

## [Methodologies of Exchange: MoMA's Twentieth-century Italian Art \(1949\)](#)

Announcement published by Chiara Trebaiocchi on Wednesday, January 16, 2019

Type:

Conference

Date:

February 12, 2019

Location:

New York, United States

Subject Fields:

Italian History / Studies, Art, Art History & Visual Studies, American History / Studies

CIMA - the Center for Italian Modern Art (NYC) is organizing a conference on **February 12, 2019**: "Methodologies of Exchange: MoMA's Twentieth-century Italian Art (1949)".

### **Program schedule:**

#### **10.30am**

*Metaphysical Masterpieces* exhibition viewing and registration

#### **11.am - 11.15am**

Welcome by Emma Lewis, Executive Director of CIMA

#### **11am-12.45pm**

Morning Panel: Italian Projections

Laura Moure Cecchini - *"Positively the only person to be interested in the show": Romeo Toninelli collector and diplomat between Milan and New York.*

Davide Colombo / Silvia Bignami - *Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and James Thrall Soby's Grand Tour in Italy: from collectors to Venice Biennale and Rome Quadriennale*

Sergio Cortesini - *The Italian Novecento in America before 1949*

Respondent: Emily Braun

#### **1 - 2.30pm** lunch break

#### **2.30 - 4.45pm**

Afternoon Panel: American Responses

William Norman - *Saul Steinberg and the Unstable US Cultural Field of the Late Forties*

Adrian Duran - *Neo-Cubism and Italian Painting ca. 1949: More Than Meets the Eye*

Sharon Hecker - *A Friendly Competition: Collecting Postwar Italian Art in the Midwest*

Ilaria Schiaffini - *It's Roman Holiday for Artists: The American Artists of L'Obelisco*

Respondent: Melissa Dabakis

**5pm Q&A - Concluding Roundtable with All Speakers**

The conference uses the 1949 Museum of Modern Art exhibition *Twentieth-century Italian Art* as a case study to examine the various methodologies or approaches taken in recent years to explore the artistic exchange between the United States and Italy in the twentieth century. By examining the history of this exhibition and the traveling exhibitions that it spawned, we will explore the reception of Italian art and artists in the US, the growth of networks and collaborations between US dealers and artists, and the role that Italy played in the idea of art-making among American postwar artists. This particular subject allows for other questions as well: How did an important institution like MoMA shape the narrative of American modernism? How did Italy help Alfred Barr and MoMA rethink a Franco-centric vision of modern art after the war? How did the American art world deal with the problematic legacy of Fascist Modernism?

Organized and chaired by former CIMA fellow **Raffaele Bedarida**, former Terra Foundation fellow **Davide Colombo**, and scholar **Silvia Bignami**, with this program CIMA devotes a day to engendering a deeper understanding of the 1949 exhibition's influence; namely, its role in exposing the American public, artists, and art dealers to the works of Italian modernists. *Twentieth-century Italian Art* acted as a catalyst for a vital exchange that had lasting effects on the American art scene. It also marked an essential turning point in the writing of the history of modern art, from both an American and an Italian viewpoint. By focusing on artists, art dealers, critics, and collectors involved in the MoMA show from both side of the Atlantic or directly affected by its consequences, the Study Day will explore a multiplicity of stories. Simultaneously it will solicit dialogue and collaboration among a wide range of methodologies that are necessary for the study of art exchange across national boundaries.

This Study Day will be held at CIMA in connection with the 107th meeting of the College Art Association and the 70th anniversary of the MoMA exhibition.

For more information see <http://www.italianmodernart.org/events/methodologies-exchange-momas-twentieth-century-italian-art-1949/>

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