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LIVING ITALY

PAST AND PRESENT

Issue 8 Summer - Autumn 2020



Bocca della Verità

Photo © GCH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR	3
PUGLIA and BASILICATA	4
By Our Itinerant Reporter	4
WHEN IN ROME DO AS THE ROMANS DID	7
By Georgina Gordon-Ham	7
BOCCA DELLA VERITÀ	9
By John Jinks.....	9
TARQUINIA, A CITY OF ANCIENT ROOTS	10
By Rubina Montebello	10
ARRIVEDERCI SPERLONGA	11
By Georgina Jinks	11
BOOK REVIEW...	12
JOURNEYS THROUGH ANCIENT ROME	13
ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI RETURNS	14
By Georgina Jinks	14
500th ANNIVERSARY OF TWO GREAT MASTERS	16
EXHIBITIONS IN ITALY AND ABROAD 2020	19
SNIPPETS.....	20

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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Welcome to our Summer-Autumn issue 2020. Apologies to our readers for only having one issue in 2019. Unfortunately our Summer-Autumn 2019 issue had to be postponed due to technical reasons and was to come out as the Winter-Spring issue. This plan was unexpectedly interrupted by the advent of COVID-19. As we all know many businesses had to stop due to the spread of coronavirus and lockdowns. Hence with regret, the issue had to be postponed once again.

The world has changed and we all had to get used to a new way of life. It was a different summer this year. Going on holiday became more difficult especially across frontiers. Having said that, Italy was the first country in Europe to be hit, but fought back. Tight restrictions were set up and Italians were very disciplined in following the rules. Coronavirus reduced. People were allowed to go on holiday and relax without letting the guard down. Visitors could enjoy walking about. Exhibitions, events and shows resumed with the necessary precautions.

Articles include a range of topics: a visit to Puglia and Basilicata in southern Italy with a special mention to the city of Matera, visiting Sperlonga in the Province of Latina in southern Lazio, Tarquinia in the Province of Viterbo in northern Lazio, commemorating the 500 year anniversaries of great masters, and more unusual sights of Rome, such as the Bocca della Verità and the Gladiator Show.

This is a periodical e-magazine covering a variety of topics from culture, history, places of interest, events and more.

There will also be a limited number of paper copies. Please contact the sales and circulation officer if you are interested in purchasing any issues. Advertisements are most welcome as they help cover costs. Availability depends on space and size.



The Editor

The e-magazine website includes various menu options:

- The Viewing Page gives the e-magazine with a flip chart, whereby the pages can be turned over;
- The Archive Page PDFs offers the possibility to download the various magazines.
- The Sports Events Page and an Exhibitions and Events Page allow quick access to specific events.
- A Blog Page is for comments from our readers. This will help us improve and broaden our spectrum.
- And several other options.

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A special thank you to our contributors, to ENIT (the Italian Tourist Board), and to all the other organisations for supporting us along this journey.

PUGLIA and BASILICATA

By Our Itinerant Reporter



Matera

Our reporter takes readers on a special visit to Matera in the region of Basilicata in southern Italy, nominated Italy's European capital of culture in 2019. The city is renowned for its cobbled streets, cave houses and churches in a backdrop of rocky undulating hills and slopes surrounded by a barren landscape. The landscape around Matera is so evocative that it has earned the nickname "The Second Bethlehem," impressing writers, artists and film directors. In the evening, the city lights up giving the impression that one is strolling through a Nativity scene.

Hence, it is no wonder that these features drew the attention of film directors, as in the shooting of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*; and in September 2019 the shooting of the 25th James Bond film *No Time to Die* starring Daniel Craig in the famous Sassi area of Matera.

ALTAMURA



The hill top town of Altamura is an ideal base to begin the journey as a central location for daily excursions. Altamura is in the region of Puglia adjacent to Basilicata bordering the province of Matera, about 20 kilometres away from the city of Matera and 66 kilometres away from Alberobello, famous for its *trulli* houses. Altamura is renowned in Italy for its particular quality of bread called *Pane di Altamura*. In 1993 the 130,000-year-old calcified Altamura Man was discovered in the nearby limestone cave called Grotta di Lamalunga, not to mention around thirty thousand dinosaur footprints which were recently discovered in Altamura's territory of "Contrada Pontrelli", making it an important site for the study of dinosaurs.

Apart from its ancient origins, the city of Altamura was reportedly looted by Saracens around the tenth century AD. It started to be inhabited again as Emperor Frederick II refounded the city (1232) and ordered the construction of the large Altamura Romanesque Cathedral, one of whose main special features being a rose window. Altamura was ruled by various feudal families, including the Orsini del Balzo and the Farnese (1538–1734). Later, it passed under the Kingdom of Naples and in 1748 Charles VII of Naples had a university built in the city.



Cathedral of Altamura

MATERA



Matera Main Square

Matera, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1993 in the region of Basilicata, celebrated its special year as European capital of culture in January 2019. A whole series of events took place there throughout the year. The rock city is best known for its extensive unique cave limestone dwelling districts, the “Sassi” (stones). The old quarters provided a stunning unique backdrop of stairways and narrow lanes, amazing cave dwellings carved out of the rock, rock churches with beautiful frescoes and elegant buildings. The cave dwellings, inhabited since the Palaeolithic period, formed two rooms. Large families consisting of father, mother and nine or ten children lived in two cave rooms, one room being a living bed room kitchen, where a few animals were allowed to stay to heat the room, and a second inter connecting cave room for more animals.



Typical Cave Dwelling



Cave Dwelling with Animals

The whole family, crammed together with their mules, pigs and chickens, lived in poverty in cold damp dwellings with no natural light, ventilation, electricity or running water. This way of life lasted until the early 1950s, when they were banned for the unhealthy living conditions and hygienic reasons. Visiting the dwellings, which have now been set up as museums, is quite an experience especially to see how these families lived.



Cave Dwelling Kitchen Area

Likewise, the nearby Rupestrian churches in the rock are another incredible feature. It is a completely different world.

Recent events have drawn more attention to this unique place, and, like all regions in Italy, Matera has its local cuisine following typical traditional food of southern Italy.



Matera Rupestrian Church in the Rock

ALBEROBELLO



Alberobello Trulli

Once in the area, it is also worth taking a trip by car to Alberobello in Puglia, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, about an hour's drive away to see the famous *trulli* houses.

Alberobello is the only town with an entire district of *trulli*. The obligation to build houses with dry stone walls without mortar was an expedient to avoid paying taxes to the Spanish viceroy of the Kingdom of Naples in the 17th century.



A day visit is sufficient to go around the centre, where at times modern buildings with hanging electricity wires and aerials stand out as an overshadowing backdrop. Unfortunately, the *trulli* are the only attraction in the town and have drawn too many tourists for its size.

GREEK TEMPLE OF METAPONTUM



Metaponto Temple

Metaponto is a small town within the Municipality of Bernalda in the Province of Matera in the Region of Basilicata. It was built by the ancient Greeks as part of Magna Graecia. According to one legend, this Greek colony was founded by Epheus, the hero who built the wooden horse of Troy. Greek settlers began arriving in the area around the 8th century BC bringing with them their Hellenic civilisation. The locals adopted Greek culture as their own. Hence, it is no wonder that some local dialects still have Greek words.



Today what remains are some Greek ruins of the temple of Hera at Tavole Palatine, a sanctuary near Metaponto in the Gulf of Taranto. Although not intact, the temple is still standing with its fifteen remaining columns as an imposing monument of a past civilisation. It is certainly worth seeing for anybody visiting the area, which combines not only history, but also offers holiday makers a long white sandy beach in the vicinity.

WHEN IN ROME DO AS THE ROMANS DID

By Georgina Gordon-Ham



Museum Guide Explains the History

Many of us are fascinated by the Colosseum in Rome and by Russell Crowe's performance in the epic historical drama film *Gladiator*.

How many are aware of the existence of an actual school for gladiators? What better location than just off the old Roman road Via Appia Antica, where gladiators perform live. The Gladiator Show in Rome follows the ancient tradition without wild animals. Professionally trained gladiators from the Gladiator School of Rome offer unique entertainment, which begins with a special tour into the exploration of history in the interactive gladiator museum by a guide who talks about the various weapons and equipment used, including techniques and skills required. This is then followed by tasting *Mulsum*, the original ancient drink consisting of a mixture of wine and honey, a favourite of the Romans, and lastly the gladiator performance itself in the arena with gladiators and ancient dances. The ambiance is perfect, a breathtaking experience with background music, *son et lumière* effects, stunning fights and dancing.



Gladiator Museum



Dancers by courtesy of the Gladiator School of Rome

Although training gladiator skills is mostly for film actors and shows for public entertainment, the exciting part is that the Gladiator School actually offers lessons to the public as well. It is open to any age group, including children who find it awesome. A two-hour introductory lesson teaches how to fight like a warrior in ancient Rome wearing the gladiator tunic and mastering the skills of swordplay, as well as about life in the imperial city. The word gladiator (swordsman) derives from the Latin *gladius* (sword).

The Gladiator School, run by the Italian capital's Gruppo Storico Romano, an association for cultural and historical dissemination founded over 25 years ago, and the arena are located at 18 Via Appia Antica, not far from the Colosseum.

The Gladiator School receives over 10,000 visitors each year.

The professional Gladiators who train at the Gladiator School study the technique and history about gladiators. At the end of their first year of training they solemnise their association with the School by taking an oath. After the oath they can choose their category and be assigned a Latin name (such as *Ganicus*, *Maximus*, *Invictus*, etc).



By courtesy of the Gladiator School of Rome

The school includes male and female gladiators. Although gladiators were mostly men, female gladiators did exist. *Gladiatrix* is a modern term applied to female gladiators in the 19th century. They were referred to in Roman times as *ludia* (female performers) or as *mulieres* (women) and came from different walks of life.

Many people know the thumbs up sign, but do they realise its likely origin? At the end of the gladiator fight, Roman crowds would decide on the fate of the vanquished gladiator: thumbs up meant life, thumbs down death. The emoji for the show is certainly thumbs up!

The Gladiator Show is produced by Gruppo Storico Romano where professional gladiators perform for entertainment.

The show is directed by Yuri Napoli (Art Director of Gruppo Storico Romano), while the plot is written by its founder and CEO Sergio lacmoni, also known by his Latin name *Nero*.

Do as the Romans did: go to the show and then try your skills by enrolling on the short course. The experience brings history to life! The shows at the Via Appia arena are at 8.30pm every Friday and Sunday from May to September. However, there are special re-enactment shows organised by the Gruppo Storico Romano, throughout the year as in the case of the assassination of Julius Caesar scheduled for the Ides of March on 15th March from 1pm at the Sacred Arena of Largo Argentina in Rome, and Natale di Roma, the birth and foundation of Rome on 21st April. Look out for these special historical events.

Contacts for the show and the school:

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By courtesy of the Gladiator School of Rome



The Team

BOCCA DELLA VERITÀ

By John Jinks



The Mouth of Truth, better known as La Bocca della Verità, stands just outside under the porch of the church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin in Piazza della Bocca della Verità on the site of an ancient cattle market (Forum Boarium) and not far from the Campidoglio, the Capitoline Hill.



Temple of Hercules Victor on left and Temple of Portunus on right

The massive marble mask weighs about 1300 kg and is supposed to depict a sea god. Historians are not quite certain what its original purpose was. Legend says it was where villains were taken to tell the truth, and that any hesitation would mean losing a hand. Others say it was where a husband would take his wife to check whether she was faithful or not. Whether this was true or not is another matter. Some say it was used as a drain cover in the nearby Temple of Hercules Victor (Hercules the Winner), which had an *oculus*, a round open space in the middle of the roof, similar to the one of the Pantheon. Hence, it could rain inside. It is also thought that cattle merchants used it to drain the blood of cattle

sacrificed to the god Hercules. It eventually moved to its current location inside the portico of the church in the seventeenth century.



The Fountain of the Tritons and the Temple of Hercules Victor

The Bocca della Verità is one of the more frivolous attractions of Rome together with the Trevi Fountain where visitors throw coins to come back to the eternal city.

Many viewers may remember these two sites from the film *Roman Holiday* with Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck.



Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck in *Roman Holiday*, Rome

The temple standing on the other side of Piazza della Bocca della Verità is the Roman Temple of Hercules in the area of the Forum Boarium. For a long time this temple was mistaken for a temple of Vesta until it was identified correctly by Camille de Tournon during his service as Prefect of Rome under Napoleon I.

Piazza della Bocca della Verità is an ideal location for those who like a stroll along the river Tiber and cross over to Trastevere, a district of Rome known for its narrow streets, squares and typical *trattorie*.

TARQUINIA, A CITY OF ANCIENT ROOTS

By Rubina Montebello



Piazza Giacomo Matteotti, Tarquinia

I visited the city of Tarquinia on a fresh sunny autumn day. The train journey from Rome was feasible as a day excursion being just under a hundred kilometres north of the Eternal City. It takes about an hour and a half by train with frequent trains throughout the day. Tarquinia's station is down in the plains, where a shuttle bus takes you from the station up to the terminus outside the walls of the main entrance of the old city standing on a hill. This immediately leads onto Piazza Cavour, the main square of the city centre.

Tarquinia is easy to go around. Everywhere is close by at walking distance, making it ideal for a day visit.

Today it maintains the appearance of a medieval village featuring interesting examples of architecture, such as Palazzo Vitelleschi and Palazzo Comunale, as well as splendid churches such as the Cathedral (Duomo di Tarquinia) dedicated to Saint Margaret and Saint Martin.

One of the outstanding spots is Piazza Giacomo Matteotti, where the Town Hall stands at No 6. Like many squares of old parts of a city in Italy, Piazza Matteotti is an excellent backdrop for a play leaving the viewer gobsmacked, wondering whether the scene is real or a dream. I stopped for lunch at Ambaradam, a restaurant on the square, renowned for their delicious dishes, which did not disappoint.

An important aspect is Tarquinia's Etruscan history. Corneto regained its Roman name Tarquinia in 1922 to evoke past glories under the Fascist government of Italy. This old

city is in the province of Viterbo in the Lazio region. It was an ancient Etruscan settlement known as Tarchuna, later taken over by the Romans. It was awarded UNESCO World Heritage status for its archaeological remains, the Etruscan tombs in the Necropolis or Monterozzi burial grounds just outside the city dating from the Iron Age (9th century BC). What is extraordinary about these burial grounds is that they look like upside down pyramids, which go underground, and are known as *tumuli*. These *tumuli* covered subterranean wall painted tomb-chambers carved into the rock, containing sarcophagi and personal possessions of the deceased. Like the ancient Egyptians, the Etruscans believed that survival and prosperity in the afterlife depended on the quality of the deceased's remains.

Etruscan civilisation flourished in central Italy between the 8th and 3rd century BC. The province of Viterbo has a high concentration of Etruscan remains. For those who have more time, driving to Tarquinia and using it as a base would be ideal in order to spend more time in the Province of Viterbo pursuing history and relaxing at the health spa of Terme dei Papi between excursions. The spa is just outside Viterbo, another interesting and fascinating city, chosen by several popes not only for the spa, but also for the cooler summer weather. The centre of the city is surrounded by medieval walls, still intact, built between the 11th and 12th centuries. Many of these towns were built on hilltops holding hidden treasures from centuries of art and culture to be discovered by lovers of history.



ARRIVEDERCI SPERLONGA

By Georgina Jinks



Painted wall with Saracen scene, Sperlonga

Sperlonga, a fascinating town south of Rome, is just under two hours drive away by car. It is one of the preferred summer resorts of many Romans. Our introduction to the town was through our Italian cousins, who kindly invited us there on several occasions. We have many pleasant memories of our stays and by the beach at Lago Lungo, about a kilometre away. Each visit offered the opportunity to discover more about Sperlonga and the surrounding areas.



The old historic centre of Sperlonga standing on a rock above the sea still retains recollections of the Saracens with its tower and narrow streets offering an incredible panoramic view. Modern Sperlonga is below, at sea level and offers long wide sandy beaches.



Painted wall with Saracen ships

The town, located near the Via Appia, is in the province of Latina about halfway between Rome and Naples. It is best known for the ancient Roman sea grotto in the grounds of the Villa of Tiberius containing remains and sculptures displayed in a museum on site.

After the fall of the Roman Empire in the 6th century, ruins of the imperial residence served as refuge for the locals. Later the population moved to the nearby promontory of Colle San Magno to escape the unhealthy nearby malaria stricken marshland and the Saracen attacks. The danger posed by the Saracens is highlighted by the presence of many watch-towers along the coast to Gaeta. Sperlonga was later destroyed by the Ottoman fleet under Barbarossa in the 16th century. It only re-emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries and gradually became more popular as a seaside residence. The tourist expansion was facilitated even more with the opening of the Terracina-Gaeta coastal road, known as the Via Flacca in 1957.



Sperlonga reflects the vicissitudes of its history. It is fascinating to stroll around the old part of the town with its cluster of white-washed houses huddled together on the hill of Colle San Magno. Parking in the centre of the old town is not easy considering the area was not built for cars, and so it is best to move about the old districts on foot exploring its narrow, winding cobblestone alleys, stone archways, and long winding staircases, which meander throughout the historic part. Every corner has something to offer.

Delightful little squares are surrounded by a mixture of small colourful shops and fashionable boutiques selling a whole range of items

ranging from clothes, to shoes, handbags and antiques. There are also numerous little restaurants and bars to choose from, offering cooling refreshments and local gastronomic delights. There are several places where you can sit and rest taking time to unwind, relax and absorb the wonderful Mediterranean atmosphere.

Narrow steps lead down to the lower section of town, where on the way one can encounter hidden courtyards with painted walls of the Saracens.

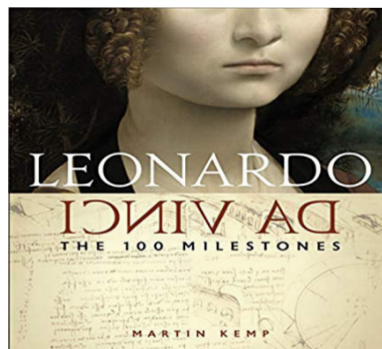


It is an ideal location for excursions. Surrounding towns include Terracina and Fondi which has the closest railway station, Itri, and Gaeta. Minturno, a bit further south, is known for its war cemetery. The towns of Sabaudia and Anzio are also not too distant. There are regular ferry crossings to the island of Ponza either from Gaeta or Anzio. Each location has something to offer and discover.



BOOK REVIEW

LEONARDO DA VINCI: THE 100 MILESTONES



By Martin Kemp

Sterling Publishing Company – 2019 - £17.99

To commemorate the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death, world-renowned da Vinci expert Martin Kemp explores in an illustrated book a hundred of the master's milestones in art, science, engineering, architecture, anatomy, and more.

Martin Kemp is an art historian and exhibition curator as well as emeritus professor of the history of art at the University of Oxford. Kemp is considered one of the world's leading scholars on the life and works of Leonardo da Vinci.

Leonardo da Vinci was born in the small Tuscan town of Vinci in April 1452. Over the centuries, he has become one of the most famous people in the history of visual culture. Spring 2019 marked the 500th anniversary of his death in May 1519, with exhibitions and events planned throughout the year across the world.

This illustrated volume by Martin Kemp offers a fresh way of looking at the master's work. Kemp focuses in chronological order on a 100 key milestones covering an extraordinary range of topics across Leonardo's many fields of discipline: painting, where he brought new levels of formal and emotional grandeur to his works, including *The Last Supper* and the *Portrait of Lisa del Giocondo* (the "Mona Lisa"); anatomical studies, which are extraordinary for their legacy regarding sense of form and function (*Studies of the Optics of the Human Eye and Ventricles of the Brain*); engineering

marvels, noted for their range and most extraordinary visual quality (Gearing for a Clockwork Mechanism and Wheels and Designs for a Flying Machine) with ideas that also inspired aviation; and his progressive engagement with a range of sciences, such as anatomy, optics, dynamics, statics, geology, and mathematics.

JOURNEYS THROUGH ANCIENT ROME

ANCIENT ROME BROUGHT ALIVE THROUGH SPECIAL EFFECTS AND VIRTUAL REALITY



Augustus

Journeys through Ancient Rome, two stories and two routes: a project conceived by Piero Angela and Paco Lanciano in 2014.

The performance is a great way to spend a warm summer evening in the open air. The show begins at nightfall. Creatively using the remains of the Forum of Caesar and the Forum of Augustus, the latest technology with spotlights and projections brings to life stones, which speak for themselves through videos and faithful reconstruction of the area with special effects and emerging architectural marvels. The visits evoke life in ancient Rome under two leading figures.

Visitors sit in front of unfolding scenes accompanied by a narrator, who explains the significance of the buildings and events of that period. Headsets are provided and the listener can tune into different languages. The show lasts about an hour.

DATES AND TIMES OF PERFORMANCES IN 2020

FROM 8 JULY TO 8 NOVEMBER 2020

From 8 July to 31 August
Timings: 21.00 – 22.00 – 23.00

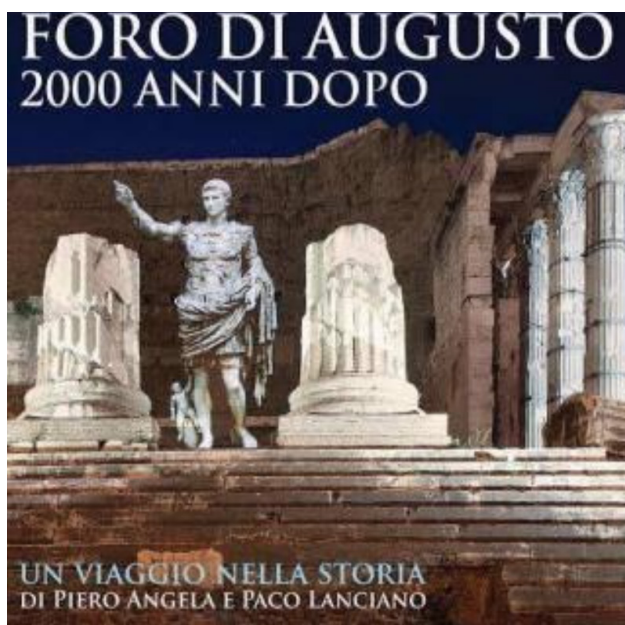
from 1 September to 30 September
Timings: 20.00 – 21.00 – 22.00

from 1 October to 8 November
Timings: 19.00 – 20.00 – 21.00

Duration about: 40 minutes

Official website: www.viaggioneifori.it

This year Journeys through Ancient Rome, two stories and two routes begin later in the year starting in July instead of April due to the Coronavirus situation. Anti-coronavirus rules and regulations have to be observed, such as taking attendee temperature before entering, one metre distancing, allocated seats for a limited number of spectators and protected audio devices.



ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI RETURNS

By Georgina Jinks



Artemisia Gentileschi
Self Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria
© The National Gallery, London

Artemisia Gentileschi returns with the first exhibition of her works at the National Gallery in London in her own right as a great Italian female artist of the 17th century. These paintings come from public institutions and private collections, including the Queen. Today she is recognised as one of the most talented painters and female artists of her generation.

The National Gallery acquired a recently discovered rare self-portrait by the celebrated artist Artemisia Gentileschi in July 2017 for £3.6 million.

The Self - Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria, an oil painting from circa 1615–17, first went on public display in the Central Hall of the National Gallery on 19 December 2018. After five months of conservation treatment, the restoration process, in a first for the Gallery, was documented through a regular series of short films shared on social media.

While unveiling the newest addition to the national collection, the National Gallery also revealed plans for her future. In 2019 The Self Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria undertook a tour of unusual and unexpected venues (not all of them galleries or museums) across the UK from March 2019 starting at Glasgow Women's Library. Then plans began for a project to hold a special exhibition on her works at the National Gallery in 2020.

From 3 October 2020 to 24 January 2021 the National Gallery is staging a major monographic exhibition of the work of Artemisia. The show brought more than thirty works from around the world to London to present a highly selective, survey of her career.

Artemisia Gentileschi is considered one of the most accomplished painters among the followers of Caravaggio, whom she must have known personally through her father Orazio. Artemisia is very expressive. She goes a step further than Caravaggio by showing even stronger emotion. As in the case of Caravaggio, Artemisia and her father Orazio were forgotten for a long time, and were rediscovered in the 20th century.

In an era when female artists were not easily accepted, she was the first woman to become a member of the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno in Florence seeking the patronage of the ruling family at the time, the Medici, and had an international clientele, including royalty.

Artemisia Gentileschi was born in Rome on 8 July 1593, the daughter of the painter Orazio Gentileschi (1563–1639). She began her artistic training with her father in 1608–9, and her earliest painting dates from 1610. The following year an event took place that changed the course of Artemisia's life and shaped her reputation: she was raped by the painter Agostino Tassi (about 1580 – 1644), a collaborator of her father's.

An infamous seven-month trial followed. Every word of this case survives in a detailed court transcript that shines light on the lives of artists in the early 17th century. The transcript of the trial is also on display at the exhibition. Tassi was condemned to choose between a punishment of five years' hard labour or banishment from Rome (he opted for the latter, though this was never enforced). Artemisia was swiftly married off to a minor Florentine painter, Pierantonio di Vincenzo Stiattesi, and left Rome for Florence.

Artemisia lived in Florence from 1612 to 1620, and it is from this period that the Self-Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria dates.

Her paintings were both commissioned and acquired by members of the ruling Medici family. In 1620 Artemisia returned to Rome, beset by creditors after running up debts, and remained there for 10 years. By 1630 she had settled in Naples, where she ran a successful studio. In 1639 she travelled to London, to assist her ailing father Orazio in painting the ceiling of the Queen's House in Greenwich. By 1640, she returned to Naples, where she remained until her death around 1654.

Although Artemisia was greatly admired during her lifetime with her works being avidly collected by the leading rulers of the day (including Cosimo II de' Medici in Florence, Philip IV King of Spain in Madrid, and Charles I King of England in London), she was only re-appreciated in the 20th century. Artemisia faced challenges in both her professional and personal life. Strong emotions are reflected in her works.

The artist often signed under the name of Artemisia Lomi rather than Gentileschi, using her grandfather's surname. She often painted her own face for her female figures, which made it cheaper for her rather than pay a model, and at the same time it was a clever marketing strategy. These self-portraits were often heroines taken from history and the Bible.

Today she is recognised as one of the most talented painters and female artists of her generation. Artemisia was lucky to be brought up in an artistic environment. She was 17 when she painted her first painting of Susanna and the Elders (1610). Whether by coincidence or not the figure of Susanna was also the theme of her last painting. It is as though her own trauma scarred her so deeply that tragedy and drama haunted her throughout her life. In fact, many of her paintings have been considered autobiographical, where her personal identity is closely intertwined with her artistic production.

Her determination led to her success. She wanted to be considered on a par with male painters of the time. Her paintings show energy. You can feel the emotions of her figures. They evoke human drama. Artemisia's works eloquently speak for themselves.



Susanna and the Elders, 1610

© Kunstsammlungen Graf von Schönborn, Pommersfelden (inv. 191)

She was a phenomenon of her time. She had extraordinary talent. Artemisia is a very powerful and inspirational figure in an art world dominated by men. Her words "I will show your illustrious Lordship what a woman can do" in a letter to Don Antonio Ruffo in August 1649 and later in another letter dated November 1649 "with me your Lordship will not lose and you will find the spirit of Caesar in the soul of



Artemisia Gentileschi

Self Portrait as a Lute Player

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT. Charles H. Schwartz Endowment Fund (2014.4.1)

© Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut

a woman" show how determined she was to succeed as a woman and finally gets her place in the spotlight. She was bold and certain. She was courageous, rebellious and powerful like the female characters she depicted.

Google Arts and Culture has partnered with the National Gallery to raise the profile of Artemisia offering cultural experiences with the help of cutting edge technology. Since 2011, Google Art and Culture has ventured to bring

the world's cultural treasures from museums all over the world to the fingertips of the public.

Unfortunately, the exhibition opens at a time when the world is in a roller coaster fighting the coronavirus pandemic. In normal circumstances, people would have travelled to see it from around the world. Make sure to book ahead due to the restrictions for the current Covid19 situation.

See website: www.nationalgallery.org.uk

500th ANNIVERSARY OF TWO GREAT MASTERS

2019 CELEBRATED LEONARDO DA VINCI'S 500th ANNIVERSARY



Events to celebrate Leonardo da Vinci 500 years after his death began in January 2019. The whole world paid homage to one of the greatest geniuses of all times. Leonardo, born in the village of Vinci in Tuscany, was gifted with a brilliant brain and multitudinous skills ranging from an engineer, scientist, inventor, town planner to artist, who continued to inspire artists over the centuries. He left a long-lasting legacy, which still amazes experts from different disciplines today.

Milan is the city where Leonardo spent the longest time working for Ludovico Maria Sforza, also known as Ludovico il Moro, the Duke of Milan. He created several masterpieces during the period he spent in the city, such as The Last Supper kept in the refectory of the splendid church of Santa Maria delle Grazie.

The photos below invite to appreciate the en-

vironment and Santa Maria delle Grazie seen through the four seasons - photos by courtesy of Benedetta Amari.



2020 CELEBRATED RAFFAELE SANZIO'S 500th ANNIVERSARY



Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino is considered part of the trinity of great masters from the Renaissance era, alongside Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci.

As in the case of Leonardo da Vinci, there will also be several Raphael exhibitions around the world in 2020, but the most important of these was held in Rome, the city where the artist spent the last decade of his life.

RAFFAELLO (1483-1520)
2 June - 30 August 2020

The Scuderie del Quirinale, one of Rome's leading art museums, paid tribute to Leonardo da Vinci, and then a year later to Raffaele Sanzio.

Unfortunately, Raphael's much-anticipated exhibition in Rome with over one hundred paintings coincided with the outbreak of coronavirus and had to be postponed from March to June.

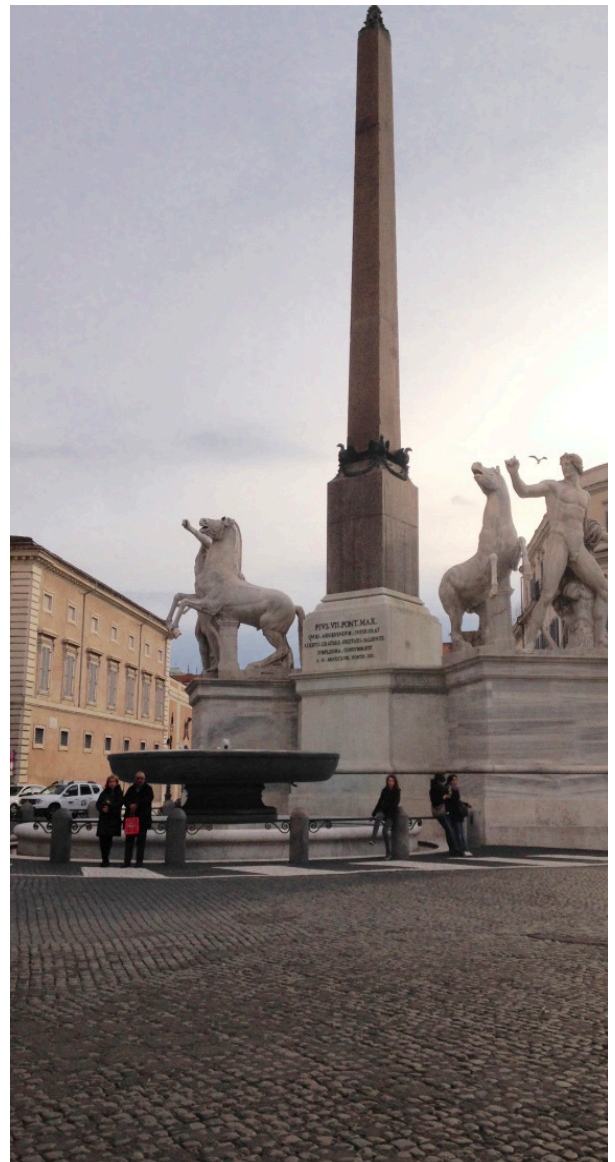
Born in Urbino in the region of Le Marche in 1483, Raphael spent the last decade of his life working as a much sought-after artist in Rome. He died aged only 37 and was buried in the Pantheon.

Raphael was highly regarded in his own lifetime and was very productive throughout his short life, receiving important commissions from two popes: Julius II and Leo X. His art and architecture can be admired today in St. Peter's Basilica, in the Vatican Museums and in churches and palaces around Rome.

Although the exhibition is over, the Scuderie del Quirinale have organised an extended virtual version called "Raphael beyond the Exhibition" with videos and background work.

This can be seen by visiting the following website:

www.scuderiequirinale.it



Piazza del Quirinale by the Scuderie Museum

**The Torlonia
Marbles.
Collecting
Masterpieces**

**I Marmi
Torlonia.
Collezionare
Capolavori**

Roma, Musei Capitolini
- Villa Caffarelli



Foto: M. Sordani - Contrasto



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**Alberto
SORDI**
1920 - 2020

la **GRANDE MOSTRA** del centenario
nella **STORICA VILLA DELL'ATTORE**
per la prima volta aperta al pubblico
e al **TEATRO DEI DIOSCURI**

7 MARZO
29 GIUGNO 2020

SEDE: **VILLA SORDI**
Piazzale Numa Pompilio (Terme di Caracalla)

TEATRO DEI DIOSCURI
Via Firenze, 1

INFO: 06.85351031 info@teatroalbertosordi.it
PREVENDITE SINGOLE: 06.48078290 www.alveticket.it
GRUPPI E SCUOLE: 06.48078287 gruppi@alveticket.com



EXHIBITIONS IN ITALY AND ABROAD 2020

Only a few exhibitions are listed as several events have been cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak. Check other exhibitions online. Always make bookings ahead of time.

ROME

IL TEMPO DI CARAVAGGIO. CAPOLAVORI DELLA COLLEZIONE DI ROBERTO LONGHI
16 June– 10 January 2021

The exhibition includes several paintings by Caravaggio, in particular *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, and about 40 works by artists who were inspired by the great master and followed his style. They are part of a collection of Roberto Longhi (1890-1970), a leading Italian art critic and collector, and are housed by his foundation in Florence.

Palazzo Caffarelli, part of the Capitoline Museums
www.museicapitolini.org/en/sede/piazza_e_palazzi/palazzo_caffarelli_clementino

THE TORLONIA MARBLES: COLLECTING MASTERPIECES
14 October – 29 June 2021

Rome's most important private collection of ancient art, the legendary Torlonia Collection at long last goes on public display. Palazzo Caffarelli exhibits 96 pieces from the priceless collection of 620 ancient sculptures.

The collection, after being largely hidden away for 70 years, comprises marble, bronze and alabaster statues, busts, bas-reliefs and sarcophagi dating to the ancient Roman era. The Torlonia family collected these pieces between the 15th and 19th centuries.

The former Museo Torlonia opened in 1875 on Via della Lungara in Rome's Trastevere quarter. In the post-war period access to the palace's 77 rooms was granted only occasionally to experts or visiting dignitaries.

In 1976 the museum closed definitively, to make way for luxury apartments, and

the priceless collection was moved to the basement of another private Roman palace owned by the aristocratic Torlonia family.

For more than four decades the collection has been kept in storage, despite attempts by successive governments to persuade the noble family to either sell or display the works in public.

Palazzo Caffarelli, Capitoline Museums

http://www.museicapitolini.org/en/sede/piazza_e_palazzi/palazzo_caffarelli_clementino

ALBERTO SORDI 1920-2020 EXHIBITION
16 September – 31 January 2021

To celebrate the centenary of the famous Italian actor Alberto Sordi's birth in the city of Rome and pay homage to this man of talent. Although perhaps not so well known internationally, he was an actor of the people and greatly loved by Italians, in particular Romans. He portrayed the man in the street and the middle class. He mainly played comic roles enlivened by his strong Roman accent.

The exhibition dedicated to the life and career of the actor is held in various rooms of his villa, his former residence near the Baths of Caracalla.

Fondazione Alberto Sordi
Villa in Piazzale Numa Pomilio
just off Via Druso
www.fondazionealbertosordi.it

FLORENCE

100 WOLVES BY THE CHINESE ARTIST LIU RUOWANG
13 July – 2 November 2020

The wolves invade the space of two squares in Florence, suggesting the aggression of man on the planet and the consequent reaction of nature.

The wolves face two emblematic buildings of the Renaissance, Palazzo Pitti and the Spedale degli Innocenti, where the great Filippo Brunelleschi showed his conception of

space, proportions and architectural rhythm.

www.vidicultural.com

The threatening pack of wolves shaped by Liu Ruowang, made up of 100 iron castings, is an allegory of nature's response to the ravages and predatory behaviour of man towards the environment.

BRITAIN

On view in two squares: Piazza Pitti and Piazza Santissima Annunziata.

ARTEMISIA

3 October 2020 – 24 January 2021

WRIGHT OF DERBY
SCIENCE AND ART
6 October – 24 January 2021

A major monographic exhibition of the work of Artemisia Gentileschi, an extraordinary Italian female artist. The show brought more than thirty works from around the world to London to present a highly selective, survey of her career.

The exhibition focuses on the wonder derived from an experiment connected to the theme of research and natural science, with a multi-disciplinary approach that benefits humanistic knowledge.

Sainsbury Wing

National Gallery

London

www.nationalgallery.org.uk

Joseph Wright of Derby's 1768 masterpiece *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* comes to Italy for the first time thanks to a loan agreement with London's National Gallery.

SNIPPETS

Gallerie degli Uffizi
www.uffizi.it

ROMAN VILLA FOUND UNDER LUXURY APARTMENT COMPLEX ON AVENTINE HILL

MILAN

THE LADIES OF THE BAROQUE PERIOD
3 December – 11 April 2021

Rome archaeologists have unveiled the remains of a magnificent Roman villa, or *domus*, buried for almost 2,000 years under a block of flats at the foot of the Aventine Hill.

This exhibition is dedicated to female creativity in particular to artists such as Artemisia Gentileschi, Fede Galizia and Lavinia Fontana.

The discovery was made in 2014 during works to earthquake-proof the foundations of the 1950s-era building in Piazza Albania, not far from the Circus Maximus. It was not made public until recently.

Palazzo Reale, Milan.

LARGO ARGENTINA TO BECOME ACCESSIBLE TO VISITORS

ALFRED HITCHCOCK IN UNIVERSAL PICTURES FILMS
9 October – 10 January 2021

Rome's archaeological site at Largo di Torre Argentina is to be restored in a €1 million project sponsored by luxury jeweller Bulgari. The works should be completed by the second half of 2021.

The exhibition displays 70 photos and various items from the special archive on Hitchcock's films (in particular *Rear Window*, *Psycho* and *The Birds*) showing the public what happened back stage.

Rome mayor Virginia Raggi has thanked Bulgari for what she described as an "act of love for the city", while the deputy mayor Luca Bergamo said "The site's many cats would not be disturbed."

Arengario di Monza

The works will include a new entry into the site, as well as elevator access under the tower, with new paths around the archaeological area.

The so-called sacred area of Largo di Torre Argentina is best known as being the scene of Julius Caesar's assassination. It is also the home of Rome's cat sanctuary.

www.gattidiroma.net



Cat Sanctuary, Largo di Torre Argentina



Roman ruins in Largo di Torre Argentina -

also known as Piazza Argentina



Trinità dei Monti overlooking the Spanish Steps

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Mrs. Montebello: Tel. +39 06 92918487
 E-mail: flats@romevisitors.eu



Piazza della Repubblica



By courtesy of the Rome Gladiators' School