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Introduction

This special issue of *Predella* grew out of a pair of linked sessions held at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in Boston in spring 2016. Organized by Adrian Bremenkamp and Nicole Riesenberger and chaired by Nicolas Bock and Tanja Michalsky, the sessions addressed fifteenth-century Naples and the city's role as an artistic center within the overlapping contexts of style, patronage, networks of exchange, and historiography. Together, the presented papers and ensuing discussions formed a stimulating response to and further complication of the topics and themes treated in the seminal *Import/Export: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in the Kingdom of Naples, 1266-1713*, a special issue of the journal *Art History* edited by Janis Elliott and Cordelia Warr that emerged from a trio of sessions at the Renaissance Society of America in San Francisco in spring 2006¹. In the ten short years since 2008, when *Import/Export* appeared in print, the field of Neapolitan studies has seen a veritable boom, especially in work that sets Naples in a broader geographical context and positions the city as a node in ever-shifting networks of artists, patrons, iconographies, typologies, and styles.

And yet there is still much to be done. Compared with other Italian artistic centers like Florence, Rome or Venice, Naples and the south are less well-tilled ground and the landscape of material and documentary evidence is still fragmentary. A significant part of our work as Neapolitanists consists of good old-fashioned hunting and gathering, and the organization and analysis of primary material. At the same time, the complexity and dynamism of the history of art in Naples invites – indeed demands – new methodological approaches and a reconception of art history that allows for movement across times, places, cultures, forms, and media.

The essays presented here work on both fronts: they introduce new findings and attend to understudied material, and also wager fresh interpretations and methodological gambits. While recent edited volumes such as Melissa Calaresu

and Helen Hills's *New Approaches to Naples c. 1500 - c. 1800: The Power of Place* and Jessica Hughes and Claudio Buongiovanni's *Remembering Parthenope: The Reception of Classical Naples from Antiquity to the Present* assemble contributions around a given theme and across a broad chronological span, this volume focuses on the fifteenth century and offers a cross-section of current scholarship on a range of topics and themes and from a variety of perspectives².

Aside from a long and vital tradition of scholarship on fourteenth-century Angevin Naples, the city has been studied predominantly for its baroque monuments. Recent overviews such as *A Companion to Early Modern Naples*, edited by Tommaso Astarita, let the Early Modern period begin with the sixteenth century, identifying it with the time of the Spanish Viceroy and the Bourbon dynasty³. The *Quattrocento* in Naples has long been neglected in histories of early Renaissance art in Italy, often treated as a purely local phenomenon dependent on developments elsewhere⁴. Only more recently has it received due attention in pan-Italian and in European contexts⁵. Furthermore, art historical study of the Neapolitan fifteenth century has concentrated on the period of rulership of the Aragonese kings (1442-1501), diminishing the importance of art production under the Anjou-Durazzo who ruled from 1382. We are therefore very happy to include two contributions that deal with art from that period. This volume's attention to the fifteenth century should not be understood as an affirmation of rigid periodizations but as a response to lacunae in the art historical literature. Nevertheless, the volume cannot be taken as representative of the actual state of research on fifteenth-century Naples and it cannot do justice to all forms of art from the period, as becomes obvious by the fact that it does not include a contribution on architecture. Instead, we offer this volume both as a contribution to the existing literature and as an invitation for future research. We are particularly pleased that the contributors whose work is brought together here are established and emerging scholars from institutions in Italy, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom, creating a forum for conversation across scholarly traditions.

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- 1 *Import/Export: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in the Kingdom of Naples, 1266-1713*, ed. by C. Warr and J. Elliott, Oxford, 2008 (special issue of «Art History», 31, 2008, 4).
- 2 *New Approaches to Naples c. 1500 - c. 1800: The Power of Place*, ed. by M. Calaresu and H. Hills, Farnham, 2013; *Remembering Parthenope: The Reception of Classical Naples from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. by J. Hughes and C. Buongiovanni, Oxford, 2015.
- 3 *A Companion to Early Modern Naples*, ed. by T. Astarita, Leiden, 2013.
- 4 Important studies opposing this tendency include but are not limited to G. Hersey, *Alfonso II and the Artistic Renewal of Naples 1485-1495*, New Haven, 1969; Idem, *The Aragonese Arch at Naples 1443-1475*, New Haven, 1973; R. Pane, *Il Rinascimento nell'Italia meridionale*, 2 vols., Milano, 1975-1977; F. Bologna, *Napoli e le rotte mediterranee della pittura. Da Alfonso il Magnanimo a Ferdinando il Cattolico*, Napoli, 1977; F. Sricchia Santoro, *Antonello e l'Europa*, Milano, 1986; *Quattrocento aragonese. La pittura a Napoli al tempo di Alfonso e Ferrante d'Aragona*, exhibition catalogue (Napoli, 1997), ed. by P. Leone De Castris, Napoli, 1997; *La Biblioteca Reale di Napoli al tempo della dinastia Aragonese*, exhibition catalogue (Napoli, 1998), ed. by G. Toscano, Valencia, 1998; A. Beyer, *Parthenope: Neapel und der Süden der Renaissance*, München, 2000; and the respective essays by F. Caglioti. See also the recently published *Naples (Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance)*, ed. by M.B. Hall and T. Willette, Cambridge, 2017; and *Renaissance Naples: A Documentary History 1400-1600*, ed. by C. Nichols and J.H. McGregor, New York, 2019.
- 5 See, for example, *El renacimiento mediterráneo: Viajes de artistas e itinerarios de obras: entre Italia, Francia y España en el siglo XV*, exhibition catalogue (Madrid and Valencia, 2001), ed. by M. Natale, Madrid, 2001; T. D'Urso, *Giovanni Todeschino: la miniatura 'all'antica' tra Venezia, Napoli e Tours*, Napoli, 2007; B. de Divitiis, *Architettura e committenza nella Napoli del Quattrocento*, Venezia, 2007; A. Delle Foglie, *La Cappella Caracciolo del Sole a San Giovanni a Carbonara*, Milano, 2011; C. Challéat, *Dalle Fiandre a Napoli: Committenza artistica, politica, diplomazia al tempo di Alfonso il Magnanimo e Filippo il Buono*, Roma, 2012; J. Barreto, *La majesté en images. Portraits du pouvoir dans la Naples des Aragon*, Roma, 2013; and L. Clark, *Collecting Art in the Italian Renaissance Court: Objects and Exchanges*, Cambridge, 2018.