

Digital Montagny
Presentation Martine Denoyelle

I'm very grateful to the GRI for its invitation to this stimulating Digital Lab, and particularly happy to be here again, nearly one year after the beginning of my stay at the Getty as a Villa Scholar; this had been the occasion to begin working concretely with Murtha Baca and her team to a project of digital workspace we had been thinking about from one year at least.

Last year saw the beginning of a long-awaited and fruitful phase of the work, and I experienced the great skills of all the team involved in conceiving and making grow the site that we are going to introduce to you today- Digital Mellini's little brother, if one can say so. The story of a research project is often the one of an encounter between unintended circumstances and conscious will: being interested in, if not obsessed by the issue of structured terminologies and interoperability between the databases- notably for improving our Aghora database in the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art- I went to explore a few years ago the Getty vocabularies and databases, and got in touch with Murtha. She gave me informations and showed me also the Mellini project, on which she was

currently working with Nuria Rodriguez and the University of Malaga. It was very near to my goals and very appealing, and it appeared to me that for the research programme that I was conducting at the Institute- history of Greek vases, but more widely, fortune of the Antique, through the study of engraved books and antiquarian drawing funds - it would be appropriate to think to a different model, complementary with the Mellini one: focused on an ancient unpublished document, it would be centered not on the deciphering of a textual description but on the analysis of the image representing an ancient artwork ; so not "reconstructing" images from a text, but objects from images.

The occasion to choose an album of drawings of the early nineteenth century illustrating wall-paintings from Pompei and Herculaneum as well as other Roman objects, housed in the GRI Library's special collections, was provided by the arrival in the team of Delphine Burlot, post-doc specialist for the antiquarian reception of roman wall-painting.

As is the case for the Mellini, the site of the Digital Montagny have been conceived first as a working platform "sur mesure", where the functionalities answer narrowly to the needs of the scholars conducting the research, while allowing exchanges with other scholars: identifying and describing the objects represented, registering their ancient and, when

found, current location, comparing their past description, state of preservation and interpretation with the contemporary ones, describing the technical and pictorial features of the drawings and, as a consequence of all these, characterizing also the artist's creative process. We'll present you today a part only of the work, since it's in progress and after the structuration of the core-record parts, we just take on the requirements for the manipulation of images. But the conception of the site is mostly settled, and we can already observe how much working in this new research environment produces both new methodological inputs and new finds on Montagny's album. I shall leave the detailed presentation to my two colleagues, but I'd like before to underscore two aspects which inscribe, following me, this project in the core of the perspectives aroused by the growth of Digital Art History today:

-First, our intention is to shape a prototype that may be used by art historians working on ancient graphic sources from different periods to produce a digital critical edition – and Digital Montagny is ideally intended to be the first of a collection co-produced by the Getty and the INHA.

For the moment, it may appear as a rather classical tool I should say, since it's different from the initiatives like wikis or blogs; there are two main scientific investigators and a rather limited team, but it is no less

collaborative, as may be seen by looking at the composition of the team involved: scholars at all levels, international participation, interdisciplinarity. And also, it is suitable for evolving in the future versions.

Then, as for the Mellini, the scholar workspace is to be transformed into a critical edition online, which brings the research process nearer to the public: this means indeed inscribing the dissemination objectives in the earliest phases of the research, and thereby thinking differently the earliest research process. Although being a scientific edition, the preoccupation of making it accessible to a wide audience is especially clear in the mini-essays series, which form a contextual documentation usable by a wide number of people, scholars, students or else.

Before handing over to the other two members of the team, I want to shortly describe the scientific team and quote the scholars contributing to the writing of scientific information and mini-essays:

Project management: Murtha Baca and Martine Denoyelle

Scientific investigators : Delphine Burlot, pensionnaire at the INHA, and Peter Bonfitto, Senior Project Management Coordinator in the Scholars Program at the Getty Research Institute.

For the research work and the filling of the core-records, Delphine is assisted at the INHA by Helene Dufresne, PhD student and research assistant; for the conception of the workspace instrumentation , she's assisted by Elli Doulkaridou, PhD student and research assistant.

The mini essays are or will be written by :

Peter Bonfitto, Luis Marchesano (GRI)

Delphine Burlot, H el ene Dufresne , Sandra Zanella (INHA)

Andrea Milanese (director of the Archivio storico della Soprintendenza di Napoli); Florence Le Bars (PhD student of Naples and Paris Nanterre universities)