Brera's Contemporary Legacy: Thirty Years of Artistic Research and Exhibition Activity

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Project Overview

The project Brera's Contemporary Legacy: **Thirty Years of Artistic Research and Exhibition Activity** develops a comprehensive data collection on the artistic and exhibition practices of students, alumni, and faculty members of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera across its various Schools and Departments. Its goal is to **create a database that documents the presence, circulation, and impact of the Academy's work in education, artistic production, and research within the contemporary art scene, both in Italy and internationally**.

Data are collected through a range of methodologies, including:

- Direct **interviews** with a selected group of faculty members.
- **Analysis of publications and catalogues** documenting Brera's exhibition activities over the years (including *Salon Primo*, *Osservatorio*, and publications by individual Schools).

A central focus of the research is *Salon Primo*, a **long-term exhibition platform** that, **from 1993 to 2015**, plays a crucial role in presenting artistic research produced within the Academy. Organised in collaboration with Milanese galleries and institutional spaces, *Salon Primo* presents projects curated and selected initially by the Department of Visual Arts and, from 2004 onwards, also by the Schools of Scenography, Art and Media, and Artistic Planning for Business.

The project's methodology and scope engage all six clusters of the IartNET initiative:

- Design and Applied Arts
- Art and Technology
- Visual Arts
- Theatre, Acting, Dance, and Performative Arts
- Cinema and Audiovisuals
- Music

Actions

Map and select sources
Identify the corpus of exhibitions, events, publications, and archival materials related to thirty years of Brera's contemporary artistic activity.

Conduct interviews
Carry out structured interviews with selected faculty members and other key figures involved in Brera's artistic and exhibition practices.

Collect and analyse documentation
Gather catalogues, invitations, critical texts, press materials, and archival records related to *Salon Primo*, *Osservatorio*, and other institutional exhibitions.

Create metadata and catalogue entries
Organise collected data into catalogue units aligned with contemporary art documentation standards, including descriptive, technical, and contextual fields.

Digitise and archive materials
Digitise audiovisual and textual materials and prepare them for integration into the IartNET platform.

Develop the database architecture
Structure the dataset to allow cross-referencing between artists, exhibitions, schools, departments, and thematic clusters.

Publish selected records on the IartNET platform
Upload and disseminate data, ensuring clarity, accessibility, and interoperability across the IartNET ecosystem.

Design dissemination outputs
Prepare communication materials—summaries, visual excerpts, timelines, and thematic pathways—to present the project within Brera and across the network.