russian and American achievements. Piacentini, in the following years, will prove to be a witness of modernist change, understanding and embracing its prevailing line, which in the United States was already early outlined in the achievements of the Chicago School and in the simplifying tendencies of constructive practice. The monumental style representative of the institutions (typical of most large public buildings that he saw in 1915 in America) is not very dissimilar from what he will develop and apply in Italy, ideas that will improperly be defined as 'fascist', when, instead, belonged to a sort of international koiné. We must not underestimate the powerful impression that the American metropolises, encountered for the first time in 1915, aroused in the young Piacentini, with the colossal dimensions of the buildings, the dizzying height of the skyscrapers and the futuristic structures. The American architectural concept, made up with monumentality, large proportions, advanced construction techniques and, above all, structural cages masked by decorative elements of a 'simplified eclecticism', certainly didn't make Piacentini feel unconcerned. We must not look for this American heritage immediately, but we will find it if we observe Piacentini's subsequent production with a look free from prejudices, in a critical reinterpretation of the development of his style that imposes itself as essential.

Lorenzo Carletti e Cristiano Giometti, *For us the living. Alfred H. Barr e una mostra mai realizzata al MoMA di New York nel 1940*

Summary

In 1940 MoMA took the extraordinary initiative to organise a «response to Mussolini's rise to power of Mussolini in Italy and the fall of Paris under Nazi rule». It was the museum's director, Alfred H. Barr, who conceived an exhibition that he considered so important that he kept its title a secret for a long time: For us the living a phrase taken from President Lincoln's famous speech at Gettysburg in 1863. In the company of his assistant John Abbott, Barr formed a small team which included the famous urban planner Lewis Mumford, the director of the Baltimore Museum Lesly Cheek, and Archibald MacLeish, poet and librarian at the Library of Congress. Inspired by some visual and technical experiments recently admired at the New York World's Fair (1939-1940) and especially by the display of historical regime exhibitions, such as the Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista (1932-1934), the Mostra Augustea della Romanità (1937) and the Ausstellung "Entartete Kunst" (1937), the five friends developed in few months a detailed exhibition project, in which the visitors were subjected to a series of sound and visual stimuli with the aim of inviting them to defend the democratic world and its way of life from the totalitarianism spreading through Europe. For this multimedia and sensory exhibition, MoMA was to construct a new building – three times the size of the museum – in the space where Philip Johnson in 1953 designed the Sculpture Garden. Disproportionate costs and political reasons meant that this 'reverse propaganda' exhibition was never staged. Thanks to the existence of the «scenario» – the articulated script, as defined by the curators – we can reconstruct its course and better understand its experimental and immersive nature.

Virginia Magnaghi, «*Da considerarsi quadri*». *Quattro anni di Mario Schifano pittore (1963-1966)*

Summary

Following upon a recent monograph and subsequent exhibition dedicated to Mario Schifano's early work, this essay considers a number of paintings realized by the artist between 1963 and 1966. Schifano's figurative imagery will be discussed through close analysis of a number of these works, with a particular focus on the rich materiality of his paintings and their iconographic sources.

The first section of the article will deal with Leonardo (1963), a four-square-meter painting inspired by the so-called Self-portrait by Da Vinci. This section will explore Schifano's use of contemporary photographic projection tools. Furthermore, the peculiar characteristics of the painting's surface – which are very difficult to capture in reproduction – will be shown to reveal the artist's meticulous layering of materials on the canvas and to explain its effects.

*The second section will contextualize this Roman artist within the exchanges and interactions that took place between Italian and American art between 1964 and 1966. This period in Schifano's life was marked by two stays in the U.S. and his first-hand experience of the works of artists such as Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Andy Warhol. It will be shown that some of these paintings, as well as certain contemporary exhibitions (such as the fundamental *The Responsive Eye*, curated by William Seitz at MoMA in 1965), shed light on creative choices made by Schifano during these months. For example, his 'optical' geometric shapes will be considered alongside his particular use of 'perspex', a plastic the artist used to partially or totally cover a number of his paintings. Finally, the study of two works produced in 1965 – *Influenza astratta* and *Lo spazio* – including an in-depth analysis of their sources, will clarify the unpredictability and eclecticism of the images chosen by Schifano as a starting point for his paintings. Borrowed and framed within his very personal and manipulative technique, the images are inevitably betrayed in the (entirely intentional) imperfection of the final works.*

Elisabetta Modena, *Le avanguardie dall'altra parte 1910/1950. Lea Vergine e quella mostra mancata alla GAM di Bologna*

Summary

*In January 1976, four years before the staging of *L'altra metà dell'avanguardia 1910-1940*. Pittrici e scultrici nei movimenti delle avanguardie storiche at the Palazzo Reale in Milan, Lea Vergine proposed the exhibition at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Bologna.*

*The art critic and curator directly addressed Franco Solmi, director of the newly founded GAM. The correspondence between Vergine and Solmi, preserved in the archives of the Bologna museum (now MAMbo), sheds light on the development of the exhibition proposal at the time entitled *Le avanguardie dall'altra parte 1910-1950*, and on the curator's initial intentions.*

*The project presented to the management committee of the museum by Solmi immediately encountered various obstacles: the decision was suspended on several occasions and for different reasons – in particular economic ones – until the autumn of 1978 when the refusal was made explicit and the interest of the city of Milan was announced. Other episodes connected to Vergine's role in relation to the Bolognese museum are intertwined, such as the involvement of the artist Gina Pane who in 1976 at the GAM realised the performance *Io mescolo tutto*.*

Through unpublished documents and testimonies, the essay restores a still little-known event concerning a strongly desired exhibition by its curator which we now consider central in shedding light on the role of women artists in the historical avant-gardes. Moreover, the essay intends to

propose itself as a case study to enhance the critical contribution of unrealised projects and occasions such as this first Bolognese version of Vergine's exhibition.

Adriano Marinazzo, *Michelangelo as the Creator. The self-portrait of the Buonarroti Archive, XIII, 111r*

Summary

Michelangelo depicted himself in a sheet of the Archivio Buonarroti while painting the Sistine Ceiling. The self-portrait is not, as many scholars wrongly asserted, a caricature. For the first time, this article wants to point out the intriguing resemblance between Michelangelo's self-portrait silhouette and the artist's representation of God in the iconic fresco of the Creation of Adam. This panel was the first painted by Michelangelo in 1511 for the second part of the ceiling's decoration. God seems to silently say to Adam, «Be still and know that I am God» (Psalm 46:10). The Lord's creative act is often identified with the gesture of the right arm towards Adam. Likewise, in the sheet of the Buonarroti Archive, the artist represented himself in the act of creating, giving life, through the brush. This tool represents an extension of Michelangelo's body. In the artist's self-portrait, his right arm is stretched toward the ceiling's surface to give life to the stories of Genesis. The artist holds a brush that approaches the vault's surface but does not touch it. This gesture recalls Michelangelo's painting of God's index, who gives life to Adam without touching him. The artist's self-portrait goes towards the surface of the ceiling, as God goes towards Adam. Michelangelo was (also) a Creator.

Renzo Mangili, *Tiepolo a Udine: 1729, epifania del 'mago'*

Summary

It is well known that to portray Jacob and Rachel, in the central fresco of the Galleria degli Ospiti in the Archbishop's Palace of Udine, are the painter himself, namely the young Giambattista Tiepolo, and his wife Cecilia Guardi. It was unknown, instead, that the scene was painted in 1729, at the end of the four-years decorative intervention. The archival documents provide, in fact, useful clues to place only in the ensemble, from 1726 to 1729, the biblical cycle articulated between the hall of the staircase and two rooms of the main floor. The date is marked on Jacob's forehead, in cryptic form. The revelation supports the complete chronological reconstruction that, in a reasonable teleological vision, should prevail already in stylistic reading: first the Fall of the rebel angels and the chiaroscuro of the staircase (1726); then the medals in the ceiling of the Gallery (1727), in advance of the polychrome stories of vertical walls (1729); second to last the hall of the Court, with the Judgment of Solomon and the Major prophets (1728).

The inscription is accompanied by fantastic clothing, evocative of the magical world. Presumably reminiscent of the title «true magician of painting», soon spread, about the artist, by Bernardo Ziliotti and other contemporaries. Revealing, in essence, Giambattista's determination to allude to his 'magical' creative talent, to his personal status as demiurge, to the faculty of projecting virtual realities.

The 'conceptual' disposition, and often in an ironic way or even between the playful and the enigmatic, is a fundamental feature in the master's poetics. Just as it confirms a recent decoding of the Capricci and the Scherzi etched engraving, precisely traceable to the treaties of hermeticism and

magic available at the time of Tiepolo. As a beginner, in Verona, he worked for Scipione Maffei, author of the Arte magica annichilata.