



Members Newsletter 2026 | February Edition

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the first edition of our members' newsletter for 2026, coming to you in this special anniversary year. For 125 years, since its founding in 1901, the BSR has supported emerging artists, architects, archaeologists and researchers across the arts and humanities at a pivotal moment in their careers. Our impact on our alumni is deep and lifelong. While small but seismic updates and improvements have been made to the 'BSR experience' through the decades (the addition of bathrooms, the purchasing of a proper coffee machine, a new gallery and lecture theatre etc.), the fundamental experience has not changed much in a century and a quarter, because its key element does not need to change, that is the time and space to meet Rome full-on and learn from all it has to teach us.

In our anniversary year, we would love to hear from our community of residents and alumni about your memories of the BSR: what did you experience here, and how did it change your ideas or practice after you left us? On the website you will find a link to share your memories, please get in touch to tell us about your time here.

Our core aim in this special anniversary year is to begin the work to ensure that the BSR can go on for the next 125 years, doing the things it does so well despite the very real difficulties of the current funding scenario. All donations, of any size and amount, are incredibly welcome to support our community, our programmes and our buildings. We are particularly focused on opportunities for funded residencies in all subject areas.

In addition, as I write building work is about to begin on a family flat on site for award holders: we will also be launching a capital campaign for the beautiful BSR Library, the beating heart of the institution, as we upgrade the spaces and create room for new acquisitions for the future. Again, you can find the link to donations on the website and Stefania in the Development Office would love to hear from you.

It is a cause for great celebration that the BSR is here, in 2026, doing what it does so well. Here's to the next 125 years!

With best wishes,

Abigail



BSR Anniversary Logo

A January Full of New Faces and Fresh Ideas

January brought a wonderful buzz to the BSR as we welcomed our new cohort of fellows—and reunited with returning friends. This year's arrivals span an impressive range of disciplines: fine artists exploring the relationship between metal and stone, Baroque frescoes, disrupting female reductionism in Roman mosaics, and the interference of time; an architect investigating Armando Brasini's legacy and contemporary classical architecture; and scholars examining early modern Italian publishing, diversifying the Renaissance, bodily anxieties, the sea, and death in ancient Rome.



New award-holders visiting the archaeological Park of Ostia Antica, 2026

The welcome festivities set the tone for what promises to be a stimulating few months. After a convivial reception and dinner at the BSR, our visiting Marie Curie fellow James Page led the new arrivals on an archaeological walk through the city, the perfect introduction to Rome's layered history. The fellows have since thrown themselves into BSR life: starting Italian lessons with the wonderful Manuela, presenting their research in a series of engaging short talks, and getting to know our research and administrative staff.

We're thrilled to see this dynamic group already making themselves at home, and we look forward to watching their projects unfold in the months ahead.

Courtney Quaintance, Programmes Manager

The Via Latina. A New Virtual Exhibition

The BSR recently began a new research collaboration with the Norwegian Institute in Rome (DNIR) which aims to conduct a comprehensive study of the development from antiquity to modern times of the stretch of the via Latina located within the Aurelian Walls. One of the oldest of Rome's named roads, it preceded its more famous, fourth-century BC counterpart the via Appia, and extended for over 200 km from Rome to Capua. While stretches of the via Latina and its monuments in the environs of Rome have been well studied, the section inside of the third-century AD Aurelian walls is far less understood.

As part of the research programme, a virtual exhibition has been curated which brings together nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs of this part of the via Latina held by the historic research collections of the BSR and DNIR, together with photographs of how the area appears today. The comparison highlights the changes that have occurred in the last century and a half, particularly with regard to the 'restoration' of monuments. Visit the Virtual Exhibition: [Deceptively unchanged: historic images of the first mile of the via Latina](#). The exhibition is also available in [Norwegian](#).

To learn more about the First mile of the Via Latina Project, see the recently published fieldwork report in the Papers of the British School at Rome 2025:

Kay, Stephen and Christopher Siwicki. "THE FIRST MILE OF THE VIA LATINA PROJECT, ROME." *Papers of the British School at Rome* 93 (2025): 395–97. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27440385>.

Stephen Kay (BSR Archaeology Manager) and Christopher Siwicki (Research Fellow)



The spot on which the Porta Capena is supposed to have stood, where the Appian & the Latin ways separated: the former to the Right; the latter to the Left Hand. Carlo Labruzzi, 1794 [TAIPRII-Mis03-018](#)

An important manuscript added to the Research Collections

In 2025 we were able to buy an important antiquarian manuscript with the generous financial support of **Professor Rosamond McKitterick**, a long-term friend and supporter of the British School at Rome, former Chair of our Faculty of Archaeology, History and Letters and member of the Council of Trustees.

The manuscript, that completes our collection in this field, belonged to **Thomas Ashby**, who noted that he bought in **1920** this '**Miscellanea Lucidi**', but it did not enter our collections when the School acquired his Topography library after his death.



Cover of the manuscript, 2026, photo by Silvia Calderoni

Assembled in the eighteenth century, this book, covered by a simple parchment binding, is a **miscellany of handwritten and printed material**. It contains manuscript texts on the history of the Lago Albano area (South of Rome), some original with additions and corrections, some copied from books as well as original letters (one of them on parchment) and drafts to various correspondents. Included are pamphlets printed in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy, such as a description of the ceremony in honour of Filippo Colonna in 1782 and a printed poem in honour of Cardinal Fabio Chigi (1686).

From the content and the names of the recipients of some of the letters, we can infer that the manuscript probably belonged to Carlo Emanuele Lucidi from Ariccia, author of *Memorie storiche dell'antichissimo municipio ora Terra dell'Ariccia* published in Rome in 1796, of which we own a copy.

Raphaële Mouren - Head of Research Collections



Pages of the manuscript, 2026, photo by Silvia Calderoni

Some news from the Fine Arts Department

In Rome, 2025 was a year of public congregation and demonstration: the city's first Dyke march; 'Pilgrims of Hope' walking through Holy Doors; and a series of powerful protests and strikes in support of Palestine. This socio-political picture was reflected in the content of our first solo exhibition of the academic year, **Anzi Parla** by artist and British Academy postdoctoral fellow, **Eloise Fornieles**. The large paintings and video installation employed the subversive methods found in her practice-led research on the relationship between the body and the voice in acts of protest- from ancient graffiti to the Talking Statues of Rome and Rivolta Femminile - whilst platforming contemporary voices concerned with social justice.



"Anzi Parla" Showcase by Eloise Fornieles, November 2025, photo by Roberto Apa



"Anzi Parla" Showcase by Eloise Fornieles, November 2025, photo by Roberto Apa

As part of our collaboration with Eloise, it was essential to develop an autumn programme of Fine Arts events that would organically accompany the exhibition. We started the program in October with two talks: the first, a lecture by **Helen Cammock**, joint recipient of the Turner Prize in 2019 and winner of the seventh edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women. Using extracts from three of her films she shared the ways in which she approaches projects; how she uses archives to activate conversations across histories and geographies; how she brings herself into the work as both catalyst and conduit and how she works with communities and individuals to develop intersectional narratives.

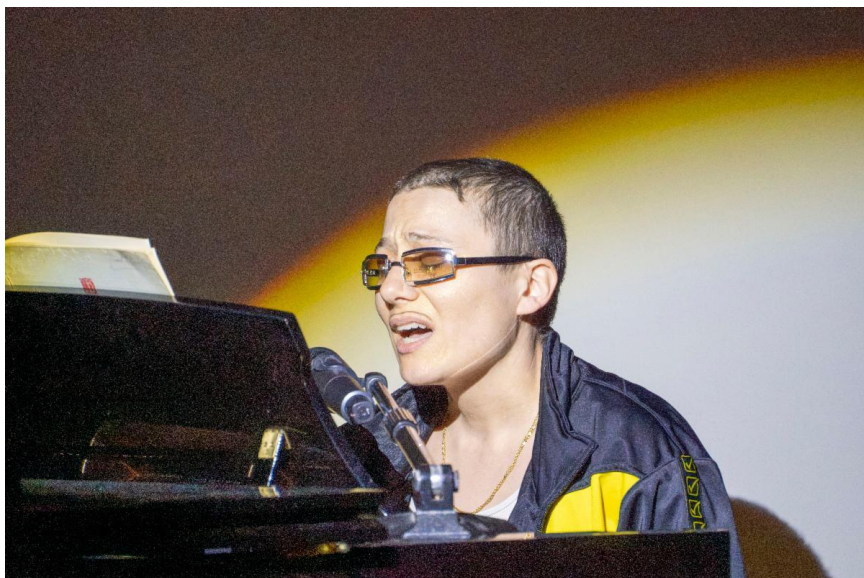
The second, a conversation between American artist **Suzanne Santoro** and **Dr. Alessia Zinnari** (University of Glasgow), who explored art and 1970s Feminism in Rome. They discussed the circumstances surrounding Santoro's move to Rome and her experience of living in the city as an American woman artist in the 1970s. Together, they examined the networks of women artists and activists in Rome at the time, including the work of the Cooperativa del Beato Angelico, one of the first women's art galleries in Europe. In addition to Santoro's renowned photographs of labial folds, both anatomical and sculptural, the conversation also addressed Santoro's lesser-known artistic production, such as the paintings she produced in the 1980s, in which abstraction became a means of articulating the sense of disillusionment that followed the feminist and student movements.

Diverse modes of cultural activism have been an ongoing theme in our program and in Italy there has been a movement of artists, community groups and scholars looking to Transformative Justice as an alternative praxis for addressing abuses of power and systemic violence. The book *La trama alternativa. Sogni e pratiche di giustizia trasformativa contro la violenza di genere* (The Alternative Plot: Dreams and Practices of Transformative Justice Against Gender-Based Violence), by activist and writer **Giusi Palomba**, is among those at the forefront on the subject in Italian literature. We were extremely lucky to have Giusi facilitate workshops at the BSR and in collaboration with Rome's LGBTQA+ organisations bar.lina and Antigone Bookshop.



Giusi Palomba facilitating a workshop at the BSR, 2025, photo by Silvia Calderoni

Our performance evening ***Asterisks***, exemplified queer comedy as a mode of resistance, bringing disquieting, intimate and funny revelations onto the institutional stage. The Roman drag king and lothario, **Nasty Waters**, (aka Nathalie di Sciascio) performed *Untitled Breakdown #1*, wailing the lascivious lyrics of *Party Rock Anthem* in off-key sobs, to the melancholy tune of *Colourblind* by the Counting Crows. This surprisingly tender meltdown of toxic masculinity was met with an ovation of awkward laughter, pumped applause and a shower of red roses from the audience, who, like many before them, fell for his charms.



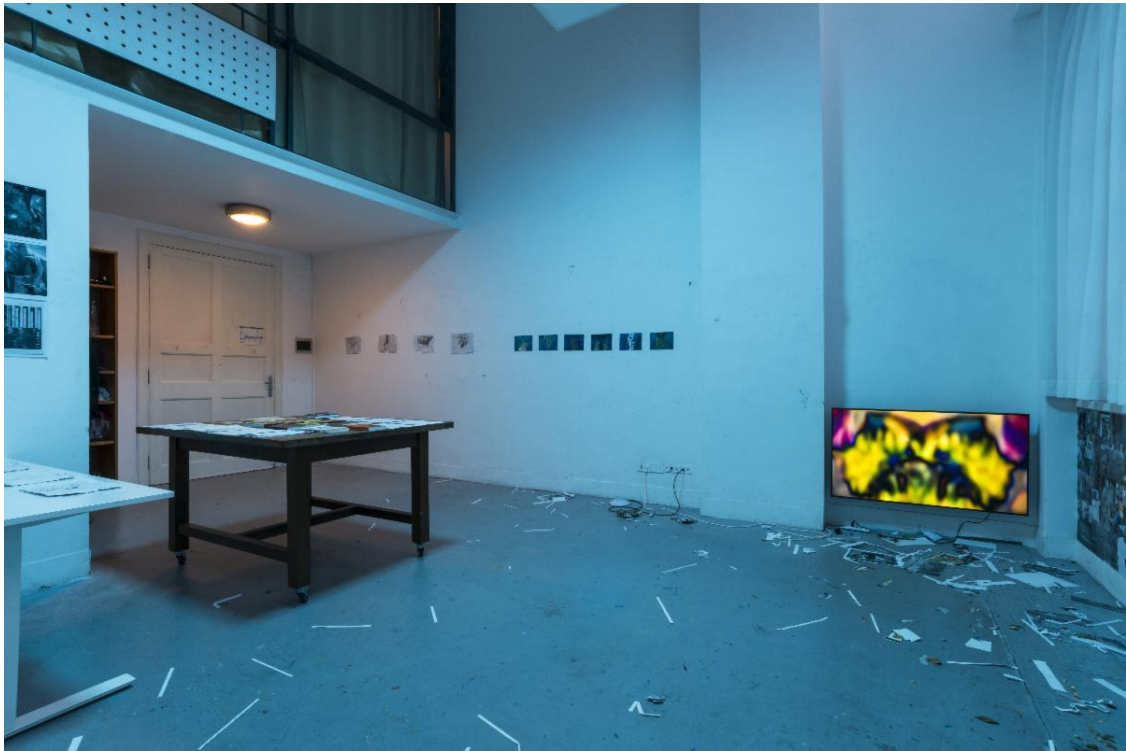
Nasty Waters performing at the BSR, 2025, photo by Silvia Calderoni

This was followed by **Jahan Khajavi**'s lip-synched poem-cum-lecture, set against overhead projections of hand-scrawled illustrations and verse which the poet flipped through whilst boldly voguing, titillating the audience with waggish escapades in clever, Spenserian stanzas. Drag King Jesus then entered to conclude the trinity, performed by Eloise, dressed in a Free Palestine T-shirt, a beard and a crown of thorns. Mediated through the body of Christ, her monologue ***Confessions of a Drag King*** recounts the artist confessing a lifetime of sins to her local priest and their consequent conversation regarding the moral judgements of the Catholic doctrine.



Eloise Fornieles performing at the BSR, 2025, photo by Silvia Calderoni

In December we celebrated our artists and architects in residence with the **Winter Open Studios** which has become a fixture of the programme, offering fellows the opportunity to present their research to the Roman public. Among the highlights was work by **Owain Train McGilvary**, Creative Wales-BSR Fellow who researched the comic figure *Ranxerox*: a punk, 'technocowboy' icon of the 1970s and 80s, created by Stefano Tamburini and Tanino Liberatore. Ranxerox embodies the rebellious and underground spirit of the movement, becoming a central character in cyberpunk comics and Italian pop culture of that period, known for his aesthetics and provocative themes. In McGilvary's research Ranxerox is a metaphor for the construction of the body, comparing the low-brow culture of comic book figures with Italian modernist paintings of mannequins by Giorgio de Chirico. As the residency progressed, this work also integrated the contemporary activity within Rome, as well as other forms of visual culture such as films by Pasolini, queer histories in Italy, writings on fascism and the many frescoes within Rome and its peripheries.



Owain Train McGilvary's studio, Winter Open Studios 2025, photo by Luana Rigolli

The first term was a full and exciting one for the Fine Arts Department and we enjoyed welcoming a large audience to our events. We now look forward to the new year and to celebrating **125 years of the BSR** - reflecting on the hundreds of artists that the school has hosted over that time and enjoying the work of the dynamic group of current fellows. We hope you will join us in doing so.

Eloise Fornieles and Marta Pellerini

ERC Consolidator Grant award

The BSR is thrilled that Dr Angela Trentacoste, Peter J Smith Senior Fellow in Archaeology, has been awarded a €2 million ERC Consolidator Grant for her project 'Feeding Roman Italy: Continuities and Innovations in animal production 600 BC – AD 200' (FEROCI). Angela took up a new position at Queens University Belfast in January, however the BSR will be an integral part of this exciting new research, which aims to transform our understanding of agro-pastoral production in Italy from 600 BC to AD 200. A researcher on the project will be based at the BSR for 4 years, using the recently refurbished laboratory, as FEROCI aims to gain new insights into farming, landscapes and socio-ecological change in the ancient world.

Stephen Kay - BSR Archaeology Manager



Angela Trentacoste, 2025, photo by Luana Rigolli

The Latest PBSR is Here: Volume 93 Now Available

We're thrilled to announce that Volume 93 of the *Papers of the British School at Rome* (PBSR) is now available both in print and in open access on JSTOR.

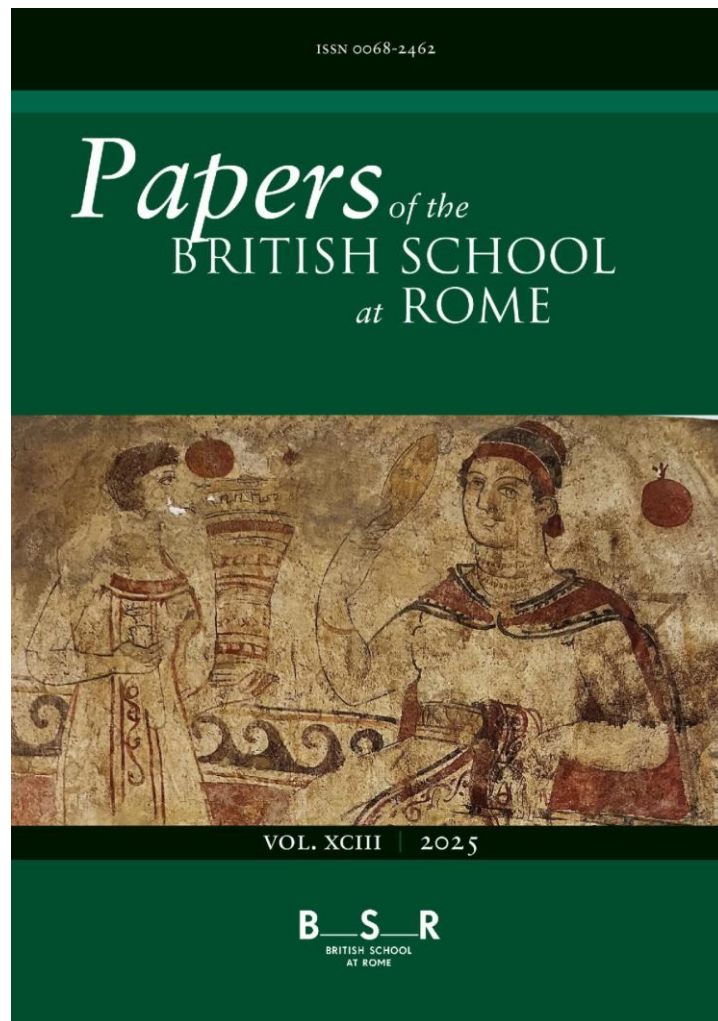
This diverse volume spans ancient to modern Italy, featuring articles on fourth-century BC funerary iconography in southern Italy, Roman women's representations on tokens, imperial legitimacy and Senate relations, early Christian catacombs, Grand Tour architectural drawings, Thomas Ashby's Australian photography, and protest at the 1968 Venice Biennale.

BSR researchers shine throughout: Elena Pomar explores water management systems at Falerii Novi, while Alessandra Tafaro presents previously unpublished funerary inscriptions from our own library. The volume also includes archaeological reports by Stephen Kay and the BSR team, as well as collaborative epigraphic studies that bring new voices to ancient Roman epitaphs.

The BSR is proud to make this research freely accessible worldwide through JSTOR's open access platform.

Read Volume 93 here: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/e27440370>

Courtney Quaintance, Programmes Manager



Cover of the 93rd edition of the Papers of the British School at Rome

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