

JOURNÉES D'ÉTUDES DOCTORALES INTERNATIONALES

NANTES /

Maison des Sciences de  
l'Homme Ange Guépin

# À l'ombre des maîtres

5 et 6

DÉCEMBRE 2019

*Les artistes « secondaires » en peinture,  
sculpture et architecture  
(XII<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles)*



© Federico Zuccaro (Italian, about 1541 - 1609) / T. Taddeo Drawing after the Antique: In the Background Copying a Facade by Palladio, about 1595, Pen and brown ink, brush with brown wash over black chalk and touches of red chalk / 42.3 x 17.5 cm (16 5/8 x 6 7/8 in.); 99.GA.6.12 / The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

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UNIVERSITÉ DE NANTES



**PATRIMOINES**  
L'INVENTAIRE EN RÉGION



Comité d'organisation : Mathilde Legeay, doctorante en histoire de l'art moderne & Jessy Jouan, doctorant en histoire de l'art moderne

## Call for papers:

### *In the shade of master s: “secondary” artists in painting, sculpture and architecture (12<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> centuries)*

Art history is mostly defined by the study of the artist as a figure, and by the study of masters. Numerous figures can also be found revolving around these masters, only regarded as secondary artists. Such a categorization partly comes from different value criteria applied to works of art by research. However, each geographical space inside the European continent is characterized with its own specific historical practices. The Italian Peninsula indeed displays a very strong biographical tradition. The Vasarian example of *Vite de'più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (1550) has become quite well-known with Giovanni Baglione, Giovanni Pietro Bellori, Carlo Cesare Malvasia or with Filippo Baldinucci. Thanks to the drive for exhaustivity displayed in these texts, researchers have been able to identify an important number of artists and craftpersons. In this way, art historians do not start from scratch, but unearth the memory of personalities along with their practices. In contrast, the French tradition stands out with a strong interest in several great figures, provoking the oblivion of all who did not profit from public acknowledgment in their lifetime. It was only during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its prevailing enthusiasm for erudition that compilations of artist biographies were published by some historians and persons of letters. As far as the Maine region is concerned for instance, l'Abbé Denis gathered painters, glass-makers, sculptors, and masons altogether in his *Dictionnaire des artistes et artisans manceaux* (1899). This approach led to the publication of the *Dictionnaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs de tous les temps et de tous les Pays* by E. Bénézit between 1911 and 1923. Nonetheless, this encyclopedic knowledge still favors great figures to the detriment of other less well-known names. These two models are evidence of a number of issues linked with the historical and geographical contexts, which influence our way of depicting those we deem as secondary artists. Moreover, the two notions of primary and secondary figures come up in specific frames in which their roles are always interdependent, whether it be in concrete terms with established links or in symbolic terms with alleged links.

The essential locus of the workshop has to be enquired into. How is a workshop organized? Which role is given to each of its members? From preparing colours to realising some parts of the painting, from building a mould to pouring liquid bronze into this casting mould, or from drawing a project to managing a work site, which evolution and which autonomy can students benefit from regarding their masters? Vasari has revealed a progressive vision of Art History, which still prevails in the discipline: students are inevitably ending up overstepping their master (Michelangelo and Ghirlandaio) or outshining their father (Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Pietro Bernini in the 17<sup>th</sup> century). But what about those who were not taken on and those who remained unskilled workers in their lifetime? Was their role really secondary? The ways and means of these artists' dependence and emancipation regarding their masters, their model, or their technique has to be addressed.

Concurrently with this approach, a number of old and new studies put forward one or several leaders against their followers. Such a view implies that the “followers” are submitted to their leader, and that they are not inclined to formulate new ideas. However, restricting research perspectives according to this view remains difficult as our historical and artistic knowledge cannot be exhaustive. Why such a classification? What makes leaders different from their followers? Can't a follower be a leader when looked upon from a different perspective? Considering this point, are followers necessarily “secondary” artists? The concern is less about analyzing the relationships between these artistic profiles than about understanding what made these characters singular as they were hidden behind the names of their forerunners.

**In order to carry out this study on “secondary” artists (12<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe), the following approaches will be addressed:**

- Artists networks: singularity and autonomy of a follower regarding one or several leaders.
- Workshops and work sites: the role played by students and apprentices in the production process of their masters' works of art.
- The contributions of “secondary” artists: creation, circulation, transmission...
- Artists and craftpersons with discreet or short-lived practices: the case of bronze sculptors, architecture sculptors, decoration painters, gilders...

**Organization committee :**

- Mathilde Legeay, PhD student in Modern Art History (University of Nantes)
- Jessy Jouan, PhD student in Modern Art History (University of Nantes / Pays de la Loire Heritage Inventory)

**Practical information:**

We invite contributions from PhD students and young doctors in Art History, or in any other discipline related to the topic. Proposals for oral presentation should include a title, an abstract (up to 300 words), and a curriculum vitae or academic resumé. The deadline for abstract submission is July 15, 2019. Abstracts must be submitted to the following email addresses: [mathilde.legeay@etu.univ-nantes.fr](mailto:mathilde.legeay@etu.univ-nantes.fr) and [jessy.jouan@etu.univ-nantes.fr](mailto:jessy.jouan@etu.univ-nantes.fr) .

Each presentation will be **20 minutes long**, and presentations can be given in French, English, or Italian.

The two-day workshop will be held at the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Ange Guépin in Nantes from **Thursday December 5 to Friday December 6 2019**. The workshop may lead to the publication of proceedings.