IL CAPITALE CULTURALE
Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage

Rivista fondata da Massimo Montella
Art and Archaeological Fakes on Display. Forty Years of Temporary Exhibitions (1915-1955)

Elisa Bernard*

Abstract

Since the second decade of the twentieth century, temporary exhibitions on art and archaeological fakes and reproductions have appeared in museums, galleries and research institutes in Europe and America. Aiming to educate collectors and curators, to denounce and raise public awareness of forgeries, and eventually to disseminate the value of fakes as historical documents, these exhibitions are something of a litmus test for the perception of, and critique on, this phenomenon over time. Drawing upon an anthology of paramount exhibitions held during the first half of the century, this research provides an insight on display strategies, as well as the patterns, reasons and purposes for exposing fakes and reproductions, tracing back both commonalities, differences and changes over time.

Dal secondo decennio del ventesimo secolo, mostre temporanee su falsi e riproduzioni d’arte e archeologia sono apparse in musei, gallerie e istituti di ricerca in Europa e in America. Con l’obiettivo di educare collezionisti e curatori, di denunciare e sensibilizzare l’opinione pubblica sui falsi e, infine, di diffondere il valore dei falsi come documenti storici, queste mostre rappresentano una sorta di carta di tornasole per la percezione e la critica di
questo fenomeno nel tempo. Basandosi su un’antologia di mostre importanti realizzate nella prima meta del secolo, questa ricerca fornisce una panoramica sulle strategie espositive, nonché sui modelli, le ragioni e gli scopi dell’esporre falsi e riproduzioni, descrivendo sia i punti in comune, sia le differenze e i cambiamenti nel tempo.

1. Introduction

This paper will provide an insight on the perception of, and discourses over, art and archaeological fakes and reproductions during the first half of the nineteenth century via the paradigm of temporary exhibitions.

Just like museums’ permanent installations, temporary exhibitions reflect choices – of objects, displays, and narratives – through which categories and hierarchies are affirmed that mirror the “choral” thoughts of the contemporary society – its tastes, ideas, knowledge, desires, queries and values. Not only do temporary exhibitions dialogue with the history of art history and archaeology, but they also open multiple windows to the contemporary art market, the history of collecting, national and international cultural policies, and the reception of Ancient and Modern artistic and cultural identity in contemporary civilization.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, copies and plaster casts in permanent installations were meant to foster educational and artistic training as well as enhance museum narratives1. Nonetheless, when forced

1 A Convention for Promoting Universally Reproductions of Works of Art for the Benefit of Museums of All Countries was signed by fifteen European Princes at the Universal Exposition of Paris in 1867 to start a European network of exchanges, which would be strengthened at the Universal Exposition of Antwerp in 1885. According to the Convention, the model of a system of reproducing works of art was the South Kensington Museum, and illustrations of it were exhibited in the British Section of the Paris exhibition (on the cast rooms of the future “Victoria and Albert Museum”, see Patterson, Trusted 2018). The end of the nineteenth century was indeed the golden era of casts rooms in most of European Museums and Universities (see Anderson 2015, in part. pp. 57-70) as well as in the United States; in 1891, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York even published a Tentative List of Objects desirable for a Collection of Casts, Sculptural and Architectural, intended to illustrate the history of plastic art (1891) that mirrors the American contemporary ideal universal art and archaeological museum. Not only did cast rooms provide useful teaching devices and promote access to artworks that otherwise were unlikely to be seen by most locals (see Conestabile 1874a, pp. 366-369; de Zerbi 1885), but integrated into traditional exhibits, casts and reproductions also assured museums to make comparisons between artworks, fill gaps in the chain of objects, complete collections, and thereby conceive, ordinate, realize, and disseminate complex archaeological discourses. The debate was particularly alive in post-Unity Italy, where it was tied to that on classical education and casts museums were established on the German model (paradigmatic is the case of Rome, where Emanuel Löwy, holding the first chair of “History of Ancient Art”, founded the Museo dei Gessi); on the Italian debate, see, e.g., on the one hand, Salinas 1866, pp. 38, 42, 1874, p. 12; Conestabile 1874a, p. 367; de Ruggiero 1874, pp. 76-77, 80-81 and ff.; on the other hand, Fiorelli 1883, pp. 13-14, 1885, pp. 558-565 and ff.; for an overview, Catoni 1993; for a comparison with the debate in Germany, see Mommsen cit. in Conestabile 1874b, pp. 75-77, Hübner 1874; Conestabile 1969; Schiering 1969; in France, see
to confront head-on doubts concerning authenticity, museums usually had their contentious objects downgraded, withdrawn from display and even destroyed or deaccessioned. However, a series of temporary exhibitions on art and archaeological fakes and reproductions held both in Europe and the United States changed this. They aimed to warn collectors and the public against, and educate them about, the ubiquitous frauds, by illustrating how to detect doubtful signs. Other exhibitions instead were organized by art police units, rather intending to stigmatize and counter forgers, denounce the threat against the integrity of the art world, historical mystifications, and the economic and social costs of crimes. Furthermore, a series of solo exhibitions were dedicated to the infamous artist/forger Alceo Dossena; the concepts of originality and authenticity were thereby raised and contested.

The use of copies and casts in permanent installations is beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, it will focus on a number of exhibitions of art and archaeological fakes and reproductions that were organized on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean between 1915 and 1955 (tab. 1), before the debate over the aesthetic and ontological status of forgery and the relevance of authenticity to aesthetic experience began among analytic philosophers. The paper will provide an insight on display strategies, as well as the patterns, reasons and purposes for exposing fakes and forgeries, tracing back both commonalities, differences and changes over time.

2. Art and Archaeological Fakes and Forgeries on Display (1915-1955)

On September 20, 1915, at the Danske Kunstindustrimuseum in Copenhagen, the curtain went up on “Forfalskninger”. This was a five-day exhibition of art and archaeological fakes, organized as an initiative of the Museum Director, the Danish art historian Emil Hannover, to coincide with the Constituent
Meeting of the Skandinavisk Museuinsforbund. One hundred and seven counterfeited items went on stage. Among them, there were forged works of art and archaeological artefacts, ranging from allegedly “Egyptian”, “Greek”, “Roman” objects to “Renaissance” sculptures, “Chinese” bronze censers, “Copenhagen” porcelain (Fig. 1)\(^5\). Most items came from the Museum’s own collections, while some others were on loan from various Danish institutions or private collectors. Notwithstanding the First World War, a few objects were lent by German Museums as well. The exhibition aimed to warn museum curators and collectors against forgeries; the exhaustive catalogue entries following Hannover’s programmatic introduction, labelled the items on view providing details about these objects’ models, provenance and *comparanda* in other collections. The danger signals and deceptions were pointed out as well. Furthermore, along with the booklet of captions, was a bibliography of counterfeit art, which likely reflected the speech Hannover gave during the curators meeting\(^6\). One year later, an appendix of plates featuring the most important pieces on view was issued\(^7\).

The fact that this exhibition was to set up the scene for the first meeting of an international museums’ association, is evidence of the growing scale of the problem of art forgery in the early twentieth century. Indeed, many exposé-style articles and handbooks, in colourful frescos full of intriguing characters and in the style of critical treatises, had been provided to collectors and curators with some detecting tools since the late nineteenth century\(^8\). Nonetheless, it was only from the mid-1910s, when the tautology forgery-fraud subject was formally established – inciting its persecution\(^9\), that some Museums started constructing temporary critical narratives around fakes and reproductions. Although forgeries were generally shunned, banned from display cabinets and ostracised by Academia\(^10\), the need to define the concept of the inauthentic in a broad social, cultural, economic, legal, ethic, aesthetic, and historical perspective, became the driving force behind new research avenues and educational agendas.

---

\(^5\) Hannover 1915a.

\(^6\) Hannover 1915b.

\(^7\) Hannover 1916.

\(^8\) Among others, see Robinson 1891; Evans 1893; Spielmann 1903-1904; Eudel [1884] 1908, [1907] 1908, 1909; Furtwängler 1899; Le Quex 1904; Munro 1905; Maskell 1906; Gardner 1908; Beissel 1909; Roessler 1910; Boyer 1911; Lang 1912; Bayard 1914; Kaempfert 1914. For a bibliographical compilation, see Reisner 1930; Koobatian 1997; see also Andreoli 2011.

\(^9\) Lenain 2011.

\(^10\) See for instance the case of the Appleton collection of Tanagra figurines of the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston, which was revealed to be fake in 1900 and withdrawn from exhibition at once (*Artistic Boston Fooled* 1900).
So far as the author knows, “Forfalskninger” (Copenhagen 1915) was the first temporary exhibition on art and archaeological fakes and reproductions. Less than one year later, in April 1916, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, the Pennsylvania Museum of Art of Philadelphia — again a museum of fine arts — was staging “An Exhibition of ‘Fakes’ and Reproductions.” Designed by Edwin Atlee Barber, Director of the museum and Honorary Curator of the American Pottery and Porcelain Department, the temporary installation covered the field of fine arts, featuring, among counterfeits and imitations of the most renowned European ceramics, Chinese porcelains, and French and German enamels, also heavily restored and deceptive copies and imitations of “Greek” and “South-Italian” vases, “Tanagra figurines”, “Roman” lamps, and “Aztec” specimens (Fig. 2). They all came from the museum’s own collection. Nonetheless, the exhibition was not only a catalogue of acknowledged mistakes, but it also aimed to raise public awareness of the malicious threat of art and archaeological forgery and to instruct amateur collectors and museum officials in detecting it. To this end, original models and their modern counterparts were displayed side-by-side for comparison and study, with black cards with golden lettering labelling authentic items. Furthermore, the illustrated catalogue following the exhibition provided visitors with detailed captions pointing out the material and stylistic elements betraying a counterfeit object. Most notably, in connection with the show, collectors desiring information on authenticity, were invited to bring their artworks to the museum for analysis.

Indeed, the temporary display of acknowledged fakes in special showcases to warn and educate is a paradigm that American museums used again in their decades-long fight against art counterfeiting, a phenomenon which was strictly connected with the dynamics of the global art and antiquities market. As a matter of fact, exhibitions devoted to fakes and possibly even the definition of the fake went hand in hand with collecting and curatorship as well as connoisseurship.
just as American collectors and museums were expanding their horizons. In 1923, Henry Walters, the Vice-president of the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts of New York, declared to the New York Times that an investigation would be made of Gothic objects in the museum on whose authenticity doubts had been cast and if any spurious artworks was found, it would be removed (but not those containing authentic parts, which would be classified as “restored” rather than “entirely original”)\textsuperscript{16}. Nonetheless, only one year later, a glass case with the label “Modern forgeries” was installed in one of the Egyptian rooms. It contained «carved scarabs, a model mummy case, stone statuettes of gods and kings, and pieces of supposedly ancient attempts at glass making»\textsuperscript{17}.

In 1929, a “Forged or Real” exhibition put on display some of the Metropolitan’s sculpture forgeries. Aiming at «removing some of the string of criticism copiously launched against those who were deceived» but rather «scarcely helping buttressing our strongholds against future campaigns waged in the interest of what is false»\textsuperscript{18}, this exhibition placed authentic terracotta and marble vases and figurines beside their modern forged counterparts; anomalies in firing and modelling and the effects of some aging techniques were exposed as well.

The case of the Metropolitan’s Arms and Armor Department is another interesting example. In 1932, the English antiquarian Charles R. Beard claimed in «Connoisseur» that one of the most famous “Gothic armours” of the renowned Dino Collection was nothing but an ambitious and convincing \textit{pastiche} of pieces of different epoch and origin, enriched with modern additions\textsuperscript{19}. The armour in question had already been on view at least since the early twentieth-century Bashford Dean’s installation of the gallery and labelled as partially restored\textsuperscript{20}. Stephen V. Grancsay, Dean’s long-time assistant and successor as curator, eventually removed the armour from display and expressed his doubt over its authenticity.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Says he sold fakes to the Metropolitan} 1923; \textit{Promises inquiry into museum pieces} 1923. Interestingly enough, Walters, who was a collector himself, declared he used to «keep a special case into which [he] put pieces which [he] discover[ed] to be spurious». The eponym museum in Baltimore would also organize an exhibition on the museum’s own forgeries: “Artful Deception. The Craft of the Forger”, in 1987 (Vikan 1987).

\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Egyptian ‘Fakes’} 1924.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Forged and Real at Metropolitan} 1929; De Forest, Kent 1929.

\textsuperscript{19} Beard 1932. As accounts for the long-running debate over authenticity (of arms and armors in particular) on «Connoisseur», see also Roe 1922; Roe, Beard 1930; Beard 1933; Shedelmann 1948; more in general, see also, \textit{Looting and Faking} 1944; \textit{The Validity of Fakes as Works of Art} 1946.

\textsuperscript{20} According to Pyhrr, Dean had even deliberately included in his gallery one or two vetrines of nineteenth-century fakes, with explanatory labels pointing out their abnormalities in terms of design, material and patinas (\textit{Of Arms and Men} 2012, p. 13). I am very grateful to Donald LaRocca, Curator of the Arms and Armour Department of the Met, who has given me valuable information concerning the recognition and explication of arms and armor forgeries as a normal function of the department at that time. Dean purposely acquired many examples of fakes in order to document the practices of particular forgers; many of these were deaccessioned and sold in the following years.
authenticity\textsuperscript{21}. Nonetheless, most astoundingly, in the same year, he also set up an “Exhibition of forgeries”\textsuperscript{22}. It consisted of three vitrines installed on the west side of the main armour gallery (H9), next to “the armorer’s workshop”. The first case displayed the “Gothic forgeries”, whereas the other two showcased genuine pieces enriched by etching, damascening and embossing. «The purpose of the exhibition [was] educational»\textsuperscript{23}: first, by placing forgeries and falsifications and their authentic models side-by-side, students could train their eyes to differentiate them; secondly, by pointing out counterfeiters’, the skills of the ancient armorer were emphasized, thereby fostering an appreciation of authentic armour.

Helping «students, collectors, and critics, indeed all who in their several ways are interested in art, in the study of the problems of quality and originality, as also of period, school, and the like»\textsuperscript{24} was also at the hearth of the London Burlington Fine Arts Club’s 1924 exhibition of “Counterfeits, imitations and copies of works of art”. Indeed, while 1920s American Museums’ exhibitions may be regarded as sheer catalogues of acknowledged errors, European museums rather used to gather loaned fake artworks to set up complex discourses around the manifold topic; they focused on Modern Art and crafts forgeries. The London exhibition put on scene spurious Modern pictures, drawings, metalworks, furniture, carpets, ceramics, glass, and sculptures on loan by various institutions and private collectors, beside their original counterparts. It drew a line between \textit{sine dolo} casts, copies, imitations made for purposes of record and dissemination or artistic practice, and restorations and fakes, forgeries, and \textit{pastiche}s intending to deceive. Not only did exposure rely on style and quality anomalies and anachronisms, but state-of-the-art scientific detection techniques, including pigment analyses and X-rays examination, were also brought to public attention for the first time. Furthermore, the exhibition first glanced at the topic of art forgery throughout a philosophical eye, questioning whether authenticity is an aesthetically relevant property, that is whether the same aesthetic appearance could not warrant the same aesthetic appreciation and judgement – and, therefore, the same display\textsuperscript{25}.

\textsuperscript{21} See Pyhrr 2012, pp. 215-223 and ff. for a detailed report with further examples of fakes and forgeries from the Dino Collection, to which they came chiefly from the then famous dealers Carrand, Spitzer, and Bardini, downgraded or even deaccessioned. For some examples also in the Riggs collection, see Carrara 2012. On the relationship between Riggs and the dealer Marcy, Blair, Campbell 2008, pp. 26-30.
\textsuperscript{22} Grancsay 1932, pp. 46-48.
\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibidem}.
\textsuperscript{24} «The Burlington Magazine» has hosted, over the years, many articles about debated and spurious artworks: see, for instance, de Rorthays’ articles on the \textit{Tiara of Saitaphernes}, which was revealed as a forgery in 1903 (de Rorthays 1903a-d); see also, among others, Veitch 1909; White 1910; Fry 1927; Pope 1935; Friedländer 1941.
\textsuperscript{25} These questions, already implicitly pointed out by Guillaume Apollinaire (1903) and Clive Bell (1913), would be later conceptualized by the Formalist tradition. For an overview, see Bernard 2020.
Two years later, in 1926, the dichotomy of innocent and deceptive copies (of nineteenth-twentieth century paintings only) and the manifold purposes behind them were explored at Vienna’s Oberen Belvedere. “Fälschungen und Faksimiles von Kunstwerken des 19. Jahrhunderts” staged copies and forgeries after Franz Alt, Paul Cézanne, Honoré Daumier, Gustave Klimt, and other famous painters, featuring “Beispiele der Praktiken manueller Darstellung von Kunstwerken, Kopien, Ersatzstücke, Signierungen, Kompilationen, freie Nacherfindungen, und Beispiele mechanischer, insbesonderen photomechanischer Reproduktionen”

As in the above-mentioned exhibitions, one hundred thirty originals and non-originales were displayed side-by-side for comparison.

Nonetheless, case histories of acknowledged forgeries ending up being exhibited as such can be traced back also in Europe. Emblematic is the case of the “prehistoric finds” that once had been the foundational linchpin of the Austrian Historical Museum of Baden before being revealed as forgeries by Joseph Wuhack in the early 1900s. After they were withdrawn from exhibition in Baden, these artefacts eventually ended up being permanently showcased in the museum of the Police Directorate of Vienna. In fact, art and archaeological forgeries started attracting the attention of some national art police units, among whom, there was Siegfried C. Türkel, the scientific director of the Kriminologischen Instituts der Österreichischen Staatspolizei of Vienna. A renowned jurist and criminologist, Türkel was also an expert in chemical analysis and dating techniques, which he applied to the broad field of counterfeiting, from manuscripts and typewriting to checks, through alleged archaeological relics. On this topic, in 1927, likely following the lecture he gave during the Second International Police Congress, held in Berlin in 1926 under the aegis of the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC), Türkel published a pamphlet/enquiry, entitled *Prähistorische Fälschungen: eine Rundfrage*, opening with, and featuring some of, the Baden forgeries on view at the Police Museum.

Indeed, in the late 1920s, the battle against forgers by the judicial police came under the spotlight. One year before the shocking murder of the judge of

---

27 The scandal, denounced by one Gustav Coliano, ended up in a trial against the forger (Türkel 1927, pp. 1-3) and made headlines: see, for instance, Gefälschte prähistorische Funde in Baden 1902; Gefälschte prähistorische Funde 1902; Aus Den Gerichtsfaale 1902.
29 A special art investigation department was existing in Italy, for instance as early as 1914 (A fine arts police 1914).
30 Türkel 1933. See also, Türkel 1930. His discoveries were featured heavily on the press: see, e.g., Chemistry Vs. Forgery; Dr. Turkel’s Way of Telling if a Check Has Been Raised 1933 and Test reveals age of writing by ink action on paper 1933.
31 Türkel 1927, p. 16; Teilnahme österreichischer Fachleute am internationalen 1926.
32 Prehistorical forgeries had been fooling the market at least since the late nineteenth century, as account for, e.g., Evans 1893; de Mortillet 1885; Munro 1905; Vayson de Predenne 1932.
33 Türkel 1927, pls. I-II.
the forensic police Bayle, who had authored a controversial evaluation of the “prehistorical” finds of Glozel, in 1928, the Dossena scandal exploded.

A series of solo exhibitions were organised soon after in Italy and abroad. Two expositions were held in Italy in spring 1929: in April, an exhibition of twenty-three of Dossena’s works on loan by three deceived collectors occurred at Naples’ renowned Corona Gallery, and an “Esposizione di 28 capolavori di Alceo Dossena” was hosted in Milan’s Micheli Gallery in May – its catalogue featuring an essay by the art critic Elpidio Piccoli. A larger exhibition was staged in January 1930 at Berlin’s Hall of Art, which Dossena made several works especially for; a film of Dossena at work in his studio titled “Schaffende Hände” was made by Hans Cürlis, the Director of the Institute for Cultural Research, that was released at the show and followed by a catalogue. One year later, thirty-three of Dossena’s artworks were on view at the Mostre di “Fiamma”’s rooms in via Bocca di Leone in Rome, whose catalogue featured some excerpts of Piccoli’s above-mentioned essay.

These exhibitions aimed at making a celebrity of Alceo Dossena as a contemporary «great artist of the chiesel, a marvellous creator of Madonnas and Putti»; one able to «far risognare, mentre intorno si brancola sull’orrido, la poesia e la Potenza di quella che fu e dovrà essere gloria assoluta d’Italia».

Mutatis mutandis, in 1933, a public auction of Dossena’s works was set up at The Rose Room of the Hotel Plaza in New York: “Exhibition of Sculptures by Alceo Dossena”. The National Art Galleries auctioned a collection of thirty-nine “authenticated” statues and reliefs by the Cremonese artist conferred by one Giuseppe Giosi of Rome, including allegedly marble and bronze archaeological finds and sculptures in style of Italian Masters from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century – among which a wooden copy of the Annunciation group purportedly by Simone Martini (Fig. 3). According to Alfred M. Frankfurter, the renowned art critic and
editor of «Art News» and the Auction Catalogue, Dossena’s artworks were to be «valuable, to the collector and museum, for artistic achievement as for scientific documentation»\textsuperscript{44}. Indeed, not only were the apparently dichotomic concepts of authenticity and forgery contested (the “fake Simone Martini” becoming an “authentic Dossena”), but all these exhibitions may be regarded to as very early forerunners of instances of historicization of the figure of the artist/forger\textsuperscript{45}, which would have wormed their way into display cabinets only from the late 1980s\textsuperscript{46}.

Dossena’s works had indeed deceived many eminent connoisseurs and curators, including Wilhelm von Bode, Frederick Mason Perkins, Charles Loeser, Detlev Freiherr von Hadeln, and Harold Parsons. The art historian Leo Planiscig, the Director of the Sammlung für Plastik und Kunstgewerbe of the Kunstistorisches Museum of Vienna, was among the few who doubted of the authenticity of some works which were proposed to him. When, in 1937, the death of Dossena caught the attention of the Austrian press\textsuperscript{47}, the Cremonese forger was among the main characters of “Gefälschte Kunstwerke”, curated by Planiscig himself with Ernst Kris\textsuperscript{48} at the Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna – the former being celebrated as the \textit{deus ex machina} who disclosed the Dossena scandal\textsuperscript{49}.

The exhibition was set up in the Applied Arts Gallery to coincide with the Jahrestagung Internationilen Verbandes der Museumsdirektoren and stayed very same year (F. Gastaldello, E. Pellegrini, in Pellegrini 2017, pp. 438-439), were sold together for $ 600 – the second highest auction price. It is worth pointing out that the Milan exhibition Catalogue mentions the Madonna as a Saint (\textit{Esposizione di 28 capolavori di Alceo Dossena} 1929, p. 25).

\textsuperscript{44} Frankfurter 1933, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{45} As a matter of fact, a permanent exhibition of fakes and forgeries was installed by Anthony Radcliffe in the Cast Courts of the Victoria and Albert Museum sandwiched in the corridor between the 46A and 46B galleries, featuring, among others, also three terracotta reliefs by Alceo Dossena (Sox 1987, p. 72).

\textsuperscript{46} See tab. 1 and below.

\textsuperscript{47} See, e.g., Der berühmte Kunstfälscher Dossena gestorben 1937; Der Meisterfälscher Dossena Gestorben 1937; Meisterfälscher Dossena Gestorben 1937; Ein Meisterfälscher Gestorben 1937.

\textsuperscript{48} Kris also co-authored a book on the psychology of the artist with Otto Kurz (Kris, Kurz 1934). On the latter, see infra note 61.

on view through September and October\textsuperscript{50}, before moving to Graz in 1938\textsuperscript{51}. On show were eighty-seven artworks of all kinds, comprising paintings, marble and bronze sculptures, enamels, ivory carvings, weapons and porcelains from the “Middle Ages” to the “seventeenth century” as well as an all’antica marble grave relief from the Obizzi collection, “Roman” fictional medallions and coins, “Classical” bronze and terracotta statuettes, and “Egyptian” Baphomets, dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century (Fig. 4)\textsuperscript{52}. Furthermore, on display were many photographs reproducing Dossena’s sculptures, which were not mentioned in the catalogue\textsuperscript{53}. The catalogue opens with the curators’ sardonic declaration laying bare “die Fälschung als Feind”\textsuperscript{54}, seductive and alluring because of its being object of desire and of a blinding and possessive passion. In fact, the exhibition’s first aim was not to provide a guide to recognising fakes, but rather to denounce these “Entthronte Größen sind sie, die, ans Licht gezogen, sich des Lichtes schämen” and, most notably, to historicize the phenomenon\textsuperscript{55}. To this end, the introduction is followed by a list and description of the objects exhibited, giving an account of their history as the “Tragikomödie” of which they had been the main actors. Furthermore, many of them, which came both from the museum’s own collection and from privately-owned ones, either they were designed to deceive or not, were set side-by-side with an original, for the point of comparison between them to be available and in order to entice the visitors into looking at true artefacts by means of their malicious counterpart. “Gefälschte Kunstwerke” is paradigmatic of how, in the late 1930s central Europe, fakes that were stigmatised as threats to the integrity of art

\textsuperscript{50} The exhibition was featured hugely on the press: see, e.g., Ausstellung von Kunstfälschungen 1937; Die Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke 1937; Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke 1937; Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke 1937; Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke 1937; Ausstellung im Kunshistorischen. Gefälschte Kunstwerke 1937; Roessler 1937; Rainalter 1937; journalistische Falschmünzerei 1937; Der berühmte Kunstfälscher Dossena gestorben 1937. Indeed, the topic was under the spotlight, as they account for, e.g., Methoden im Kunsthandel. Allerlei Fälschungen 1937, and Kampf gegen Antiquitätschwindel. “Gut erhaltenen, Funde sind verdächtig 1938. This is litmus card of the interest that not only connoisseurs, collectors and curators, but also the general public (see also supra, notes 17-18) had in exhibitions of art and archaeological fakes. Indeed, that of the reception of the exhibitions on art and archaeological fakes by both experts and the general public is a topic which would warrant further enquiry and open new research avenues; it would be worth exploring, on the one hand, how much these exhibitions were cited in subsequent scientific publications and exhibition catalogues; on the other hand, how much they were featured on the press and, ideally, what was the ratio of these exhibitions’ visitors to others’.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{51} The Archive of the Kunstkammer holds two folders about this travelling exhibition: Kunstkammer 9/PL/37 (Vienna) and Kunstkammer 37/L/37 (Graz). I am grateful to Susanne Hehenberger, in charge of the Kunsthistorische Museum, for helping my research with expertise and kindness.

\textsuperscript{52} Planiscig, Kris 1937.

\textsuperscript{53} See, e.g., Ausstellung von Kunstfälschungen 1937; Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke 1937; Die Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke 1937.

\textsuperscript{54} Planiscig, Kris 1937, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibidem.
and archaeology were persecuted. To this end, only one year before, the Naturhistorischen Gesellschaft of Nürnberg had staged an “Ausstellung über Fälschungen aus Nordbayern statt”, featuring Hans Hösch’s allegedly prehistoric findings formerly in the collection of the painter Gabriel von Max, which the museum had just acquired from Mannheim for the price of 20 Reichsmark.

In contrast, in the same years, in the Unites States, the topic of art and archaeological forgery became the centrepiece of new research and educational agendas. “Art: Genuine of Counterfeited?" was on view at the Fogg Museum of Arts in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from May 1 to June 20, 1940. It was a temporary exhibition loaned by graduate students enrolled in the course “Museum Work and Museum Problems” at Harvard. It aimed to provide students and the general public with the opportunity to improve their power of discrimination in distinguishing between original and fake and, possibly, to discourage the forgers and their acolytes, followed by the wish that this example would be imitated by other institutions on a greater scale. Concerning the display, many authentic artworks were flanked by others identified as inauthentic. In most cases, labels reciting a concise “Genuine” or “Counterfeit” were to inform the viewer of their status. Other times, however, visitors were challenged to tell original and imitation apart by themselves, through a sort of game, or they were provided with just a few hints for further investigation.

While this method required the attention of the viewer’s eye, there were also some references to the result of the scientific analyses which had been carried out on some objects. Scientific methods had been brought to the fore one decade before, but it was only in this moment that, though brushed aside by the connoisseur, they would become progressively crucial to the authentication process. Among its thirty-two exhibits, “Art: Genuine or Counterfeit?” counted, as usual, not only deliberate forgeries, but also innocent imitations, copies and reproductions, among which, “Early Modern” and “Modern” paintings and drawings, “Renaissance” sculptures, prints, Limoges enamels, “Egyptian” and “Aztec” sculptures, a “Greek” marble fragmentary statue and a “Tanagra” figurine, ancient “Chinese” vessels and statuettes. They arrived from both private and corporative collectors – including the Yamanaka & Co. of New York – and public institutions, among which feature prominently, apart from

---

56 Graf 2000, p. 16. Forgeries by Hösch had already been the central pieces of a temporary exhibition of forgeries organized by Johannes Ranke to coincide with an anthropological congress in 1885 in Berlin (ibidem, pp. 13-14).

57 Art: Genuine or Counterfeit? 1940. I am thankful to Michelle Interrante, in charge of The Fogg Museum of Art Archive, for her kind help.

58 See, e.g., Art: Genuine or Counterfeit? 1940, ns. 2, 14, 18.

59 See, e.g., Art: Genuine or Counterfeit? 1940, ns. 1, 8, 13, 22 and 10 respectively.

60 See the behemoth of manuals, including Cole 1955; Savage [1963] 1976; Fleming 1975. See also the exhibition catalogue Hours 1980.
from the host museum – which also held two sculptures by Giovanni Bastianini and Alceo Dossena, the latter commissioned *ad hoc* –, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Cambridge Peabody Museum.

The following decade, with the Second World War raging, did not witness any paramount exhibition. Nonetheless, in October 1943, a temporary display of archaeological forgeries – likely the first one to be ever dedicated solely to archaeology – was installed at the then Palestine Archaeological Museum (now Rockefeller Archaeological Museum) in Jerusalem. The exhibition, organised by Leo Aryeh Mayer under the aegis of the Department of Antiquities of the British Mandatory Government, set the venue for the First Congress for Land of Israel Studies of the Hebrew Society for the Exploration of Eretz Israel and its Antiquities. This was of particular relevance at a time in which colonial archaeology and its use in a nationalistic perspective was at its height, while the ghost of Moses Wilhelm Shapira’s “Mohabite forgeries” was still in the air.

In contrast, likely also in reaction to the number of fraudulent exchanges of authentic artworks that had occurred during their chaotic relocations and returns following the war, in the early 1950s a large number of exhibitions on art and archaeological fakes and forgeries took place.

In 1952, two exhibitions were organized independently from one another. On June 6, the Stadelijk Museum of Amsterdam inaugurated “Vals of Echt?”, which was also on tour in Europe (in Maastricht, Basel, Zürich, and Düsseldorf) and the United States (in Corning, Baltimore, Boston, and Louisville as “True or False?”) later. On July 21, at the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford, the curtain went up on a small exhibition of “Forgery and Imitation of Antiquities and Works of Art”.

The Stadelijk’s travelling exhibition was conceived as kind of a game: there was no indication regarding the authenticity of the artefact on view, so that visitors could train their eyes in telling the original apart and, later, find the solution in the catalogue. The show was designed by the art historian Maurits Michel van Dantzig, the famous inventor of Pictology, a system to identify artists by their brush or pen strokes that he applied to both attribution and aesthetic quality evaluation; coupled with chemical and physical techniques,

61 Nonetheless, crucial contributions to the study of art and archaeological forgery as a phenomenon were provided by Friedländer (Friedländer [1942] 1955) and Kurz (Kurz [1946] 1961). The latter, in particular, condemning, but also being subservient to, the trend in the contemporary literature on fakes of recounting only anecdotes and presenting superficial guidelines, attempted to re-evaluate the hermeneutic potentiality of fakes and counterfeits for the history of culture and taste.

62 Cit. in Doron 1989, pp. 5-6. Silvia Krapiwko, Head of archive IAA, to whom I express my gratitude, told me that the Rockeller Archaeological Museum holds a folder about this exhibition. Nonetheless, I could not access it.

63 Prisco 2019, p. 275.

64 van Datzing 1952; 1954.

applying the principles of Pictology also allowed to reveal differences between the fake and its original counterparts. With this in mind, new light was thus shed on the manifold forms of the inauthentic, from the copy and the schoolwork to the overpainting, the pasticcio, and the imitation, reaffirming the tautology forgery-fraud. As a matter of fact, the exhibition, first held in the homeland of the infamous Dutch forger Han van Meegeren only a few years after his trial and condemnation, was mostly devoted to paintings, from allegedly Primitives to Early Modern and Modern Masters, featuring also both fakes and “authentic” works by van Meegeren himself; they went on scene also some œuvres by Bastianini and Dossena and the famous Tiara of Saitaphernes.

The Oxford exhibition instead, designed by W.L. Brown, the Keeper of the Department of Antiquities, was arranged in the Temporary Exhibition Gallery to coincide with the 58th Annual Conference of the Museum Association and stayed open until November. It gathered exhibits from the two departments of the Ashmolean and from other Oxford museums, i.e., the Pitt Rivers Museum, the Museum of the History of Science and the Eastern Art Museum. The display was divided into four sections: drawings and paintings, minor and applied arts, antiquities and Far Eastern Art. Furthermore, the Heberden Coin Room hosted a related exposition of coin and medals. As usual, they were placed on view both forgeries and innocent copies and imitations. Although the emphasis was on the typical fake that could slip unheated into any collection, there was also reference to famous forgers, including Giovanni Bastianini, “Flint Jack”, and William Smith and Charles Eaton. In coincidence with the opening of the exhibition, Harold J. Plenderleith, the Keeper of the Research Laboratory of the British Museum, held a lecture titled Fakes and Forgeries in Museums, introducing the approaches to scientific and technical examination in authenticity studies.

Chemical and physical analyses, which from the very 1950s started being widely applied to study and authenticate artworks, were also the main concern

---

66 On van Meegeren, the infamous forger of Vermeers, see Moiseiwitsch 1964; Godley 1951; Coremans 1949.


68 The small exhibition did not have a catalogue. Scattered information can be found in Ashmolean Museum. Report of the Visitors (1952), pp. 3, 10 and 42, and Brown 1952, p. 161. I am very grateful to Clare Pollard for her enquiries and kind advice.

69 The paper was published in the dossier appeared in the Museums Journal (Plenderleith 1952).

70 See supra, note 60. On the advent and increasing sophistication of scientific techniques in the authentication of works of art and their (sometimes conflictual) relation with art historical
of “Take Care”, on view at the Brooklyn Museum of New York between January and February 1954 (Fig. 5). Organized by Sheldon Keck, veteran of the Museum’s restoration laboratory, and his wife, Karoline K. Keck, not only did the exhibition shed some light on state-of-the-art sleuthing techniques, but it also delved into the art of preserving and restoring paintings. The panoply of scientific examination to which paintings had been subjected included both non-destructive means, such as X-ray and IR photos, and destructive ones, like microscopy, spectroscopy, and X-ray diffraction. A film documenting the different techniques was projected as well.

Not only did scientific detection methods represent a valuable device for museums, but they proved powerful weapons also for art police units, which were playing a major role in detecting as well as displaying art and archaeological forgeries – as already mentioned the case of Türkel, in the Twenties. In the summer 1955, the “Exposition Mondiale Le Faux dans l’Art et dans l’Histoire” was set up in Paris, as part of the yearly “Salon International de la Police”, at its third edition. The first Salon had been organised in 1953, at the initiative of the Amicale International des Policiers ACDIPR, to display the artworks of the “flics-artistes”, in a small gallery in rue de Bourgogne. At its second edition, arranged in a gallery in rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, the Salon had been enriched by «une sensationnelle attraction... le premier Musée des Faux artistiques» . Although the exhibition was temporary and its catalogue modest, its resonance was such that the third Salon reached an international scope and was staged in the most prestigious art gallery of Paris, the Grand Palais des Champs-Élysées – with the exalted collaboration of Sureté Nationale, Préfecture de Paris and Interpol.

In the catalogue, the commissaire principal Guy Isnard, artistic director of the Comité and author of books on forgeries as well, synthetises the chief aims of the Salon in these terms: «dévoiler le fraude, mettre en garde, protéger le droit des ‘créateurs’, stigmatiser les faussaires et leurs complices», and provide «une démonstration éducative devant servir à l’édification des collectionneurs, des acheteurs, des étudiants, des artistes, des connaisseurs et amateurs d’art».

evaluation, there is a broad bibliography; for some latest references, see Craddock 2020 forthcoming; Scott 2020 forthcoming; Scott 2016; Craddock 2009, pp. 2-5 et passim; see also, Spier 1990. To this end, it is also worth pointing out how the publication of both originals making-technology and state-of-the-art authentication techniques proved useful to forgers themselves, who got used to paying attention to anachronisms, reusing old frames, canvases, panels, papers, ceramics etc., and employing ageing techniques to give their new artefacts convincing appearance, spectra, date etc. For some examples, see Craddock 2009.

---

71 For a broader and detailed account of this exhibition, see Prisco 2019.
73 Musée des faux artistiques 1954.
Among the short essays which follow, it is worth mentioning the one of Serge Roche, President of the Confédération internationale des Négociants en oeuvres d’art, who brought to the fore the point of view of the dealer. His poetic contribution remembers how Isnard himself invited him to visit the venue of the exhibition and figure out together its installation. After the initial scepticism,

Petit à petit, durant notre promenade, l’unité paraissait cependant possible, le rythme des salles s’affirmait... En même temps, j’acquérais la certitude de l’utilité de cette manifestation, combine il était nécessaire que l’œuvre de tous ceux qui ont triché soit mise au grand jour afin de permettre au public de se faire une idée du faux, d’en connaître les limites et de savoir aussi que l’acheteur est bien défendu dans ce domaine et que la répression est sévère.

The display was divided in two parts: “Le Faux dans l’Art” and “Les Faux dans l’Histoire”, including, in the section “Contrefaçons et Faux Divers”, “Archéologie” and “La Préhistoire”. Fakes, innocent reproductions, and their authentic counterparts were displayed in close proximity for comparison. In some cases, a concise label displayed alongside the item identified it as “vrai”, “faux” or “surdecoré”, whereas, other times, visitors were challenged to identify its status for themselves, like in “Art: Genuine of Counterfeit?” (Cambridge 1940) and “Vals of Echt?” (Amsterdam 1952). Furthermore, some artefacts were accompanied by the results of the scientific investigations which had been carried out on them.

The Salon featured also an Italian contribution, consisting of eleven artefacts sent by the Istituto Centrale del Restauro (ICR) of Rome, together with their labels, the results of the scientific investigations and a photo-montage describing the activities of the Istituto. These were items that the ICR had collected in the previous years for the project “Mostra del falso d’arte”, which was meant to become a permanent installation.

Items and photographs of art and archaeological fakes and imitations had come from all corners of Italy. Nonetheless, the “Mostra del falso d’arte” (Fig. 6), which would have been the pendant of the “Mostra permanente di restauri e di documentazioni dei restauri”, that opened at the ICR in May 1950, was not to be and there was only a small, temporary exhibition without any catalogue. The chronology of “Mostra del falso d’arte” is uncertain, oscillating between 1955/56 and 1959. The fact that the items that had been borrowed by the Soprintendenze

---

77 E.g., Les Faux dans l’Art et dans l’Histoire 1955, s.v. Céramiques.
78 E.g., Les Faux dans l’Art et dans l’Histoire 1955, s.v. Dufy.
79 The same double-pattern would have been adopted later, e.g., for “Artful Deception. The Craft of the Forger”, Baltimore, Walters Arts Galleries 1987 (Vikan 1987), whereas other exhibitions would have chosen the sole quiz-game, like, e.g., “Fakes & Forgeries: Yesterday and Today”, Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum 2011 (Fakes & Forgeries 2011). Most exhibitions, however, would have featured labels identifying and describing the objects.
80 On the project of this museum dedicated to forgeries, see Prisco 2019.
faced some resistance and refusals when asked to be sent back, is striking. It proves that the director of the Institute, the art historian Cesare Brandi, thought that taking them from their own museological context as “non-art” would have raised an unsolvable question when side-by-side with “true” art.

In fact, although the exhibition failed, Cesare Brandi took on the role of forerunner of two different driving forces in the subsequent study perspectives: first, he emphasised the importance of scientific analyses, which were only marginal in restoration work, when the art historian’s true tools failed, that is, critical and aesthetic analyses in the case of fakes. Secondly, notwithstanding the paradigm of the ontological impossibility of fakes as art, he foreshadowed the hermeneutic re-evaluation of fakes and forgeries as historical documents, bearers of aesthetic, cultural and social messages on multiple levels and part of the history of taste and art criticism.

3. Conclusions

This path throughout forty years of temporary exhibitions on art and archaeological fakes and reproductions allows us to identify commonalities, differences, and changes over time, so far as display strategies, as well as the patterns, reasons and purposes, are concerned. We may conceptualize three format-paradigms that have been employed again, as exhibitions of art and archaeological forgeries have multiplied over the years and especially in the last decade.

First, exhibitions conceived and put on by museums for chiefly educational purposes. Whether they were catalogues of the museum’s own acknowledged mistakes – from “Fakes’ and Reproductions” (Philadelphia 1916) to “Take Care” (Brooklyn 1954) – or the outcome of a University class – like “Art: Genuine or Counterfeit?” (Cambridge 1940) – or yet they were to set up the venue for an international meeting of museum curators, gathering loans from outside – from “Forfalskninger” (Copenhagen 1915) to “Forgery and Imitation of Antiquities and Works of Art” (Oxford 1952) –, they first aimed to warn

81 “Il giudizio di falsità deve scaturire quanto meno sia possibile da apprezzamenti stilistici e quanto più possibile da analisi, constatazioni, documentazioni di fatto. E questo non perché proprio io voglia negare l’universalità del giudizio estetico, ma perché, trattandosi di non-arte, deve intervenire nel giudizio una catena di indizi, che proprio nel giudizio estetico non possono intervenire, tanto meno motivarlo» (Brandi 1955, p. 28).

82 Brandi’s ideas and beliefs on fakes and forgery found a place in the introduction for the entry Falsification written for the Enciclopedia Universale dell’arte (Brandi [1958] 1987), that was re-published in Teoria del restauro (Brandi [1963] 1977). Most notably, in the late 1950s, the art historian Giulio Argan designed the project of a twenty volumes series of art history to be published by Einaudi to include also a volume entitled Tecniche, falsi, restauri (techniques, fakes, restorations) by Cesare Brandi, which still was not to be (Nicoletti, Rossi Pinelli 2018, pp. 156 and ff.).
visitors against, and educate them about, the ubiquitous fakes, illustrating the doubtful signs and how to detect them. This format would have been bought by many museums in the subsequent years, as to account for example the miscellaneous exhibitions “Forgeries and Deceptive Copies” (London, British Museum 1961)\(^{83}\) and “Fakes and forgeries” (Minneapolis Institute of Fine Arts 1973)\(^{84}\), and is still in vogue, as shown, for instance, by the recent travelling exhibition “Fakes, Forgeries and Mysteries” (Detroit 2010)\(^{85}\) and “L’Âge du Faux. L’Authenticité en Archéologie” (Neuchâtel, Laténium 2011)\(^{86}\).

Secondly, exhibitions like the Parisian Salons des flics (1954, 1955), gathering counterfeits confiscated by the art police units, aimed at unveiling frauds, stigmatizing and countering forgers, denouncing the crime against the integrity of the art world and historical mystification, as well as highlight the financial costs and celebrating the police itself. Although exhibitions of this kind fell out of style in the mid-nineteenth century, they came back in fashion in recent years, as account for, e.g., “The FBI collects” (Washington D.C., McIntosh/Drysdale gallery 1986)\(^{87}\), and, more recently, “Veri, falsi e ritrovati” (Venice, Ca’ Foscari 2008)\(^{88}\), set up by the former Gruppo Tutela Patrimonio Archeologico of the Guardia di Finanza, and “The Metropolitan Police Service’s Investigations of Fakes and Forgeries” (London, Victoria and Albert Museum 2010)\(^{89}\), conceived and curated by the Arts and Antiques Unit of London’s Metropolitan Police Service\(^{90}\).

Lastly, that of the solo exhibition by the artist/forger, like the series of Alceo Dossena’s (Naples 1929, Milan 1929, Berlin 1930, Rome 1931, New York 1933), is a paradigm that has been employed again afterwards as well. Along with “Retrospettiva di Alceo Dossena” (Rome 1956)\(^{91}\), exhibitions devoted to the Russian goldsmith Israel Rouchomovsky – “Secret of the Tiara: The Work of the Goldsmith Israel Rouchomovsky” (Tel Aviv, Eretz Israel Museum 1997)\(^{92}\) –, Icilio Federico Joni, Umberto Giunti, and the other nineteenth-twentieth-century forgers of Italian Primitives – including “Falsi d’autore. Icilio Federico Joni e la cultura del falso tra Otto e Novecento” (Siena, Santa Maria della Scala 2004)\(^{93}\) –,

\(^{83}\) An exhibition of forgeries and deceptive copies, held in the Department of Print 1961.
\(^{84}\) Fakes and forgeries 1973.
\(^{85}\) See, e.g., Kahn 2010.
\(^{86}\) Kaeser 2011.
\(^{87}\) See, e.g., Shenon 1986.
\(^{88}\) Veri, falsi e ritrovati 2008.
\(^{89}\) See, e.g., Hardwick 2010.
\(^{90}\) They are worth mentioning also “Possessione. Trafugamenti e falsi di antichità a Paestum” (Paestum 2016) – Zuchtriegel 2016 – and the temporary displays organized within the Cycle of Conferences L’arte non vera non può essere arte by the Carabinieri Nucleo Tutela Patrimonio Culturale in 2017 (L’arte non vera 2018).
\(^{91}\) Biancale 1956.
\(^{92}\) See Benjamin 1997.
\(^{93}\) Mazzoni 2004. More in general, on the figure of the forger, see “Artful Deception. The Craft of the Forger” (Vikan 1987). On the Italian production of spuria over the nineteenth and
and, more recently, to the Dutch Han van Meegeren – “Van Meegeren’s Fake Vermeers” (Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen 2010) – provide some examples. By shedding light on the activity and the poetics of the artists/forgers and their milieu, these exhibitions drew attention to the critical analysis of, and reflection on, nineteenth-twentieth century antiquities collecting and trading tout court, that is the economic, social, and cultural scenario in which artistic reproduction and forgery were at their height. This was the last consequence of the 1980s re-evaluation of the figure of the forger and the phenomenon of art forgery as historical instances, mirrors of cultural, social, ethic, aesthetic, and epistemological values. This re-evaluation, foreshadowed by Cesare Brandi – and, before him, by Otto Kurz –, came to the fore thanks to exhibitions like “Vrai ou faux? Copier, Imiter, Falsifier” (Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 1988) or “Fake? The art of deception” (London, British Museum 1989).

With this in mind, panels on forgeries have been included in traditional exhibitions, framed into broader cultural discourses concerning Classical artistic and cultural memory and identity in our Modern and Late modern civilization and art; “Carvers and Collectors. The lasting aura of ancient gems” (Malibu, Getty Museum 2009) and “Voglia d’Italia. Il collezionismo internazionale all’ombra del Vittoriano” (Rome, Palazzo Venezia – Vittoriano 2017) provide two valuable examples.

On a different note, it is worth noting that from the late twentieth century, the flourishing business of counterfeits and the spreading of “fake news” taking over the globe, exhibitions have been organised that looked at the threat of forgery through the prism of diverse types of products, ranging from food to luxury and pharmaceutical. Paradigmatic is the case of the Parisian exhibition “Vraiment Faux” organized by the Fondation Cartier in 1988 (Jouy-en-Josas, Fondation Cartier 1988) and also exported to Italy – “Veramente Falso” (Milan 1990) – and, more recently, the Toronto’s Royal Ontario Museum-produced “Fakes & Forgeries: Yesterday and Today” (2010) travelling across Canada.

95 Jones et al. 1990.
97 Pellegrini 2017.
99 Fakes and Forgeries 2011.
Lastly, since the topic of forgery is tangent to that of revival and appropriation\(^{100}\), it is worth mentioning a number of exhibitions dealing with Postmodern appropriations from both Classical and Modern Art, from “Berlin und die Antike” (Berlin, Große Orangerie Schloss Charlottenburg 1979)\(^{101}\), “Pictures” (New York, Artists Space 1977)\(^{102}\) and “Art about Art” (New York, Whitney Museum of American Art 1978)\(^{103}\), to the more recent “Icons: The Art of Appropriation” (New York, Sotheby’s 2012)\(^{104}\) and “L’image volée” (Milan, Fondazione Prada 2016)\(^{105}\).

If Alfred Lessing claimed that, whatever the reason for the removal of van Meegeren’s *Disciples of Emmaus* from the walls of the Boymans Museum in Rotterdam, still «it embodies and bears witness to the greatness of the seventeenth-century art of Vermeer»,\(^{106}\) we may say that not only do the semiotics of forgery exhibitions’ patterns\(^{107}\) investigated in this paper shed light on museums, galleries, and art police units’ reactions to, and reception of, forgeries over the century, but, in this *mise-en-abyme*, such narratives of/on forgeries also prove part of the history of culture and art criticism.

References


*A New Society’s Pictures; Brilliant but Audacious Beginners Show Their Pages* (1893), «The New York Times», April 29, p. 3.

Anderson J. (2015), *Reception of Ancient Art: The Cast Collections of the University of Tartu Art Museum in the Historical, Ideological and Academic*


\(^{101}\) Arenhövel, Schreiber 1979.

\(^{102}\) Crimp 1977.

\(^{103}\) Lipman, Marshall 1978.

\(^{104}\) <http://www.sothebys.com/it/auctions/2015/icons-art-appropriation-n09376.html>.

\(^{105}\) Demand 2016.

\(^{106}\) Lessing 1965, pp. 469-470.

\(^{107}\) Different narratives have been constructing through different display strategies: original/non-original side-by-side *versus* original/non-original in different panels; lonely forgeries *versus* forgeries/sine dolo copies and imitations; archaeological diagnostics *versus* scientific diagnostics; labels *versus* quiz etc.
Context of Europe (1803-1918), Dissertationes Studiorum Graecorum Et Latinorum Universitatis Tartuensis 7, Tartu: University of Tartu Press.


Art News (1929), May 18, p. 12.


Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke (1937a), «Salzburger Chronik», September 7, p. 3.

Ausstellung gefälschter Kunstwerke (1937b), «Das Interessante Blatt, September 9, p. 22.


Beissel S. (1909), Gefälschte Kunstwerke, Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder.

Bell C. (1916), Art, New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company (ed. or. 1913).


Chemistry Vs. Forgery; Dr. Turkel’s Way of Telling if a Check Has Been Raised (1933), «The New York Times», May 28, p. 7.


Conestabile della Staffa G.C. (1874a), Scavi, monumenti, musei e insegnamento della scienza delle antichità in Italia. Lettera al comm. Ruggero Bonghi [con


Datzing M.M. van, ed. (1952), Vals of echt?, tentoonstelling catalogus (Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum 1952), Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum.


Der berühmte Kunstfälscher Dossena gestorben (1937), «Innsbrucker Nachrichten», 13 Oktober, p. 5.

Der Meisterfälscher Dossena gestorben (1937), «Der Wiener Tag», 13 Oktober, p. 3.

De Ruggiero E. (1874), Lo stato e i monumenti dell’antichità in Italia, Roma: Regia tipografia.


Doron G., ed. (1989), Fakes and Forgeries from Collections in Israel, exhibition catalogue (Tel Aviv, Israel Eretz Museum 1989), Tel Aviv: Eretz Israel Museum.


Esposizione di 28 capolavori di Alceo Dossena (1929), Milano: Galleria Micheli.

Fiorelli G. (1883), Sull’ordinamento del servizio archeologico: relazione del direttore generale delle antichità e belle arti a S.E. il Ministro della Istruzione Pubblica, Roma: Forzani e C.
Fiorelli G. (1885), Sull’ordinamento del servizio archeologico: Seconda relazione del direttore generale delle antichità e belle arti a S. E. il Ministro della Istruzione Pubblica, Roma: Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati.
Godley J. (1951), Master Art Forger. The Story of Han van Meegeren, London: Home and Van Thal.
Hannover E. (1912), Nogle Forfalskninger af gammelt københavnsk Porcellæn, København.
*L’arte non vera non può essere arte. Atti del ciclo di conferenze promosse dal Comando Carabinieri TPC, in collaborazione con il Consiglio Nazionale Anticontraffazione (CNAC-MiSE), il Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e l’Università degli Studi* (2018), Roma: Edizioni Efesto.

Looting and Faking (1944), «Connoisseur», 114, n. 493, p. 54.


M. Bayle assassiné (1929), «L’action Francaise», 17 Septembre.


Mostra personale dello scultore Alceo Dossena (1931), Roma: Mostre di “Fiamma”.

Müller S. (1892), Hannover, Emil Viggo, in Danish biographical encyclopedia, Vol. 6, København, p. 562.


Rorthays G. de (1903a), *The Tiara of Saitapharne*, «The Burlington Magazine», 1, n. 1, pp. 1-5.
Ruggiero E. De (1874), *Lo stato e i monumenti dell’antichità in Italia*, Roma: Regia tipografia.
Teilnahme österreichischer Fachleute am internationalen (1926), «Tages Post. Linz, Freitag», 17 September, p. 3.
Tentative List of Objects desirable for a Collection of Casts, Sculptural and Architectural, intended to illustrate the history of plastic art (1891), New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.


Appendice

Fig. 1. Some of the objects on view at “Forfalskninger” (Copenhagen, Danske Kunstindustrimuseum 1915). From left to right: Hannover 1916, cat. nos. 29, 73, and 88

Fig. 2. Some of the objects on view at “‘Fakes’ and Reproductions” (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Museum of Fine Arts 1916). From left to right: Modern French copy (France, eighteenth century) of genuine Chinese Ch’ien-lung porcelain plate (1736-1795); genuine example of Zwischenglass (Bohemia, mid-eighteenth century) and Venetian imitation (eighteenth century); Modern imitation of late sixteenth-century Siegburg white-stone cannette and genuine example. Barber 1916, cat. nos. 2 and 1, 234 and 235, 297 and 298
Fig. 3. Alceo Dossena, *Annunciation in the manner of Simone Martini*, polychromed wood, early nineteenth century, auctioned at “Sculptures by Alceo Dossena” (New York, National Art Galleries 1933). Frankfurter 1933, cat. nos. 15 and 16
Fig. 4. Some of the objects on view at “Gefälschte Kunstwerke” (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum 1937). From right to left: eighteenth century Egyptian Baphomet; Modern wooden statuettes of Holy Mary and Saint John after models of Tilman Riemenschneider; Modern golden reliquiar with pearls and precious stones after fourteenth century originals. Roessler 1937, p. 7
Fig. 5. Exhibition interior of “Take Care” at the Brooklyn Museum (1954), © Brooklyn Museum, photographs retrieved from <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/>
Fig. 6. A couple of the archaeological fakes on view at “Mostra del Falso d’arte” (Rome, ICR 1955). From left to right: fake Locrian terracotta pinax (Soprintendenza alle Antichità della Puglia e del Materano); fake marble portrait of a male (Soprintendenza alle Antichità di Torino). Prisco 2019, p. 276
Tab. 1 – Exhibitions of art and archaeological fakes held between 1915 and 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Museum</th>
<th>Exhibition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Copenhagen, DNK</td>
<td>Danske Kunstinsustrimuseum</td>
<td>Forfalskninjer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PE (USA)</td>
<td>Pennsylvania Museum of Art</td>
<td>“Fakes” and Reproductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Vienna, AUT</td>
<td>Kunsthistorische Museum</td>
<td>Ausstellung Gefälschte Kunstwerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>London, GBR</td>
<td>Burlington Fine Arts Club</td>
<td>Counterfeits, Imitations and Copies of works of art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>New York, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Metropolitan Museum of Art</td>
<td>Egyptian ‘fakes’ (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Vienna, AUT, touring</td>
<td>Belvedere, touring</td>
<td>Fälschungen und Faksimiles von Kunstwerken des 19. Jahrhunderts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>New York, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Metropolitan Museum of Art</td>
<td>Forged and Real (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Naples, ITA</td>
<td>Corona Gallery</td>
<td>(Exhibition on Alceo Dossena)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Milan, ITA</td>
<td>Galleria Micheli</td>
<td>Esposizione di 28 Capolavori di Alceo Dossena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Berlin, DEU</td>
<td>Hall of Art</td>
<td>Der Bildhauer Alceo Dossena aus dem filmzyklus “schauffende Hände”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Rome, ITA</td>
<td>Mostre di “Fiamma”, via Bocca di Leone 83</td>
<td>Mostra personale dello scultore Alceo Dossena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>New York, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Metropolitan Museum of Art</td>
<td>An exhibition of forgeries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>New York, NY(USA)</td>
<td>National Art Galleries - Rose Room, Hotel Plaza</td>
<td>Sculptures by Alceo Dossena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Nuremberg, DEU</td>
<td>Naturhistorischen Gesellschaft Nürnberg</td>
<td>Ausstellung über Fälschungen aus Nordbayern statt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Vienna, AUT</td>
<td>Kunsthistorische Museum</td>
<td>Gefälschte Kunstwerke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Cambridge, MA (USA)</td>
<td>Harvard, The Fogg Museum of Art</td>
<td>Art: genuine or counterfeit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Jerusalem, ISR (British Mandate)</td>
<td>Palestine Archaeological Museum (Rockfeller Museum)</td>
<td>(Exhibition on archaeological fakes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Oxford, GBR</td>
<td>Ashmolean Museum (Temporary Exhibitions Gallery)</td>
<td>Forgery and imitation / Fakes and Forgeries in Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Amsterdam, NLD, touring</td>
<td>Stedelijk Museum, touring</td>
<td>Vals of Echt?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>New York, NY, touring</td>
<td>Corning Museum of Glass, touring</td>
<td>True or false?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Paris, FRA</td>
<td>Gallerie du rue Faubourg St. Honoré</td>
<td>Musée des Faux artistiques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>New York, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Brooklyn Museum</td>
<td>Take Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Paris, FRA</td>
<td>Galerie du Grand Palais</td>
<td>Le Faux dans l’Art et dans l’Histoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Rome, ITA</td>
<td>Associazione della Stampa, Palazzo Marignoli in via del Corso 184</td>
<td>Retrospettiva di Alceo Dossena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-6-1959</td>
<td>Rome, ITA</td>
<td>Istituto Centrale del restauro (ICR)</td>
<td>Museo del Falso d’arte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>London, GBR</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
<td>Forgeries and Deceptive Copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>New York, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Graham Gallery</td>
<td>Art: Authentic and Fake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Madison, WI (USA)</td>
<td>Madison Art Center</td>
<td>Fakes and Frauds**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Portland, OR (USA)</td>
<td>Portland Art Museum</td>
<td>Fakes, Frauds and Forgeries**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Chicago, IL (USA)</td>
<td>The Renaissance Society of the University of Chicago</td>
<td>Know What You See**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>New York, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Martin Gordon Gallery</td>
<td>Buyer Beware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN (USA)</td>
<td>Minneapolis Institute of Arts</td>
<td>Fakes and Forgeries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Huntington, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Heckscher Museum of Art</td>
<td>Mistaken Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, PA (USA)</td>
<td>Pittsburgh University</td>
<td>Original + Fälschung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-1977</td>
<td>Essen, Berlin, DEU</td>
<td>Museum Folkwang, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz</td>
<td>Fälschung und Forschung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Westport, CT (USA)</td>
<td>Annual Southport-Westport Antiques Show</td>
<td>Genuine antiques and their counterfeits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Toledo, OH (USA)</td>
<td>Toledo Museum</td>
<td>Deceptions in glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Berlin, DEU</td>
<td>Orangerie Schloß Charlottenburg</td>
<td>Berlin und die Antike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Vienna, AUT</td>
<td>Akademie der Bildenden Künste</td>
<td>Original, Kopie, Replik, Paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Amsterdam, NLD</td>
<td>Allard Pierson Museum</td>
<td>Echt vals? namaak door de eeuwen heen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Maryland, MD (USA)</td>
<td>Annual hunt valley antiques show</td>
<td>Fakes and forgeries, marriages and deceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Brussels, BEL</td>
<td>Musée Royaux d’Art et d’Histoire, Brussels</td>
<td>Vervalsingen van Egyptische kunst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Washington D.C. (USA)</td>
<td>Mcintosh/Drysdale gallery</td>
<td>The FBI collects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Hull, GBR</td>
<td>Ferens Art Gallery</td>
<td>Don’t trust the label: an exhibition of fakes, imitations and the real thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Exhibition Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Oxford, GBR</td>
<td>Ashmolean Museum</td>
<td>Forgery and its Detection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Baltimore, MD (USA)</td>
<td>Walters Arts Galleries</td>
<td>Artful Deception: The Craft of the Forger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>New York, NY(USA)</td>
<td>Asia Society Galleries</td>
<td>The Real, the Fake and the Masterpiece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Paris, FRA</td>
<td>Fondation Cartier</td>
<td>Vraiment Faux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Paris, FRA</td>
<td>Cabinet des Medailles</td>
<td>Fakes and Forgeries from Collections in Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Tel Aviv, ISR</td>
<td>Israel Museum</td>
<td>Fake? The art of Deception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>London, GBR</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
<td>Kunst og Kunstfalskning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Aarhus, DNK</td>
<td>Kunstmuseum</td>
<td>Discovery and Deceit: Archaeology and the Forger’s Craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Jerusalem, ISR</td>
<td>Israel Museum</td>
<td>Treasures of Deceit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Milan, ITA</td>
<td>Museo Poldi Pezzoli</td>
<td>Truly Fake. Moses Wilhelm Shapira, Master Forger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Jerusalem, ISR</td>
<td>Rockefeller Museum</td>
<td>Fake or not fake: het verhaal van de restauratie van de Vlaamse Primitieven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Jerusalem, ISR</td>
<td>Rockefeller Museum</td>
<td>Definitely False. Moses Wilhelm Shapira, Master Forger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Bruges, BEL</td>
<td>Groeningemuseum</td>
<td>Intact to Deceive: Fakes and Forgeries in the Art World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Springfield, MA (USA), touring</td>
<td>The Michelle and Donald D’Amour Museum of Fine Arts</td>
<td>Fakes and Forgeries: The Art of Deception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Greenwich, CO (USA)</td>
<td>Bruce Museum</td>
<td>Veri, Falsi, Ritrovati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Venice, ITA</td>
<td>Ca’ Foscari</td>
<td>Unearthing the Truth, Egypt’s Pagan and Coptic Sculpture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>New York, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Brooklyn Museum</td>
<td>The Metropolitan Police Service’s Investigations of Fakes and Forgeries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>London, GBR</td>
<td>Victoria and Albert Museum</td>
<td>Close Examination: Fakes, Mistakes and Discoveries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>London, GBR</td>
<td>National Gallery</td>
<td>Fakes, Forgery and Mysteries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Detroit, MI (USA)</td>
<td>Detroit Institute of Arts Museum</td>
<td>Contrefaçon, la vraie expo qui parle du faux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Paris, FRA</td>
<td>Cité des Sciences et de l’Industrie, Parc de la Villette</td>
<td>Van Meegeren’s Fake Vermeers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Rotterdam, NLD</td>
<td>Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen</td>
<td>Fakes &amp; Forgeries: Yesterday and Today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Toronto, CAN, touring</td>
<td>Royal Ontario Museum, touring</td>
<td>L’Âge du Faux. L’authenticité en archéologie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Neuchâtel, CHE</td>
<td>Laténium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Exhibition Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Capaccio, ITA</td>
<td>Parco Archeologico Paestum</td>
<td>Possessione. Trafugamenti e falsi di antichità a Paestum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Reggio Calabria, ITA</td>
<td>Museo Archeologico Nazionale</td>
<td>Vero o falso. Il valore dell’originale, lo stile dell’imitazione</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Cosenza, ITA</td>
<td>Museo dei Brettii e degli Enotri</td>
<td>Bello ma Falso, tutta un’altra storia!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Winterthur, DE (USA)</td>
<td>Winterthur Museum</td>
<td>Treasures on Trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Münster, DEU</td>
<td>Museum für Archäologie Herne</td>
<td>Irrtümer und Fälschungen der Archäologie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Hannover, DEU</td>
<td>Sprengel Museum</td>
<td>Fake News: Original + Fälschung + Kopie + …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Taipei, TWN</td>
<td>National Palace Museum</td>
<td>Fineries of Forgery: “Suzhou Fakes” and Their Influence in the 16th to 18th Century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Hildesheim, DEU</td>
<td>Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum</td>
<td>Irrtümer und Fälschungen der Archäologie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Roma, ITA</td>
<td>Università degli Studi Roma Tre</td>
<td>In difesa della bellezza. Diagnostica umanistica e tecnologico-scientifica per lo svelamento del falso nell’arte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>St. Peter, MN (USA)</td>
<td>Hillstrom Museum of Art</td>
<td>Elmyr De Hory, Artist and Faker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Binghamton, NY (USA)</td>
<td>Binghamton University Art Museum</td>
<td>Holy Hoaxes: A Curator Collects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Cited in Koobatian 1997; the museum’s archive does not hold any folder or reference to this exhibition.  
** Cited in *Fakes and Forgeries* 1973.