

# Publics of the First Public Museums (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries).

## II. Literary Discourses



International  
Workshop

Durham  
23–24 May  
2024



Durham University  
Institute of Medieval  
& Early Modern Studies



Durham  
University  
Institute of  
Advanced Study

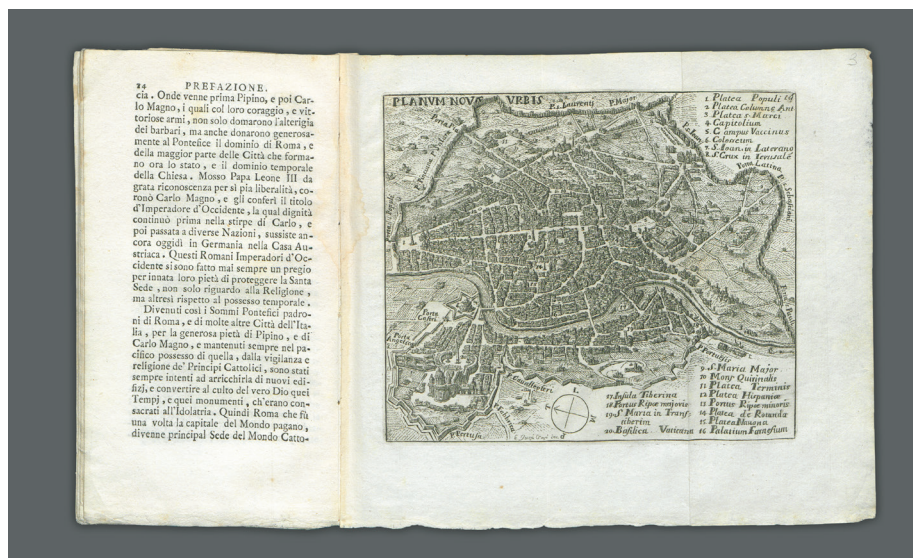
## Publics of the First Public Museums (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries).

### II. Literary Discourses

On the cover:  
Camille Cabailhot-Lassalle, *Le Salon de 1874*, 1874, Paris, Musée d'Orsay

- ▼ Mariano Vasi, *Itinerario Istruttivo di Roma antica e Moderna*, Roma 1791

The workshop *Publics of the First Public Museums (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*. II. *Literary Discourses* is an integral part of the research project *Visibility Reclaimed. Experiencing Rome's First Public Museums (1733-1870)*. An Analysis of Public Audiences in a Transnational Perspective. Marking the second of three encounters, this workshop delves into the examination of literary discourses vital to understanding the experiences of early museum-goers. Travel literature has long represented a privileged source for investigating the origins of the first public museums and the practices of access to public and private collections in Europe. However, in the light of recent studies aimed at deepening the material history of the museum and the encounter of the public with the institutions, these sources deserve a closer scrutiny in both methodological and critical terms. Following the inaugural Rome session that focused on institutional sources, the Durham workshop turns its gaze towards the rich literary narratives with the aim of analysing them also in a comparative perspective with the primary sources. As museums sought to define and engage their public, literature often became both a mirror and a mould, reflecting and shaping societal perceptions. With a spotlight on interdisciplinary and transnational approaches, the Durham workshop calls for a deeper probe into the visual and material realms of museums, emphasizing the interplay between literary discourses and artworks, collections, display, space, audiences “narrated” in the museum and the evolving institutional norms of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries.



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9:00 Welcoming Remarks  
Ita MacCarthy (Durham University, Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Director)

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### I. Methodological Reflections

This session serves as an introduction to the workshop, providing a shared reflection on the current state of research and the future prospects. It will focus on the comparative, interdisciplinary, and intermedial analysis of literatures within the field of Museum Studies.

Chair: Christoph Frank (Università della Svizzera italiana)

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9:15 Carla Mazzarelli (Università della Svizzera italiana)  
*Letterature e pubblici del Museo: fonti o modelli?*

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9:45 Stefano Cracolici (Durham University)  
*Musei d'Arcadia*

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10:15 Marco Maggi (Università della Svizzera italiana)  
*"Tutta l'arte del buon governo trastullando imparare in un passeggio":  
A Literary Rearrangement of the Duke of Savoy's Great Gallery*

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10:45-11:00 Discussion

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Coffee Break

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### II. Museums at Hand

This session will analyse literary genres for museum visitors, like guidebooks, and the role of periodicals in broadening museum audience engagement. Discussions will cover the evolution of these texts and new reading approaches introduced by Digital Humanities.

Chair: Giovanna Capitelli (Università Roma Tre)

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11:15 Damiano Delle Fave (Sapienza Università di Roma)  
*Pubblici dei musei a Roma nelle guide dell'Ottocento*

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11:35 Gaetano Cascino (Università della Svizzera italiana)  
*"I Romani non frequentano le gallerie di Roma": discussioni e stereotipi sui visitatori dei musei di Roma nella stampa di secondo Ottocento*

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11:55 Pietro Costantini (Università di Teramo)  
*Viaggio in Abruzzo: Vincenzo Bindi e I Monumenti storici ed artistici degli Abruzzi*

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12:15-12:30 Discussion

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12:30

**Keynote Address**

Chair: Carla Mazzarelli (Università della Svizzera italiana)

Carole Paul (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
*The Museum Going Public in Eighteenth-Century Italy*

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13:00

Discussion

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**III. Museums on the Beaten Track**

This session focuses on museum experiences in travel literature, including correspondence, diaries, and travel accounts. Discussions will specifically examine the unique perspectives of visitor-narrators and how published literary accounts of museum visits compare or contrast with unpublished sources.

Chair: Mauro Vincenzo Fontana (Università Roma Tre)

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14:15

Rosa Maria Giusto (Napoli, CNR)  
*La "città-museo" e i resoconti dei viaggiatori: le Notizie di Roma scritte dal Sig.re Aless.o Galilei*

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14:35

Luca Piccoli (Università della Svizzera italiana)  
*Reise nach Italien dell'architetto Simon-Louis Du Ry: resoconti pubblici e privati sui musei in Italia a confronto*

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14:55

Ludovica Scalzo (Università Roma Tre)  
*"The torch, like Promethean fire, makes every statue live": visite a lume di fiaccola nei musei romani dai resoconti di viaggio della prima metà dell'Ottocento*

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15:15-15:30

Discussion

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Coffee Break

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**IV. Varieties of Sightseeing**

This session explores the variety of visiting spaces, perspectives, and geographies in the 18th and 19th centuries, including museums, monuments, private palaces, and studios. Discussions will focus on what these diverse viewpoints reveal about sociocultural dynamics.

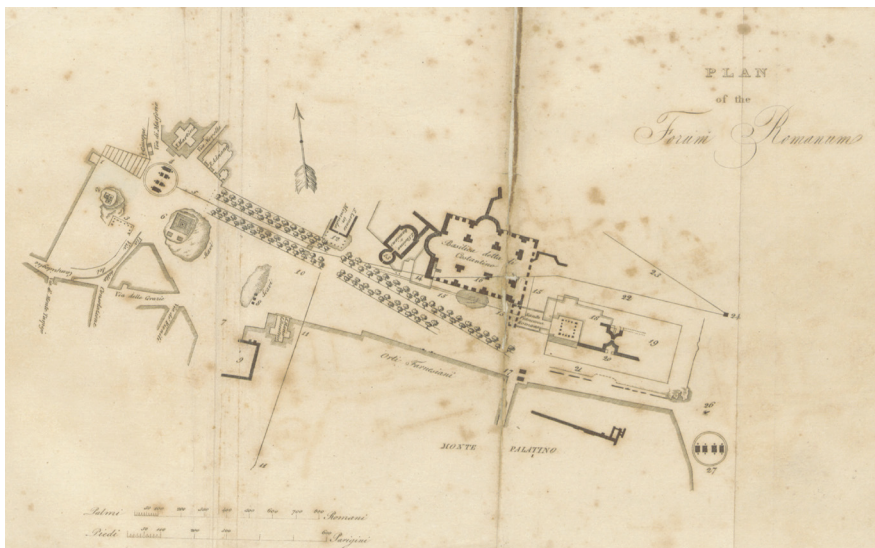
Chair: David García Cueto (Museo Nacional del Prado)

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15:45

Daniel Crespo-Delgado (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)  
*Los monumentos y las colecciones de arte en la literatura de viajes española (y por España) de la Ilustración*

16:05	Victoria Arzhaeva (EPHE-PSL, laboratoire Histara) <i>Les pensionnaires russes au Vatican: l'expérience muséale à travers la correspondance artistique et les journaux intimes du XIXe siècle</i>
16:25	Michele Amedei (Università di Pisa) <i>"The Studio was a monument of his intelligent taste and æsthetic culture": l'atelier dell'artista nei resoconti e diari di viaggio di visitatori nordamericani nella Toscana dell'Ottocento</i>
16:45-17:00	Discussion
17:00	<b>Keynote Address</b> Chair: Stefano Cracolici (Durham University)  Christoph Frank (Università della Svizzera italiana) <i>In the Shadow of the Americas: The Humboldts and Schinkel in the Rome of the Early 1800s</i>
17:30	Discussion



*Plan of the Roman Forum in Mariana Starke, Travels in Europe between the years 1824 and 1828, London 1828, p.149*

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### V. Literary Landscapes

This session aims to reflect on how literature provides a multifaceted view of the museum experience, extending the analysis to landscape traversal. It will consider the poetic charm of narrative evocations that capture the emotions of a setting and the ekphrastic descriptions that articulate artworks in written words.

Chair: Ita MacCarthy (Durham University)

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9:00

Cecilia Paolini (Università di Teramo)

*Il Controcanto di Clío: George Sand e l'inascoltata interpretazione del paesaggio italiano tra spazio barocco e romanticismo progressista*

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9:20

Elizaveta Antashyan (Sapienza Università di Roma)

*"A Walk through the Hermitage": Russia's First Public Museum and its Reflections in Literature during the reign of Alexander II (1855–1881)*

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9:40-10:00

Discussion

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### VI. Museum Tales

This session is dedicated to literary texts that transform museum visits into narratives. It explores how notions of time and space during such visits compare with the temporal dynamics of literary narration and how the perception of the visited places differs from travel accounts.

Chair: Sara Garau (Università della Svizzera italiana)

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10:00

Lucia Rossi (Università della Svizzera italiana)

*Il "Museo di Roma" tra esperienza, ricordo e costruzione narrativa: I Miei Ricordi e le Lettere di Massimo d'Azeglio*

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10:20

Meghan Freeman (Yale University)

*The Intimacies of Art Travel in Henry James*

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10:40

Corinne Pontillo (Università di Catania)

*"S'arrestò davanti alla Gioconda": visitare il Museo del Louvre attraverso la letteratura*

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11:00-11:15

Discussion

## VII. Sensory Visits

This session explores how the concept of the museum as a space to “read” differs from its traditional perception as a space to “visit.” It will examine, from an interdisciplinary perspective, the implications of this distinction in literary and museological discourses, with a special focus on the sensory dimension of navigating through texts and the museum.

Chair: Marco Maggi (Università della Svizzera italiana)

- 11:30 Isabelle Pichet (UQTR, Trois Rivières) and Dorit Kluge (VICTORIA | International University, Berlin)  
*Experiencing 18th century art exhibitions in Paris and Dresden – a sensory interplay between exhibition and text*
- 11:50 Sofia Bollini (Università Luigi Vanvitelli, Napoli / Università della Svizzera Italiana)  
*Il preparato anatomico come oggetto museale e letterario nella cultura tardottocentesca*
- 12:10 Laura Stefanescu (Villa I Tatti, Harvard University)  
*Vernon Lee's Gallery Diaries: An Aesthetic Bodily Experience of Italian Museums in the Early Twentieth Century*

## Discussion and Conclusion

*Le Musée du Vatican.*  
An extract from the  
French newspaper  
*L'Autorité*, 1891.





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**II. Literary  
Discourses**

**International  
Workshop  
Durham,  
23-24 May 2024**

**Organised by**

- Stefano Cracolici  
Durham University
- Carla Mazzarelli  
Università della  
Svizzera italiana

The Workshop is part of Research  
Project *Visibility Reclaimed.  
Experiencing Rome's First Public  
Museums (1733-1870).*  
*An Analysis of Public Audiences  
in a Transnational Perspective*  
(SNSF 100016\_212922)



**Principal investigator**

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Università della Svizzera italiana,  
Accademia di architettura di  
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dell'arte e dell'architettura

**Project Partners**

- Giovanna Capitelli  
Università Roma Tre
- Stefano Cracolici  
Durham University
- David García Cueto  
Museo del Prado
- Christoph Frank  
Università della Svizzera Italiana
- Daniela Mondini  
Università della Svizzera Italiana
- Chiara Piva  
Sapienza Università di Roma

**Organising Secretary**

- Gaetano Cascino  
(Università della Svizzera  
italiana)
- Lucia Rossi (Università  
della Svizzera italiana)

**Information and  
streaming on request**

- [visibilityreclaimed@gmail.com](mailto:visibilityreclaimed@gmail.com)

**Venue of the workshop**

- **Durham**  
Durham University  
Seminar Room, Institute  
of Advanced Study  
Cosin's Hall | Palace Green  
| Durham | DH1 3RL  
0044 (0) 191 334 4686

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**In collaboration with**  
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