MITTEILUNGEN DES KUNSTHISTORISCHEN INSTITUTES IN FLORENZ

LXII. BAND — 2020
HEFT I

Photography and the Art Market around 1900

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Photography and the Art Market around 1900

edited by Costanza Caraffa and Julia Bärnighausen

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz
Max-Planck-Institut
Via G. Giusti 44, I-50121 Firenze
Tel. 055.2491147, Fax 055.2491155
s.vitali@khi.fi.it – martinez@khi.fi.it
www.khi.fi.it/publikationen/mitteilungen

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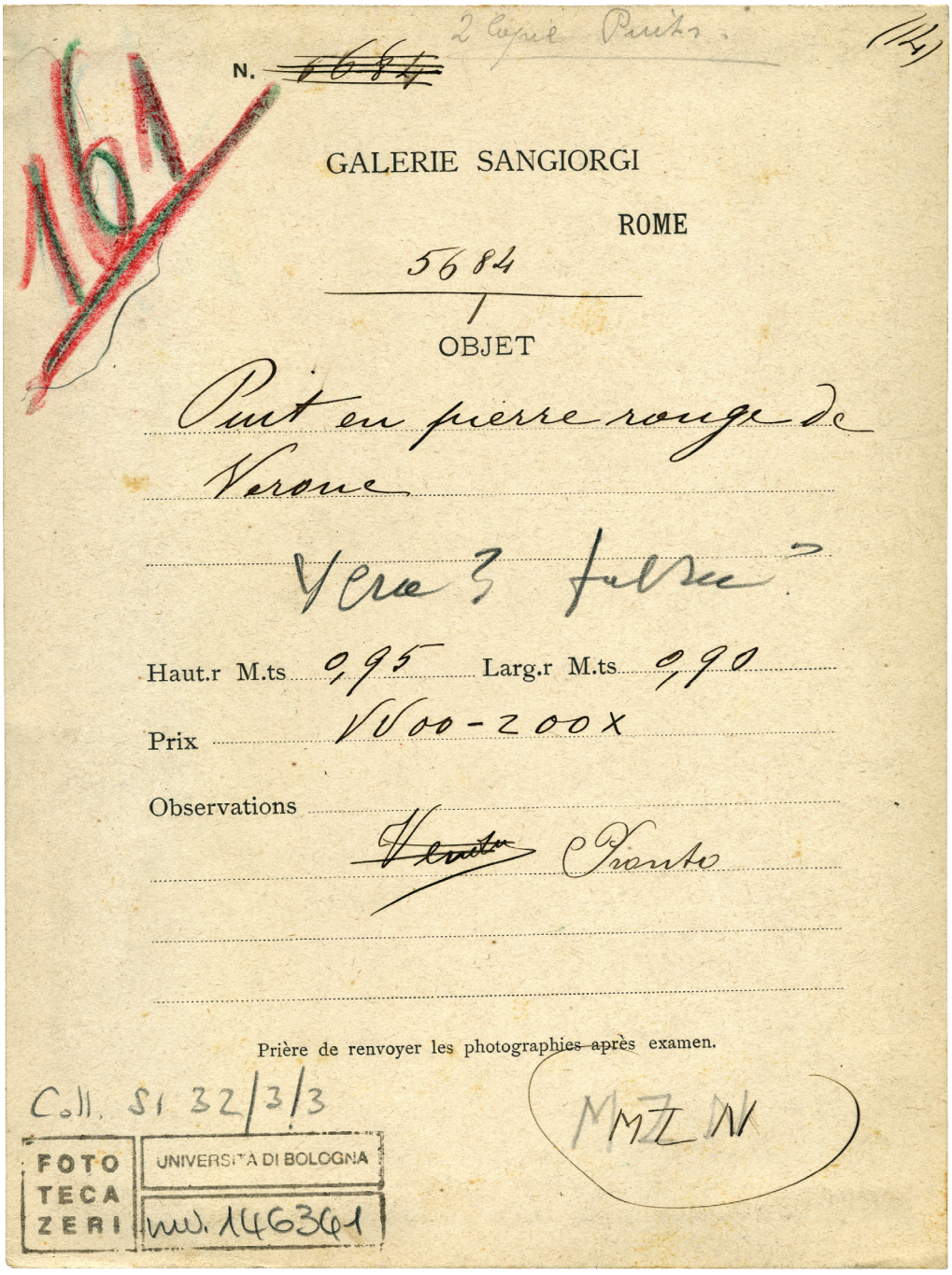


1 Verso of a Galleria Sangiorgi mount with pre-printed lettering and inscriptions (actual size), 1900–1915, 18,1 × 13,5 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 146341

"À REPRODUIRE" PRODUCTION, REPRODUCTION, AND THE ART MARKET IN THE SANGIORGI MATERIALS OF THE FEDERICO ZERI FOUNDATION

Francesca Mambelli

"À reproduire": this expression – meaning 'to be reproduced' – is one of the most common notes scribbled on photo-objects[1] documenting the dealings of the Galleria Sangiorgi. The same formula, or variants like "à fabriquer", "per riproduzione", "pour reproduction", is also found on the back of many photos from the Sangiorgi collection at the Federico Zeri Foundation in Bologna, accompanied by a description of the object, the inventory or negative number, and the code discreetly signifying the sale price or bids received on the pieces shown on the recto.[2]

Never before analysed as a whole, the photographs and other Sangiorgi materials in the Zeri archive yield a series of novel information on multiple aspects of the gallery's activity. They also throw light on how the photographic medium was used not just to promote the antique artwork business but also to support restoration work and the creation of 'in style' objects, two important sides to gallery sales: pro-

[1] The term 'photo-object', which recurs throughout the text, provides a clue to interpretation and tie up with a line of research that is fundamental to understanding my article. Among the broad bibliography devoted to the materiality of photographic objects since the late 1990s, see at least the following essential studies: Joan M. Schwartz, "'We Make Our Tools and Our Tools Make Us': Lessons from Photographs for the Practice, Politics, and Poetics of Diplomatics", in: *Archivaria*, 40 (1995), pp. 40–74; Geoffrey Batchen, *Photography's Objects*, Albuquerque 1997; Elizabeth Edwards, "Photographs as Objects of Memory", in: *Material Memories: Design and Evocation*, ed. by Marius Kwint/Christopher Breward/Jeremy Aynsley, Oxford/New York 1999, pp. 221–236; *Photographs, Objects, Histories: On the Materiality of Images*, ed. by Elizabeth Edwards/Janice Hart, London 2004; for an overview on the topic see Costanza Caraffa, "Photographic Itineraries in Time and Space: Photographs as Material Objects", in: *The Handbook of Photography Studies*, ed. by Gil Pasternak, London *et al.* 2020, pp. 79–96; *Photo-Objects: On the Materiality of Photographs and Photo Archives in the Humanities and Sciences*, conference proceedings Florence 2017, ed. by Julia Bärnighausen *et al.*, Berlin 2019.

[2] The codes served salesmen as guides to the price range set on objects, hiding the figure from the customer. They varied in the course of time. The oldest, which I have lately decrypted, seems to be VENTI MARZO, where each letter corresponded to a different figure from 1 to 9, and final 0 (V=1, E=2, etc. and O=0), while the final letter X marks the end of the number. The next code, EUCALIPTUS, followed the same principle. Later, at least two other code systems would be used, one alphabetic, the other numerical, which have not yet proved possible to crack.

ducing, therefore, and *re*producing ("à reproduire") works to be offered on the market.

This article presents the preliminary results of this analysis, complementing the ongoing research by Julia Bärnighausen on Sangiorgi materials at the Photothek of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz,[3] and forms part of the studies exploring the epistemological potential of art historical photo archives,[4] whose multidisciplinary approach it shares. It aims to show how our knowledge may be advanced by examining photographic objects not just for their visual content, but also for their material and morphological qualities, as well as for the accumulation, stratification, and re-stratification in collections of another kind, as happened with the Sangiorgi photographs in the Zeri photo archive. This kind of approach not only discloses new details about the firm's business history, but more generally provides new input for the study of the interconnections between photography, history of art, and the art market over the turn of the twentieth century.

The Sangiorgi Collection in the Zeri Photo Archive: An Inductive Research

I should like to begin this analysis not from the visual content of an image, but from the various layers of jottings on the back of the mount of a Sangiorgi photograph (Fig. 1). They are the direct or indirect signs of the various hands the photo passed through in time and of the various agencies[5] that altered not just the appearance but also the function of the photographic object at various stages of its life: the gallery that commissioned the image, whose name is stamped on the mount ("Galerie Sangiorgi / Rome"); the photographer, who referred to what we can interpret as the negative number at top right ("14"); the gallery staff who filled in the form bearing the main information about the object reproduced, such as description, size, sale price ("Puit [*sic*] en pierre rouge de Verone, 0,95 × 0,90, VVOO–ZOOX [1100–900]"), and progressive inventory number ("5684", "161"); the member of staff who pencilled along the top edge the category the work belonged to among the firm's output ("2 Copie. Puits", that is water wells); the salesmen who noted the current commercial status of the object portrayed and reproductions of it ("Vendue", "Pronto"), and lastly, bottom right, the actual price it fetched ("MZN", that is 693 lire).

Besides these categories of actors and users linked to the gallery's activity, we should mention at least two other agents who intercepted the photo-object at other moments of its life and left annotations on the verso: Federico Zeri, who included it in his personal archive and noted his doubts as to "vera? falsa?"

[3] Besides the article contained in this issue, see also the online exhibition *Photo-Objects and "Applied Arts" in the Photothek* on the website of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, which likewise focused on the Sangiorgi materials kept in the Institute's photo archive. This virtual exhibition may be viewed on http://photothek.khi.fi.it/documents/oau/00000284 (accessed on 8 February 2020).

[4] To mention the most important stages in this debate, it came to a head with exchanges during the 2009 meetings in the series called "Photo Archives": *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History*, conference proceedings London/Florence 2009, ed. by Costanza Caraffa, Berlin/Munich 2011; *Archivi fotografici: spazi del sapere, luoghi della ricerca* (= *Ricerche di storia dell'arte*, 106 [2012]), ed. by Costanza Caraffa/Tiziana Serena, Rome 2012. Moreover, see also Tiziana Serena, "L'album e l'archivio fotografico nell'officina dello storico dell'arte: da 'outils pratiques' a 'outils intellectuels'", in: *Ri-conoscere Michelangelo: la scultura del Buonarroti nella fotografia e nella pittura dall'Ottocento a oggi*, exh. cat. Florence 2014, ed. by Monica Maffioli/Silvestra Bietoletti, Florence/Milan 2014, pp. 62–77; Costanza Caraffa, "Manzoni in the Photothek: Photographic Archives as Ecosystems", in: *Instant Presence: Representing Art in Photography. In Honor of Josef Sudek (1896–1976)*, ed. by Hana Buddeus/Katarína Mašterová/Vojtěch Lahoda, Prague 2017, pp. 121–136. Examples of how this method can be applied to small case studies on materials in the Zeri archive can be found in the volume *I colori del bianco e nero: fotografie storiche nella Fototeca Zeri 1870–1920*, ed. by Andrea Bacchi *et al.*, Bologna 2014.

[5] The concept of agency, applied not just to art history documentation photos but extending to all photo-objects, especially those with ethnographic and scientific content, is central to several recent studies in the history of photography; see especially Christopher Pinney, *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs*, London 1997; Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums*, Oxford *et al.* 2001. These studies are based on applying a biographical model to photography, an approach which dates back to the volume *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed.

("true? false?"), that is, the real antiquity of the object documented; and then the archivist at the Zeri Foundation who stamped and inventoried the photo after the collection became institutionalised.[6]

As our example shows, the simple description of the verso of a Sangiorgi photo unfolds the full complexity of the photo-object. Creating it and giving it an identity involves not just the network of people we have mentioned but also a series of non-human actants: the technical procedure by which it was made, the commercial stages it underwent, the pre-printed card on which it was mounted, the various folders in which it was kept, and so forth.[7]

Each of the stages the photograph went through in the course of time, plotted by marks on the back, brought some change to its status. Although unchanged in its visual appearance, it alternated between being a document (of an object in the gallery and again, for Zeri, of a work significant for the history of art and taste), a tool (something to show customers by way of publicity; a model to be reproduced), an asset (a historical print kept in a photo archive, to be studied and preserved). Finally, via the present research, the photo-object reverts once more to being a document in the history of the gallery and of art market practices within which it is itself an agent.

An approach based on recognising the material nature of the photograph thus leads to the realisation that a photo-object cannot just be considered at one stage of its existence. Each photo is the result of a continuous process of production, exchange, and consumption. As the Sangiorgi case shows, this process of a photo passing from one collection to another or coming to roost in an institutional archive marks a series of basic way stations: the change of context brings a radical change of meaning.

The reference to rubber stamps and inventory numbers marked on the verso by a foundation archivist helps me clarify one essential side to my research. It has stemmed not from a specific theoretical study on the Sangiorgi gallery, but from the slow cataloguing process that has occupied the Zeri photo archive since 2003.[8] Before that project started, no one knew about the existence, let alone the extent, of the Sangiorgi collection within the archive. It was just detailed examination of the material, preliminary to its catalogue description, that gradually – through recurring features (inscriptions, mounts, codes) – identified the provenance of these photos scattered inside the system. We thus extended our enquiry to other sections of the archive, which were not immediately involved in the painstaking filing of photographs, as well as to other documentary resources at the Federico Zeri Foundation: the library and the auction catalogue collection.

Again, the filing activity not only called for minute analysis to meet questions posed by the entry, but raised new queries, which in turn propelled the enquiry outwards, in the circular process (research –

by Arjun Appadurai, Cambridge 1988 ([1]1986), and therein particularly the paper by Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process", pp. 64–91. On the importance of archivists as agents and their role as "historically situated actors", see in particular Schwartz (note 1), esp. p. 62, and *Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory*, ed. by Terry Cook/Joan M. Schwartz (= *Archival Science*, II [2002], 1–2).

[6] For a description of the Zeri photo archive and an explanation of how the photographic collections that the scholar came by were handled and divided up, see Marcella Culatti/Elisabetta Sambo, "La pittura italiana nella Fototeca Zeri", in: *La pittura italiana nella Fototeca Zeri: fotografie scelte*, ed. by Anna Ottani Cavina, Turin 2011, pp. 17–24; Elisabetta Sambo, "Per una storia della fototeca di Federico Zeri", in: *Federico Zeri, dietro l'immagine: opere d'arte e fotografia*, exh. cat., ed. by Anna Ottani Cavina, Turin *et al.* 2009, pp. 109–112.

[7] The photography complex – that network of agents, made up of human and non-human actants which went into making and describing the photo – was a concept proposed by James L. Hevia, "The Photography Complex: Exposing Boxer-Era China (1900–1901), Making Civilization", in: *Photographies East: The Camera and Its Histories in East and Southeast Asia*, ed. by Rosalind C. Morris, Durham 2009, pp. 79–120, esp. pp. 79–82.

[8] A full description of the cataloguing project at the Federico Zeri Foundation is contained in: Francesca Mambelli, "La Fototeca Zeri: da archivio privato a banca dati online", in: *La pittura italiana nella Fototeca Zeri* (note 6), pp. 42–46; *eadem*, "Una risorsa online per la storia dell'arte: il database della Fondazione Federico Zeri", in: *Digital Humanities: progetti italiani ed esperienze di convergenza multidisciplinare*, conference proceedings Florence 2014, ed. by Fabio Ciotti, Rome 2014, pp. 113–125.

description – research) that typifies the cataloguing task. For cataloguing is not just a descriptive operation but an extremely creative act presupposing and prompting in-depth intellectual study.[9] What immediately emerged from that reconnaissance was the extremely rich and diverse nature of the part of the Sangiorgi collection that made its way into the Zeri archive, comprising not just photographs but also graphic material and a large number of auction catalogues.[10] So far we have identified over 3700 photos, 345 drawings and 28 catalogues.

There are two theories as to the mechanisms whereby Federico Zeri acquired this material. The more likely one is that he inherited it from his cousin Alessandro Zeri (1892–1962), who worked for the gallery from 1907. For many years he was the personal secretary of its founder, Giuseppe Sangiorgi. From 1915 to 1918 he was employed at the New York branch of the gallery, alongside painting expert Giovanni Walser, a key member of the firm's lineup.[11] Another possibility is that the materials came down through Antonio Muñoz (1884–1960), an art historian related to Alessandro and Federico who, at his death, left his photo collection to the latter. The Sangiorgi holdings in the foundation include various prints used by Muñoz for his publications.[12] The whole Zeri family was clearly conversant with the gallery, as is testified by the recollections of Sisto Mancini (1887–1971), who headed its administration for over sixty years and whose anecdotes were repeated by his grandson Claudio. Mancini recalled how, in his youth, Federico haunted the rooms of the Palazzo Borghese, often under the guidance of Giovanni Walser himself, and how his lifelong passion for the decorative arts was born there.[13]

Once they entered his possession, Zeri divided up the Sangiorgi photos, as he used to do with other collections, into the theme-based sections that comprise his photo archive, mixing them up with those of different provenance.[14] We may find Sangiorgi materials in the Italian painting and sculpture sections or equally under "Falsi" ("Fakes"). The interesting fact is that these are often reproductions of the same objects, which the art historian placed in different sectors. Overlapping also occurs between the archaeology and sculpture sections (concerning ancient and

[9] On cataloguing as a cognitive act par excellence as well as a practice yielding high scientific value, see: Sandra Vasco Rocca, *Beni culturali e catalogazione: principi teorici e percorsi di analisi*, Rome 2002. For the photograph collection sector in particular and the role of the archivist/cataloguer inside the archive: Joan M. Schwartz, "'To Speak Again with a Full Distinct Voice': Diplomatics, Archives, and Photographs", in: *Archivi fotografici* (note 4), pp. 7–24; Tiziana Serena, "L'archivio fotografico: possibilità derive potere", in: *Gli archivi fotografici delle soprintendenze: tutela e storia. Territori veneti e limitrofi*, conference proceedings Venice 2008, ed. by Anna Maria Spiazzi/Luca Majoli, Vicenza 2010, pp. 103–125. See also Francesca Mambelli, "Tra referenzialità e materia: note sulla catalogazione delle fototeche d'arte", in: *Luk*, XXIII (2017), pp. 83–89.

[10] The auction catalogues refer to sales conducted between 1892 and 1910.

[11] Many documents confirm the central role played by Walser within the gallery staff. From a notebook compiled by Sisto Mancini, now kept at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in Rome (Archivio Luigi Mancini, Fondo Galleria Sangiorgi, box 46), it emerges that Giovanni Walser was born at Dägerlen, Switzerland, in the canton of Zurich, on 31 July 1871. He joined Sangiorgi's staff on 25 February 1894 and was instantly dubbed a painting expert. I was unfortunately unable to track his education and cultural qualifications. During World War I, Walser was in charge of the New York branch of Sangiorgi, which ran from 1915 to 1918. This is borne out by many cuttings from *American Art News*, the newspaper in which the gallery advertised. As I point out in the text, Walser was helped in running the New York shop by the young Alessandro Zeri.

[12] For example those published in Antonio Muñoz, "Mobilio italiano del Rinascimento", in: *L'Arte*, VI (1903), pp. 21–27; *idem*, "Un'opera del Bernini ritrovata: il busto di Gregorio XV", in: *Vita d'arte*, VIII (1911), pp. 183–192.

[13] Claudio Maria Mancini related these and other interesting anecdotes at the *IV Convegno di studi locali di Massa Lombarda* held on 20 November 1999. The talk is preserved in a typewritten manuscript: Claudio Maria Mancini, *Giuseppe Sangiorgi: antiquario e filantropo*, Forlì, Biblioteca Saffi, Fondo Piancastelli, PIANC N.A. Bio 1134.

[14] For the dismembering of collections arriving at Zeri's photo archive, see the papers quoted in note 6. For studies on other collections from which the photos originated, e.g. those of Antonio Muñoz, Umberto Gnoli, Giuseppe Bellesi and Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà, see the "Call for papers" section of the Federico Zeri Foundation website: http://www.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/it/pubblicazioni/call-for-papers (accessed on 9 May 2020).

ancient-looking statuary), and also between archaeology and decorative arts.[15] Problems with understanding whether the objects reproduced are heavily restored originals, *d'après* copies or 'new materials', marketed as such, are highlighted in the jotting "vera? falsa?" ("true? false?") in Zeri's hand on the verso we examined above (Fig. 1). Of course, not being able to directly view the artworks made it hard for the scholar to come down on one side or the other. It is also probable that, even when what they show are clearly copies, Zeri may have kept photos in several sectors (for instance ancient sculpture and nineteenth-century sculpture) to document the original prototype when the scholar lacked documentation of it, or to demonstrate the fortunes of certain subjects in the history of taste. Again, we can imagine that it must have been hard for Zeri to place the photo of an antique-looking statue solely among "Fakes" when a key criterion in defining works as such was missing: the will to defraud, which seems absent in Sangiorgi's 'in style' output.[16]

Whatever the reasons for which it was divided up, we have here the extremely interesting case of a professional archive destined for production and marketing reinterpreted by an art historian upon conceptual and aesthetic criteria – authenticity and style of reference – differing from those used in its creation. For Sangiorgi the photos served to highlight the aesthetic and material qualities of an object being placed on the market, while Zeri used them to explore the bounds of 'genuine' and 'fake' in art. This goes to show the problems and challenges that arise when we try to interpret complex 'ecosystems' such as art historical photo archives.[17]

Framing the Case Study I: The Gallery's Premises and Activity through the Zeri Foundation Images

In the last decade, the Galleria Sangiorgi has attracted much scholarly interest,[18] in the wake of the growing role that fields such as history of collecting and history of the art market are playing within the discipline of art history.[19] The gallery's importance for the trade of art and the worldwide dissemination of 'Italian-style' taste around the turn of the twentieth century amply justifies this flurry of research; indeed, the silence on the gallery after it closed definitively in 1970 is something of a mystery. The fact that the original archive – or archives, as we shall see – was later selectively divided up, so that Sangiorgi materials are now scattered among many private and public

[15] On the Sangiorgi materials that Zeri placed in the archaeology section, see Francesca Candi, "Fotografie di archeologia dal fondo Sangiorgi", in: *I colori del bianco e nero* (note 4), pp. 99–106.

[16] Even when copies and *d'après* are not explicitly indicated as such by jottings on the back of the mounts, from the price codes (if present) one can deduce their true nature, since the indicated prices are much lower than that for an ancient statue. Some photos also bear annotations that the customer could see, clarifying the degree of repair work.

[17] See Tiziana Serena, "La profondità della superficie: una prospettiva epistemologica per 'cose' come fotografie e archivi fotografici", in: *Archivi fotografici* (note 4), pp. 51–67; Caraffa (note 4); Elizabeth Edwards, "Thoughts on the 'Non-Collections' of the Archival Ecosystem", in: *Photo-Objects* (note 1), pp. 67–82.

[18] See Claudio Maria Mancini, "Giuseppe Sangiorgi, antiquario e filantropo", in: *L'Urbe*, LIX (1999), pp. 109–122; Debora Loiacono, *Collezionismo e mercato artistico a Roma tra '800 e '900: la Galleria Sangiorgi*, master thesis Bologna 2007/08; *eadem*, "Gli arredi 'in stile' della Galleria Sangiorgi di Roma e qualche appunto su Umberto Giunti alias Falsario in Calcinaccio", in: *Valori tattili*, 0 (2011), pp. 104–116; Francesca Di Castro, "Il gusto di un'epoca e la Galleria Sangiorgi", in: *Strenna dei Romanisti*, LXXVI (2015), pp. 203–216. Note also the direct accounts of contemporary scholars and antiquarians such as Augusto Jandolo, *Le memorie di un antiquario*, Milan 1935, esp. pp. 97–109; Ludwig Pollak, *Römische Memoiren: Künstler, Kunstliebhaber und Gelehrte 1893–1943*, ed. by Margarete Merkel Guldan, Rome 1994, pp. 129–150.

[19] To quote only the latest publications closely relevant to my research: *Dealing Art on Both Sides of the Atlantic, 1860–1940*, ed. by Lynn Catterson, Leiden/Boston 2017; *eadem*, "Stefano Bardini and the Taxonomic Branding of Marketplace Style – From the Gallery of a Dealer to the Institutional Canon", in: *Images of the Art Museum: Connecting Gaze and Discourse in the History of Museology*, ed. by Eva-Maria Troelenberg/Melania Savino, Berlin/Boston 2017, pp. 41–63; *Dall'asta al museo 1916–1956–2016: Elia Volpi e Palazzo Davanzati nel collezionismo pubblico e privato del Novecento*, ed. by Brunella Teodori/Jennifer Celani, Florence 2017; Patrizia Cappellini, "Trading Old Masters in Florence 1890–1914: Heritage Protection and the Florentine Art Trade in Post-Unification Italy", in: *Journal of the History of Collections*, XXXI (2019),

collections, has provided researchers with amply diversified grist to their mill.[20]

The gallery was founded in 1892 by Giuseppe Sangiorgi (1850–1928) who, from humble origins in Romagna, became an antiquarian almost by accident, owing to his involvement in the sale of certain important collections. Sangiorgi's business flair and a climate that favoured trade and exchange of art objects brought the firm international renown in the space of a few years and enormously swelled its turnover, such that by the beginning of the twentieth century it ranked as the top art gallery not just in Rome, but in Italy and maybe even Europe.

At least until the 1920s it pursued three main lines of business: organising auction sales; managing the permanent exhibition as it grew from unsold auction exhibits or ad hoc acquisitions for sale; and producing objects inspired by originals passing through the gallery or generally by the style of works from previous epochs.[21] To display the collections, which by the end of the century numbered more than 6000 pieces, already in 1892 Giuseppe had bought the ground floor of Palazzo Borghese – with a sure sense of the right image to attract an international clientele.[22]

The photos at the Federico Zeri Foundation give us some enticing and varied views of those handsome premises. From the appearance of the photo-objects, one can deduce the various purposes for which they were produced, tying up with the gallery's practices, photographic or otherwise. On the one hand, we have albumen prints of the display rooms (Fig. 2), designed to form part of catalogues of the permanent collection and advertising matter such as newspaper ads, invitations, and other publicity.[23] Angle-shots and foreshortening give as broad a view as possible of the premises. These photos concentrate less on individual exhibits than on the splendid setting itself.

On the other hand, there are a large number of gelatine silver prints showing service areas such as passageways, corridors, and storerooms containing objects by the hundred (Figs. 3, 4). Many shots of this type show the famous 'marble garden': the Palazzo Borghese courtyard, where antique sculpture stood as well as collections of newly made garden statuary (Fig. 5). These photos are less carefully composed and bear signs of 'disturbance',[24] such as loss of focus, over-exposed portions, or parts of extraneous objects obscuring the main subject. Their purpose was probably to let staff take stock of the contents at a glance. They seem to have been used to check which pieces were available to customers and to track them down. As well as by their lower quality, that purpose

pp. 363–371; Charlotte Vignon, *Duveen Brothers and the Market for Decorative Arts, 1880–1940*, New York 2019; *The Art Market in Rome in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in the Social History of Art*, conference proceedings Rome 2012, ed. by Paolo Coen, Leiden/Boston 2019.

[20] Besides those in the photo archives of Federico Zeri and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, a sizable bulk of photos is preserved in the Mancini fonds at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in Rome. Moreover, Sangiorgi photographs are found in the Palazzo Davanzati archive and the Giovanni Poggi collection at the Archivio Storico delle Gallerie Fiorentine. Some materials linked to the family are preserved at the Massa Lombarda municipal library, while many catalogues and archive papers are still owned by the Sangiorgi heirs. In 2018 Claudio Maria Mancini generously gave the Federico Zeri Foundation some of the materials he still possessed: 18 watercolour drawings, 29 gelatine silver prints and albumen prints, 190 glass stereoscope slides, one blueprint with a technical drawing, and miscellaneous publications.

[21] Already in the last years of Giuseppe's management, the organising of auctions was abandoned and was not taken up again by his son Giorgio (1886–1956) and his grandson Sergio Sangiorgi (1929–2015). In all, between 1892 and 1915 no less than 121 sales were conducted, as shown by entries in the "Publicità" register described in note 38.

[22] For the events leading to the purchase of the building and the story of settling in and setting up the gallery, see Giuseppe Sangiorgi, *A viso aperto*, Milan 1924, p. 68; Loiacono 2007/08 (note 18), pp. 43–48.

[23] *Galerie Sangiorgi – Rome: catalogue des objets d'art ancien pour l'année 1910*, Rome 1910; *Galerie Sangiorgi – Rome: catalogue des objets d'art ancien pour l'année 1912*, Venice 1912; *Galerie Sangiorgi – Rome: catalogue des objets d'art ancien pour l'année 1913*, Venice 1913. Reproductions of the photos in question appear on invitation cards, flyers, contemporary newspaper ads, and other ephemera pasted into the "Publicità" scrapbook that will be described below, p. 21f. and note 38.

[24] For a detailed study of 'disturbance' – a range of unintentional features caused by camera mechanisms and other technicalities – see Peter Geimer, *Inadvertent Images: A History of Photographic Apparitions*, Chicago/London 2018.

2 *Interior of the Galleria Sangiorgi with books, prints, and autographs*, 1895 ca., albumen print, 18,4 × 24,1 cm.
Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 190319

3 *Interior of the Galleria Sangiorgi with sculptural objects*, 1900–1920, gelatine silver print, 22,7 × 17,3 cm.
Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 268120

4 *Doorway to the courtyard of Palazzo Borghese with sculptural objects*, 1900–1920, gelatine silver print, 17,1 × 22,2 cm.
Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 205177

5 *Palazzo Borghese courtyard with a fountain and other sculpted objects*, 1900–1920, gelatine silver print, 19,9 × 16,4 cm.
Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 267290

6 Domenico Anderson, *Roma - Palazzetto Borghese*, 1895–1899, albumen print, 16,4 × 19,9 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. A2750

is betrayed by marks and annotations on the photo-objects themselves, not just on the back but also on the front, sometimes scratched directly on the negative: inventory numbers or dimensions of objects, crossings-out, and other information related to sales or reproductions of works.

While many photos in the Zeri archive are of Palazzo Borghese interiors, only one gives us an outdoor view. This is an Anderson albumen print from the end of the nineteenth century showing the side entrance to the gallery on Via Ripetta (Fig. 6).[25] On the façade, above the balustrade of the covered balcony at the first floor, one can make out publicity panels advertising the types of artwork that could be purchased. More significant for my argument are a series of ground floor rooms jutting out into the street on the right of the Palazzo, beyond the winding Via Borghese. These are part of the former stables of the Borghese family, which were bought by Giuseppe at the close of the nineteenth century to house his laboratories.[26]

[25] The photo's inventory number suggests an early dating to around 1895–1899. The first known Anderson catalogue devoted to Rome (*Catalogo delle Fotografie di D. Anderson: Catalogo I. Roma: Vedute, Musei, Gallerie e Contorni*, Rome 1899) does not list the corresponding negative no. 435, though it contains the immediately preceding and following numbers.

[26] Confirming this is a sketch kept among the Mancini papers at the

7 *Sarcophagus front and other stone fragments in the Sangiorgi laboratories*, 1900–1920, gelatine silver print, 8,8 × 11,8 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 1511

We believe that some Sangiorgi photos at the Federico Zeri Foundation portray these work rooms (Fig. 7).[27] One can see fragments of stonework, bits of sculptures, and also equipment such as stands, presses, levers, and scalpels. In some images there is a glimpse of an artisan, half-hidden behind a backdrop or fleetingly appearing on the edge.

The documentary interest of such photographs lies in the fact that they represent premises that no longer exist. These outbuildings were sold off by Giuseppe in 1924 and demolished shortly afterwards to widen Via Borghese.[28] That year is therefore a certain *terminus ante quem* for the dating of the shots.

Archivio Centrale dello Stato in Rome (Archivio Luigi Mancini, Fondo Galleria Sangiorgi, box 46, c. "Topografia della zona di piazza Borghese"), which testifies both to the use ("laboratori") and to the identity of two of Sangiorgi's chief artists ("Marozzi", "Carlo Efisio Oppo"), as well as to the name "salone dei marmi" given to the large room behind the workshop, which must have been a depot for artworks and bits and pieces. It is noteworthy that artists and writers like Adolfo De Carolis and Gabriele D'Annunzio lived in that very building right at the end of the nineteenth century. De Carolis is not documented as working for Sangiorgi but certainly had links with the gallery, as shown by a sketch he made for a company logo, published in Fiorella Bartoccini, *Il decadentismo e Roma*, Rome 1980, pl. 2. In 1895/96 the building also housed the editorial premises of *Il Convito*, the literary review founded by Adolfo De Bosis. For a description of the 'saddle rooms' at the time cf. especially Gabriele D'Annunzio, "Contemplazione della morte", in: *idem*, *Prose di ricerca, di lotta, di comando [...]*, Milan/Verona [4]1966–1968, III, pp. 203–315: 216.

[27] One can deduce from an etching appearing in an advertisement printed in the *Guida Monaci*, LI (1921), p. 736, a commercial guide of Rome, that the laboratories in the former Borghese stables could be accessed directly from Via Ripetta 118. The entrance was an elegant doorway surmounted by a large "G. Sangiorgi" signboard set into a façade with two rows of windows. Cf. Jørgen Birkedal Hartmann, "Le memorie romane di Ludovico Pollak", in: *L'Urbe*, n.s., LIV (1994), pp. 253–262.

[28] For the events leading to Sangiorgi selling the buildings and the story of the new construction, originally to house the Regio Istituto Superiore di Studi Commerciali, Coloniali e Attuariali, see: *La Facoltà*

From these prints, we may also inductively reconstruct some of the work processes adopted in restoring antique artworks as they passed through the laboratories. These procedures are sometimes suggested by jottings on photos. On the back of some, one reads annotations such as "restaurato bene con pezzi propri" ("well restored with our own pieces"), "assolutamente antiche, teste e mani restaurate" ("absolutely antique, heads and hands restored"), or "restaurato nella nuca" ("nape of neck restored"). This suggests that works were completed with portions that did not belong to the original pieces but came from other antiques or were made for the purpose, following procedures customary at the time.[29]

The laboratories seen at the edge of the Anderson photo in Figure 6 not only restored originals but also produced objects 'in style', a side to the business that is fully documented by the Zeri materials we shall be considering in the next sections. In the production, restoration, and marketing of all these kinds of work photography played a key role.

Framing the Case Study II: Evidence of Sangiorgi's Approach to Photography from Other Sources

Before we embark on describing the photographic objects and analysing what the Sangiorgi materials at the Zeri photo archive reveal about such mechanisms, it is worth taking a step back and also considering external sources that may help us investigate both the firm owner's theoretical approach to photography and some of the gallery's internal processes that involved the photographic reproductions. Such information will be borne out by comparison with the Sangiorgi materials at the foundation, though there are sometimes contradictory features.

Although Giuseppe Sangiorgi wrote a large number of texts,[30] only once he directly commented on the topic of photographic reproduction of artworks. He did so in the introduction of the catalogue of the Carrand collection at the Museo del Bargello in Florence, written in 1895 and dedicated to Isabella Stewart Gardner, one of the gallery's most illustrious customers.[31] The book was published by "G. Sangiorgi éditeur" as the first issue in a series of guides to museums of Italy,[32] but this publishing venture seems to have not been continued. In introducing the catalogue, Sangiorgi stressed the need for campaigning to get the museums of Italy fully illustrated, a task that could draw on modern methods of reproduction which he called "exacts et rapides".[33] He emphasised, moreover, that in drawing up the text, preference was given to high quality reproductions instead of long descriptions:

> Au lieu de donner de longues et inefficaces descriptions, qui le plus souvent ne reflètent que l'opinion personnelle de celui qui écrit, nous avons préféré nous borner à peu de mots et augmenter plutôt le nombre des belles et fidèles reproductions, laissant ainsi à chacun la faculté de juger selon ses propres idées, car la meilleure description ne peut jamais égaler une médiocre reproduction.[34]

di Economia: cento anni di storia, 1906–2006, ed. by Raimondo Cagiano de Azevedo, Soveria Mannelli 2006, pp. 45–48, and the bibliography cited.

[29] On the huge subject of integrative restoration, see at least: Alessandro Conti, *Storia del restauro e della conservazione delle opere d'arte*, Milan 1988, esp. pp. 101–107, 196–202; Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "Chirurgia della memoria: scultura antica e restauri storici", in: *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana*, ed. by Salvatore Settis, Turin 1984–1986, III, pp. 181–250; as well as the collation of texts in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, ed. by Nicholas Stanley Price/Mansfield Kirby Talley Jr./Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro, Los Angeles 1996.

[30] Giuseppe Sangiorgi, *Per la casa del pane*, Rome 1904; *idem*, *Tal'è qual è*, Florence 1920; *idem* (note 22); *idem*, *Lettere famigliari di Giuseppe Sangiorgi*, Milan 1928.

[31] The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston owns many objects that were purchased from the antiquarian. For Stewart Gardner's use of photography in her collecting and curatorial practice, see the essay by Casey Riley in this volume.

[32] *Florence: Collection Carrand au Bargello*, Rome 1895.

[33] *Ibidem*, p. 4.

[34] *Ibidem*, p. 5. The volume contains barely 33 pages of text compared with 88 plates illustrating the masterpieces of the collection.

These words convey more than enthusiasm for the speed and communicative value of the new medium: they also show perfect faith in its documentary fidelity, reflecting the mood of the times. The (alleged) objectivity of photography was a well-known topos often used by its supporters in debate and critical literature of the day.[35] Sangiorgi himself felt that a reproduction's impersonal conformity to reality enabled viewers to form their own idea of the works shown, without being influenced by the writer or the critic presenting them. In the following lines, he went on to argue that the study of artworks from the past, which photography makes at least indirectly possible, is the best way of inspiration for artists. Reproductions of ancient masterpieces give craftsmen examples and models, furthering the revival of industrial handicrafts that the author wished to see.[36]

This argument, the usefulness of photography in teaching art and in the practice of craftsmanship, was also used frequently by supporters of photography and finds an echo in the main photographers' catalogues of the period. It has been noted that details of ornamentation increased enormously in such repertories over the last decade of the nineteenth century, to support a mushrooming output of artistic craftsmanship.[37] We may infer that such catalogues and the photos offered in them were likewise a reference point for the craftsmen working at the Galleria Sangiorgi.

A document, still owned by the Sangiorgi heirs, provides further evidence of how important photography was in its production and sales system. This is a register compiled by an employee, a kind of scrapbook of press cuttings begun in 1900 where all the advertisements and articles on Sangiorgi appearing in newspapers as well as the gallery's own advertising material have been glued.[38] One page in the scrapbook contains a card destined for British customers and dated 10 November 1910. On it, Giuseppe Sangiorgi invites potential purchasers to book a meeting with his agent Giovanni Walser, at the time staying in a London hotel. The owner states that his agent will come to the meeting "with

[35] In 1859, Oliver Wendell Holmes had defined photography as a "mirror with a memory", given its mimetic potential (Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The stereoscope and the stereograph", in: *Atlantic Monthly*, III [1859], pp. 738–748: 739). In the first years of the Galleria Sangiorgi's activity, one meaningful piece of evidence for art historians seeing photography as absolutely objective is Bernard Berenson's famous remark that artwork photos by the main specialist photographers are "accurate impersonal renderings" or "the pictures themselves on a smaller scale" (Bernard Berenson, "Isochromatic Photography and Venetian Pictures", in: *The Nation*, 9 November 1893, reprinted in: *Visual Resources*, III [1983–1987], pp. 134–138). Sticking to other contemporary sources, we find an interesting echo of the debate for and against the new medium and its use in artistic and art-historical practice in introductions to the photo catalogues of the firm Braun penned by famous art historians. See especially the introductions by Paul de Saint-Victor, Henry Jouin, Carl Ruland, John C. Robinson, Adolfo Venturi in *Ad. Braun & Cie: Catalogue général des photographies inaltérables au charbon et héliogravures faites d'après les originaux [...]*, Paris/Dornach 1887, pp. V–XLI. For an overview of the debate over the objectivity of photography and rejoinders to that argument, which punctuated the early years of the new medium, see at least Ettore Spalletti, "La documentazione figurativa dell'opera d'arte, la critica e l'editoria nell'epoca moderna (1750–1930)", in: *Storia dell'arte italiana*, I: *Materiali e problemi*, ed. by Giovanni Previtali, Turin 1979, II, pp. 417–482: 454–479.

[36] On the relation between photo archives, teaching and production of 'applied arts', see Julia Bärnighausen/Stefanie Klamm, "Bilder für die Produktion: Fotografien und Kunstgewerbe", in: *Foto-Objekte: Forschen in archäologischen, ethnologischen und kunsthistorischen Archiven*, ed. by Julia Bärnighausen *et al.*, Berlin 2020 (in press).

[37] In the very same period, Giacomo Brogi, for instance, produced a photographic catalogue specifically designed for "esercenti industrie artistiche" ("those involved in industrial art"), containing details of decoration arranged according to type (friezes, capitals and pilaster strips, columns, etc.) and extracted from the previous general catalogue. See Giacomo Brogi, *Catalogo delle Serie disposte per uso delle arti industriali (Estratto dal Catalogo Generale)*, Florence 1891. Massimo Ferretti, "La documentazione dell'arte: fra traduzione e riduzione", in: *Gli Alinari fotografi a Firenze, 1852–1920*, exh. cat., ed. by Wladimiro Settimelli/Filippo Zevi, Florence 1977, pp. 116–142, 314, was the first to stress the importance of using photographers' catalogues to trace the changing history of taste and focus on the role of photography promoting artistic craftsmanship. He was able to show that photos of ornaments in such catalogues increased exponentially in the 1890s, amounting for instance in the 1887 Alinari catalogue to some 12% of the whole offer.

[38] The cover of the register bears the title "Publicità" [*sic*]. On the front endpaper a note in pen reads: "Libro di pubblicità fatta nei giornali della Galleria Sangiorgi / Roma, il 6 agosto del 1900 / Zuccari Alfredo". The volume contains material covering a huge time span (from 1892 to 1974). It was kindly shown to me by Anna Maria Cima, wife of the last gallery owner, Sergio Sangiorgi.

the complete collections of my photographs. He will be glad to submit them for your inspection at your request." The note confirms that certain employees possessed all or part of the gallery's photo collection to show prospective buyers, similar to an illustrated sample book from which customers might choose. Dispatching and showing photograph collections to promote sales of artworks was probably a widespread practice on the contemporary art market. In the case of Sangiorgi, the phrase written on the card explains the surfeit of materials and the multiple prints from the same negatives that we find in the various archives. Besides being able to consult photos at the gallery's foreign branches or by meeting agents, customers out of physical reach could benefit from another service: as frequently mentioned in the catalogues, there was a mailing service of photos for which the negatives were evidently reprinted periodically.[39]

Another piece of information gleaned from the scrapbook is of great interest to the topic we are exploring. According to a series of advertisements mostly from the years 1900–1903 (Fig. 8), the Galleria Sangiorgi dealt in "photographies inaltérables" (probably carbon prints), which are called "le più perfette e le più economiche" ("the most perfect and convenient"). A striking feature of these announcements is that they recognise the aesthetic and commercial value of carbon prints, which are placed high up in the list of objects offered for sale. They are even mentioned before the gallery's renowned marbles and bronzes.

No immediate tie-up with such information can be found in the Zeri collection, there being no trace of any valuable prints – carbon or large format – which Sangiorgi certainly dealt in. Thus, these few lines confirm how the status of photographs changed in some points of the company's story. At times, for the gallery staff too, from being working tools they became objects of value, thereby implicitly taking on the status of works in their own right.

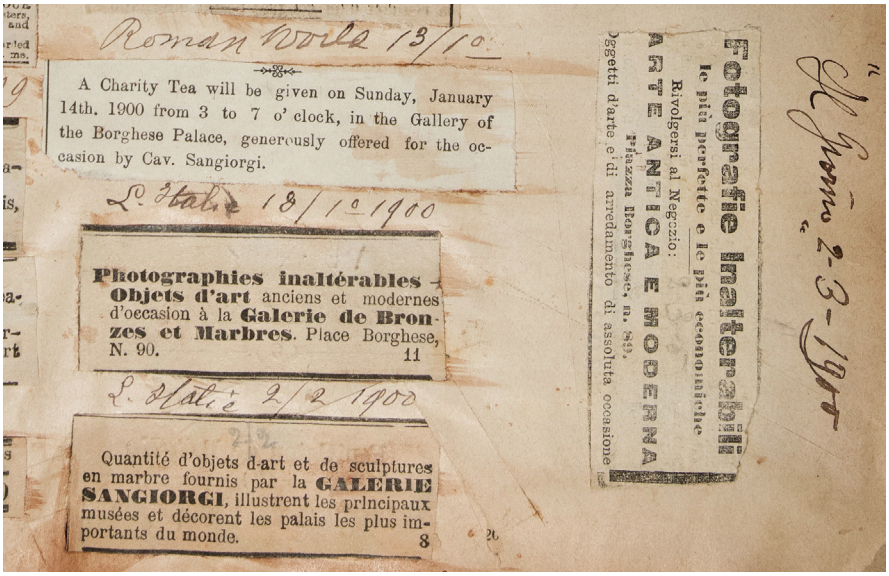
Photographs in the Cycle of Object Production, Reproduction, and Marketing

Having dealt with the snapshots of gallery premises, which serve to reconstruct the setting, we must now turn to the photos of objects. These must be seen not just as documents of the work they show, but as essential tools in the processes of creating, duplicating, and selling. In this different approach, aspects of the photo-objects' materiality and photographic technique spring to the fore.[40]

What emerges from the set of 3700 photo-objects we have so far identified as originating from the Galleria Sangiorgi is above all the extraordinary variety of techniques, formats, and finishes: they comprise cyanotypes, albumen prints, aristotype prints, and gelatine silver prints of various sizes. The variety of printing processes is of immediate relevance in dating the collection: it confirms that most of the photos that ended up in the Bologna archive belong to the era of Giuseppe's management, before the end of the 1920s. In fact, these were the years when the gelatine silver process came to prevail for good, being cheaper and more versatile. It completely replaced the other printing techniques, which were all contact-based.

[39] The sentence "Photos are supplied on request" occurs frequently in Sangiorgi's auction catalogues. The same service, extended to designs and sketches, is mentioned in a rare catalogue of 'in style' objects destined for the Anglo-Saxon market, probably from the years 1906/07 and preserved among the materials still owned by the Sangiorgi heirs: *Catalogue of Sculptures in Marbles, Stone and Terracotta for Indoor and Outdoor Decoration from Sangiorgi's Rome: Sole Agents in Great Britain, Norman & Stacey Ltd. Tottenham Court Road*, London n. d., p. 32.

[40] On the importance of photography for the physical reproduction of artworks, especially in the archaeology and antiques sector, see the studies by Stefanie Klamm, *Bilder des Vergangenen: Visualisierung in der Archäologie im 19. Jahrhundert. Fotografie – Zeichnung – Abguss*, Berlin 2017; *eadem*, "Neue Originale – Medienpluralität in der klassischen Archäologie des 19. Jahrhunderts", in: *Das Originale der Kopie: Kopien als Produkte und Medien der Transformation von Antike*, ed. by Tatjana Bartsch *et al.*, Berlin 2010, pp. 47–67. On these subjects see also the essays in *Photography and Sculpture: The Art Object in Reproduction*, conference proceedings Los Angeles/Williamstown, Mass., 2014, ed. by Sarah Hamill/Megan R. Luke, Los Angeles 2017.



8 Scrapbook with press cuttings related to the Galleria Sangiorgi, 1900–1974, detail of newspaper advertisements from 1900. Rome, private collection

The formal differences among the photo-objects, including jottings or rubber stamps on the mounts, confirm the existence of various archives within the gallery: a collection designed for customers, one for the artists who were to reproduce pieces, and another for the administration, which kept track of objects sold or still available, mailed images to distant customers, or attached photos to shipping documents. The subdivision principle was quite fluid: the same negative would be printed several times by different techniques, producing positive prints that found their way into more than one collection. Moreover, as the marks on some photo-objects show, the images might pass from one collection to another at different points of their history. Therefore, though one can note a certain correspondence between the photo-object's morphology and its intended use within the production or marketing cycle of the work it documented, the fact that the photos frequently changed their use warns us against any over-rigid categorisation. There is the time factor to consider: photos that had served one purpose – for instance, notifying what objects were on sale – might later be put to different use and become a kind of 'historical catalogue' once ownership of the work changed hands.

Figure 9 shows a group of prints side by side so that one can appreciate the different finishes as well as their respective sizes. The print on the left belongs to a group of cyanotypes depicting chimney-pieces, which are among the oldest photos in the collection. On the back they bear the stamp "L. Huvé", referring to an ornamentalist active in Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century, most likely the author of the pieces shown. The prints might thus not have been made inside the laboratories but specially purchased by Giuseppe in France as models for making chimney-pieces on the line of those portrayed. The hand-painted portions, highlighting metal or gilt decorations, are of great interest, since we find this technique in many photos of the Sangiorgi output.

9 From left to right:
Carved chimney-piece, 1895–1905, hand-coloured cyanotype, 16,1 × 21,8 cm;
Vases in the Tuileries gardens, 1895–1910, aristotype prints, 11,1 × 8 and 11 × 7,8 cm;
Marble bust of Queen Mary II Stuart, 1900–1915, albumen print mounted on cardboard, 19 × 11,5 cm.
Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 266076, 267255, 267101, 205069

Next to the cyanotype are two small-format aristotype prints reproducing vases of the Tuileries gardens in Paris, whose Sangiorgi provenance is proved by the inscriptions on the back. They are low-quality images. The objects portrayed are not perfectly centred, while from the angle they were shot one cannot make out some important details, for instance the shape or decoration of the handles. The same lack of care is visible in how the prints were made, their sides not being at proper right angles. Like other aristotype prints with similar features and dimensions, these images must have served as models for artists making garden objects. The production of aristotype prints was easy and cheap since industrially-produced sensitised paper was available, including small formats. This made the process ideal for Sangiorgi's purpose.

The image on the far right shows the front side of a photograph mounted onto a "Galerie Sangiorgi" cardboard of the kind shown in Figure 1. That these photos were destined for the 'customer archive' is confirmed by the words "Prière de renvoyer les photographies après examen" written along the lower edge. The photographs that are mounted on these cardboards are nearly always albumen prints. Compared to the positives obtained by other processes, albumen prints with their better finish, sharper definition, and nicer tone were clearly held to be more suitable for being shown to potential purchasers. The thinness of the support made them especially suitable to be mounted. Some prints show the signs of quite careful manual retouching ('silhouetting') on the respective negatives: in this way, the piece was detached from its surrounds to bring out its features and not distract the eye of

10 *Marble fountain with seashell, dolphin and putti*, 1900–1920, gelatine silver print, 22 × 15,6 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 150448

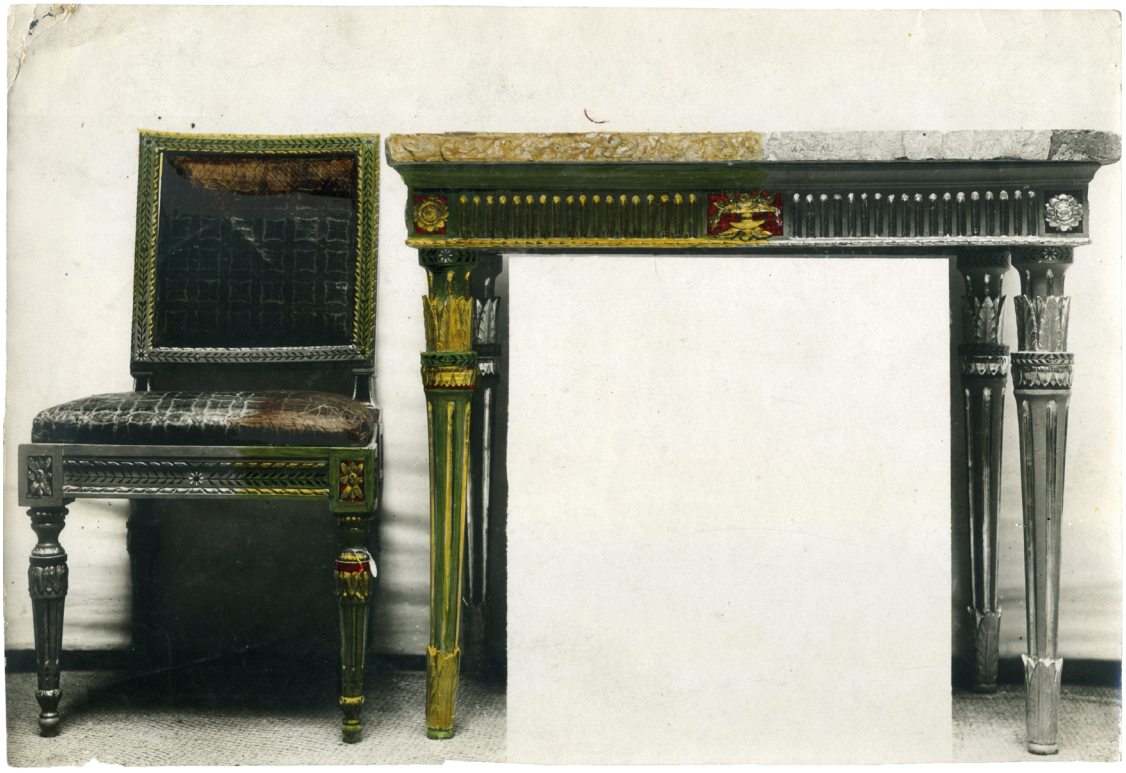
11 *Renaissance-style chimney-piece and basin*, 1900–1920, gelatine silver print, 22,1 × 13,6 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 265992

the customer.[41] In other cases, the same effect was achieved by using backdrops or curtaining during the photo-shoot (Fig. 10) or by more roughly masking the negative plate with paper (Fig. 11), techniques which are clearly detectable when examining the positive.

While these were the most frequent operations to negatives, those performed on the prints were far more varied and complex. As mentioned, many photo-objects are hand-coloured, as in the photo reproduced in Figure 12. Here, part of the objects portrayed – a late eighteenth-century chair and table – have been touched up in green, yellow, and brown. A paper mask on the negative has eliminated the shadow under the table, which would have made it hard to discern the exact design of the supporting structure, as happens with the rear legs of the chair. In this print, colouring was used to bring out the real material quality and colour of the furniture pieces. The inscription on the back describes them as a "console table and chair in carved and gilt wood painted (dark green ground), top in Lumachella marble / antique leather covering", proving that the re-touching did indeed have a mimetic intention.

In other cases, the same operations on the photo-object seem to aim not at reproducing the real aspect

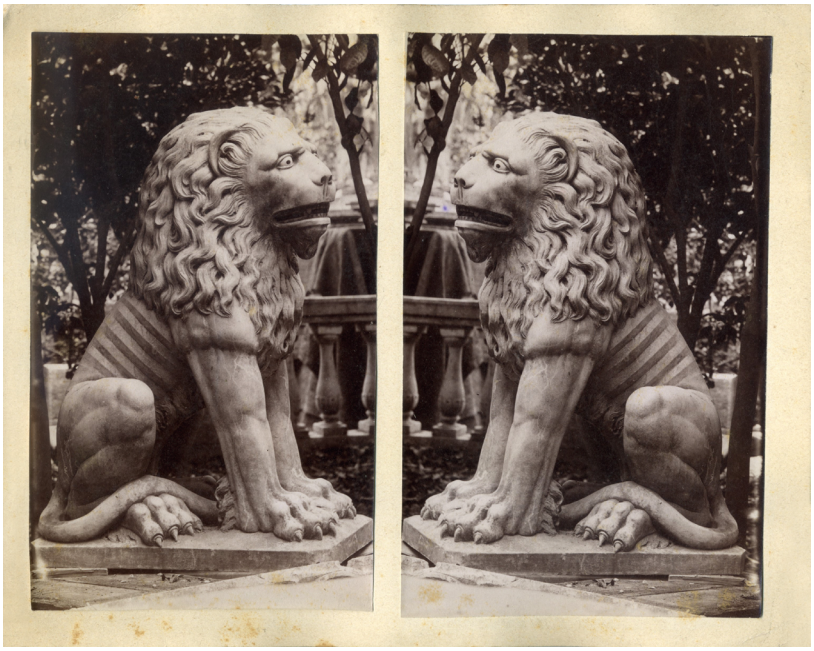
[41] It is interesting that photography created for supporting art historical and archaeological research went in for the same decontextualising of the subjects, not for commercial purposes but to cater for the habitual way scholars had of studying artworks. On this, see at least: Geraldine Johnson, "Using the Photographic Archive: On the Life (and Death) of Images", in: *Photo Archives* (note 4), pp. 145–156; *eadem*, "Photographing sculpture, sculpting photography", in: *Photography and Sculpture* (note 40), pp. 276–290.



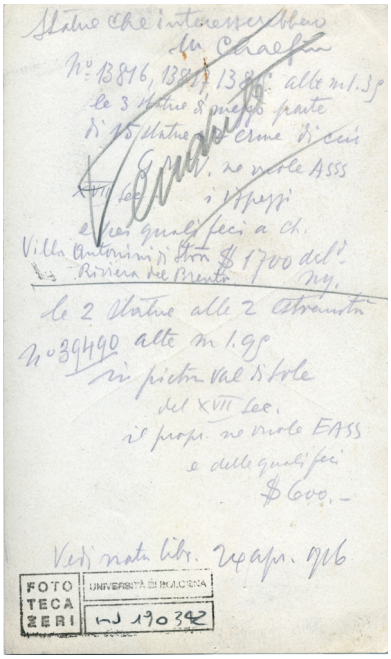
12 *Eighteenth-century chair and console table*, 1900–1920, hand-coloured gelatine silver print, 14,8 × 21,8 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 266534

of a thing but at simulating the different materials in which a reproduction of the object shown in the photograph could be made, according to the purchaser's preference. Failing annotations or other clarifying signs on the photographs, and in the lack of external evidence (written or visual documentation or the works themselves), it is hard to confirm this hypothesis. If use of colour to suggest the possible material quality of an object still to be manufactured were proven with certainty, we would be far from an 'objective' use of photography. Human intervention on the positive prints, personalising each photographic object, would lead it to 'document' non-existent works, or not existing in that particular variant.

As regards the mounting techniques, we have numerous cases where several positive prints are stuck onto a single mount. One example of this practice is the photo-object in Figure 13: it may have been designed to propose to customers a pair of statues, two lions to stand possibly on either side of a staircase or entranceway. The mount holds two perfectly mirrored albumen prints, obtained by printing the same negative twice, turning the plate upside down. There are two possible explanations for this procedure. In one case, if both lions were available at the time, the solution adopted would economise on photograph production time: one shot would suffice for the desired end. Otherwise, if only one sculpture existed at the time of shooting, the ploy would suggest to the buyer what effect would be achieved by duplicating the work and setting the matching pair opposite one another. We have once again a discrepancy between



13 *'In style' stone lions*, 1900–1915, albumen prints mounted on cardboard, 16 × 9,6 and 16,2 × 10,1 cm.
Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 198169



14a, b Three photographs of stone garden statues, 1910–1920, gelatine silver print, 10,1 × 16,9 cm, recto and verso.
Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 190342

15 *Negative plate reproducing a statue of Athena*, 1910–1920, gelatine silver print, 15,9 × 13 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 190396

the alleged 'objectivity' of photography and what a photo-object tells us by its shape and material qualities. The way the prints are mounted does not in fact reproduce reality, but suggests what customers might achieve if they so wish, by envisaging the presence of an object that does not actually exist.

Another option was to use a single photo to offer the customer a series of works, either already existing or to be made after the designs available at the laboratories. An example of the first possibility is a gelatine silver print reproducing three photos of sculptures set next to one another – not a mounting, therefore, but a photo of three photos (Fig. 14a). On the back of the photo-object (Fig. 14b), as in many other cases, we find important handwritten information for the history of art and art market. Amid various indications of prices, measurements, and materials, one reads "statue che interesserebbero M. Chalfin" ("statues that Mr. Chalfin might be interested in") and "Villa Antonini di Stra / Riviera del Brenta". The annotations tell us first who the possible buyer was, the American artist Paul Chalfin (1874–1959), who was in charge of decorating the Villa Vizcaya in Florida in neo-Renaissance style and, second, where the sculptures came from: a mysterious villa on the Brenta Riviera which I have not yet managed to identify.[42]

In the case of designs, one and the same print could be used to show several drawings of bigger and less handy format at once. The sheets were fixed to a wall and photographed in a single shot. This solution also allowed the customer to immediately check whether the pieces to be ordered would have matched each other well.

It would be misleading to assess these photographic materials according to their formal qualities, as traditional art history criteria might suggest. The way they are seems merely functional to a rapid documentation of the items. The absence of any aesthetic pretension also characterises a group of small-format gelatine silver prints with inverted

[42] I have verified that these statues do not belong to the set of Sangiorgi objects that now adorn the Villa Vizcaya or other collections linked to Chalfin. So they might either never have been bought by that collector or have been destroyed or resold. One attractive idea is that these were the very group of sculptures that the Vizcaya archive documents as having been bought from Sangiorgi on 15 October 1915 and sent off to Florida a few days later. They were loaded onto the liner Ancona, which was torpedoed by a German submarine in the Tyrrhenian Sea on 6 November 1915, taking its precious cargo to the bottom. A letter from Sangiorgi to Chalfin dated 11 November 1915 refers to the incident. But it only makes a generic reference to "lost objects" and "nice pieces of Fine Arts that you had chosen", so that the identification cannot be confirmed. Cf. Flaminia Gennari-Santori, "An Imaginary Italy on the Shores of Florida: Paul Chalfin, Vizcaya and the International Market for Italian Decorative Arts in 1910s", in: *Dealing Art on Both Sides of the Atlantic* (note 19), pp. 205–226: 214f.

16 Luigi Rocca (?), *Sculpted objects from the Ferroni collection* (recto and verso), 1909, albumen print cut up into four pieces, 18 × 19,7 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 597, 1355, 1362, 2306

image tones, obtained by photographing negatives (Fig. 15). It is not clear why, instead of simply printing out the negatives that are depicted, they were reproduced by taking new shots. If the purpose of these images remains mysterious, their presence among the Sangiorgi materials shows that the photographers working for the gallery were prepared to also employ techniques that produce low definition photographs, making full use, for commercial purposes, of the versatility of the negative/positive process.

In organising auctions, photos not only served as quick documentation of the collections offered for sale, but also provided a physical support on which to jot remarks about pieces as they were sold. This was the case of the albumen prints that portray works from the Ferroni collection auctioned off by Sangiorgi in 1909 (Fig. 16).[43] On the back of the photos, the collector Gioacchino Ferroni himself had noted down the prices at which the works were being offered. One material feature of the photo-object – the semi-transparent albumen paper – in this case enabled him to easily maintain the correspondence between the jotting and the piece it refers to. When the sale was over, the prints were cut up and the photos of the individual objects took on an independent life inside the archive as the works went their separate ways.

Again on the subject of auction organisation, an important sector in the Sangiorgi photograph output must have concerned sales catalogues. The Zeri archive holds many positive prints used to pro-

[43] *Catalogue de la vente après décès de Mr Joachim Ferroni se composant de tableaux des maîtres italiens et étrangers [...], sculptures en marbre, terres cuites et bois [...]*, auction cat. Jandolo & Tavazzi/Galleria Sangiorgi, Rome, 14–22 April 1909. On this sale and the photographs connected with it, see Francesca Mambelli, "La vendita della collezione Ferroni nelle fotografie di Federico Zeri", in: *I colori del bianco e nero* (note 4), pp. 107–113.

17 Luigi Rocca, *Antique statue of Bacchus from the Ferroni collection*, 1909, aristotype print with manual retouching, 19,3 × 9,3 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 604

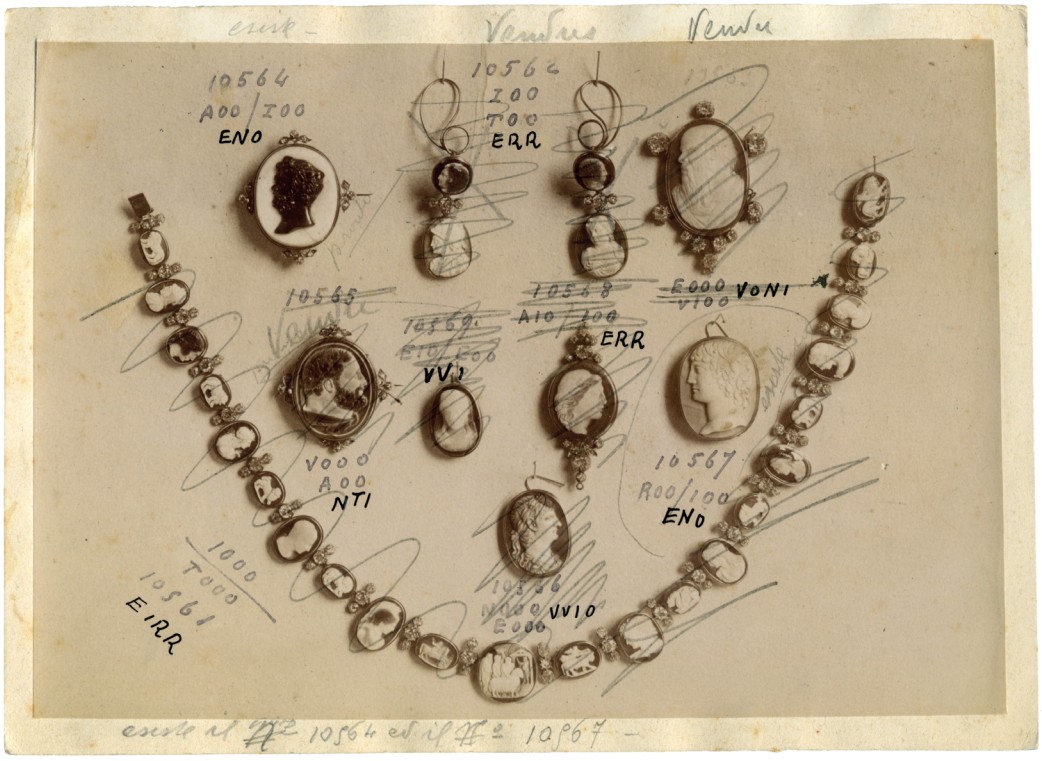
duce printer's matrixes for impression onto books (Fig. 17). It is interesting to note that these positives, with their outlining in white lead, retouching in Indian ink, and measurement details, are nearly always aristotype prints. The choice may have depended on technical properties of photos made by this process. In fact, they returned more details and showed a more pleasing colouring than gelatine silver prints, but were also cheaper than albumen prints, whose tonal effects they resemble. Compared to the latter, the greater thickness of the primary support made aristotypes more suitable for manual retouching designed to bring out details or heighten the chiaroscuro. Such material features may provide the art historian with precious clues, suggesting two directions of research. By finding and interpreting such signs, one may reconstruct the original setting where the photo-objects were produced,[44] in this case the auction catalogues for which they were used. From the auction catalogues one can derive useful information on the collection the works belonged to, or equally embark on new research into the archival materials, aiming to identify other images produced for the same purpose or occasion.[45]

As mentioned, we know from many examples that photographs changed their role in the course of time. Albumen prints mounted on Sangiorgi cardboards, originally got up to display objects nicely and hence destined for what we have termed the 'customer archive', became a kind of memorandum on which to follow up the phases of marketing. Staff progressively crossed off works when sold, noted the prices of outgoing objects, and made references to pieces still present in the stock, though maybe in other versions (Fig. 18).

Other traces of the marketing stage are customs stamps and jottings on the back as well as signs of paper clips and staples that some photos bear. Such features show the already widespread practice of attaching images to export papers. The photograph thus helps to create a sort of identity card accompanying the work that was being shipped. Once the latter had been delivered abroad, the photo would be returned to Sangiorgi.

[44] I refer once more to Schwartz (note 1).

[45] These remarks are designed to stimulate future research. Besides reconstructing the "original functional context" of photo-objects (cf. *ibidem*, pp. 41–43), it would be no less interesting to track the individual photo-object or group of images and their changing role within collections, extending the search to other archives containing Sangiorgi photos (see note 20).



18 *Jewelry adorned with cameos*, 1900–1915, albumen print mounted on cardboard with inscriptions in pen and pencil, 12,6 × 18 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 268064

Integrating Graphic and Photographic Material in the Zeri Collection

The most extraordinary thing about the Sangiorgi materials at the Federico Zeri Foundation, distinguishing it from that of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, is the possibility of juxtaposing the photos with some 345 drawings done in a wide range of techniques on differing supports: pencil sketches, drawings on tracing paper, charcoal drawings, watercolours, pastels, and even full-scale technical drawings complete with measurements and components.[46] While some of these are rather sketchy since they merely served to give a craftsman an idea or a model for a piece to be worked on, others have a high degree of finish, suitable for showing a customer the subtle effect that might be achieved with the piece when finally in place (Fig. 19).

Of all the supports, tracing paper has the greatest versatility, especially when combined with photographic materials. One could superimpose it or bend it, enabling the designer and craftsman to try out various decorative possibilities. The variants that the purchasers selected

[46] On the connection between drawings, sketches, and photographs explored from a different angle from that of art history, see Geoff Belknap, *From a Photograph: Authenticity, Science and the Periodical Press, 1870–1890*, London *et al.* 2016. Combined use of photos and drawings in archaeological research, hence geared to objects and not the marketing thereof, is also dealt with by Klamm (note 40).

19 Drawings of sculpted objects and furniture from the Sangiorgi collection (shown in relative size). Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. AD 9.11, AD 19.7, AD 20.21, AD 20.14, AD 20.27, AD 14.12, AD 8.57, AD 8.36

20 *Drawing of a carved chest*, 1900–1920, aristotype print with inscriptions in pen, 23,3 × 37,7 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 266130

from such graphic try-outs are documented by Sangiorgi photos showing how the objects finally turned out.

Some positives prove that drawings on tracing paper were used as negatives. The sensitised paper was placed in contact with them in such a way as to produce a white image on a dark background (Fig. 20). It was a procedure widely used in making technical and industrial drawings. The special feature of the Sangiorgi materials in the Zeri archive, however, is their use of the aristotype process instead of cyanography. The colour quality of aristotype prints, their greater sensitivity, and the hiding of the paper fibres thanks to the barite layer made them suitable to produce images of carved or sculpted objects that render the details with extreme refinement and clarity. Also the shading and the watercolour parts of an original drawing could be effectively reproduced.

A sheet of tracing paper with pen drawings that depict objects for garden furnishing (Fig. 21) sums up many of the points that the Zeri materials illustrate for anyone studying the Galleria Sangiorgi business. At the top, it bears the name of the customer for whom these pieces were destined: a certain Shields, possibly a landscape gardener working for wealthy patrons whose name also appears in the Berenson correspondence.[47] Notes jotted beside the sculptures state the models from which they were drawn. We thus have a "vaso tipo 7014 Barberini", a vase Bagnaia-style, as well as a "banchetta Borghese" ("Borghese bench"). There is also information about the photographer then working for Sangiorgi: next to the fountain we see the words "vedi foto Rocca" ("see Rocca photo") and a plate number reference.[48] Luigi Rocca was one of the professionals Sangiorgi used on a more constant basis. He was active in Rome in the first decade of the century, owned a laboratory situated on Via del Babuino and is documented as photographer for the gallery from 1907 to 1913.[49] His name recurs not only in jottings on the backs of Zeri photos but also in photographic reference sections in auctions and gallery catalogues of the time.[50] Other photographers whose collaboration with Giuseppe Sangiorgi is attested by rubber-stamps on photographic materials were Vasari, Cesare Faraglia, and Pompeo Sansaini in Rome, and Reali in Florence.[51]

Another interesting aspect of the 'Shields' drawing is that, for all the pieces depicted on the sheet (except for the eagle and tiger), in the Zeri photo archive I found other evidence helping us understand how the composition was put together. We have a pencil drawing of a basin with two cherubs, another drawing on tracing paper from which the fountain was taken, and photos of other sculptural objects complet-

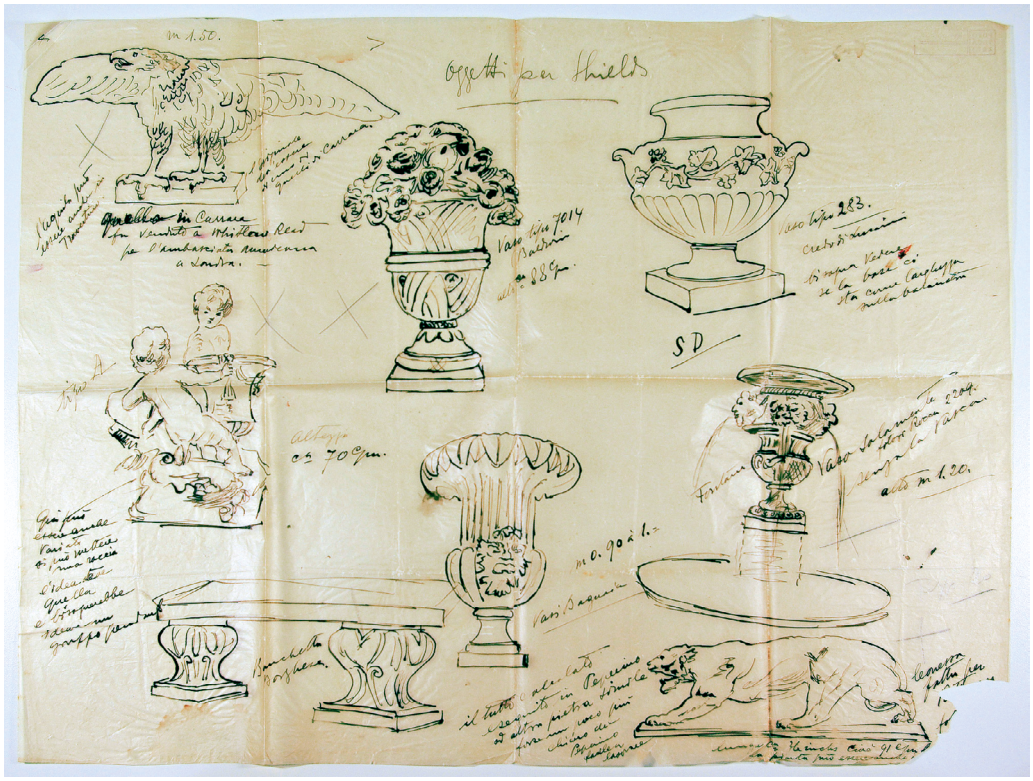
[47] The surname occurs in a letter from Mary Berenson to the English landscape architect Cecil Pinsent from 1911 (Loiacono 2007/08 [note 18], pp. 86f).

[48] It is not clear whether these numbers, which we find penned in the upper right or left corner of the photo verso, were numbers assigned by Sangiorgi or plate numbers given by photographers working at the gallery on a short- or long-term basis. One future research avenue might start from such numbering in order to reconstruct sequences in the reproduction of objects.

[49] We know very little about Luigi Rocca, not even his date of birth or when he started working. He is first mentioned in the "Elenco Generale dei fabbricanti, negozianti e fotografi dell'Italia Settentrionale" (General directory of artisans, shopkeepers and photographers of North Italy), published in the *Annuario del 'Corriere fotografico' di Milano*, http://www.gri.it/docs/Annuario-Corriere-fotografico-fotografi-italia-900.pdf, accessed on 8 February 2020). The document has no date, but from cross-references we can tell it was drawn up around 1906. A reference to Luigi Rocca also appears in the catalogue of the 1911 photography exhibition in Turin (*Catalogo ufficiale illustrato dell'Esposizione e del Concorso internazionale di fotografia, Torino, aprile–ottobre 1911*, [Turin 1911], p. 14), where he exhibited a photo of Angelo Zanelli's frieze on the monument to Vittorio Emanuele II in Rome.

[50] *Galerie Sangiorgi* 1912 (note 23); *Galerie Sangiorgi* 1913 (note 23). In the same years, Rocca produced illustrations for many auction catalogues of other Roman antiquarians. See among others: *Catalogo della pregevole raccolta di oggetti d'arte antica: del Medio Evo, del Rinascimento e dei tempi moderni appartenuti alla B.M. di Donna Enrichetta Castellani [...]*, auction cat. Jandolo & Tavazzi, Rome, 5–20 April 1907; *Catalogo della pregevole raccolta di oggetti d'arte antica e moderna e della mobilia di proprietà del signor Benvenuto Cosentini di Napoli [...]*, auction cat. Jandolo & Tavazzi, Rome, 16 March–3 April 1908; *Catalogo delle pregevoli raccolte di oggetti d'arte antichi e moderni appartenute al defunto Pasquale Janniello [...]*, auction cat. Jandolo & Tavazzi, Rome, 22 April–3 May 1911.

[51] In later years Giorgio and Sergio Sangiorgi also employed Renato Sansaini and Caldarazzo.

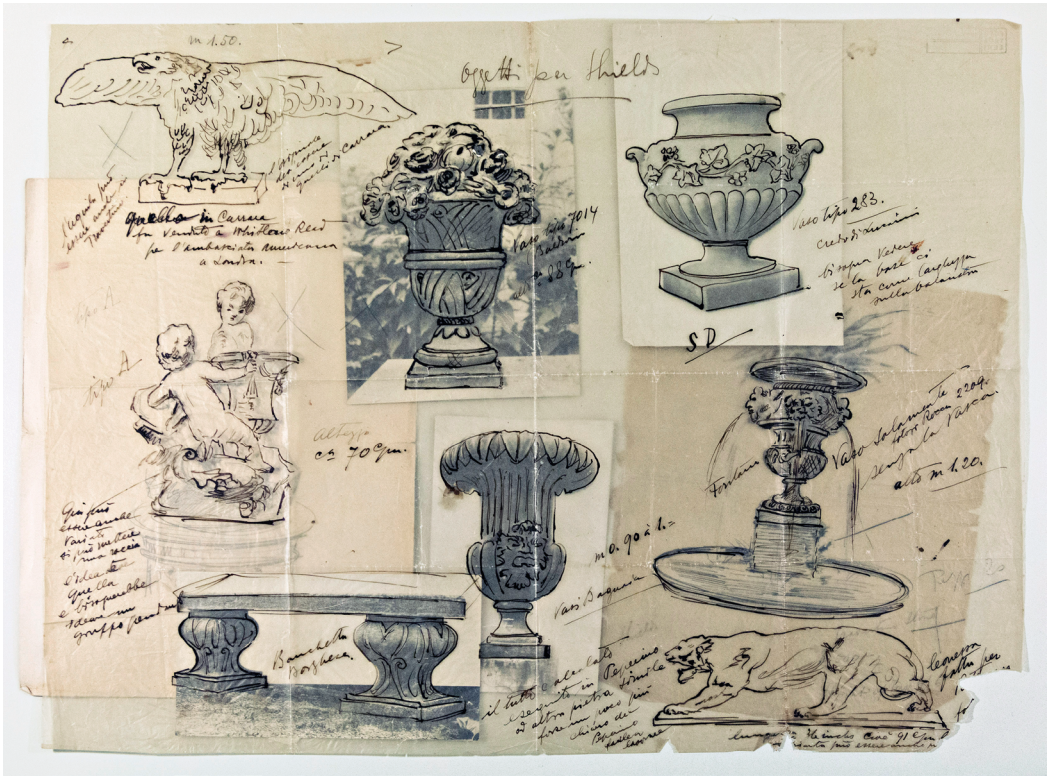


21 *Objects for garden furnishing ("Oggetti per Shields")*, 1910–1915, pen and ink on tracing paper, 47,5 × 62,5 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. AD 7.1

ing the series that was offered to the customer. It is easy to ascertain that the 'Shields' drawing was made very quickly by placing tracing paper on top of these photos and drawings: the objects' outlines coincide perfectly, as can be seen in the superimposition of the sheets in Figure 22. Here we have a case of exponential multiplication of the reproduction process. Photography is used to create a reproduction that in turn will give rise to new production of objects, which will be reproduced in their turn upon request.

Even more significant are the cases where, again by superimposing tracing paper on photographs, rapid drawings were made that could be included in the customer archive. Some of these sketches taken from photos are presented as original models, stamped with the warning that reproduction is forbidden (Fig. 23). Handwritten on the drawings, we find the same phrase ("Prière de renvoyer après l'examen") that is printed on the mounts of albumen prints destined for customers. These are examples of unusual reverse-direction processes compared to the normal course of a project. It is not the drawing that sparks off the process of production but the works themselves and the photos reproducing them that formed the basis for making 'original' drawings from which to create new works.

To end this brief survey of drawings interrelating with photos, there is the intriguing case of a medium-format aristotype print that appears on first sight to be documenting a real location: a dining room with coffered ceiling, neo-Gothic wall decorations, and a large carved fireplace (Fig. 24). Closer inspection reveals that the photo is actual-



22 The drawing of Fig. 21 superimposed on two drawings and four photographs used to trace the objects. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. AD 7.1, 267129, 268753, AD 8.37, 268763, AD 8.45, 267273

23 *Water stoop*, 1910–1920, ink drawing on tracing paper, 25,3 × 16,1 cm, superimposed on a gelatine silver print of the same subject, 22,8 × 13,5 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. AD 8.2, 267232

24 *Drawing of a room decorated in neo-Gothic style*, 1900–1920, aristotype print, 10,6 × 21,3 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 190318

ly the reproduction of a watercolour, which probably was of a much larger scale, given the amount of detail. Yet the proportions and light effects in the drawing are so accurate as to suggest that the artist must have had a photo of an actual room before his eyes. The existence of another Sangiorgi image depicting the same stone fireplace in the centre of that dining room (Fig. 25) permits us to conjecture the function of the photo-object. Like the watercolour it reproduces, it must have been a rendering designed to offer the customer two options of decorating the room in which this 'in style' furnishing was to be placed: the two halves of the hall have in fact different tiles, friezes, and wall decoration.[52] However, the reduction of the drawing's size and of its colour scheme to black and

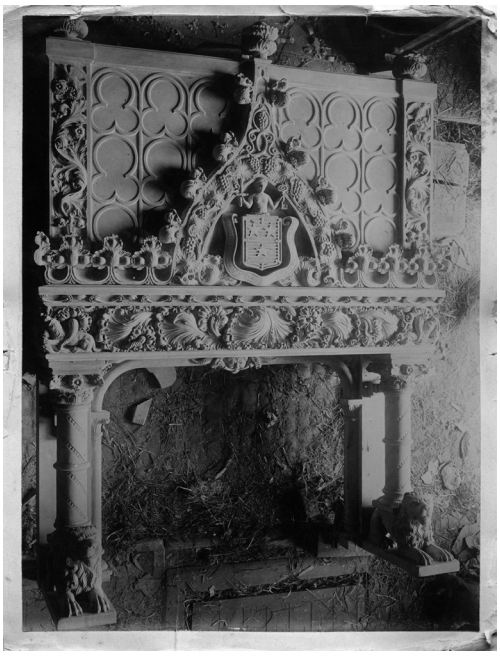
[52] The advertisement cuttings stuck into the "Publicità" scrapbook (note 38) stress that the Galleria Sangiorgi would undertake full-scale decoration of palazzi, villas, castles, gardens, and parks, and that in support of this service the owner could draw on "uno studio composto di abili disegnatori per la preparazione di progetti di Arte Classica decorativa" ("a studio of draughtsmen skilled in the preparation of classical decorative art objects"); these advertisements were appearing in the newspaper *L'Italia* twice a week throughout winter 1906/07. One such commission was certainly the refurbishing of Palazzo Vidoni in Via del Sudario. An article published in *The English and American Gazette* on 21 November 1903 explains that the whole complex was decorated and refurnished by "Cavalier Sangiorgi" who gave "ample proof of the progress achieved in modern artistic furniture" without lapsing into the "vulgar showy effects" of many a similar venture. The operation tallies with photos and drawings in the Zeri and Archivio Centrale dello Stato collections that show objects decorated with the shields and mottoes of the Giustiniani-Bandini, the illustrious family who owned Palazzo Vidoni until 1903. For the history of the palace see Giuseppe Tomassetti, *Il Palazzo Vidoni in Roma, appartenente al Conte Filippo Vitali […]*, Rome 1905. I will be returning to the subject in a forthcoming paper: Francesca Mambelli, " 'Il più grande centro commerciale di oggetti d'arte': la Galleria Sangiorgi tra strategie di marketing e artigianato artistico", in: *Mercanti, collezionisti e conoscitori nella Roma sabauda (1870–1915)*, conference proceedings Bologna 2017, ed. by Andrea Bacchi/Giovanna Capitelli, Bologna 2020 (in press).

white in the photographic reproduction created a more realistic effect, showing a virtual scene as really perceived. We are here dealing with a use of images that intentionally exploits the "indexical paradigm" of photography and the widespread belief that this medium can portray reality objectively and immediately.[53] Using such techniques, Sangiorgi could change the way of communicating with customers: from a design approach – by way of drawings – to an experiential ploy: the photographic reproduction that simulates a snapshot of the real thing, thus ensuring greater impact and evocative effectiveness.

Integrating Zeri Materials with the Sangiorgi Collection at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato

These are some of the insights that emerge from connecting graphic with photographic materials; yet more stimuli come from comparing the Zeri archive photo-objects with those in other collections. Besides once more referring to the paper by Julia Bärnighausen in this volume on the Sangiorgi photos at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, I should like to conclude by mentioning some findings and questions that derive from matching up the Bologna materials with the Mancini fonds at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato in Rome.

The folders that the grandson of the Galleria Sangiorgi chief executive donated to the Roman archive contain some five hundred photographs as well as numerous auction catalogues and other hard-copy documents. Among the photo-objects we find pictures showing the same Ferroni collection that is documented by the cut-up albumen print I mentioned above



25 *Chimney-piece in neo-Gothic style*, 1900–1915, albumen print mounted on cardboard, 26,6 × 19,5 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 266028

(Fig. 16).[54] They integrate the documentation on the Ferroni sale in 1909 and clarify certain cross references (to potential buyers, prices, sales strategies) which Gioacchino Ferroni included in his verso jottings. In the Mancini archive we find the photo used to draw the outline of the tiger in the 'Shields' drawing of the Bologna collection. Identification of the print is confirmed not just by a perfect overlap with the drawing but also by jottings on the support which give the name of the mysterious destinee of those garden marbles as well as photographer Luigi Rocca's negative number.

[53] For the term "indexical paradigm", see Carlo Ginzburg, "Clues: Roots of a Scientific Paradigm", in: *Theory and Society*, VII (1979), pp. 273–288. Ginzburg uses it to indicate an epistemological model that applied to many disciplines in the late nineteenth century, though it lacked an explicit theoretical framework. It was based on the art of decipherment and the use of inferential procedures. For elucidation of indexicality as applied to photography, one should once more consult Pinney (note 5), p. 20, and Tomáš Dvořák, "Photography and Phonography: Roots of an Indexical Paradigm", in: *Fotograf*, 25 (2015), pp. 102–104. Edwards (note 5), p. 5, points out that "[photographs] are unprocessed, ambiguous, fleeting, and changing in meaning precisely because their 'minute indexicality' produces an expectation of immediacy and of evidence destined to remain always unaccomplished".

[54] ACS, Archivio Luigi Mancini, Fondo Galleria Sangiorgi, box 48, folder III.

26 Album with albumen prints of ancient statues, 1892–1915, 21,5 × 29,4 cm. Rome, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Archivio Luigi Mancini, Fondo Galleria Sangiorgi, box 61

27 Fratelli Alinari, *La musa Italia* (left) and anonymous photographer, *Antinoo*, 1880–1900, albumen prints mounted on cardboard, 14,2 × 9,5 and 15,5 × 10,5 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 770

Besides such discoveries, which confirm how complementary the holdings are as well as how randomly they were divided up, the comparison between the two archives sheds light on the nature and function of certain particular photographic objects found in the Zeri photo archive. The Mancini archive at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato contains, for instance, an album with photos of famous ancient statues, for the most part preserved at the Musei Capitolini and the Musei Vaticani, taken by the main photographers of the time (Fig. 26). Beside the photos (which are nearly all albumen prints by Anderson and Alinari) there appear the usual Sangiorgi codes with their encrypted prices. These figures evidently do not refer to the sculpture portrayed but to the cost of a copy of the original statue that could be requested to the Sangiorgi laboratories – a shift in the *prima facie* purpose of the photo: from documenting a work to supporting a new production process of the reproduced subject. This shift, however, must have seemed quite natural to the people – gallery staff and customers – using the images. A comparison with this album proves fundamental in clarifying the provenance of certain cut-out cards found in the archaeology section of the Zeri photo archive onto which identical reproductions are glued (Fig. 27). They must originally have been en-

28 *Fresco fragment by Oreste Marozzi (?) with two figures in Renaissance dress*, 1903–1920, gelatine silver print, 11,3 × 12,3 cm. Bologna, Federico Zeri Foundation, inv. 170501

29 *"Enea Silvio Piccolomini crowned poet by Emperor Frederick III" by Pinturicchio in the Libreria Piccolomini, Siena* (detail), 1900–1910 ca., collotype, 22 × 15,8 cm. Rome, Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Archivio Luigi Mancini, Fondo Galleria Sangiorgi, box 48

closed in a similar folder: a kind of model repertory destined for artists or customers.

Lastly, the Luigi Mancini archive contains images of original works of applied art, of ornament details, and of ancient paintings produced by Brogi, Anderson, Alinari, and Moscioni. Such images, too, must have been used by Sangiorgi craftsmen as examples and sources of inspiration for 'in style' objects. Among a group of photos portraying fifteenth- and sixteenth-century frescoes, there are fifteen collotypes that depict the Pinturicchio cycle at Siena's Libreria Piccolomini.[55] As becomes evident from the juxtaposition of Figures 28 and 29, these images served as models for certain figures appearing on polychrome furniture and *calcinacci* – the Renaissance-style fragments produced by the Sangiorgi workshop, which figured centrally in some of Federico Zeri's most brilliant studies and are amply documented in his photo archive.[56]

These and other prints from the Mancini archive that portray original works bear no markings on the verso: their Sangiorgi provenance is only confirmed by their belonging to a compact archival fonds, solely comprised of materials relating to the firm. This fact opens up new perspectives. I refer to the possibility that the Zeri photo archive may likewise contain photos of the kind and that, therefore, the bounds of the Sangiorgi collection scattered throughout the archive

[55] *Ibidem*, box 48, folder IV.

[56] Federico Zeri, "Il falsario in calcinaccio", in: *idem*, *Diari di lavoro*, Bergamo 1971–1976, I, pp. 81–91; *idem*, *Dietro l'immagine: conversazioni sull'arte di leggere l'arte*, Milan 1987, pp. 204–212; Massimo Ferretti, "Falsi e tradizione artistica", in: *Storia dell'arte italiana*, III: *Situazioni, momenti, indagini*, ed. by Federico Zeri, Turin 1981, X, pp. 113–195: 176f.; Loiacono 2011 (note 18). I will be returning to Sangiorgi polychrome furniture and to the *calcinacci* (literally 'rough pieces of painted wall') in a forthcoming article

may be much broader than the 3700 photos hitherto identified from writing on the supports. Only further research and deeper comparison with other documentary sources can yield an answer to this question.

Yet even within the bounds so far established, research into the collection continues to come up with new contents on a daily basis: novel information from analysing photo-objects, news of artists working at the gallery, its owners' collecting policies, and identification of pieces that passed through the Palazzo Borghese and are now in museums all over the world.[57] I hope that the present and future discoveries will sooner or later go to form a monograph on the gallery composed of transversal contributions. For, as I have tried to show, only by a multidisciplinary approach can one unravel the tangled stories that lie behind the Sangiorgi materials and make correct use of these sources for a thoroughgoing analysis of the firm's life and work, as well as the role of photography in the international art market at the turn of the twentieth century.

My thanks to Claudio Mancini for his constant support during my research; to Costanza Caraffa and Pierangelo Cavanna for reading the text and offering invaluable suggestions; to Anna Maria Cima and Maria Letizia Paoletti for showing me some important documents belonging to Sangiorgi's heirs.

focused on the nature, the authors, and the cultural context of this line of production (Mambelli [note 52]).

[57] These findings will be included in an article of mine in press (Mambelli [note 52]).

Abbreviations

ACS Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome

Abstract

The article focuses on the Galleria Sangiorgi materials found in the Federico Zeri Foundation: some 3700 photos and a number of drawings and auction catalogues that Zeri inherited from a relative and incorporated into his own photo library, disseminating them in its various sections. They had been part of the collection used by the Roman gallery and auction house (active from 1892 to 1970), which was gradually dismembered and is now divided up among several institutions. In the everyday activities of the firm, photographs were an indispensable means of commercialising and restoring antique works as well as producing new ones such as *d'après* copies or 'in style' objects.

The study explores the different statuses that photographs have assumed in the various areas of the gallery's business and now in the Zeri archive into which they merged. At distinct stages of their existence, without changing their visual content, they alternated between being documents (of sold objects, of works significant for the history of art and taste, of the art market practices), working tools (advertising to be shown to customers; models to be reproduced), assets (historical prints kept in a photo library, to be studied and preserved). They recount a story that can be retraced only by considering the material features of the photographic objects – morphology, technique, annotations, signs – as well as their interactions with designs and catalogues at the foundation, and with photos of the same origin nowadays part of other collections.

Photo Credits

Federico Zeri Foundation, Bologna: Figs. 1–25, 27, 28. – Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome: Figs. 26, 29 (su concessione del Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e per il turismo; è vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione o duplicazione con qualsiasi mezzo).

Umschlagbild | Copertina:

Archivschachtel mit Sangiorgi-Fotos in der Photothek des Kunsthistorisches Instituts in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut | Scatola d'archivio con foto Sangiorgi nella Fototeca del Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut
(Detail aus Abb. I, S. 42 | dettaglio da fig. I, p. 42)

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