

CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS

Fellows present their work in Rome and beyond

Fellows find numerous opportunities for cross-disciplinary research and for presenting their scholarly or artistic work during their residencies. Now in its third year, the **AAR's Fellows' Project Fund** enhances the practical experience of Rome Prize winners and Italian Fellows by funding collaborative work with colleagues at AAR and other national Academies and/or cultural and academic institutions in Rome and throughout Italy. Supported projects, which take place during the Fellowship year, include exhibitions, performances, site-specific installations, publications, symposia, or any proposal with a public component. Here is a sample of projects recently supported by the fund.

As her contribution to the Cinque Mostre exhibition, **Danielle Simon**—recipient of the Millicent Mercer Johnsen Pre-Doctoral Rome Prize and a PhD candidate in the Department of Music at the University of California, Berkeley—developed and served as musical director for performances of *Il Cuore di Wanda* (Wanda's Heart), the first Italian opera composed specifically for the radio. With a libretto by the futurist poet Pino Masnata and music by the composer Carmine Guarino, the opera received positive reviews, but was never recorded and has not been performed since its initial broadcast in 1931. Danielle arranged for two performances of the opera, as well as a recording to make the work available to other scholars. **E. V. Day**, winner of the Henry W. and Marian T. Mitchell/Miss Edith Bloom Fund Visual Arts Rome Prize, collaborated with Danielle, serving as artistic director of the live performance and recording. The two also worked with Italian artist Zazie Gneccchi Ruscone to design costumes for the live performance.

Historian **Hussein Fancy**, in collaboration with three other Fellows, conceived a retelling of an infamous

LEFT
Notes for Christopher
Trapani's *Tesserae*.
All photos by altros spazio.



ABOVE
Enrico Riley,
Infinite Receptors,
selected drawings
and moderated talk.

RIGHT
Danielle Simon
& E. V. Day,
Wanda's Heart
performance.

moment in Italian history—a thirteenth-century rebellion in Sicily popularly known as the Sicilian Vespers—as a puppet show. *The Sicilian Vespers and the Tunisian Matins* consists of multiple three-to-five-minute monologues, each presented by a different historical figure from an island in the Mediterranean: Mallorca, Sicily, and Jerba. Hussein, an associate professor of history at the University of Michigan and recipient of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Post-Doctoral Rome Prize, notes that the aim of the show is to break the nationalist mold in which the history of the Sicilian Vespers is typically cast and to retell the episode as a shared history, one that binds Italy, Iberia, and North Africa. Hussein and **Leon Grek** wrote the monologues, drawing simultaneously on history and literature. **Jonathan Berger** composed the music, adapting selections from Verdi's opera *I vespri siciliani* (whose story is loosely based on the historical incident). Drawings by **Enrico Riley** highlighted the complex aesthetic heritage of Sicily. Hussein and his colleagues worked with a

professional puppet theater company to perform the piece at AAR in April. **Caroline Cheung** served as producer, and **Kyle deCamp** was consulting director.

Infinite Receptors is the title of a February exhibition of selected drawings created in Rome by **Enrico Riley**, the Jules Guerin Rome Prize Fellow and an associate professor of studio art at Dartmouth College. Enrico's work is based on an idea of the black body being manipulated into what he calls a "meta-icon, efficient at absorbing a variety of stereotypes, misrepresentations, and expectations." He also draws on multiple sources, including medieval Italian painting, historical and contemporary Roman architecture, and biblical narratives. *Infinite Receptors* was shown at the SACI gallery and was accompanied by a moderated talk at Museo Novecento, both in Florence. Both the exhibition and talk were part of a larger schedule of events, resulting from a collabora-

tion among multiple private and public institutions, artists, musicians, and scholars in celebration of Florence Black History Month.

Inspired by the *lyra* and *kemençe* music of Crete and Istanbul, **Christopher Trapani**, recipient of the Luciano Berio Rome Prize and a student of music composition at Columbia University, created a new work for viola d'amore and electronics titled *Tesserae*. Grounded in a modal tradition, using small fragments of microtonal scales to assemble long expressive lines, it features the unique and intimate sound of the viola d'amore, performed by one of its foremost contemporary champions, Milan-based musician Marco Fusi. *Tesserae* received its world premiere in Rome at the Fondazione Isabella Scelsi on April 12; its U.S. premiere takes place at the Italian Academy at Columbia University in New York on April 26.

