

The Importance of Italian Art and Design in Education



Michelle Zuccolo

2013 Italian Services Institute Fellowship

Fellowship funded by the Italian Services Institute.





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Skills
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i. Executive Summary

The Fellow, Michelle Zuccolo has been an art educator and practising artist in Australia for over twenty five years. Through participating the Italian Services Institute International Fellowship program with the International Specialised Skills Institute, she undertook further education at a private art school in central Florence - the Accademia D' Arte. Via an intensive range of practical courses in traditional and contemporary Italian art forms, Zuccolo acquired knowledge about European history and culture, enhanced her practical skill base and sought new technologies in the area of design. Studying in situ enabled the Fellow to make regular visits to internationally acclaimed churches, galleries and museums, providing her with a unique opportunity to research primary art forms made by Italian Renaissance, Baroque and Contemporary artists.

Zuccolo studied and/or produced two-dimensional art forms based on classical Italian drawing techniques, oil painting, egg tempera, mosaics, fresco work and printmaking. She was immersed in a society which embraced public sculpture as an important, primary art form. The Fellow noted that the continued engagement with sculpture from Antiquity was prevalent in many educational programs including Florence's most famous university, the Accademia di Belle Arte (conveniently situated next to the Academia Galleria which houses the original marble statue of David by Michelangelo). During the tour of the university, Zuccolo was able to research traditional approaches to using clay, marble and wax. She observed anatomy classes and contemporary painting being practised by new generations of Italian and International art students.

During the course of two months, Zuccolo travelled extensively within Italy and Austria, studying Italian art and design. Research destinations included Florence, Rome, Bologna, Venice, Vienna and Graz. Travel was punctuated by the Fellow participating in interviews with company directors and educational staff in prominent museums including Piazzale del Museo Borghese, Galleria Borghese and The British School of Art in Rome, the Kunsthistorisches in Vienna and the Istituzione Bologna Musei in Bologna. Zuccolo gleaned valuable insight into innovative teaching and training programs which will be implemented into her art teaching in Australia. The experience has already benefited the Fellow on her return to Australia, informing her teaching practice in the classroom and during workshop presentations in the community.

The Fellow took a particular interest in Italian drawing and sculpture. One of the key findings was that in Florentine art schools, classical study into the art of Antiquity is still highly valued. Traditional skills and techniques form the basis for more contemporary extension work. This is not the case in the Australian secondary system, where many traditional forms of painting, printmaking and sculpture are taught in a diminishing capacity.

Through interviewing contemporary Italian artists such as Patrizio Travagli (who has had his sculpture and installation work included three times in the Venice Biennale), Zuccolo learnt that the traditional Italian cultural heritage was highly valued and informed current art practice and emerging trends.

Undertaking the Fellowship has reinforced Zuccolo's desire to continue teaching in "face to face" situations which facilitate the acquisition of skills and knowledge through demonstration and experience with "real materials" such as clay and paint. Her outcomes will be made available to art educators/teachers and secondary/tertiary students enabling them to utilise new and traditional concepts acquired through research and study in Italy and Austria. Promoting new information will be further achieved through the Fellow implementing revised lesson plans into secondary school curriculum at Sophia Mundi Steiner School in Abbotsford. Zuccolo will implement classical studies into her Life Drawing and General Art classes taught in community art programs such as Brighton Art Society, Beaumaris Art Group and Glen Eira Art Group. Zuccolo will facilitate workshops informing secondary teachers through the Teacher Training Association (TTA) and will present her key findings to post graduate students at the Arts Academy, in a Creative Arts Research Seminar at Federation University, Ballarat.

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ii. Abbreviations/Acronyms

ADA	Accademia D'Arte, Art School in Florence, Italy
ISS	International Specialised Skills Institute
TTA	Teacher Training Australia (TTA) PTY LTD
MAMbo	Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna

iii. Definitions

Antiquity

This refers to the historic period preceding the Middle Ages. Italian Renaissance artists were particularly inspired by sculpture, paintings and architecture from Ancient Greek and Roman times

Atelier

This is a workshop attended by art students and apprentices, in order to receive traditional training from a principal master, teacher or professor

Bottega system

Italian Renaissance artists often worked in a studio or workshop environment which facilitated shared learning, with masters training apprentices in traditional drawing and painting techniques

Sanguigna

Developed during the Renaissance, this technique involved making drawings (often of the human form), in warm red and orange coloured chalks

Silverpoint

Using a metal stylus, line drawings were incised in to a prepared surface on paper or parchment

1. Acknowledgements

Michelle Zuccolo would like to thank the following individuals and organisations who gave generously of their time and their expertise to assist, advise and guide her throughout the Fellowship program.

Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)

The International Specialised Skills Institute Inc is an independent, national organisation that for over two decades has worked with Australian governments, industry and education institutions to enable individuals to gain enhanced skills and experience in traditional trades, professions and leading-edge technologies.

At the heart of the ISS Institute are our Fellows. Under the **Overseas Applied Research Fellowship Program** the Fellows travel overseas. Upon their return, they are required to pass on what they have learnt by:

1. Preparing a detailed report for distribution to government departments, industry and educational institutions.
2. Recommending improvements to accredited educational courses.
3. Delivering training activities including workshops, conferences and forums.

Over 200 Australians have received Fellowships, across many industry sectors. In addition, recognised experts from overseas conduct training activities and events. To date, 22 leaders in their field have shared their expertise in Australia.

According to Skills Australia's 'Australian Workforce Futures: A National Workforce Development Strategy 2010':

Australia requires a highly skilled population to maintain and improve our economic position in the face of increasing global competition, and to have the skills to adapt to the introduction of new technology and rapid change.

International and Australian research indicates we need a deeper level of skills than currently exists in the Australian labour market to lift productivity. We need a workforce in which more people have skills, but also multiple and higher level skills and qualifications. Deepening skills across all occupations is crucial to achieving long-term productivity growth. It also reflects the recent trend for jobs to become more complex and the consequent increased demand for higher level skills. This trend is projected to continue regardless of whether we experience strong or weak economic growth in the future. Future environmental challenges will also create demand for more sustainability related skills across a range of industries and occupations.

In this context, the ISS Institute works with Fellows, industry and government to identify specific skills in Australia that require enhancing, where accredited courses are not available through Australian higher education institutions or other Registered Training Organisations. The Fellows' overseas experience sees them broadening and deepening their own professional practice, which they then share with their peers, industry and government upon their return. This is the focus of the ISS Institute's work.

For further information on our Fellows and our work see <http://www.issinstitute.org.au>.

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1. Acknowledgements

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- Ken Greenhill, Fellowship Advisor, ISS Institute, Melbourne, Australia

Organisations Impacted by the Fellowship

Education and training

- Beaumaris Art Group, Melbourne
- Brighton Art Society, Melbourne
- Federation University, Ballarat
- Glen Eira Art Group, Melbourne
- Sophia Mundi Steiner School, Melbourne
- Teachers Training Association (TTA)
- The Convent Holiday Program, Melbourne

2. About the Fellow

Name: Michelle Elena Zuccolo

Employment: Self employed

Qualifications:

- » 2014 Approved External Assessor, International Baccalaureate
- » 2013 Accredited Workshop Presenter, Teacher Training Australia (TTA) PTY LTD, Cambridge Education
- » 2011 International Baccalaureate Teacher Training – Visual Art (IB Diploma Certificate) Brisbane, run by Asia Pacific
- » 2004-2007 Master of Arts, (Visual Arts part-time by Research) University of Ballarat
- » 1985 Diploma of Education, Melbourne College of Advanced Education, Melbourne
- » 1980-83 Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art, majoring in Drawing), Victoria College of Art and Design, Melbourne

Memberships:

- » Honorary member - Beaumaris Art Group
- » Honorary member - Brighton Art Society
- » Victorian Institute of Teaching

Brief Background

Born in Orbost, Victoria, Michelle Zuccolo relocated to Melbourne as a teenager to further her education. She undertook a Fine Art degree at the Victorian College of Art and Design, majoring in the discipline of drawing. She achieved early success with her drawings, being selected to exhibit in national art awards. On completing her Diploma of Education at Melbourne State College, Zuccolo was keen to travel to Europe and America visiting major art museums and galleries. Returning to Australia twelve months later, she was offered a sessional teaching position, lecturing in drawing at the Victorian College of Art and Design. Later in her career, Zuccolo taught Drawing and Contemporary Imaging at the University of Ballarat for five years.

Zuccolo undertook her Master's degree at the University of Ballarat. In 2008, her drawings were selected for the prestigious Seventh Drawing Biennial, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra. Zuccolo has also had paintings selected for national prizes such as the Portia Geach Memorial Art Award 2011 and 2013, Sydney. This is Australia's most prestigious Portraiture prize for women. Her drawings have been selected for the Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing, Presbyterian Ladies College, Sydney 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2013. Zuccolo has been included by invitation, in several exhibitions in the Ballarat Art Gallery, Ballarat - the largest regional art gallery in Australia. Her drawings have been acquired by this public art collection and the University of Ballarat.

Zuccolo has held various positions in secondary colleges during the past twenty five years, and is currently teaching the International Baccalaureate Visual Arts Diploma Programme to senior students at Sophia Mundi Steiner School in Abbotsford, Melbourne. She has been an art tutor with Brighton Art Society and Beaumaris Art Group for over thirteen years. Zuccolo is also employed as a Workshop Presenter with TTA (Professional Development for Australian Teachers, Cambridge Education). In this role, she delivers nationally approved art programs to secondary teachers.

3. Aims of the Fellowship Program

Professional benefit

- The Fellow, Michelle Zuccolo submitted a proposal applying to undertake further education at the Accademia D' Arte in central Florence. Through attending an intensive range of practical courses at this Institute and the Istituto Michelangelo, the Fellow aimed to enhance her existing skill base and acquire new knowledge and experience in other fields.
- This opportunity would also provide Zuccolo with insight into new teaching strategies through observing world class tutors and university lecturers in several international schools.
- Through interviewing education staff in prominent museums and galleries regarding the implementation of art education programs available through these facilities, Zuccolo aimed to glean valuable insight into practices which could be in turn, incorporated into art education programs in Australia, as well as being of benefit her own performance in the classroom.

Personal development

- Creating new art work in Florence inspired by her Italian heritage, Zuccolo would facilitate personal growth in her practice.
- Part of this Intensive Art Course involved group discussions and reflections with local artists and practitioners. This feedback would enable Zuccolo to analyse and further develop her own artwork.
- This aspect of the program would also provide the Fellow with an opportunity to develop new audiences and contacts on an international level, promoting cultural exchanges between Australia and Italy.

4. The Australian Context

With constant changes and developments in technologies, and with the evolutionary nature of education, it is necessary to maintain on-going research into the fore-mentioned areas as a means of keeping ones teaching practice relevant to contemporary art practice. Such research is also desirable as a means for nurturing and extending a personal studio practice.

Enhancing Zuccolo's skill base would directly benefit her teaching practice in Australia. Through her appointments in Melbourne, Zuccolo has the opportunity to promote Italian art and culture through various areas in the secondary curriculum. As part of the Fellow's professional engagement, she is required to reflect, evaluate and improve her knowledge and practice. Teachers are required to engage in professional development activities, contributing to the development of school communities that support the learning and well-being of both students and fellow teachers. As a professional teacher, Zuccolo maintains national standards and principles related to the practice of education. The Fellow's experience and study in Florence would contribute to her portfolio of achievements supporting these goals. Through enhancing practical skills, acquiring new knowledge and class room resources (such as books, catalogues and photographs of art work and architecture), and developing new technologies and methodologies would strengthen the Fellow's expertise as an art educator.

Summary of actions and outcomes

As a facilitator in various learning environments, Zuccolo sees it as her role to

- Provide stimulating experiences to her students through varied two dimensional and three dimensional processes exploring new materials, tools and equipment discovered through undertaking art and design courses in Florence
- Provide new opportunities for students to learn about contemporary and traditional art forms practised in Italy
- Help students find more information about Italian culture through showing them books and photographs of Florence and by examining the artwork she produced on location
- Encourage students to examine the impact and influence of Italian art, design and architecture upon other countries and cultures. This will promote and develop a deeper understanding of how the arts evolved within a particular political, religious, historical and cultural context
- Create new lesson plans for students which enable them to understand the development of knowledge of art and design skills, techniques and processes in creating and presenting outcomes for a variety of purposes and audiences
- Design lesson plans which enable students to appreciate the influence of new discoveries and techniques in art, design and architecture formed during the Renaissance
- Share the Fellow's findings with existing staff at places of employment and in other educational institutes
- Share findings with other artists and art students

The enhancement of professional knowledge and skills will be made available to teachers, art students the general public, through classes, workshops and seminars/presentations delivered in secondary schools, in higher educational institutions, and in community based art programs.

5. Identifying the Skills and Knowledge Enhancements Required

Zuccolo enrolled in art and design courses at the Accademia D' Arte and the Istituto Michelangelo (photography) in Florence. This provided her with the opportunity to increase her understanding of traditional and contemporary skills in drawing, painting, photography and sculpture. It was essential that the Fellow study in the central city location in Italy, enabling her to research the direct application and development of Renaissance and Baroque techniques emerging in Italian art work located in the Uffizi, the Michelangelo Casa/Studio and in churches containing key frescos and sculpture.

Undertaking practical courses further provided the Fellow with the opportunity to observe international educational practices and teaching methods.

Skill Enhancement Number 1

Action and outcomes:

Drawing classes.

- By participating in traditional and contemporary drawing lessons, the Fellow acquired a range of new techniques and experienced materials such as sanguigna and silverpoint
- Studying the human form through life drawing classes provided Zuccolo with a valuable insight into constructing the figure through classical means, with particular reference to methods developed by Italian Renaissance and Baroque artists
- The Fellow acquired a range of skills which she could impart in the class room at secondary level, in TTA workshops and to adults attending community art classes
- Zuccolo gained knowledge regarding the development of these skills in a cultural and historical context

Skill Enhancement Number 2

Action and outcomes:

Undertake courses on painting which investigates ancient, traditional, and contemporary techniques.

- The Fellow was introduced to painting techniques practised in Italy between 1300 and 1600 during the Italian Renaissance
- Fundamental techniques related to this craft were explored. This included insight into the preparation of the canvas surface, applications of egg tempera, gold leaf, oil colours and glazing processes
- Zuccolo researched painting which embraced modern technology and new materials
- Zuccolo was able to study how contemporary Italian artists teaching at the academy modified these skills and techniques, creating innovative art and design pieces. These artists were committed to their Italian heritage and continued to imbue aspects of classical traditions in their contemporary art practice

Skill Enhancement Number 3

Action and outcomes:

Undertake a professional course on digital photography.

5. Identifying the Skills and Knowledge Enhancements Required

- The Fellow undertook an intensive course in photography which enabled her to learn new technology related to the practical use of the digital camera
- Zuccolo produced a portfolio of photos showcasing aspects of the city of Florence which would be suitable to exhibit in Australia, promoting cultural awareness of Italy
- The Fellow learned how to produce professional quality photographs of her own artwork (drawings, sculpture and paintings). When entering awards, prizes and exhibitions, or applying for grants, artists are required to submit high quality digital imagery of artwork
- The Fellow will develop new lesson plans instructing secondary students on how to use a digital camera, conveying information about technical and artistic aspects of this discipline. She will provide information about the history and evolution of the camera

Skill Enhancement Number 4

Undertaking formal classes in Sculpture.

Action and outcomes:

- The Fellow selected formal classes which provided insight into a wide variety of techniques and media, including clay modelling, marble sculpture, mosaic and wood carving
- At the beginning of the course, Zuccolo was given an introduction to drawing as a means of clarifying form and proportion in the intended piece of art work. The drawing was referred to as a basis for sculpture
- Various traditional methods in sculptural carving were demonstrated. These included an illumination of marble carving, wood carving and clay work related to portraiture, creating statues and other art forms
- Information was provided related to techniques for hollowing clay sculptures and re-joining pieces
- Lessons and demonstrations were provided educating the Fellow on a range of techniques which could be applied in building features on the human face

The Fellow benefited from visiting the Accademia di Belle Arte; Florence's most prominent University. Through observing a range of practical and theoretical art classes in progress, Zuccolo acquired insight into the delivery of subjects including Life Drawing, Anatomy, Contemporary Painting, Wax Sculpture, Marble Carving, Printmaking and Art History. Many of these subject areas referenced classical Greek sculpture. An abundance of plaster reproductions were available for inspiration throughout the campus.

6. The International Experience

Objectives:

The Fellow conducted interviews with various professionals in her field of employment and vocation, with a view of enhancing her existing skill base, knowledge and expertise in teaching and art making. Zuccolo also enrolled in Intensive art and design courses in art schools in Florence as outlined in Section 5, with the objective being to develop new skills practiced in traditional and contemporary Italian art forms.

Outcomes:

Through undertaking the Fellowship, Zuccolo absorbed new teaching strategies and acquired valuable knowledge from world class educational facilities and art museums which will enrich her teaching practice and inform her own art work.

Contacts and Interviews

Destination: Accademia D' Arte, Florence, Italy

Through undertaking an Intensive one month course in Art and Design at the Accademia D' Arte in Florence, the Fellow was able to observe current teaching practice in Italy whilst learning traditional and contemporary skills and techniques. Zuccolo was able to observe and research this unique resource as a model for education and personal development. The Fellow conducted various interviews with staff at this institute, expanding her knowledge base of Contemporary Italian artists and photographers.



Florence ADA Sculpture teacher - Lorenzo Galligani explaining clay techniques.

6. The International Experience

Interview One: Director, Patrizio Travagli

The Fellow had the opportunity to interview Patrizio Travagli, who had teamed with two other co-founders in 2003 to establish this private Arts Academy in central Florence. Zuccolo was able to learn about the history of this successful art school, located in a medieval heritage listed building positioned in close proximity to the Florence Duomo. During the interview, Zuccolo gained useful insights into the educational practices of Italian art schools.

Having graduated from the Accademia di Belle Art, Florence in 1993, Travagli embarked on a teaching career in private art schools whilst developing his own art practice. His desire to build his own private art school stemmed from his dissatisfaction with the ethics and teaching practices which existed in these establishments at the time. Travagli felt that these schools did not embrace contemporary art practice and selectively taught “some” traditional skills developed by Italian artists and artisans, and imparted “some knowledge” in a diminished capacity. Travagli disagreed with this “cloud of secrecy,” believing that artists who “knew more could do more.” Therefore, the underlying principle on which he based this Academy was with a view to make the enhancement of all skills (traditional and contemporary) available to all students, artists, artisans and professionals. Travagli strongly believed in providing staff and a facility which enabled students to better translate their ideas through the acquisition of knowledge, techniques, research and new technologies. His goal was to promote and celebrate personal learning, as opposed to restricting resources and consciously suppressing or hiding knowledge.

Travagli wanted to establish a new and unique school which epitomised the Bottega atmosphere of learning and reflected true Florentine objectives and values. Teachers, technicians and administrative staff were hand - picked based on their high professional skill base and attitude to learning/sharing.

All staff had keys to the school and were encouraged to use the facilities to produce personal art work and research ideas. Travagli strongly encouraged the staff to learn about new mediums from each other through observing and participating in activities in other classes. Importantly, Travagli invited the art history teachers into the studios for a three month period to enhance their own understanding of practical art work. Travagli felt for example, that if academics could learn about paint application and the nature of brush strokes, it would improve the delivery of the art history program – particularly when students were being taken to museums to study from Master paintings, drawings and sculpture.



Florence - ADA - sculpture tutor explaining how to cut and hollow out clay work.



Florence - clay and plaster cast.

6. The International Experience



Florence ADA Sculpture teacher - Lorenzo Galligani explaining clay techniques.

Business is flourishing and during 2013, around six hundred international students booked into the academy to undertake the one year course of study. Others booked in for shorter periods of time, varying from one week to six months. Classes were conducted throughout the day and a second session of evening classes occurred between 3pm and 7pm.

Travagli preferred to customise the courses meeting the needs of the individual. Students were asked to trial classes before making a financial commitment to the Academy. Travagli offered a wide range of courses in contemporary art and design, including Architecture and Art Therapy. If space permitted, students were encouraged to continue using the studio and facilities before and after structured class times, therefore maximising the learning experience. Classes were offered at an affordable price and many students negotiated an extension on their initial course booking.

As a “hands-on” Director of Accademia D’Arte, Travagli felt it was important to circulate within the studios on a daily basis engaging in conversations with the students about their progress and developments. He was keen to develop new technologies which combine ancient Italian art making techniques with new materials. Technicians and engineers were on hand to facilitate this kind of innovation.

This contemporary innovation was reflected in his own paintings and multimedia installations which forge links between architecture, installations, electrical system design, design, lighting, painting, metal gilding and glass. Zuccolo was able to examine examples of Travagli’s large scale metallic paintings and installations in the Florence studios. Travagli has had artwork included in the Venice Biennale in 2011, 2012 and 2013. His work is highly regarded and in steady demand on the International art market.

Travagli was currently working with architects who had requested his assistance in designing suitable lighting for a new student gallery overlooking the Arno River. He aims to incorporate the effects of natural lighting and reflected light from the water surface into the dynamics of the gallery space.

6. The International Experience

Belle Arte Accademia – Florence

The staff employed at the Accademia D' Arte had trained at Florence's most prestigious University, Belle Arte Accademia. The Fellow was given a guided tour of the Institute. Senior Professor of Contemporary Art, Mauro Pratesi and Drawing Professor, Spartaco Papini accompanied Zuccolo through the facilities conveniently situated next door to the Galleria Accademia, housing the original David and other marble statues by Michelangelo. The University is divided into many rooms containing specialist classes in Art Theory, Life Drawing, Contemporary Art and Painting, Printmaking, Wax sculpture, Marble sculpture and Anatomy classes. Zuccolo observed that many of the rooms and the enclosed courtyard within the facility contained large reproductions of sculptures from Antiquity. The University also housed many rare books in its impressive library.

Destination: The British School of Art in Rome, Rome, Italy

Interview two: Director, Christopher Smith

The Fellow was invited to lunch with Christopher Smith at the British School of Art in Rome. This provided Zuccolo with an opportunity to meet with administration staff, current artist-in-residence and academic scholarship recipients. This customary meeting occurs on a daily basis in the large dining hall, facilitating the interchange, sharing and discussion of a broad range of ideas related to research being conducted in Italy.

Smith provided Zuccolo with a guided tour of the current art exhibition on display in the British School of Rome's gallery space. Titled Friday 13, it demonstrated the Italian influence on the participating artists-in-residence. The expectation was that a body of work would be produced in response to aspects of Italian culture. Inspiration could be immediate and made in response to architecture, landscape, cultural encounters and Italian art forms. However, in some instances Smith had observed



Rome, Director, Christopher Smith, British School of Art in Rome

6. The International Experience

that the dissemination and influence of this research emerged in the artist's work much later in their career.

Smith explained that no formal teaching occurred at this location. Principally the environment fostered learning through stimulation of ideas generated through interaction. Residents had access to first class facilities including an extensive library containing many rare books, use of the gallery space to showcase art work and facilitate artists talks, and opportunities to engage with guest lecturers, and attend seminars/workshops in the new purpose built lecture theatre.

Destination: Villa Borghese and Galleria Borghese, Rome, Italy

Interview three: Educational staff, Education Program for School Children

The Fellow took the opportunity to speak with Educational staff working in one of the most important cultural centres in Rome, the Galleria Borghese. Situated within the grounds of a large public park, the Galleria Borghese houses an important collection of Italian art with work by masters such as Raphael, Titian, Caravaggio and Bernini. The collection was amassed by Cardinal Scipione Borghese during the early 1600s.

The Italian government has owned the historical collection and surrounding parks and buildings for over a century. In the basement of the former Borghese family palace, an education centre has been established. It takes the form of a large studio containing tables, chairs and easels. Museum staff and teachers engage students in a range of art related activities from this facility, promoting an understanding of Italian art and culture. Groups of students are booked in from the age of four, with classes running throughout the week and on Sundays.

The introduction to art works in the museum was built up in careful stages during three hour sessions. Initially the younger students had been taken through the museum and asked to observe the depiction of animals in the sculpture and paintings. Later in the studio, they were asked to draw animals. On the following visit, students created a clay animal. This begins the gradual process of engagement in practical art and art appreciation, with particular reference to Italian culture. Teenagers conducted drawing exercises directly on location in front of the art work. All classes occurred during normal operating hours amongst the large public crowds.

Destination: Florence Steiner Inspired School - The Liceo dei Colli, Florence, Italy

Interview four: Pedagogical Director, Christopher Clouder

Event:

The Fellow was a guest at a luncheon meeting with Christopher Clouder AM, FRSA and visiting Steiner parents from across Italy. Christopher Clouder is an educational consultant and founding Director of the Botin Platform for Innovation in Education, based in Spain. Clouder was the Key Note speaker at the Open Day at Liceo dei Colli.

In this presentation, Clouder spoke about creativity and arts being cut out of the Italian Education primary and secondary system curriculum due to funding restrictions. The emphasis of the country's curriculum now focussed on Mathematics and Languages. One of Clouder's goals was to promote creativity through music, dance, theatre and visual art. He stated that it has been proven that this in turn promotes general academic progress in the individual.

6. The International Experience

Clouder was also concerned about the social and emotional development of children. Through international forums Clouder lectured to teachers, encouraging them to engage in creative and innovative methods and practices in their classrooms.

Importantly, the curriculum within the framework of the new school in Florence interacts and integrates in a fluid and organic process supporting the local community within that environment. Education was made relevant to the students through for example; its emphasis on continuing traditional Italian art forms such as sculpture and marble carving. The school also worked closely with the agricultural university and science academy, fostering relations between tertiary and secondary students. Locally cultivated produce would be supplied to organic cafes on site.

Cultural and creative practices are to be extended to the general public, with plans to offer sculpture and craft workshops, and accommodation to the broader community.

The school was interested in fostering student exchanges with Sophia Mundi Steiner School in Melbourne, which employs the Fellow. English was one of the second languages taught at Liceo dei Colli, and developing a relationship with this community would benefit students, parents and staff in Melbourne and Florence.

Contact/ Destination: Eletto Tour operator, Director, Francesco Di Fiori, Florence, Italy

Interview five: Francesco Di Fiori

Francesco Di Fiori was developing a new business within the scaffolding of the Florence precinct. He was implementing a plan to bring small groups of tourists to the local region to experience the benefits of being in the local rural environment. Groups would be accommodated in the countryside within the Chianti area, enjoy local organic produce and participate in cultural activities which include visiting the Academy of Fine Arts and Academy of Music in Florence. Di Fiori was particularly interested in attracting families who may have a member suffering from restrictive health problems, such as heart disease. He aimed to tailor tours to meet the requirements of those who find it difficult to participate in the more physically demanding commercial tours. Di Fiori would like “the journey to be the medicine.”

Destination: Midj – Designer Furniture Company, Cordovado, Italy

Interview six: Founder/Director, Paolo Viener

Zuccolo was given the opportunity to meet Designer, Paolo Viener in his Furniture Show Room “Midj” in Cordovado, Northern Italy. The company now provided top-design modern furniture to world-wide markets. Viener explained that he had not undertaken any formal university training. As a child, he was obsessed with drawing chairs and always dreamed of establishing his own company. Having left technical school as a teenager, he sought work in his area of interest in Milan.

In 1980, he opened his own factory on the fringe of his small home town called Cordovado in the Friuli region. The recently opened multi-level Midj Show Rooms, situated in front of the factory, now occupy 1000 metres of floor space. Viener works alongside his son and daughter, making this a traditional family owned and run business. Over three hundred local staff were employed onsite. Viener sourced all products used in production from Italian companies located in North East Italy. This included plastic, wood and metals.

Viener was conscious of making a contribution back to the Italian community and had set up a project

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within his business nurturing aspiring Italian designers. Offering internships to young, emerging Italian designers in the Cordovado complex, new generations were given the opportunity to work alongside established and experienced team members. The interns had their products included in the Company's annual display at the Milan Furniture Trade Fair.



Cordovado, Midj Furniture Company

Destination: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria

Interview seven: Educational Officer, Barbara Herbst

The Fellow met with Education Officer, Barbara Herbst from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Zuccolo gained new perspectives into the delivery of knowledge related to lesson plans and art activities designed to engage adults and secondary/primary students in learning about art and culture.

Herbst provided the Fellow with a comprehensive historical background on the history of this Imperial Palace which opened its museum to the public in 1891. This forward thinking Imperial family had a self-understanding of empire, and developed a strong focus on paintings. To that effect, the family commissioned many artists from Italy and Austria to produce portraits and landscapes featuring relatives and historical city views.

The Imperial family held strong connections to Venice and steadily collected paintings by Italian artists such as Titian, Correggio, Giorgio Giorgione, Tintoretto, Parmigianino, Raphael and Canaletto. Herbst explained that less art had been acquired from France and England who were considered "Imperial Rivals." The Museum's collection also included many prints which were considered important due their ability to spread information to the public through books, posters and woodcuts.

Antiques and other decorative arts were highly regarded. Unlike the Florentine patrons who had commissioned large scale, public marble sculpture, the Austrian Imperial family favoured small

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Cordovado. Director, Midj Furniture Company, Paolo Vernier



Cordovado. Director, Midj Furniture Company, Paolo Vernier, Michelle Zuccolo

bronzes, ivory carvings and medieval wooden sculptures that were intimate, personal and able to be held, owned and touched by hand.

Like collectors and patrons during the Italian Renaissance, there was also a focus on antiquity. Artefacts from Ancient Greece were to become sought after items, and served as an Imperial display of wealth, knowledge and power, and an appreciation of craftsmanship.

Zuccolo learned that the current Kunsthistorisches Museum staff had a strict policy on their role with the public. Their philosophy was to avoid the word “educate” when discussing public programs. Instead, the staff regarded themselves as “Kunstvermittlung” mediators, and aimed to make visiting the museum affordable to all. The museum staff were particularly focused on attracting minority migrant groups and families from low income brackets.

The Fellow was given access to an atelier in the Museum basement. This had recently been built after additional government funding was secured. Innovative art education programs operating from here were designed to bring new audiences in to experience the enormous collection of arts and crafts on display in the rooms above. Children were encouraged to participate in a range of programs – with the idea that through reaching a younger audience, parents would be engaged in the museum through a “flow on” effect.

Herbst informed the Fellow of an innovative and elaborate “treasure hunt” held in the museum. It had proven to be extremely popular and successful. During the free program, children were enlisted as “detectives” and were allowed into the gallery to solve the crimes. A series of clues and riddles were hidden or connected to art works. Children worked in teams as “special agents” and had to solve the jigsaw puzzle through looking closely at objects and art work.

Objectives of this program included:

- Making learning fun;
- Encouraging independent thinking and problem solving; and
- Promoting leadership and team work

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Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Educational Officer, Barbara Herbst

- Students were not to disrupt the general public and therefore also learnt how to conduct themselves appropriately in a public space.

The Fellow was shown another feature of the studio. A display case housed a collection of children's artwork. During this program, a group of children were taken on a tour of parts of the museum to conduct research and source inspiration from the art collection. The children were allotted a budget and taken to an art supply shop to purchase materials to create their own piece of art work. On returning to the studio, the children created an art work. They were asked to price the item and place it in the display cabinet. This gave them the opportunity to engage in the total experience of art making and understand its function in society. The special program gave them the opportunity to price their own art work and display it to an audience and to a market.

The Kunsthistorisches Museum also offered guided tours to children only, enabling them to book in and learn about particular areas of art work in the museum's collection.

Destination: Giorgio Morandi' studio/house and MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

Interview eight: Educational Officer, Veronica Ceruti

Veronica Ceruti was the Head of Education at the Istituzione Bologna Musei, and coordinated the city's thirteen cultural museums including the Medieval Museum and Music Museum. Ceruti offered to meet with Zuccolo and personally introduce her to several art museums and educational activities.

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Artist: Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964 Italy)

The Studio

Via Fondazza 36, 1st Floor

Bologna



Bologna. MaMBO Educational Office rVeronica Ceruti

Ceruti organised a personal guided tour of the Morandi's house and studio which provided Zuccolo with a rich insight into the life and times of this important and inspirational Italian artist. The fellow was given special permission to take photographs at this location for educational purposes. Morandi was an extremely focussed man who dedicated his life to making art work and teaching. Whilst he rarely travelled, he but did see two key exhibitions by Cezanne – an artist whom he always admired and who influenced the direction of Morandi's artistic investigation.

Morandi occupied the apartment in Bologna with his three sisters for over fifty years. It was divided into clear sections including a room which displayed Morandi's personal collection of art work – treasured sources of inspiration. This included ancient classical Greek vases and Rembrandt etchings.

There was a small drawing room where guests would be greeted. Morandi slept on a single “monastic” bed inside the actual studio amongst various easels, tables, chairs and still life objects. Thin paper still covers the window. Morandi worked directly from observation and maintained a constant, diffused light source in this room. He was not interested in the changing effects of lighting reflecting on the surfaces of objects, or traditional applications of tone and colour.

Morandi constantly created art works exploring still life objects, referencing common everyday bottles, jugs and other vessels available in supermarkets, general stores and local cafes. He sourced other objects including artificial flowers and shells from local flea markets. These were still grouped together

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on shelves and tables in and near the studio. A collection of set squares, rulers and other measuring devices provided further insight into Morandi's working process. Compositions were carefully calculated and measured – all this formed a critical part of a life time investigation into the relationship between shape, form, mass, colour, and implied space.

Morandi led a simple existence dividing his time between teaching and working in his studio. Initially he taught in municipally-run drawing schools. In 1930 he became a professor in engraving at the Accademia Belle Arte in Bologna. Summers were spent in the town of Grizzana in the nearby Apennine hills.

In 1993, Marilena Pasquali and the Bologna Municipality founded the Giorgio Morandi Museum. This museum housed a large portion of Morandi's estate which had been donated by his sister, Maria Teresa. The collection included over fifty paintings, some watercolours, ninety drawings and engravings. When a serious earthquake struck Bologna in 2010, the collection was moved to the Museo d' Arte Moderna for safe keeping. Parts of the collection are on permanent display to the public in several rooms at this location.

As arranged by Ceruti, the Fellow was given unlimited access to Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (MAMbo) in Bologna which provided Zuccolo with further opportunities to study Morandi's large body of art work at this location. Drawing, painting, sculpture, interactive media and video presentations produced by contemporary artists were displayed concurrently in nearby rooms. The work formed part of a special project in which these artists had directly referenced Morandi's work, and used it as a source of inspiration. Once again, Zuccolo was granted permission to take photographs as required throughout the complex.

A separate feature exhibition by Tacita Dean, (UK. b. 1965) was also showcased. Dean has held major exhibitions in Tate Modern, Tate Britain (London), New Museum (New York), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York) and has participated in the Venice Biennale (2003, 2005 and 2010) and the Sao Paulo Art Biennial (2006 and 2010). The exhibition offered a "dual vision" of two different perspectives and artistic intentions. Morandi's carefully calculated, rationalised compositions were seen alongside stills selected from films Dean had made in the Morandi studio. In contrast to Morandi's approach to art making, Dean presented images of the same still life objects which were randomly placed, blurred and arbitrary in nature.

When Ceruti was questioned by the Fellow about the challenges she faced in educating the general public about Italian art through public programs, she stated that one of biggest problems she encountered related to the decline in numbers of locals visiting public museums and churches. In her view, having been saturated by reproductions of artwork in books and in the media, the public now tended to be despondent and apathetic to the notion of viewing art through firsthand experience.

The major sentiment towards Morandi by local secondary and tertiary students, as defined by Ceruti, was similarly alarming. To them, he was regarded as a mere "provincial" and local artist. This is surprising considering his work is highly esteemed and regarded around the world. A clear indication of this esteem was evident in the fact that at the time the meeting, Ceruti, in conjunction with MAMbo, was in the process of curating a major exhibition of Morandi's work destined for exhibition in Japan.

7. Knowledge Transfer: Applying the Outcomes

New knowledge and practical skills will be made available to art educators/teachers and art students enabling them to utilise the outcomes acquired through the Fellow's research in Italy and Austria. The application of new information will be achieved through:

- Conducting classes, workshops and seminars/presentations in secondary schools such as Sophia Mundi Steiner School, Abbotsford
- Delivering specialised presentations in other class rooms by assisting staff to deliver knowledge on Italian art and design at Sophia Mundi Steiner School
- Transferring new knowledge, skills and techniques in workshops through the Teacher Training Association (TTA)
- Sharing new skills, techniques and knowledge through the delivery of specific workshops and art classes taught to adult and teenage groups at Brighton Art Society, Beaumaris Art Group and Glen Eira Art Group

Dissemination

- February 10th, 2014, Zuccolo was invited to be a guest speaker in a Year eight class, Sophia Mundi Steiner School, focussing on the Italian Renaissance
- March 30th, 2014, Zuccolo facilitated a One Day Workshop at Brighton Art Society, reflecting on the development of Life Drawing throughout the Italian Renaissance and Baroque art periods
- May 21st, 2014, the Fellow has been invited to be a Guest Speaker for Arts Research Seminar at Federation University, Ballarat. A combined group of Honours, Masters and PhD students will be in attendance
- August, 2014, Zuccolo will present an insight into the outcomes of her Fellowship in a morning seminar at Beaumaris Art group, Beaumaris. During the afternoon, she will teach a practical Life Drawing Workshop
- In 2015, Zuccolo will participate in a Group Exhibition at Anita Traverso Gallery, Richmond. Artwork will be displayed for three months. The Fellow will be producing new work for this exhibition informed by her experience and research in Italy. This includes drawing and painting skills learnt through undertaking classes at the AD'A in Florence

Concluding remarks:

By undertaking this Fellowship in Italy and Austria, Zuccolo was provided with an invaluable opportunity to enrich her teaching practice by researching innovative educational programs being developed and implemented in Italian Art Schools and internationally acclaimed Art Museums. These valuable outcomes will be integrated immediately into her own teaching practice, and will directly benefit other teachers who undertake training workshops for Professional Development with the Fellow. Zuccolo has the capacity to influence a broad range of students from primary age, secondary level and on to adult learning groups in the general community. This will enable her to optimise the transformation of outcomes and share newly acquired skills and knowledge with others. Through research in situ, Zuccolo has successfully acquired valuable insights in to traditional and contemporary Italian art and design. She has done this by visiting museums and galleries, and by observing important examples of Italian architecture. Practical skills acquired through undertaking intensive art courses in Florence will also benefit her personal practice.

8. Recommendations

Education and training

- Zuccolo has recommended the delivery of workshops at Brighton Art Society, Glen Eira Art Group and Beaumaris Art Group facilitating the transfer of a range of art marking techniques, with an emphasis on gaining further insight into Life Drawing and Human Anatomy
- Studying from plaster cast reproductions from ancient Greek and Roman sculpture is not a common practice in Australian institutes. If practiced, it could provide new learning opportunities for Australian art students, improving observational drawing skills and facilitating a deeper understanding of anatomy. Zuccolo will recommend this practice where appropriate in art institutes and educational programs
- Meeting with Pam Soriano, Programming & Volunteer Coordinator of The Convent, Abbotsford, Zuccolo will make recommendations regarding the future direction and pedagogy of The Holiday Workshop Program offered at this location. The recommendations will be informed by recent research into public art education programs practiced in Italy and Austria
- March 19th, the Fellow met with John O'Neill (President, Beaumaris Art Group) and Alison Pilcher (Teacher Development) to discuss innovative initiatives she researched whilst in Italian and Austrian museums. The purpose of this meeting was to convey ideas to the President which promote and enhance children's art activities and workshops in this community based art group.

9. References

Websites:

viewed 20th, October, 2013, www.bolognawelcome.com/en/places-to-see/history-art/params/CategorieLuoghi_6/Luoghi_189/ref/MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (Modern Art Gallery)

viewed 5th, October, 2013, AD'A Accademia d'arte - Art school in Florence, Italy

viewed 7th, October, 2013, <http://www.bsr.ac.uk/>

viewed 5th, October, 2013, tta.edu.au/

10. Appendices

Locations the Fellow visited for research purposes:

Zuccolo was able to study traditional and contemporary Italian art works, forms of design production, fashion and architecture in context throughout Italy and Austria. A list of highlight destinations is provided below.

Florence

- » Accademia d' Arte – AD'A di Florence
- » Accademia di Belle Arte (University)
- » Academia Galleria
- » Casa Buonarroti (Michelangelo's House)
- » Florence Cathedral
- » Florence Duomo
- » Istituto Michelangelo
- » Piazza della Carmine – Cappella Brancacci
- » Piazza Santa Croce
- » Piazza Santa Maria Novella
- » The Liceo dei Colli, Florence Steiner Inspired School
- » Uffizi Gallery

Rome

- » Complesso del Vittoriano - Cezanne e gli artisti italiani del '900
- » Complesso Monumentale di S. Maria del Popolo – Il Genio di Leonardo da Vinci
- » Galleria Borghese
- » Galleria Nazionale d' Arte Moderna, Rome
- » Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia
- » Museo dell' Ara Pacis
- » Modern Gallery
- » Galleria Doria Pamphilj
- » Palazzo Cipolla - Modigliani and Soutine
- » The British School of Art in Rome
- » The Parthenon

Venice

- » Chiesa Di S. Polo
- » Gallerie dell'Accademia – Palazzo Grimani, Venezia

Cordovado

- » Designer Furniture Company, Midj
- » Founder/Director: Paolo Vernier

10. Appendices

Bologna

- » Morandi Casa
- » Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna (MAMbo)

Vienna

- » Albertina Museum
- » Karlsplatz - Wien Museum
- » Kunsthistorisches Museum
- » Leopold Museum
- » The Belvedere
- » German Museum

Graz

- » Stadtpfarrkirche Church, containing the high altar "MariaeHimmelfahrt" ascribed to Tintoretto
- » Universal Museum Joanneum