

Few materials have been such a constant and dominant factor in the history of the arts as the material of marble. Forever associated – at least from a western perspective – with the influential cultures of Greece and Rome, marble evokes, first and foremost, magnificence. And yet, the ways in which it has been employed, between sculpture, architecture, ornament and applied arts, has been extremely varied: whereas its coloured veins may conjure seas, landscapes, the bowels of the earth or even the veins of life itself, in its whitest form, marble can almost seem to disappear behind the very shape it takes on. Since the foundational work of Raniero Gnoli (1971) and Gabriele Borghini (1989), scholars have explored marble from various points of view, including its quarrying, processing techniques and networks of distribution, as well as its aesthetic, socio-cultural and representational role. More recently, particular attention has been given to marble's expressive power as a medium: the ways in which it may act as a mediator between iconicity and aniconism, structure and ornamentation. Yet, notwithstanding the growing body of literature on the uses, meanings and aesthetics of marble, scholarship has remained scattered, often taking the form of case studies, confined to specific disciplinary, geographical and chronological boundaries.

This three-day workshop aims to draw attention precisely to these boundaries, seeking ways to overcome them and bring new perspectives to the field. Considering marble both as a "raw" material and as a medium that, through its materiality, gains meaning, it will "pair" the five founding members of the recently established network *NeReMa - International Network for Research on Marble and Decorative Stones* with a number of invited international scholars, selected for their different and sometimes opposed methodological backgrounds as well as geographical and chronological variety. The specific aim of the workshop is to create a dialogue and to see in what ways these different approaches can be brought together in a productive exchange. In doing so, it will focus on three leading questions: How have socio-cultural, epistemological or technical conditions transformed the uses and meanings of marble? In what ways may the choice for marble affect the perception of an artwork? And at what moments in history did marble transcend its own materiality, suggesting new aesthetic outlooks? The workshop will explore these issues both through a more theoretical round-table discussion and by looking at concrete case studies in the city of Rome.

#### CONCEPT

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#### ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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#### NeReMa - INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR RESEARCH ON MARBLE AND DECORATIVE STONES

[www.nerema.org](http://www.nerema.org)

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**IMAGE:** Detail of marble decoration, Rome, Villa Giulia, Museo Nazionale Etrusco (photo by Ariane Varela Braga)



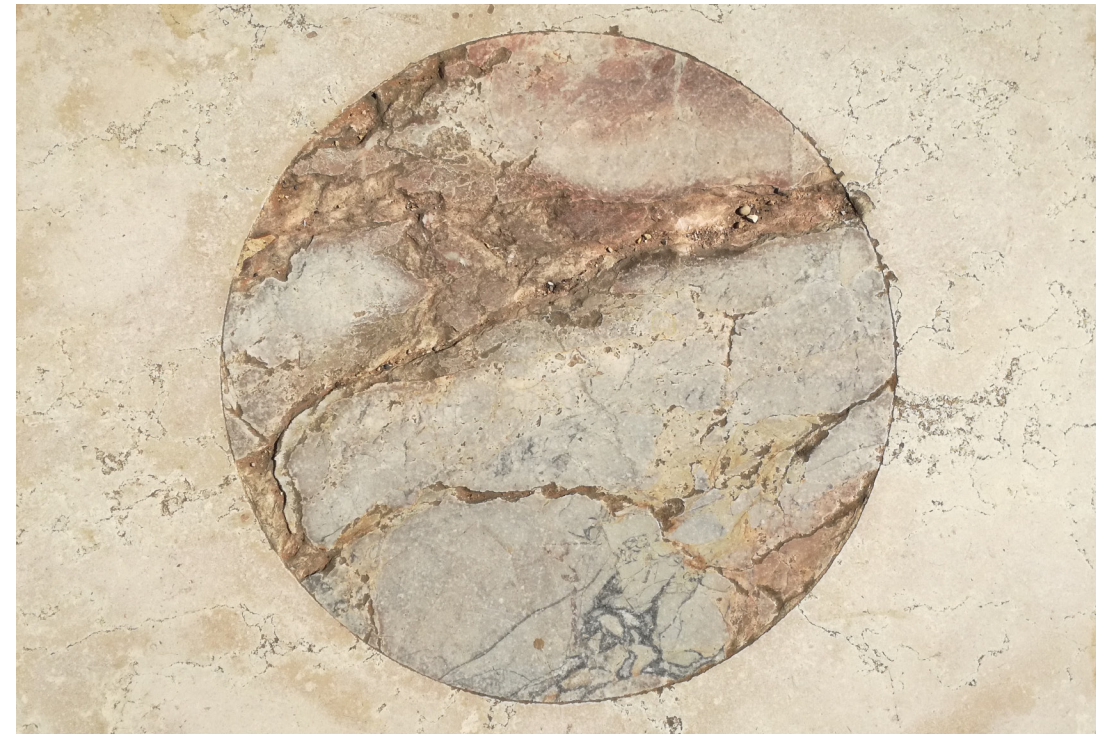
# Marble Connections and Refractions

Workshop

16–18 September 2021

#### Bibliotheca Hertziana

Villino Stroganoff · via Gregoriana 22, Rome



## Thursday, 16 September 2021

The evening programme is open to the public via zoom. Please use the following link:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7475586652?pwd=SlJUUUZhcHNZM1hvT3Boak5mQjlaQT09>

- 18.00 | **Welcome**  
TRISTAN WEDDIGEN, *Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome*
- 18.05 | **Presentation of the network NeReMa**  
ARIANE VARELA BRAGA, *Universität Zürich*  
JORIS VAN GASTEL, *Universität Zürich*
- 18.15 | **DARIO GAMBONI, *Université de Genève***  
**Marble and Marbling: Pattern, Material, Process**  
Is the artistic and architectural recourse to marble but one technique of ‘marbling’ that is of producing patterns appealing to humans by their combination of regularity and irregularity, or are there properties of the material that affect its uses and justify a specific research on marble and “decorative stones”? Following an essay recently published by Raphael Rosenberg on the subject, this lecture will raise this question and propose a few answers.
- 19.00 | **Discussion**

### Discussants

SANTE GUIDO, *Università di Roma Tre*  
RUGGERO LONGO, *Bibliotheca Hertziana/ Scuola IMT Alti Studi Lucca*  
CIGDEM ÖZEL, *Bibliotheca Hertziana*  
LUCIA SIMONATO, *Scuola Normale di Pisa*  
AMALIE SKOVDMØLLER, *København's Universitet*  
STEFFEN ZIERHOLZ, *Ruhr-Universität Bochum*

## Friday, 17 September 2021

Participation in the workshop is by invitation only. For further information please contact us at [neremainfo@gmail.com](mailto:neremainfo@gmail.com)

- 09.00 | **Welcome**  
ARIANE VARELA BRAGA, *Universität Zürich*  
JORIS VAN GASTEL, *Universität Zürich*
- 09.15 | **Introduction of the participants**
- 09.45 | IRIS WENDERHOLM, *Universität Hamburg*  
**Origins and Provenance in the Early Modern Discourse on Stones**  
Respondent: JORIS VAN GASTEL, *Universität Zürich*
- 11.00 | **Coffee break**
- 11.30 | PASCAL JULIEN, *Université de Toulouse*  
**Statuary Marble, White, Pure and Brilliant: Mythical and Mystical Dimensions of a Western Elitism**  
Respondent: GRÉGOIRE EXTERMANN, *Universidad de Sevilla*
- 13.00 | **Lunch break**
- 14.00 | GREG SULLIVAN, *York University/St Paul's Cathedral*  
**Metamorphosis: Sculptors, Geologists and the Discourse on Marble 1750–1840**  
Respondent: MARTHE KRETZSCHMAR, *Universität Wien/Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte, Paris*
- 15.15 | CHRISTINE CASEY, *University of Dublin*  
**Marble in Architecture: The Competing Claims of Making and Meaning**  
Respondent: ARIANE VARELA BRAGA, *Universität Zürich*
- 16.30 | **Coffee break**
- 16.45 | BUKET ALTINOBA, *LMU München*  
**Machines for Reproducing Sculpture: Marble Concepts and the Crisis of Materiality in the Nineteenth Century**  
Respondent: ANNA FRASCA-RATH, *Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg*
- 18.00 | **Concluding remarks**

## Saturday 18 September 2021

Speakers and invited discussants only

9.00 – 18.00 Field visits