

Spring 2023 Fellowships, Center for Italian Modern Art, New York

New York, Feb 1–Jun 30, 2023

Application deadline: Dec 18, 2022

Nicola Lucchi

General Information.

Each year the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) awards multiple Fellowships to support research on and the study of Italian modern and contemporary art for doctoral and post-doctoral scholars. Citizens of all nationalities are eligible. CIMA offers a unique experience to its fellows: its exhibition program serves as a hub for scholars from different academic backgrounds to share—with each other and with the public—research that speaks to the artworks on view. The fellowship has two main components: 1) research conducted through close examination of the artworks and individualized study of a topic raised by the exhibition; 2) community engagement, through public programming in collaboration with CIMA staff and in-person exhibition tours. During their residency, fellows also have the opportunity to pursue their own research and connect with scholars and other professionals in and around New York.

2023 Fellowships.

The Winter-Spring exhibition for CIMA's 2023 season is *From Depero to Rotella: Italian Commercial Posters between Advertising and Art*, scheduled for February 16, 2023 – June 10, 2023. The exhibition examines the cross-pollination between avant-garde art and commercial posters in Italy, with a particular focus on the interwar years and the early post-WWII era, at the time of the country's economic boom. The ideal starting date of the exhibition is 1926, the year in which Depero exhibited at the Venice Biennale a "quadro pubblicitario", *Squisito al selz*, in which the artist willingly blurred the domain of art and advertising in a provocative gesture. One year later, Depero published his *Manifesto agli industriali*, which formed the basis for his following manifesto, *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* (1932), an embrace of advertising as a legitimate art form. The exhibition concludes in 1957, the year in which the television advertising show *Carosello* first aired on Italy's public tv network RAI. While many artists and graphic designers moved flawlessly between old and new media, the televised commercial represents a watershed moment that began to revolutionize the priorities and semantics of Italian advertising.

The exhibition illustrates how the design of Italian commercial posters moved hand in hand with the artistic currents of its times, pushing the boundaries of lithographic techniques, photomontage, and typography. The commercial posters' peculiar ambition to deliver alluring forms and contents to the masses, rather than to an elite circle, also make them an object of socioeconomic and philosophical interest.

The exhibition includes some 30 posters from major Italian institutions and corporate collections,

as well as select private collections in the United States. Among the artists featured will be Erberto Carboni, Fortunato Depero, Nikolai Diulgheroff, Lucio Fontana, Max Huber, Bruno Munari, Marcello Nizzoli, Bob Noorda, Giovanni Pintori, Xanti Schawinsky, Mario Sironi, Albe Steiner. The works of these individuals illustrated the products of companies that made the history of the Italian economy, such as Barilla, Campari, Fiat, Olivetti, Pirelli.

As a visual and conceptual counterpoints to the path traced by the commercial posters, the exhibition will also include a few artworks by Mimmo Rotella. An artist in the traditional sense of the word, Rotella's *décollages* and *retro d'affiches* turn the medium of the commercial poster onto itself, in a gesture of critique and self-reflection.

Some of the possible research subjects include (but are not limited to):

- The avant-garde interactions with the poster medium, from Futurism to Surrealism.
- Modernist graphic design and typography in the field of commercial posters.
- Monographic studies on specific artists (ex. Depero, Nizzoli, Pintori).
- The Italian commercial poster vis-à-vis its European counterparts.
- The commercial poster as a case study in the field of Communication Science, Economic History, Food Studies, Fashion Studies, Gender Studies.
- The role of Italian industrial conglomerates in interwar and post-WWII culture
- Intermedia relationships of posters in the early days of television in Italy.
- The relationship between commercial posters and political propaganda.
- The relationship between art, advertising, and patronage under capitalism.
- Mimmo Rotella and his artistic re-appropriation of commercial posters.

The deadline for the 2022 CIMA Fellowship application is Sunday, December 18, 2022. The selection process will be completed by early January 2023 and may include a phone or video interview if necessary. Application materials must be submitted in English.

Fellowship Details.

- Fellowship Duration: the 2023 CIMA Fellowships will last five months, encompassing the Spring semester of the 2022–23 academic year, from February 1st to June 30th, 2023. Graduate and Post-Graduate Fellows from the disciplines of Art History, Italian Studies, and other fields in the humanities may apply.
- Stipend and Benefits: Fellowship stipends vary in range, based on need and length of term, and typically include a living allowance of \$3,750 per month. If appropriate, health insurance coverage will also be reimbursed, as well as travel costs from a fellow's permanent residence to and from CIMA. CIMA fellows' tax liability to the U.S. government will be determined in accordance with the tax regulations of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.
- Resources: Fellows are given a desk at CIMA but are also encouraged to work at a desk provided for them in the main gallery, surrounded by the works that they are researching. They may apply to receive privileges at New York City research libraries through the MaRLI program, and through the research branch of the New York Public Library.
- Responsibilities: Fellows are expected to be present in New York during the term of their fellowship and to participate in the intellectual life and programming of CIMA, though a small research budget to support short research trips to archives elsewhere in the United States will be made available. Fellowship responsibilities include but are not limited to leading CIMA's public tours

(which occur twice a week on Fridays and Saturdays) as well as private guided visits for school groups and special constituents (on average once or twice a week, with the possibility of tours for children or other special activities) and to participating in the public and members' programming through the run of the exhibition; these duties are shared evenly among the fellows. Fellows interact with a wide variety of public audiences, sharing their research in many different ways, including through guided tours. For this reason, CIMA is seeking candidates who have the ability to express themselves clearly in English.

- CIMA fellows will be present for the installation and de-installation of the exhibition and will collaborate on the planning of the season's public programs. All the fellows work together to organize the exhibition's Study Days—an international conference that brings together the fellows and other scholars to share research that stems from the exhibition on view. Fellows are encouraged to contribute to CIMA's blog and to propose public programming; they are also invited to pursue their own projects and take advantage of the rich cultural life of New York. CIMA makes every effort to assist the fellows in making professional contacts during their residency.

The Selection Process.

A committee of experts drawn from CIMA's advisory board and CIMA's university partners will meet to select the 2023 fellows. Candidates for CIMA Fellowships are chosen based on their academic potential and curriculum vitae, their proposed plans of study, their spoken and written English and Italian language abilities, and the correlation between their proposals and CIMA's annual study topic. At CIMA we wish to foster a mix of emerging scholars from different schools of thought, who employ different methodologies and approaches, in order to encourage dialogue and exchange. All other factors being equal, preference will be given to those applicants who have not had extensive prior experience living, studying, and/or working in New York. CIMA selects fellows on an objective and non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. For this application, CIMA will accept pre-doctoral applicants, those who have attained their PhD within the past 7 years, and post-MA applicants enrolled in post-graduate, academic specialization programs.

The Application.

The application should be emailed to info@italianmodernart.org by Sunday, December 18, 2022.

The email subject line should identify the fellowship the applicant is seeking and their first and last name. If the applicant does not receive confirmation or receipt within one week, please contact CIMA by phone or email. Please submit the following information in a single PDF document in 12pt Times font. Please do not send multiple attachments.

- Cover letter with applicant information and project summary

Name, Email, Phone, Address, Current Position

Brief statement describing your background, relevant experience, and particular interests (250-word limit)

Brief summary of proposed study, also relating your project to CIMA's study theme (350-word limit)

- Proposal

Project Statement (1,500-word limit)

- Curriculum Vitae

A curriculum vitae (maximum of three pages)

- References

Please provide the names, phone numbers, and email addresses for three references. Please instruct your references to submit their letters directly to CIMA by Sunday, December 18, 2022. CIMA prefers letters as single page PDFs sent to info@italianmodernart.org with the applicant's first name and last name in the email subject line.

Reference:

STIP: Spring 2023 Fellowships, Center for Italian Modern Art, New York. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 27, 2022 (accessed Sep 15, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/38030>>.