

**FEMALE PERSPECTIVES**  
Women of Talent and Commitment  
1861–1926

Cover: Vittorio Corcos, *Stella and Piero*, 1889, oil on canvas, Florence, Uffizi Galleries, Modern Art Gallery (cat. no. 84)  
p. 10: Fratelli Alinari, *Female worker at the Ginori factory, Doccia*, 1902, photograph, Florence, Archivi Alinari (cat. no. 87)  
p. 12: Unidentified photographer, *Woman photographing a young couple*, 1902, photograph, Florence, Archivi Alinari, Raccolte Museali Fratelli Alinari, Favrod collection (cat. no. 88)  
pp. 78–79: Fillide Giorgi Levasti, *A School, A Street, A Square*, 1954, oil on canvas, Florence, Uffizi Galleries, Modern Art Gallery  
p. 122: Michele Gordigiani, *Portrait of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, 1858, oil on canvas, London, The National Portrait Gallery  
back flap: Bernardo Celentano, *Transvestite Model*, c. 1860, oil on canvas, Florence, Uffizi Galleries, Modern Art Gallery (cat. no. 75)

# FEMALE PERSPECTIVES

## Women of Talent and Commitment 1861–1926

edited by  
Simonella Condemi

ISBN 978-88-3340-081-5

© 2019 Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali  
Gallerie degli Uffizi

© 2019 sillabe s.r.l.  
Livorno  
www.sillabe.it

The logo “Le Gallerie degli Uffizi”  
is a registered trademark of Carmi e Ubertis

The logo “Firenze Musei”  
is a registered trademark of Sergio Bianco

*The Publisher is willing to settle any royalties that may be due for the publication of pictures from unascertained sources*

Printed by Media Print, Livorno

Reprint	Year
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028

  
FIRENZE  
MUSEI  
sillabe

 LE GALLERIE  
DEGLI UFFIZI

# FEMALE PERSPECTIVES

Women of Talent and Commitment  
1861–1926

Florence, Uffizi Galleries  
Pitti Palace  
Modern Art Gallery  
Sala del Fiorino  
7 March – 26 May 2019

  @UffiziGalleries  
www.uffizi.it

## Producers



MINISTERO  
PER I BENI E  
LE ATTIVITÀ  
CULTURALI



LE GALLERIE  
DEGLI UFFIZI



FIRENZE  
MUSEI

with the support of



ADVANCING  
WOMEN  
ARTISTS  
FOUNDATION

Alice Vogler  
Connie and Doug Clark  
Nancy Galliher  
Donna Malin  
Elisa Tozzi Piccini



*Director of the Uffizi Galleries*  
Eike D. Schmidt

*Education, Research and Development  
Division*  
Eike D. Schmidt

*Collections and Services Division*  
Claudio Di Benedetto

*Architecture, Landscape and  
Technology Division*  
Mauro Linari

*Security and Visitor Services Division*  
Maurizio Catolfi

*Administration Division*  
Silvia Sicuranza

*Scientific Coordination of Exhibitions*  
Alessandra Griffo

*Education Department*  
Silvia Mascalchi

*IT and Digital Strategies Department*  
Gianluca Ciccardi

*Logistics and Storage Department*  
Antonio Russo

*Permits, Concessions and Outsourcing  
Department*  
Alessandra Vergari

*Director's Office*  
Monica Alderotti, Alberica Barbolani di  
Montauto, Veruska Filippieri, Alejandra  
Micheli

*Exhibition Conceived and Curated by*  
Simonella Condemi

*Loans and Registrations*  
Laura Mori  
Patrizia Tarchi

*Exhibition Design and Direction  
of Works*  
Mauro Linari

*Technical Collaboration*  
Paola Scortichini

*Security Systems*  
Claudia Gerola

*Exhibition Construction*  
Opera Laboratori Fiorentini – Civita  
Leonardo Baldi

*Exhibition Graphics*  
Sillabe

*English Translation of Exhibition  
Labels and Panels*  
Stephen Tobin

*Conservation Control of Works  
on Display*  
Conservation Department of the Uffizi  
Galleries

*Climate Control*  
Opificio delle Pietre Dure:  
Sandra Cassi, Monica Galeotti

*Security Coordinator, Modern Art Gallery*  
Stefania Mariotti

*Storage Coordinator for the Modern Art  
Gallery*  
Antonina Alletto

*Exhibition Production Management*  
Opera Laboratori Fiorentini – Civita

*Exhibition Communication*  
Opera Laboratori Fiorentini – Civita  
*Coordination, Promotion and Public  
Relations*  
Opera Laboratori Fiorentini – Civita  
Mariella Becherini

*Press Office*  
Opera Laboratori Fiorentini – Civita  
Andrea Acampa, Tommaso Galligani

*Restorations*  
cat. no. 46: CRD s.n.c., Lazzate (MB)  
cat. no. 38: Laboratorio delle Scuole Pie,  
Genova  
cat. no. 21: L'Officina del restauro s.r.l.,  
Firenze  
cat. no. 102: Opera Laboratori Fiorentini  
cat. nos. 47-59: Restoration Department of  
the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze  
(Gisella Guasti, Silvia Medagliani, Andrea  
Nutini, Lia Prestucci, Alessandro Sidoti,  
Liliana Talli)

*Transport*  
Arteria

*Insurance*  
Generali Assicurazioni

*Lenders*  
Atina, Museo Académie Vitti  
Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale  
Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia  
Florence, Gabinetto Scientifico Letterario  
G.P. Vieusseux  
Florence, Famiglia Natiello Colosimo  
Florence, Eredi Zonaro  
Florence, Fratellanza Artigiana d'Italia  
Genoa, Raccolte Frugone, Comune di  
Genoa  
Genoa, Galleria d'arte moderna, Comune  
di Genova  
Moliterno, MAM, Musei Aiello Moliterno  
Naples, Città Metropolitana di Napoli  
Turin, Fondazione Torino Musei, Galleria  
Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea  
Turin, courtesy Galleria Berman  
Vigevano, Pinacoteca civica "C. Ottone",  
Comune di Vigevano

*Catalogue Edited by*  
Simonella Condemi

*Essays by*  
Fausto Barbagli, Arianna Borga, Riccardo  
Carapelli, Caterina Chiarelli, Gabriele  
Sodo Natiello Colosimo, Simonella  
Condemi, Laura Desideri, Lisa Diolaiuti,  
Linda Falcone, Daniele Galleni, Francesco  
Galluzzi, Roberto Giovannelli, Irene Grifoni,  
Raffaella Marcucci, Silvia Mascalchi,  
Carlotta Nucci, Monica Pacini, Cristina  
Palma, Anna Pellegrino, Alessandra  
Rapisardi

*Biographies Edited by*  
Arianna Borga, Simonella Condemi, Lisa  
Diolaiuti, Maria Delpriori, Matilde Gentilini

**s i l l a b e**  
*Editorial Management*  
Maddalena Paola Winspeare  
*Editing*  
Giulia Bastianelli

*Iconographic Research*  
Giulia Perni

*Graphic Design and Cover*  
Susanna Coseschi

*English Translation*  
Paul Metcalfe and Christine MacLellan for  
Scriptum, Rome

*Photo Credits*  
Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali:  
Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence  
(photo by GAP)  
Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence  
Gabinetto Fotografico delle Gallerie degli  
Uffizi, Florence  
Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti  
e Paesaggio per la città metropolitana di  
Firenze e per le Province di Pistoia e Prato  
Archivi Alinari, Florence  
Archivio Daniele Galleni, Pisa  
Archivio "Liberio Andreotti", Pescia  
Archivio Rapisardi, Florence  
Archivio Roberto Giovannelli, Florence  
Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa (photo by  
Giandonato Tartarelli)  
Città Metropolitana di Napoli  
Collezione Eredi Zonaro, Florence  
Collezione Fratellanza Artigiana d'Italia,  
Florence  
Collezione Mazzei-Traina, Ferrara  
Collezione privata, Arezzo  
Collezioni private, Florence  
Comune di Genova, DOCSAI, Centro di  
Documentazione per la Storia, l'Arte e  
l'Immagine di Genova / MUSEI DI NERVI  
- Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Raccolte  
Frugone, Genoa  
Courtesy of the principal and fellows of  
Homerton College Cambridge

DeA Picture Library, licensed to Alinari  
Edizioni Remo Sandron, Florence  
Gabinetto Scientifico Letterario G.P.  
Vieusseux, Florence  
Galleria Berman, Turin  
Gam, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e  
Contemporanea, Turin (kind permission  
of the Fondazione Torino Musei), Studio  
Fotografico Gonella 1995  
Istituto Matteucci, Viareggio  
Kind permission of the Natiello Colosimo  
family, Florence  
MAM, Musei Aiello Moliterno, Moliterno  
Musei civici Vigevano, Pinacoteca civica  
"C. Ottone", Vigevano  
Museo Académie Vitti, Atina  
Museo della Fondazione Scienza e Tecnica,  
Florence  
Photo Carlo Cantini, Florence  
Photo Cristian Ceccanti, Florence  
Photo Claudio Giusti, Florence  
Photo Hansen, Gallerie degli Uffizi, Galleria  
d'arte moderna, Florence  
Photo Mario Nunes Vais, Florence  
Smithsonian American Art Museum,  
Washington DC, © 2019. Photo Smithsonian  
American Art Museum / Art Resource /  
Scala, Florence  
© De Morgan Collection, courtesy of the  
De Morgan Foundation, London

*Acknowledgements*  
Domenico Aiello, Gianfranco Aiello, Federico  
Bano, Luca Bellingeri, Ermanno Bellucci,  
Virginia Bertone, Stefania Borghesi,  
Federica Borselli, Riccardo Carapelli,  
Jennifer Celani, Benedetta Chiesi, Graziella  
Cirri, Gabriele Sodo Natiello Colosimo,  
Paola Costa, Luigi de Magistris, Daniela  
De Palma, Maria Delpriori, Francesco Del  
Vecchio, Laura Desideri, Cesare Erario,  
Ursula Esposito, Luciano Garella, Matilde  
Gentilini, Maria Flora Giubilei, Giuliana  
Godio, Cecilie Hollberg, Alessandro Lazzeri,  
Loretta Lombardi, Margaret MacKinnon,  
Simona Mammana, Giuliano Matteucci,  
Maria Maugeri, Iolanda Meneguzzer,  
Gloria Manghetti, Pier Luigi Muggiati,  
Armando Nicolai, Eleonora Nomellini,  
Caterina Olcese, Roberto Palermo, Cristina  
Panconi, Gloria Pasi, Riccardo Passoni,  
Gloria Piaggio, Susi Piovaneli, Muriel  
Prandato, Graziano Raveggi, Luca Rinaldi,  
Paola Rotella, Donatella Schembri, Angela  
Schiattarella, Vincenzo Tiné, Cesare Mario  
Trevigne

Special thanks to Arianna Borga, Margherita  
Ciacci, Irene Grifoni and Gregorio Nardi  
for their work on the project since its  
commencement.

Women Workers and Intellectuals in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century: Silent Liberation <b>Eike D. Schmidt</b>	<b>9</b>	Marianna Panciatichi Ximenes d’Aragona Paulucci, a Naturalist in Tuscany in the Late Nineteenth Century <b>Fausto Barbagli</b>	<b>71</b>
Speaking into the Silence: A Voice for Female Creativity <b>Linda Falcone</b>	<b>13</b>	Primary Education Entrusted to Women <b>Raffaella Marcucci</b>	<b>79</b>
Untold Career Paths for Women in Tuscany (1861–1926) <b>Simonella Condemi</b>	<b>14</b>	A Young Lady of Good Family Prevented from Being an Artist <b>Riccardo Carapelli</b>	<b>92</b>
Tuscan Women, Italian Women. Work, Identity and Citizenship, 1861–1926 <b>Anna Pellegrino</b>	<b>19</b>	Women, the Two Faces of Knowledge <b>Lisa Diolaiuti</b>	<b>96</b>
Women’s Creativity and Professions between Tradition and Innovation Enterprise in the Feminine <b>Alessandra Rapisardi</b>	<b>29</b>	From Muse to Maker Expat Women Artists Find ‘a Space of Their Own’ in Newly Unified Italy <b>Linda Falcone</b>	<b>101</b>
Angiolina Pagliano Bruno: The Portrait of a Modern Woman <b>Daniele Galleni</b>	<b>35</b>	Women Subscribers to the Gabinetto Vieusseux in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century <b>Laura Desideri, Monica Pacini</b>	<b>107</b>
Studio Models in Florence. Sketches from Memory <b>Roberto Giovannelli</b>	<b>39</b>	Félicie de Fauveau, Romantic Sculptor and Businesswoman <b>Silvia Mascalchi</b>	<b>115</b>
Women in the World of Cinema <b>Francesco Galluzzi</b>	<b>50</b>	The First Women to Enter the Spheres of Culture, Science and the Professions <b>Irene Grifoni</b>	<b>119</b>
Tuscany, the Cross-roads of an Extraordinary Period in Women’s Art Eleonora Duse, Candida Natiello Colosimo, Juana Romani and Maria Lavinia Fiorilli <b>Gabriele Sodo Natiello Colosimo</b>	<b>53</b>	Elizabeth Barrett Browning: The Lady of the Corner House <b>Cristina Palma</b>	<b>123</b>
Elisa Pante, Photographer and Traveller <b>Arianna Borga</b>	<b>59</b>	Woman as Subject: Female Images in the Modern Art Gallery in Florence <b>Carlotta Nucci</b>	<b>126</b>
Beyond Fashion: Women without Constraints <b>Caterina Chiarelli</b>	<b>64</b>	Biographies Works on Display	<b>129</b> <b>133</b>

## **Women Workers and Intellectuals in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century: Silent Liberation**

Most of the women of the Democratic party attending the American president's State of the Union address to the joint session of Congress on 5 February 2019 did so dressed in white. The chromatic and symbolic effect of a breach in the dark, compact mass of the audience constituted an authentic manifesto, stronger than so many cries of protest and declarations of dissent. In a culture that is still misogynistic in many respects, where women are still generally paid less than men while bearing equal responsibility, where decisions detrimental to their rights are often taken, the white shape created by their positioning reminded everyone with elegant eloquence of the ideals that these political representatives stand for and the consequences that their mission can have on a broad section of the population. What happened in Congress is only the latest stage in a movement of women's liberation and awareness of the place that they can rightfully claim in society. As we know, this was born in Britain back in the middle of the nineteenth century and battled to survive and grow within a blackmailing system of compliance with biological duties and social conventions to be dismantled. The exclusive role of the submissive, virtuous wife and caring mother opened up little by little to include perspectives no less ethically orthodox but often previously regarded as illegitimate if not indeed revolutionary.

It was probably the economic havoc caused by the struggle for national independence and unification that created an opening in Italy for women too and permitted the blossoming – and often exploitation – of the resources they have to offer. And it is to women that Italy owed its very survival during World War I, when they were forced to shoulder the tasks previously performed by men now serving in the army or dead at the front. In peace time, while the division of labour, as far as rural life is concerned, remained more or less the same, change took place in the working-class, middle-class and intellectual sphere.

The essays in the catalogue illustrate a situation that had been looming for some time but saw its official birth in Tuscany with the founding in February 1861 of the Fratellanza Artigiana, the most important workers' association in Italy at the time, and the enrolment of its first women members. The exhibition they represent is designed above all to illustrate the change that took place and stimulate deeper reflection on the lives and conditions of women at the time through portraits of female agricultural and industrial workers, ladies of the upper middle class and aristocracy, family groups in the home, outdoor scenes of women at work or gardens with girls engrossed in books.

The pages that follow present women artists like the sculptress F elicie de Faveau, who achieved success in Paris before moving to Florence in 1833. A new addition to the city's already numerous international colony, she continued the pursuit of financial independence through work as the primary form of emancipation that had characterized her career from the outset. Others figures include Maria Lavinia Fiorilli, who devoted her energies also to the difficult techniques of engraving and etching, Candida Natiello Colosimo and Juana Romani, students at the Accademia di Belle Arti in a period when it was still considered unseemly for women to attend



classes of nude studies, and Ryta Bordini, prevented from being an artist despite her gifts and vocation. As her grandson explains in this catalogue, it was precisely because of her privileged position and hence susceptibility to the social fetters imposed by Florentine society that Bordini was forced to relegate painting and drawing to the status of a pastime, albeit without sacrificing her intellectual sophistication. Caterina Chiarelli presents the Princess Anna Maria de' Ferrari, a photographer who certainly owed her unconventional open-mindedness to her cosmopolitan upbringing as the daughter of a Russian lady and her marriage to Prince Scipione Borghese, a great traveller and explorer. Elisa Pante Zonaro actually travelled all the way from Istanbul to Paris to learn the art of photography, displaying the spirit of adventure to which her husband was certainly indebted for his success as a painter.

The catalogue also draws our attention, however, to those on other rungs of the social ladder, such as artists' models. Sometimes naïve, sometimes uninhibited, and generally beautiful, embodying the aesthetic ideals of the time, they are brought to life by Roberto Giovannelli complete with names and personal histories. How can we look at the art of the period from now on without thinking also of figures like Tuda, who posed for the *Diana* commissioned by Pirandello from Libero Andreotti, or the young Vittoria Caldoni from the rural area of Lazio, who inspired such great sculptors and painters as Thorvaldsen and Tenerani, Horace Vernet and Overbeck?

Then there is the whole army of female workers, from embroiderers and dressmakers to straw weavers, small-scale entrepreneurs and writers, sometimes obliged to use male pseudonyms in their struggle to succeed. There are school mistresses who could have been academic luminaries but instead spent their lives teaching, above all in primary schools, moulding children who would then enjoy access to universities and the highest professional positions, especially if they were male. But there are also, surprisingly enough, women film critics who wrote about cinema when the art was still in its infancy. And the naturalist Marianna Panciatici Ximenes d'Aragona Paulucci, a malacologist, botanist and ornithologist of international renown, who housed her extraordinary collections of specimens in the Castle of Sammezzano. As Fausto Barbagli explains in the catalogue, she never held an academic post and she was already over 60 in 1907, when the appointment of the zoologist Rina Monti at the University of Sassari made the latter the first woman ever to hold a chair in Italy. These are just some of the women to be discovered on reading the following pages with their wealth of stimuli, offering so much more than a sociological and cultural survey of Italy and Tuscany in particular in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Devised by Simonella Condemi, to whom we owe the overall conception of the exhibition and the catalogue as well as the success of the initiative as a whole, the brilliant title *Female Perspectives* invites us to consider the female universe on all its levels as well as the non-violent and crucial role of women in family, intellectual, political and everyday life, be they school mistresses, illiterate basket weavers or senators dressed in white.

**Eike D. Schmidt**  
Director, Uffizi Galleries



### Speaking into the Silence: A Voice for Female Creativity

The Pitti Palace, purchased and renovated with the dowry of Duchess Eleonora de Toledo, Cosimo I's strong-willed Spanish wife, is a fitting place for a brand-new exhibition spotlighting the achievements of women, as Eleonora's investment would ultimately create the Oltrarno artisan district and make her very much 'an influencer', as we might say today. Advancing Women Artists' first partnership with Pitti's Gallery of Modern Art, now under the Uffizi Galleries' illustrious wing, began in 2014, with the restoration of *The Three Sisters*, Elisabeth Chaplin's brooding family portrait in which the artist is flanked by her two equally pensive sisters.

Nearly five years later, the gallery's curator Simonella Condemi approached Advancing Women Artists with other visions of 'sisterhood' in mind. "We will create an exhibition for all kinds of ground-breaking women," the curator explained. "We will build them a room of their own." Unlike the majority of AWA's projects, there would be no restoration involved, except, of course, the restoration of these women's stories. Their influence on the modern world is paramount and Condemi's premise recalls not only the words of Virginia Woolf but those of another Eleonora, one of the show's many forerunners, Italian actress Eleonora Duse who took the stage by storm at the turn of twentieth-century: "The one happiness is to shut one's door upon a little room, with a table before one, and to create; to create life in that isolation from life."

The word 'isolation' rings strong here, almost like a challenge. It can and has been argued that women-centered exhibitions, particularly in today's world, do just that, isolate, by separating out the creative achievements of women and relegating them away from the more dynamic mainstream. Yet Duse's brand of separateness is both voluntary and willful. It is the prelude to vigorous expression—the silence into which one can truly speak.

The works in our Women's Day exhibition, much like the essays that comprise this volume, are not, in fact, products of relegation. Instead, the art of women is interspersed with that of their male counterparts, to represent a moment in history when both male and female artists finally converged toward the same question: how could the perspective of women be properly captured on canvas? But the true 'happiness' of this show is the realization that much more than the canvas was actually being claimed: in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, female creativity developed under many guises: in fabric and fashion, on page and stage, and on both sides of the art studio – as model or artist. The newfound 'art of light', otherwise known as photography, became a creative medium available to women, and the same is true of sculpting and, finally, science.

The female perspective revealed here is multi-faceted and fascinating. History's 'New Woman' is artist, writer and suffragette. She is the revolutionary in exile, the poet or the nationalist. She is the dangerous, the disgraced, the brilliant and the strong. She is both image and substance. *Female Perspectives* is a chorus of many voices, and amidst alternating bouts of song and silence, the words of writer and activist Margaret Fuller will likely surface: "Let it not be said, whenever there is energy or creative genius, 'She has a masculine mind'."

Two years ago this Women's Day marked Advancing Women Artists' first full-scale exhibition with the Uffizi Galleries, featuring Renaissance convent painter Plautilla Nelli. For today's new show to confirm that women artists three centuries later were no longer hidden behind high convent walls, but a thriving part of the public sphere and powerful makers of collective consciousness is the true source of our celebration. A moment of reflection inside the hallowed halls of the Uffizi Galleries, this story belongs to all of us.

**Linda Falcone**  
Director, Advancing Women Artists

# Untold Career Paths for Women in Tuscany (1861–1926)

## Simonella Condemi

The multifaceted female presence characterising the period of Italian Unification (circa 1860–1926) is examined here with a particular focus on Tuscany. The region witnessed the creation of a lively cosmopolitan environment comprising the less-explored world of women, as one can glean from documents detailing the living and working conditions of women who literally ‘gave life’ to the Italian Unification movement (those who fell at Curtatone and Montanara are a case in point). They were craftswomen, labourers, and peasant women, as well as teachers and writers whose profiles continue to emerge today, albeit as so-called ‘secondary’ data. Despite this fact, they proved exceptionally important for generations of patriots and were paramount to the creation of a collective consciousness. The figurative culture of the time exemplifies these elements through the pictorial representation of related episodes, such as *The Departure of the Conscripted* (*La Partenza del coscritto*) by Girolamo Induno which tells the whole story of what women sacrificed to free their country.

Although our project upholds necessary connections and comparisons with the national dimension, its aim has always been to symbolically complete a trajectory that began in 2009, with celebrations held in Palazzo Vecchio’s Sala d’Arme, marking the anniversary of Tuscany’s provisional government (27 April 1859). At that time, a small exhibition of paintings and sculptures were displayed alongside portraits of leading figures, documents, coins, flags, and memorabilia which, variously, bore witness to the fertile transitional years in which the provisional government of Tuscany gave way to the Unification of Italy.

Tuscany is an emblematic case that enables us to reconstruct the entire period, a time of cultural ferment that affected citizens across the board, whether they belonged to the working classes or the higher echelons of society. In both cases, the formerly unknown female profile that emerges in the region, more clearly than elsewhere, takes on deeper significance, thanks, in part, to the legacy of the Leopoldine enlightenment.

Tuscany’s geographical position and cultural climate also played a significant role, making it attractive to prominent

figures in literature and the arts, as well as social and political fields, including personalities from other areas, including the south, where it had not yet proved possible to develop a fully functioning civil society. The maieutic approach we have adopted here reflects this view, and seeks to arouse emotion, whilst drawing connections between works of art, as well as their relationship to letters, books, furniture, customs, and decorative objects.

As a research project that evolved on multiple levels for the exhibition, the accompanying catalogue contains thematic itineraries as well as the in-depth analysis of several protagonists about whom little or virtually nothing is known. Certainly, it addresses the perhaps more familiar theme of “sociability” as conceived in the salons of the mid-nineteenth century, such as the ‘Red Salon’ in Borgo dei Greci, presided over by Emilia Toscanelli Peruzzi whose autobiography, *Vita di me*, was co-written with her granddaughter Angiolina and published posthumously in 1934; Teresa Bartolommei’s salon in Via Lambertesca, and that of Gesualda Malenchini Pozzolini in Via dei Pilastrini are other notable examples. This book also explores themes concerning the participation of women in society. Through their ‘art’ in the broader sense, these forerunners added a poetic dimension to a project deemed ‘heroic’, such as Giannina Milli Cassone, whilst others, like Erminia Fuà Fusinato and Caterina Franceschi Ferrucci, would lay the foundations needed to build a civic and educational consciousness, aimed not only at women.

The exhibition strives to shed light on the international repercussions of the turmoil caused by the struggle for Unification in Tuscany, evoking the voices of foreign women who, for one reason or another, found themselves participating in said events. Through their poetry and writings, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Jessie White Mario, Theodosia Garrow Trollope and Margaret Fuller stirred the sympathies of the English-speaking world for Italian unity in-the-making. This less explored aspect is of vital importance, since it constitutes an early testimony of the role of women in that period which can be re-examined and re-evaluated based on previous archival research per-

taining to the living and working conditions of women in general. The show is set in Pitti Palace’s Sala del Fiorino and it bears witness to the creativity and talent of female writers, photographers, models, tailors, embroiderers, fashion designers, journalists and teachers. It finally places women centre stage by following various female careers prevalent in Tuscany between 1861 and 1926 – the same year that Grazia Deledda was awarded the Nobel Prize, a redeeming moment for the many female talents that had not yet been properly considered. In line with this idea, we also created didactic activities using interesting archival documents generously loaned by the Accademia Vitti in Atina. The academy’s history demonstrates the entrepreneurial courage of a small group of women who opened a private art school in Paris in the late nineteenth century where female students were allowed to paint the male nude.

A small section in the gallery chronicles the Fratellanza Artigiana d’Italia workers’ association, with Giovanni Costa’s portrait of baker Giuseppe Dolfi juxtaposed with an elegant portrait of Bruna Pagliano, a businesswoman who shared the Fratellanza’s philosophy, namely that women should be allowed to become members. By joining this ‘trade union’, they began to emerge as participants of the labour force in every respect, enjoying all rights bestowed on legitimate workers. A large collection of artworks on display at the gallery enable us to reconstruct the evolution of the role of women as agricultural workers or members of the

Fig. 1 - Michele Tedesco, *The Storm*, c. 1888, oil on canvas, Naples, Città Metropolitana (cat. no. 43)





bourgeoisie who sought out and established a career for themselves. Works of art in the Galleria d'Arte Moderna whose subjects are akin to those featured in the exhibition are marked with a logo, indicating a 'side tour', designed as a complement to the main show. In this way, the gallery's other masterpieces establish a close dialogue with the exhibition, enriching the viewer's overall experience. *Female Perspectives* – like those of photographers such as Elisa Pante, excellent educators like Ida Baccini, painters, including several of Giovanni Fattori's students, or art critics like Anna Franchi who specialised in the Macchiaioli movement – is the true theme of the exhibition. Talented women who introduced major new ideas to the world of fashion are also featured, such as Princess Anna Maria Borghese who wore a corset without whalebones under her dress, on the claim that the compression of the body could damage the internal organs. Then there are the writers – women who wrote children's books, and later penned essays on the problems of married life, and even discussed separation. Various career paths taken by women also come to the forefront in this exhibition; their work was often demanding, such as that of agricultural labourers, factory workers,

water carriers, models, artisans, wet nurses, midwives, embroiderers and straw braiders. The latter represented one of the largest sectors of female employment in the flatlands surrounding Florence and the group was the most vocal of all when it came to demanding their rights and fair pay (The Signa strike of 1897 is just one example). Other women who loved travelling and were eager to discover new artistic landscapes embarked on a quest to suitably access the professional sphere. The large paintings on show date from the end of the century and exemplify these women's capacity to pursue the most challenging of undertakings.

In his *Beneath the Olive Trees (Sotto gli ulivi)* Pompeo Mariani depicts sweeping landscape where a woman artist has her back to the viewer and is drawing inspiration from the natural setting. The Art Nouveau interior of *Arachne (Aracne)* by Carlo Stratta looks a gilded cage of sorts in which the subject herself becomes 'decorative', almost as if she were a mere extension of the natural world the viewer glimpses upon here; within the scene's domestic walls, the cranes on the curtains and the flowers represent a degree of layered disorder. This female figure is part of a

series of portraits featuring indolent but strong-willed girls who sit, gazing intensely at the viewer. We do not know if they are imprisoned, in the Proustian sense, or protected in these gilded cages where their thoughts written on paper fly away, much like the cranes. A similar example can be found in *Dreams (Sogni)* painted in 1896 by Vittorio Corcos, on display at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna in Rome. Another large canvas – *Horsewoman (L'amazzone)* – shows us the wife of Ettore Tito out on her own in the company of her horse and dog, spending her time as she pleases. Just like the two young women, as yet pre-Romantic, painted by Mariani: 'the daredevils' looking out at the stormy sea, in his *Fearless Ladies (Le temerarie)*. In *The Storm (La tempesta)* by Michele Tedesco (fig. 1), that very same sea is on the verge of engulfing a female figure, perhaps an allegory of the storm. She challenges the waves, a true force of nature. Other women were driven by curiosity and compelled to travel to distant foreign lands, where they documented unknown traditions, like Elisa Pante whose photographs capture life in the harem and the street festivals of Constantinople. Still others, such as Candida Colosimo,

Lavinia Fiorilli and Juana Romani, travelled to America, France and Italy to study and practice art, and as a way to round out their cultural growth. Meanwhile, many women improved the tools and equipment used in the factories where they were employed, including plants manufacturing bullets, porcelain and textiles. After the great economic losses that Florence suffered as capital, the Fratellanza Artigiana d'Italia helped create new employment opportunities in the fashion industry. Here the work of female dressmakers and shirt makers as well as new ideas for hand-made objects destined for foreign visitors helped to re-boot the job market. As entrepreneurs, women equipped themselves with the first sewing machines to produce buttonholes and manufactured hosiery, embroidery, knitwear and straw hats. They also displayed their handiwork at an exhibition of work by women.<sup>1</sup> Such multifaceted ingenuity is not easy to categorize; with its blurred and overlapping boundaries, it does not fall into a neat subdivision of professional or creative experiences. This event presents a complex and varied panorama, presenting initial research that delves into some of these far-reaching but little-known *Female Perspectives*.



Giuseppe De Nittis, *Posing*, 1869, watercolour on paper, Turin, Galleria Berman (cat. no. 44)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Badon, 'Imprenditorialità a Firenze dal Granducato alla grande guerra (1852-1912): note da un campione prosopografico', in *Rassegna Storica Toscana*, LVIII, no. 2, July-December 2012, p. 190; L. Bortolotti, G. De Luca, *Come nasce un'area metropolitana-*

*na Firenze, Prato, Pistoia*, Firenze 2000; Z. Ciuffoletti, G. Corradi, M. Corigliano, *Le artigiane della moda e la creatività femminile. Le esposizioni dei lavori femminili a Firenze, Parigi e Milano (1871-1890-1902-1906)*, Florence 2014.

For further information on the text, a selected bibliography on the subject is provided:

- *Della prima esposizione nazionale dei lavori femminili tenutasi in Firenze nel 1871 cenni del conte Demetrio Carlo Finocchietti*, Lodi, tip. Wilmant, 1871
- R. Erculei, *Esposizioni retrospettive e contemporanee di industrie artistiche 1887. Tessuti e merletti. Museo storico artistico industriale di Roma. Catalogo delle opere con brevi cenni sull'arte tessile in Italia*, Rome, Stab. Giuseppe Civelli, 1887
- V. Paganini, *Carattere e la Civiltà, conferenze tenute alla fratellanza artigiana di Firenze*, Florence 1888
- *Esposizione Beatrice. Mostra nazionale di lavori femminili in Firenze (maggio-giugno 1890)*, Florence, Stab. Tip. G. Civelli, 1890
- I. Baccini, *L'esposizione Beatrice: La Mia vita, ricordi autobiografici*, Rome-Milan 1904
- *Le industrie femminili italiane, cooperativa nazionale: sede centrale via Marco Minghetti*, Roma, Milan 1906
- S. Soldani, *Educazione delle donne: scuole e modelli di vita femminile, dell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, Milan 1989
- R. Carrani, *Tendenze e caratteri della stampa destinata alle donne*, in A. Gigli Marchetti, N. Torcellan (eds.), *Donna Lombarda, 1860-1945*, Milan 1992, pp. 275–291
- C. Pazzagli, *La terra delle città. Le campagne toscane dell'Ottocento*, Florence 1992
- S. Soldani, "Donne della nazione. Presenze femminili nell'Italia

- del Quarantotto", in *Passato e presente*, (46), 1999, pp. 75–102
- G. Porpora, *Le industrie femminili italiane. Una rete culturale per lo sviluppo economico territoriale*, Perugia 2002
- S. Soldani, "Italiane! Appartenenza nazionale e cittadinanza negli scritti di donne dell'Ottocento", in *Genesis*, I/1 "Patrie e appartenenze", 2002, pp. 85–124
- C. Gori, *Crisalidi. Emancipazioniste liberali in età giolittiana*, Milan 2003
- *Eroine Invisibili: Storie di donne dalle collezioni della Provincia di Napoli e dalla Pinacoteca Provinciale di Bari*, exhibition catalogue (Bari, Pinacoteca provinciale "C. Giaquinto", 2010–2011), ed. by C. Gelao, L. Martorelli, Naples 2010
- F. Taricone, *Patriote e apolidi nel Risorgimento italiano*, in *L'esperienza e l'eredità delle Patriote del primo Risorgimento all'Italia post-unitaria*, Conference Proceedings (Rome, 19 November 2010), ed. by M.P. Ercolini, Roma 2011
- A. Demurtas, *Le Garibaldine: donne del Risorgimento che hanno fatto l'Italia*, [www.lettera43.it/it/articoli/cultura-e-spettacolo/2011/03/08/le-garibaldine/6884/](http://www.lettera43.it/it/articoli/cultura-e-spettacolo/2011/03/08/le-garibaldine/6884/)
- D. Tasini, "Le Giardinere: società segrete e femminili nel risorgimento", in *B@belonline*, no. 13, Rome 2013, pp. 219–223
- Z. Ciuffoletti, G. Corradi, M. Corigliano, *Le artigiane della moda e la creatività femminile. Le esposizioni dei lavori femminili a Firenze, Parigi e Milano (1871-1890-1902-1906)*, Florence 2014
- M. Soldi, "Esporre il femminile. Esposizione Beatrice, Firenze 1890", in *Ricerche di S/Confine*, vol. VI, no. 1 (2015), pp. 24–36