



THE CENTER FOR ITALIAN MODERN ART (CIMA) TO PRESENT  
*STAGING INJUSTICE: ITALIAN ART 1880-1917*

2022 SEASON EXHIBITION FEATURES WORKS BY 15 ARTISTS, EXPLORING THEMES OF  
MIGRATION, LABOR, PROTEST, AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE

JANUARY 25 — JUNE 18, 2022



Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo, *Membra stanche (Famiglia di Emigranti)* (*The Emigrants*), 1907 oil on canvas 50 x 64 5/8 in. Collezione Fondazione Francesco Federico Cerruti per l'Arte. Long term loan at Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli (Turin), Italy.

November 30, 2021 — For its 2022 season, the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) will present *Staging Injustice: Italian Art 1880-1917*, a group show exploring Italian painting and sculpture in the decades between 1880 and 1917 — the most dramatic year of World War I. In light of widespread social tensions, economic difficulties, and inequalities prevalent in the United States in 2020-21, CIMA looked to explore cultural conversations by making historical connections to a period of similar social upheaval in Italy more than a century ago — one powerfully reflected in the country's fin-de-siècle art.

*Staging Injustice* is organized around four themes that marked the realities of its artists—migration, labor, protest, and social injustice—topics that resonate to this day in Italy, the United States, and many nations worldwide. Shedding light on a period of Italy's social and artistic history rarely examined abroad, the exhibition underscores how modern artists have eternally been among the strongest voices against oppression. *Staging Injustice* is on view from January 25 to June 18, 2022.

Featuring around 20 artworks from Italian museums and first-rate private collections, and together with a selection of photographs and images from press at the time, *Staging Injustice* is curated by Giovanna Ginex, an independent art curator and historian based in Milan. Ginex specializes in different aspects of 19th and 20th century art across painting, sculpture, photography, and design, and is a frequent collaborator with institutions in Italy and abroad.

Artworks by the fifteen artists of *Staging Injustice* including **Giacomo Balla, Antonio Mancini, Angelo Morbelli, Giuseppe Pellizza and Medardo Rosso**, offer a cross-section of the most advanced Italian artistic production of the time. The exhibition includes heterogeneous perspectives, styles, and formal languages, which reflect the artists' diverse backgrounds in terms of location, training, and their varied alignment with the tastes of the era. The exhibition will also become a dialogue between artists who came from different areas of the country and were educated in different academic contexts. Most of the artists' work have never been exhibited in the United States including **Ambrogio Alciati, Adriana Bisi Fabbri, Antonio Carminati, Achille D'Orsi, Raffaello Gambogi, Giuseppe Mentessi, Luigi Nono**.

This thought-provoking and timely exhibition will be held at CIMA (421 Broome Street, 4th floor, New York, New York, 10013) and is open to the public on Fridays and Saturdays by appointment.

The themes of the exhibition will extend both to its robust slate of public programs and events, including lectures, concerts, film screenings, and activities for students. Details of public programs will be announced in the coming weeks.

As always, CIMA's exhibitions result from the curator's deep knowledge of the selected topic, but also function as a catalyst for new research by CIMA's international fellows who gain and share new insights on the show's themes with the public. The fellows' studies will be included in CIMA's accredited academic online journal, *Italian Modern Art* following the exhibition's run ([www.italianmodernart.org/journal](http://www.italianmodernart.org/journal))

CIMA's international fellows for *Staging Injustice* include Giorgio Motisi, PhD candidate in Art History at the Scuola Normale Superiore (Pisa), Camilla Froio, PhD in Art Criticism and Theory at the University of Florence, Italy, and Eduardo De Maio, a final year PhD candidate in History of Art at the University of York, United Kingdom.

Generous sponsorship to the exhibition is provided by Istituto Italiano di Cultura, New York. The exhibition opened under the patronage of Ministero della Cultura, Roma; Ambasciata d'Italia, Washington; Istituto Italiano di Cultura, New York, and Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Washington.



#### About CIMA:

Founded in 2013, CIMA is a public non-profit dedicated to presenting modern and contemporary Italian art to international audiences. Through critically acclaimed exhibitions—many of them bringing work to U.S. audiences for the first time—along with a wide variety of public programs and substantial support for new scholarship awarded through its international fellowship program, CIMA situates Italian modern art in an expansive historic and cultural context, illuminating its continuing relevance to contemporary culture and serving as an incubator of curatorial ideas for larger cultural institutions. CIMA works to add new voices to scholarship on modern Italian art with annual fellowships that open fresh perspectives and new avenues of research. A visit begins with a complimentary espresso, followed by an informal exhibition tour with one of the resident fellows. Visitors are welcome to linger for additional viewing and conversation.

#### ABOUT CURATOR GIOVANNA GINEX:

Giovanna Ginex is an independent art curator and art historian based in Milan. She specializes in different aspects of nineteenth- and twentieth-century art, including painting, sculpture, photography, and design. She has collaborated with many institutions in Italy and abroad. Her most recent publications include *La meraviglia della natura morta, 1830–1910. Dall'Accademia ai maestri del Divisionismo*, exh. cat. (Milan: Cassa di Risparmio di Tortona-Skira, 2011); *“Rembrandt Bugatti: From Milan to Paris”*, in *Rembrandt Bugatti: The Sculptor 1884–1916*, eds. Philipp Demandt and Anke Daemgen, exh. cat. (München: Hirmer Verlag, 2014); *Una musa tra le ruote. Pirelli: un secolo di arte al servizio del prodotto* (Milan: Corraini, 2015); Elsa Smithgall-Erica E. Hirshler-Katherine M. Bourguignon-Giovanna Ginex, eds., *William Merritt Chase: A Modern Master*, exh. cat. (Washington D.C. and New Haven: The Phillips Collection and Yale University Press, 2016); Giovanna Ginex, *“Sono Fernanda Wittgens”. Una vita per Brera* (Milan: Skira, 2018). Giovanna Ginex, *Angelo Morbelli. Il poema della vecchiaia*, exh. cat., (Venezia: Ca' Pesaro Galleria Internazionale d'Arte Moderna, Skira 2018); Willemijn Lindenhovius-Giovanna Ginex, ed's., *Sprezzatura. Vijftig Jaar Italiaanse Schilderkunst 1860-1910*, exh. cat. (Assen: Drents Museum, WBOOKS, 2019); Giovanna Ginex, *Album del Divisionismo. «Mais d'abord que sont ces 'divisionnistes'?»* (Milan: Electa, 2021).

#### ABOUT CIMA FELLOW CAMILLA FROIO:

Camilla Froio earned her PH.D in Art Criticism and Theory at the University of Florence, Italy, with a dissertation on the process of appropriation and canonization of G.E. Lessing's “Laokoon” in North-America during the XIXth century, here regarded as a fundamental step to the formalization of the modernist lexicon in America during the 1930s and the 1940s. Camilla's research especially focused on the analysis of Clement Greenberg's essay “Towards a Newer Laocoon,” published on “Partisan Review” in 1940, and on the cultural and historical significance of Greenberg's reference to Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's treatise. Moreover, her

thesis intended to demonstrate that Greenberg's peculiar choice to reappraise the German classic was partly due to Lessing's traditional and enduring popularity in North-America during the second half of the XIXth century. This part of Camilla's study has been published in "Studi di Memofonte" with the title "La cultura nord-americana e il Laokoon di G.E. Lessing: premesse di una fortunata ricezione critica, 1840-1874." Camilla's research for her Ph.D thesis was supported by a Getty Library Grant from the Getty Research Institute, which allowed her to study Greenberg's personal papers, held by the mentioned institution, and to elaborate the hypothesis on the existence of multiple drafts of Greenberg's essay. An article on this subject, called "Un Unreleased Laokoon: The First Draft of Clement Greenberg's Towards a Newer Laocoon," has been recently published in the "Getty Research Journal" (2021). Over the years, Camilla published a number of articles as well as two books dedicated to Clement Greenberg (*A Quality of Jewishness. Ebraismo e modernismo nella critica di Clement Greenberg*, 2018; *Verso un Laocoonte modernista. Temi, immagini e contesti del Laocoonte di Clement Greenberg*, 2020, both for Angelo Pontecorboli Editore, Florence). Camilla took part in the 2018 École de printemps with an essay on the political significance of Clement Greenberg's "Laocoon," and recently contributed to the 2021 École de printemps, where she presented a paper on the painter Hans Hofmann and his theory of art. She contributed with the Centro dell'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci (Prato, Italy) on several occasions, giving talks and lectures on topics related to contemporary art. Camilla is currently Cultore della materia in Art History and Criticism at the University of Florence, and conference secretariat for the upcoming 16th Expert Working Group Meeting for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Landscape and Archeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley World Heritage Property, for the University of Florence. From these research experiences, Camilla's interest has gradually gravitated towards topics related to the transcultural interactions between American and European culture, with a particular emphasis on the ideological aspect of knowledge and on the processes of cultural negotiations.

During her time at CIMA, Camilla will be working on the collecting history of Alberto Pasini's "orientalist" artworks in Northeastern America; she will be highlighting the visual success of Pasini's paintings, as well as their critical reception and circulation from the 1870s until the first decade of the XXth century. Moreover, Camilla will be examining the depiction and crystallization of the image of the "Italian peasant" that, along with the iconic representation of Muslim subjects, was perceived through the lenses of a preconceived network of stereotypes around Italy's so-called "Southern question."

#### **ABOUT CIMA FELLOW EDUARDO DE MAIO:**

Eduardo De Maio is a final year PhD candidate in History of Art at the University of York, United Kingdom. Supervised by Prof. Elizabeth Prettejohn, Eduardo's thesis investigates the phenomenon of cultural interchange and transmission between Britain and Italy at the turn of the twentieth century, presenting it as a mutual opportunity for both countries to discover their respective contemporary artistic cultures. Eduardo holds an MA in History of Modern and Contemporary Art from the University of York, with a dissertation on the relationship between the English sculptor Henry Moore and Tuscany. The research was carried out mainly at the Henry Moore Foundation, The Henry Moore Institute and at the KHI in Florence, with a focus on the innovative exhibition of Moore's sculptures held at the Forte di Belvedere in Florence in 1972 and its impact on the 1970s-Italian environmental art. Previously, Eduardo was awarded a BA in Cultural Studies at the University of Florence, Italy, with a thesis in History of Art Criticism, focussing on the Italian critic Roberto Longhi's early Futurist ekphrasis. In the meantime, Eduardo has worked at the History of Art Department of the University of York as Graduate Teaching Assistant and as Associate Editor of the Department peer-reviewed journal *Aspectus*. He previously worked as an exhibition and collection researcher at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds and at the York Museum Trust. His further research interests include European and Italian art between 1880s and 1930s, Post-War exhibition practice, Arte Povera and Environmental art, democratization and social commitment in culture.

As a CIMA fellow, Eduardo will investigate the impact of Anglo-American and European social/socialist culture on fin de siècle Italian art and culture, in particular on the gradual development of a social commitment and tendencies to socialism (Humanitarian and Evolutionary), which some Italian artists embraced between the 1880s and 1910s. This theme will be analyzed in the broader context of the fin de siècle internationalism, alongside highlighting its peculiarities as a phenomenon per se, parallel or even clashing with the contemporary influences coming from the rest of Europe and beyond. Most importantly, it will be related to the cultural debate that hinged on the dichotomy of “Art for the few” (elitist) and “Art for the People” (collective), which animated Italian culture for almost four decades between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

#### **ABOUT CIMA FELLOW GIORGIO MOTISI:**

Giorgio Motisi is a PhD candidate in Art History at the Scuola Normale Superiore (Pisa). His doctoral research, supervised by professor Flavio Fergonzi, focuses on the Italian Ultimo Naturalismo (“Last Naturalism”) and Francesco Arcangeli’s work as a critic during the 1950s. Giorgio attended both the University of Pisa and the Scuola Normale Superiore. In 2018, after completing an internship at the Marino Marini Foundation (Pistoia), he defended a thesis on Marini’s portraits. An extract of the thesis has been published in the CIMA journal (Italian Modern Art, 2021). In 2020, he discussed his MA thesis on the portraits of the anti-fascist group Corrente, which emphasized the social and political values of these artworks. The first results of the thesis are about to be presented at a conference at the Kunsthistorisches Institut (Florence 2021). Giorgio’s main area of interest is Italian 20th century painting and sculpture, with an emphasis on their connections to the sociocultural context, the reception of ancient and Renaissance art, and the critical dialogue with the international avant-gard. On these subjects he has contributed book chapters, published articles in leading academic journals (Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore, 2020; L’uomo nero, 2021), and attended international conferences (Pisa 2019; Ravenna 2021; Reims 2021; New York 2021). He is a contributor to Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani (Enciclopedia Treccani), with entries on the painters Filippo de Pisis (2019), Ernesto Treccani (2020), and Italo Valenti (2020). Furthermore, since 2018 he has been on the board of FAcT (Festival of Academic Theater): an association which organizes international festivals for university theater companies. Giorgio’s research project for the 2022 CIMA Fellowship proposes a new way of interpreting an often overlooked issue: the value of titles in socially committed artworks of the late-19th and early-20th centuries. In those decades, indeed, Italian painters and sculptors showed an unprecedented interest in their choice of titles, conceiving them as instruments capable of deeply enriching their works. Taking into account a large number of case studies, the main purpose of the project will be to understand not only the sources but also the reasons and aims of their choices, providing a starting point for analyzing the inner workings of titles, their critical reception and their variations depending on different contexts and audiences.

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