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FMR Issue No. 18: "The Unreachable House of the Olsons" marks the start of a series from Giovanni Mariotti, "A River of Words, a Cascade of Astonishment" narrates the narrative of Niagara Falls, "Tesseract at the Palazzo" tells how staging art in Venice is an art unto itself, while "Paper Lion" traces Rembrandt's brush with a big cat. "JACK OF FALCONS BEATS FOUR OF DUCKS" presents unfamiliar fauna in playing cards; "THE AEROPAINTRESS AND HER SWIFT MESSENGERS" reminds us that the one notable female Futurist was looking down from her cockpit at a world newly linked by now-old media; in "BUTTERED SPRINGTIME," Gloria Fossi links art to asparagus. "THE PALACE OF TWELVE-POINTED STARS" tours us through a Moorish revival palace in Tangier. And "RUNAWAY QUEEN" tells the tale of an independent female royal eager to shed the ballast of her birth in the Eternal City.

After ten years as Head of Department for Old Master Paintings at Christie's, **Marco Riccòmini** now lives out of a suitcase, alternating between blitzes in the capitals of the art market and tours of neglected, rarely discussed places. He has contributed extensively to specialist journals, exhibition catalogues, and museum publications, and has written several books on eighteenth-century Italian artists, including Donato Creti. Le opere su carta (Allemandi, 2012), Giuseppe Maria Crespi. I disegni e le stampe (Allemandi, 2014), and I Gandolfi. Disegni della raccolta Certani alla Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Marsilio, 2018). He writes for Gazzetta Antiquaria, contributes the column "Il viaggiator cortese" to Il Giornale dell'Arte, has recorded episodes for Le Meraviglie (Rai Radio 3), and wrote and narrated the documentary I Carracci. La rivoluzione silenziosa (2019). For La Nave di Teseo he has published Un breve incanto. Dizionario semiserio del mercato dell'arte (2021) and Il nome della cosa (2026).

Antony Shugaar is editor of the American edition of FMR. He has published extensively as an investigative journalist and author and has translated hundreds of books from Italian and French. His career has also been marked by extended periods spent in Italy. He is the editor of Franco Maria Ricci: A Labyrinth of Beauty (2025), about the history of FMR, a subject he knows well, as he was an early collaborator, serving as managing editor of the first American edition of the magazine through 1986. In those early days, he once met Jorge Luis Borges in the reading room of the NY Public Library.

Giovanni Mariotti was born in Versilia, Tuscany, in 1936 and was educated at the Rural Elementary School of Pedona di Camaiore, at the Istituto Artigianelli in Lucca, and the Tre Cancelli Archiepiscopal Seminary in Vallebuia. He has written for the major daily and weekly press in Italy. His publications include Storia di Matilde and Piccoli Addii (Adelphi), I manoscritti dei morti viventi (La nave di Teseo) and La Carpa del sogno and La gatta, Borges e il fox terrier with Franco Maria Ricci, a publishing house he has worked with for decades. He is a senior editorial adviser to FMR magazine.

Massimo Navoni, originally from Ravenna, took a degree in law at the University of Bologna before moving to Milan and has contributed to major publishing houses, from Franco Maria Ricci to Mondadori Electa, since 1988. He also writes for Arte, the magazine of Giorgio Mondadori. Since 2014, he has been in charge of cultural events and editorial projects for the Gruppo Sole 24 Ore.

Laurel Saint Pierre is a curator, exhibition producer, editor, and translator based in Venice. She holds degrees in Linguistics, Art History, and Creative Writing, having studied in Canada, the UK, and Italy. She has recently produced exhibitions in Torino, for the Museo Nazionale del Cinema, and in Venice, at Palazzo Van Axel and San Marco Art Centre. She has been an editor with FMR since 2022.

Cristina Nuzzi studied at the University of Florence with Mina Gregori. In the years from 1979 to 1985 she curated a great many exhibitions, including Quarant'anni di spettacolo in Italia attraverso l'opera di Maria de' Matteis (Florence, 1979); Arnold Böcklin e la cultura artistica in Toscana (Fiesole, 1980); Franco Maria Ricci Editore e Designer (Fiesole, 1982); and Fortuny e la Belle Époque (Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, 1982). In 1985, she wrote and directed the three-episode documentary Viaggio nei luoghi degli Etruschi for Istituto Luce and RAI2. She has worked with a number of publishing houses, including this one.

Paolo Plebani, an art historian, focuses his academic and research interests on Italian painting of the 15th and 16th centuries and on 19th-century art, while also venturing into the history of art collecting. He has published many articles on these topics in scholarly journals, exhibition catalogues, conference proceedings, and miscellaneous volumes. He is also the author of a book dedicated to Veronese's Renaissance art reinterpreted through Giorgio Vasari's Lives (2012). He works at the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo, where he has served as Curator of Paintings, Drawings, and Prints since February 2016, in addition to overseeing the Archives and the Historical Library. For the museum, he has curated, among others, exhibitions dedicated to Simone Peterzano (2020) and the Tarots (2026).

Anna Maria Ruta, born and raised in Palermo, has long been active as both a teacher and a researcher in the fields of Sicilian literature and art history. She has contributed to newspapers and scholarly journals and has published books and essays; she has also curated numerous exhibitions, focusing in particular on Sicilian Futurism. She has worked as well on art by women, analyzing the artistic paths of several female painters in Sicily in the 1920s and 1930s. She has contributed entries to many dictionaries and encyclopedias, including the Encyclopedia of Sicily published with Franco Maria Ricci (2005).

Gloria Fossi is an art historian who studied with Roberto Salvini and Federico Zeri. She also owes a great deal to the teachings of Franco Maria Ricci, with whom she worked in the 1980s. She has edited and translated novels and short stories by W. Beckford, E.A. Poe, R.L. Stevenson, H. James, and J. Conrad. Alongside her work as a scholar and editor, she has also worked as a visiting professor and lecturer since the 1980s. She has worked for RAI 3, il Giornale dell'Arte, and La Repubblica, and has written for Art e Dossier since 1987. Her recent books include Sulle tracce di Van Gogh, L'Oggetto misterioso (2022), Picasso (2023), Sulle tracce di Gauguin (2024), and Sulle tracce di Matisse. She is a regular contributor to the series Histoire et Arts, published by Le Figaro.

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