

Special Edition Newsletter for BSR Members 2023

Note from the Director, Abigail Brundin

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the members' newsletter, in which we are delighted to update you on recent activities in Rome across our many fields of endeavour.

As I write the British School at Rome is positively popping, with 20 new fellows and award holders in residence, all our other rooms occupied by members old and new, and the new academic year's events programme starting up downstairs in the Sainsbury Lecture Theatre. In recent weeks we have also welcomed a number of new colleagues, with more arriving soon, who are already making their valued contributions to our wide roster of activities.

Meanwhile, it is October but the sun is still beating down on us, although it is finally dipping below 30 degrees which seems to be our new 'normal'. Although the very hot weather continued in Rome through July and August (including a period when the temperature was in the early forties), we were able to finish our yearly cycle for the last academic year on a high with a week's course on cinema and architecture led by Francois Penz from Cambridge ('Cineroma'), a major conference funded by UCL on 'Languages of the Anthropocene', and a 'May Week' concert sung in the cortile by the choir of my own college in Cambridge, St Catharine's. A group of artists and architects occupied the studios and braved the heat through August, and in September we hosted the two-week Ancient Rome Summer School taught by Robert Coates-Stephens, followed by a new course for architects, the 'Reading Rome' Architecture Practice Summer School, led in this its inaugural year by John Tuomey and Sheila O'Donnell. Practices who sent a student on the course made a matching donation to cross-fund the Rome Scholarship in Architecture for the coming year, and we are immensely grateful for their support.

Meanwhile, we continue to enjoy the uplifting presence of 'Verve', the new work by Bridget Riley installed as a gift to the BSR in the entrance foyer. News of the work is generating a lot of interest both locally and further afield, with a number of visits organised over the summer for groups and individuals and more to come this autumn.

As our valued members, we thank you very warmly for your vital support, we invite you to enjoy the following pages and to come and visit us soon on Via Gramsci!



Excavations at Falerii Novi

This past summer saw the second season of month-long archaeological excavations of the multi-year project at the Roman town of Falerii Novi, led by the BSR and the universities of London, Harvard and Toronto with the fundamental support of the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la Provincia di Viterbo e per L'Etruria Meridionale and the landowner.

50km to the north of Rome close to Civita Castellana (ancient Falerii Veteres), the city has been extensively investigated through non-invasive techniques, such as aerial photography and geophysical prospection, which have revealed in astonishing detail the plan of the city. The new excavation project is therefore using this information to explore the development of this substantial urban site over the long durée from its Republican origins through Imperial and Late Antique transformations and the re-occupation in the Medieval period.

With a team of 40, comprising students and specialists, the excavations have therefore been able to target individual buildings and the town's infrastructure, including the macellum (the meat market), a domus to the south of the forum as well as the excavation of a row of tabernae on the northern side of the forum and a street crossing inside the South gate.



Falerii Novi, BSR excavation, 2023, photo by Emlyn Dodd



Falerii Novi Excavatio, open day 2023, photo by Emlyn Dodd

The team from the BSR and University of London, comprising of staff and professional archaeologists, supported a group of students from the universities of Durham, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Florence and Royal Holloway. We were also delighted to welcome on to the team a summer placement student, funded by the Roman Society. Our 2023 excavation concentrated at the northwestern corner of the forum, investigating a series of structures interpreted by the geophysical surveys as a row of tabernae opening on to the forum. The 15m x 15m trench incorporated part of a road to the north of the forum and three tabernae which, as shown by the excavations, had been significantly modified over the course of their history. Two of these shops had been later transformed into a single room with a small central apse opposite the entrance and a decorated marble floor in opus sectile. These rooms were again later incorporated into a much larger apsidal building.

The excavations are supported by a team of ceramic and environmental specialists, as well as geoarchaeologists from the University of Ghent who continued a detailed coring analysis of the central forum area.

Stephen Kay, Archaeology Manager



Falerii Novi, 2023. Excavation team. Photo by Emlyn Dodd

Vision for a Fine Arts programme

A residency at the BSR can profoundly impact the work and future career of an artist. The stimuli offered by the city of Rome (and Italy more generally) have proved highly influential on artistic practice, including in opening space for creative experimentation. Experiencing a new environment, meeting and networking with fellow award-holders and the local artistic community and starting new research is at the core of an artist's residency in Rome. For this reason, from Autumn 2022 the BSR Fine Arts department has launched a new programme with an Open Studios Night every three months, in which the public has the chance to see first-hand how, where, and why art is created on site. Meeting the artists in their BSR studios, viewing works in progress, and focusing on the creative process, represent a unique opportunity to highlight the artists' research.

It is also a chance for the artists to immerse themselves in their projects with no pressure to produce a final output, allowing them the time and space to engage with Rome and take time for research before beginning to make work in the studio. Since 2022 the BSR has also opened its gallery space to exhibitions by both BSR and Italian artists. The aim of these exhibitions is to support the artists' work and foster their presence within the Italian cultural scene.

On 28 October 2022, we opened *Renata, remember you are unconscious; you have no expression, no pain, you don't yell, you are unconscious*, the first solo show in Rome by the artist and BSR alumnus Adam Chodzko. The exhibition at the BSR was part of *Pier Paolo Pasolini. Tutto è Santo*, a wider exhibition project coordinated by Azienda Speciale Palaexpo di Roma, Gallerie Nazionali di Arte Antica and MAXXI Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI secolo, on the 100th anniversary of Pasolini's birth.

On 31 May 2023, the group show *On the Meaning of 'Gossip'* opened to the public, featuring works by BSR fellows Maeve Brennan, Catriona Gallagher, Holly Graham, Sharon Kelly, Lucy Tarquinio and Laura White and Italy-based artists Helena Hladilová and Lulù Nuti in collaboration with Marie-Agnès Nobecourt. The exhibition aimed to investigate in a broad way the meaning of the word 'Gossip', starting from a chapter of the book "Witch, witch-hunting and women" (2020) written by the feminist philosopher and activist Silvia Federici.

Together with the activities organised within the spaces of our Academy, another important goal of the new Fine Arts programme is to create points of contact between the BSR fellows and Rome's contemporary art scene. This is why in the past year we have established multiple collaborations with Roman collectives of curators, cultural associations, and independent art spaces. OnSite Roma collective curated a one-night event of screening with Bridget Riley Fellow Catriona Gallagher at Fondazione Giuliani and a reading event with Sainsbury Scholar Holly Graham at Libreria GRIOT; Ampersand Fellow Laura White and Bridget Riley Fellow

Catriona Gallagher also took part in the group exhibition *Rome, a portrait. Festival delle Accademie e degli Istituti di cultura stranieri* curated by Cecilia Canziani at Palazzo delle Esposizioni, together with works by BSR alumni Sara Barker, Simon Callery and Winifred Knights. Finally, Laura White participated in the public programme of the show with a conversation on the materiality of food with writer and academic Rebecca May Johnson and food writer and journalist Rachel Roddy.

The vision we are pursuing for the new BSR Fine Arts and the programme we have been building over the past year have begun to bear fruit and we look forward to developing these activities throughout the new Academic year.

Marta Pellerini, Visual Art Residency and Programme Curator



'On the meaning of Gossip', Install view, May 2023. Photo by Roberto Apa.



Summer Open Studios 2023. Photo by Silvia Calderoni.

The John Marshall Archive Research Project

This research project, launched in 2013, is now in its final stages. John Marshall (1862-1928) was a classical art expert who lived in Rome and worked as official agent for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York between 1906 and 1928. While living in Rome and maintaining a close connection with leading dealers and intermediaries throughout Europe, Marshall was responsible for finding many of the finest pieces that comprise one of the largest collections of antiquities in the world.

Marshall's archive, composed of photographs and handwritten documents pertaining to ancient art objects that were offered to him, was bequeathed to the BSR.

At the crossroads between the study of antiquity and its reception and provenance studies, the aims of this project were to reconstruct and study the trade in classical art in early 20th-century Europe through Marshall's agency. An international team of scholars, experts in various fields of the humanities and social sciences, was led by Dr Guido Petruccioli; they worked in close collaboration with the then BSR director (Christopher Smith), the staff in the library and archive (Beatrice Gelosia, Alessandra Giovenco, Valerie Scott), and with the support of Sapienza Università di Roma. The collection was digitised and catalogued, and a database was created, with the aim of supporting the work of the researchers.

The BSR hosted a workshop in 2014 and a conference in January 2016; an exhibition took place at the School during the 2016 conference: *Trading Antiquities in Early 20-th Century Europe: the John Marshall Archive Research Project*, accompanied by a catalogue.



John Marshall Archive, jm-0959



John Marshall Archive, jm-2343

[A book](#), edited by Guido Petruccioli, was published in December 2022 by the renowned publisher Archaeopress (Oxford): [Ancient Art and its Commerce in Early Twentieth-Century Europe: the John Marshall Archive – A collection of essays written by the participants of the John Marshall Archive Project](#). This beautifully illustrated volume contains ten chapters, that together offer a thorough investigation of the history of art collecting and John Marshall's role in the constitution of museum collections.

The final stage of the project is the migration of the original database, now technically outdated and impossible to maintain, to the BSR digital library. The John Marshall digital collection includes photographs, handwritten cards, as well as transcriptions of letters and additional documents. Although it is more complex than the existing collections in the Digital Library, in recent months, thanks to a close collaboration with our IT consultant, Emme.Bi.Soft, we have found a way to migrate all the data and maintain the original structure of the database in our digital library. An exciting new collection will therefore soon be added to our Digital Library.

The John Marshall project was from its inception externally funded by the British Academy (BA Strategic Development programme) and a group of generous private sponsors: Mr Christian Levett and Professor Peter and Mrs Anne Wiseman. Their financial support was instrumental in initiating and taking forward this research project over a long period, resulting in important outputs and online material that are now available for all.

See the old database [here](#). The new collection will be on the digital library [here](#).

Raphaële Mouren, Head of Research Collections

Falerii Novi: the fringes of the city

In November 2022 I started work on the PhD project "Falerii Novi: ai margini della città" (Falerii Novi: the fringes of the city), supported by the BSR in collaboration with the University of Pisa. The project makes use of a suite of non-invasive investigation methods (geophysical prospection, aerial photography, satellite imagery) to examine the suburban area of Falerii Novi.

The subject of the project, the periphery of a Roman city, remains an understudied theme in archaeology, despite the crucial role that the immediate hinterland of cities had on the local economy and in various aspects of urban life. It is known that hinterlands were intensively occupied by villas and farms, as well as supporting the infrastructure, such as roads and aqueducts, that connected the city. Periurban areas also represented the

funerary landscape of the city, with mausolea and necropoli lining the main access routes, in the case of Falerii Novi the Via Amerina. Finally, large public monuments such as amphitheatres were occasionally placed outside the city wall.

The Roman occupation of the periurban area of Falerii Novi is attested to by some remarkable standing structures (the amphitheatre, some mausolea and a stretch of the aqueduct). Moreover, a few past studies, which only partially investigated the periphery of the city, underlined the archaeological potential of this area.

My PhD project aims therefore to conduct an organic and comprehensive study of the hinterland of Falerii Novi, mainly based upon extensive non-invasive survey, including a magnetometry prospection over an area of c. 45 hectares. The new data collected, together with a review of the archival and bibliographic sources, will help to better understand the ancient topography and occupation of the suburban area of the Roman city. The conclusions achieved will also support the ongoing Falerii Novi Project in contextualizing the city in a broader context.

Whilst during the winter I spent some time in the library to study and collect bibliography, this summer I started the magnetometry prospection and covered over 30 hectares of agricultural fields. The data collected are currently being processed.

Elena Pomar, Geophysics Researcher



Magnetometry data collection over the fields surrounding Falerii Novi,
July 2023

Update from Architecture

One of the main aims of the BSR Faculty of Architecture – re-established now after a gap of almost thirty years – is to ensure that the Rome Scholarship in Architecture is securely funded for the future.

To this end, the BSR has, for the first time, run a week-long architecture summer school, under the title ‘Reading Rome’. Twelve practices were invited to send young architects and engineers, where possible from under-represented groups, to join a course which was inspirationally led by the RIBA Gold Medal winning architects Sheila O’Donnell and John Tuomey, supported by faculty member Marco Iuliano and new BSR architecture research fellow Antonello Alici. The practices paid a course fee, and a matching sum by way of a contribution to the cost of the architecture scholarship. John and Sheila generously gave their time for free. The course was a great success, and we plan now to repeat it next summer. Also new this year, and also very successful, was the Architecture and Cinema summer school which took place at the BSR and was led by Francois Penz from the University of Cambridge.

In Rome, at the moment, are our two 2023/4 architecture award-holders, Dominic Walker (Rome Scholar in Architecture) and Hiba Aboyadi (Giles Worsley Rome Fellow). Both will have the benefit during their three month stay of a visit from new member of faculty Guido Beltramini, who will be at the BSR delivering a paper at the conference on the subject 'The Allure of Rome: Studying Ancient Architecture 1500-1550', organised in collaboration with the University of Birmingham. Guido is the director of the Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio in Vicenza.

Bob Allies, Chair of the Faculty of Architecture



Students of the course 'Reading Rome' sketching during a visit at Ostia Antica, September 2023. Photo by Silvia Calderoni.

New research in the Aterno Valley

The BSR has a long history of research in the Abruzzo, most recently with the universities of Oxford and Chieti at Iuvanum, and this summer saw the commencement of a new collaboration with the Università degli studi dell'Aquila, the Soprintendenza ABAP per le province di L'Aquila e Teramo and the Comune di Barisciano to begin investigations of the vicus of Furfo.

The site, a few kilometres to the east of Aquila in the Comune di Barisciano lies on the ancient via Claudia Nova, close to the larger better known Roman town of Peltunium. The site has been identified thanks to the discovery of several inscriptions, one of which, dated to the beginning of the 1st century BC, is still in situ (CIL, IX, 3521) inside a structure identified as a public fountain or cistern.



Furfo, Santa Maria di Farfona. Photo by Stephen Kay



Furfo inscription. Photo by Stephen Kay

Close by is the ruin of the church of Santa Maria di Farfona. The aim of the project is to investigate the vicus, a little studied form of Roman settlement, in its entirety. Few excavated examples exist; therefore the project seeks to understand the role this small centre had within the territory.

A first season of work, generously supported by the Comune di Barisciano, was undertaken in late summer with geophysical prospection used to begin to map the hypothesised extent of the site. Alongside this, a team from the Università degli studi dell'Aquila began a fieldwalking survey, coupled with the 3D recording of the few standing structures.

Stephen Kay, Archaeology Manager



Furfo, Aterno valley. Photo by Veronica Castignani

Visita Annuale di Roma

The 2023 edition of the BSR Ashby Patrons' annual visit to Rome took our group on an energetic trip through *Three Romes in Three Days*. Suited with our walking shoes on, and umbrellas at the ready we visited the Roman Forum with Professor Mary Beard, looked at the architecture of Medieval Rome with Professor Chris Wickham, and we spent some time in the opulence of Renaissance Rome with Professor Raphaële Mouren. With our expert guides we were able to stand in the doorway of the Tempio di Antonino e Faustina for an elevated view of the Roman Forum, descend through time in the Basilica of S. Clemente get up close with Piranesi's *Le Antichità Romane* in the rare books' room of the Biblioteca Corsiniana.

While the Autumn term has only just started here in Rome, we are already looking ahead to next year, and the 2024 visit is shaping up to be an archaeological adventure. A fitting theme given the namesake of this incredibly important group of BSR supporters. The dates have been set for Thursday 18 – Sunday 21 April 2024 and we will have further details in the coming months. If you are not an Ashby Patron and are interested in knowing more, please contact development@bsrome.it or see the website here: <https://bsr.ac.uk/join-support-become-an-ashby-patron/>

Karin Grundy, Development Consultant



Pictures taken during the Ashby Members visit in Rome in 2023

New people at the BSR!



Angela Trentacoste, new Peter J. Smith Fellow in Archaeology

Nearly 10 years after a residency at the BSR on a Mougins Museum Rome Award, I am delighted to be back as the Peter J Smith Fellow in Archaeology. Following a PhD at the University of Sheffield, my original stay at the BSR helped launch me onto research positions at Oxford and followed by a recent stay in Kiel, where I was able to grow my core archaeological expertise from zooarchaeology (the analysis of animal bones from archaeological sites) into a multi-disciplinary research programme investigating broader questions of human–environment interaction. I remain motivated by many of same themes I did as an award-holder – feeding cities, mobilisation of resources as a means to political power, Roman impact on food systems and landscapes – but I have a few more tools to assist me, thanks to formative experiences on the Oxford Roman Economy Project, ZooMWest ERC Grant, and a Humboldt Fellowship in the CAU Archaeological Stable Isotope Laboratory.

Looking back over this period, some things have remained with me. Connections, collaborations, and friendships I made as an award holder have strengthened. I still have (and almost fit into!) the black jacket

I wore in my first BSR photo. Now as I settle into my new role, I'm looking forward to the future and a new chapter. Firstly, in terms of research, being based at the BSR means I no longer need to board an airplane to look at archaeological material.

Having the freshly excavated assemblage from Falerii Novi downstairs feels like a luxury. Site visits can be arranged in days rather than months. This access will change the pace and improve the quality of the work as well as the cooperations that make it possible. Secondly, I have the privilege of being able to re-experience Rome through the eyes of our award holders. The introductory presentations in recent weeks were a showcase of diverse and inspiring projects.

The calendar quickly filling up with talks, walks, and visits organised by residents. It's fantastic to be back in this community, and alongside my own research I look forward to helping facilitate our academic programme and the experiences of our residents.



Courtney Quaintance, new Programmes Manager

I am delighted to have joined the BSR as Programmes Manager in September 2023.

I studied voice performance as an undergraduate and began my professional life as an opera singer, which inspired me to study Italian language, literature, and music history. I followed my love of Italian to Florence, where I earned a Master's degree in Italian Renaissance literature, and eventually received a PhD in Italian literature from the University of Chicago and a second PhD in History of the Performing Arts from the "Sapienza" University here in Rome. From 2008 to 2017, I was Assistant and then Associate Professor of Italian at Dartmouth College, where I taught Italian language and literature and served frequently as faculty director of the Dartmouth Rome Center.

My research interests include literary and academic translation, early modern Italian women writers, salon culture in sixteenth-century Venice, and seventeenth-century Italian opera, with particular focus on women singers.

Here at the BSR, my responsibilities include administering award competitions and managing the selection process, advising and supporting applicants and award-holders, supporting the BSR's three faculties and coordinating faculty meetings, and supporting the Director in developing strategic targets for the BSR's academic and fine arts programmes. This month, I am very busy organizing and advertising the calls for applications to BSR awards. I am greatly enjoying my new colleagues and this year's wonderful group of award-holders, and I look forward to supporting BSR faculty in selecting next year's lucky crew.



Alessandra Tafaro, new British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellow

The BSR is delighted to announce the arrival of a new British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellow, **Dr Alessandra Tafaro**. Alessandra, who was an award holder at the BSR in 2022, joins us from Macerata where she has been a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Macerata since 2022. She completed her BA and MA Degrees at the University of Rome, 'La Sapienza' and her doctoral studies at the University of Warwick.

Tafaro's research sits at the juncture between Latin literature and Roman epigraphy. During her BA fellowship at the BSR, she will work on a project entitled 'Inscribing Anonymity: Unauthored Poetry in Roman Epigraphic Culture' – which will provide a ground-breaking analysis of a hitherto underexplored corpus of anonymous metrical inscriptions from Rome and Pompeii (I century BC–II century AD), filling a crucial gap in scholarship.

Through the interpretive frame of anonymity, the project will redefine our understanding of political discourses, negotiation of identity politics, aspects of gender relations, practices of citation, and modes of authorship.

Alessandra will join the BSR academic staff on 1 November 2023.

The BSR bids farewell to **Veronica Castignani**, Archaeology Survey Technician, who is leaving us to embark on a new journey, taking up the position of PhD student at the University of Catania. Good luck!