

Local Fisticuffs in the Shadow of Brunelleschi's Dome/Globe: Florence, Art, and the Renaissance Perspective on Modern Globalization"

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Something irresolvable divided Michelangelo and Torrigiano as they began their careers in late fifteenth-century Florence. Whatever the problem, Torrigiano delivered a blow that disfigured Michelangelo's nose for life. Physical disfigurement and ruptured friendship were not the only results of this altercation. This scuffle fundamentally divided the critical fortunes of how art history has categorized the careers of these two artists and shaped our understanding of the Florence that formed them. Even with a career that often took him away from his native city of Brunelleschi's dome, Michelangelo remains the consummate Florentine artist; Torrigiano, however, is largely absent from our modern-day history of Florentine art. In some respects this is understandable. After his Florentine fisticuffs, Torrigiano moved far away—well beyond the Florentine Renaissance one might argue—to a career a good bit across the globe in Tudor England.

I have two objectives for my proposed 2014 STARS presentation. My first is to challenge this latter-day art historical alienation of Torrigiano as I seek to repatriate him as a kind of test case for the larger question of just what was the wider geographic reach of Florentine art. Rather than seeing Torrigiano and others as exceptional to the norm of the city's artistic production when these masters worked beyond the city's walls, my argument will be that working beyond Florence was a well-established yet now under-appreciated practice in the Renaissance. My second objective is to speak broadly to my colleagues across the whole university in offering this Renaissance case study as a point of perspective into seeing the historical roots of how we now understand the world and talk about its interconnectedness. Central to contemporary globalization is its increasing spacelessness, or rather the perception of a borderless inter-penetrability of people, processes, and products. Toward engendering thought and, ideally, debate, my presentation will insist on the historic importance of place—be it of Renaissance Florence or of modern Beijing—to an understanding of the nature and purposes of globalization.

The University of Dayton, like other universities, is moving steadily toward a greater engagement with globalization in curriculum, research, and service, faculty, staff, and students. While this phenomenon is largely seen as a contemporary occurrence, driven mainly by technological, economic, and social factors, I will communicate to a general audience of faculty *and* students that the historical roots of modern globalization arise equally from the humanities and the arts. This can be seen with the Renaissance and its art within and beyond the very city that played such a critical role in how generations since have shaped and how we now understand our 21st century world: the Florence yes of Amerigo Vespucci, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Galileo Galilei, but also the Arno city and cultural *caput mundi* that was home to Brunelleschi's dome/globe as emblem of Florentine connectedness to elsewhere and Michelangelo's *David* as republican icon of the Renaissance and latter-day destination of the world.