

International  
Colloquium

# The Adorned City

A History  
of Painted Façades  
in the Modern Era

10 > 12  
June 2025

—  
University of Fribourg  
room MIS 10 01.13



Fonds national  
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UNIVERSITÉ DE FRIBOURG  
UNIVERSITÄT FREIBURG

# Introduction

The ambition of the research project *The Adorned City* (2021–2025) has been to restore painted façades to the prominent historical and artistic position they deserve, recognizing them as emblematic manifestations of early modern European visual culture. This remarkable laboratory of *representation* – understood both in its transitive and reflexive dimensions – has been investigated through the comparative study of surviving decorative programs as well as those known only through documentation, in order to illuminate the political, social, and artistic stakes inherent in this decorative practice. A central aim has been to revisit the notion of *public space* through the lens of painted façades, and to reconceive the image not as an autonomous entity, but as an integral component of the urban fabric. Comparative and systematic studies have been carried out thanks to the combined efforts of two doctoral researchers, a postdoctoral fellow, a senior researcher, and the principal investigator. Their work has addressed a wide range of topics, including painted clocks across Europe, the Swiss corpus as a synthesis of multiple Italo-Germanic influences, the blending of motifs and styles, the status of ornament, the political resonance of certain decorative schemes, and the legitimation of patrician identity through iconographic programs.

This effort at synthesis has been marked by various contributions to international conferences and, above all, by a series of workshops that explored in greater depth topics as : the Swiss exception (2022), issues of spatial arrangement (2023), points of intersection with the legal world (2023), and the relationship to architecture (2024). In addition to a comprehensive volume, two doctoral dissertations, and two monographs, the scholarly impact of the project also relies on the online sharing of knowledge. One of the project’s core objectives has been to develop a rigorous body of documentation in the form of an open-access database, designed to foster a forward-looking perspective on the phenomenon.

As it draws to a close, *The Adorned City* project seeks to culminate in a scholarly debate bringing together leading specialists on European painted façades. The international colloquium aims to address several key issues: historiographical challenges, the realities of the profession, the social and political stakes of the façade, the role of the patron, the contractual and financial dimensions of the commissions, the figurative rhetoric, the geography of the phenomenon as it emerges through the relationship between center and periphery, the circulation of styles, and the migration of artists. The event anticipates a debate rich in ideas, intended to inspire future research.



Organized with the generous support of  
the Swiss National Science Foundation

**June**

**10**

**Program**

17:00 - 18:00

**Jérémie Koering**

Facing Painted Façades

18:00 - 18:15

**Florian Métral**

Mapping Painted Façades: a Database

18:15 - 19:00

**Maria Fabricius Hansen**

Between Ephemerality and Permanence:  
Festivals and Urban Adornments in Early Modernity  
(keynote lecture)

19:00 >

Standing dinner reception

9:10 - 9:15

**Jérémie Koering**

Welcome speech

Panel

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TECHNICAL QUALITIES

Respondent

**Patricia Falguières**

9:15 - 9:40

**Anna Swartwood House**

Painting in the Streets:  
The Tensions of the Frescoed Façade

9:40 - 10:05

**Antonella Fenech**

“Sfacettature” : On the Unity and Heterogeneity  
of Painted Façades in Italy

10:05 - 10:20

Discussion

10:20 - 10:35

Coffee break

10:35 - 11:00

**Andreas Huth**

Decorative Scratches:  
Sgraffito in Italy Before and After Vasari

11:00 - 11:25

**Pavel Waisser**  
**Vladislava Říhová**  
**Zdeňka Míchalová**

Renaissance Façade Decorations  
in Bohemian and Moravian Towns

11:25 - 11:40

Discussion

12:00 - 14:00

Lunch

<u>Panel</u>	<u>SPACE</u>	
Respondent	<b>Valérie Hayaert</b>	
14:00 - 14:25	<b>Luca Cereghetti</b>	Presence and Representation: Political Display on Painted Façades in the Old Swiss Confederacy
14:25 - 14:50	<b>Florian Métral</b>	Painted Clock Façades: Time and Space
14:50 - 15:15	<b>Dominic-Alain Boariu</b>	Regardless of Where You Are: Vision and Counter-Vision in Painted Façades (A Motif Study)
15:15 - 15:30	Discussion	
15:30 - 15:45	Coffee break	
<u>Panel</u>	<u>TRADITION</u>	
Respondent	<b>Carolin Behrmann</b>	
15:45 - 16:10	<b>Alexis Culotta</b>	“The True Painter of Ancient Things”: Remembering Polidoro’s All’Antica Dialect in Frescoed Façade Design
16:10 - 16:35	<b>Sandes Dindar</b>	Exploring Mythology and Antiquity on Swiss Renaissance Façades: Narration and Patronage in the 16th-Century
16:35 - 16:50	Discussion	
19:00 >	Dinner	

9:10 - 9:15	<b>Dominic-Alain Boariu</b>	Welcome speech
Panel	<u>ICONOGRAPHY</u>	
Respondent	<b>Marie Theres Stauffer</b>	
9:15 - 9:40	<b>Rossella Riscica Chiara Voltarel</b>	Titian as a Young Fresco Painter: The Façade of the “Scuola del Santissimo” in Treviso Between Antiquarian Decoration and the Modern Manner
9:40 - 10:05	<b>Angela Kuratli</b>	The Big Sgraffito House in Krems
10:05 - 10:20	Discussion	
10:20 - 10:35	Coffee break	
10:35 - 11:00	<b>Fabrice Flückiger</b>	Scaevola Meets Solomon: Understanding the Principles of Good Government Through the Murals of Ulm’s City Hall
11:00 - 11:25	<b>Susan Tipton</b>	Salomon and the Queen of Sheba: A Façade-Painting Competition in Early 17th-Century Augsburg and the Secret of the Wall, that Disappeared
11:25 - 11:40	Discussion	
12:00 - 14:00	Lunch	

Panel                      ICONOGRAPHY

Respondent                **Sabine Frommel**

14:00 - 14:25            **Aleksandra Sieczkowska**  
**Agnieszka Seidel-Grzesińska**  
**Marcin Wistocki**              Iconographic Programs  
of Renaissance Sgraffito Decorations in Silesia:  
Origins, Patterns, Ideas

14:25 - 14:50            **Julia Grimm**                      Space for Imagination:  
The Façade Design for the “Maier” House in Nuremberg

14:50 - 15:15            **Martina Volpato**                Verona’s Painted Façades:  
Documentation, Surveys, and Analysis of  
External Frescoes from the 14th to the 19th Centuries

15:15 - 15:30            Discussion

15:30 - 15:45            Coffee break

Panel                      RECEPTION

15:45 - 16:10            **Océane Acquier Sicart**            Between Restoration, Reconstruction and Invention:  
On the Trail of a 16th-Century Fresco on the Façade  
at the Prince’s Palace of Monaco

16:10 - 16:35            **Adrián Fernández Almoguera**      Unusual Colours: On Some Decorated Façades  
in 18th-Century Madrid

16:35 - 16:50            Discussion

16:50 - 17:05            **Jérémie Koering**  
**Dominic-Alain Boariu**              By the Street

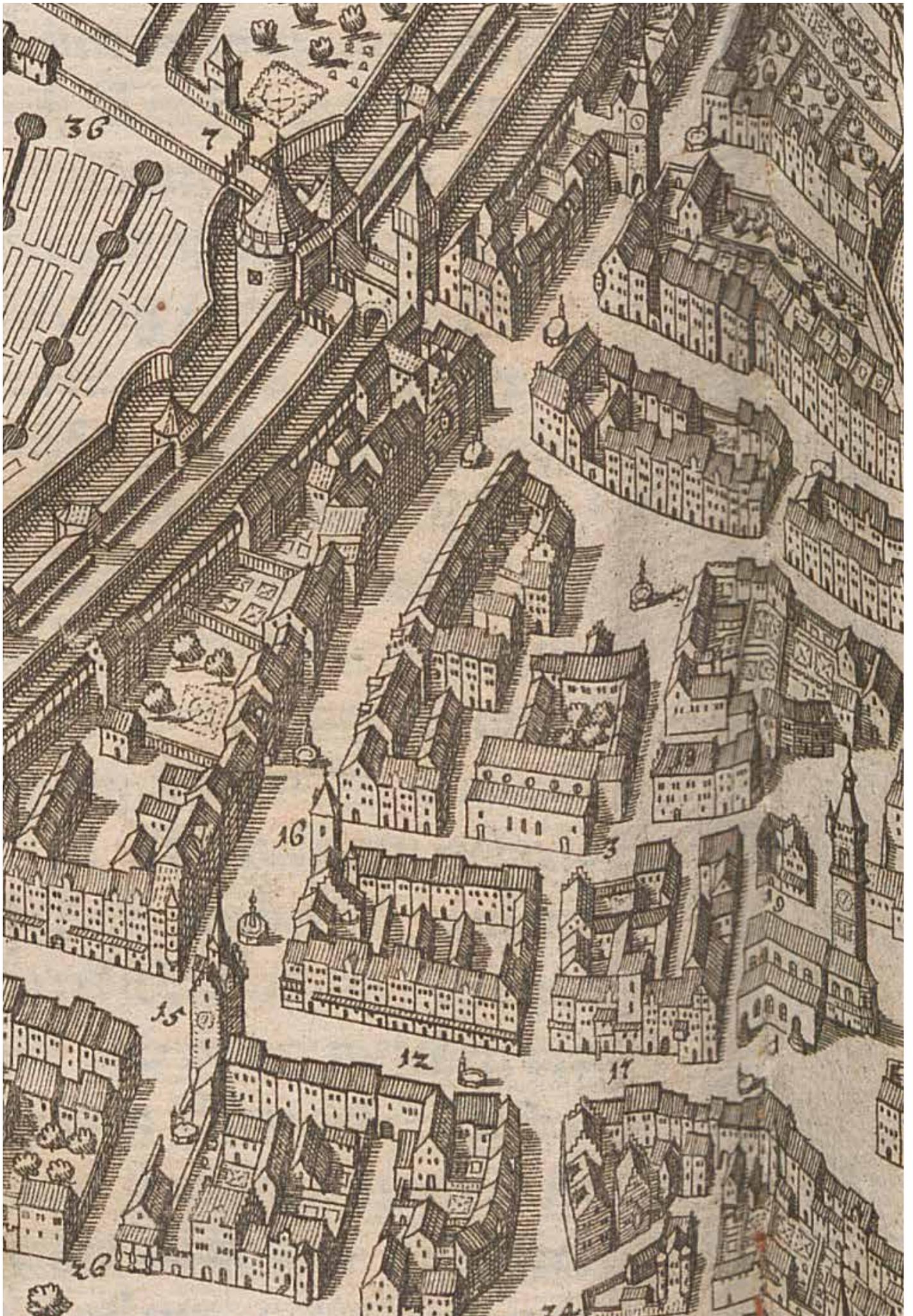
19:00 >                      Dinner



# Facing Painted Façades

**During the Renaissance, many European cities were adorned with painted façades (*al secco*, *al fresco* and *a sgraffito*) presenting historiated scenes, monumental figures, ornaments (heraldic, vegetal, *all'antica*, grotesque) and architectural illusionistic structures. Yet, despite its geographical and chronological scope, this phenomenon often remains outside our historical horizon, due to the absence of a comprehensive study of the political, legal, social and artistic issues accompanying its development. This introduction to the international colloquium will provide an opportunity to present the broad outlines of a collective research project supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation, the aim of which is to tackle this historical problem on a European scale. By focusing on secular buildings (palaces, town halls, bourgeois houses, etc.), we will more specifically measure the contribution of this phenomenon to the definition of “public space” in European urban societies.**

**Jérémie Koering** is professor of early modern art history at the University of Fribourg. His fields of study are Renaissance Art, epistemology of art history, and anthropology of images. He has published *Léonard de Vinci. Peintures et dessins* (Hazan, 2007), *Le prince en représentation* (Actes Sud, 2013), *Caravage, juste un détail* (INHA, 2018); with Stephen J. Campbell, *Andrea Mantegna: Making Art History* (Wiley, 2015); with Yve-Alain Bois, *Damisch/Schapiro* a special issue of *October* (MIT, 167, 2019). He has edited two unpublished manuscripts by Robert Klein, *L'Esthétique de la technè. L'art selon Aristote et les théories des arts visuels au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (INHA, 2017) and *Essai sur la responsabilité* (with Carole Maigné, INHA, 2022). Recently, he has published a book in the field of image anthropology: *Les iconophages. Une histoire de l'ingestion des images* (Actes Sud, 2021/Zone Books 2024), for which he was awarded by the Pinault Collection (Pierre Daix Prize 2022). His last book is the forthcoming *Enquête sur 'Les Ménines'* (Actes Sud, 2025). He is now working on the publication of two essays: the first on Meyer Schapiro and drawing as epistemic tool, the second on the metaphors of the artistic process in Italian Renaissance art.



# **Mapping Painted Façades: a Database**

**This short presentation introduces an ongoing digital project that aims to document, describe, and visualize painted façades in early modern Europe. Based on a relational database enriched with textual sources, iconographic material, and geolocated entries, the project provides both a research tool and a public resource.**



# Between Ephemerality and Permanence: Festivals and Urban Adornments in Early Modernity

Early modern cities were dressed up and animated at grand secular and religious celebrations. By a presentation of some of the elements that were brought into play at these festivals the lecture will discuss the relationships between the ephemeral equipment and the more permanent adornments of the urban space. The art historical discipline has tended to specialize in permanent works and to apply modern, media specific categories such as sculpture and painting in the analyses. This implies a risk of overlooking the fleeting, multisensorial and performative cultural productions of the early modern period, highly valued at the time. I will argue that many features of “permanent” works, such as the sculpture and painting of the time, were created by reflections from or interactions with the temporary field.

**Maria Fabricius Hansen** is Professor of Art History at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. In her research she has focused on cultural and material appropriations in Italian architecture, painting and visual culture from late antiquity through the sixteenth century. She has published extensively on *spolia* and medieval repurposing of architectural elements, e.g. *The Spolia Churches of Rome: Recycling Antiquity in the Middle Ages*, 2015, on 15th and 16th-century reception of antiquity, and on grotesques, e.g. *The Art of Transformation: Grotesques in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, 2018. She works on contemporary art and architecture as well. Her current research addresses the international, cultural exchange manifest in the art and architecture of Denmark ca. 1550-1650, analyzing the flows of artisans, craft, technology, and materials that brought about the ephemeral equipment of festivals and the long-lasting buildings, painting and sculpture of the time.

## Morning session

**Patricia Falguières** is Professor at the School for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS), Paris. She has published numerous essays on Renaissance Philosophy and Art, Classifications, Encyclopedias, Indexes and the Birth of the Museum in modern Europe (*Les Chambres des merveilles*, Paris, Bayard, 2003), Mannerism (*Le Maniérisme: Une avant-garde au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, Gallimard, 2004). She has published the French Edition of Ernst Kris, *Le style rustique. L'emploi du moulage d'après nature chez Wenzel Jamnitzer et Bernard Palissy* (Paris, Macula, 2005), and Julius von Schlosser's classic, *Les cabinets d'art et de merveilles de la renaissance tardive* (Macula, 2012). Her current research focuses on Renaissance Technè, the inclusion of Artistic Practices in the Aristotelian Order of Knowing and Making, and Architectural Theory. She set up and co-directed the international symposium «The Art Industry. Gottfried Semper, Architecture and Anthropology in 19th Century Europe». At the same time she regularly contributes articles and essays in the field of Contemporary Art.

## Afternoon session

**Valérie Hayaert** is Honorary Researcher at the Center for the Study of the Renaissance / University of Warwick and teaches the Cultural History of Law via images at the University of Versailles Saint Quentin-en Yvelines (Paris Saclay), France. A historian and humanist researcher of the early modern European tradition, her current project is intended as a contribution to a survey about European legal symbolism over the course of the early modern period. Her new book is entitled *Lady Justice : An Anatomy of Allegory*, Edinburgh University Press, 2023.

## Afternoon session

**Carolin Behrmann** is professor for Early Modern Art History at the Ruhr-University Bochum since 2021. Her work has expanded multiple pictorial dimensions challenging the notion of law's insularity to understand how visuality and aesthetic experience actively take part in and shape juridical normativity, involving form, perception, action, and knowledge. These interests came to fruition as a project entitled "The Nomos of Images. Manifestation and Iconology of Law" (2014-2019), a project conducted at the Max Planck Institute for Art History in Florence. She has collaborated on several exhibition projects such as : "Moïse. Figures d'un Prophète" at the Musée d'Art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, Paris, "The Art of Law", at the Musea Brugge, and the exhibition "Call for Justice", Hof van Busleyden, Mechelen. Carolin Behrmann is currently leading in Bochum the research project "Normative Image Spaces: Virtual and Imaginary Dynamics of Epistemic Topologies". Her publications include *Tyrann und Märtyrer. Bild und Ideengeschichte des Rechts um 1600* (2015), *Images of Shame. Infamy, Defamation and the Ethics of oeconomia* (2016), *Nomoi of Images. Common Sense and Visual Norms* (forthcoming, 2025).

## Morning session

**Marie Theres Stauffer** is director of the department of art history and musicology and teaches the history of architecture and urbanism at the University of Geneva. She has published on topics of the 20th century, such as *Figurationen des Utopischen. Theoretische Projekte von Superstudio und Archizoom* (Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2008), or *Ensembles urbaines Alfred Genève. Alfred Bertrand* (with Raphaël Nussbaumer, Infoлио 2023). A second focus is on the architecture of the 17th/18th century, including her habilitation thesis *Spiegelung und Raum. Semantische Perspektiven* (University of Bern, 2008), as well as *Perceptual machines* (ed. with Stefan Kristensen, Boehlau 2016). She has taught at the Universities of Konstanz, Bern, Zurich and at the ETH Zurich. Her research has been awarded the Prix Jubilé of the SAGW (2004) and the Swiss Art Award of the Federal Office of Culture (2006), among others, and she has also received fellowships from the Max Planck Society and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

## Afternoon session

Since 2003, **Sabine Frommel** has been Director of Studies at the Renaissance Art History Chair at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Sorbonne). Her doctoral thesis on the architectural work of Sebastiano Serlio, defended in Marburg in 1995, was subsequently published in three languages. In 2001, she obtained an Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches from the Université Paris IV (Sorbonne) with a project on artistic exchanges between France and Italy in the modern era.

Visiting professor at the University of Bologna, corresponding member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts de Paris, lecturer at the École du Louvre, Sabine Frommel is the author of *Giuliano da Sangallo. Architekt der Renaissance. Leben und Werk* (2014) and *Peindre l'architecture pendant la Renaissance* (20220). She has co-authored and edited several publications, including: *Leonardo da Vinci and architecture* (2019); *Forma Ideale durante il Rinascimento* (2022) and *Suspendre l'éphémère: l'art de la fête en Europe à l'Époque moderne* (2024).



# **Painting in the Streets: The Tensions of the Frescoed Façade**

**Painted façade decoration was difficult to square with Italian Renaissance ideals of architectural decorum and urban planning. Visual and textual depictions of ideal cities of the era pointedly lacked what Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo (1584) memorably called “painting in the streets”, a kind of ornamentation that nonetheless flourished in fifteenth-through seventeenth-century Italy. Large-scale painted façade programs could mimic ephemeral architectural ornament like ceremonial textiles or theatrical apparatus; interior decoration like murals; or even ancient relief or sculptural fragments. But as it became more ubiquitous, façade painting took on its own generic qualities. This paper thus considers the ways in which painted façades existed in a heuristic in-between, bypassing certain norms and meeting others.**

**Anna Swartwood House** is an art historian (Ph.D., Princeton 2011) whose research focuses on Renaissance cross-culturalism, the art of Venice 1400-1600, artists' biographies, and the reception of art. Currently she serves as Associate Professor of art history in the School of Visual Design at the University of South Carolina. Her book *Antonello da Messina and the History of Art* (2025) was supported by a Samuel H. Kress Fellowship in Art History from the Renaissance Society of America. Research for her second book, on the frescoed façade in Cinquecento Venice and the Veneto, is supported by the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, which awarded her the Henry A. Millon Award in Art and Architectural History.



## **“Sfaccettature” : On the Unity and Heterogeneity of Painted Façades in Italy**

**Can one truly consider “painted façades in Italy” as a coherent phenomenon? While the non-architectural ornamentation of Italian façades follows a clearly defined chronology – a sign of widespread enthusiasm for this artistic practice – an in-depth analysis of cases across the Peninsula’s cities reveals a more complex reality. In fact, the phenomenon is far more heterogeneous than one might expect, despite the common tendency to imagine a reality marked by a supposed (and ‘canonical’) bipolarity: on one hand, Rome with its monochrome, antiquarian façades; on the other, Venice with its polychromy and ‘poetics’ of the Antique. A careful examination of formal and iconographic paradigms – always influenced by specific socio-political factors – allows us to sketch a cartography that deconstructs this “bipolarity,” revealing, in contrast, the polyhedral nature of the phenomenon of painted façades in Italy between the end of the 15th century and the 1620s.**

**Antonella Fenech** is a researcher at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Centre André-Chastel (Paris). She has been a fellow at the Académie de France and the École Française in Rome, as well as at the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America at Columbia University. Her research on early modern art in Italy explores artistic and visual productions in their political (e.g., *Giorgio Vasari: La fabrique de l’allégorie*, 2011; *Histoire de Florence par la peinture*, 2012) and cultural dimensions (*Corps troublants: Images et imaginaires dans la première modernité*, co-edited with Francesca Alberti, forthcoming). Her recent work focuses on pre-sportive and ludic practices in images and societies in early modern Europe. She is currently writing a new book, *Corps à contre-sens: Pour une iconologie de la « verticalité négative »*, which explores the modalities, functions, expressions, and both the semantic and empathic dimensions of the human body turned upside down.



# Decorative scratches: Sgraffito in Italy Before and After Vasari

In the 26th chapter of the *Introduzione alle tre arti del disegno*, which is prefixed to his famous *Vite*, Giorgio Vasari describes how sgraffito decorations are created, what they are used for and how durable they are – not least in Vasari's own interest, as he was active in this field. At that time, the technique had already been around in Florence for about 150 years; there are no earlier examples in any other Italian city. There are two different theories about its origin: it was either imported from the Almohad Empire or invented locally based on the properties of the material. What is certain is that sgraffito decorations were intended to adorn and mark important buildings; the list of these is correspondingly long: It ranges from Santa Croce, Santa Maria Novella, and the Palazzo della Mercanzia to the palaces of the Rucellai, Medici, Strozzi and Capponi, and the Palazzo della Signoria. Especially in the case of private palaces, the 'facciata' is not only to be interpreted as the 'faccia' of the building, but also – in a figurative sense – of the owner. With regard to the architecture itself, the question arises as to the relationship between two- and three-dimensional elements, where they compete and where they complement each other. The contribution traces the history of Florentine sgraffito, discusses the origin of the technique and examines the sources dating from before Vasari. For this, Andreas Huth also draws on his own research on preserved façades and practical experiments.

**Andreas Huth** studied conservation and art history in Berlin and Potsdam and worked as a freelance conservator of wall paintings and wall decoration. In 2016, he received his PhD from the Freie Universität Berlin with a thesis on Florentine sgraffito decorations; he then worked at the Technical University of Berlin. In 2023, he was appointed to the professorship for art history with a special focus on artistic techniques at the University of Bamberg.



**Vladislava Říhová**  
(Univerzita Pardubice)**Zdeňka Míchalová**  
(Univerzita Pardubice)

## Renaissance Façade Decorations in Bohemian and Moravian Towns

**Pavel Waisser** studied art history at the Faculty of Arts at Palacký University in Olomouc (1998–2004) and did his doctoral studies at the same department (2004–2011). Since 2007, he has worked in this department on a research project; since 2012, he has been an assistant professor. His scholarly work deals with aspects of Renaissance art and culture in general, specialising in architectural surface decorations (sgraffito, stucco, wall painting, terracotta, etc.) and graphic arts, with a focus on early modern conceptual thinking, as well as technical aspects and crafts in circumstances of heritage science.

**Vladislava Říhová** studied art history at Palacký University in Olomouc (PhD, 2008). She is a researcher and lecturer at the Department of Humanities, Faculty of Restoration, University of Pardubice. Her research focuses on Renaissance art and architecture and 20th-century art in a public space. She is the author of the monograph dedicated to the Renaissance visual culture in Moravská Třebová in Moravia (2011). In 2022, she co-authored a publication on Renaissance and mannerist stucco works in the Czech Republic. She is an expert in researching archival sources and technical art history.

**Zdeňka Míchalová** studied art history at Masaryk University in Brno (PhD, 2017). She is the head of the Department of Humanities, Faculty of Restoration, University of Pardubice. Her research concentrates on art patronage, Renaissance and Reformation visual culture, art and architecture in early modern urban settlements and technical art history. She has published a monograph dedicated to the Renaissance visual culture in Telč and Slavonice in Moravia (2020). She has edited and co-authored a monograph on a unique Renaissance stucco epitaph of the Hodějovský family in Český Rudolec (2021).

**In the Czech Republic, an extensive fund of façade decorations in the technique of sgraffito and wall paintings, mostly executed in the 16th century, has been preserved and presented, which has few analogues in the Central European context. This is naturally related to the phenomenon's popularity at the time and to the preferences of state monument care in Czechoslovakia after 1948. The most valuable houses with figural scenes have been preserved in the centres of historic towns, which were declared so-called "urban heritage reserves" from the early 1950s onwards. Between the 1960s and 1980s, 18th and 19th century façade modifications were removed in favour of older stratigraphic layers. Newly uncovered decorations were restored and reconstructed, rarely presented analytically. The paper is devoted to four urban heritage reserves within the present borders of the Czech Republic. The specific situation of the capital of the Czech Republic, Prague, cannot be outlined in a short summary paper, so we will focus on the façades of the houses within those heritage sites whose stock is best preserved and whose previous research has also provided the basis for a more comprehensive interpretation. At the same time, these sites had different legal status, significance, linguistic and religious backgrounds in the 16th century. Thus, a set of painted façades from the early 16th century has been preserved in the residential town of the House of Pernštejn in Pardubice; the façades of ten houses dating from the 40s to 80s of the 16th century in the serf town Slavonice belonging to the Lords of Hradec are uniquely preserved in form. Similarly, Prachatice, an important trading centre on the Salt Route (serf town of the House of Rožmberk), has façades from the second half of the 16th century with wall paintings and sgraffiti. The case study will be completed by Tábor (a royal town) with a strong Hussite tradition, with preserved or at least documented façades or their relics from the second half of the 15th century to the last third of the 16th century.**



# Presence and Representation: Political Display on Painted Façades in the Old Swiss Confederacy

The study of painted façades in the Old Swiss Confederacy provides an opportunity to explore the notions of representation and performativity. These two notions don't just have an operative meaning. Representation is not simply a delegation of power, but that it constitutes a *presentia in absentia*, materialising in symbolic and ritual practices that structure public space and affirm social order.

In this context, painted façades play a central role as performative media of power. The images and emblems found on public buildings and squares are not mere ornaments, but tools for making authority visible and legitimizing it. These iconographic representations – wall paintings, coats of arms, inscriptions, and so on – actively contribute to the staging of the political and social order. They serve as a reminder of the hierarchy and interdependence of urban players, while affirming the continuity of power across time and space. These elements can therefore also be the target of dissension and criticism.

In a context where the public space is a place for asserting authority and disseminating political messages, these images embody a political and civic discourse aimed at both those in power and those being governed. They do not simply express an established order, but play a full part in its construction and stabilization by reinforcing its anchorage in the collective imagination. This study highlights the role played by painted façades in communicating power, structuring urban society and inscribing authority in the visual memory of the cities of the Old Swiss Confederacy.

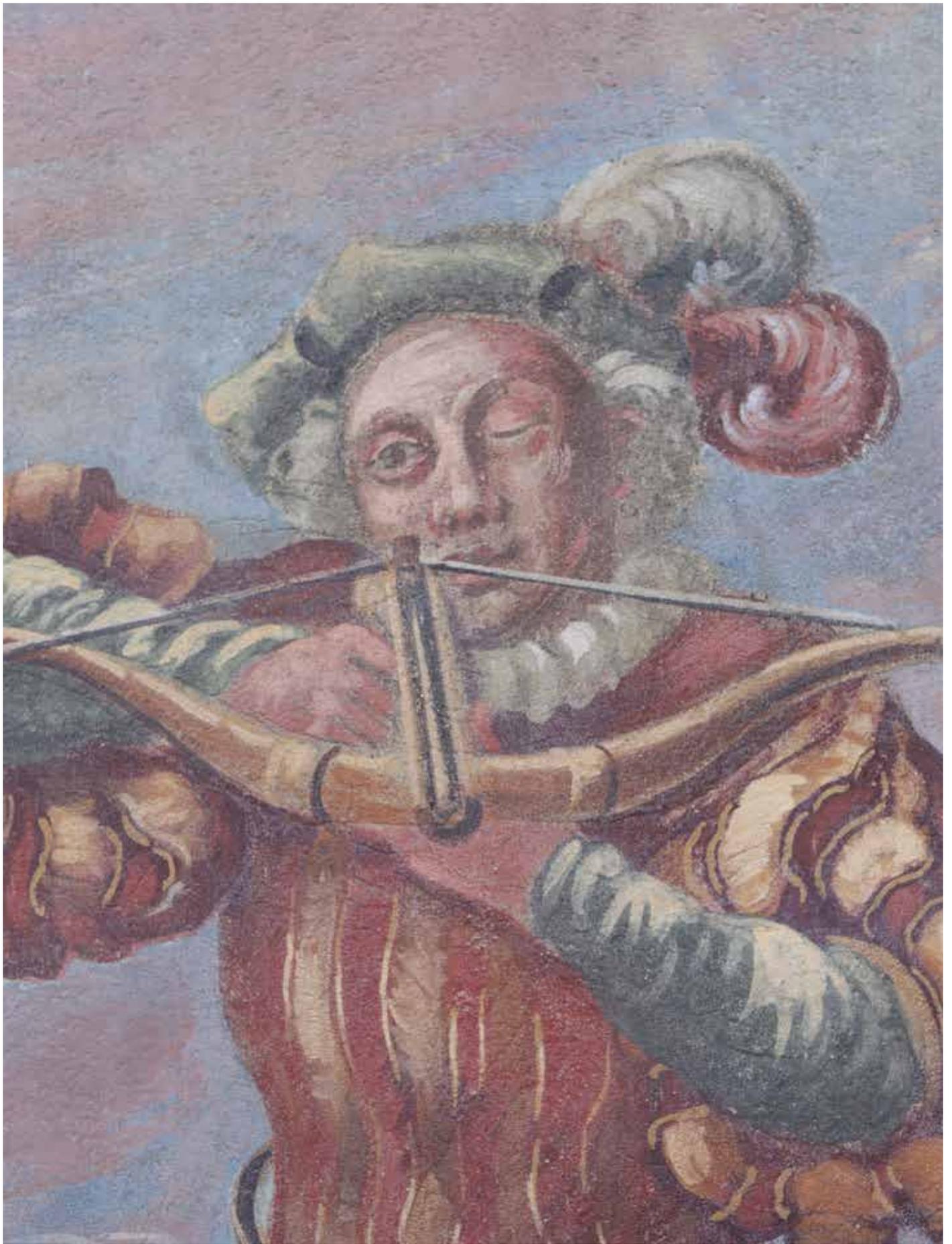
Luca Cereghetti is a doctoral student in History at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) as part of the project *La ville ornée. Pour une histoire des façades peintes à l'époque moderne (Suisse/Europe)*. After gaining a Master's degree in General History and Philosophy and a teaching diploma for secondary schools, he is currently writing a thesis on the social, political and legal issues surrounding painted public façades in the former Swiss Confederation, under the supervision of Professor Jérémie Koering, head of the Modern Art History department, and Professor Claire Gantet, head of the Modern History department. He is interested in heritage history and cultural transfers, as well as material history.



# Painted Clock Façades: Time and Space

**Among the broader phenomenon of painted façades, the decoration of clock dials occupies a position both central and distinctive. These artworks, also executed by promising young talents and local painters, share a common purpose: to adorn the city. While the most elaborate and large-scale examples are found primarily in Northern Italy, Switzerland, and Southern Germany, these painted clock façades extend across Europe, spanning from the late 14th to the late 18th century, with their artistic pinnacle reached between 1450 and 1650. Yet, painted clock façades are distinguished by their unique characteristics. They are situated exclusively in highly symbolic public spaces—such as town halls, towers, and other civic landmarks—where they occupy strategic locations within the urban fabric. These façades not only contribute to the urban spectacle but also shape the experience of the city's rhythms, embodying a temporal dimension that mirrors the life of the city. Their purpose is to symbolize the continuity and endurance of civic institutions, projecting an image of stability amidst the inevitable passage of time. While these artworks inevitably fade, they are continually renewed. In this sense, the painted clock façade functions as a bridge, linking the microcosm of urban life with the vast expanse of the macrocosm, aligning the temporal rhythms of the city with the immutable celestial cycles that govern the universe.**

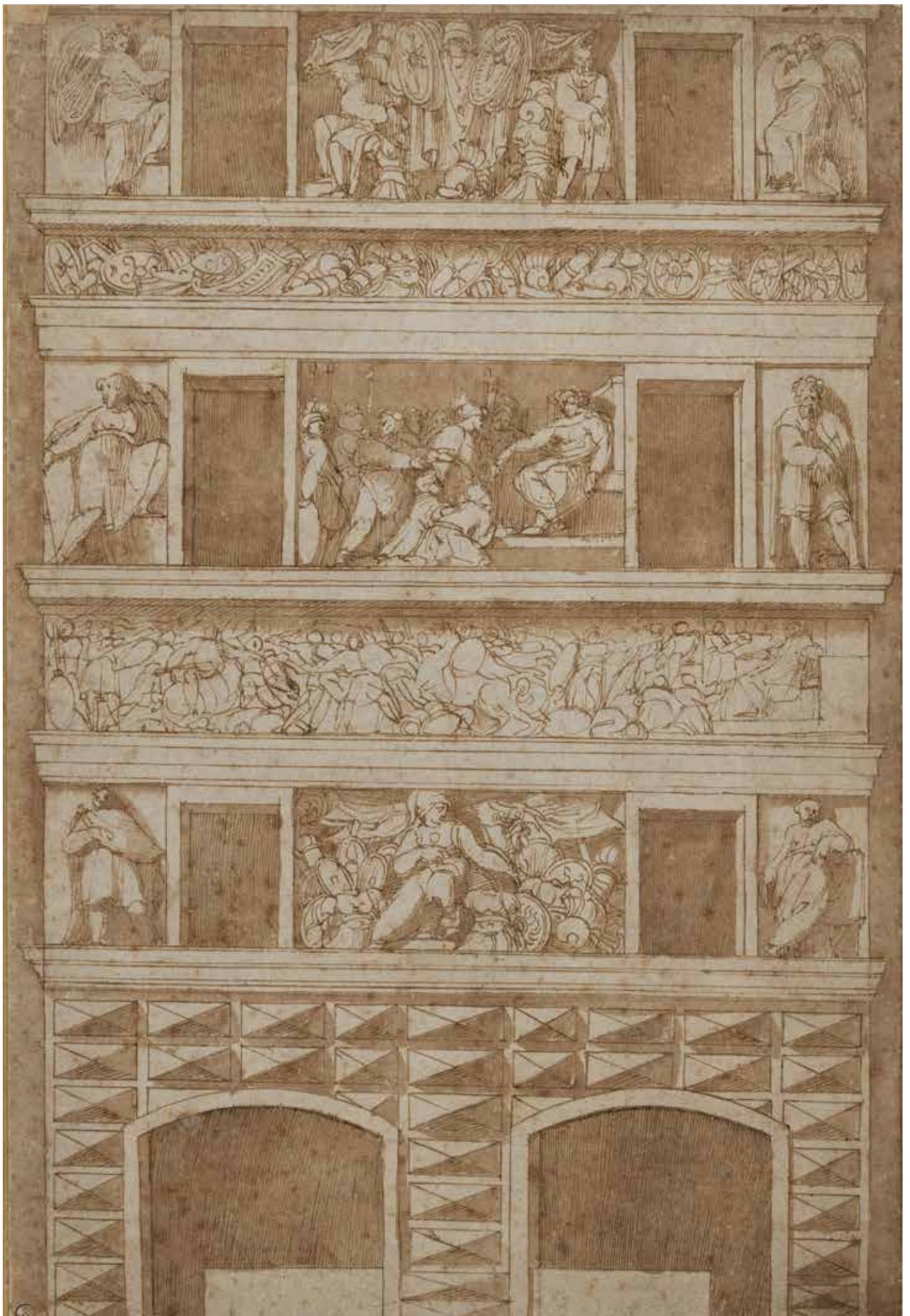
**Florian Métral** earned his Ph.D. in art history from Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne in 2017 and has been a junior professor at the CNRS, affiliated with the Centre André-Chastel, since 2024. His research explores representations of the cosmos in the early modern period, with a particular focus on the intersections of imagery, belief systems, and knowledge. His work examines topics such as the iconography of creation, the ornamentation of public clocks, and depictions of celestial phenomena. From 2021 to 2024, he was a postdoctoral researcher on *La ville ornée* project.



# Regardless of Where You Are: Vision and Counter-Vision in Painted Façades (A Motif Study)

Among the images chosen by Nicholas of Cusa in *De visione Dei sive de icona* (1453) to prove divine omnivoyance, “the one of the archer in the forum of Nuremberg” is particularly renowned through its variations in graphic arts, in painting as well as in photography. Such longevity goes hand in hand with multiple meanings. At its focal point, the shooter’s arrow is the indexical vector of a myriad of theological, optical, perspective-related, and even erotic meanings. Anyone wishing to understand this nexus must scrupulously return to the text. Initially anchored in the concreteness of the place, architecturally conditioned, the *figura cuncta videntis* conceals prior meanings that iconology must study with analytical acuity. Ultimately, it is a matter of hypostasizing a place, of calling into question the dynamism of a vector image, heightened by its public exhibition, articulated as it is in the urban tissue: the sentient community of the *fratres* (according to Nicholas of Cusa), the *panopticon* (according to Bentham), the *Öffentlichkeit* (according to Habermas). It is surely no coincidence that the painted façade, as a pan-European artistic phenomenon, was the favored setting for this apotropaic figure. But in what semiotic key should it be read? How does the beholder’s adherence to the thing seen occur politically? Through which exchange of gazes (intromissive and extromissive) should one artistically grasp the performativity of this image? This presentation seeks to address these questions through previously overlooked case studies in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy.

**Dominic-Alain Boariu** studied Fine Arts in Romania, Belgium, and France. He defended in 2015 at the University of Fribourg his PhD thesis in Art History on the post-revolutionary iconography of decapitation, which was published as *Roi et régicide. Satire, peinture et politique sous la Monarchie de Juillet* (2024). His second book, *Rex ex machina*, is being finalized and deals with the links between monarchy and “photocracy” in the mid-nineteenth century. He is currently a Swiss National Science Foundation senior researcher at the University of Fribourg and part of the project *La ville ornée*.



# “The True Painter of Ancient Things”: Remembering Polidoro’s All’Antica Dialect in Frescoed Façade Design

While the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century inventories and itineraries recounting Rome’s frescoed façades mention myriad makers’ names, Polidoro da Caravaggio consistently emerges as a core creator. In addition to his contributions to increasingly dynamic façades, Polidoro was also crucial to the development and dissemination of an *all’antica* visual lexicon thanks to both his extensive façade work and his tireless study of antiquity that garnered him the accolade of “the true painter of ancient things” in Gian Paolo Lomazzo’s *Idea del tempio della pittura* (1590). This pairing placed the Lombard transplant in a powerful position as he was both a student and creator of antiquity, resulting in the production of compositional elements comprising their own *all’antica* dialect that recalled yet stood distinct from the ancient fragments scattered around the city. This paper examines this dialect as it manifested in Polidoro’s façade designs via the lens of *rimembrare*, an originally Petrarchan notion that takes on new meaning when extended to Rome and Polidoro’s practice: just as the city was being reassembled, remodeled, and rearticulated in various acts of *renovatio*, so too were antique fragments foundational for Polidoro’s innovative façade programs. Accordingly, this contribution investigates how fragments preserved in drawing and print must have expanded the period’s spread of Polidoro’s *all’antica* visual dialect while simultaneously aiding us today in reassembling lost components of these slowly decaying faces. At the same time, this process of re-membling will be positioned as an aid to making sense of some of the few physical fragments that survive, specifically those removed in the 1630s from a dwelling in the piazza Madama that, it will be argued, can be reunited from Polidoro’s drawings. The hope in reassembling these fragments is to encourage enhanced appreciation for both Polidoro’s efforts as façade frescoist and new facets of a slowly vanishing tradition to reenter the scholarly spotlight.

Alexis Culotta serves on the art history faculty at Tulane University and investigates how the tensions of competition, collaboration, and innovation drove artistic and architectural practice in early modern Rome. Her first book, *Tracing the Visual Language of Raphael’s Circle to 1527* (Brill, 2020), explored these intersections and in turn launched her collaborative work on the Artistic Network Toolkit (ANT), funded by an NEH Phase II Digital Humanities Advancement Grant. Her second book, *The Frescoed Façade in Renaissance Roman Visual Culture* (Amsterdam University Press, 2025), investigates the breadth and implications of decorated façade in Rome between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In addition to the NEH, her work has been supported by the American Academy in Rome, the Kress Foundation, the Renaissance Society of America, the Italian Art Society, and the New Foundation for Art History.



# Exploring Mythology and Antiquity on Swiss Renaissance Façades: Narration and Patronage in the 16th-Century

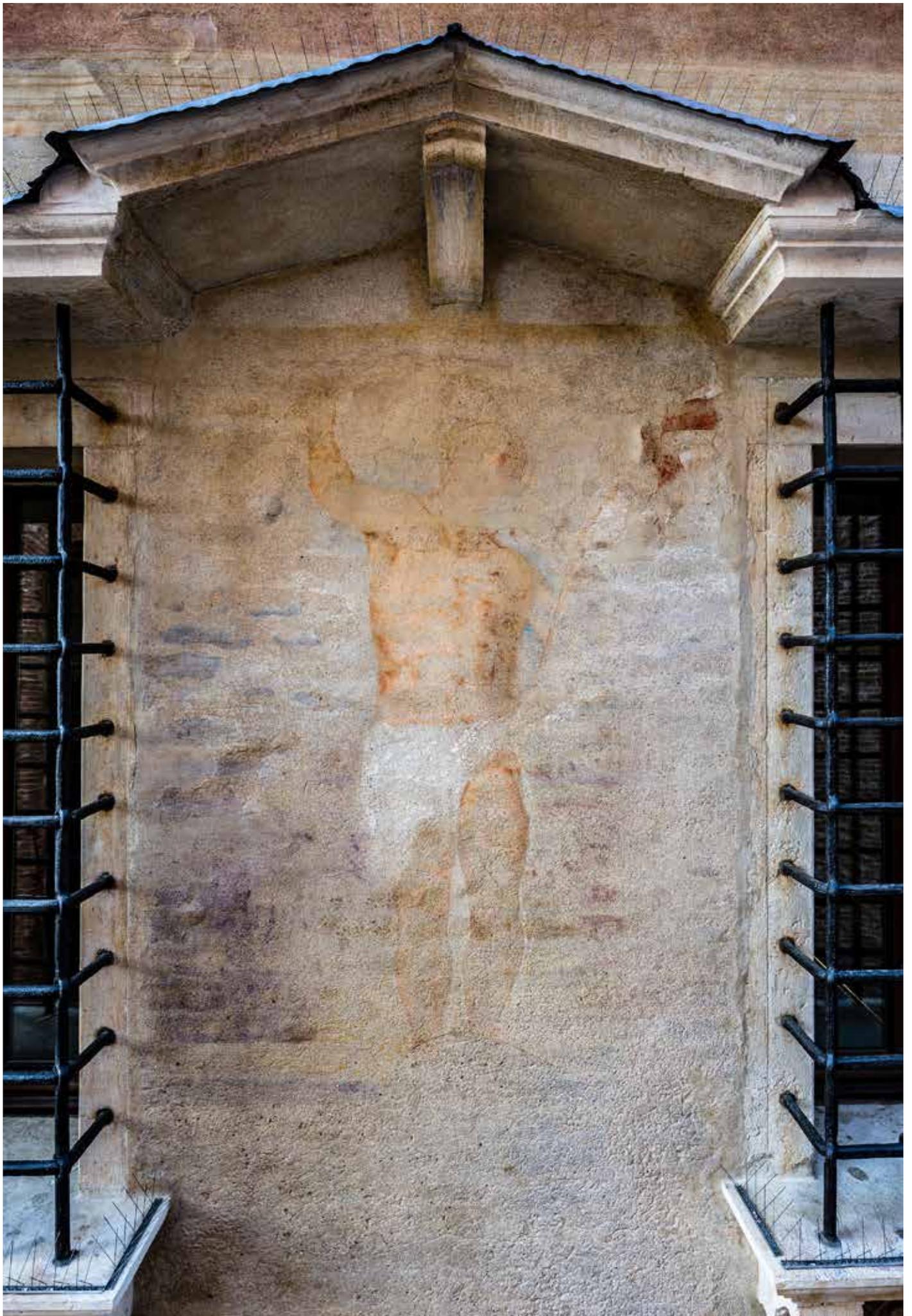
**Two significant Swiss façades serve as the backdrop for rich historical and artistic narratives: the Haus zum Ritter in Schaffhausen and the Haus zum Weissen Adler in Stein am Rhein.**

**The Haus zum Ritter, dating back to 1492, received lavish decorations around 1570 under the patronage of Knight Hans von Waldkirch. The façade, created by Tobias Stimmer, is noteworthy for its integration of Renaissance aesthetics within a Gothic framework and the use of a mixed technique of *buon fresco* and *fresco secco*. The iconographic program, highlighting chivalric virtues through mythological themes, reflects the humanist ideals of the time and invites comparisons with other façades featuring mythological episodes.**

**At the Haus zum Weissen Adler, the narrative leans more towards allegorical and virtuous representations commissioned by Sigmund Flar, a former mayor of Constance who moved to Stein am Rhein due to strong confederal convictions. The iconographic program, implemented by Thomas Schmid around 1520, features complex allegorical figures such as Veritas and Iustitia. The way these virtues were artistically represented to serve Flar's intentions will be compared with other façades adorned with virtues and allegories, exploring thematic treatments and societal messages they convey.**

**This comparative study aims to elucidate the artistic, cultural, and political dialogues these façades generate, offering an insight into the broader interaction of ornamentation in public spaces, patronage, and ideologies during the 16th century.**

**Sandes Dindar** is currently in her fourth year of doctoral studies under the supervision of Professor Jérémie Koering, head of the Art History Department at the University of Fribourg. After a master's degree in medieval art history focusing on the representation of the Crusades in the *Yates Thompson 12* under the supervision of Professor Michele Bacci and with the support of the CNRS Institute for Research and History of Texts, she became involved in the FNS project titled *La Ville Ornée* as part of a team of art historians and a historian. Her doctoral work focuses on the ornaments and motifs of Swiss urban painted façades from the 16th and 17th centuries, with particular attention to identification, circulation, and the influences at play.



**Chiara Voltarel**  
(independent researcher, Treviso)

# Titian as a Young Fresco Painter: The Façade of the “Scuola del Santissimo” in Treviso Between Antiquarian Decoration and the Modern manner

**Rossella Riscica (1978)** Architect, MSc in Economics and Techniques for the Conservation of Architectural and Environmental Heritage from the University of Nova Gorica. Specialized in conservation planning, particularly of decorated surfaces, she has overseen major fresco restoration projects, including those of Pozzoserrato, Dorigny, and Titian. As an independent researcher, she has been involved in university teaching, professional training conferences, and fresco workshops. She has authored several publications, many with Chiara Voltarel, on frescoed façades, including *Treviso Urbs Picta: Frescoed Façades of the City from the 13th to the 21st Century* (Ita 2017–Eng 2018, co-editor), *Tra mito e devozione nel Rinascimento. La riscoperta degli affreschi di Casa Secco a Treviso* (2022), *Allegorie e colore: il restauro degli affreschi di Pozzoserrato sulla facciata di Palazzo Zignoli a Treviso* (2017).

**Chiara Voltarel**, art historian, independent researcher, and journalist, she graduated in Conservation of Cultural Heritage from the University of Udine. She has conducted several historical-artistic studies and has been researching frescoed façades for years. Among her many publications, she co-edited, with Rossella Riscica, the book *Treviso Urbs Picta: Frescoed façades of the city from the 13th to the 21st century* (Ita 2017–Eng 2018), which received the Gambrinus “Giuseppe Mazzotti” Special Prize. She also authored the essay *Dipingere le facciate. Trento e le città del Venetoin Trento città dipinta. I decori murali esterni dal Medioevo ai giorni nostri* (2022). Since 2004, she has collaborated with *Il Gazzettino* and since 2020, she has been the director and co-founder of the scientific journal *FRAGMENTA Studi trevigiani di scienze storico-artistiche e archeologiche*.

**In 2021, a significant restoration effort enabled the recovery of traces of a fresco depicting the Risen Christ, painted by the renowned Titian Vecellio in 1517 on the façade of the “Scuola del Santissimo Sacramento” in Treviso. This study began with the review of payments made to the master himself and the craftsmen involved in the fresco’s creation. This research provides new insights, in the context of the Venetian area, of the activity of the young Titian as a fresco painter. This case offers an opportunity for an in-depth analysis of the two main types of façade decoration that were prevalent during the Renaissance: first, the “antiquarian manner”, which was particularly successful in Treviso, and then the “modern manner”, characterized by grand figures, predominantly emerged with Giorgione, and consequently embraced by his pupil, Titian. At the “Scuola del Santissimo Sacramento”, the master depicted a powerful figure surrounded by the existing frame of refined friezes effectively creating a true “jewel façade”. Unfortunately, the surviving pictorial evidence is limited, and this remains the last and only autograph façade fresco by Titian still preserved in its original location. Within this context, it is highly relevant to investigate the circumstances that brought the young Titian to Treviso, at a time when he had just been appointed official painter of the “Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia”. This study also explores the fresco’s different restorations, including interventions by notable artists. Particular attention is given to the most recent restoration which has provided valuable insights into the various compositional phases of this remarkable façade.**



# The Big Sgraffito House in Krems

**At the crossroads of Altangasse and Margarethenstraße in Krems at the Danube stands the so-called “Grosse Sgraffitihaus”. Both paths lead directly from the St Vitus parish church up to the Gozzoburg and the High Market. An important trade route linking Italy with Central and Northern Europe ran through Krems as early as the Middle Ages. But Krems was not only a trading centre for material goods, but also a negotiation centre for ideas. In the 16th century, Krems was a prosperous town and a centre of the Reformation. By the end of the century almost the entire population was reformed.**

**The merchant, town councillor Hans Drackh bought three neighbouring buildings on Margarethenstraße, put them together and renovated them. Probably in 1561, when Hans Drackh became town judge, he commissioned the extensive façade paintings. The trapezoid-shaped «Grosse Sgraffitihaus», which is exposed on three sides, features sgraffiti from a wide range of themes: Old Testament scenes, scenes from Roman and Greek mythology, allegories, fables and scenes from everyday life.**

**When the sgraffiti in St Margheretenstrasse was discovered in 1927, it sparked great enthusiasm and research into the technique, patrons, artists and sources. Since then, these research findings have been regularly repeated, but not analysed in detail. This is an invitation to take a closer look at the collaboration between patrons and painters: What values did the patron want to convey? What sources have been used? How did the painter lay out the individual scenes on this complex architecture? And how does the overall picture fit into the cityscape?**

**Angela Kuratli** is a master's student in art and contemporary history at the University of Fribourg. After training as a graphic designer, she worked in Berlin, Zurich and St.Gallen. She became a specialist in signage and exhibition design. She is currently completing her master's thesis on *The Angels Rolling Up the Heavens* under the supervision of Prof. Michele Bacci.

## Männliche Kühnheit.



Porfenna, ein König in Tusciem, bedrängte die Stadt Rom mit Heeresmacht. Da gieng ein Römer Mucius genant das Vaterland zu befreien, hinaus und Schlich an des Königs Gezelt / ihn zu erschrecken. Der König sah mit seinem Kanzler Bei einem Feuer, und weil er ein Kriegsman war, trug er einen schlechten Harnisch, Der Kanzler aber einen schönen Mantel. So erstach Mucius den Kanzler statt Des Königs. Als er nun ergriffen ward, legte er, zu zeigen daß der Schmerz Ueber einen kühnen Mann nichts vermöge, seine rechte Hand ins Feuer -

# **Scaevola Meets Solomon: Understanding the Principles of Good Government Through the Murals of Ulm's City Hall**

**One of the most important iconographic programmes devoted to Good and Bad Government in imperial cities unfolds on the façades of Ulm's city hall. Roman heroes and biblical characters, allegorical figures and symbolic animals make the virtues that should guide the city Council visible to everyone while also warning against the vices from which the authorities must protect themselves.**

**This paper retraces the origins of the city hall's murals and examines how they are an expression of the civic ethos of a free imperial city whose Council faced a dual challenge in the 1540s: to assert the political legitimacy of a collective entity consisting of the meliores among the citizens on one hand, and to justify the city's adoption of the Reformed faith, ratified by a vote of the guilds in November 1530, on the other hand.**

**What is the meaning of the Judgement of Solomon, the sacrifice of Mucius Scaevola or the spider of Anacharsis in the context of a city hall's façade? What can be learned about the magistrates' self-perception by looking at these images and what message did the paintings convey to spectators from within and from outside the city? How do the images reflect Ulm's political institutions and the rites that ensured the continuity of power and authority in the city? I will attempt to provide some answers to these questions to understand why the murals on the city hall's façades can be seen as performative images.**

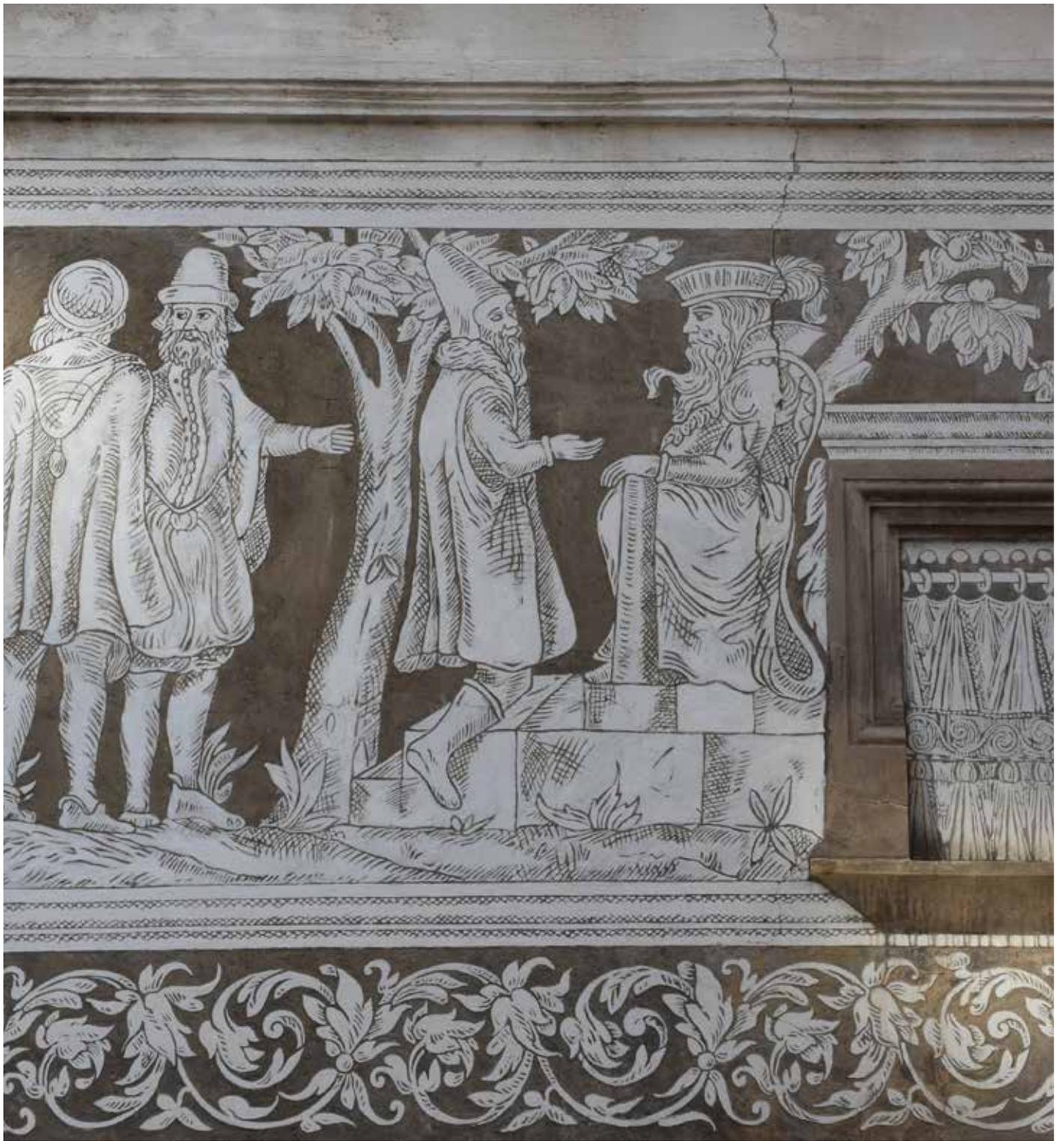
**Fabrice Flückiger** is head of the History department at Schwabe Verlag in Basel and an associate member of the Institute of History at the University of Bern. In 2016, he obtained a PhD in Early Modern History at the University of Neuchâtel: his thesis, *Dire le vrai. Une histoire de la dispute religieuse au début du XVIe siècle*, focuses on political aspects of religious disputes in the Early Swiss Reformation and was published in 2018. Fabrice Flückiger was also part of the team who edited and translated Wilhelm Gumpfenberg's *Atlas Marianus (1657-1659)* in 2014/2015. He is currently working on representations of Good Government in Protestant cities of the Holy Roman Empire and the Old Swiss Confederacy.



# Salomon and the Queen of Sheba: A Façade-Painting Competition in Early 17th-Century Augsburg and the Secret of the Wall, that Disappeared

Dr. **Susan Tipton** Art Historian. Independent Scholar. Researcher. Museum and Exhibition Curator. Studied Art History, History, Archaeology and Literatur at the Universities of Freiburg im Breisgau, FU Berlin and LMU München. Dissertation: 1994 Ludwigs-Maximilians-Universität München: *'Res publica bene ordinata' – Regentenspiegel und Bilder vom Guten Regiment. Rathausdekorationen in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Hildesheim 1996); 1996–1999 Curatorial Assistant at the Staatliche Museen Kassel; Co-Curator of the exhibitio: *Katharina die Große*, Museum Fridericianum Kassel; 1999–2001 Collaborator at the Bayerischen Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Munich; 2001–2004 Exhibition Coordinator: The Detroit Institute of Arts, MI/U.S.A. for the exhibition *The Medici, Michelangelo and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*; 2004–2006 Research Grant Gerda-Henkel Stiftung Düsseldorf: *The Correspondance of Elector Palatine Johann Willhelm von der Pfalz and his collections in Düsseldorf*; 2006–2010 Research project: *Paintings for Diplomats from Carlevarijs to Canaletto: Diplomatic ceremonial in 17th and 18th century Europe in contemporary sources and painting*; 2010–2014 Researcher at Trier University in the EU-Project *artifex: Redefining Boundaries: Artistic training by the guilds in Central Europe up to the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire*; 2015–2019 Assistant at the *Corpus der Barocken Deckenmalerei in Deutschland*, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Ludwig-Maximilians Universität München. Since 2019: Independent Researcher for the *New Hollstein German: Lucas and Wolfgang Killian*, ed. by Hans-Martin Kaulbach, Sound & Vision, Rotterdam (in print). Finished research projects: New sources on the interior decoration of the Augsburg Townhall. Cosmas Damian Asams ephemeral decorations for Max Emanuel and Karl Albrecht of Bavaria. *'Small people on large staircases'. The perception and representation of people with 'dwarfism' in 18th century painting.*

**This paper is a case study on the rare event of a public competition for a mural painting or fresco on a lost wall or "façade" in early 17th century Augsburg. In the 16th and early 17th century, the imperial city of Augsburg was praised by for its colorful murals on public and private buildings by connoisseurs and artists such as Philipp Hainhofer (1578 – Augsburg – 1647) and Joachim von Sandrart (Frankfurt am Main 1606 – 1688 Nuremberg). But what happened, when the ambitious public building project launched by the city's burgomasters and organized by city architect Elias Holl (1573 – Augsburg – 1646) changed the outward appearance of public buildings? Did mural painting suddenly become "out of fashion"? Surprisingly, it did not. There were creative alternatives. City officials opened a public competition for a mural – quite a singular case and rarely documented in Early Modern façade painting – and invited three renowned artists to participate: Munich court painter Peter Candid (Bruges ca. 1548–1628 Munich), Johann Rottenhammer (Munich 1564–1625 Augsburg), who had returned from Venice in 1606, and Augsburg city painter Johann Matthias Kager (Munich 1575–1635 Augsburg). Lost in the late 18th century, the fresco project is nevertheless well documented in a variety of contemporary sources. The focus will be put on the impressive presentation drawing for the fresco by Kager, that won the competition: over 1.50 m wide and with a provenance from Augsburg it is today preserved at the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung in Munich. Its detailed analysis will shed more light on the origins of the pictorial idea and illusionistic architecture of the painted prospect, which has also been documented in an engraving, and – according to eyewitness reports – was somehow deteriorated but still visible by the end of the 18th century. Moreover, some only recently discovered floor plans and cross sections from the early 19th century, make it possible to reconstruct the wall, that had once exclusively been erected to hold this particular fresco and only disappeared when the building ensemble was demolished around 1880.**



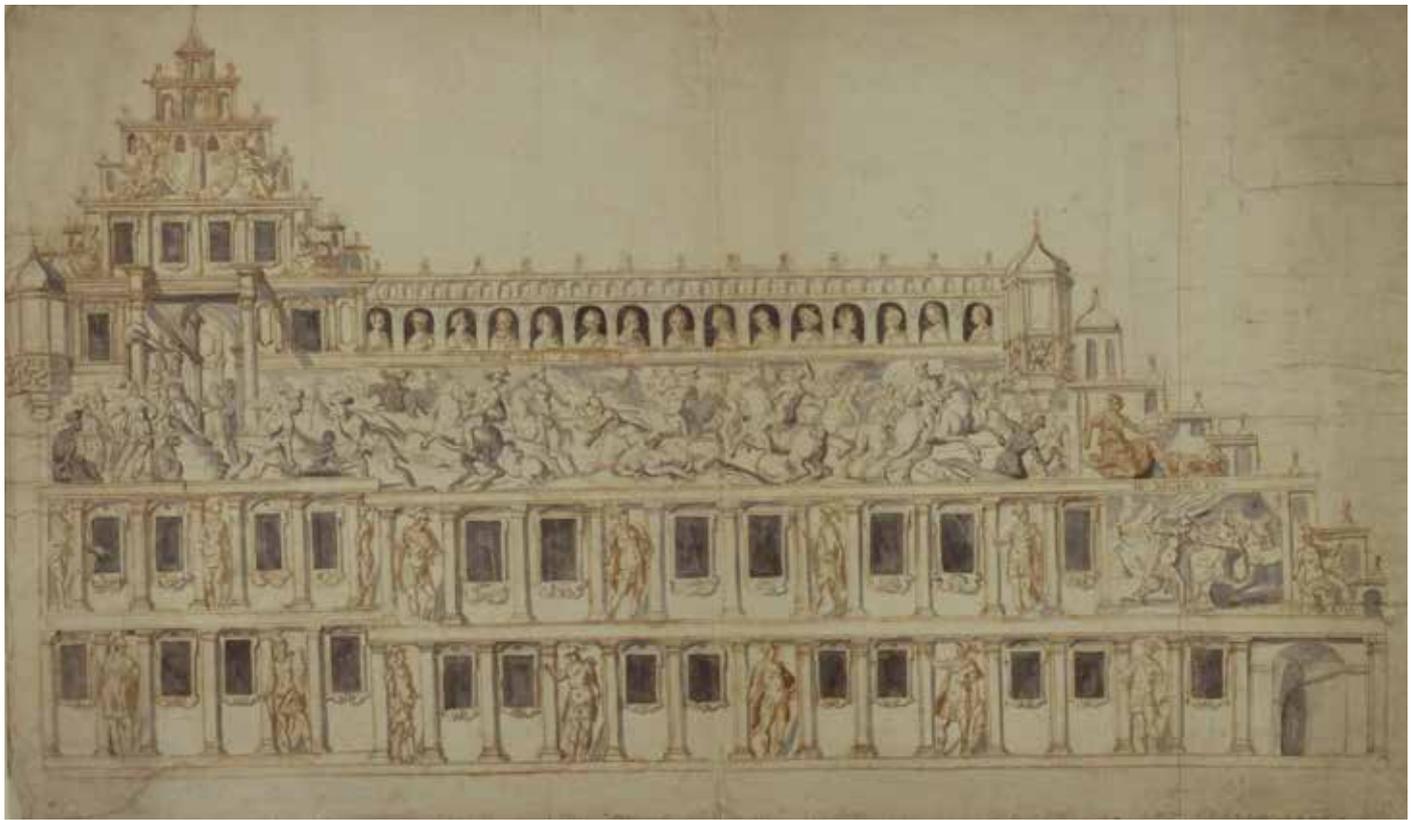
# Iconographic Programs of Renaissance Sgraffito Decorations in Silesia: Origins, Patterns, Ideas

Dr. **Aleksandra Sieczkowska**, assistant professor at the Institute of Art History, University of Wrocław. Her research interests focus on issues related to artistic patronage and foundations in the late medieval and early modern periods, as well as on source research.

Dr. **Agnieszka Seidel-Grzezińska**, since 2001 assistant professor at the University of Wrocław, in 2003–2006 also an assistant professor in the Department of Tourism and Recreation at the University of Health and Sport Sciences in Wrocław. She specializes in issues related to iconography of early modern European art, Protestant art, digital documentation methods and cultural heritage research.

Dr. **Marcin Wiśtocki**, assistant professor in the Institute of Art History at the University of Wrocław. Head of the Department of the Renaissance and the Reformation Art in the Institute of Art History there (since 2020). Scientific interests: early modern ecclesiastical art, especially the Lutheran art in Central and Northern Europe; iconographic programs and function of church architecture and furnishing, considered in their relation to the liturgy, devotion, ecclesiastical law as well as to the theological, catechetical and edifying writings; emblems in their religious context.

**Sgraffito decoration became popular in Silesia from the mid-16th century, when the region, an important province of the Kingdom of Bohemia, was characterised both by the presence of towns with great economic potential and by the strong position of the nobility, both mostly identified with the Lutheran confession. In contrast to Bohemia, the vast majority of surviving examples of sgraffito in Silesia cover the façades of aristocratic residences. Relatively few sgraffiti are known to have been commissioned by burghers. However, it is likely that this is only a small proportion of the original number of artworks in the region. On the territory of Poland within its present borders, however, they constitute a quantitatively and qualitatively distinctive complex of examples. Although their iconographic programmes appear highly interesting, they have not yet been the subject of monographic studies. The surviving decorations present moral-ethical and humanistic programmes inspired by a wide range of literary and iconographic sources of ancient, biblical and hagiographic origin, as well as those derived from the secular cultural tradition of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (e.g. the world turned upside down, *mundus inversus*). One of the key questions is how these programmes were constructed, combining motifs from all these areas. The aim of the proposed paper is to try to answer questions about the main patterns as well as the ethos behind these programmes and the context in which they were created.**



# **Space for Imagination: The Façade Design for the ‘Maier’ House in Nuremberg**

**Before its destruction during World War II, the former façade of the so-called Maier House adorned the northern side of the ‘Grüner Markt’ (known as ‘Hauptmarkt’ since the early 19th century and then again after the war). While today a new post-war building stands in its place, various pictorial sources still provide an impression of the impact that the façade has had on this central urban space. A particularly noteworthy testimony is a modern façade design that is said to be a work of Paul Juvenell the Elder. Due to the lack of written sources, it has received little scholarly attention and will be discussed in more detail. Especially the three main scenes in this pen drawing represent an iconographically interesting case. Thanks to inscriptions, all three can be identified as scenes from the Old Testament: the suicide of King Saul and his armor-bearer, David’s learning of Saul’s death and the execution of the messenger, as well as the murder of King Elah by the officer Zimri. During the lecture, it will furthermore be examined how these main scenes and the additional iconography are spatially and conceptually connected in the imaginary architectural space on the façade and what levels of meaning this design could overall evoke. Moreover, as it is difficult to trace the appearance of the actual façade and its development over time, a brief overview will be provided of how the façade has been depicted and imagined in various pictorial testimonies.**



# **Verona's Painted Façades: Documentation, Surveys, and Analysis of External Frescoes from the 14th to the 19th Centuries**

**Verona has often been referred to as a painted city, due to the numerous frescoes adorning the façades of houses and palaces in its historic center. This reputation is supported by a significant body of literature documenting the painted façades of Verona, including *Verona Illustrata* by Scipione Maffei and *Descrizione di Verona* by Giovambattista da Persico, along with a series of city guides published throughout the 19th century. Additionally, valuable information about the existence and condition of these frescoes can be found in documentation produced by the former "Soprintendenza ai Monumenti". This includes notifications of restrictions on buildings with painted façades and requests for approval for conservation interventions on external frescoes.**

**This paper is based on my Master's thesis in Art History, but it has been enhanced by insights from more recent research. The uniqueness of the subject and the variety of theoretical implications make this an ongoing research project, approached with the understanding that we are dealing with a fragile heritage. Among the results achieved are two databases concerning both existing and lost external frescoes, dated from the 14th to the 19th centuries, as well as a map detailing the remaining evidences. The collection and organization of this data have facilitated a series of analyses using graphs to better understand certain aspects of the painted façades phenomenon, such as their distribution across different centuries and the frequency of the subjects depicted. In conclusion, the external frescoes can also be viewed as evidence of cultural exchanges and artistic influences shared with other cities such as Trento, Rome, and Mantua, specifically during the Renaissance period.**

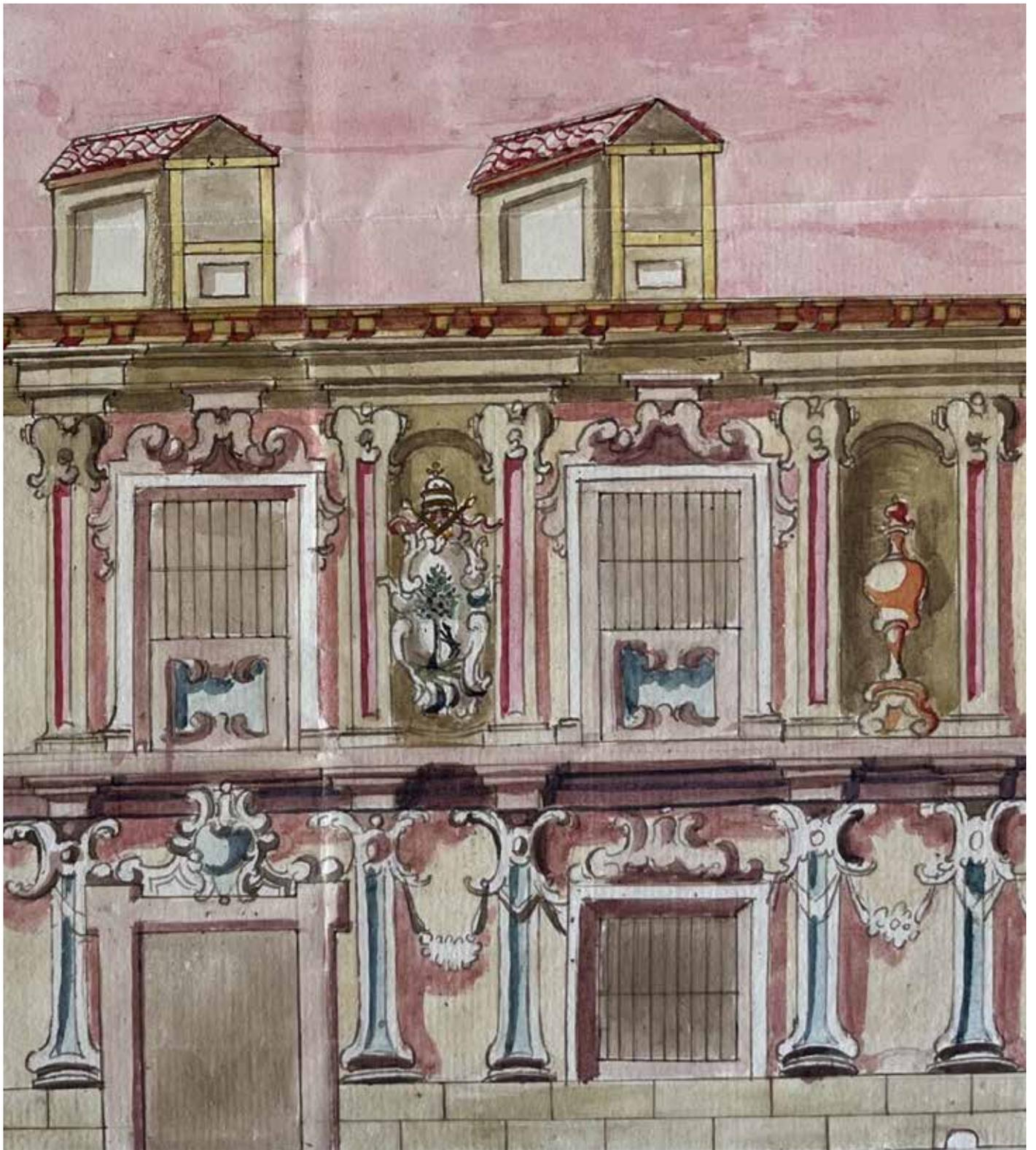
After obtaining a master's degree in Visual Arts from the University of Bologna in 2022, **Martina Volpato** completed a postgraduate internship at the Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura "Andrea Palladio". Since November 2023, she's been a PhD student in the History of Architecture as part of the PhD program in Arts, History, Society of the University of Bologna. She participates in a research project co-funded by the Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione of the Ministry of Culture, aiming to update the catalogue entry for Architectural Heritage in digital format. She presented some of the research results on the Veronese frescoed façades at the 68th international annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America (RSA) in Dublin, and at the international seminar *The City of Art Historians* organized by the Associazione Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte (AISU) in Naples.



# **Between Restoration, Reconstruction and Invention: On the Trail of a 16th-Century Fresco on the Façade at the Prince's Palace of Monaco**

**A painted façade, known as the “Régie” façade, nearly fifty meters long and over twelve meters high, has adorned the courtyard of honor of the Prince's Palace of Monaco since the second half of the 16th century. Despite being exposed to the vagaries of climate and seismic activity for more than four centuries, the Princes of Monaco, beginning with Honoré II (1597– 1662), have consistently ensured the preservation of this vast fresco, safeguarding its longevity for future generations. Yet, how have successive interventions sought to restore this decorative program while remaining as faithful as possible to the surviving remnants? Have they not, rather, attempted to reinvent an iconographic scheme whose meaning remains ultimately in service to the reigning dynasty, the Grimaldis? Significant fragments of the original fresco were uncovered in the autumn of 2024 by the conservation and restoration team of the Prince's Palace of Monaco. Excavating at the junctions between the studied façade and the perpendicular façades revealed previously concealed sixteenth-century frescoes whose existence had hitherto been unsuspected. This discovery invites a reconsideration of the current decorative ensemble in light of its historical antecedents, highlighting both divergences and continuities: between restoration, restitution, reconstruction, reproduction and invention. Above all, these new findings offer fresh insights into the visual culture present within the Grimaldi Palace of Monaco in the second half of the 16th century.**

Doctor in History and specialist in South Alpine mural painting (eastern Provence, Liguria, Piedmont) from the 14th to 16th centuries, **Océane Acquier Sicart's** research primarily focuses on the numerous relationships between images, epigraphic objects, and the practice of preaching. She taught at the University Côte d'Azur before becoming a researcher in 2023 as part of the conservation and restoration project for the frescoes of the Prince's Palace of Monaco. Since then, her studies have concentrated on the analysis of the painted decorations of approximately 600 square meters of sixteenth-century frescoes uncovered at the Palace since 2013.



# **Unusual Colours: on Some Decorated Façades in 18th-Century Madrid**

**Despite being the seat of the monarchy, and the theatre of all kinds of festivities, exaltations and architectural representations, the face of 18th century Madrid was rather monochrome. In the midst of a general monotony in the shapes and tones of the façades of private houses, some mid-century buildings stand out for their particular use of exterior ornamentation. This paper, which brings together several unpublished examples, sets out to study them from the point of view of their artistic, cultural and social singularity in the context of a capital city and at a time when the reform of private architecture created a space for multifaceted artistic debate.**

**Adrián Fernández Almoguera** studied Art History at the Complutense University of Madrid. Thanks to several grants and research contracts, he completed a master's degree and a PhD in Art History at the Sorbonne University in Paris. After having been a scientific fellow at l'École française de Rome (2019-2022), he was a fellow at the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies and a Juan de la Cierva researcher at the Complutense University of Madrid, where he has also been Assistant Professor. He is currently a Ramón y Cajal researcher in the Department of History of Art at the UNED. Throughout his career he has specialised in the interactions between revolutionary political systems and architectural and urban thought in Spain, France and Italy. He is currently working on the mechanisms of national construction in various Latin American capitals at the time of the first independences, studied through the circulation of European architects and theoretical and graphic models that were implanted in American territory after the collapse of the Napoleonic system.



## By the Street

Gian Paolo Lomazzo recalls that the Ancients looked down on fresco painting, especially exterior works, for lacking the nobility associated with easel painting: “...perché le pitture delle strade è di necessità che si stendano sulle facciate, questo lavorare da gli antichi fu tenuto poco nobile, per il che alcuni hanno lasciato scritto che quando il lavorar in fresco fu introdotto, la nobiltà e dignità della pittura fu gettata a terra: poi che le pitture non furono più tenute in quella riverenza che furono le prime, che si facevano solamente sopra le tavole” (*Trattato dell’arte della pittura*, Milan, 1585, VI, 27, 350). Though rejected by both ancient (Vitruvius, Plutarch, Pliny the Elder) and modern trattatisti (Vasari, Rusconi, Serlio), the supposed antagonism between artist and artisan – between artwork and handwork – has nonetheless endured. Questions remain: How “dirty” is this job? How do façade painters make their presence known, visible to all, right in the midst of their work? How do they, perched on the scaffolding, implicitly elevate themselves to the Parnassus of Painting? Where, in truth, do they stand in the grand narrative of art history? To grasp the identity stakes of such a public practice one must understand the subtle movement between “making a place for oneself” and “claiming one’s rightful place”. In this regard, it is not enough to leaf through the art literature of the time. One must also subject it to the light of an iconography, sparse yet meaningful.

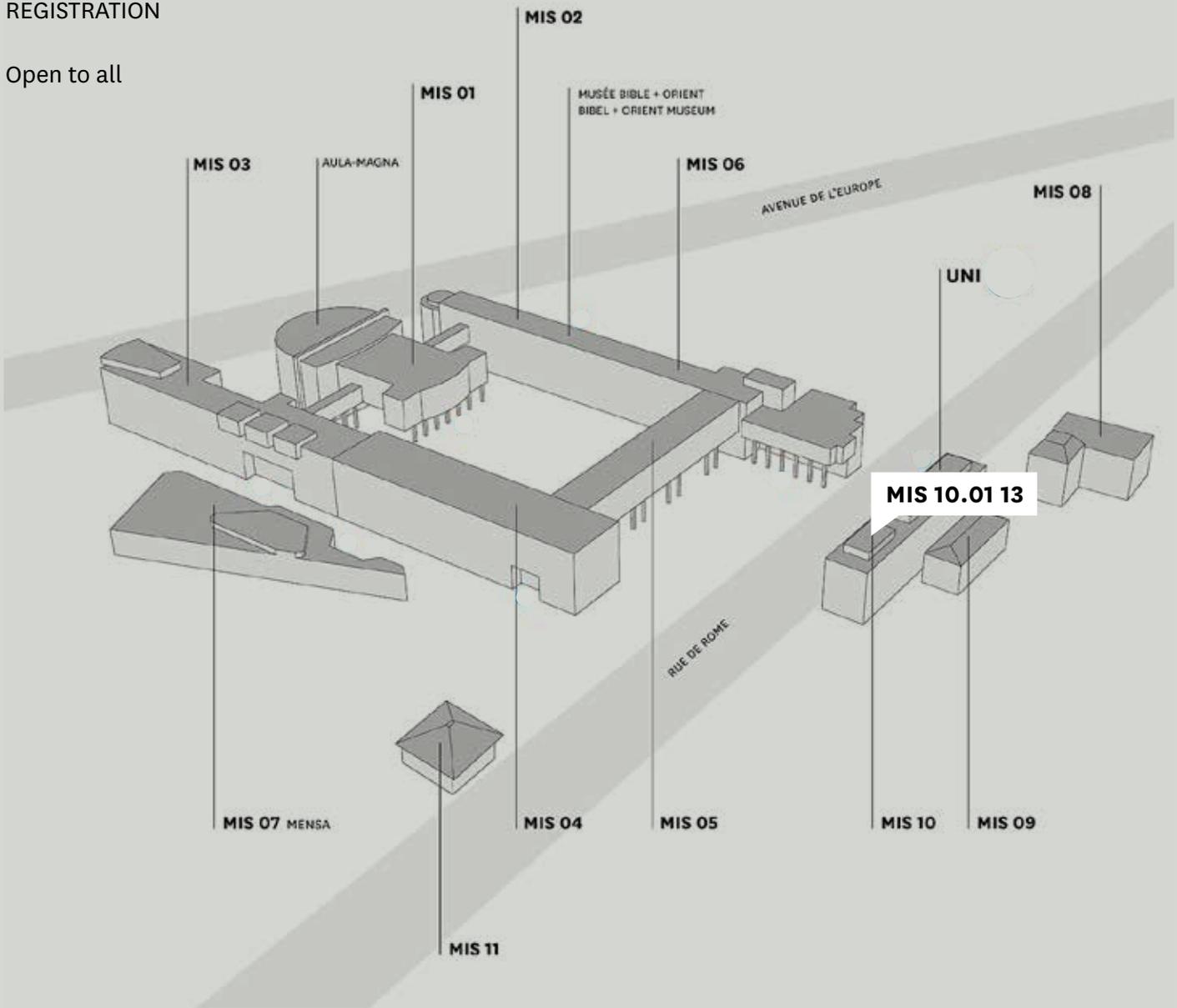
Improvised in a free spirit, these farewell remarks attempt to sketch a few visual cues around the singular figure of the façade painter, and in so doing, conclude by highlighting the richness of the international colloquium.

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