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## **Classic, contemporary and environmental**

### **From Torino to Roma, a list of exhibitions for every artistic taste**

By

Romantic landscapes by Poussin and more realistic paintings by Canaletto; parades of ancient pharaohs by Oscar-winning set designer Dante Ferretti; paintings on ice influenced by our planet's climate change; artistic lighting transfiguring city squares and streets; majestic architectures of snow and ice; frozen sculptures alongside high-altitude sonic installations; and more: Leonardo, Michelangelo, Charlemagne, and even the unique opportunity to try winter sports in the dark. Midway between classic and contemporary, visual arts grab a chunk of the limelight during the 20th edition of the Winter Olympics in Torino. A tribute to mountains, a challenge to ice, snow and water in their interplay, a playful take on the suggestions of cold weather, but also a readiness to exhibit Egyptian, Greek and Roman treasures and to offer sophisticated pictorial and statuary beauties, marks the long list of exhibitions included in Italyart, the cultural side of Turin 2006. The programme opened at the "Giovanni e Marella Agnelli" Painting Gallery, where *Paesaggio e veduta da Poussin a Canaletto* ("Landscapes and vedutas from Poussin to Canaletto") will run until May 14; it includes 65 works painted between the 17th and 18th centuries, lent by the collection housed at Palazzo Barberini in Rome. The exhibition follows the history of landscape painting, born as an alternative art form in Rome in the late 16th century and grown throughout the next 150 years following tastes, styles and market trends of the period, passing through Classicism and Romantic euphoria, the lure of realism and camera obscura, picturesque exercises, and the fashion of fantastic ruins. This is a precious review of the greatest Italian and foreign artists who worked between Venice and Rome in the 17th and 18th centuries, such as the elegant Bellotto, the lucid Canaletto, the captivating Cerquozzi and Dughet, the melancholic Guardi and Guercino, the knowledgeable Panini, the seductive Poussin, the grandiose Van Wittel, the panoramic Paul Bril, and the magniloquent Salvator Rosa.

For mountain lovers, until September 17 the Fort of Bard (Aosta) hosts *Alpi di Sogno. Dal mito all'ascensione* ("Alps of Dreams. From myth to ascension"), examining the history of depiction of the Western Alps from 1800 to 1930, a timeframe when mountains went from the limbo of a confused perception to greater human awareness, demonstrated by the interest shown them by artists. Until April 23, Torino's GAM is celebrating Vittorio Sella, *alpinista e fotografo* ("Vittorio Sella, alpinist and photographer"). Sella's high-altitude travels, carried out between 1887 and 1908, mostly in Caucasus, Africa and Alaska, in the company of the Duke of Abruzzi, produced some 200 photographs in different formats and techniques, including some really extraordinary panoramas composed of four or five pictures juxtaposed. Still more summits on display until March 26 at Torino's Museo Nazionale della Montagna, for an exhibition entitled *Viaggio alle Alpi, alle origini del turismo alpino* ("A trip to the Alps - the origins of Alpine tourism"), alongside *Viaggi dell'Oro* ("Gold trips"), where photographs taken by Canadian Craig Richards document the adventure of the Klondike gold rush, at the close of the 19th century, straddling the Canadian Arctic and Alaska. Finally, until April 30 Torino's Museo

Regionale di Scienze Naturali displays Inuit. Popoli del Ghiaccio ("Inuit. Peoples of the ice"), an exhibition including photos by Italian-Canadian Silvia Pecota, items and artworks from Siberia, Alaska, Canada, Greenland and Northern Europe. Lovers of antiquity will be pleased to know the Turin's Museo delle Antichità Egizie presents - until June 30 - Riflessi di Pietra ("Reflections in Stone"), an imposing collection of monumental statues of pharaohs, deities and dignitaries, selected from the large Egyptian collection of the Museum, in a scenery designed by Dante Ferretti, where the central spot has been given to the statue of Ramses II, the last great sovereign of a powerful, rich and wise Egypt, an image that would last to our days. A veritable show of colours and lights exalting the beauty of stone sculpted to portray the faces and bodies of kings, gods and noblemen, propelled by human skill and thought to the eternal dimension of art. Right beside it, another exhibition is devoted to La vita quotidiana dell'antico Egitto ("Everyday life in ancient Egypt"), a theme illustrated with artworks and items of common use. A key role is played by the paintings found in the tomb of Iti, a detailed description of peasant life, including the topical moments of harvest and reproduction. This patrimony is integrated by a rich assortment of raw materials, tools, food, cosmetics, garments, and furniture, illustrating life in dwellings, shops and fields, by farmers, fishers or hunters. More 'classical beauty' can be found in Eroi ed atleti. L'ideale estetico nell'arte da Olimpia a Roma ("Heroes and athletes. Aesthetic ideal in art from Olympia to Rome"), running until April 30 at Torino's Museo di Antichità, which presents a selection of some 40 works - mostly Greek and Roman statues, as well as decorated ceramics and elements of funeral outfits of athletes - that reconstruct the iconographic models and the exaltation of beauty in classical art, through depictions of ancient Olympic Games and other athletic contests. Until June 18, Torino's Palazzo Bricherasio will host the presentation of the Papyrus of Artemidorus, an exceptional find dating to the age of the Ptolemies, brought out of 2,000 years of obscurity thanks to Fondazione per l'Arte of the Compagnia di San Paolo that recently bought it and had it restored. Visitors will be able to admire an ample portion of a formerly lost book by geographer Artemidorus of Ephesus, previously known mostly as a source for Strabo, but also three layers of images: the oldest map of classical age known to us, a catalogue of real and imaginary beasts, and a sketchbook with drawings of human figures, probably used in an artist's shop. However, the contemporary age spreads everywhere, in the lowlands as well as up high in the mountains; and art must be enjoyed with warm clothing and accessories. Until February 26, the Fort of Finestrelle - Europe's most imposing military fortress - hosts Pitture sotto zero: Ice Painting Project dell'artista canadese Gordon Halloran ("Paintings below zero: an Ice Painting Project of Canadian artist Gordon Halloran"). In the spirit of a special tribute to Canada, the country that will host the next Winter Olympics, Halloran creates huge abstract paintings, using a Zamboni as a spatula, a fire hose as an aerograph, and a church as his workshop. The results include layers of brightly coloured ice on floors, walls, windows and doors; visitors, in fact, must wear special shoes for walking on the artwork. The paintings melt and re-freeze every day, reflecting the dynamics of our planet's climate changes. Sestriere is constantly occupied, day and night until March 20, by Snow Show. Installazioni di ghiaccio e neve (Snow Show. Installations of ice and snow"), an exhibition of contemporary environmental art and architecture making use, instead of permanent and familiar materials such as wood or concrete, unusual and ephemeral water, in the form of snow. This is an open-air display of monumental installations of ice, some towering to five metres. Some of the most interesting artists and architects of our times take part in this event: Daniel Buren &

Patrick Bouchain, Carsten Höller & Williams & Tsien, Paola Pivi & Cliostraat, Jauma Plensa & Norman Foster, Yoko Ono & Arata Isozaki, Kiki Smith & Lebbeus Woods. There is also Echoes from the mountains - Suoni in alta quota (installazioni sonore), an experimental project developed by Ombretta Agrò Andruff in collaboration with Galleria One Off. In practice, 11 musicians and sonic artists have been invited to create performances and sonic installations for the mountain towns hosting Olympic events. The artists include Enrico Glerean, ZimmerFrei, Joe Diebes, Stephen Vitiello, Charlie Morrow, Steve McCaffery, Olivia Block, Miya Masaoka, Scanner, Vlada Tomova, and Phil Kline. The latter presents his performance Unsilent Night. Participants are advised to bring with them portable CD players or cassette recorders.

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