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*The Art of the Restorer: Bruno Arciprete and the Restoration of Painting in Naples*

In collaboration with the Center for the Art and Architectural History of Port Cities at La Capraia, I am carrying out a book-length study of painting restoration in the city of Naples. The book focuses on Italian methods and philosophy of restoration through a series of interviews with one highly accomplished art restorer, Bruno Arciprete. It situates the restorations carried out by Arciprete within their historical and geographical context, emphasizing that art objects as seen today reflect a visual historiography inherited from restorers, art historians and theorists in addition to the original intent of their creators. The book argues that the role of the restorer has traditionally been undervalued. Moreover, it highlights the tension between the scholarly opinions of art historians and the technical observations of conservators and restorers. For non-Italian readers, the book provides a discussion of Cesare Brandi's legacy in the practice of restoration in post-war Italy and the various schools that grew from it. Arciprete is based in Naples, and the book pays particular attention to works in churches and museums in the southern capital while also discussing Arciprete's work in France, England, and the United States. The book details the painstaking restorations of *cinquecento* masters like Titian, Polidoro da Caravaggio, and Parmigianino in the Capodimonte Museum and elsewhere, while also exploring in depth the restoration of the major Neapolitan seventeenth-century painters like Battistello Caracciolo, Jusepe de Ribera, and Luca Giordano. The urgent need to restore Neapolitan works following the devastation of the Second World War and the earthquake of 1980, the consequences of which were enormous, is explained for readers who are unfamiliar with the city's history and monuments. Special attention is paid to Caravaggio, whose work in public and private collections Arciprete has a long association. The book also discusses the role of art restorer as teacher, whose knowledge and skills must be passed down to apprentices if it is to be preserved.