



MUSEO
ITALO AMERICANO

NEWS
LETTER

JANUARY • MARCH 2023

CONTEMPORARTE

SELECTED WORKS BY ITALIAN
ARTISTS FROM OUR PERMANENT
COLLECTION

Now extended through March 26, 2023

Preserving Our Italian Heritage & Culture

MUSEO ITALO AMERICANO

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By appointment only

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Mecca Billings at
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Dear Members,

After 2 years of restrictions, we are thankful to have been able to reopen our doors, and welcome members and guests back into the Museo.

In the spring we exhibited **Rhapsody** featuring the works of 3 Italian American women, Serena Bocchino, Kara Maria, and Nola Pardi Proll. In the fall we opened our current exhibit **ContemporArte** featuring a selection of works by Italian born artists from our permanent collection, dating from the 1960's to the early 2000's.

We relaunched our fundraising arm, **Alleanza**, and these dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly to organize several events over the year, including the Antipasti dinner and our Holiday Dolci party.

We continue to focus on collaborating and building community with other Italian American organizations.

Lastly, we are honored and grateful to have received major donations to our Capital Campaign, with donors honored at a beautiful reception hosted by the Honorable Sergio Strozzi, Consul General of Italy.

I would like to thank all of our supporters and members – 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, 2022 to November 30, 2022** and are exclusive of donations made to the Capital Campaign. Our sincere apologies if any names were inadvertently omitted.

Sandra Bagnatori, Mr. & Mrs. Murray Baumgarten, Elena Brittain, Mr. & Mrs. Mark Brittain, Mr. & Mrs. Norman Dunlavy, Rose Filippo, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Gardella, Chris Garvey, Antonella Goldsborough, Ginny Hanger, William Hudson, Robert Lazaretto, Paulette Long, Downey Manoukian, Mr. & Mrs. Fiore Marcheschi, Suzanna Mark, Gerald Martin, Mr. & Mrs. Eric Matcovich, Mr. & Mrs. Nello Prato, Leslie Proll, Diana Rogers, Cara Sander, Susan Scitutto Tonjum, Karen Seratti, Diane Mason & Mick Thomas, Patricia Welsh, Mr. & Mrs. Pierluigi Zappacosta, Anna Maria Zara.

Thank You!

- Another successful Mercatino di Natale!

We celebrated the 10th anniversary of this beloved event with more than 2300 friends and supporters. A huge **GRAZIE** to our wonderful vendors and to our great sponsors, Forchette Tricolore and Mr.Espresso, for making it memorable. See you next year!!

- Antipasti Dinner

The Antipasti Dinner was a huge success thanks to all who participated both as guests and as donors. A special thank you to the Ancona family and Angelino Restaurant who provided both the delicious antipasti and special service that evening. Thank you to Lorenzo Scarpone of Convivium, Celia Barbaccia and ItalFoods for their donations. And, of course, mille grazie to Jackie Svevo, the chairperson of the event, and our staff and Alleanza members who worked hard to make this a wonderful event. See you at Antipasti 2023!

- Festa dei Dolci

A big thank you goes to all the Museo members who baked delicious cookies and treats for this special event and to Poesia Café and ItalFoods for their donations. Grazie to Denise Bottarini, the chairperson of Dolci, and the volunteers of Alleanza for their work and contributions. We would also like to warmly thank Valentina Imbeni, Head of La Scuola International School, Carlo Dean, La Scuola music teacher, and the great School's Ambassador Ensemble (middle school and alumni musicians), for organizing a beautiful and heartwarming Christmas concert for all of us.

ContemporArte

We are happy to announce that our current exhibition ContemporArte will be extended through March 26, 2023!

It is a wonderful opportunity to see works by Italian born artists from our Permanent Collection, from the 1960s to the early 2000s.

Among the body of works in the exhibition are paintings by members of the Italian art movement *Transavanguardia*: Sandro Chia, Francesco Clemente, Nino Longobardi, and Mimmo Paladino. The Italian version of Neo-expressionism, *Transavanguardia* developed in Italy and the rest of Western Europe in the late 1970s and 1980s. The term was coined by Italian art critic Achille Bonito Oliva, at the 1980 Venice Biennale and literally means beyond the avant-garde.

Another significant section of this exhibit is dedicated to a prominent group of artists who operated in the Milanese milieu, from Enrico Baj to Lucio Del Pezzo, Valerio Adami, Bruno Di Bello, and Emilio Tadini. Many of them drew inspiration from an artistic language that made its mark on the global art scene from the early 1960s and, in recurring waves, to recent years: Pop Art.

We also proudly present some of our latest acquisitions, works by Giuseppe Gattuso Lo Monte and Giovanni Ragusa, from the 1970s and 1980s. Both artists worked and exhibited in the Bay Area: Ragusa was artist-in-residence at UC Berkeley in 1981, while Gattuso Lo Monte ended a decade-long exhibition tour in San Francisco in 1983.

Our permanent collection constitutes the very core of our museum and what defines us as such. And while we make works available to the public via exhibitions, it is through our acquisitions that we become keepers of our artistic and cultural heritage. Through the preservation and presentation of these works, we educate ourselves and future generations. All this has been made possible thanks to the generosity of artists, donors, and supporters of the Museo.

ARTISTS

- Valerio Adami • Vasco Ascolini • Enrico Baj • Piero Brolis
- Paolo Buggiani • Sandro Chia • Francesco Clemente
- Lucio Del Pezzo • Bruno Di Bello • Piero Dorazio
- Omar Galliani • Giuseppe Gattuso Lo Monte • Renato Guttuso
- Nino Longobardi • Alberto Magnelli • Luciano Monti
- Mimmo Paladino • Gianfranco Pardi • Giovanni Ragusa
- Italo Scanga • Carlo Sismonda • Emilio Tadini • Giuseppe Uncini
- Sergio Vacchi • Giuseppe Zigaina



↑ Longobardi, Nino, *Untitled*, Mixed media on wove paper, 1983

↓ Paladino, Mimmo, *Muto*, Aquatint and sugar lift with black fur collage, printed in five colors, 1985



Upcoming Exhibition

BRAVO

Save the date

Bravo
Celebrating San Francisco Opera
Its Italian Roots and Legacy

Opening April 20, 2023

The Museo was fortunate to secure the services of talented designer Jeremy Regenbogen for the overall concept and schematic design for the permanent history exhibit that will be a centerpiece of the Museo's future home at 940 Battery Street in San Francisco. In this article, we will examine a section of the exhibit entitled *Two Sides to Every Coin* that will explore the struggles, including internment, that Italian Americans experienced during World War II.

The stories in *Two Sides to Every Coin* intend to shed light on the Italians Americans impacted by an episode that parallels the more widely known internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. In this way, the Museo will create a safe space for Italian Americans to confront this painful past, and reclaim their heritage, culture, and language for future generations.

America's entry into World War II resulted in the arrest and incarceration of many Italians living on the West Coast, an episode referred to in the community as "Una Storia Segreta"—a secret story. These were almost exclusively men who had been part of the "spearhead of Fascist activities in California," especially through the foreign language press.

Nationwide, approximately 600,000 Italian-born residents of the United States who had not become citizens were declared enemy aliens. Many were arrested, imprisoned at internment camps, forced to evacuate their homes, and ordered to surrender property to the United States Government. By June 1942, the FBI had arrested a total of 1,521 Italian aliens.

But even for non-seditious Italian American citizens, there were still wartime repercussions. For a while, they were subjected to an 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. curfew and excluded from prohibited zones along the coast, sometimes forced to move out of restricted areas.

The military forbade the Italian fishing fleet to sail for many months, nearly wrecking the fishing economy. Restrictive regulations were enforced more in the San Francisco area than on the East Coast, where Italians made up a much higher percentage of the population, especially in major urban centers.

Mixed emotions and allegiances were everywhere. Even Joe DiMaggio's parents weren't spared. Despite Joe's status as a national hero, General John DeWitt, commanding the army's Western

Defense Command, pressed to arrest Joe's father, Giuseppe, who had lived in the U.S. for 40 years but never become a citizen. DeWitt wanted to make a point: "No exceptions."

In San Francisco, the popular Italian American mayor Angelo Rossi came under suspicion, accused of giving a Fascist salute at a Columbus Day parade, which he tearfully and forcefully denied. Rossi was defeated for reelection as mayor the following year following an acrimonious campaign.

For many Italian Americans, the humiliation and shame of Una Storia Segreta lingered after the war. Many families, ashamed of accusations thrown at their communities during the war years, distanced themselves from Italian culture even further, including Italian language, an incalculable loss to future generations.

The Museo has a variety of options for naming opportunities in the *Two Sides to Every Coin* exhibit, all of which are evergreen. Gifts to the Museo's capital campaign are fully tax-deductible, and multi-year pledges that can be fulfilled by 2024 are also accepted.

The Museo also has a staged version of the highlights of the history exhibit, including *Two Sides to Every Coin*, on display at 940 Battery Street, and would welcome the opportunity to give a tour to anyone interested in supporting the capital campaign.

For more information, please contact Mecca Billings, mecca@sfmuseo.org or (415) 578-0224.

Following are some images and descriptions of the *Two Sides to Every Coin* exhibit:

