

La Diana, special issue: Restoration-Era Tuscany as an International Crossroads

Deadline: Dec 31, 2025

Journal of the School of Specialization in Art History of the University of Siena
(SSBSA)

Restoration-Era Tuscany as an International Crossroads: The Art Market, Collecting, Criticism, Heritage Protection, and Conservation.

The journal LA DIANA invites the submission of original contributions for a special issue dedicated to various aspects of the art market in Tuscany during the Restoration Era, as well as the history of art criticism, restoration, collecting, heritage preservation and conservation.

This period is characterized by a climate of relative peace and political stability, with Florence and the Grand Duchy at the centre of an international network connecting Paris, London, Berlin, and Munich, and extending—already at an early stage—as far as the United States. The ferment of this international context gave rise to developments whose consequences are hard to overstate: following the Napoleonic Era, the reorganisation of European states and the establishment of significant national galleries coincided with the specialization of art history as a discipline and the emergence of a nascent connoisseurship.

The circulation of artworks was further facilitated by the abundant presence of objects on the market, particularly from the idealized (rather than truly known) Middle Ages. This allowed for major acquisitions in Tuscany, with changes of ownership that shaped the history of collecting. Interest in pre-Raphaelite painting grew between Paris and London, albeit with differing chronologies and motivations, making Restoration-Era Tuscany a privileged site for engaging with the Middle Ages. While France rediscovered its medieval past through the writings of Alexis-François Rio, Prosper Mérimée, Jules Quicherat, and the monumental restorations of Viollet-le-Duc, England—thanks in part to John Ruskin's writings and his stay in Florence—witnessed the emergence of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

The demands of public collection formation brought early influential directors like Gustav Friedrich Waagen and Charles Eastlake to develop trade systems that, with the help of astute intermediaries, further tightened Florence's role in the art market.

The historical and critical debate was enriched by a fruitful period of archival studies in the cities of the Grand Duchy, led by figures such as Johannes Gaye, Carl Friedrich von Rumohr, Ettore Romagnoli, the Milanese brothers, and Carlo Pini—active collaborators with institutions like the Gabinetto Vieusseux.

At the same time, less conventional texts, such as numerous tourist guides printed to navigate the

streets of Florence, served as barometers of the "taste" of the era, influencing and being influenced by it, while offering valuable insights into the art market. An example is *The "Lions" of Florence* by William Blundell Spence, first published in 1847 and reprinted in 1852. Letters, personal diaries, and journals written for publication provide further evidence of an interconnected world, with Tuscany often at its centre. These accounts frequently give voice to the "other half of the sky," with intellectuals like Lady Callcott, Lady Elizabeth Eastlake, Anna Brownell Jameson, and Marguerite Gardiner, Countess of Blessington, offering perceptive accounts of the Grand Duchy during this period.

Meanwhile, Florence and the rest of Tuscany developed new policies to strengthen the protection of cultural heritage. A new generation of painter-restorers emerged, leading the way in what was called "Romantic" restoration. While the Royal Galleries adapted to meet the needs of public collections, figures such as Antonio Marini and Gaetano Bianchi marked an era—consider, for example, the notable restorations of the Giottoesque Bardi and Peruzzi chapels in Santa Croce—within a world rich with intersections with the art market.

The aim of this special issue is to foster interdisciplinary reflection on these important themes. We invite contributions addressing these topics, emphasizing the intersections between the following areas:

- Collecting and the art market
- Art criticism and the development of connoisseurship
- Restoration and conservation
- Texts, images, and narratives
- Travel literature

Editors of the Special Issue: Mattia Barana, Roberto Bartalini, Davide Lacagnina.

Guidelines for Authors:

- Text length: Maximum of 50,000 characters, including spaces.
- Images: Up to 10 illustrations free of copyright restrictions; otherwise, necessary permissions must be included.
- Language: Submissions may be in Italian, English, French, German, or Spanish.
- Format: Contributions must comply with the journal's editorial guidelines, available on the website.

Submission Process:

Proposals must be submitted by December 31, 2025, via the dedicated platform: <https://journals.fupress.net/call-for-paper/la-diana-call-for-articles/>

Authors are expected to adhere strictly to the editorial standards provided.

All contributions will undergo a double-blind peer review process in line with international academic standards.

About the Journal:

LA DIANA is a biannual open-access journal published by the School of Specialization in Art Historical Heritage at the University of Siena. The journal promotes a plurality of perspectives on contemporary art historical practices, with particular attention to contexts of art production and recep-

tion, as well as the history of culture and ideas.

Reference:

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