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## American Collecting, Stefano Bardini & the Taste for Trequattrocento Florence

*Just around the turn of the century, the desire on the part of wealthy American and European collectors for Italian art was exorbitant. Operating out of Florence, the dealer Stefano Bardini (1836-1922) succeeded in matching that demand by stocking collections with ample quantities of high quality supply. Moreover, Bardini deftly cultivated a taste for certain kinds of objects which have since moved into public view in museums around the world. However, as far as the Americans were concerned, Italian art of the Trecento was not especially the objects of desire. On the basis of much newly discovered archival material concerning transactions of art from ca 1870-1900 it can be demonstrated that the transatlantic market was ripe for specifically art of the late fifteenth century, that is, for objects which evoked the age of Lorenzo the Magnificent. This paper examines this phenomenon, the possible reasons behind it, and how Bardini effectively exploited these conditions. In addition, using a case study which involves Bardini, Wilhelm Bode (1845-1929) and the Bostonian Quincy Adams Shaw (1825-1908) it can be demonstrated that this was the generation that refined the relationships among the collector, the dealer and the academic expert/connoisseur. The result was the birth of the business model upon which the younger Bernard Berenson (1865-1959) would build his career. Moreover, as a complex transatlantic synergy, it ultimately provided the very impetus required for Italian trecento art to enter mainstream American collecting and academic discourse in the early twentieth century.*

By 1852, the Bostonian James Jackson Jarves (1818-1888) had effectively relocated to Florence where he began to put together an impressive collection of Italian paintings, among them several from the Trecento (See Appendix 1). As such, Jarves is regarded as one of the earliest American collectors of early Italian painting in the nineteenth century<sup>1</sup>. However, Jarves' predilection for trecento art is likely to have been connected with his brand of Christian spirituality combined with a period propensity for didactic collecting and moreover, it was rooted in the European culture of mid nineteenth-century Florence as he would experience it as an ex-pat. That is also to say, his taste and acquisitions were at odds with the prevailing American collecting inclinations at the time. The evidence in support of this statement may be gleaned from Jarves' failed attempts to sell his collection, first to fellow Bostonian Charles Eliot Norton in 1859<sup>2</sup> and again in 1871 to the newly formed Metropolitan Museum. Yale University acquired the bulk of the collection, first as collateral for a loan to the financially pressed Jarves and subsequently 119 individual works for \$22000 when he ultimately defaulted in 1871<sup>3</sup>. Parenthetically, though Jarves' collection is often referred to as of «Primitives», his collection spanned the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Of the group bought by Yale, twenty-six were attributed to a trecento painter<sup>4</sup>.

As for the Metropolitan Museum, its first acquisition as a new institution in 1870 was a Roman sarcophagus, the gift of an American vice consul in Turkey<sup>5</sup>. It would take some time before mainstream American taste for Italian art of the fourteenth century would find its place in the emerging American private and institutional collections<sup>6</sup>. Of the ninety-seven trecento paintings currently in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, only two entered the collection of the museum during the nineteenth century. Both of these paintings found their way in 1888 from a certain Madame d'Oliviera in Florence to the American law firm of Coudert Brothers, who in turn gifted them to the museum<sup>7</sup>. The rest were twentieth-century acquisitions, with the vast majority of them coming by bequest from George Blumenthal (1858-1941) and then from the estate of Robert Lehman (1892-1969). The Lehman collection included works that had been collected by his father<sup>8</sup>; with respect to these, the majority of the trecento paintings were acquired during the second decade of the twentieth century and, primarily, via the London art market. Of the 8,095 total number of works made in Italy between 1300 and 1600, acquired by the Metropolitan Museum between 1870 and 2013, only ten—all paintings—arrived during the 1870s<sup>9</sup>; whereas, during the 1880s the museum acquired 531 objects<sup>10</sup>, though none were sculpture. Only twenty-five objects were acquired during the 1890s; of these nine are categorized as sculpture, though designated as reproductions<sup>11</sup>. This is all to say, that one cannot say in general, that Americans were especially interested in collecting trecento art in the nineteenth century; thus, using the following case study, this essay proposes to identify what they were collecting and their reasons for doing so.

Within the history of American collecting as it has been generally told, one would move forward in time from Jarves to the Bostonian Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840-1924), who, from 1890, amassed and installed a diverse collection of Italian Renaissance art and decorative arts in her home in Boston<sup>12</sup>. An additional page of that history can now be inserted before that of Gardner. The recent discovery of archival material concerning another Bostonian, Quincy Adams Shaw (1825-1908), reveals that he actually began building his collection some twenty years before Gardner first began. Born in Boston to Brahmins, Quincy Adams Shaw shopped in Europe for art throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century. His collection, begun as early as 1870, was extraordinary, particularly for its attention to Italian Renaissance sculpture, the nucleus of which forms today a substantive part of the current holdings of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston<sup>13</sup>. Nine years after his death in 1908, his bequest was realized with the gift of some fifty-six works by Jean Francois Millet, which at the time represented the largest collection of works by Millet gathered together in one place. In addition the gift

included an exquisite painting by the Venetian master, Tintoretto<sup>14</sup>, and nineteen pieces of Renaissance sculpture, along with various and sundry plaster casts, decorative art and drawings.

The introductory essay of the exhibition catalogue published in 1918 by the Trustees of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts on the occasion of the exhibition of Shaw's bequest of the Millets and the sculpture offers tremendous insight into the aesthetic sensibilities of one of America's most astute collectors<sup>15</sup>. One gets the sense that the purchases made by Shaw were not only contrived with specific purpose, but sensitively thought out along aesthetic lines. In this way, Quincy Adams Shaw was evidently in the minority of the group of wealthy Americans who were at the time shopping in Europe. Just seven years before the publication of the catalogue (three years following Shaw's death), an American newspaper published an interview with the art historian and otherwise giant of the German museums, Wilhelm Bode (1845-1929). The career-long super specialist commented that, he: «feared many American collectors did not take sufficient time to make judicious selections of art works as to purchase the same with safety», noting that «in earlier days American collectors of wealth, such as Henry G. Marquand and Quincy A. Shaw went to Europe almost every year and devoted months of study and research, before the purchase of art works... Nowadays... some noted American collectors rush through Europe in a motor [car] and one I know has been to Europe twice only in his life»<sup>16</sup>.

Much is known about the circumstances by which Shaw acquired the Millets—these were obtained over the years by commission from the artist, and by purchase from another collector of Millet, the American painter and Boston resident, William Morris Hunt. Others were bought at auctions in Paris, most notably from the collection of Émile Gavet (1830–1904)<sup>17</sup>. Why the Millets? On one hand, Shaw was privileged and well educated but of a generation that was really only one step away from that of the labouring emigrant toiling against the backdrop of the as yet unspoiled wilds of the American landscape. If we consider just two of the Millets that were among the first Shaw acquired, one can imagine how Millet's *Priory at Vauville, Normandy*, evoked for him a view of the Atlantic from the Massachusetts shore. Likewise, the realist tenets engaged by Millet in *The Sower* were of the same experiential genre as that which motivated Shaw and his cousin Francis Parkman to travel the Oregon Trail, in search of their own American Barbizon.

While the 1918 essay attempted to bring to life the details of Shaw's European search for Millet paintings, it was conspicuously silent when it came to the cir-

cumstances by which he acquired his collection of Italian art, and in particular, the Renaissance sculptures, «of a kind which in [the] future will remain more absolutely than ever out of the Museum's reach»<sup>18</sup>. The objects in question, currently in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, are of the highest quality and for the most part rational in their association one to the other. With respect to the Venetian paintings, we can guess that this Bostonian would have shared in his generation's attraction to Venice. Indeed, the lure of the city on the lagoon lingered well into the next generation of Americans, Gardner among them. Shaw's purchases of large and substantially intact altarpieces suggest early American «institutional purchasing», in this case, on behalf of the Museum of Fine Arts. And indeed the works by Vivarini and Tintoretto entered the museum well before the 1918 bequest<sup>19</sup>.

As for the sculpture, the majority of them evoke the very essence of Florentine sculptural production from the second half of the fifteenth century, having attached to them attributions to Donatello, and his workshop assistant Bartolomeo Bellano, or to Verrocchio, and his workshop associate, Francesco di Simone Ferrucci, and others to Mino da Fiesole. More than one generation of the della Robbia family is represented, with glazed terracottas by Luca and Andrea, to the unglazed head of the young John the Baptist attributed to Giovanni della Robbia. Despite the coherency and quality of Shaw's collection of sculpture, and what turns out to be a glaring stylistic shift in desire from Venice to Florence, next to nothing has been known about their provenance prior to their acquisition by Quincy Adams Shaw.

Shaw emerges as an important early American collector of Italian Renaissance art, and one who overwhelmingly favoured the Florentine Quattrocento, and not the Trecento. Thus it might be asked, why? And what were the factors that compelled these choices? One could identify broader trends indicated by, for example, the 1878 appearance of an English translation of Burckhardt's *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* as one among many signs of an already increased interest in Italian art; likewise, publications such as Burckhardt's served as regenerative stimuli in the art market. Yet this does not account for both the specificity and seemingly curatorial collocation of Shaw's sculptures and the migration of his taste to a taste for Florentine quattrocento production.

Incredibly, the Museum of Fine Arts had never known their provenance prior to Shaw's acquisition. In order to see this mystery solved, we now turn our attention to possibly the most active Italian dealer at the turn of the century, the Florentine Stefano Bardini (1836-1922)<sup>20</sup>. Following a more than sixty-year career in the

art market, Bardini died in 1922 and the business was carried forward by his son Ugo until his death in 1966. Through a complicated bequest, the legacy of the Bardini business remains in Florence under the jurisdiction of the state and the commune<sup>21</sup>. Since 2010, I have been working in the state archive on the Bardini material, and early on, I located some correspondence between Quincy Adams Shaw and Stefano Bardini. This was a significant accidental discovery in itself since no Shaw papers are known to exist. Moreover, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston finally has gotten some long awaited answers as to when, where and from whom Quincy Adams Shaw acquired his collection of Italian Renaissance sculpture.

The announcement of this conference gave me the opportunity to scrutinize Shaw's collecting and it caused me to further ask, why not Trecento? It turns out that the answer lies less with the taste of the collector than with the particular cultural disposition of the dealer. By this I mean that it was Bardini's training as an artist at the Accademia di Belle Arti during the years of Italian unification that coalesced to define for him a particular brand of Italian art which he marketed to collectors. Broadly speaking the Italian artistic community as embodied by the Macchiaioli closely identified with and participated in the last years of the Risorgimento<sup>22</sup>. As such, current political events inevitably inspired particular choices for the narratives assigned topics for history painting in the Accademia. Earlier in the Risorgimento, the artists in the generation before Bardini aligned their political sensibilities with Republican Florence and historical figures such as Savonarola and Machiavelli. Later, the younger generation, Bardini among them, was drawn to the Florence in the age of Lorenzo the Magnificent de' Medici. Bardini and his academic cohort drew upon historic themes from late fifteenth-century Medicean Florence to express anxiety about the potential perils of Garibaldi's last campaign, for which Bardini volunteered to serve. Ultimately, the appointment of Florence in 1865 as capital of the new kingdom only served to heighten the cultural appropriation of a very specific glorious past time—the golden age of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Moreover, Bardini's formative years, as an artist and as a dealer, coincided with the ambitious plans of urban renewal which would come to define *Firenze Capitale* on behalf of the newly unified Kingdom of Italy<sup>23</sup>. The south side of the Arno east of the Ponte Vecchio was restructured, the Piazzale Michelangelo was emerging to crown the hill just outside the old walls, and new *viali* circumnavigated the old city centre. The old market was demolished in order to give way to Piazza Repubblica. At the same time, the cemetery on the south side of Piazza del Duomo was disinterred and much of the canonry complex was demolished in order

to open up and unify the piazza<sup>24</sup>. A similar project was underway on the north side of Santa Maria Novella, with its cemetery giving way to a grander railway station. These were the years that saw the collocation and installation of the Bargello, where the visitor was first confronted with a courtyard thickly encrusted with the heraldic devices of ancient Florentine families, before moving on to period rooms boasting copious amounts of masterworks by such canonical figures as Donatello, Verrocchio and Luca della Robbia. In 1865, the façade of Santa Croce was completed and the competition for the façade of Florence cathedral was announced; its completion more than twenty years later would coincide with the fifth centenary of Donatello's birth in 1887. 1875 was witness to the city-wide celebrations in honour of the fourth centenary of the birth of Michelangelo. This is all to say that from 1850, through the end of the century, the city of Florence was humming with sculptors and masons all with an eye that harkened back to a specific glorious past time and whose professional livelihood was tightly bound with historical reconstruction keyed to quattrocento Florence.

In a broader context, the evolution of Bardini's career also coincided with the rise of the global art market and the concomitant, and very self-aware, institutional and private collection competition within Europe and across the Atlantic. From ca 1850 there was an identifiable taxonomic shift from objects marketed and sold as *bric-à-brac* to «objects of art», which would then be more precisely categorized<sup>25</sup>. The rise in value of art on the market and the increased stakes for institutional and private collecting came together as a groundswell out of which emerged the figure of the professional/academic art historian. This in turn gave way to the birth and proliferation of art historical publications, which in many ways were fueled by the increased use and developing technologies of photography and the photographic representation of art.

At the same time, contemporary production of art, decorative arts, architecture and its ornamentation embraced a neo-renaissance style. Likewise, fifteenth-century Medicean artists such as Donatello, Verrocchio, Luca della Robbia and Mino da Fiesole enjoyed a local revival and this had a complex impact on the art market. And perhaps the common ground where contemporary production would meet the old masterworks was in the practice of a certain kind of restoration and no less, fabrication—that is, a neo-renaissance that was not so «neo».

Bardini built his palace *Gallerie* showrooms decorated in this particular brand of Medicean renaissance style<sup>26</sup>. Lorenzo the Magnificent himself would likely have been comfortable in Bardini's palace with its internal courtyards, coffered wood ceilings, fabulous collection of antique carpets, quite the quantity of arms and

armour and of course a healthy dose of *stemme*. Bardini's installation of the many rooms was vicariously didactic, with objects from Antiquity through Baroque. Yet, far and away, the preponderance of them harkened back to late fifteenth-century Florence. Moreover, Bardini's rubric of display was insistently evocative of the structure and rubric of fifteenth-century Florentine inventories, such as that made for Palazzo Medici in 1492 for Lorenzo il Magnifico. This type of taxonomic structuring, that is, room by room and with the particular placements of objects in the rooms, is, in many ways, reborn in the rich visual materiality of Bardini's displays. Thus, their success may owe something to traditions which ran deep in the culture of commodities, notwithstanding the obvious relationship to the ancient practice of *loci*, the *memory palace*, which in itself probably encouraged first-time shoppers to return over and over again.

After his formal training as an artist in the late 1850s, Stefano Bardini's career morphed to that of a dealer, who enjoyed remarkable success particularly from the early 1870s through 1900. It turns out that his earliest most rapacious and acquisitive clients included the American architect Stanford White (1853-1906), the rising star of the German museums Wilhelm Bode and the wealthy Bostonian Quincy Adams Shaw (fig. 1).

I have located nearly four dozen letters from Shaw to Bardini, and nearly as many from Bardini to Shaw. This research path has led to a deeper understanding of the complex social network within which take place the even more complex, and most often, opaque transactions of art in the marketplace. To wit, more letters have been identified between Bardini and Bode which discuss Shaw and his potential acquisitions or completed transactions, and letters between Shaw and Bode which discuss Bardini, as well as countless third party functionary letters. From this array, and a multitude of other supporting material, it can be affirmed that the transaction of art in the global marketplace is not linear in the way that we like to see proper provenance constructed. Rather, objects are often owned by several individuals, provenance is often fictive, everyone routinely lies to each other, and it is apparent that the majority of the aspects of a transaction are verbal, and thus undocumented.

A selected exchange of letters found in the archive nicely defines a cultural microcosm, but it also demonstrates that the American Quincy Adams Shaw is collecting Quattrocento instead of Trecento. The object in question is a terracotta bust of Lorenzo de' Medici, today in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston<sup>27</sup> (fig. 2). On September 22, 1898, Quincy wrote a long letter to Bardini regarding this object,



probably transacted some thirty years before. Beginning with some contemporary and sensitive comments regarding the Spanish American war, he segued into concern for Bode's failing health. The next few passages concern the bust:

So many objects have passed through your hands that you may not remember the terracotta portrait bust (said to have been that of Lorenzo de' Medici) which Mr. Gavet had from you and passed from him to me—Dr. Bode's attribution of it was to Verrocchio. Do you recall the bust and did you have an opinion as to its probable attribution when in your hands—if so, I should be glad to know it. Until Dr. Bode saw the bust at my house and spoke of it as by Verrocchio I had never given a thought to the matter, and Mr. Gavet made no mention as to its attribution when it came to me; but I am told now that others who can have no means of forming an opinion except from seeing some print or photograph of the bust, ascribe it to another origin. I can't say that attributions have much interest to me generally, but if you do happen to have formed an opinion when the Bust was with you, there could be no one who would be so well informed as to all circumstances connected with its history and of so wide an experience in Italian Art, and so competent to decide a question as to whom this bust or other marbles should be ascribed. This is a question for myself only and not to be given to any person whatsoever<sup>28</sup>.

Many years later, it had come to Shaw's attention that the attribution was being questioned and he turned, most confidentially, to Bardini for his opinion. Almost immediately Bardini responded:

For the bust of Lorenzo de' Medici that you bought from Gavet, I still think that it is more in the manner of Pollaiuolo than that of Verrocchio; but in order to make a fair judgment, one would have to review the bust and compare it to the works of these two masters... In Italy, the old objects are becoming very rare and in fact the sculptures to be found are very few. On the other hand, there is a great abundance of false things and so well made that it is very difficult [to tell the difference] without putting one's head through the panel [sic]. You are blessed that you bought at a good time and this is very difficult to repeat in these days. I would be very happy to see you again and you can still find good paintings, if not marbles and bronze<sup>29</sup>.

From the letter we learn that this terracotta portrait bust was first transacted from Bardini to Émile Gavet in Paris; in turn, Gavet sold it to Shaw. The evidence of the archive confirms that Bardini's first [documented] commercial activity in Florence was in 1866<sup>30</sup>. But the archive also confirms that he was traveling to Paris

already in 1867 and very likely because of the business and networking opportunities surrounding the Universal Exhibition in Paris from April through November that year. I would hypothesize that Bardini's earliest commercial success was achieved in Paris, where he would place objects with other dealers. It is also likely that a Florentine marketplace niche did not actually open up for Bardini until after the death of an older and very successful dealer, Giovanni Freppa, around 1868.

The earliest extant letter from Shaw to Bardini dates to 1874, though it is apparent from its contents that, by this time, their relationship had begun some years before. The correspondence between them reveals that they saw each other in Florence and also in Paris, where Bardini traveled probably at least once per year. But with respect to this bust, since Shaw obtained it from Gavet, it would seem that the acquisition was made before Shaw personally met Bardini, i.e. in the 1860s<sup>31</sup>.

Altogether, I would posit that whilst perusing the Parisian collection of Émile Gavet shopping for Millets, an Italian Renaissance sculpture that had originated with Bardini caught Quincy's eye. And while Shaw had probably by then bought the Venetian painting, this object appealed to a different side of Quincy Adams Shaw. By its very subject matter—Lorenzo the Magnificent de' Medici, the Brahmin *par excellence* of fifteenth-century Florence—this object redirected the shopper's attention and desire from Venice to Florence. In turn, Bardini branded, marketed and supplied to Shaw objects whose style and authorship evoked art in the golden age of Lorenzo, that is, art and artifact for which Bardini was culturally disposed to transact. Likewise, Quincy Adams Shaw would find in it an immense personal resonance, for he himself was enjoying his own American Gilded Age.

## **APPENDIX 1**

*10 Piazza S. Spirito*

*Florence, March 19, 1876*

*Giulio Meyer, Esc*

*Director of the Berlin Museums*

*My Dear Sir,*

*I owe you many apologies for not replying sooner to your amiable favor of the 14 Jan[uary] but absence from Florence and illness must plead my excuse. I have been waiting also to see if I could get some better photographs to send, but find it impossible. Having received proposals for my Leonardo, Luini, Giorgione, (portrait of Teobaldo of Ferrara) my Benozzo Gozzoli, for one of the German galleries, if we conclude the negotiation, I should wish to deliver the pictures in person. In that event, being not far from Berlin, I might bring with me such pictures as you should have the goodness to indicate, by the photographs I sent you in my letter of December 15<sup>th</sup> last, if the prices which I write you in advance are satisfactory. Besides the above named pictures here that seem to me most deserving a place in a National Gallery, are the Madonna & Child by Verrocchio, the Crucifixion by Sodoma, an extremely fine portrait, attributed by Italian connoisseurs to Sebastian del Piombo, after a drawing by Michel Angelo of Victoria Colonna; at all events a face d'art that gives much probability to this conjecture, an excellent Annunciation by De Credi, a fine cartone desegni [sic] of the Recording Angel by Correggio, large; a portrait of Innocent X by Velasquez, one belonging to Cardinal Andrea di Doria, and the large battle piece, Defeat of Death of Catherine by S. Rosa, signed, and which all connoisseurs consider by far his finest composition of this character. Were several pictures selected the prices would be reduced in proportion to the number taken. The Sigismondo di Malatesta of Rimini picture by Giorgione, early manner, including the portrait of his mistress Isotta & her pilgrim castle of Rimini in the background etc, & inscription on the sarcophagus with the foreground of the message sent by Pope to his excommunication, makes it a very interesting composition.*

*I should not however be willing to bring any pictures to Berlin unless there was a reasonable assurance of the sale at least of one & immediate payment, & the expenses & insurance paid on those not taken & their return to Florence, as proposed by another gallery which has made me a similar proposition to yours.*

*I append prices as a basis of negotiation in case of a serious disposition to purchase, with the understanding however that these are confidential. Overtures have been made for the purchase of the whole collection (of 25 pictures, on the part of an Am. Museum. I should of course give the preference to make a sale to my native country, in case the museum comes to an affirmative conclusion at once at 12.000 Lit. Swiftly - Leonardo da Vinci Lit 6.000. Portrait of Don Carlos by Sofonisba Anguissola - 30*

*If you could give me in reply immediately your ideas, I should be much obliged, because I have just received a letter requesting me to come to America, and I wish to leave by the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, to be gone several months.*

*With sentiments of profound esteem, believe me, my dear Sir,*

*Most truly yours,*

*James J. Jarves*

*Luini-2000 / Giorgione-portrait-12,000 / [Giorgione] – Malatesta-12,000 / S. Rosa – Death of Catilen – 2000 / Claude - Marine – 1,000 / Portrait of Victoria Colonna – 500 / Bronzino – [Portrait] of Prince d'Este – 200 / Sodoma - Crucifixion – 300 / L. di Credi – Annunciation – 250 / Fra Bartolommeo – Prophet Isaiah – 250 / Velasquez – Innocent X 400 / (cartone / Correggio – Recording Angel – 100 / [Correggio] Head of David – 300 / Verrocchio – Holy Family – 400 / Gentile da Fabriano – Altar – 125 / Fra Filippo Lippi – Adoration – 150 / Giotto – Diptych Epiphany & Flight – 35 / Portrait of Lady Andrea – 100 / [Portrait] Dr. Johnson by Sir Joshua Reynolds – 200 / Tondo – Sacra Familia e Santi – Fra Diamante – 300 / Lippi – St. Jerome and three saints – 24 / Cima da Conegliano – insured! signed. Dated 1522 – 60 / and a few others of minor importance – Benozzo Gozzoli – Defeat of Pyrrhus - 400 / Matteo de Siena – Epiphany – 30*

Berlin Zentralarchiv, NL Meyer/314.

I am grateful to Petra Winter and her amazing colleagues at the ZAB for their kind assistance and generosity during my recent visit. I am also in debt to Paul Tucker for solving the last few nasty paleographic quandaries of this letter.

- 1 I am grateful to the organizers of the conference for giving me the opportunity to query and present some of my research. This essay is a redacted and revised version of my conference paper, and a small part of a much larger project regarding Stefano Bardini and the supply of art. Unless otherwise noted, all transcriptions and translations are mine.

The other early American collector of note, though also not particularly interested in trecento painting, was Thomas Jefferson Bryan. For an important assessment of Bryan within the context of the earlier nineteenth century, see I. REIST, *Sacred Art in the Profane New World of Nineteenth-century America*, in *Sacred Possessions: Collecting Italian Religious Art, 1500-1900*, eds G. Feigenbaum, S. Ebert-Schifferer, and G. Tirnanić, Los Angeles 2011, pp. 224-240.

- 2 Charles Eliot Norton, Typescript of *Letters, 1859-1860: concerning a collection of Italian paintings owned by James Jackson Jarves of Florence*, Boston Athenaeum, Mss. L637.
- 3 Mark ALDEN BRANCH, *Lost and Found*, «Yale Alumni Magazine», May 2000 at: <[http://archives.yalealumnimagazine.com/issues/00\\_05/art.html](http://archives.yalealumnimagazine.com/issues/00_05/art.html)>. For additional bibliography see <<http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/jarvesj.html>>. Traditionally, Jarves has been regarded as a collector, but it is perhaps time to re-evaluate his role as primarily one of a dealer masquerading as a collector, as in the case of others, such as Émile Gavet. Writing confidentially to Julius Meyer (Berlin Museums) from his Florentine home in Piazza Sto Spirito, on 19 March, 1876, Jarves heavily marketed to Meyer a collection of some twenty-seven paintings, of which only one was from the Trecento. This was a diptych of the *Epiphany* and *Flight into Egypt* by Giotto, valued at thirty-five *lire*, a slight amount when compared to a Luini listed for 2000. He had sent photographs and coyly told Meyer that he was in negotiations with another German gallery; he also indicated that «overtures have been made for the purchase of the whole collection» by an American museum. Considering he had not been able to sell his collection to America in repeated attempts in the 1850s and 1860s, it is hard to take this letter at face value. It is more likely a clever attempt to convey a [fictive] account of market interest in what seems to have been a case of works having been purchased for the purpose of being resold as «a collection». See APPENDIX 1.
- 4 R. STURGIS, *Manual of the Jarves Collection of early Italian pictures, deposited in the galleries of the Yale School of Fine Arts. Being a catalogue, with descriptions of the pictures contained in that collection, with biographical notices of artists and an introductory essay, the whole forming a brief guide to the study of early Christian art*, New Haven 1868. W. RANKIN, *Some early Italian pictures in the Jarves collection of the Yale School of Fine Arts at New Haven*, «American Journal of Archaeology», 10/11, 1895, pp. 137-151. I have chosen to take very literally «collecting Trecento» to include objects thought to be produced during the fourteenth century. Often, trecento art has been culturally categorized as «primitive», and in this case, the category is populated with representatives from other centuries and other places. And, obviously, aesthetic sensibilities and notions of primitivism collide and have an effect on collecting practice. Thus, in 1868, Jarves' collection was termed «early Italian», whereas in 1972, it was designated as «primitive», for which see D. ARNHEIM, *Italian Primitives: The Case History of a Collection and Its Conservation*, New Haven 1972. The 1972 exhibition catalogue celebrated the now controversial restoration of the Jarves paintings, included among the forty-seven works paintings attributed to Ghirlandaio, Filippino Lippi, Giovanni Bellini, Titian and Giorgione. For the issue of primitivism and additional bibliography, see F. CONNELLY, *The Sleep of Reason: Primitivism in Modern European Art and Aesthetics, 1725-1907*, University Park 1995. See also C. KLENZE, *The Growth of Interest in the Early Italian*

- Masters from Tischbein to Ruskin*, «Modern Philology», 4.2, 1906: 207-274.
- 5 See article by M. BOWLING at: <<http://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-museum/now-at-the-met/Features/2010/This-Weekend-in-Met-History-November-21>>. See also K. BAETJER, *Buying Pictures for New York: The Founding Purchase of 1871*, «Metropolitan Museum Journal», 39, 2004: 161-245, and R.W. DE FOREST, *William Tilden Blodgett and the Beginnings of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, «The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin», 1/ 3, Feb. 1906: 37-42.
  - 6 See also M.J. HOLLER and B. KLOSE-ULLMANN, *Art Goes America*, «Journal of Economic Issues» 44/1, 2010: 89-112.
  - 7 These are a *Madonna and Child* by Guariento di Arpo (Gift of Coudert Brothers, 1888 Accession Number: 88.3.86) and a *St Paul* by Lippo Memmi (Gift of Coudert Brothers, 1888 Accession Number: 88.3.99). Extensive bibliographic information is contained on the museum's website.
  - 8 Philip Lehman (1861-1947).
  - 9 This includes accessioned as well as since de-accessioned works. I am hugely grateful to Gretchen Wold, Senior Collections Manager, Department of European Paintings at The Metropolitan Museum of Art for her help in conducting this census.
  - 10 Acquired in the 1880s: 510 drawings, eighteen paintings, one ceramic, one manuscript illumination, one musical instrument.
  - 11 Acquired in the 1890s: nine sculptures [reproductions], six drawings, five manuscript illuminations, four paintings, one ceramic.
  - 12 The 1890s would then see the emergence of mega-collecting on the part of John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913) and Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919).
  - 13 I owe a huge debt to my friends and colleagues in Boston, for their patience and persistent willingness to engage in the conversation regarding their many Shaw objects; I have learned so much from them. In particular, I wish to thank Marietta Cambareri, Curator of Decorative Arts and Sculpture and Jetskalina H. Phillips Curator of Judaica, Art of Europe, Pam Hatchfield, Head of Objects Conservation and Frederick Ilchman, Chair, Art of Europe, all at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
  - 14 In a letter dated 1946 on file at the museum from Shaw's son, he recalled that his father had found and purchased the painting from a church, whose name he could not remember, but which was located «in a small town north of Florence», which I suppose Venice is. In any case, two other sources note the painting in the Shaw collection in Boston already by 1881. The painting was certainly in the Shaw collection by 1881, when it was mentioned in *Greta's Boston Letters*, «Art Amateur», 5/4, 1881, pp. 72-73: 73. E. STRAHAN, *The Art Treasures of America*, 3 vols, Philadelphia 1882, 3, p. 87, wrote that it was «obtained at Venice». An enormous altarpiece by the Venetian painter Bartolomeo Vivarini had already been given to the museum in 1901.
  - 15 *Quincy Adams Shaw collection: Italian Renaissance sculpture; paintings and pastels by Jean François Millet*, exhibition opening April 18, 1918, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1918.
  - 16 «American Art News», 10/7, 1911, pp. 4, 6: 4.
  - 17 For Émile Gavet, see A. CHONG, *Émile Gavet: Patron, Collector, Dealer*, in *Gothic art in the gilded age: Medieval and Renaissance treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling collection*, ed. V. Brilliant et al., Sarasota 2009, pp. 1-21. On 11 and 12 June 1875, a sale exhibition

was held in the Paris saleroom Hôtel Drouot of ninety-five pastels and drawings by Millet from the Émile Gavet Collection (Lugt 1938-1987, no. 35754). See A. PIÉDAGNEL, *Souvenirs de Barbizon. J.-F. Millet*, Paris 1888, pp. 73-83; and exhib. cat. Amsterdam 1988, pp. 10, 23 (n. 3). More than a dozen were bought by Alexis-Eugène Détrimont (b. 1825), according to the BMFA website, presumably on behalf of Shaw. For Détrimont, see: <<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/research/monsieur-pivot-on-horseback>>: «Alexis-Eugène Détrimont (born 1825) was a picture dealer who also dealt in canvases. He started a small framing business in the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs in Paris before setting up in the rue Lafitte. From 1865 to 1870 he was operating at 33 rue Lafitte, and in 1871 he moved to 27», citing A. ROQUEBERT, *Quelques observations sur la technique de Corot*, in *Corot, un artiste et son temps*, (Actes des colloques organisés au Musée du Louvre par le Service Culturel les 1er et 2 mars 1996 à Paris et par l'Académie de France à Rome, Villa Médicis, le 9 mars 1996 à Rome), eds G. de Wallens, V. Pomarède, C. Stefani, Paris and Rome 1998, pp. 73–97 and p. 95, note 14.

- 18 Boston Museum of Fine Arts, *The Quincy Adams Shaw Collection*, «Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin», 16/ 94, 1918): 11-27. Nor are the Venetian works discussed, as they had been on display in the MFA since its earliest years.
- 19 <<http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/the-nativity-32992>> and <<http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/virgin-and-the-dead-christ-with-the-ascension-and-saints-31121>>.
- 20 Almost all of the literature on Bardini is in Italian and stems from the archival material held by the comune; it concerns itself primarily with the collection of the Museo Bardini. The biographical details of the man and his business have been thus far largely elusive. The most recent contribution resulted from an exhibition in 2013 at Villa Bardini which explored the relationship between the Parisian collectors Edouard André and his wife, a painter, Nélie Jacquemart and Bardini. The dealer, the collectors and their objects were united with a compliment of rich archival material, for which see M. TAMASSIA, MUSEÉ JACQUEMART-ANDRÉ and MUSEO BARDINI, *Il Rinascimento da Firenze a Parigi andata e ritorno: I tesori del Museo Jacquemart-André tornano a casa: Botticelli, Donatello, Mantegna, Paolo Uccello*, Firenze 2013. Another fairly recent publication is admirable for its examination of Bardini's relationship with Wilhelm Bode, and secondarily, with Julius Myer, on the basis of meticulous study of the Bode and Meyer papers held by the Berlin Zentralarchiv, for which see *Stefano Bardini e Wilhelm Bode: mercanti e connoisseur fra Ottocento e Novecento*, ed. V. Niemeyer Chini, Florence 2009. The main body of literature is as follows: *Galleria di Palazzo Mozzi-Bardini I tesori di un antiquario* (catalogo della mostra Firenze, Fortezza del Basso, 4 dicembre 1998-3 gennaio 1999), eds C. Acidini Luchinat, M. Scalini, Livorno 1998; A. BRUSCHI, *Stefano Bardini: si scoprono le tombe, si levano i morti*, Florence 1992; *Arte greca, etrusca, romana (L'Archivio storico fotografico di Stefano Bardini)*, ed. G. Capecchi, Florence 1993; C. DE BENEDETTIS and F. SCALIA, *Il Museo Bardini a Firenze: Le pitture*, Milan 1984; L. FAEDO and E. NERI LUSANNA, *Il Museo Bardini a Firenze: Le sculture*, Milan 1986; *Dipinti, disegni, miniature e stampe*, in *L'Archivio storico fotografico di Stefano Bardini*, ed. E. Fahy, Florence 2000; F. SCALIA, *Il carteggio inedito di Stefano Bardini*, in *San Niccolò Oltrarno, la chiesa, una famiglia di antiquari*, eds G. Damiani and A. Laghi, Florence 1982, pp. 199–208; R. VIALE, *Alcune considerazioni su Stefano Bardini ed i suoi allestimenti* in «Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, classe di lettere e filosofia», ser 4, v. 6, 2, 2001, pp. 301–320. One should avoid A.F. MOSKOWITZ, *Stefano Bardini: the Early Years*, «Studi Trentini. Arte», A. 92/2, 2013), n. 2, pp. 267–288, as well as EAD., *Stefano Bardini "principe degli antiquari": Prolegomenon to a biography*, Florence 2015, because of the problematic archival references and numerous

factual errors and omissions.

- 21 The result of a massively complicated bequest, there are two primary archival Florentine repositories of material concerning Stefano Bardini, his family, and his business of transacting art. One group, representing a small percentage of the entirety of extant material, is located in the archive of the Museo Stefano Bardini which is under the jurisdiction of the Comune of Florence (Musei Civici Fiorentini: Comune di Firenze Direzione Cultura). This archive has been catalogued; it contains material largely confined to the decade from 1905–1915. The other repository is in the custodianship of the state, under the direction of Dott. Stefano Casciu (Polo Museale della Toscana); it is now known as Archivio Storico Eredità Bardini (hereafter ASEB) and Archivio Fotografico Eredità Bardini (hereafter AFEB). It is this state archive that has occupied my attention thus far. A recent broad assessment of the archive of Stefano Bardini emphatically underscores the need for a comprehensive digital humanities project on a shared collaborative platform. The scope of this project is vast, thus in the interim only discreet and tentative findings are suited for publication. The first work on this project was done during a Kress fellowship and Leon Levy fellowship both at the Center for the History of Collecting at the Frick Collection and the Frick Art Reference Library. Continued support has come from the American Philosophical Society and the Center for the Advanced Study in the Visual Arts. My gratitude is beyond immense. This project would otherwise be nowhere were it not for the generosity and kindness of the former director, Dott.ssa Marilena Tamassia, to Dott. Casciu, for continued access to the material, and also to Stefano Tasselli for his magical powers and his deep insights into the world of Stefano Bardini. For studies of various aspects of this archival material and the various aspects of the phenomenon of Bardini see L. CATTERSON, *Stefano Bardini and the Taxonomic Branding of Marketplace Style: from the Gallery of a Dealer to the Institutional Canon*, in *Images of the Art Museum. Connecting Gaze and Discourse in the History of Museology*, eds E.M. Troelenberg and M. Savino, Berlin and Boston 2017, pp. 41–64; EAD., *Introduction*, in *Dealing Art on Both Sides of the Atlantic, 1860–1940*, ed. L. Catterson, Leiden 2017.
- 22 Distinguishing themselves outside of the academy, mainly in Tuscany during the second half of the nineteenth century, the *Macchiaioli* embodied the spirit of en plein air, with a focus on patches of light and shadow. On the *Macchiaioli*, see T. PANCONI, *Antologia Dei Macchiaioli: La trasformazione sociale e artistica nella Toscana di metà Ottocento*, Massa e Cozzile (PT) 1999. For the political-artistic situation, see A. BOIME, *The Art of the Macchia and the Risorgimento: Representing Culture and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Italy*, Chicago 1993.
- 23 The body of literature is vast; for current research and updated bibliography, see ARCHIVIO DI STATO DI FIRENZE, *Una capitale e il suo architetto: Eventi politici e sociali, urbanistici e architettonici, Firenze e l'opera di Giuseppe Poggi* (mostra per il 150° anniversario della proclamazione di Firenze a Capitale del Regno d'Italia, Archivio di Stato di Firenze, 3 febbraio - 6 giugno 2015), ed. L. Maccabruni, P. Marchi, Florence 2015.
- 24 G. SMITH, *Gaetano Bacconi's 'Systematization' of the Piazza Del Duomo in Florence*, «Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians», 59/12, 2000: 454–477.
- 25 Based on the evidence of auction catalogues, for which see the incredibly important resource, *Art Sales Catalogues Online (ASCO)*: <<http://asc.idcpublishers.info/>>. For a stealth examination of this phenomenon as it brewed in the first half of the nineteenth century see M. WESTGARTH, *The Emergence of the Antique and Curiosity Dealer in Britain 1815–1850: the commodification of historical objects*, Farnham 2013; see also P.M. FLETCHER and A. HELMREICH, *The rise of the modern art market in London, 1850–1939*, Manchester 2011.



- 26 One hesitates to qualify something as the «first», but it appears that Bardini's showrooms were perhaps the most ambitious, if not the earliest, of this type.
- 27 <<http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/bust-of-lorenzo-de-medici-55524>>, accession number: 17.1477. As given by the museum: «(Italian, Florence; probably 19th century[;] In the manner of Andrea del Verrocchio (Italian (born and active in Florence), 1435–1488)... dimensions: 57.2 x 48.3 x 24.1 cm (22 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2 in.)». It is not my purpose here to take up the issue of attribution or authenticity, but rather to consider the object and its transaction for what Shaw believed it to be. The museum continues to confront these issues in a very open way. For the early history of the sculpture and its display, see M. CAMBARERI, *Italian Renaissance sculpture at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: the early years*, in *Sculpture and the Museum*, ed. C.R. Marshall, Farnham 2011, pp. 95-114.
- 28 Florence, ASEB, Corrispondenza, 1898: excerpt of letter written in English, dated 22 September 1898.
- 29 Florence, ASEB, Copialettere 1898 04 21 - 1899 03 10, pp. 255-256, excerpt from letter dated 9 October 1898: «Pour le buste de Laurent du Medici que vous avez acheté a Gavet j'ai toujours pensez qu'il soit plus tôt de la manière du Pollajolo qui di Verrocchio; mais pour en faire un jugement plus juste faudrait revoir le buste et le comparer avec les œuvres de ces deux maitres. [...] In Italia, les objets anciens sont devenus très rares et en fait de sculptures on trouve très peu. Par contre il y'a grande abondance de choses fausses et très biens faites qu'il est très difficile de ne pas mettre la tête dans le panneau. Heureux vous qui avez acheté dans le beau temps et qui avez fait que très bien impossible de refaire ces jours. Je serais très heureux de vous revoir et vous pouvez trouver encore des bons tableaux si pas des marbres et des bronzes.» The response was penned some two weeks after Shaw wrote to Bardini. Considering that, in 1898, it would have taken approximately six days in each direction for a letter to cross the Atlantic, Bardini's response was relatively quick.
- 30 This is the subject of another paper, but suffice it to say that his early commercial activity in Florence could hardly be called successful.
- 31 See note 17. Shaw had been dealing with Gavet for the acquisition of several Millets certainly by 1875.



Fig. 1: Photograph of Quincy Adams Shaw, from MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, *Quincy Adams Shaw Collection: Italian Renaissance sculpture paintings and pastels by Jean François Millet* (exhibition opening April 18, 1918), Boston, 1918.



Fig. 2: Italian, Florence, *Bust of Lorenzo de' Medici*, probably 19th century (in the manner of Andrea del Verrocchio), terracotta, 57.2 x 48.3 x 24.1 cm (22 1/2 x 19 x 9 1/2 in.), Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.