

COSTRUIRE LA PACE

STORIE ANTICHE, URGENZE PRESENTI

CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION

AS PART OF THE EXHIBITION
"LA CALMA ASSENTE:
PACE E GUERRA NELL'ANTICA GRECIA"
MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL ART
AT SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY

OPEN CALL FOR ARTISTS

APPLICATION DEADLINE 15. 11. 2025



POLO MUSEALE
SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATIONS

Peace is an ancient idea. A necessity that runs through history and lives in every age. It is a reality to be built, a language to be learned, a daily practice. It is what holds differences together without erasing them, what seeks justice beyond silence, what gives form to a possible coexistence.

Peace as the free crossing of borders between peoples, places, identities, between the ancient and the modern. Peace as a difficult choice, as radical empathy.

Today, silence reigns in the halls of the Museum of Classical Art at Sapienza University of Rome, but in our contemporary world conflicts resound. To avoid indifference, we must make noise, act, and express ourselves.

The exhibition *La calma assente: pace e guerra nell'antica Grecia* (*The Absent Calm: Peace and War in Ancient Greece*), hosted within the Museum, proposes a dialogue with the past that goes beyond matters of style. The aim is to read in the plaster casts of sculptures the threads of ancient history, deeply marked by conflict and the celebration of victory, yet also crossed by images and symbols of Peace.

Within the exhibition project, the section *Costruire la pace. Storie antiche, urgenze presenti* (*Building Peace. Ancient Stories, Present Urgencies*) stems from the desire to shift the focus from the centrality of war in classical culture to question the possibility of a Peace that is not merely the absence of conflict, but that finds space within the cracks of history, among sculpted bodies and the narratives preserved in the museum.

Although most of the works displayed in the museum inevitably depict scenes and subjects connected with war, many of them can serve as a warning against violence and the disastrous consequences that every conflict inevitably entails. It is therefore important to acquire an alert and conscious gaze, capable of neutralizing the fascination that the exaltation of force and supremacy can often generate. Classical art itself, after all, offers sublime examples of the celebration of the defeated (such as the famous Hellenistic masterpiece known as *The Dying Gaul*), which can still today serve as powerful antidotes against the ferocity and injustice brought about by the use of arms.

This call aims to invite artists and collectives to contribute to building a true culture of Peace, drawing inspiration from the classical heritage to stimulate reflection and civic commitment toward the values of dialogue, respect, and understanding of others. The proposed works, may thus be inspired both by explicitly irenic subjects (such as images of harmony or prosperity) and by iconographies illustrating the ferocity and disastrous consequences of any armed conflict. They should establish a reference to ancient culture—not necessarily in a formal sense—that creates a bridge with the past and a window onto our present.

How can art contribute to this culture of Peace?

It is our responsibility to make change concrete.

Art. 1) WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

- ◆ The call is open to visual artists of all kinds.
- ◆ Both individual works and collective projects are accepted.

Art. 2) CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK

- ◆ The work must reflect on the theme of Peace, fitting into the exhibition project described in the introduction to this call. Artists are free to enter into dialogue with the Museum, where war is often more visible than peace, to develop a project that chooses to foreground Peace as a central horizon. Possible approaches include
 - Peace as coexistence
 - Peace as rest and bucolic quiet
 - Peace as equality
 - Peace as a right
 - Peace as justice
 - Peace as victory or agreement
 - Peace as freedom

These indications do not exclude works with war-related subjects as a possible source of inspiration, given their prevalence in the museum's collection. Artists are invited to rethink and transform them into narratives of Peace.

- ◆ The work must reference antiquity, engaging with the museum's exhibition spaces and the classical artworks on display (see Art. 3 – THE MUSEUM).
 - Works may be realized in various media (photography, sculpture, drawing, print, engraving, painting, etc.) within the spatial limits provided.
 - ◆ Dimensions:
 - A space of approx. 80 m² is available for sculptures or installations.
 - Eight display cases are available, each measuring 1.86 m wide × 0.40 m high (artists may use part or all of the assigned case).
 - ◆ It is possible to present multiple works in different spaces.
 - ◆ Works must be submitted through the form within the deadlines set out in Art. 4)
- PARTICIPATION AND TIMELINE.**

Art. 3) THE MUSEUM

The Museum of Classical Art at Sapienza University of Rome—covering over 3,000 m²—consists of fifty-five rooms and houses more than 1,200 plaster casts of Greek sculptures (originals and Roman copies) from museums and collections worldwide. Some examples include:

- Statue of Eirene, goddess of Peace
- The battle between Gods and Giants (from the Pergamon Altar, now in Berlin)
- The pediments of the Temple of Athena Aphaia at Aegina (battle scenes exalting the military virtues of the Aeginetans)

To view the museum map and photos of the collection, click on: [Discover the museum](#)
Instagram page of the Museum: [Click here](#)

Art. 4) METHODS OF PARTICIPATION AND DEADLINES

- ◆ **A short presentation text of the work**
- ◆ **Project proposal, including:**
 - Technical description (dimensions, materials, installation, special requirements)
 - Images, sketches, or renderings
- ◆ **Artist/collective profile**
- ◆ **Portfolio:** a selection of previous works with brief captions if applicable
- ◆ **Timeline:** the call opens on September 18, 2025. The works must be submitted through the form by November 15, 2025. The selection process will then follow the procedures described in Art. 5) SELECTION AND COSTS
- ◆ **Exhibition dates:** March 2026 – December 2026

- ◆ Link to application form: [Apply here](#)

Art. 5) SELECTION AND COSTS

Applications will be evaluated by a committee of curators and members of the project's scientific board.

Main criteria:

- Relevance to the theme and relation to classical heritage
- Originality of language and vision
- Compatibility with museum spaces and context

Both individual works and groups of works will be considered, provided they engage with the exhibition theme.

Results will be communicated by email.

Participation is free of charge, but transportation (shipping and return) of works will be at the artists' expense, as well as the provision of pedestals, bases, monitors, or other special equipment (if necessary) to be agreed upon with the curatorial team.

Insurance coverage will be provided by Sapienza University of Rome.

Art. 6) JURY AND AWARDS

Works will be selected by the Scientific Committee composed of:

- **Massimiliano Papini**

Professor of Archaeology and History of Greek and Roman Art, Director of the Museum of Classical Art, Sapienza University of Rome. His research focuses on various aspects of Greco-Roman culture, with particular emphasis on figurative arts and Greco-Roman sculpture. Since 2012, he has been a member of the German Archaeological Institute.

- **Irene Baldriga**

Professor of Museology, Museum Policies and Education, Delegate for Public Engagement at Sapienza University of Rome. Her research focuses on museology, heritage education and storytelling, history of public engagement, protection, communication, and valorization of cultural heritage. She is a member of the Group de Recherche Éducation and Musées at the Université du Québec à Montréal and adjunct researcher of the HISTARA Group at the École Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris. She directs the book series “Fare Museo” by Edifir (Firenze) and, since 2025, has been a member of the Commission for Naturalistic and Scientific Museum of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei

- **Claudia Carlucci**

Director of the Sapienza Museum Hub, Professor of Etruscology and Italic Archaeology. Corresponding member of the Rivista di Studi Etruschi. She has curated numerous scientific projects for temporary archaeological exhibitions as well as permanent displays.

- **Raffaella Perna**

Professor of Contemporary Art History, Sapienza University of Rome, author of numerous publications focused on feminist art in the 1960s and 1970s, she has coordinated the university network of La Quadriennale Foundation. She is responsible for the local unit of the PRIN 2020 project Italian Feminist Photography and the PRIN 2022 project WOW – Women Writing around the Camera, and is a member of the FAF Research Center (Photography, Art, Feminisms). She has curated numerous exhibitions.

- **Ilaria Schiaffini**

Professor of Contemporary Art History, Director of the Museum-Laboratory of Contemporary Art. Her research interests focus on Symbolism and the historical avant-gardes, on the relationships between art, literature, and philosophy, on the history of photography, and on photographic archives.

- **Claudio Zambianchi**

Professor of Contemporary Art History, Sapienza University of Rome. His main areas of study are English art and art criticism from the late 19th and early 20th centuries; American art of the 19th and 20th centuries; Italian art and art criticism after World War II; and French art of the second half of the 19th century. He is Emeritus Director of the Museo Laboratorio di Arte Contemporanea at Sapienza University and co-editor of the online journal Piano B.

A group of students from the Master’s Degree program in Art History, who collaborated in the conception and development of the project, will also serve on the Committee.

Two prizes are foreseen: one awarded by the scientific committee and one by popular vote from visitors.

Winners will be notified by email. The award ceremony will take place at Sapienza University and will serve as an occasion to meet the artists.

Art. 7) CURATORS AND ORGANIZERS

Curatorial team:

- Prof. Massimiliano Papini
- Prof. Irene Baldriga
- Prof. Claudia Carlucci

Under their direction the curatorial team is also includes:

- A group of archaeology students for the exhibition on peace and war in ancient Greece: Giacomo Presciuttini, Federico Raimondi, Giulia Rampiconi, Sara Ruia, Irene Sofia Scifoni, Tommaso Sambuco.
- For the contemporary art exhibition project, a group of students from the Master's Degree program in Art History: Ashanti Soleil Bernardini, Francesca Di Lupo, Alessandro Francesca, Matteo Hung Morosetti, Carolina Sala, Giada Torresan.

The exhibition project is part of the “Third Mission” initiatives of Sapienza University of Rome, in particular the project *Paesaggi di Confine. Work Models for Participatory Storytelling* and the activities of the Open Lab CIVIS *Faro Sapienza*.

The university's Third Mission is a collaborative and project-oriented framework aimed at promoting the valorization of knowledge through initiatives that engage with local communities. By going beyond the traditional concept of academic studies, the University seeks to serve citizens and contribute to the social, economic, and cultural development of communities. The *Paesaggi di Confine* project, in collaboration with the Open Lab *Faro Sapienza*, promotes the enhancement of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in order to encourage respect for others, a culture of peace, and social sustainability.

Reference links:

[Sapienza Third Mission page](#)

[CIVIS Open Lab Faro Sapienza](#)

[Paesaggi di Confine](#)

Art. 8) CATALOGUE

A catalog of the exhibition, featuring the selected works and curatorial critical texts, will crown the experience.

Art. 9) CONTACTS

Email: mostrapace.sapienza@gmail.com

Email Prof. Massimiliano Papini: massimiliano.papini@uniroma1.it

FAQ

- ♦ **Does the work need to be unpublished?** No, works do not need to be unpublished. Previously created works may be submitted if consistent with the exhibition themes and adaptable to the museum context.
- ♦ **Can I submit more than one work?** Yes, multiple works may be submitted. Each proposal must be complete and clearly distinct, with its own conceptual description, images, and technical specifications. If submitting multiple proposals, it is preferable to organize them into separate sections within one PDF file or send distinct files, each containing all required materials.
- ♦ **In which language can I submit materials?** Materials may be submitted in any language.
- ♦ **Can I visit the exhibition spaces before proposing a site-specific project?** Yes. It is possible to request information or images of the spaces or arrange a visit.
- ♦ **What is the deadline for submission?** The call closes on November 15, 2025.
- ♦ **What is the timeline for selection results and delivery of works?** Updates will follow after the call closes on November 15, 2025.
- ♦ **What is the exhibition duration?** March 2026 – December 2026.
- ♦ **Is there compensation for selected artists?** No, works will be loaned free of charge. Only prizes for winners are foreseen.
- ♦ **Where can I find the application form?** You can access it via the following link: [Apply here](#)