



# RICCHE MINERE

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Lino Moretti

## Marco Boschini: “compendiosa informazione”

### *Abstract*

This contribution outlines the multifaceted personality of Marco Boschini thanks to a number of recently discovered documents: his baptism certificate (1602), and acts concerning his house, his family and his main activity, the trade of glass beads. His first master was Palma il Giovane; he also devoted himself to engraving under the guide of Odoardo Fialetti, a Bolognese who had settled down in Venice (and of whom we give here the correct date of death). Boschini's love for the sixteenth-century painting lead him to compose *La carta del navegar pitoresco*, a vast poem in Venetian dialect printed in 1660: a connoisseur (Boschini himself) accompanies a Venetian senator in a tour among the great works of the painters of the previous century, exalting the Venetian painters for their use of colour; he also expresses his own preferences, celebrating those among his contemporaries who follow the tradition and criticizing or ignoring the other ones. Better known are *Le minere della pittura veneziana* (1664), a guide to the Venetian paintings in the churches and in the public palaces, and its updated edition (*Le ricche minere della pittura veneziana*, 1674), including also the *Breve instruzione*, aiming at cultivating the taste of the art lover through the knowledge of the style of the Venetian painters from Giovanni Bellini to seven artists of the late sixteenth-early seventeenth centuries. Marco Boschini died in 1681.

Claudia Kryza-Gersch

## The Production of Multiple Small Bronzes in the Italian Renaissance: When, Where and Why (I)

### *Riassunto*

È un fatto noto che tanti bronzetti rinascimentali siano stati fusi in numerose repliche uguali tra loro. Gli studiosi hanno perciò dovuto sviluppare metodi per accertarne l'autenticità e per distinguere la qualità di tali repliche. La *Replikenkunde* diventava così una disciplina indispensabile per lo studio dei bronzetti, ma, finora, non ci si è mai chiesti quando, dove e soprattutto perché gli scultori iniziassero a produrre repliche. L'articolo cercherà di dare una prima risposta a tali domande, per le quali il progresso tecnico – cioè il getto indiretto che permette la riproduzione di un modello per mezzo degli stampi – e le sempre più grandi richieste non sono spiegazioni sufficienti. Nel presente lavoro si dimostrerà che durante il Quattrocento gli artisti non s'interessarono alle repliche, sebbene il principio del getto indiretto fosse già ben noto. Questo metodo fu usato per la prima volta nella fusione dei bronzetti solo verso la fine del secolo da Pier Jacopo Alari de Bonacolsi, detto Antico. Questi però non era intenzionato a fare repliche

ma voleva innanzitutto assicurare, con il raffinato metodo della fusione indiretta, la massima qualità tecnica ai suoi lavori che furono, infatti, di una bellezza mai vista fino ad allora. Attorno al 1500, Antico prese a fare repliche, ma solo su richiesta specifica di Ludovico Gonzaga e di Isabella d'Este e senza entusiasmo. A Padova, pochi anni dopo, Andrea Briosco, detto il Riccio, iniziò a sua volta a creare bronzetti, preferendo la fusione diretta ed eseguendo solo eccezionalmente delle repliche, che sono piuttosto varianti. Fu Severo da Ravenna che ebbe l'idea di produrre bronzetti uguali in grande quantità e di qualità assai mediocre, usando una sua tecnica molto particolare. Passando alla situazione a Venezia, durante il sedicesimo secolo, si può osservare che gli scultori importanti si occuparono raramente della produzione di bronzetti e mai di quella di repliche. Solo alla fine del Cinquecento, e soprattutto durante la prima metà del Seicento, furono le fonderie veneziane – e non gli scultori – a iniziare una vera produzione di massa, quindi molto più tardi di quanto ritenuto dagli studiosi. Il concetto di repliche di altissima qualità fu introdotto a Firenze attorno al 1580 dal Giambologna (a cui sarà dedicata la seconda parte del presente articolo, a stampa nel prossimo numero di «Ricche Minere»). Egli e la sua bottega cambiarono il mondo dei bronzetti in modo radicale, tanto che oggi siamo abituati a vedere anche la produzione del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento con i parametri sviluppati dal grande fiammingo: un errore che ci ha impedito di capire la vera genesi del genere.

Ermanna Panizon

## **L'Assassinio di san Pietro martire di Giovanni Bellini: strategie narrative, precedenti iconografici e analisi iconologica**

*Abstract*

This study analyses the woodcutting scene painted in the background of the Assassination of Saint Peter by Giovanni Bellini, now preserved in the National Gallery of London. Another version of the Assassination, believed to be a work by Bellini's bottega, is hosted in the Courtauld Institute: in this painting the cut branches spill blood, as showing sympathy for the death of the saint. This background scene has always been considered of Bellini's invention. However, there are two previous works of the same subject where the woodcutters are also present: a stone relief on the facade of Sant'Anastasia in Verona and a fresco by Ottaviano Nelli in San Domenico in Gubbio. In the fresco, the cut tree is spilling blood and the lumberjack reacts with marvel and horror to the miraculous event. This paper also introduces the analyses of a post mortem miracle by Saint Peter Martyr, previously overlooked by the scholars: the legend tells the story of a miraculous bleeding of the trees cut by a lumberjack forced to go and fetch firewood on the day of Saint Peter's canonization, in the same woods where the saint was killed. This legend and the figurative precedents compel to elaborate a new interpretation of both paintings in the National Gallery and in the Courtauld Institute. It is hereby argued that the bleeding trees' scene is not an original introduction of Bellini's bottega, but that it was part of a wider figurative heritage stemming from the legend of Saint Peter's post mortem miracle.

Jan-Christoph Rössler

## **The "Camera nova" by Michele Sanmicheli and Giorgio Vasari, Palazzo Corner Spinelli**

*Riassunto*

Attraverso l'analisi dell'edificio, l'autore tenta di ricostruire l'aspetto del palazzo Lando Corner Spinelli dopo le modificazioni attuate nel 1542 da Michele Sanmicheli. Quest'ultimo non solo riprogettò il portego al pian terreno, ma creò anche un nuovo scalone interno per entrambi i piani superiori destinati ad uso residenziale: la scala scoperta nel cortile posteriore, risalente al tardo XV secolo, divenne dunque superflua e venne demolita. In seguito nella metà orientale della corticella fu costruita una nuova stanza, da identificarsi, in mancanza di altre possibilità, con la cosiddetta "Camera nova", una stanza più volte citata nelle note di pagamento alle maestranze. La restante metà della corte divenne una terrazza accessibile a livello del primo piano residenziale sia dalla sala passante che dalle due stanze laterali, una delle quali era la "Camera nova". Il progetto dell'architetto è oggi irriconoscibile, a causa della distruzione del portego nel XIX secolo. Non si può dubitare che il famoso soffitto del Vasari (che verrà a breve ricostruito nel museo di Palazzo Grimani) si trovava un tempo nella "Camera nova" costruita da Sanmicheli. Sfortunatamente sembra essere virtualmente impossibile ricostruire il particolare contesto originale delle pitture di Vasari.

Giulio Manieri Elia

## **La Fede di Giorgio Vasari e il soffitto della “Camera nova” in palazzo Corner Spinelli**

*Abstract*

The presentation of Faith, recently entered into the Venetian artistic patrimony, gives us the opportunity to reconsider the ceiling created by Giorgio Vasari in 1542 for a room of the Corner Spinelli palace in Venice. This contribution goes over the different steps of the creation, dispersion, rediscovery and, eventually, purchase of the panels, following a proposal of the Venetian Soprintendenza. It also offers an updating on the critical studies and on the material analysis in view of the planned rearrangement and exhibition of the ceiling in the Museo del Palazzo Grimani

Daniele D’Anza

## **Un’occasione perduta.**

## **Il Caravaggio di Hartford già in collezione Grioni**

*Abstract*

A rich bourgeois family of Trieste called Grioni owned, from 1925 to 1938, an oil painting on canvas by Caravaggio. This painting, presently at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut (USA), depicts St. Francis comforted by the angel after receiving the stigmata. The encounter with the heirs of that family, in addition to the discovery of some documents that had been kept at the Soprintendenza per i Beni Culturali of Florence and Trieste, allowed the author to gather some useful information in order to define the history of this painting. Guido Grioni purchased this painting in Alexandria, Egypt, from a Muslim man who had inherited it from his brother-in-law, an Arab Coptic. The painting had previously been under the property of a British officer in Malta. In the second part of his work, as a result of the discovery of these documents, the author reveals the embarrassing disinterest of Italian institutions towards this painting that at that time some critics believed to be a copy of a lost original. This critics’ evaluation, that had vitiated the possible acquisition of the painting by the Italian State, was dissolved in 1951 during the great exhibition of Caravaggio in Milan, when the painting was presented as an authentic work. At that time, however, the painting had already gone abroad. Noting the lack of interest of the Italian institutions and with their permission signed by the Minister of National Education, the painting was sold in the USA doubling the value initially estimated in Italy.

Giuseppe Pavanello

## **Disegni decorativi alla Kunstbibliothek di Berlino (I)**

*Abstract*

The article, divided into two parts, takes into examination a group of eighteenth-century Venetian drawings of the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin, depicting projects for decorations for the most part to be executed in fresco, with the notable exception of one sketch for a silver frontal formerly in the San Giorgio Maggiore Basilica in Venice. The XVIII century, from Girolamo Mengozzi Colonna to David Rossi, is thoroughly documented in its taste variations, from late baroque to neoclassical. The drawings are related to ornate and quadratura works executed in fresco in Venetian palaces and churches, so as to have a view of the decorations of an entire century, bringing along the presentation of unpublished works and stimulating reflections on the spread of the rococo in Venice, especially in the work of Andrea Urbani, both in palaces and villas in the Veneto. Other decorators are taken into account in the second part of the article, from Francesco Zanchi to Pietro Visconti, to the neo-classical Paolo Guidolini and Lorenzo Sacchetti. Girolamo Mengozzi Colonna’s project, which opens up the article, is an important testimony to the decoration executed in the palace of Cardinal Giulio Alberoni in Rome in 1725: the work, unfortunately, has been destroyed in the early twentieth century. The second design considered, due to Francesco Battaglioli and Francesco Zugno, attests a valuable work of jewelery created in Venice in 1746-1747: the frontal for the high altar of the Benedictine Basilica of San Giorgio Maggiore, commissioned by abbot Leopoldo Capello. It was of solid silver, and was cast by the French in 1797, at the fall of the Venetian Republic. Further drawings of clear rococo taste are then examined: one for the

Venier family, perhaps created for one of their villas in the Mainland; others for a ceiling and an overdoor, and then a study for a wall frieze and a ceiling of a church building. These projects are likely due to Andrea Urbani, and can be compared to similar carvings and other decorative projects of mid-eighteenth century.

Stefania Cretella

## **La Manifattura Ginori alle grandi mostre industriali.**

### **Il caso dell'Esposizione Generale Italiana di Torino del 1884**

#### *Abstract*

In this essay we shall examine the different versions of historicist taste, taking as a reference point the works displayed by the Ginori Manufacture at the 1884 Esposizione Generale Italiana in Turin. This event can indeed be considered a useful case study to understand what was happening in the decorative arts department in a cultural phase still strongly influenced by a lively interest for arts, culture and costumes of the past, a passion which was widely spread in Europe since the 1830s. The rich collection of maiolica and porcelain exhibited in the Ginori's Pavillon was extremely heterogeneous and a significant section of works was inspired from Renaissance tin-glazed earthenware, above all grotesque decorations, Istoriated wares and Della Robbia Pottery. Since the 1870s, Ginori had decided to increase its catalogue and to introduce new models in imitation of Pompeii models, Turkish pottery and Hispano-Moresque ware, distinguished by the use of lustre that create metallic finishes and iridescent effects.

In the same period, together with the revival course and the interest for the exotic world, the Manufacture tried to create a modern production and started to create maiolica plates painted with the Madonna with Child theme, reproducing contemporary paintings.

The real innovations of the collection were the works designed by the sculptor Urbano Lucchesi, artistic director of the Ginori Manufacture from 1880 to c. 1900. He invented a new kind of pottery, called "Maiolica artistica - oggetti di fantasia" (artistic maiolica - fancy objects): they were sculptures and objects of everyday usage with plastic ornaments representing putti, children, animals, mythological figures and fantastic creatures.

Ginori obtained a great critical success and sold an incredible number of sculptures, vases, dishes and porcelain dinner sets to ordinary customers and to important personalities, such as King Umberto I, Queen Margherita and the minister Bernardino Grimaldi, who sent those objects to the Artistic-Industrial Museum of Rome and the Royal Italian Industrial Museum of Turin.