

# 第三屆國際武學研討會

2020年12月11日至2020年12月12日

## THE 3<sup>rd</sup> INTERNATIONAL MARTIAL STUDIES CONFERENCE

11 Dec 2020  
12 Dec 2020



### 跨歐亞大陸的刀劍文化

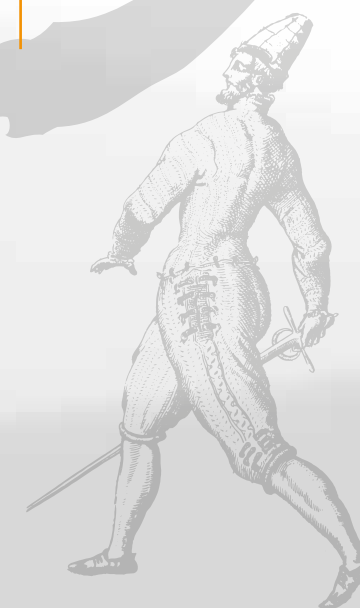
### SWORD CULTURE ACROSS THE EURASIAN CONTINENT

# FOREWORD

This conference is organised in parallel to the exhibition “Way of the Sword: Warrior Traditions in China and Italy”, curated by Hing Chao and Roberto Gotti, a multi-dimensional presentation of China’s and Italy’s warrior and sword traditions from the Classical period through to the Early Modern age, and their contemporary revival. The scholars, expert practitioners, craftsmen and collectors selected here will open up and broaden the perspectives drawn by the exhibition, with a series of research papers and keynotes.

This booklet presents a selection of speakers from both Asia and Europe, with their titles and abstracts. The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Martial Studies Conference will be held online.

Hing Chao and Daniel Jaquet  
co-chairs of the Organising Committee



INTERNATIONAL  
MARTIAL STUDIES  
CONFERENCE

# INTRODUCTION 2020

“Exchange is that which propels historic development.” This is a famous statement made by the late linguist and historian Prof. Ji Mulin in the early 1980s, at a time when China was starting out on its reform journey. This statement had a significant impact within the Chinese academia, and served as a catalyst for the development of the history of Sino-international relations as a new academic discipline. I was personally inspired to take a new experimental direction in my research. This led to *Examination of Historic Martial Arts Exchange between China, Japan and Korea (Tiyu jingji*, vol. 5, 1980), my first research paper on the relationship between China and its neighbouring countries in arms and martial arts.

“Exchange” is a rich and complex notion with profound historic and emotive connotations; it encompasses a vast range of heritage and relics, as well as many different kinds of literary sources. For China, the archetypal example for exchange is the overland and maritime “Silk Road”, which is a veritable intellectual magnet that continues to attract scholars from around the world.

Exchange takes many forms, including warfare and conflicts of different kinds that involve individuals and groups. We call these kinds of exchange, which lie outside the bounds of normal social activities, extraordinary conflictual exchange. In such conflictual exchange military culture occupies a primary role, while its material and intangible aspects take prominence. The greater the clash, the greater the frequency and scope of exchange, leading to more significant and profound changes, particularly in the sphere of military culture.

Chinese scholars have long noticed the influence this special type of exchange had on human history, as seen for example in Prof. Bai Shouyi’s research on “the Battle of Talas” between the Tang dynasty and the Abbasid empire. However, such studies are few in number and tend to be limited in depth and scope. To illustrate, China has thus far failed to develop antique arms studies as a discipline, while historic studies continues to exclude from its purview academic societies and periodicals for historic arms research, which are treated as a sub-discipline of archaeology. In recent years this is starting to change, led mainly by independent researchers and private collectors, who have shown much enthusiasm and been very active in this space.

China has a long history; its territory is vast and its cultures are diverse. The glory and achievements of the Chinese civilization are inseparable from the multifarious and multi-layered cultural exchanges – including exchanges between China and other countries, between different cultures and groups within China, as well as inter-regional exchanges – that have occurred in its history. Regarding exchanges within the “martial” domain, I think we should consider the following three aspects:

First, exchanges in weaponry. Weapons constitute a unique medium for cultural exchange, which encompass such diverse aspects as form, manufacture, raw materials, considerations of geography, climate, and tactical use, as well as cultural (and religious) concepts which confer unique symbolic significance upon them. Consequently, weapons often carry ethnic, religious and geographic characteristics. Of course, in the end such features are subservient to weapons’ combat properties and are expressed in qualitative terms in relation to arms manufacture and practical use. It is precisely for this reason that weapons exchange has always occupied a prominent role in the history of human exchange, and played a fundamental role in promoting social and technological development.

Second, martial arts exchange. Tools and the skills involved in their use are closely related. Confucius’ famous dictum, “in order to master a skill, first you must hone your tools”, vividly captures the profound connection between the two. Exchange in weapons is in essence a form of martial arts exchange, which inevitably leads to change, bringing about cultural fusion or transformation, and at times resulting in distortion. However, such diverse outcomes are all within reason as exchange cannot occur without change. Due to the inherent difficulties in preserving techniques and skills, this is perhaps the most difficult part of our research. With the passage of time and changes in tools, certain skills attendant on their use inevitably became distorted or vanished altogether, while the remaining vestige was often nothing more than dots on a leopard. In the same breath, this is also the most interesting and appealing part in historical arms and martial arts research, as the very challenge of discovering the true form of historical martial arts as well as the magical space for imagination therein, is what excites and holds us spellbound.

Third, literature. Conceptually speaking this is a vast framework that includes all textual and figurative information, including historical objects and archaeological finds that contain inscriptions or visual representations. Literary resources are particularly rich in China where a significant number of martial arts manuals, in both printed and manuscript forms, have been preserved. Until now insufficient work has been done on collecting, arranging and studying historical texts, and it would not be wrong to say we are still at the beginning of this process. In truth, many martial arts texts have been preserved not only in China, but also elsewhere, particularly in the European countries. There is a need to study such texts in a systematic manner, which will facilitate cross-cultural comparative studies in historical arms and martial arts. I have some familiarity with historical martial arts manuals and other kinds of literature in China, and have dedicated myself to their study. I also have some familiarity with the literature of China’s neighbouring countries, such as Japan, Korea and Vietnam. However, I had virtually no exposure to European sources until Mr. Hing Chao’s recent introduction, which made me aware that in the academic domain of Sino-international relations, there is a virgin territory with precious cultural gems waiting for us to explore and excavate!

In closing, I wish success to the Third International Martial Studies Conference. I will provide a research paper on sword culture during the Han and Wei dynasties in China, which I invite my peers to critique after it has been translated into English.

Ma Mingda



# TIMETABLE

## 11-DEC-2020

HK Time Italy Time  
14:00 07:00 Opening Remarks  
by Hing Chao

### 01 KEYNOTES

Moderator: Hing Chao

HK Time Italy Time  
14:10 07:10 Ma Mingda  
Mandarin (English Translation)  
A Call to Advance International  
Exchange in the Study of Historical  
Arms, Martial Arts and Martial Arts  
Literature

14:40 07:40 Ausilio Priuli  
Italian (English Translation)  
Tracks of Warrior Culture on the  
Petroglyphs in Val Camonica

15:10 08:10 Roberto Gotti  
English  
The Treatise Behind the Treatises

HK Time Italy Time  
15:40 08:40 Break

### 02 HISTORIC PERSPECTIVES ON MARTIAL CULTURE IN ITALY

Moderator: Daniel Jaquet

HK Time Italy Time  
15:55 08:55 Enrico Valseriati  
English  
Military Culture of Brescia in the  
Venetian Era

16:15 09:15 Cristiano Brandolini  
Italian (English Translation)  
Longobard Warriors in the Seprio  
Judicaria

16:35 09:35 Marco Lena /  
Moreno Dei Ricci  
Italian (English Translation)  
Stratification, Amalgamation and  
Sedimentation of European Martial  
Arts: the Case of Brescia

HK Time Italy Time  
16:55 09:55 Break

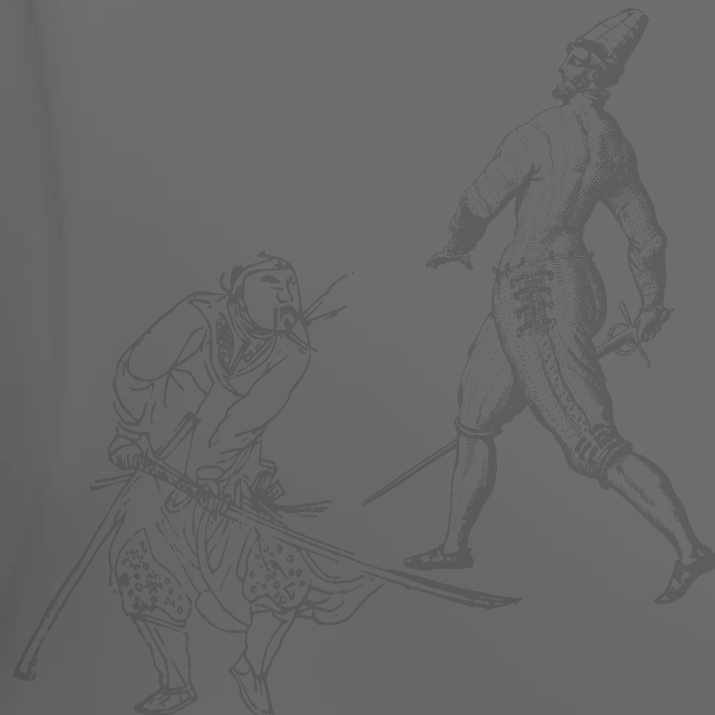
### 02 ITALIAN SWORD TRADITION : SWORD & SWORDSMANSHIP

Moderator: Hing Chao

HK Time Italy Time  
17:10 10:10 Gabriele Tonelli  
English  
Archaeometallurgical Investigation  
into the Ancient Sword-making  
Techniques in Northern Italy in the 16th  
and 17th Centuries

17:30 10:30 Jacopo Penso  
English  
Masters through the Ages:  
Interpretation of a Renaissance  
Martial System and Foundation of a  
Modern School

HK Time Italy Time  
17:50 10:50 Discussion  
Dr. Daniel Jaquet



# TIMETABLE

## 12-DEC-2020

### 03 MATERIAL CULTURE: WEAPONS, TECHNOLOGY, & AESTHETICS

Moderator: Hing Chao

HK Time Italy Time  
14:00 07:00 Gong Jian  
Mandarin (English Translation)  
The Yueya Guard on Chinese Swords  
and Sabres

14:20 07:20 Ma Yuwei  
Mandarin (English Translation)  
Antique Arms Collection & Reconstruction  
of Classical Martial Arts

14:40 07:40 Betty Lo  
English  
Sword Aesthetics : the Decoration  
Techniques on Edged Weapons

HK Time Italy Time  
15:00 08:00 Break

### 04 CHINESE SWORD TRADITION: SWORD & SWORDSMANSHIP

Moderator: Daniel Jaquet

HK Time Italy Time  
15:15 08:15 Hu Xiaojun  
Mandarin (English Translation)  
Rediscovering Swordmaking  
Techniques of Ancient China: Insights  
from Reconstructing a Han dynasty  
Ring-pommel Dao

15:35 08:35 Ma Lianzhen  
Mandarin (English Translation)  
Duanbing and the History of Fencing  
in China

HK Time Italy Time  
15:55 08:55 Break

### 05 FIGHT BOOKS: THE TRANSMISSION AND INTERPRETATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Moderator: Hing Chao

HK Time Italy Time  
16:10 09:10 Daniel Jaquet  
English  
Martial Arts Knowledge on and beyond the  
Page: from Visual Mantras to Hyperrealism  
with Words and Brushes

16:30 09:30 Manuel Valle Ortiz  
English  
The Ferrara manuscript, Destreza and Vulgar

Moderator: Daniel Jaquet

HK Time Italy Time  
16:50 09:50 Hing Chao  
English  
Towards a 3D Digital Methodology for  
Documenting and Transmitting Historical  
Martial Arts

17:10 10:10 Jeffrey Shaw /  
Sarah Kenderdine  
English  
New Media Art, Digital Performativity  
and Intangible Cultural Heritage

HK Time Italy Time  
17:30 10:30 Break

HK Time Italy Time  
17:45 10:45 Round Table  
Discussion -  
Hing Chao (moderator),  
Roberto Gotti, Daniel Jaquet,  
Ma Lianzhen, Ausilio Priuli,  
Jeffrey Shaw

18:30 11:30 Concluding Remarks

# MA MINGDA

## Jinan University, China

**TITLE** | A Call to Advance International Exchange in the Study of Historical Arms, Martial Arts and Martial Arts Literature

### ABSTRACT

Chinese scholars have long noticed the influence of conflictual exchange in human history, where the material and intangible aspects of military culture have played a prominent role. In this paper, he considers the three main aspects of exchanges in China's martial culture, namely exchanges in weaponry, martial arts, and written texts.

In the first place, weapons constitute a unique medium for cultural exchange, encompassing such diverse aspects as form, manufacture, raw materials, considerations of geography, climate, and tactical use, while also embodying important cultural and religious concepts. Weapons thus carry ethnic, religious and geographic characteristics, and have played a fundamental role in promoting social and technological development. The second aspect is martial arts exchange. As a form of intangible culture, the research and reconstruction of historical martial arts poses significant challenges, as they are most susceptible to change, while changes in material culture (i.e., the form and dimensions of weapons) also have an inevitable impact on the techniques of their use. Finally, the third aspect – literature – is what ties the material and intangible aspects of historical martial culture together. Books and treatises are the most direct record of past knowledge systems, while the study of historical texts provide the foundation for reconstructing martial cultures from the past. However, interpretation of historical texts is not straightforward, while comparative studies of historic martial arts manuals across different cultures is still in infancy. Focusing on the role of exchange in the development of martial culture, this paper is also a call for action for greater international exchanges and research partnerships between scholars in Asia and Europe.

### BIOGRAPHY

Ma Mingda, renowned historian and the most important inheritor of Ma's Tongbei system. He is a former professor of history and PhD supervisor at Jinan University in Guangzhou, visiting professor at School of Physical Education & Sports Science, South China Normal University, visiting professor of history at Northwestern Nationalities University, and the president of Guangdong Chinese Martial Arts Research Society. He is also the founder and honorary president of International Guoshu Association, and the founder of International Martial Studies Conference. His research focus is China's cultural history, China's ethno-history, history of Sino-international relations, as well as the history of the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. Among the books he has authored or edited are *Encyclopaedia of Chinese Martial Arts*, *Encyclopaedia of China's Hui Nationality*, *Guanghe County Gazette*, and *Compendium of the Hui Nationality's Legal Codes (Zhongguo Huizu Lifa Jicong)*.

# AUSILIO PRIULI

## Museo Didattico D'Arte e Vita Preistorica, Italy

**TITLE** | Tracks of Warrior Culture on the Petroglyphs in Val Camonica

### ABSTRACT

The rock art of the ancient prehistoric and protohistoric Camuni, of the Camonica Valley in the Province of Brescia, in the heart of the Alps, is a ritual language that evokes and actualizes the presence of mythical heroes and warriors who played an important role in the community, and whose deeds remained, for millennia, in the historical memory and myths of the people of Valley.

On special ritual occasions throughout the millennia, the prehistoric priest-artists had been engraving thousands of warrior figures, many armed with swords and shields and in multiple movements of combat, in the great alpine sanctuary. The engraved figures show the strength, courage, prestige and importance of weapons: the status symbol of the warriors class after the advent of metallurgy in the fourth millennium B.C.

To represent the weapons, daggers, spears, axes, bows and arrows, swords and shields was to exalt the prestige of the deceased warriors who had possessed and used them. At the same time, the act of representation replaced with the real object with the image, as the weapon owned by the warrior was ritually deposited in votive cabinets, and in bogs or streams elsewhere.

Representing armed warriors, warriors in combat, in parade with the ostentation of weapons, was a way to honour and accompany them in the after world, and to commemorate and revive the spirits of the deceased heroes so that they could infuse strength and courage to those who evoked them.

### BIOGRAPHY

Ausilio Priuli is an archaeologist, an ethnologist, a cultural anthropologist, a cultural and archaeological tourism entrepreneur. He graduated at the University of Milan with a research thesis on prehistoric art. He is the author of over 300 scientific, educational and scientific publications and about fifty monographic works, including the work in 3 volumes on all prehistoric art and tradition in Italy and the Alpine world (*Prehistoric and traditional figurative culture in Italy*, Giotto printer ed., 1991). In 2014 he won the literary prize of Tolmezzo and in 2015 was the first reported for the Premio Mario Rigoni Stern with the work: *Signs as words, lost language*, (ed.) He organizes and manages regular training courses for cultural activists to spread environmental and cultural heritage knowledge within the region.



# ROBERTO GOTTI

## Museo delle Arti Marziali, Italy

**TITLE** | The Treatise behind the Treatises

### ABSTRACT

Italian culture is loved in the world in many of its aspects, but little known from the point of view of martial arts that it has been developing over the millennia. The culture of arms and men-at-arms was the one that forged the most important eras of Italian history – just think of the Renaissance or the Roman empire. The art of Mars is the art of transforming the body into the perfect tool of life: for survival, elevation, increased perception of ourselves, even more than an instrument of death and conquest. Starting from the words of the ancient masters and the physical experience, the author recovers and shares the fundamental principles of Italian martial arts that can create the man – the dynamic sphere with the circumference anywhere and the centre nowhere. The text presents the hypothesis of a third stage of the Vitruvian man. The natural man inscribed in the square with centre in the reproductive organ gives way to the speculative man inscribed in the circle with centre in the navel, and finally evolves into the perfect man, the one inscribed in the sphere with centre in the solar plexus.

### BIOGRAPHY

Roberto Gotti is a master swordsman, collector of antique fight books and weapons, founder of Gairethnix, Sala d'Arme degli Erranti, member of the working group on historical fencing of the Italian Fencing Federation. He has published articles and books on historic weapons and martial arts, and is a long-serving guest instructor in national and international HEMA events. In 2016 he won the first Italian two-handed sword championship, followed by his students in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. He founded Gairethnix, Sala d'Arme degli Erranti, which is the first centre of its kind in Europe dedicated to the daily practice of both Olympic fencing and HEMA, which also serves as a museum showcasing over two thousand objects, from historic printed treatises and manuscripts to swords, polearms and other objects related to the western art of the sword. In 2019 he promoted and realized the inclusion of HEMA as guest combat sport event in the cultural programme of the European Games organized by the European Olympic Committee.

# ENRICO VALSERIATI

## Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico, Italy

**TITLE** | Military Culture of Brescia in the Venetian Era

### ABSTRACT

Towards the end of the 15th century, Brescia became one of Europe's 20 most populous cities and one of the largest manufacturing centres. Even the arts and culture more generally experienced a period of evolution. Knives, swords, shields and especially armour came out of the forges and workshops of Brescia during the early modern period. However, it is important to remember that so did many materials for construction and farm work, products that were less vulnerable to economic decline than the weapons industry. Venice, in turn, imposed regulations on the trade flow of arms and armour from Brescia right from the beginning. This was achieved through a specific structured system of fiscal controls. The technical abilities of the Brescian masters were renowned beyond the borders of Brescia and the Republic of Venice, to the extent that they were in demand in several urban settings in Italy and throughout Europe. Outside demand for the professionalism and products of Brescia – which closely corresponded with the needs of war – had to contend with demand from the internal market. Venice was the preferred market for Brescia's arms and armour, in fact and in law, but the nobility and local militias also required large quantities of armour, blades and firearms. To merchants and buyers at home and abroad, the added value of Brescia's arms and armour production lay not just in the raw materials but also in the skills of the city's masters. In the workshops inside the city walls, they hand-finished - including decorating them - semi-finished weapons or those that had already been fully manufactured in the valleys.

### BIOGRAPHY

Enrico Valseriati is a PhD in History and Anthropology (Early Modern History). He is currently a 3-year research fellow at the Italian-German Historical Institute in Trento, in conjunction with the new collaborative European project *Public Renaissance: Urban Cultures of Public Space between Early Modern Europe and the Present* (PURE) funded by Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA), 2019-2021. His main research interests are: Republic of Venice; Italian Renaissance; Early Modern History; History Didactics; Humanism and Philology.

# CRISTIANO BRANDOLINI

Civic Archaeological Museum of  
 Arsago Seprio, Italy

**TITLE** | Longobard Warriors in the Seprio Judicaria

## ABSTRACT

The Seprio is an ancient territory with a millenary history in which we find five important Longobard centres: Sibrium, (Castelseprio), Pagus Artiaco (Arsago Seprio), Castrum Novate (Castelnovate) and, further north, Stabulum (today, Stabio in the Swiss Canton of Ticino) and Campiliorum (today, Campione d'Italia, an Italian exclave in Switzerland), where the noble family of Toton, Lombard landowners and merchants, resided. The elements present in the grave goods not only of the Seprio, but of all the Italian necropolises, have allowed us to understand that the Longobard warrior held a shield, brandished a *spatha* (sword), carried with him a scramasax (short weapon to a single cut), a spear, and in some cases even an axe or bow and arrows.

The most important warriors were equipped with mail or lamellar armour and helmet. From the type of harnesses (belt elements, personal objects, pottery, golden crosses, etc.) it is possible to trace the degree of nobility of the owner, in the same way also the weapons and the shield, more or less refined, indicated the social position of the warrior who wore them. The *spatha* and the scramasax were almost a "status symbol" of the Longobard warrior; they brought to the fore and underlined the status of nobility and free man. The *spathe* began to appear in warrior graves of from the beginning of the sixth century. They are long weapons, able to cut from both sides, and it is hypothesized that they were used mainly on horseback, to strike the enemy with the cutting edge rather than the point. The presence of belt strapping seals is also considerable inside the kits. The belts were a typical and widespread element of Longobard armament and clothing. Different types have been documented which could be worn simultaneously: one to fix the tunic, and another more elaborate military one to support the *spatha* and the scramasax. The Seprio has always played a leading role in the geo-political events that have affected the ancient Insubria in all its historical phases. In the last fifty years much of the Arimannia of the Seprio has been unearthed and studied, but much still lies buried which scientific research is only slowly bringing to the surface.

## BIOGRAPHY

Cristiano Brandolini graduated from the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan and attended the Institute of Archaeology of the State University of Milan. He has been a professional archaeologist for almost twenty years, dealing with excavation, research, study, reconstruction and museum installations. He is a collaborator of the Archaeological Superintendency of Lombardy, and also collaborates with various archaeological museums, including the Civic Museums of Villa Mirabello in Varese, the Archaeological Museum of Arsago Seprio, the Archaeological Museum of Sesto Calende and the Civic Archaeological Museum "P. Giovio" of Como. He has numerous conferences and publications to his credit. He is the founder and president of the Insubria Antiqua Association, which deals with historical reconstruction, didactic dissemination, as well as medieval fencing and historical archery. He holds the role of Authenticity Officer in The Vikings, an English society of historical reconstruction from the early medieval period. He has the qualification of 2nd level National Technician in fencing and historical archery.

# MORENO DEI RICCI AND MARCO LENA

Opera Nova, Italy

**TITLE** | Stratification, Amalgamation and Sedimentation of European Martial Arts: the Case of Brescia

## ABSTRACT

Brescia is a city among many others in Europe, but it is a shining example of the evolution and stratification of martial arts which have been strongly present in all its eras: from the prehistoric warrior armed with sticks to the Iron Age in which appeared the first metal weapons, which subsequently evolved thanks to the contributions of the Celtic and Etruscan civilizations. These later clashed with the Latin civilization of Rome, a completely militarized society that at the end of its imperial period gave way to the Germanic peoples arriving in Italy, with whom they ultimately fused into one. Together they gave birth to a long period called the Middle Ages, from which a continuous evolution brought the country to the Renaissance.

In every single period, martial arts had been the foundation for each of these cultures. A common thread connects the figure of the warrior through time and space, as encapsulated in the sedimentation and evolution of martial arts, which experienced its maximum splendour in the Renaissance period, spreading to all social strata and rising to a complex and refined practice that saw its sunset only with the advent of firearms.

Brescia was overwhelmed by all this, while always distinguishing itself with excellence in the martial arts, whose glory resonates even today.

## BIOGRAPHY

Moreno dei Ricci is a student of the Maestro Roberto Gotti and instructor of Historical Fencing (FIS) at OPERA NOVA school of martial arts. In his sporting career he has collected 8 gold and 4 silver medals in national and international tournaments. He specializes mainly on the Italian Renaissance two-handed sword and polearms. He took part in several seminars of Historical Martial Arts at international level as an instructor or assistant to Maestro Gotti. Passionate about medieval and Renaissance military history, he directs a blog called "Il mestiere dell'Armi", which has as its main purpose the study and the divulgation of the feats of arms. He collaborates by writing in-depth articles for the first Italian historical divulgation website "Historica". He constantly collaborates with the MAM of Brescia (the Martial Art Museum) where he supports the hoplological studies of the finds and the studies of documents.

Marco Lena, who has always been passionate about history and military strategy, graduated from the Faculty of Letters of the University of Parma. A professional journalist since 2010, he still marvels at the discoveries that narrate the oblique ties between man and his past. He has been studying historical fencing since 2015, and lives in Cremona, the city of Claudio Monteverdi.



# : GABRIELE TONELLI

University of Brescia, Italy

**TITLE** | Archaeometallurgical Investigation into the Ancient Sword-making Techniques in Northern Italy in the 16th and 17th Centuries

## ABSTRACT

The history of Brescia (Latin Brixia), a city in Northern Italy, is characterized by a long tradition of manufacturing, in particular the crafting of steel weapons and armour. This was made possible thanks to the availability of iron ore, the wide forests from which to obtain the charcoal and the numerous torrents utilized as driving force for the power hammers and forges, but mostly thanks to the capability of the people.

Since before the age of the Romans, the skills of the ancient masters and artisans had been developing for centuries, to the extent that Brescia and surroundings ended up being one of the most significant weapon manufacturers in Europe between the 16th and 18th centuries.

In this paper the author presents an overview of the weapon manufacturing district of North Italy, in particular, Brescia. Moreover, thanks to a metallurgical study performed on an authentic northern Italian “storta” sword dated in the early 17th century, he will discuss the sword-making technologies adopted by the ancient swordsmiths, in order to discover the secrets of the high quality of Italian edged weapons.

## BIOGRAPHY

Gabriele Tonelli is a material engineer, currently working as laboratory technician in the field of metallurgy and failure analysis. In addition to the passion for his job, he is interested in industrial archaeology of his homeland. Since 2015, he has collaborated with the University of Brescia to research and study the technological aspects of the ancient weapons manufactured in Italy, applying the modern analysis techniques to the original objects.

# : JACOPO PENSO

Opera Nova and Museo delle Arti Marziali, Italy

**TITLE** | Masters through the Ages: Interpretation of a Renaissance Martial System and Foundation of a Modern School

## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to describe and share the experience of the reconstruction of a 500 year-old martial art, from the study of the material sources, mainly treatises and weapons of the time, to the understanding and practice of motions and embodied concepts. The target of this research has been the reconstruction of the Italian renaissance “*Arte delle Armi*” (literally “art of weapons”) led by Master Roberto Gotti, long-time practitioner and teacher, as well as collector of historical treatises and weapons and technical commissioner for the historical fencing with the national fencing federation.

The approaches, methods and praxis will be analysed, exploring the hard and delicate process of reconstructing a martial system from written words. Among the various authors and different disciplines, this paper will focus particularly on the use of the two-handed sword in the lessons of the master Achille Marozzo from Bologna, Italy, who published his treatise in 1536. Marozzo is one of the few European authors who offers long and complex sequences of fixed motions and techniques, usually referred as “free forms” or “solo forms” as didactical and training tools. The perspective of the article is a personal narration, in the author’s capacity as a student of M° Gotti.

## BIOGRAPHY

Jacopo Penso graduated in Psychology, holds a PhD in Neuroscience, and recently specialized in Sports Psychology. He started the study of European martial arts in 2006 and from 2015 focused on Italian Renaissance martial arts after becoming a student of Roberto Gotti. He is a martial arts teacher at Opera Nova School, with the title of Master of Historical Fencing given by the Italian Fencing Federation (FIS). As instructor he participated in several national and international events and official demonstrations, teaching or assisting M° Roberto Gotti. As athlete he took part in Italian championships and international HEMA competitions, achieving notable results particularly in the two-handed sword discipline.



# ⋮ GONG JIAN

## collector and independent researcher

**TITLE** | The Yueya Guard on Chinese Swords and Sabres

### ABSTRACT

Iron and steel arms appeared in China during the late Warring States period, while sword guards of Han dynasty *jian* (double edged sword) was a continuation of Warring States designs. The single-edged ring-pommel sword (*huanshou dao*) which also appeared during the Han did not have a guard. During the Jin period a type of V-shape sword guard appeared, which continued into the Southern and Northern dynasties. In the Tang dynasty, on the one hand arms design continued trends from the Northern Zhou and Sui periods, while it also absorbed Turkic and Sassanid influences from the west, giving rise to a unique aesthetic for Tang dynasty swords. From then on V-shape guards started to gain popularity in China. Indeed, the gradual development of this guard style had a major impact on sword guards during the Song dynasty, as well as among the Mongols and Tibetans, until it finally attained the familiar form of Yazi guard during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

### BIOGRAPHY

Gong Jian, from Chengdu, is a researcher and collector of Tibetan arms and armour, and also works as a Tibetan art consultant for multiple auction houses. Since 2000, he has been collecting ancient Tibetan arms and armour (including swords, spear, armour and matchlock, etc.) during his frequent trips to Tibetan areas. After more than a decade of painstaking efforts, he has formulated a research direction and the first comprehensive theoretical framework for the study of historical Tibet arms. Based on this, he is now writing the following books: 《藏武備考》 *Zang wubei kao (Examination of Tibetan Martial Culture)*, 《中國刀劍史》 (暫定) *Zhongguo daojian shi (preliminary title, History of Chinese Swords)*, and 《中國甲冑》 *Zhongguo jiazhou (Chinese Armour)*.

In 2011, he and his business partner founded Xishan Cultural Development Company and started a research project on traditional metalworking techniques. They successfully replicated ancient swords using traditional methods, while some of their works have been collected by Tibet Culture museums and the China Tibetology Research Centre.

As an independent researcher, he has been invited to many international academic Tibetology conferences. In Beijing 2012 International Tibetology Seminar, he delivered the lecture of "Analysis on Han-Tibet Relationship via Tibetan Cold Weapons." He serves as secretary general of the Sword Collection Association of Sichuan Province, a board member of Sword Collection Association of Shanxi and Hebei Provinces, and a member of Zhejiang Bronze Weapons Culture Research Expert Committee.

# ⋮ MA YUWEI

## Yichan Daoguan, China

**TITLE** | Antique Arms Collection & Reconstruction of Classical Martial Arts

### ABSTRACT

The process of collecting and researching antique arms has led to the discovery that across different periods, weapons' shapes and dimensions often varied considerably, which in turn gave rise to the development of different techniques.

Double-edged swords (*jian*) of the pre-Qin period were mainly bronze weapons. However, as bronze swords lack the strength and flexibility of iron and steel blades, such swords tended to break under stress. Therefore, bronze *jian* had their own specific methods of use. On the other hand, *jian* of the Song, Liao and Jin periods were large and heavy, and were unsuitable for thrusting. In addition, a significant number of *jian* from this period had rounded tips, which further reduced their thrusting function. At the same time, a number of contemporary *jian* blades exhibit *dao*-like curves which suggests they were specifically designed for cutting. These changes also reflect the fact that armour of this period covered the entire body, which limited the effectiveness of a sword mainly designed for thrusting, and encouraged its development into a cutting weapon. In the Ming and Qing periods the rise of firearms reduced the need for heavy armour, while ancient fencing methods found their way back to the battlefield. In the period from the Ming dynasty through to the Republic of China, arms and martial arts went through significant changes, which greatly enriched Chinese martial culture. This provides a fertile field for further investigation.

In summary, the collection and study of antique arms is an important heuristic tool for understanding and ultimately reconstructing classical martial arts. From this point of view, an integrated approach that combines martial arts studies and historic arms research ought to receive greater attention.

### BIOGRAPHY

Ma Yuwei is the founder of *Zhanhun*, China's first historical armed combat championship, and the founder and director of the martial arts institute Chan Wudaoguan (Zen Budokan). Starting at a young age he received martial arts training under his father, and has won multiple *sanda* and *jinji tuishou* (Taiji pushing hands) tournaments. In 2017, he organised and served as a judge for the fight between the MMA fighter Xu Xiaodong and traditional martial artist Lei Lei. This experience led him to the realisation that armed combat lies at the foundation of China's historical martial arts, and prompted him to begin collecting antique Chinese arms. He advocates research in historical weapons as an important part of developing armed combat as a modern sport. He also plans to build a museum dedicated to China's historical martial arts.

## : BETTY LO

Mengdiexuan, Hong Kong

**TITLE** | Sword Aesthetics: the Decoration Techniques on Edged Weapons**ABSTRACT**

One important aspect in the study and appreciation of arms is the techniques and methods for their decoration. The wide range of materials and techniques used in the creation of swords and daggers were intended to add to the aesthetic qualities of functional items, either for daily or ceremonial use. Throughout the ages in different cultures, beautiful swords and daggers were worn by royal personages and were awarded to warriors and courtiers as gifts to symbolize victory, virility and chivalry. They are worn by men as jewellery of prestige and status.

Techniques used by artisan to embellish these swords and bladed weapons commissioned by their masters will be discussed in this paper. Examples from museums and private collections will be selected to demonstrate the exquisite craftsmanship on gilding and colouring, inlay and damascening, stone and gem-setting, embossing, chasing and engraving, enamelling, 3-D carving, wiring and filigree, patterned welding, etching and openwork.

Decorated antique swords and daggers of Eastern origins from the Ottoman empire, Persia, and India will be the primary targets of study.

**BIOGRAPHY**

A collector of Chinese art for over 30 years, together with her husband Kenneth Chu, they have jointly assembled the Mengdiexuan Collection of Chinese antiquities, which comprises of scholar's objects, metalwork and, most significantly, ancient Chinese gold and personal ornaments. In 2010, Betty donated 70 sets of Liao textiles from the Mengdiexuan Collection to the Chinese National Silk Museum in Hangzhou to support the museum's research in this specific area. In 2014, she donated a collection of Liao ceramics to the Art Museum of Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Through staging symposiums and major exhibitions of ancient Chinese ornaments from the Mengdiexuan Collection, Betty has been instrumental in promoting academic exchange among international scholars. Such exhibitions include "Adornment for the Body and Soul" in Hong Kong and Taiwan (1999-2000); "Noble Riders from Pines and Desert - the artistic legacy of the Qidan" at the Chinese University Art Museum (2004); "Adornment of the Noble Riders - personal ornament of the Liao Dynasty" in Hangzhou (2010); as well as the exhibitions "Radiant Legacy - ancient Chinese gold from the Mengdiexuan Collection" and "Jewels of Transcendence" at the Chinese University Art Museum (2013 and 2018)

Betty is a member on the Advisory Board of the Chinese University Art Museum. She is the Chair of the Collection Committee of Hong Kong Maritime Museum.

## : HU XIAOJUN

swordsmith, Longquan Jiancun  
Sword Research Academy, China**TITLE** | Rediscovering the Sword-making Techniques of Ancient China:  
Insights from Reconstructing a Han dynasty Ring-pommel *Dao***ABSTRACT**

Sunzi said, "Military affairs are important matters of the state. [They determine] the place of life and death [and] the path of survival or extermination. [They] must not be ignored." In like manner *Zuozhuan* states that "the most important matters of the state are rituals and warfare." From this we may see that beside attending to such ritual matters as ancestor worship and maintaining the temples, rulers in ancient China considered warfare and the training of arms to be paramount. Consequently, much attention was paid to sacrificial implements and weapons of war. For any state or group, military preparedness is essential to survival. The production and maintenance of arms is an integral part of this effort as it impacts state security as a whole. The study of ancient arms therefore tells us not only about weaponry and combat, but yields unique insights into the technology and organization of war. As such it is a worthy subject of study. The principal short-range weapons during the Han Dynasty were *jian* (double-edged sword) and *dao* (single-edged sword), which were mainly used for cutting and thrusting in close-quarter combat. One of the most important changes in short-range weapons during the Han is the gradual replacement of *jian* by *dao*, which became the principal military sidearm in Han dynasty armies, as a consequence of the rise of the cavalry. This paper contains four parts: Han dynasty arms and sword culture; forging techniques and arms manufacture during the Han dynasty; reconstruction of the vertical furnace for forging iron; and the process of making a ring-pommel sword according to Han dynasty methods.

**BIOGRAPHY**

Hu Xiaojun, by the literary name of Yifu, is also known as Jiancun. Influenced by Chinese sword culture since a young age, he has travelled extensively, visiting well-known sites and seeking out experts, in order to further his research and knowledge. In 2009 he founded Longquan Jiancun Sword Research Academy, and dedicated himself to transmitting sword culture and making handcrafted swords. Jiancun is dedicated to the way of the sword. In recognition of this, he has been awarded several national level prizes, such as China Arts and Crafts Golden Prize, and China Films Props and Equipment Golden Prize. In addition, he has collaborated with research and academic institutions such as Beijing Technology University and International Guoshu Association, to study and reconstruct blades from the antiquity.



# MA LIANZHEN

## South China Normal University, China

**TITLE** | *Duanbing* and the History of Fencing in China

### ABSTRACT

“*Duanbing*” was used to describe a category of weapons in ancient China, which over time came to encompass all short-range weapons including single and double-edged sword, mace, iron whip, and short spears. During the Republic of China, *duanbing* became the name for Chinese fencing under the Guoshu system. This paper begins with a historic overview of Chinese sword culture. The discussion draws attention to changes in the design, material, and functional aspects of the sword, the disciplines of *xiangjian* (sword appreciation) and *xiangji* (fencing), as well as other dimensions of sword culture including the philosophy of *jiandao* (Way of the Sword) and *wujian* (sword dance). The discussion then focuses on the development of fencing in China by tracing literary records from the Western Zhou to the Qing Dynasty. This part pays attention to the rise of swordsmen as a separate social class, who played an important role in transmitting fencing techniques and sword culture and, more importantly, the transforming form and social function of fencing in Chinese society, which was shaped in turn by the various functions it fulfilled for military training, moral education, and entertainment, and by the changing social environment over the course of Chinese history. The paper also includes a review of the development of *duanbing* as a modern sport.

### BIOGRAPHY

Ma Lianzhen is one of the main teachers and inheritors of Ma's Tongbei Martial Studies. He is a professor at the School of Physical Education and Sports Science, South China Normal University.

He is also a Master's degree supervisor, the convenor of Masters' supervisors for Traditional Sports programmes and the deputy supervisor for the Faculty of Sports Training. At the same time, he is the President of International Guoshu Association, the President of Gansu Province Ma's Tongbei Martial Studies, the chief editor of the academic journal *Wuxue (Martial Studies)* and the director of Jiangong Academy. He is also a leader in the development and teaching of such sporting disciplines as traditional Chinese martial arts, Chinese archery, *duanbing*, etc. He advocates an integration of “teaching and education, research and development, and industry”, and emphasizes the need to align theory and practice.

# DANIEL JAQUET

## University of Bern, Switzerland

**TITLE** | Martial Arts Knowledge on and beyond the Page: from Visual Mantras to Hyperrealism with Words and Brushes

### ABSTRACT

Martial arts are cultural phenomena shaped by the society in which they develop. They were – and still are – transmitted through interpersonal exchanges, from body to body. Martial arts experts use speech for devising these martial skills into complex system of bodily knowledge. Once the systems are complex or vast enough to be verbalised, they are transmitted through bodies and speech with mnemotechnical texts such as poems, codified knowledge canons or a constellation of technical words associated with metaphors or images. Some of these mantras (mnemonic devices) found their way into writing or depiction. This process is a transliteration from speech to the page, or to a depiction. The written word or the depiction of bodies fighting on a wall, a painted canvas or embedded into a sculpture challenged time and survived the masters who invented them. However, in most cases those who wrote the words, painted the images, or sculpted the stone were not the martial experts themselves. The documents, depictions and sculptures preserved for the study of martial arts culture of the past have to be explored while taking into account the perspective of those who created them. Based on previous research on circulation of knowledge in the corpus of European fight books, this contribution allows for a new categorisation of martial arts knowledge, on and beyond the page, with a focus on early modern fight books.

### BIOGRAPHY

Daniel Jaquet is a medievalist, with a background in literary studies and interest in the history of science and the material culture in the early modern period. He received his PhD in history at the University of Geneva in 2013. He taught at the University of Geneva and Lausanne (2008-2015). He was a visiting scholar at Max Planck Institute for History of Science (Berlin, 2015-2016), and an associate researcher at the Renaissance Centre of the University of Tours (2016-2017). His teaching and research specialisations are the history of warfare, duelling, martial practices and knowledge transmission in pragmatical literature at the end of the Middle Age and the beginning of the Renaissance. He is currently the coordinator of the research project “Martial Culture in Medieval Towns” (Swiss National Science Foundation, 2018-2022) and the head of research and public engagement at the Military Museum of the Castle of Morges.



# MANUEL VALLE ORTIZ

Universidade Santiago de Compostela, Spain

**TITLE** | The Ferrara manuscript, Destreza and Vulgar

## ABSTRACT

The Destreza is a fairly well-known fencing system, primarily as it has left behind a large amount of printed texts and manuscripts. Another fencing system present in Hispanic countries alongside the Destreza is the common or vulgar Destrezas. However, very little is known about this system(s) apart from certain works such as Godinho. Most of the actual knowledge of the Vulgar Destreza comes from the Verdadera Destreza texts, which include instructions on how to counteract the Vulgar techniques.

There are not many of these, but until recently one of them was only glimpsed through the vanished traces taken from an old book. This is the manuscript of Octavio Ferrara, a Destreza fencing master born in Saragossa who was active in Madrid in the middle of the 17th century, where he wrote a treatise for one of his disciples who was a Austrian nobleman. This manuscript has remained hidden for many years but now we can finally review its contents, where apart from an introduction to the general concepts of Destreza, there are ample descriptions on a large variety of Vulgar techniques, as well as the way to counteract them, including very detailed drawings that illustrate these techniques. We can safely say that this work is fundamental to understanding the Verdadera/Vulgar Destreza relationship.

## BIOGRAPHY

Born in Cantabria, Manuel Valle Ortiz is a professional surgeon and vocational fencer. He has spent over two decades researching the sources of Iberian fencing traditions in libraries and private collections across the world. He founded *AGEA Editora* to publish these investigations, and has gathered around him a team of practitioners and researchers. He chairs its editorial board, overseeing with an iron fist in a velvet glove the good progress of its various projects. He has edited multiple important historical treatises of *Verdadeira Destreza*, both in Spanish and in Portuguese. He is also the author of the exhaustive bibliography *Nueva Bibliografía de la Antigua Esgrima*, an unprecedented work since Leguina.

Manuel has spoken at multiple conferences in Europe (Galicia, France, Spain, Scotland) and America for various organizations (AGEA, AEEA, FEEH, HEMAC, WMAW, among others). He is an active member of the international HEMA community, being a reference in the field of literature. A member of Gallaecia in Armis, he is also a fellow of the Historical European Martial Arts Coalition and is an honorary member of the Federación Española de Esgrima Histórica.

# HING CHAO

International Guoshu Association, Hong Kong

**TITLE** | Towards a 3D Digital Methodology for Documenting and Transmitting Historical Martial Arts

## ABSTRACT

Combat has existed since prehistoric times while the transmission of martial arts has been continuous since the first attempts were made to pass down the knowledge of attack and defence. For the longer part of human history, such transmission has been oral in kind and, indeed, remains the dominant form of preservation and instruction even today. In some societies, documentary records of martial arts and their related culture appeared at an early stage. However, it was not until the development and popularization of printing that martial arts writing started to appear in significant volume. In the 21st century, the development of digital technology, in particular motion capture, has dramatically transformed the way in which martial arts may be recorded, annotated, and studied, while the importance of developing a cohesive 3D documentary methodology comes into sharp relief, as the transmission of many traditional martial arts school becomes increasingly difficult.

Speaking from personal experience as co-founder and project leader of “Hong Kong Martial Arts Living Archive”, the author shares his view on the methodology he and his team have been developing towards a comprehensive digital strategy for documenting, archiving, representing, and transmitting martial arts. In particular, his talk will focus on the experimental studies he has done with M<sup>o</sup> Roberto Gotti and Opera Nova, and Prof. Ma Lianzhen and Ma’s Tongbei Martial Studies, for the exhibition “Way of the Sword: Warrior Traditions in China and Italy”.

## BIOGRAPHY

Hing Chao is the founder and executive director of International Guoshu Association and Institute of Chinese Martial Studies. He is a pioneering researcher in Chinese martial studies in Hong Kong, the founder of Hong Kong Martial Arts Living Archive, and the project leader of Hong Kong Martial Arts Research Project, the first-ever comprehensive study of traditional Chinese martial arts in Hong Kong. He is the author of several books and has produced and co-curated several influential martial arts exhibitions including “300 Years of Hakka Kung Fu: Digital Vision of Its Legacy and Future” (2016), “Lingnan Hung Kuen Across the Century: Kung Fu Narratives in Cinema and Community” (2017), “Kung Fu Motion” (2018), “Safeguarding the Community: an Intangible Cultural Heritage New Media Exhibition” (2018), and “Way of the Sword: Warrior Traditions in China and Italy” (2020).

# JEFFREY SHAW / SARAH KENDERDINE

## City University, Hong Kong

**TITLE** | *New Media Art, Digital Performativity and Intangible Cultural Heritage*

### ABSTRACT

In his over 50-year career Jeffrey Shaw has pioneered various forms of interactivity and performativity in his new media art practices. In a parallel trajectory of innovation Shaw, working together with Sarah Kenderdine, has brought these techniques to bear on Intangible Cultural Heritage, thereby making salient contributions to the emerging field of the Digital Humanities. In his keynote Shaw will describe some of these landmark projects including the Hong Kong Martial Arts Living Archive, the Remaking of the Confucian Rites, as well as master works in immersive interactive cinema, theatre and dance. The vectors of new media art exemplify an intricate set of negotiations between body and space, between the actual domain of the real body of the viewer and the real space we inhabit and the virtual domain of the represented body and represented spaces. Shaw and Kenderdine's works demonstrate how these new creative modalities can respond to the growing needs for digital conservation, scholastic visualization and the social re-embodiment of global intangible cultural legacies.

### BIOGRAPHY

Jeffrey Shaw has been one of the leading figures in new media art since the 1960's. In a prolific body of widely exhibited and critically acclaimed works he has pioneered and set benchmarks for the creative use of digital media technologies in the fields of virtual and augmented reality, immersive visualization environments, digital cultural heritage and interactive narrative.

Shaw was the founding director of the ZKM Institute for Visual Media Karlsruhe, Germany (1991-2002), and co-founding director of the University of New South Wales Australia iCinema Centre for Interactive Cinema Research (2003-). From 2009 to 2016 Shaw was Dean of the School of Creative Media at City University of Hong Kong (CityU). He is currently Yeung Kin Man Chair Professor of Media Art, Director of the Centre for Applied Computing and Interactive Media at CityU and Visiting Professor at EPFL Lausanne and CAFA Beijing.

Shaw's numerous awards include the Australian Research Council Federation Fellowship, the Ars Electronica Golden Nica for Visionary Pioneer of Media Art, Linz, Austria, and the ACM Siggraph Distinguished Artist Award for Lifetime Achievement in Digital Art.



# CONFERENCE ORGANISERS

## 中華武學會

Institute of Chinese Martial Studies Limited (ICMS), incorporated as a non-profit organization in 2014, is dedicated to the research, promotion, and public education of Chinese martial arts and related culture.

To date, the most significant events ICMS has organized have been the new media exhibition, *Safeguarding the Community: an Intangible Cultural Heritage New Media Exhibition* ([www.safeguardingthecommunity.com](http://www.safeguardingthecommunity.com)), on display at Hong Kong City Hall from 14 September 2018 to 10 October 2018, and *Lingnan Hung Kuen Across the Century: Kung Fu Narratives in Hong Kong Cinema and Community* ([www.lingnanhungkuen.com](http://www.lingnanhungkuen.com)), on display at Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre in September 2017 and at City University of Hong Kong Gallery from 8 December 2017 to 8 February 2018.

ICMS also collaborated with École Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (EPFL) on *Kung Fu Motion* exhibition, which was on display at the university gallery at EPFL in Lausanne, Switzerland, from April to August 2018.

ICMS's research and exhibition on the subject of *Lingnan Hung Kuen* was published by CityU Press – *Lingnan Hung Kuen: Kung Fu in Community and Cinema* (2018). ICMS also organized the 2nd International Martial Studies Conference in partnership with the Hong Kong Baptist University Institute of Contemporary China Studies, which was held at Jao Tsung-I Academy (11-12 Oct 2018).



International Guoshu Association Limited is committed to protecting, developing, and promoting China's indigenous sports martial arts system. Our aim is to revitalize China's physical heritage by reforming its organizational and competition structures; to educate the public; and to popularize Chinese sports through printed media, website, and organizing public events such as competitions, demonstrations, seminars, lectures and exhibitions. Last but not least, at the same time as promoting and protecting China's traditional culture, we aim to introduce China's distinguished physical heritage to the global audience and integrate Chinese sports more closely with global sports.



The Italian Cultural Institute in Hong Kong (ICI), currently directed by Mr. Stefano Fossati, has been active since 2011 as the official Italian governmental body dedicated to the promotion of Italian language and culture in Hong Kong and Macao through the organization of cultural events.

Alongside the Italian Cultural Institutes in Beijing and Shanghai, it is one of the three cultural agencies of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in China.

Central to ICI's mission is a constant effort to encourage the understanding and enjoyment of Italian culture by organizing and promoting events that focus on Italian music, dance, cinema, theater, architecture, literature, design, and philosophy in collaboration with the most prominent local academic and cultural institutions. ICI also focuses on the development of academic exchanges, the organization and support of visual arts exhibitions, and the promotion of Italian studies.



The mission of the Centre for Applied Computing and Interactive Media, City University of Hong Kong is to promote the development of core competencies in the areas of computational science and engineering, data visualization, digital humanities, new media technology and the creative arts. ACIM provides a platform for research synergy between the College of Science and Engineering, the School of Creative Media and other multidisciplinary groups in the university.

## ORGANISING COMMITTEE :

Hing Chao (co-chair)  
Daniel Jaquet (co-chair)  
Roberto Gotti  
Ma Lianzhen  
Ausilio Priuli  
Enrico Valseriati  
Hu Xiaojun  
Cristiano Brandolini

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