

Andrea Appiani's Drawings: The Vallardi Album and Other Collections

Academic Supervision

Anna Mariani
Chiara Palandri

RESEARCH UNIT

Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera

Research assistants

Elisa Albano – Conservator and Researcher
Serafina Pignotti – Conservator and Researcher

Project Staff

Lara Maria Rosa Barbieri – Cataloguer
Miriam Ferrera – Photographer
Federica Iannuzzi – Photographer
Elena Passini – Conservator and Cataloguer
Marta Rizzato – Photographer
Matilde Spimpolo – Conservator and Cataloguer
Yusheng Zhan – Conservator and Cataloguer
Students of the School of Restoration – Educational and training activities

Project Overview

The **Prints and Drawings Cabinet** of the **Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera** preserves approximately **five hundred drawings** by **Andrea Appiani** (1754–1817). This extensive corpus includes groups of graphic works executed in a variety of techniques, on papers of differing quality and colour. The drawings document the various phases of Appiani's artistic career, allowing scholars to trace the evolution of his visual language and to study the methods of his creative process.

More than **three hundred drawings** are contained in an album compiled in **1820** by the publisher, patron, and collector **Giuseppe Vallardi** (1784–1861). Acquired by the **Brera Academy** in **1875**, the album is now preserved in the Prints and Drawings Cabinet. To these must be added about **150 drawings**, kept both in albums assembled around **1884**, following the donation by **Count Borromeo** (1815–1885), and in a folder that gathers studies related to the frescoes in the **dome of Santa Maria presso San Celso** in Milan.

The **Vallardi Album** and its drawings have recently undergone a **conservation treatment** aimed at restoring the original binding structure, which had been severely compromised. The intervention, currently nearing completion, was carried out by the “**Camillo Boito**” **School of Restoration** at the **Brera Academy**, under the supervision of **Maria Chiara Palandri**. All the drawings contained in the album—**336 in total**—have been catalogued and are available on the **SIRBeC platform** of the **Lombardy Region**.

The project foresees the **digitisation of all Appiani drawings** held within the **Historical Collections of the Brera Academy**, through the production of **high-resolution images** to ensure their accessibility and enhancement on the **IartNET digital portal**.

All works belonging to the artist’s graphic corpus will also be analysed using **transmitted and raking light**, as well as **microscopy**, in order to study materials and techniques, with specific attention to the characteristics of the papers and the presence of **watermarks**. For the drawings that were formerly mounted in albums, new images will also be produced of the **verso** of the sheets—previously inaccessible prior to the conservation treatment.

The project further involves the **revision of the catalogue entries** (updating inventory numbers, bibliographic references, locations, and restoration records) and the **creation of new records** for drawings discovered on the reverse of the sheets. Data currently available on **SIRBeCWeb** will be **migrated to the SIGeCWeb platform**, the national database for state heritage cataloguing.