

## PAOLA'S STUDIOLO Winter 2022 Program

Saturdays, on Zoom

10am Los Angeles, 11am Phoenix, 1pm NY & Toronto, 6pm  
London, 7pm Florence

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January 22

### ***Astrology and the Scientific Revolution, A Reappraisal: Conversation with Professor H. Darrel Rutkin, Ca' Foscari University, Venice***

There was once a time, not so long ago, when astrology was studied, practiced, and taught in the finest medieval, Renaissance, and early modern European universities, embedded within and integrated with many types of scientific knowledge, especially mathematics, natural philosophy, and medicine. Almost all of the most important scientists from the past--from Ptolemy to Galileo and Kepler and beyond--were all practicing astrologers, except Newton (who was an alchemist).

With Galileo we have a manuscript with 27 horoscopes in his own hand, including his own and his daughters, for which he made interpretations as well!

In the modern world, however, astrology was delegitimized and removed from legitimate knowledge and practice, and is now considered one of the so-called occult or esoteric sciences. In the history of science and culture, this epistemological shift--astrology's downgrading and removal from the "map of legitimate knowledge"--marked a transformation from premodern to modern. Dr. Rutkin, a professor at the distinguished Università Ca'Foscari in Venice, will present his research and new findings about the medieval, Renaissance, and early modern "map of knowledge" from 1250 to 1600, reframing our understanding of the ways in which modern science was born and reappraising the role of astrology and the occult.



Dr. H. Darrel Rutkin is an Historian of Science specializing in the history of medieval, Renaissance, and early modern astrology. He received his PhD from Indiana University, and is the recipient of prestigious pre- and post-doctoral fellowships--including a Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, Harvard's Villa I Tatti in Florence, and NYU's Institute for the Study of the Ancient World. In 2019, he published "*Medieval Structures (1250-1500): Conceptual, Institutional, Socio-Political, Theologico-Religious, and*

*Cultural*," the first in what will be a three-volume monograph titled *Sapientia Astrologica: Astrology, Magic and Natural Knowledge, ca. 1250-1800*.

**January 29**

**A Conversation with Ben Street, author of "How to Enjoy Art: A Guide for Everyone"**



Ben Street is an art historian, lecturer, and educator based in London. He is the author of numerous books on art for general audiences, including "How to Enjoy Art: A Guide for Everyone" (Yale University Press, 2021) and a children's book, "How to be an Art Rebel" (Thames and Hudson, 2021). Ben has taught and lectured at many museums, including the National Gallery, the Tate, and the Royal Academy in London; and The Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York. He received his M.A. in English Literature and Art History from the University of Edinburgh and is currently completing his PhD in art history at the University of East Anglia; the subject of his dissertation is American painter Philip Guston.

In this interview, we will explore some of the themes of Ben's books and articles, with special reference to works of Italian Renaissance art found *in situ*, particularly in Florence. Through close observation of artworks such as Michelangelo's *David* in the Piazza della Signoria or Fra Angelico's frescos in the Convent of San Marco, Ben will explore and discuss his theories on the impact of our physical encounter with an art object *in situ* – its scale and texture, the sensory experience of the space itself. Rather than analyzing artists' biographies or discussing periods of art history, our speaker will instead talk about new ways of experiencing great works of art and how that understanding can enhance our appreciation and understanding.



February 5

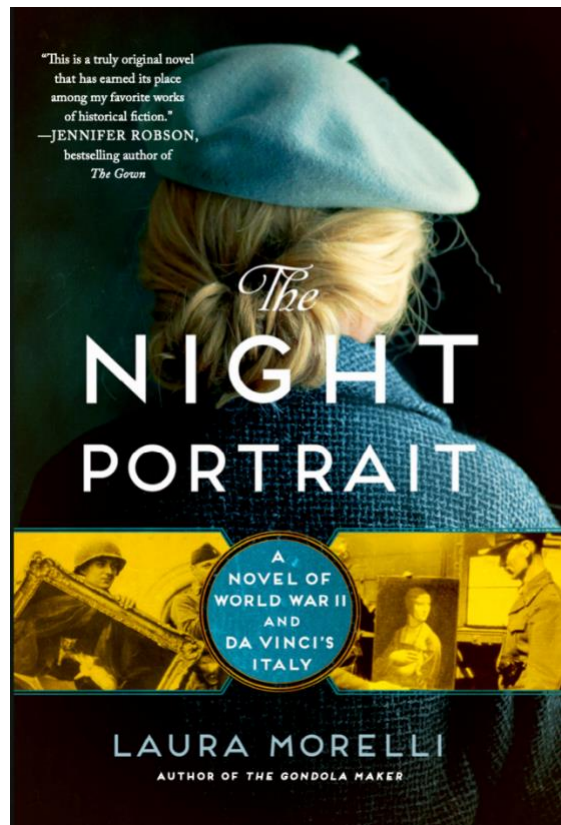
## Leonardo da Vinci's *Lady with the Ermine*: 500 Years of History and Mystery: A Conversation with Laura Morelli



Author and art historian Laura Morelli returns to the Studiolo to discuss one of the most compelling paintings in all of art history. In Renaissance Italy, wealthy families paid artists to paint the likenesses of their wives and daughters. In these portraits, the point was to showcase the wealth of a woman's husband or father. A portrait of a new bride was standard fare for a Renaissance artist, but painting a mistress instead was an unusual request. Laura will explain what it was that prompted Ludovico Sforza of Milan to commission

Leonardo da Vinci to paint his pregnant mistress, Cecilia Gallerani, rather than his fiancée—she'll even talk about the various theories about that enigmatic white creature in Cecilia's lap!

Laura's talk takes us from 15<sup>th</sup> century Milan to the present day, across Europe and across the centuries to Paris, Poland, and finally to World War II Germany, where Leonardo's *Portrait of the Lady with the Ermine* stood in the crosshairs of Hitler's obsession to possess this work of art along with so many of the world's masterpieces. Laura Morelli holds a Ph.D. in art history from Yale University and is an award-winning, bestselling author of historical novels. She has covered art and travel for TED-Ed, National Geographic Traveler, Italy Magazine, CNN Radio, and other media, and is the author of the popular *Authentic Arts* guidebook series that includes "Made in Italy." Her historical novels, including bestsellers "The Night Portrait" and "The Gondola Maker," bring the stories of art history to life. Laura's latest historical novel, "The Stolen Lady," tracks the untold story of Leonardo's Mona Lisa, from 16<sup>th</sup> century Florence to France during World War II and her present home at The Louvre.





**February 12**

***Eleonora di Toledo and the Creation of the Boboli Gardens: A Conversation with Professor Bruce Edelstein, New York University Florence***

2022 marks the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Eleonora di Toledo, the second duchess of Florence, wife of Cosimo I. She is perhaps most famous as the beautiful subject of Bronzino's largest and most important portrait in the Uffizi, but was far from being a passive ornament to the nascent Florentine court. She was her husband's most important collaborator in transforming the Florentine republic into a duchy and refashioning the Medici as hereditary aristocrats.



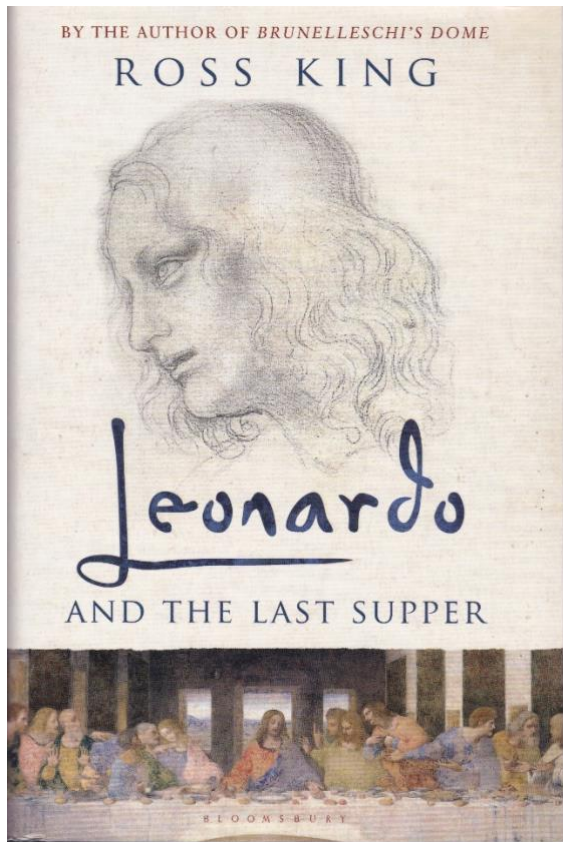
Professor Edelstein, who has taught at NYU's Florence campus since 1999, will discuss the fascinating life of this Renaissance woman. As a patron of the arts, Eleonora's most important project was the creation of the Boboli Gardens, following her family's acquisition in 1550 of the palace and adjacent grounds belonging to the descendants of Luca Pitti. Until her death in December 1562, this project was primarily the domain of Eleonora, although it has largely been treated in the literature as her husband's. Dr. Edelstein will share some of the findings in his forthcoming book on the Boboli Gardens,

shifting attention to the patronage of this Spanish princess and away from that of her Medici husband.

Bruce Edelstein, who received his Ph.D. from Harvard's Department of Fine Arts, is Coordinator for Graduate Programs and Advanced Research at NYU Florence. Among his honors, he has been a visiting scholar at the Max-Planck Institute, Florence; was a Fellow at the Villa I Tatti, and in 2014, was named Honorary Member of the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno, Florence. He has published widely on subjects including Eleonora di Toledo's biography, iconography, and artistic patronage; studies on 16<sup>th</sup> century Medici gardens; and essays on works by Medici court painters and sculptors such as Bronzino, Cellini, Pontorno, and Tribolo. He co-curated the exhibition *Miraculous Encounters: Pontorno from Drawing to Painting* seen at the Palazzo Pitti, the Morgan Library and Museum in New York, and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles (2018-2019). His book, *Eleonora di Toledo and the Creation of the Boboli Gardens*, will be published in 2022 by the Uffizi.

**February 19**

***The Accidental Masterpiece, Leonardo and the Painting of The Last Supper: A Conversation with Ross King***



The image of Leonardo's *The Last Supper*, located in refectory of the Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, is as familiar to us as the boot shape of Italy on a map. However, the history of how this famous mural came to be painted, precisely how Leonardo painted it, and who he painted it for are much less well-known. Ross King, bestselling author of books on Italian, French, and Canadian art and history, will discuss how Leonardo received the commission from Lodovico Sforza, the Duke of Milan, and how he went about creating his masterpiece through an experimental new style. While the mural is burdened with many myths – most of which have no basis in fact – the true story of its execution is even more remarkable and interesting.

[Ross King](#)'s books include *The Bookseller of Florence*, *Brunelleschi's Dome*, *Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling*, *The Judgment of Paris*, *Leonardo and The Last Supper*, and *Mad Enchantment: Claude Monet and the Painting of the Water Lilies*. He has also published two novels (*Domino* and *Ex-Libris*), a biography of Niccolò Machiavelli, and a collection of Leonardo da Vinci's fables, jokes, and riddles. He is currently working on a "short" history of Italy. Among many other honors, Ross King serves on the Council of Academic Advisors for Friends of Florence, and lectures widely on a range of art subjects. He lives with his wife Melanie in Oxfordshire, England.



**February 26**

**A Conversation with Katherine Zock, Vice-President & Director,  
Friends of the Bargello**



The Bargello, also known as the Palazzo del Bargello, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, or Palazzo del Popolo, is a former barracks and prison, now a museum in Florence with extraordinary collections and many masterpieces. In 2018, the Friends of the Bargello was founded, an Anglo-American organization created “to raise funds to maintain, preserve and publicize the museum and its collections.”

Art advisor Katherine Zock, vice president of the board of Friends of the Bargello, will talk about the museum, its treasures, and the work of her organization, as well as the upcoming exhibition on Donatello,



scheduled to open in Palazzo Strozzi on March 19, 2022!

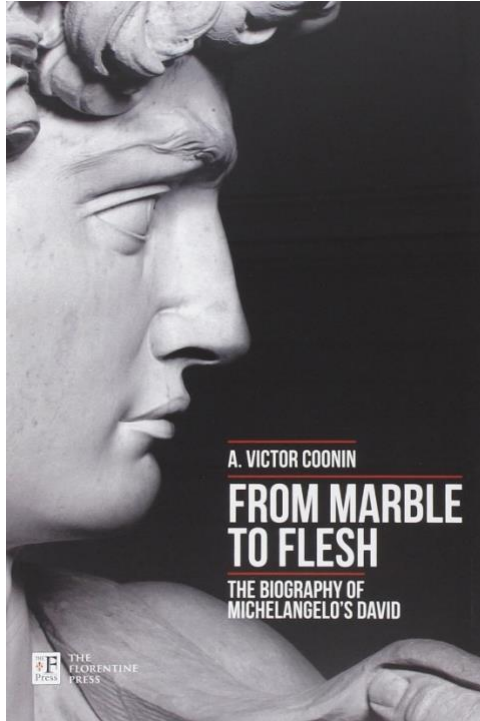
Promising to be the Italian cultural highlight of the year, this once-in-a-lifetime exhibition will reconstruct the preeminent career of one of the most influential masters of Italian art. Curated by Professor Francesco Caglioti, also the author of the extensive exhibition catalogue, this show will remain as the defining guide in this area of quattrocento art history.



March 5

*On the Occasion of Michelangelo's 547<sup>th</sup> Birthday!*

**A Conversation with Dr. Victor Coonin - Michelangelo's David: Then and Now**



Professor Victor Coonin is the author of *From Marble to Flesh: The Biography of Michelangelo's David*, described by the New York Times, the “definitive” book on what has become the world’s most famous statue. Professor Coonin, a scholar specializing in the field of Italian Renaissance Art who teaches art history at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, will share stories about the original appearance and meaning of the David, highlighting some of the more controversial and lesser-known aspects of this work, and offer insights into why Michelangelo’s masterpiece remains so relevant to our modern times.

With degrees from Oberlin College, Syracuse University, and Rutgers University, Professor Coonin has published widely on the Italian Renaissance as historian, critic, and reviewer. He is author of the recently published book *Donatello and the Dawn of Renaissance Art*, and the monograph *From Marble to Flesh: The Biography of Michelangelo's David*. He has also edited or co-edited four other books on Renaissance Art, and has written dozens of influential articles, encyclopedia essays, and catalogue entries for leading European and American venues, including The Metropolitan Museum Journal, The Burlington Magazine, Artibus et Historiae, and The Sculpture Journal. Professor Coonin is a former Fulbright Fellow and an active member of the College Art Association, Italian Art Society, Renaissance Society of America, and the Archaeological Institute of America. He also appears occasionally on radio and television as an expert. His work has been supported by grants from the Mellon Foundation and Kress Foundation, among others. Professor Coonin lives in Memphis with his wife and two children.



**March 12**

## **The Art of Observing Art: A Conversation with Joe Navarro**

Bestselling author Joe Navarro is one of the world's leading experts in the field of nonverbal communication. In this fascinating conversation, we will look with Joe's discerning eye at some of the most iconic works of art from the Renaissance, and hear his impressions based on his research and training in the art and science of nonverbal communication. With this session in the Studiolo, we will broaden the conversation on visual arts and how so much of what we consider today as images of "power" originated in Florence with Donatello, Michelangelo, and the other great artists of that time.



Mr. Navarro is a Cuban-born American author, public speaker, and former FBI agent (where he served on the National Security Division's Behavioral Analysis Program). He specializes in studying nonverbal communication and body language, and has authored numerous books, including *What Every Body Is Saying* (translated into 27 languages), *Dangerous Personalities, Louder Than*

*Words, Three Minutes to Doomsday*, and *The Dictionary of Body Language*. He is an adjunct fellow at the Institute for Intergovernmental Research and is on the adjunct faculty at Saint Leo University. He has lectured in many academic settings including Harvard Business School, Wayne State University School of Medicine, and Baylor College of Medicine's Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Mr. Navarro combines his academic background, scientific research, and practical experience and applies it to the art of observing and interpreting human behavior.

His insightful interviews, [such as this one](#), are seen by the millions of viewers. It will be fascinating to talk with him about Renaissance portraits and other artworks and what they say about that time, and ours.



**March 19**

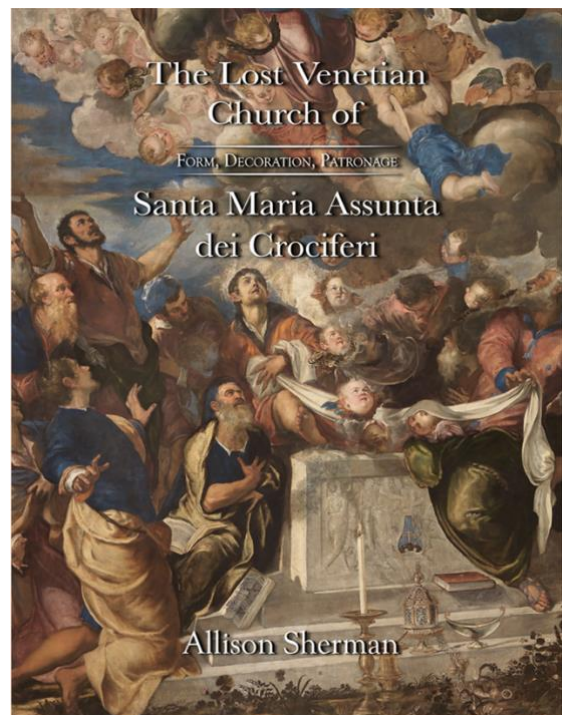
**On the Lost Venetian Church: A Conversation with Art Historian Carlo Corsato**



Dr Carlo Corsato is an Educator at The National Gallery, London and an expert in the art and architecture of early-modern Venice. Together with Prof Deborah Howard, he edited *Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari. Devotional Space, Images of Piety*, the first monographic book written on the church. He has also published articles in leading specialist journals and contributed to important exhibition catalogues, including *Titian. Love, Desire, Death* (The National Gallery, London). His most recent publications include *Lives of Tintoretto*, *Lives of Titian*, and the edition of Dr Alison Sherman's *The Lost Venetian Church of Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi*.

This book presents the first detailed investigation of the history and decoration of one of the most important churches of Venice in the 16th century: Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi. Painters and sculptors of the stature of Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Palma il Giovane, Vittoria and Campagna all contributed major works of art, many of which survive in the present-day church of the Gesuiti. This excellent piece of scholarship was originally the doctoral thesis submitted by the late Allison Sherman to the University of St Andrews in 2010. Tragically, Allison passed away in 2017 before publishing her research. Only three years later, on the occasion of Allison's 41st birthday, Carlo had succeeded to make available to the general public a scholarly edited and fully illustrated digital version of one of the most fascinating books on the art and history of Renaissance Venice: [\*The Lost Venetian Church of Santa Maria Assunta dei Crociferi: Form, Decoration, Patronage\*](#). The ebook is available free of charge (no subscription or registration are required).

Carlo will talk about how the project came about – a story of love and generosity – and present Allison's new research on Tintoretto's Assumption of the Virgin and Titian's Martyrdom of St Lawrence – two stories of piety, murder and redemption.



March 26

**A Conversation with Gražina Subelytė, curator of *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice***



Like no other 20<sup>th</sup> century movement, Surrealism was keenly inspired by tropes of magic, myth, and the occult, and there are many works of Surrealism in the collection of Peggy Guggenheim in Venice. The Surrealists, in their engagement with the irrational and the unconscious, looked to magic as a poetic and deeply philosophical discourse, related to both arcane knowledge and individual self-empowerment. In many of their works, they drew on traditional occult symbolism, cultivating the image of the artist as an alchemist, magician, and visionary. Dr. Subelytė's exhibition *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity* explores the many ways in which magic and the occult informed the development of Surrealism,

tracing its artistic trajectory from the “metaphysical painting” of Giorgio de Chirico through the visions of Max Ernst and Kurt Seligmann, among others, to the late work of Leonora Carrington and Remedios Varo.



Gražina Subelytė is Associate Curator at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, where she has curated the exhibitions *Rita Kernn-Larsen: Surrealist Paintings* (2017), and *1948: The Biennale of Peggy Guggenheim* (2018), and co-curated *From Gesture to Form: Postwar European and American Art from the Schulhof Collection* (2019), and *Peggy Guggenheim: The Last Dogaressa* (2019–20). She is the curator of *Surrealism and Magic: Enchanted Modernity*, scheduled to open at the Guggenheim on April 9, 2022 till September 26, 2022. She wrote the catalogue *Hannelore B. and Rudolph B. Schulhof Collection* (2016) as well as numerous essays and articles on modern art, in particular on Surrealism and its relation to magic and the occult.

Image: Victor Brauner, *The Surrealist (Le Surréaliste)*, January 1947, Oil on canvas, 60 x 45 cm  
Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice (Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York)