

# **Robin L. Thomas**

## Curriculum Vitae

Associate Professor  
Department of Art History  
The Pennsylvania State University  
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### **Education**

PhD Columbia University, 2007

Dissertation Title: "Charles Bourbon's Naples: Architecture and Urbanism"

MPhil Columbia University, 2002

Major Concentration: Baroque Architecture

Minor Concentration: Byzantine Architecture

MA Columbia University, 2000

BA, summa cum laude, Emory University, 1999

Honor's Thesis Title: "The Counter-reformation Art of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, 1599-1602."

### **Professional Positions**

Associate Professor, The Pennsylvania State University, 2014-present

Affiliate Associate Professor of Architecture, 2018-present

Assistant Professor, The Pennsylvania State University, 2008-2014

Post-Doctoral Fellow, Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, Emory University, 2007-2008

Adjunct Instructor, Emory University, 2006-07

### **Articles and Books**

Translation: Vico, Giovanni Battista. "In Memory of Lady Angela Cimmino." *New Vico Studies* 25 (2007): 1-33.

"Luigi Vanvitelli as Reader and Author." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 69, no. 4 (2010): 508-533.

“Building the Monarchy: The Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, 1737.” *The Court Historian* 17 (2012): 35-60.

*Architecture and Statecraft: Charles of Bourbon's Naples 1734-59*. Penn State Press, 2013. (peer reviewed)

Reviews: Michael J. Levin, *Bulletin for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies*, vol. 38, pp. 260–261

Daniel McReynolds, *caa.reviews*, April, 2014 (online)

Jörg Garms, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 147, pp. 35–36

“Propagandizing Nolli in Naples.” In *Giambattista Nolli, Rome and Mapping: Before and After the Pianta Grande*. Eds. Allan Ceen and Ian Verstegen (Rome: Studium Urbis, 2014), 134–144.

“The Royal Palace of Capodimonte: the Early Years.” *Napoli Nobilissima*. 7<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 2, issue 3 (2016): 23–32.

“Architects’ Libraries.” *The Companions to the History of Architecture, Volume II, Eighteenth-Century Architecture*. Eds. Caroline van Eck and Sigrid de Jong (Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 33–53.

“Albergo dei Poveri.” *The Companions to the History of Architecture, Volume II, Eighteenth-Century Architecture*. Eds. Caroline van Eck and Sigrid de Jong (Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 603–606.

“Royal Palace at Caserta.” *The Companions to the History of Architecture, Volume II, Eighteenth-Century Architecture*. Eds. Caroline van Eck and Sigrid de Jong (Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 607–611.

“The *pacte de famille* and a *famille des palais*: Architecture and the Bourbons in the Eighteenth Century.” *Cheiron* 2 (2017): 137–163.

“Slavery and Construction in Eighteenth-Century Naples” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 78 (2019): 167–186.

“Convent and Crown: Redecorating Santa Chiara in Naples 1741–59” *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era* 24 (2019)

“Symbols of Royal Power: the Bourbon Royal Palaces of Naples” *The Modern State in Naples and Bourbon Europe, Historiography and Sources*, eds. Giuseppe Cirillo and Maria Anna Noto (Naples, 2019), 219–246.

“Towers of Power: the *Guglie* of Naples and the Visual Rhetoric of Height” in *Visualizing the Past in Italian Renaissance Art: Essays in Honor of Brian A. Curran*, eds. Douglas Dow and Jennifer Cochran Anderson (Brill) (forthcoming)

### **Reviews**

Costanza Caraffa. Gaetano Chiaveri (1689–1770). Architetto romano della Hofkirche di Dresda. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, no. 4 (2008): 606-608.

“New Studies of Vico and Tiepolo.” *New Vico Studies* 26 (2008) 170-172.

Heather Hyde Minor. The Culture of Architecture in Enlightenment Rome. *European Architectural History Network Newsletter* 4 (2010): 38-41.

### **Research Projects**

*Palaces of Reason: the Royal Architecture of Bourbon Naples* (book project in preparation)

### **Lectures and Conference Presentations**

“Palace as Palimpsest: the Royal Palace at Portici,” Invited by the Committee for Early Modern Studies, The Pennsylvania State University, October 2018.

“Spain, Rome, and the Planning of Capodimonte,” *Napoli, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte in un contesto mondiale*, Naples, Italy, October 2017.

“Luigi Vanvitelli as Active Reader” 30<sup>th</sup> International Seminar in the History of Architecture: the Architect as Reader, Palladio Museum, Vicenza, Italy, June 2017.

“Francesco de Mura and Bourbon Naples” Invited by The University of Wisconsin, Madison, February 2017.

“The Healing Power of Art” Invited by the Princess Theatre, Decatur, AL, December 2016.

“Il Segno del potere monarchico. Le reggie dei Borbone di Napoli,” Invited by conference *Lo Stato modern napoletano e l'Europa Borbonica: storiografia e fonti*, Seconda Università di Napoli, Caserta, December 2016.

“Palaces and Political Economy in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Naples” Invited by Cambridge University, January 2016.

“Planning Portici: Architecture and Diplomacy between Naples and Spain 1734–49” *Neapolitan Network*, Universitat de Barcelona, October 2014.

“Staging Gothic: Luigi Vanvitelli’s Designs for Milan Cathedral” Society of Architectural Historians Annual Meeting, April 2014.

“The Bourbon Theater of State and Architecture of Eighteenth-Century Naples” Invited by Princeton University, December 2013.

“The Bourbon Redecoration of Santa Chiara in Naples” American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Meeting, Cleveland, April 2013.

“Reading Spanish Architectural Influence in Bourbon Naples: Portici and La Granja de SanIldefonso” Invited by The Geography of Southern Baroque Architecture Conference, Northwestern University, May 2012.

“The Bourbon Theater of State: Decorating the Royal Palace at Portici (1744-1745),” College Art Association Annual Conference, Los Angeles, 2012.

“Space and Spectacle at the Court of Charles Bourbon,” Invited by Delirious Naples: For a Cultural, Intellectual, and Urban History of the City of the Sun Conference, Hofstra University/New York University, November 2011.

“Charles Bourbon’s Theater of State from Naples to Madrid,” Metropolitan Museum of Art, March, 2011.

“Luigi Vanvitelli: Reader and Author,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference, Venice, April 2010.

“To Protect and to Serve: Giovanni Battista Piranesi’s Rome,” Invited by Lebanon Valley College, Arnold Art Gallery Exhibition Keynote Speaker, April 2010.

“From Naples to Madrid: Charles III and Civic Architecture of Reform,” American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Conference, Albuquerque, March, 2010.

“Cosmopolitanism at the Coffehouse on the Quirinal Hill in Rome,” Pennsylvania State University, IAH Moments of Change Salon, March 2010.

“Southern Italian and Spanish Colonial Urban Planning: Grids and Civic Identity,” Invited by Muhlenberg College, April 20, 2009.

“Structure and Statecraft: The Reale Albergo dei Poveri in Bourbon Naples,” Invited by Emory University, February 2008.

“For Music and Monarchy: The Teatro di San Carlo in Naples,” Invited by The Ohio State University, Columbus, October, 2007.

“Changing Music and Propagating Form: The Teatro di San Carlo of Naples,” Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, April, 2007.

“Rome and the Bourbons: the Reale Albergo dei Poveri and the Roles of the Church and King in Enlightenment Naples,” American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Conference, Atlanta, March, 2007.

“For Music and Monarchy: The Teatro di San Carlo in Naples,” Invited by The University of Washington, April, 2006.

“Politicizing Nolli in Naples: The Duca di Noja Map,” Giambattista Nolli, Imago Urbis and Rome Conference, Rome, May, 2003.

### **Conference Panels**

Panel Co-Organizer, “Space, Time, and the Architectural Treatise,” Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, Providence, April 2019

Roundtable Participant, “Teaching Southern Italy,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference, New Orleans, March 2018.

Respondent, “Naples Reconsidered,” American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Conference, Vancouver, March, 2011.

### **Fellowships, Awards, and Honors**

Award for Outstanding Teaching, College of Arts and Architecture, The Pennsylvania State University, 2014

Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010-11

Post-Doctoral Fellowship, The Bill and Carol Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, Emory University, 2007-08

Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation Fellowship in the Humanities, 2005-06

J. William Fulbright Grant, Italy, 2004-05

Columbia University Traveling Fellowship, 2004-05 (declined)

Rudolf Wittkower Dissertation Fellowship, Columbia University, 2003-04

Teaching Fellow, Columbia University, 2002-03

Presidential Fellow, Columbia University, 2000-01, 2001-02

Marion Luther Brittain Service Award Honoree, Emory University, 1999

Phi Beta Kappa, 1997

Omicron Delta Kappa (Service Honor Society), 1997

Phi Sigma Iota (Foreign Language Honor Society), 1997

Constantinian Award in Byzantine History for essay: "Byzantine Trade Concessions the Genoese," 1996

### **Public Outreach**

Interview with Australia Broadcasting Corporation Radio, "Last Half Hour: Naples," October 2018

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/blueprintforliving/features/the-last-half-hour/last-half-hour:-naples/10382412>

### **Service**

Editorial Advisory Committee, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 2020-present

Reviewer of manuscripts: *Art Bulletin*, Penn State University Press, University of Pennsylvania Press, *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*, *Boletín de arte*, *Arris: the Journal of the Southeast Society of Architectural Historians*, *Journal18*

Reviewer of grant applications: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Editorial Advisory Committee, Penn State University Press, 2018-present

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State University, 2017-present

Committee for Early Modern Studies, The Pennsylvania State University  
Steering Committee Member. 2012-13, 2018-present  
Director, 2013-15  
Co-Director, 2016-2018

Faculty Adviser, Penn State Quiz Bowl Team, 2014-present

Promotion and Tenure Committee, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State University, 2014-15, 2019-present

Chair, Search Advisory Committee, Open Rank Tenure Track Professor of African Diasporic or African American Art, Architecture, or Visual Culture, Department of Art

History and Department of African American Studies, The Pennsylvania State University  
2020

Faculty Teaching Award Selection Committee, College of Arts and Architecture, The  
Pennsylvania State University 2017-present  
Promotion and Tenure Committee, College of Arts and Architecture, The Pennsylvania  
State University, 2017-2019

General Education Committee, College of Arts and Architecture, The Pennsylvania State  
University, 2017-2019  
Chair, 2018-2019

Search Advisory Committee, Assistant Teaching Professor of Ancient to Medieval  
Architecture, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State University, 2019

Search Advisory Committee, Department Head of Art History, 2018

Chair, Search Advisory Committee, Tenure Track Assistant Professor of Early Modern  
Art History, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State University, 2016

College of Arts and Architecture Faculty Advisory Council, The Pennsylvania State  
University 2011-2013

Search Advisory Committee, Renaissance and Baroque Architecture One-year  
Replacement, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State University 2009

Staff Award of Distinction Selection Committee, College of Arts and Architecture, The  
Pennsylvania State University, 2009.

Graduate Initiatives Committee, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State  
University, 2009-10, 2011-12, 2014-15

Institute for the Arts and Humanities Director Search Committee, The Pennsylvania State  
University, 2009-10

Committee on Scholarships and Awards for Undergraduates, College of Arts and  
Architecture, The Pennsylvania State University, 2013-15

Alumni Scholarship Selection Committee, College of Arts and Architecture, The  
Pennsylvania State University, 2008-10

Golumbic Award Selection Committee, College of Arts and Architecture, The  
Pennsylvania State University, 2008-10

Undergraduate Initiatives Committee, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State  
University, 2008-09

Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Art History, The Pennsylvania State University

Emory University Alumni Board, 2003-09

Panelist, Graduate Student Grant Writing Workshop, Emory University, 2007

Co-Chair, Annual Fund, Emory University Libraries, 2005-07

### **Undergraduate Advisees:**

Ellyn Matta ('10), earned an M.A. in Heritage Conservation and Site Management from Brandenburg University of Technology (Cottbus) and held an internship Edinburgh World Heritage

Ryan Jacobs ('16), received the Alumni Society Scholarship in 2015 and is completing a MArch degree at Virginia Tech.

### **MA Students**

#### *Adviser:*

Orner, Amy, Department of Art History, degree in progress.

Burch, Nathan, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Spring 2019.

Master's Paper: "Render Unto Caesar: the Role of Numismatic Imagery in the Lombardian Architectural Renaissance."

Hagen, Emily, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Spring 2018

Master's Paper: "*Horrendo spettacolo*: Urban *teatro*, Spectacle, and Public Execution in Early-Modern Rome"

#### *Second reader:*

Glissman, Jennifer, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Spring 2019.

Surrena, Abbey, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Spring 2014

Betz, Tim, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Spring 2013

Kim, Allison, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Spring 2013

Brown, Marlise, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Summer 2011

Kowalski, Denise, Department of Art History, M.A. degree completed, Summer 2010

### **Ph.D Students**



*Adviser:*

Hagen, Emily, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree in progress

Tokushige, Kenta, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree in progress

Petersen, Elizabeth, Department of Art History, Ph.D. Summer 2019

Dissertation Title: "Architecture and Audience in Donatello's Florentine Reliefs"

Kutasz Christensen, Theresa, Department of Art History, degree completed, Summer 2018

Dissertation Title: "Regina Christina, Antiquario: Queen Christina of Sweden's Development of a Classical Persona through Allegory and Antiquarian Collecting." Post-Doctoral Position at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

*Committee Member:*

Lacopo, Frank, Department of History, degree in progress

Millard, Robert, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree completed, Summer 2017

Zins, Katie, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree completed, Fall 2016

Kulpa, Pierette, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree completed, Spring 2015

Olson-Rudenko, Jennifer, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree completed, Spring 2011

Costanzo, Denise, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree completed, Summer 2009

Goad Davis, Laurin, Department of Art History, Ph.D. degree in progress

**Professional Organizations**

American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies

College Art Association

European Architectural History Network

Historians of Eighteenth-Century Art and Architecture

Italian Art Society

Renaissance Society of America

Society of Architectural Historians