

# cincinnati art museum

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**\*Images Available Upon Request**

## **Rare presentation of Giorgione's *La Vecchia* at the Cincinnati Art Museum February 15–May 5, 2019**

**CINCINNATI**— *La Vecchia*, a singular masterpiece by Renaissance painter Giorgione, will be on view at the Cincinnati Art Museum February 15–May 5, 2019. This will mark the first time a painting by this rare and influential artist has been on view in Cincinnati, and the first exhibition of *La Vecchia* following a major conservation treatment.



The painting is on loan from one of Europe's greatest paintings collections, the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice, Italy. The Cincinnati Art Museum is presenting the work in conjunction with the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, which will showcase the artwork in the summer of 2019, and the Foundation for Italian Art and Culture (FIAC), which has facilitated its loan.

Created circa 1502–08, *La Vecchia* (Italian for “the old woman”) is among the most startling and engaging images of the Italian Renaissance. Depicted in half-length with her body turned to the side, the wizened figure looks directly at us and points to herself. Her mouth is open, as though speaking, and she sends us a message—a slip of paper emerging from her sleeve inscribed *col tempo*, “with time.”

In the woman's skin, teeth and hair, the effects of age are rendered unsparingly, yet with a depth of humanity. It is both a portrait and an allegory of aging. Remarkably, the painting retains the painted wood frame that has been with it since the mid-sixteenth century.

“*La Vecchia* embodies the power and complexity of the art of painting at one of its most experimental moments,” says Peter Jonathan Bell, Cincinnati Art Museum Associate Curator of European Paintings, Sculpture and Drawings.

Giorgione was born in 1477 and spent most of his career in Venice, where he died in 1510. As few as two dozen paintings attributed to the artist survive today and his life is shrouded in mystery. In spite of a short career, Giorgione was renowned in his lifetime for his innovative approach to landscape and portrait painting, and he left an enduring legacy. His work strongly influenced artists for another two centuries, and he has been called the founder of sixteenth-century painting in Venice.

In addition to facilitating the painting's loan, the Foundation for Italian Art and Culture (FIAC) funded a conservation treatment of the painting in 2018 that has breathed new life into *La Vecchia*. “The painting looks better than it has for the last 150 years—maybe more,” says Bell.

The Cincinnati Art Museum collaborated with FIAC on past exhibitions *Cagnacci: Painting Beauty and Death* (2018) and *Sublime Beauty: Raphael's Portrait of a Lady with a Unicorn* (2015).

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Giorgione's *La Vecchia* is sponsored by Robert Lehman Foundation and James J. and Joan A. Gardner Family Foundation. It will be on view in the Sara M. and Michelle Vance Waddell Gallery (G125), across from the Terrace Café. Admission is free.

Image credit: Giorgione (1477–1510), Italy, *La Vecchia*, circa 1502–08, oil on canvas, 26  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 23  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (68 x 59 cm), Gallerie dell'Accademia, cat. 272, © Archivio fotografico G.A. VE, courtesy of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities—Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice

## **About the Cincinnati Art Museum**

The Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the generosity of individuals and businesses that give annually to Artswave. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as our members.

Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from the Rosenthal Family Foundation. Special exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free. The museum is open Tuesday – Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and Thursday, 11 a.m.–8 p.m. [cincinnatiartmuseum.org](http://cincinnatiartmuseum.org)

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