



Digital Archives of Art Teaching Collections

Academic Supervision

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Project Overview

Digital Archives of Art Teaching Collections originates from *The Making of Artistic Education: Brera Academy's Historical Teaching Collections* (1776–1815), a pilot project developed between 1998 and 2001 within the framework of the CNR Targeted Project for Cultural Heritage, curated by Francesca Valli. Its goal was to open new research perspectives on the pedagogical activities of the Brera Academy through the development of a dedicated digital program designed to catalogue both existing and lost objects within the Academy, including teaching models and works produced by students.

These two categories—models created by masters and works by students—were never conceived as rigidly distinct. A student's work, for instance, might later have become a model for teaching. This dynamic interchange is recorded in the database field **COLLOCAZIONE (Location)**, which traces the **physical and didactic movements** of each object within the Academy—from classroom display to storage—thereby reconstructing its life within Brera's institutional history.

Equally important for understanding the evolution of forms and styles in academic teaching—especially during the nineteenth century—is the documentation of the **provenance and genealogy** of study models. By recording detailed acquisition data (costs, provenance, commissions, suppliers, etc.), the project reconstructs the **network of exchanges and shared practices** between Italian and foreign

academies. This approach reveals an early “**historical internationalization**” of art education, built upon the circulation of **shared artistic models** such as plaster casts commissioned from model-makers who often worked simultaneously for several academies and artists.

The database thus serves both as a **research tool** and as a means of **valorization**, allowing scholars to trace the material and intellectual life of objects central to artistic education at Brera and beyond.

Actions

- Review and update of **data-entry operations**;
- Preliminary study for the **extension of database fields**;
- Research on **data interoperability** and integration with other dedicated platforms;
- Entry of **new data** resulting from ongoing archival research.