

Newsletter

II

VILLA I TATTI

THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY CENTER
FOR ITALIAN RENAISSANCE STUDIES
FLORENCE, ITALY

November 1967

This letter continues the account of activities at Villa I Tatti which was begun with the publication of a first Newsletter in January 1966.

I. The Florentine Flood and C.R.I.A.

The academic year 1966-67 was dominated by the occurrence on November 4 of the worst flood in the history of Florence. Villa I Tatti on the high ground toward Settignano suffered no physical damage but the scholarly work of the Fellows was necessarily suspended in varying degrees for a considerable period.

During the two weeks immediately following the flood I Tatti undertook to clean and dry the negative plates from the Gabinetto Fotografico of the Uffizi. This great collection which goes back to the nineteenth century is a comprehensive record of all the works of art in the province of Tuscany, and includes very important documentary photographs of the recent restorations of frescoes of Giotto and Piero della Francesca. About a third of the Gabinetto was flooded leaving the plates covered with mud. They had to be cleaned and washed in such a way as not to damage the gelatine surfaces. Altogether some 20,000 plates were so cleaned at I Tatti with the combined help of Fellows, library staff, house staff and volunteers.

As the Villa continued to have heat, light, and water we were able to offer help to friends in the center who were deprived of all these facilities. Many of the Fellows

devoted themselves for weeks to salvage work in the flooded libraries and galleries.

When the Committee to Rescue Italian Art (C.R.I.A.) was formed in the United States I Tatti became its Florentine headquarters. The first representatives who came to inspect the situation, Professors F. Hartt and F. Licht, stayed at the Villa as did several of the expert restorers who were sent by the Committee. Meetings were arranged at I Tatti in which the Italian restorers could meet their opposite numbers to discuss technical problems. The initial grants for funds for the work of restoration were made from I Tatti and until March, when C.R.I.A. acquired an office in Palazzo Pitti, the Villa continued to serve as C.R.I.A. headquarters.

In January the Director, Professor Gilmore, returned to the United States to teach at Harvard University for the spring term. His place was taken by Professor Millard Meiss of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. Professor Meiss was also Chairman of the Advisory Committee of C.R.I.A. In this capacity he carried on the negotiations for the allocation of C.R.I.A. funds with the representatives of the Florentine galleries and libraries. In this task he was ably assisted by Professor Curtis Shell who had been appointed Assistant Director of I Tatti for the year 1966-67.

II. *Fellows and Visiting Scholars*

In 1966-67 the following scholars were Fellows at I Tatti:

- Sergio Bertelli (second year), History: Diplomatic History of Florence, 1502-12.
Malcolm Campbell, Art History: Late Baroque Patronage in Florence.
Riccardo Fubini (third year), History: Letters of Lorenzo de' Medici.
Carlo Ginzburg, History: 16th and 17th Century Emblems.

- Robert Klein, * Art History: 15th Century Ferrarese Prints.
Myron Laskin (second year), Art History: Correggio.
Nancy Neilson, Art History: 16th Century Portraiture.
Maria Angela Novelli, Art History: Parmigianino.
John O'Malley, S.J., History: Egidio da Viterbo.
Martin Picker, Music History: Early 16th Century Sacred Music.
Jerrold Seigel, History: Attitudes Toward Aristocracy in Renaissance Italy.
Irving Singer (second year), Philosophy: Renaissance Philosophy of Love.

The Fellows for the present academic year 1967-68 are:

- James Beck, Art History: Monographic Study of Giovanni da Modena and Early Career of Jacopo della Quercia.
Charles Cohen, Art History: Pordenone.
Riccardo Fubini (fourth year), History: Letters of Lorenzo de' Medici.
Felton Gibbons, Art History: C.R.I.A. Representative and Giorgione.
Creighton Gilbert, Art History: Textbook on the Renaissance.
Jeremy Noble, History of Music: Josquin des Prez.
John O'Malley, S.J. (second year), History: Egidio da Viterbo.
Edmund Pillsbury, Art History: Jacopo Zucchi.
Antonio Rotondò, History: Fausto Sozzini.
John Tedeschi, History: Lelio Sozzini.
Manfred Wundram, Art History: Donatello and Nanni di Banco.

Of the twenty-three appointees in the last two years ten have received their support in whole or in part from the funds of the I Tatti permanent endowment. The others have been the recipients of grants from the American Commission for Cultural Exchange with Italy, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Medici Fund of the Renaissance Society of

* Deceased 22 April 1967.

America, the Istituto di Studi sul Rinascimento in Florence, the Finley Fund of the National Gallery, the Kress Foundation and the Old Dominion Foundation. The latter two foundations have each granted to I Tatti the sum of \$10,000 annually for a five-year period to be used for fellowships and for support of the library. This year is the fourth of the Kress grant and the third of the Old Dominion. James Beck and Charles Cohen are the recipients this year of grants from the Leopold Schepp Foundation awarded in memory of Florence L. Schepp.

The distribution of the fields in which these scholars are working follows the policy adopted at the beginning of the Center that about half of the Fellows should be art historians and the remainder representatives of other disciplines in the broad area of Renaissance studies such as history, literature, music, philosophy, religion.

Numbers of distinguished scholars in all fields of Renaissance studies have continued to be guests at the Villa for periods ranging from overnight to a month. Many such guests have the opportunity to meet informally with some or all of the Fellows to discuss work in progress. In 1965 the Gulbenkian Foundation granted to I Tatti the sum of \$2,500 annually for four years to pay the expenses of European scholars invited to I Tatti for short visits. Visitors on this grant have included Frances Yates of the Warburg Institute, Philip Pouncey of the British Museum, Carlos de Azevedo of Lisbon, Anthony Levi, S.J. of Oxford, Federico Zeri of Rome, Mendel Metzger of Paris, Victor Lazarev of the Fine Arts Institute of the University of Moscow, Olga Puymanova of Prague and José de Pina Martins of the University of Lisbon. Several of these scholars have given formal lectures at the Center and all of them have had stimulating exchanges of views with the Fellows on problems of general interest.

During the last two years Florence has been the scene of congresses held in honor of the anniversaries of Dante, Michelangelo, Donatello, and Giotto. On these and other occasions such as the seminar of the Kunsthistorisches Institut on problems of the Quattrocento and other meetings of

learned societies I Tatti has offered receptions to the delegates and special opportunities for viewing the Berenson collection.

III. *Tours of the Villa and Gardens*

The number of visitors on the regular Wednesday tours during the academic year and the Monday, Wednesday, Friday tours during July and August remained about the same. Some fifteen hundred people annually make appointments for these tours and in addition special group tours have been arranged for the Albright-Knox Gallery, the Corso per Stranieri in Florence, Middlebury College, Sarah Lawrence College, Stanford University, Temple University and Wellesley College.

In addition to being shown on the regular tour the garden is visited by the regular excursions arranged in May and June to visit the gardens of the Florentine villas. Several garden clubs have also requested special permission to come to I Tatti. Contributions from a number of friends have made it possible to improve the maintenance of the garden. Mr. and Mrs. Morrill's gift of 2,000 spring bulbs last year made a particularly brilliant display in April and May.

IV. *Lectures and Concerts*

The following formal lectures have been given at I Tatti since January 1966:

Everett Fahy: « The Beginnings of Fra Bartolommeo ».

Carlos de Azevedo: « Italian Influence on Portuguese Architecture ».

Frederick W. Sternfeld: « Song and Instrumental Music in the Age of Shakespeare » with musical illustrations by Brian Jeffery on the lute and Frank Traficante on the viola da gamba.

Frederick Hartt: « The Problem of Authenticity in the Drawings of Michelangelo ».

Mendel Metzger: « Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts of the Renaissance ».

Robert Klein: « Tarocchi di Mantegna ».

Federico Ghisi: « Musiche per le nozze di Ferdinando I de' Medici e Cristina di Lorena ».

Martin Picker: « Claudio Monteverdi » in honor of 400th anniversary of composer's birth.

On 25 March 1966 Benjamin Rowland, Jr. and Fosco Maraini gave an informal talk on the Oriental collection at the Villa.

Three concerts were offered in the same period:

Josephine Singer, soprano; Marcello Guerrini, pianist.

Italian Chamber Music Society (Società Cameristica Italiana): Enzo Porta, violin; Umberto Oliveto, violin; Emilio Poggioni, viola; Italo Gomez, violoncello. This concert presented the European première of the *Quartet* composed by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco in memory of Bernard Berenson.

Chamber Ensemble « Alessandro Stradella »: Franco Cipolla, Sergio Marzi, violins; Mario Alberghini, cello; Maria Luisa Salerni, cembalo.

The program of lectures and concerts was necessarily curtailed because of the flood.

V. The Library and Photograph Collection

The project for converting the former garage into a special library for the photograph collection had been approved by the University in the spring of 1966. Funds were available in the special fund set aside by the executors to take care of such capital improvements as might be necessary in adapting a private establishment to the purposes of an institute. A corridor has been built connecting the old garage with the existing library, and the former garage space has been enlarged to create a reading room on the ground floor and, above, six studies and a photographic laboratory. A new garage and parking lot were

created in the rear of the old one. The plans for this work were drawn up by Architect Ferdinando Poggi and construction was begun in September 1966. The contract called for the work to be finished by January 1967 but the flood interrupted all progress for more than two months and the new library was not completed before the early summer of this year. It is now open and has been much admired. The photograph collection is arranged in clearly labelled boxes following the order of Berenson's lists. The photographs are far easier to consult and better protected than they were in the folders in the old library.

F. Gordon Morrill and Elizabeth Morrill have continued their generous support for the purchase of books in the history of music. They have now offered to finance the building of a room to house the music library. This will be designed by Mr. Morrill and will be situated above the former reference room with views into the garden. The Harvard Corporation has voted to call it the Morrill Music Library in the Berenson Library.

During 1966-67 Professor Curtis Shell of Wellesley occupied the Villino with the title of Assistant Director and had responsibility for supervising the library and the photograph collection. In the current academic year two of the Fellows, Dr. John Tedeschi and Professor Creighton Gilbert, have agreed to exercise supervision over acquisitions for both collections.

Substantial progress has been achieved on the project of reproducing sets of the Berenson Photographic Archive. The photographer who is now employed full time has a laboratory and dark room on the second floor of the new wing. His equipment has been further expanded this summer by the gift from Dr. Edwin H. Land of a Polaroid MP 3 copy camera. This has made it possible for the photographer to execute special commissions for the Fellows. Fourteen institutions have now subscribed to and are receiving the small prints of the Berenson photographs which are produced at the rate of as many as five hundred prints a day. Some 25,000 negatives have now been made and

there is universal testimony to the value of the collection of prints as a teaching instrument.

VI. Publication

The first publication of the Harvard Center at I Tatti was the preliminary inventory of the Berenson Archive entitled *An Inventory of Correspondence* published in 1965 on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of Berenson's birth and distributed by the Harvard University Press. This archive is the property of Nicky Mariano and documents in it may be consulted only with her permission. It is housed in the I Tatti library and the *Inventory* provides a guide to letters from more than 1,200 friends and acquaintances ranging in date from 1890 to Berenson's death in 1959. The letters are of interest not only to students of art history but also to all those who are concerned with the intellectual history of Berenson's generation. In addition to the letters to Berenson from the wide circle with whom he kept in touch there are more than 3,000 from him to his wife Mary and a similar number from her to him. These constitute source material of an extraordinary interest for Berenson's life and times. Professor Ernest Samuels of Northwestern University has begun work on a biography of Berenson which will be based on an exhaustive study of this material. It will be published by the Harvard University Press.

It is the hope of all those connected with the administration of the Center that a regular program of publication can be undertaken in the future. There are now more than fifty scholars who have been Fellows or Associates of I Tatti since the Center was opened. Many of them have materials — documents discovered or interpretative essays — which were the result of their researches during their tenure of the fellowship. An annual volume of studies and documents perhaps centered in successive years on the different special fields of art history, history, or literature in which the Fellows have worked would provide an appropriate outlet for the publication of their

work and make a contribution to Renaissance studies. In the long run it might be feasible to publish a series of monographs. Negotiations have been undertaken with a Florentine printing house and with the Harvard University Press and the outlook is promising. If these hopes are to be fulfilled the fund drive must be completed.

VII. The Financial Position

At the time of the opening of the Harvard Center in 1961 the University announced a drive for additional restricted endowment for Villa I Tatti of \$2,000,000. In 1963 an anonymous donor contributed \$500,000 with the stipulation that his gift be matched by the end of 1966 (subsequently extended to the end of 1967). In 1964 the Corporation assigned to the uses of I Tatti the De Dombrowski bequest to the University of approximately \$289,000, the income of this sum to be devoted to the study of Italian art and music. In 1966 the Charles Dunlap bequest of approximately \$125,000 was similarly assigned to I Tatti.

The following have contributed to the permanent restricted endowment:

Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Alexander, Jr., Mr. Lawrence Berenson, Mr. Richard Berenson, Mr. Theodore Berenson, the Berenson Family, the Copperfield Fund (Mr. John P. Hodgkin), Mr. Charles Henry Coster, Miss Alice A. de Lamar, Mr. Paul Geier, Mr. Paul Hammond, the Kidder Peabody Foundation (Mr. Albert Gordon), Mrs. Rensselaer Lee, Mrs. Matilde Pfeiffer, Mr. Peter Riesenbergh, Mr. Arnold Ross, Mrs. Fannie Shaskan, Mr. and Mrs. George F. Shaskan, Jr., the Shelter Rock Foundation for Mr. and Mrs. Donald S. Stralem, Mr. Merryl F. Sicherman, Mr. H. Colin Slim, the Trustees of the Judgment Fund for R. Keith Kane and Mrs. Kane, Mr. and Mrs. Rawson L. Wood.

Contributions for unrestricted current expenses including new construction have been received from the following:

Mr. Reuben Brower, Mr. William A. Coolidge, Mr. Fellowes Davis, the Finley Fund of the National Gallery of Art (Mr. John Walker), Mr. Felton Gibbons, Mr. Thomas S. Lamont, Mr. James I. Merrill, Mr. and Mrs. F. Gordon Morrill, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth B. Murdock, Mr. Philip Pouncey, Mr. Peter Riesenber, Mrs. Frank Wooster.

The garden has been kept up with contributions from:

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, Mr. Derek Hill, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin H. Land, Mr. Henry P. McIlhenny, Mr. and Mrs. F. Gordon Morrill, Mrs. Richardson Pratt, Mrs. Elery Sedgwick, Miss May Sarton, Mrs. Peter Viereck.

The purchase of additional books for the library has been made possible through gifts from:

The Max Ascoli Fund, Inc., Countess Antonia della Gherardesca d'Oncieu, the Bertram M. Goldsmith Foundation, Mr. Werner Gundersheimer, Mr. Myron Laskin, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Millard Meiss, Mr. and Mrs. F. Gordon Morrill, Mr. John Pope-Hennessy, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene B. Power, Mrs. Ralph Schmitt, Dr. Mark Sheppard.

As the Center enters its seventh year it is a pleasure to record the support given by these many friends. Their contributions have brought us within \$750,000 of the goal originally set, but, as we have mentioned earlier in this Newsletter, we are now operating with the help of three term grants. Two of these are in the amount of \$10,000 a year. One will be concluded next year. The other still has two years to run. A third grant in the amount of \$2,500 a year has two more years to run. Unless new sources of support are found we will have to operate after next year with \$10,000 less money, and after the following year with \$22,500 less money.

It is obvious that our program cannot be maintained as it exists today unless new money is found. This is a serious situation. There are only two alternatives. To continue our program of Renaissance studies substantially in its present form new annual grants of at least \$22,500 must be found. The second alternative, and by far the better, is the goal which we have set for ourselves. Additional capital in the amount of \$750,000 must be found if

we are to continue our present program and to ensure the publication of an annual volume of studies, the proper development of the library, and the establishment of fellowships based entirely on I Tatti funds. We are continually seeking ways and means to attain this goal so that the full potentialities of the Center at Villa I Tatti may be realized. We now appeal to the further generosity of our friends and to that of other readers of this Newsletter.

Myron P. Gilmore

Nicky Mariano

Fellows and Associates of I Tatti, 1961-68

Roberto Abbondanza, History, 1964-5
 Mina Bacci, Art History, 1965-6
 James Beck, Art History, 1967-8
 Marvin Becker, History, 1963-4
 Sergio Bertelli, History, 1965-7
 Ludovico Borgo, Art History, 1963-5
 Howard Brown, Music History, 1963-4
 Gene Brucker, History, 1964-5
 Malcolm Campbell, Art History, 1966-7
 Anthony Caputi, Literature, 1964-5
 Cecil Clough, History, 1963-4
 Eric Cochrane, History, 1961-2
 Charles Cohen, Art History, 1967-8
 Elio Conti, History, 1963-4
 Dario Covi, Art History, 1964-5
 Colin Eisler, Art History, 1962-3
 Everett Fahy, Art History, 1964-6
 Francis Fergusson, Literature, 1963-4
 John Freccero, Literature, 1961-2
 Riccardo Fubini, History, 1964-8
 Felton Gibbons, Art History, 1964-5, 1967-8
 Creighton Gilbert, Art History, 1962-3, 1967-8
 Carlo Ginzburg, History, 1966-7
 Guglielmina Gregori, Art History, 1963-5
 James Haar, Music History, 1965-6
 John Hale, History, 1962-3
 Robert Hatfield, Art History, 1964-6
 Detlef Heikamp, Art History, 1963-4
 David Herlihy, History, 1961-2

Sears Jayne, Literature, 1962-3
 Robert Klein, Art History, 1966-7
 Myron Laskin, Jr., Art History, 1965-7
 Michael Mahoney, Art History, 1962-3
 Lauro Martines, History, 1962-5
 Nancy Neilson, Art History, 1966-7
 Jeremy Noble, Music History, 1967-8
 Maria Angela Novelli, Art History, 1966-7
 Konrad Oberhuber, Art History, 1965-6
 John O'Malley, S.J., History, 1966-8
 Martin Picker, Music History, 1966-7
 Edmund Pillsbury, Art History, 1967-8
 Janet Cox Rearick (Mrs. H. Wiley Hitchcock), Art History, 1961-3
 William Robert Rearick, Art History, 1961-3
 Peter Riesenbergh, History, 1964-5
 Antonio Rotondò, History, 1967-8
 Lawrence Ryan, Literature, 1963-4
 Howard Saalman, Art History, 1963-5
 Jerrold Seigel, History, 1966-7
 Curtis Shell, Art History, 1961-2
 Irving Singer, Philosophy, 1965-7
 James Snyder, Art History, 1962-3
 Randolph Starn, History, 1964-6
 Francesco Tateo, Literature, 1965-6
 John Tedeschi, History, 1967-8
 Richard Turner, Art History, 1963-4
 Donald Weinstein, History, 1962-3
 Hayden White, History, 1961-2
 Manfred Wundram, Art History, 1967-8

Advisory Committee on Villa I Tatti, 1965-66

Robert Lee Wolff, Coolidge Professor of History, Harvard University, *Chairman*.

James Ackerman, Professor of Fine Arts, Harvard University.

Douglas Bryant, University Librarian, Harvard University.

Felix Gilbert, Professor of History, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton.

Cecil Grayson, Serena Professor of Italian Studies, Oxford University.

Millard Meiss, Professor of Art History, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton.

Nino Pirrotta, Naumburg Professor of Music, Harvard University.

Benjamin Rowland, Jr., Gleason Professor of Fine Arts, Harvard University.

Contributions to the *Fund for I Tatti* may be sent to Villa I Tatti, Via di Vincigliata 26, Florence, Italy, or to the Treasurer's Office, Harvard University, 225 Franklin Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02110. Checks should be made out to Harvard University, and it should be specified that the gift is to be applied to the *Fund for I Tatti*.