



# ICFA Annual Meeting 2009

## Rome and the world: the arts in Rome from 1860 to 1911

Rome, October 14th 2009

The ICOM ICFA Annual Meeting 2009 presents a key theme for the arts of Italy and Europe: the period just after the independence of Italy and the final transformation of Rome into a modern capital. In fifty years the eternal city radically changed its face, losing part of its wonderful landscapes and monuments, reaching European urban standards while still retaining most of its grandness and fascination. For centuries the naturalistic and archaeological landscapes of Rome have been a call, a school and a myth for great artists, and their works recorded and depicted the face of the city. They have been witnesses to the melancholic disappearing views of Rome, but also of the new intellectual vitality that let the city become an attractive centre expressing new art forms.

The Annual Meeting 2009 is organised into two different sessions: in the morning the conference is concerned with the main theme developed by several speakers coming from European countries, analysing the subject from different points of view. In the afternoon, the meeting continues as a round-table open only to professionals with an invitation. The round-table is concerned with one of the most important and delicate current issues in the galleries' and museums' world, that is to say the question of loan fees for temporary exhibitions. The speakers participating in the round-table are museum directors and art historians involved in this field.

### Key-note speakers:

Maria Vittoria Marini Clarelli, Director of the Galleria Nazionale di Arte Moderna, Rome  
*Rome and the world: the arts in Rome from 1860 to 1911*

Matteo Lafranconi, Art Historian, Galleria Nazionale di Arte Moderna, Rome  
*International artists in Rome from 1860 to 1911*

### Ordinary speakers:

Dr. Doina Punga, Senior researcher, Romanian National History Museum, Bucarest, Romania:  
*Few historic, stylistic and technical guide marks of the Romanian Artists - painters, lithographers and engravers' presence in the XIX Century, in Italy*

Ellen J. Lerberg, Senior curator, The National Museum for Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo, Norway:  
*The Norwegian painter Anders Castus Swarstad (1869-1943) in Rome.*

Jan Gorm Madsen, Curator, The Hirschsprung Collection, Copenhagen  
*A masterpiece is born. The Danish painter L.A. Schou in Rome 1864-1867*

Matteo Lafranconi

*International artists in Rome from 1860 to 1911*

Two major research projects, both supported by the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, have pointed out the historical coordinates of the Ottocento in Rome, the "long century" running from Neoclassicism to World War 1. The cosmopolitan culture favored by the universalism of the Papacy has been studied –for the period from Napoleon to the Unification of Italy- by *Maestà di Roma* (2003, catalogue Electa), whilst the international impulse given by the Modernist culture of the Esposizione Universale of 1911, was analyzed in depth by *Roma 1911* (1981, catalogue De Luca). Sliding forward some of the historical points of view of *Maestà di Roma*, and looking behind for the roots of the modernist cultures displayed in *Roma 1911*, we could try to represent "if" and "how" Rome was able to maintain an international and cosmopolitan role in art also in the arduous decades after the Unification of the country.

Due grandi progetti di ricerca maturati all'interno della Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e poi confluiti in mostre, hanno definito le coordinate storiche dell'Ottocento a Roma, il "secolo lungo" che va dal Neoclassicismo alla prima guerra mondiale. Il clima cosmopolita derivato dalla condizione di capitale universale ed eterna -da Napoleone all'Unità d'Italia- è stato analizzato da *La Maestà di Roma* (2003, catalogo Electa), mentre lo slancio internazionale e modernista dell'Esposizione Universale di Roma del 1911 è stato al centro dell'attenzione di *Roma 1911* (1981, catalogo De Luca).

Proiettando in avanti alcune delle considerazioni storiche definite nella *Maestà di Roma* ed individuando all'indietro i radicamenti culturali del clima modernista di *Roma 1911* entro gli esiti della cultura artistica ottocentesca, soprattutto simbolista, si può tentare di definire quanto e in che modo Roma sia stata "internazionale e cosmopolita" anche nei decenni del faticoso avvio dell'avventura nazionale.

Jan Gorm Madsen, Curator, The Hirschsprung Collection, Copenhagen

*A masterpiece is born. The Danish painter L.A. Schou in Rome 1864-1867*

In the course of the last three decades international interest has focused on Danish art from the first half of the nineteenth century, whereas isolated exceptions have been the norm when it comes to the last half of the century. In the Denmark of the 1860s a group of artists, in the art history literature called the Europeans, turned their gaze towards the international currents and several of them spent periods in Rome. One of them was the painter Ludvig Abelin Schou (1838-1867), who arrived in the city in 1864 and stayed there for extended periods until 1867, when he died in Florence, fleeing from the ravages of cholera. He went to Rome thanks to funding from a sympathetic uncle, in order to go his own way in relation to the Copenhagen Academy of Art, which had turned up its nose at his achievements. Schou dreamed of following in the footsteps of the sculptor Thorvaldsen, and the artistic milieu in Rome undoubtedly helped him to find his form. In 1867 he exhibited a painting in Copenhagen showing Chione killed during a hunt by the offended Diana. The story of its genesis illustrates how the young painter, during his stay in Rome, drew on the city's wealth of models and sources of artistic inspiration.

Dr. Elena Doina Punga, Senior researcher, Romanian National History Museum, Bucharest

*Few historic, stylistic and technical guide marks of the Romanian artists - painters, lithographers and engravers' presence in Rome, in the second half of the XIX century*

The evolution of the Romanian art in XIX century determined and it is still raising many questions. Reporting the fine art to the general effort of modernizing the Romanian society, the emergence and the evolution of the new artistic techniques, the awareness of the status of independent artist and the configuration of the artist-citizen profile, as well as the sinuosity of the effort to synchronize with the Occidental art, the special interest for Italian art and artistic Rome school, all represent as many lines of investigation as the results of which novelty might be at least anticipated. In accordance with the

language characteristics and the historic, social and cultural reality of that time, the study of the beginnings, the development, the moments of glory of Romanian modern art, was based on the compared analysis of those interferential paragraphs constituted by the synchronizing and obvious correspondence with the great conquests, lines and certitudes of the Italian and artistic Rome school in the second half of the XIX century. One of the most important Romanian painters, Gheorghe M. Tătărescu (1818-1894), nephew and pupil of a church painter familiarized with the traditional canons of the Byzantine Ermini, arrives in Rome in 1845, with a scholarship granted by the church authorities of that time and with the support of a high dignitary. In Romanian Principalities, as well as in the Occidental Europe, was believed that no artist could be considered as completely matured unless he would travel and study in Rome. Arrived in Rome, at Accademia di San Luca, where the rational doctrine of neoclassicism was taught by professors almost forgotten today, Gheorghe M. Tătărescu, first of all, learned to draw. Giovanni Silvagni, Natale Carta, Cherici, Capalti, Agricola, guided him in order to learn a skill and a convenient artistic technique. His successes within the official contests of the Academy prove a serious assimilation of the mysteries of drawing and painting. In 1850 at the contest organized by the Accademia di San Luca, he wins the big prize and the first class medal for the Biblical composition Simeon and Levi rescuing their sister, Dina, kidnapped by Sichem and Henor. The participation at this contest was initially rejected due to the fact that he was not "Italian and catholic", being accepted finally, thanks to the intervention of the philo-Romanian cardinal Mezzofanti. As a result of the studies from Rome, and of the contact with the Italian painting, Gheorghe M. Tătărescu, artist trained in the constant conservatory Byzantine spirit, he brought in his country a new vision and artistic language. He was a professor and he trained the scholars in the spirit of European culture. Author of some academic and portraitist compositions, he used the knowledge accumulated in Rome for the important scenes with historic connotations and patriotic message. Tătărescu illustrates a moment of glory of the academic art in Romania, a moment of optimism and trust in the resources of the Romanian painting school, which was passing an obvious stage of synchronizing with the European academism also thanks to the assimilation of the academic norms of the school from Rome. The brief presentation of some Romanian painters, drawers or lithographers for whom Rome meant a new horizon of creation, is records of the XIX century Roman school of art contributions to the development of the modern Romanian art.

Ellen J. Lerberg, Senior curator, The National Museum for Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo, Norway:

*The Norwegian painter Anders Castus Svarstad (1869-1943) in Rome.*

When A.C. Svarstad came to Rome the first time in April 1908, he was almost 29 years old. He had been travelling in Europe since January the same year. His artistic carrier was about 6 years old. Back in Kristiania (Oslo), he had a family with his wife Ragna, and 3 children. This stay in Rome was to become very important for Svarstad. First of all; his works of art changed into containing more brightness in the colours. Although Svarstad was working in a rather old-fashioned manner, with roots in the realistic manner, he As concerning the motifs, he was further developing the "city-scapes" that he had been working on for a few years. Many famous places, and some more picturesque motifs, turned up on his canvases. Among these paintings we find Via Bocca de Leone, Terrace in Rome (in several versions) and From the River Tiber. In his letters to family and friends in Norway, Svarstad describes how he is working on motifs, but also about the splendid art-collections he is visiting. Especially he is talking a lot about the Vatican and Galleria Colonna, and its collections. Almost important as the meeting with the Italian art and the motifs in Rome, was the meeting with the young Norwegian author Sigrid Undset. They were both staying in an hostel in Via Frattina 138, in the top floor. Undset was working on her novel Jenny, and got to know many of the Scandinavian artists. They got married 3 years later, and spent their first months as a married couple no other place than Roma.