



MUSEO
ITALO AMERICANO

**NEWS
LETTER**

JANUARY • MARCH 2024



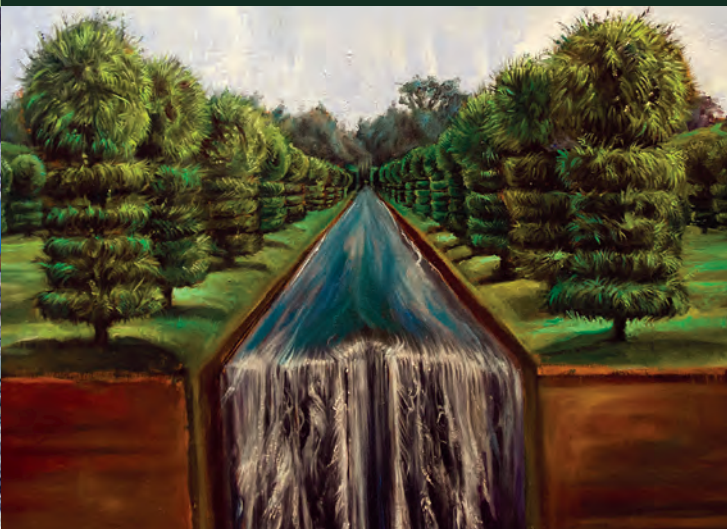
**RICCARDO
ROSSATI**

VILLA ARCONATI
AND
IMAGINARY WORLDS

Organized By

 FONDAZIONE
AUGUSTO
RANCILIO
Villa Arconati

11.16.2023 - 03.31.2024



Preserving Our Italian Heritage & Culture

MUSEO ITALO AMERICANO
2 Marina Blvd.
Fort Mason Center, Building C
San Francisco CA 94123

MUSEO FUTURE HOME
940 Battery St.
San Francisco, CA 94111
By appointment Only Wed. - Fri.

Hours: Tue. - Fri. 12 - 4 | Sat. - Sun. 10 - 4
info@sfmuseo.org | 415.673.2200
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If you need info please contact our Capital Campaign counsel:
Mecca Billings at mecca@sfmuseo.org or **Sandra Bagnatori** at sandrabagnatori@gmail.com

Dear Members,

As we come to the end of the year, it's time to reflect on the many events and exhibits which have supported our mission to **preserve the heritage of Italian Americans through art, language, and culture.**

In the spring we presented **“Bravo: Celebrating San Francisco Opera, its Italian Roots and Legacy”**, exclusively sponsored by the E. L. Weigand Foundation, with the support and partnership of the San Francisco Opera.

In November we opened our current exhibit **“Riccardo Rossati - Villa Arconati and Imaginary Worlds”**. This exhibit blends two themes: the enchanting Villa Arconati and a series of visionary artworks that transport viewers to imaginary places.

Throughout the year the Museo held numerous events, classes, lectures, and receptions. The success of all of this is largely due to our unparalleled core staff comprised of Managing Director Sandra Bagnatori, Assistant Managing Director Susan Filippo, Curator & Communications Director Bianca Friundi, Designer & Digital Media Manager Alice Amigassi, as well as our language instructors and volunteers.

Thanks to the tireless work of our Alleanza volunteers, led by Jackie Svevo and Sandra Bagnatori, we continued to offer numerous social and fundraising events throughout the year, including an Antipasti dinner, Italian Heritage night with the SF Giants, the Italian Heritage Parade, a bocce ball tournament, and in November the sold-out Pasta contest where our celebrity chefs embraced the challenge to deliver the most delicious pasta dishes. We are grateful to all of the donors and sponsors who helped make these events possible.

The Board's Capital Campaign Committee continues to progress with development plans and fundraising to renovate our future home at 940 Battery Street, and we're pleased to report that approval of the site permits is imminent.

Most importantly, I would like to thank all of our members for the ongoing support and active participation – we are grateful for all that you do.

Buon Anno,
 Victoria LoBue

Grazie Members!

The list on this page includes donations received from **September 1, 2023 to November 30, 2023** and are exclusive of donations made to the Capital Campaign. Our sincere apologies if any names were inadvertently omitted.

Linda & Michael Antonini, Stephen Barbieri, Fedele Bauccio & Bon Appetit Management Company, Isetta Family, Capo Isetta Wines, De Cecco, Donna DiGiuseppe & Rick Matcovich, Rose Filippo, Gabe & Joseph Gardella, Antonella Goldsborough, Ginny Hanger, ItalFoods Inc., Gina Marie & Michael Larocca, Paulette Long, Eileen Mougeot, Bobby & Tito Patri, Nola Pardi Proll, E. Victor Quattrin, Angela Rando & Gil Garcia, Cindy & Daniel Rosenheim, Cara Sander, San Francisco Italian Athletic Club, Enrica & Pierluigi Zappacosta.

Annual Meeting of Members of the Museo

January 17, 2024 - 6:00 PM
Notice Of Annual Meeting of Members of the Museo Italo Americano

All Museo members are invited to the annual General Membership Meeting. At this meeting you can meet the Museo's 2023 Board Members, learn what is projected for next year at the Museo, and vote on the 2024 slate of Board Member nominees.

If you wish to attend the meeting, please **RSVP by January 15** at info@sfmuseo.org or to **415.673.2200**

Riccardo Rossati - Villa Arconati and Imaginary Worlds

Grazie mille to all the visitors, members, and supporters who graced us with their presence at the two exhibition openings of **Riccardo Rossati - Villa Arconati and Imaginary Worlds!**

The artist was present at both events, engaging with enthusiasm as he fielded questions, shared stories about his artistic process, and connected with our vibrant Italian community. The occasion was further enriched by the presence of the **Consul General of Italy in San Francisco, Sergio Strozzi**, who graciously bestowed his patronage upon this unique body of works.

We were honored by the attendance of **Tom Huth, Head of Palladium USA**, accompanied by his wife **Kim Parker**. Tom stands as the American counterpart to **Cesare Rancilio**, the **President of Villa Arconati**, whose generous sponsorship played a pivotal role in bringing this exhibition to San Francisco. Once again, thank you to all who contributed to making these events memorable and inspiring!



↑ Riccardo Rossati and Tom Huth at the Museo opening night.



↑ Riccardo Rossati at the Museo for the soft opening.

An Interview with Riccardo Rossati

Who are your biggest artistic influences?

My artistic journey is deeply intertwined with the profound impact of iconic figures, with Rembrandt, the Dutch master, standing tall as a primary influence. His portraits serve as a gateway to the intricate complexities of the human soul, a theme that resonates profoundly in my own work.

In addition, the expressive and vital outcomes achieved by Lucian Freud have played a pivotal role in shaping my artistic vision. Freud's ability to push the boundaries of expressionism has been a guiding light, encouraging me to explore dynamic and unconventional paths within the figurative tradition.

While rooted in figurative art, I have consistently gravitated towards artists who transcend mere representation. The conventional adherence to "mimesis" and the academic pursuit of rendering the "real" and the "natural," although yielding masterpieces, often falls short of capturing the true and fervent essence of art — the creation of living images.

It is in the unorthodox approaches of artists such as Rembrandt, Delacroix, Caravaggio, and Lucian Freud that I find the realization of this aspiration, as they have successfully generated living images that defy conventional boundaries.

Where do you draw inspiration from?

If we consider inspiration as the initial emergence of an image destined to evolve into a painting, I would like to emphasize its dual origin. The first source lies in the tangible aspects of our everyday existence—the sights, sounds, and experiences that unfold in the light of day. This diverse array of impressions accumulates and takes shape during the night, converging with the second wellspring of inspiration: the realm of dreams, where these impressions from reality undergo a transformative process. Consequently, I believe that my creative energy is intricately linked to this dual register of the real and the dreamlike.

How do you perceive the importance of art in society?

Navigating this question, I find it to be inherently paradoxical. I believe that one of the artist's paramount responsibilities is to bear witness to their sentiments regarding the evolution and unfolding of society. Frequently, the artist's impressions and innovations stand at a distance from their contemporary milieu, either being too advanced for their time or challenging societal norms. This inherent tension often positions the artist as a counter cultural force, introducing elements that may be indigestible to society as a whole.

It is essential for art to maintain a certain level of heterogeneity and resistance to regulation by society. If art were to become excessively homogenized and subservient to societal expectations, it would forfeit its crucial role as a faithful yet enigmatic mirror reflecting the impending occurrences in society. Consequently, I think that art might appear, in the immediate moment, as a seemingly useless and potentially harmful tool for society. However, in the broader context, it assumes a significant and vital role in providing insight and foresight.

Special Photo Exhibition–Meets–Performance Art Experience in January

The **Museo Italo Americano** and Artist **Lorenzo (Larry Brucia)** are thrilled to present **Saint Francis of Assisi-Emotions of the Man**, a photo exhibition-meets-performance art experience featuring a series of large-scale photographs in the style of Renaissance paintings.

Making its U.S. premiere in San Francisco, the namesake city of the patron saint, after previous exhibitions at the Vatican, Customaci (Sicily), Poppi (Tuscany), and Assisi, this unique experience will take place in the Museo's future home on Battery Street.

Taking advantage of the opportunity to activate this space, Lorenzo has created a special program for guests to Gather, Explore and Experience while participating in a bit of historical fiction, intrigue and fun. *Saint Francis of Assisi-Emotions of the Man* is part of Lorenzo's adventure game *The Mask Trilogy* which includes *Secrets of the Carsarians*, a fictional novel about the death mask of Saint Francis of Assisi which travels through the centuries and affects historical individuals in positive ways. Lorenzo will be displaying, for the first time, a duplicate of the original mask which has been hidden somewhere in the world and the clues to find the mask are embedded in the novel, the photographs and in poems in two books by Lorenzo.

Guests will also be encouraged to walk through the space and browse the Museo's plans for its future home!

Special Opening Days:

Saturday, **January 13, 2024**: 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Sunday, **January 14, 2024**: 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Special Opening Nights

Thursday, **January 18, 2024**: 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Friday, **January 19, 2024**: 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Location: 940 Battery Street – San Francisco

Attendance is limited and all visits will be guided by Lorenzo

Admission: \$25/ person

For more information, visit www.sfmuseo.org/event/lorenzo/



↑ Affection. Photo by artist Lorenzo (Larry Brucia)

Pasta Contest, Celebrating 45th Anniversary

The Museo's **Pasta Contest** on November 2nd, celebrating its 45th Anniversary, was a tremendous success! The event was made possible by the dedication and contributions of various individuals, and it's great to see the community coming together to make it a memorable occasion.

The chefs, Rebecca and Larry Brucia, Joe and Christine Garofoli, Natalie Sangiacomo and Lorenzo Iacomini, Dominique Gioia and Boz Scaggs, Catherine Stefani and Gianna Bankovitch, Sergio Strozzi and Simone Mazzetto, deserve a special mention for creating delicious pasta sauces that everyone enjoyed.

Special thanks are extended to the host, Fedele Bauccio, CEO of Bon Appetit Management Company, who provided the Stem Kitchen venue, antipasti, salad, and dessert. Bill Isetta of Capo Isetta Winery was acknowledged as the wine provider, and Richard Armanino of ItalFoods and DeCecco Pasta as the pasta provider.

The event wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of volunteers and contributors. The list includes:

Alice Amigassi, Donna Ancona, Celia Barbaccia, Terry Barton, Beverley Siri Borelli, Denise Bottarini, Marcella Comparini, Susan Filippo, Bianca Friundi, Ginny Hanger, Nancy Lange, Victoria LoBue, Nyla Puccinelli Moore, Ginny Hanger, LaVerne Reiterman, Stefanie Rosemond, and Tessa Shanahan.

Our thanks also to the auctioneer, George Ross, the event chair, Jackie Svevo, the Stem Kitchen staff, and, of course, the guests who participated in the pasta tasting, the live auction, and voting for their favorite pastas.

While all the chefs were winners, the top three were: Natalie Sangiacomo and Lorenzo Iacomini who took first place with Gnocchetti Sardi, Rebecca and Larry Brucia secured second place with veal, sausage, and porcini ragu, and Joe Garofoli with help from his wife Christine claimed Third Place with Pasta with Pesto.

The Pasta Contest 2023 was a delightful and successful celebration, thanks to the combined efforts of the chefs, volunteers, sponsors, and participants.

