

2024 Johns Hopkins-Warwick Doctoral Summer School in Venice

June 3-12

Renaissance Europe and the Environmental Humanities: Venice and Beyond

The Johns Hopkins-Warwick Doctoral Summer School, in association with the University of Ca' Foscari, is an extended interdisciplinary workshop in History of Art, History of Science and Medicine, Literature, and History of the Book. The summer school will emphasize how literature, art, religion, urban planning, and forms of knowledge culture, religion, and politics were shaped by the constant threats of flood, land degradation, epidemic disease, resource depletion, and overpopulation, and shaped cultural responses and understandings of these crises in turn.

The Venetian Republic's artistic and intellectual prominence, its stylized urban design, and its geopolitical impact on the mainland and the Mediterranean will be seen through the lens of its successes and failures in managing the natural world. We will consider the implications for the humanities of work in ecocriticism and in environmental history to carve out new ways of attending to pre-modern Europe, thinking together about how we can develop new ways to listen and to look for the enmeshed and multifaceted relationship between pre-modern culture and its multiple ecologies. We will also think about how ecocriticism and environmental history in the pre-modern period can inform our culture today, with the conviction that the humanities play just as vital a role as STEM in addressing our current juncture of climate crisis.

The workshop is co-organized by Prof. Stephen J. Campbell (Johns Hopkins) and Dr. Bryan Brazeau (Warwick). It includes talks by faculty from both institutions, along with faculty members from Ca' Foscari, Goucher College, U. Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Venice International University, and the University of Padova. The participants include 16 PhD students from JHU, Warwick, UC Berkeley, Harvard, NYU, U. Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Yale.

The summer school is jointly organized by the Charles Singleton Centre for the Study of the Premodern World at Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, MD) and the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance at the University of Warwick (Coventry, UK). It is supported by generous funding from both centres, by the Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Warwick, and by the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti, who are hosting the school's activities.

Programme:

Unless otherwise indicated, all meetings at the Istituto Veneto will take place at the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti – Palazzo Franchetti, 4th Floor, Campo San Vidal, Venice. You will need your badge to get in. Please remember to bring it with you each day.

Monday June 3

10 am – Istituto Veneto

Orientation meeting and lecture/discussion:

Towards an Ecohumanist Approach to Early Modern Venice
Bryan Brazeau and Stephen J. Campbell

11:30 am – Coffee Break

11:45 am – ...continued from above

1 pm – Lunch at Istituto Veneto

3pm – Walking tour of Piazza San Marco and vicinity, with visit to Doge's Palace

Tuesday June 4

9-12.15 Istituto Veneto

The Poetics of Water in Word and Image
Arielle Saiber and April Oettinger

10:30 – Coffee Break

12:15 – Lunch at Istituto Veneto

1pm – Departure from Istituto Veneto for Fondamente Nove and Field Trip to Torcello:
The Rise and Fall of a Medieval Commune.

4:30 pm – Depart from Torcello

Wednesday June 5

9:30 am – Meet outside Istituto Veneto – Palazzo Franchetti

10 am – 12.30 pm

Morning workshop at University of Venice Center of Environmental Humanities

at Ca' Bottaccin: *The Environmental History of Early Modern Venice*.
—Pietro Omodeo

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm – Lunch at Istituto Veneto

2:00 pm-5:00 pm— Walking tour

Urban Neighborhoods – the municipal church, the parish church, the synagogue
SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Madonna dell'Orto, Ghetto Nuovo.

Thursday June 6

Ecological Defenses, Food Systems, and the Strategic Use of the Lagoon
Bryan Brazeau

9 am- Meet at Fondamente Nove

10 am – Visit to Lazzaretto Nuovo

Ecological Barene Walk

12 pm – Arrive at Sant'Erasmus – Ecological walk and the changing shape of the lagoon

1pm – The Garden of Venice: Sant'Erasmus and Food Production Then and Now

Visit to I e S Farm (Lunch Provided)

Expected return time around 4.30-5pm.

Friday June 7

9:00 am – Meet at San Giacometto (near Rialto Bridge).

The Rialto market and Venetian food systems from the pre-modern
to the present day.

Donatella Calabi

9.00 – Walk around Rialto Island

11.30— Walk to Palazzo Franchetti

12.00— Lecture with slides

1pm – Buffet lunch at Istituto Veneto

2.30pm – *Workshop on Eco-Latin* – Ingrid de Smet

5.30 pm Aperitivo at Warwick in Venice

Saturday June 8

9am Optional visit to the Galleria dell'Accademia and S. Maria della Salute.

Sunday June 9

Terraferma I: Field trip to Bassano del Grappa and the Villa Maser, Museo Civico Bassano del Grappa,

James Pilgrim, Stephen J Campbell

8:30 am. – Depart Tronchetto (meet at the People Mover bus stop)

9:40/45 – Arrive at Bassano del Grappa - walk into town
(and grab coffee along the way)

10:00 Museo Civico di Bassano

12:30-2:00 Lunch (on their own) in Bassano del Grappa.

2:00 - Depart for Asolo

2:30 pm – Arrive at Asolo – Visit Duomo and Museo Civico

3:45 pm – Leave for Villa di Maser

4:00 pm – Villa di Maser and Gardens

6:00 pm – Leave to return to Venice

Monday June 10

*Terraferma II: Field trip to the Fratta Polesine - Villa Badoer and Villa Grimani Molin.
Art and Architecture—land and water management in the Venetian terraferma.*

Meital Shai

8:30 am - Depart Tronchetto (meet at the People Mover bus stop)

9:30 am- Arrive at Fratta Polesine

9:45 – Begin visit to Villa Badoer

11:15 – Coffee break

11:45 – Begin visit to Villa Grimani Molin

13:15 – Lunch (at your expense)

14:15 – Departure for Arquà Petrarca

14:45 – Arrive in Arquà Petrarca

16:00 – Depart for Valsanzibio Gardens

16:15 – Arrive at Villa Barbarigo / Valsanzibio Gardens

17:45 – Depart for Venice

18:45 – Arrival in Venice and end of day

Tuesday June 11

9.30 am: Istituto Veneto

Graduate presentations on research – 20 minutes each with discussion.

10:30 am: Coffee break

10: 45 am: Graduate presentations on research – 20 minutes each with discussion.

12-1 pm- Lunch at Istituto Veneto

1pm – Departure for Padova

3pm - Environmental Humanities and Renaissance Studies workshop, “Representing Arcadia (1504-1790)” organized by Enrico Zucchi

7pm onward—aperitivo/dinner in Padova (at your expense);
return to Venice when you prefer

Wednesday June 12

9am-12.30 pm – Istituto Veneto

Graduate presentations

11 am – Coffee Break

11:15- 12:30 pm— Graduate Presentations

1pm – 2pm – Lunch at Istituto Veneto

2.00-5.00pm – Istituto Veneto

Graduate presentations

7:30 p.m. – Aperitivo – Osteria al Ponte

8:45 p.m. – Final Dinner – Trattoria Alle Bandierette

READINGS

Please read the following before the first day

Extracts from *Venice and the Anthropocene: An Ecocritical Guide*. Eds. Cristina Baldacci, Shaul Bassi, Lucio De Capitani and Pietro Daniel Omodeo (2022).

Karl Appuhn, *A Forest on the Sea. Environmental Expertise in Renaissance Venice* (2009), 1-19.

Donatella Calabi, *The Rialto, Venice's Island Market. A Walk Through Art and History*. (2022), 9-34.

Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, "Toward an Ecological understanding of the Myth of Venice," in *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City State 1297-1797* eds. John Martin and Dennis Romano (2000), 40-64.

Ken Hiltner, *What Else Is Pastoral? Renaissance Literature and the Environment* (2011), 1-19.

Meital Shai and Simone Guseo, "Faith in Science Triumphant: An Eclipse in Villa Barbaro at Maser." *Artibus et Historiae* 84 (2021), 195–220.

Sara Miglietti, "Between Nature and Culture: The Integrated Ecology of Renaissance Climate Theories." In *Early Modern Écologies*. Eds. Pauline John Usher, Pauline Goul (2020), 137-60.

Pietor Daniel Omodeo, "The Invisible Fisherman: The Economy of Water Knowledge in Early Modern Venice." *Ichthyology in Context*. Eds. Paul J. Smith and Florike Egmond (2023), 364-391.

James Pilgrim, "Jacopo Bassano and the Flood of Feltre." *The Art Bulletin* 105 (2023), 115-137.

Also recommended:

Todd Borlik, "Renaissance Literature and the Environment" *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature*. Oxford University Press, 2022.

Bryan Brazeau, "Take Me Down to the Paradise City: An Ecocritical Approach to Paradise Spaces in Italian Renaissance Epic," *Status Quaestionis* 24 (2023): 21-45.

Giovanni Caniato, "Il controllo delle acque," *Storia di Venezia*, VII, 479–508.

Gillen D'Arcy Wood, "Introduction: Eco-Historicism." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 8, No. 2, Climate and Crisis (2008), 1-7.

Gianfranco Pertot, *Venice: Extraordinary Maintenance* (2004).

Salvatore Settis, *If Venice Dies* (2015).

Anthony Tung, "Tourism versus the Habitable City," from *Preserving the World's Great Cities* (2001), 318-343.

PARTICIPANTS

Faculty:

Bryan Brazeau is Reader in Liberal Arts at the University of Warwick. He works on early modern Italian literature (Jacopo Sannazaro and Torquato Tasso), philosophy, and poetic theory. He also studies Dante and medieval philosophy, book history, the intersections of Spanish and Italian early modern literary cultures (Cervantes) and the visual reception of renaissance art in the early twentieth century. He is writing a monograph on the late Renaissance poet Lucrezia Marinella and is co-editor of *The Reception of Aristotle's Poetics in the Italian Renaissance and Beyond: New Directions in Criticism* (London, 2020).

Donatella Calabi was formerly Chair Professor of Urban History at the University Iuav of Venice. She has worked on 19th and 20th century town planning and is one of the foremost experts on the urban history of the Venetian Ghetto. She has published widely on the European city in early modern times and on Venice in particular, including *The Market and the City* (revised edition 2004) and *Venice, The Jews, and Europe* (2016).

Stephen J. Campbell is Weisenfeld Professor of History of Art, Johns Hopkins University. He is the author of several books and exhibition catalogs on the geography of Italian Renaissance art and on artists in Northern Italy/the Adriatic, the most recent being *Andrea Mantegna: Humanist Aesthetics, Faith, and the Force of Images* (2020); he is co-editor of *The Routledge Companion to Global Renaissance Art* (2024).

Ingrid de Smet is Professor of French and Neo-Latin Studies, University of Warwick. Her many articles include studies of Menippean satire in the Renaissance, of eroticism and obscenity in Neo-Latin poetry, and of Montaigne, Casaubon, and Julius Caesar Scaliger, among other authors. Her most recent book is *La Fauconnerie à la Renaissance. Le Hieracosophon (1582-1584) de Jacques Auguste de Thou* (2019).

Meital Shai is a Researcher in History of Art and Architecture, Ca' Foscari University of Venice. She is interested in the intersections of art and natural philosophy in Veneto, and has written about problems in art historical methodology, especially theories of reception. She is the author of *The Cosmos at Home. The Fresco Cycle of Villa Grimani Molin at Fratta Polesine* (2019).

April Oettinger is Barbara Beacham Cushing Distinguished Professor of the Humanities // Professor of Art History, Goucher College. She is the author of several articles on 16th-century Venetian painter Lorenzo Lotto and the 1499 edition of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, and the co-editor of *Green Worlds in Early Modern Italy. Art and the Verdant Earth* (2019). Her monograph, *Animating Nature. Lorenzo Lotto and the Art of Landscape in Renaissance Venice 1500-1550*, is forthcoming from Penn State University Press.

Pietro Daniel Omodeo is a cultural historian of science and a professor of historical epistemology at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. His publications include *Copernicus in the Cultural Debates of the Renaissance: Reception, Legacy, Transformation* (2014), and *Political Epistemology: The Problem of Ideology in Science Studies* (2019). He is co-editor of *Venice and the Anthropocene: An Ecocritical Guide* (2022).

James Pilgrim is Assistant Professor of Art History, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He studies the ways in which images helped early modern Europeans make sense of the rapidly changing world in which they lived. He is particularly interested in recovering artistic contributions to the emergence of a new environmental consciousness, a new global imaginary, and a growing skepticism about the reliability of the 'visual.' His book *Pastoral's End: Art, Ecology, and Disaster in Renaissance Italy* is forthcoming from The University of Chicago Press.

Lawrence M. Principe is Drew Professor of the Humanities, Department of History of Science and Technology, Johns Hopkins University. His research specialization lies in exploring and understanding the history of chemistry/alchemy. His most recent book is *The Transmutations of Chymistry: Wilhelm Homberg and the Académie Royale des Sciences* (Chicago, 2020), and he is currently working on a critical edition and translation the alchemical works of the fourteenth-century Franciscan friar and prophet John of Rupescissa.

Arielle Saiber is Charles S. Singleton Professor of Italian Studies, Johns Hopkins University. She publishes primarily on Dante, on the intersections between premodern Italian literature and mathematics/science, and visual interpretations of Dante's *Commedia*. Her publications include *Measured Words: Computation and Writing in Renaissance Italy* (University of Toronto Press, 2017).

Enrico Zucchi is a postdoctoral researcher at Università degli Studi di Padova. His research interests focus mainly on 17th- and 18th-century European theater, particularly on the political and juridical contents of the Italian tragedy, on the literary theory developed by the Accademia d'Arcadia, on the theatrical criticism and literary historiography of the 18th century. Recently he published the editions of Giovan Mario Crescimbeni's *La bellezza della volgar poesia* (2018), and Pietro Calepio's *Paragone della poesia tragica d'Italia con quella di Francia* (2017).

Graduate Students:

Isabelle Avci, History, Johns Hopkins University, is working on a project that traces Neo-platonic themes in Pico della Mirandola's commentary on Genesis, the *Heptaplus*. This project is part of a long-term exploration of written texts as a technological, as well as intellectual, intervention in early modern social and political crises.

Meghaa Ballakrishnen, History of Art, Johns Hopkins University, is beginning a research project, *Slow Time: Art History and Contemporary Climate Change*, that investigates the significance of thirteenth-seventeenth century art and architecture

representing the natural and built environments, understood in a global context, for contemporary artists responding to the climate crisis. She considers how the search for solutions to cope with the otherworldliness of our current moment, while asking what we have done to produce it, has led to a new intimacy between the twenty-first century and the art of the premodern world.

Cristina D’Errico, Italian, Johns Hopkins University, is completing a dissertation intitled “The Order of the Chaos” that delves into the epic poem “Chaos del Triperuno” (1527) by Teofilo Folengo. The poem is interpreted as a reflection of the author’s personal crises and of societal woes in early sixteenth-century Italy, marked by political turmoil and religious unrest during the three decades leading up to the Council of Trent (1545-1563). Structuring her examination around three central topics in early modern Catholicism—soul, God, and hell- she explores how Folengo reflects the impact of heterodox theories on the intellectual atmosphere of his time.

Max Hernandez, History of Art, Johns Hopkins University, is writing a dissertation about sculptors who worked almost exclusively in unglazed clay between c. 1400 and c. 1530 within the region historically, albeit generically, known as "Lombardy," which spanned Northern Italy from Piedmont to the Venetian Terraferma. These sculptors’ works have yet to be explored as a localized historical phenomenon, with objects and makers considered in their historical, social, and intellectual contexts.

Laura Lestani, History of Art, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is primarily focused on the exploration of Italian literature and visual culture from the Early Modern period, through the lens of ecocriticism. She has studied the evolving representations of Saint Francis under the Catholic Church's influence, and how this figure, intimately connected with nature and poverty, underwent significant transformations in depiction from the Middle Ages to the Baroque period.

Clive Letchford, Centre for the Study of the Renaissance, University of Warwick, studies education in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, focusing on the impact of Renaissance humanism on teaching and how it informed the curriculum, methods and texts used by English schoolmasters. Illness was a recurring threat, yet modern scholarship on education has paid little attention to health factors to see what impact they had on pupils’ progress or experience. The crowded schoolrooms, into which all ages were crammed into one room, were an ideal spreading-ground for contagious diseases. How did schools deal with this?

Adriana Merenda, Italian Studies, New York University, is interested in the way sound helps questioning and conceptualizing the complexity of the network between human beings, non-human things, and natural environment(s). She explores the way different communities make sense of the space they are inhabiting through an analysis of what they hear and listen to, with a particular attention on the noise threshold and the way it relates to events of crisis or massive social disruption. Venice’s position and role in the Mediterranean invaluablely exposes to other’ voices – first and foremost the

sea's – and can constitute a compelling case study in the attempt to craft alternative, decolonial narratives about the Mediterranean in the early modern period.

Renata Nagy, History of Art, Yale University, is working on the role of illustration in the publications of Renaissance naturalists, especially in the wake of Conrad Gessner (1516–65) and Leonhart Fuchs (1501–66), examining how a diversity of makers from amateurs to scholars to artists used annotating, hand-coloring, and pasting to manage the natural world in their books.

Cristino Pacquing, Department of French, Yale University, is studying the history of medicine and how the environment impacts medical understanding, knowledge, and health practices. Taking particular account of Venetian public health measures for plague control, he is interested in investigating how medicine and religion are shaped by and also influence the local contours of geography and both intellectual and material culture.

Marco Pomini, History of Art, Johns Hopkins University, is writing a dissertation that explores how images shape and solidify religious identities in spaces like Livorno, Malta, or the Genoese community in Tabarka (Tunisia), while also attending to objects that register unexpected moments of crises around differences, in a period defined by the mutual use of violence and by the presence of large enslaved populations on both shores of the Mediterranean.

Piraya Puapanichya, English and Comparative Literature, University of Warwick, is engaged in research that maps the literary archipelagic and intertidal ecologies across South Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania, and examines these intertidal spaces—wetlands and marshlands—as postcolonial spaces of resistance and transgression.

Lei Qu is a first-year doctoral student in History of Art at Johns Hopkins University, interested in the intersection of art and humanism in Northern Italy and in the History of the Book.

Gabriela Rodríguez-Lebrón, Hispanic Languages and Literatures at the University of California-Berkeley, is engaged in research that delves into the representations of nature, namely trees, and the relationship between man and forested landscapes in Spanish Golden Age literature. Her work stems from the poetic corpus of Garcilaso de la Vega, who introduced the bucolic genre to Spain after a stay in Naples.

Louise Rossetti, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, Harvard University, is investigating artefacts of the Italian cultural tradition as a site of negotiation for conceptions of nature. Her research traces Cartesian rational thought and its consequences for the subjugation of nature as a symptom of a shift from conceptions of art as functional to art as aesthetic, and thus as a shift in the perception of nature from generative to functional.

Peter Scharer, Italian Studies, Yale University, has been working on a book published in Venice in 1557, *Peregrinaggio di tre giovani figliuoli del re di Serendippo*, which

prefaces itself as a translation from Persian, and in the late nineteenth century was identified as an adaptation of the twelfth-century Persian narrative poem *Haft paikar*. He seeks to learn more about how the narrative, which raises many questions suited for an ecocritical lens, fits into broader trends of environmental representation in the sixteenth century, both in the Persian and Italian contexts.

Yola West-Dennis is an MPhil/PhD student in the Global Sustainable Development department, University of Warwick, with a research focus on cultural heritage and sustainable urbanisation. Her research aim is to focus on the country of Bhutan, and the capital plan of Thimphu. The project explores the role of a distinctive design code and craft practise for architecture in Bhutan, largely based on the design of Monasteries and Buddhist buildings, which was incorporated into designs of new civic and public structures by the plan's architects.