



Stony Brook University and Florence University of the Arts are pleased to announce the 10th Annual Fall Conference, which will take place in Florence on Friday, November 30 and Saturday, December 1, 2018.

2018 Conference Theme:

**Rare and Universal: Leonardo's Humanism across Time and Space**

To say the Leonardo da Vinci was a genius means to state the obvious. Incidentally, he was certainly not the only one in the context of the Italian Renaissance, a blessed and perhaps unrepeatable age which produced a multitude of mathematicians, scientists, engineers, not to mention some of the most extraordinary artists of all time such as Botticelli, Raphael and Michelangelo. Leonardo's exceptional profile has been extolled by scholars and historians since the first decades after his death. Around 1540, the unknown author of the *Anonimo Gaddiano*, a manuscript preserved in the National Library in Florence, wrote: "His genius was so *rare* and *universal* that it can be said that nature worked a miracle on his behalf in creating him..." Only a few years later, Giorgio Vasari referred to Leonardo as follows: "In the normal course of events many men and women are born with remarkable talents; but occasionally, in a way that transcends nature, a single person is marvellously endowed by Heaven with beauty, grace and talent in such abundance that he leaves other men far behind..."

In the collective imagination, Leonardo embodies the archetype of the polymath, the "Universal Man" whose expertise spans through several subject areas, in accordance with the Renaissance ideal that emphasized a limitless capacity for development and enhanced a full, generalist approach to knowledge. However, Leonardo's universality can also be understood in reference to the vastness of his fame, which has transcended spatial boundaries and has never diminished throughout the centuries.

Interest in Leonardo and his work has continued unabated. Crowds queue to see his best-known artworks, the Vitruvian Man is a global icon printed on t-shirts, and the world still views him with awe, the symbol of unquenchable curiosity and unprecedented creativity.

Next year, Italy, alongside many other countries, will celebrate the 500th anniversary of Leonardo's death. This conference aims to provide a starting point for an in-depth reflection about the legacy of the Renaissance today. In the age of technology and globalization, in a society where important ethical values seem on the wane, if not irremediably lost, the ideals promoted by the Humanists appear more utopian than ever. In the obscure times that we are living in, is there space for a moral and spiritual rebirth? Is mankind doomed to an unavoidable decline, or will we be capable of resuming an ascending path? Will man be capable of achieving a new awareness and displaying his endless potential?

It is no coincidence today that there is an increased dialogue revolving around a new form of Humanism. It becomes topical every time the question on mankind's condition and destiny is reopened. We live in times when the pillars of the old world are falling apart – the future of society's stakeholders remains uncertain while a new era is being born, for better or for worse. It is in this context of crisis and transformation that the issue of human destiny yet again takes center stage.

The fields addressed by the Conference are: History, Art, Architecture, Literature, Philosophy, Science, Engineering, Sociology, Economy, Technology, and Religion.

Suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- Humanism
- The Italian society between 15th and 16th century
- The places of Leonardo: Florence, Milan, France
- Leonardo and his time
- Leonardo's projects and inventions
- Leonardo's impact on the modernity
- Italian creativity and "Made in Italy"
- The modern approach to the Renaissance
- New Humanism
- Humanism in Globalization
- Interreligious dialogue in a globalized world
- Relationships between faith and science in the Age of Technology
- Human Rights
- Social justice

### **ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS**

One-page abstract (not exceeding 300 words) and short Curriculum Vitae.

The above material must be submitted in the English language to [conferences@fua.it](mailto:conferences@fua.it) no later than August 31st, 2018.

All the proposals will be examined by the Conference Scientific Committee, which will notify selected candidates by September 7, 2018.

Conference presentations will be conducted in English for a maximum of 20 minutes.  
The selected papers will be published in an online volume of the conference proceedings.

### **CONFERENCE VENUE**

Florence University of the Arts  
Palazzo Bombicci Guicciardini Strozzi – Corso Tintori, 21  
Florence, Italy