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COLLECTING COLLECTIONS

GINEVRA IELKANN

Chairwoman of Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Turin

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I'm just going to start by telling you a bit about the architecture of this place because the Pinacoteca Agnelli is in a space on the roof of the Lingotto Building in the *Torino* Fiat Industrial Historical Complex. The pinacoteca permanently houses the private art collection which belonged to Giovanni and Marella Agnelli. Opened on September 20th 2002, the pinacoteca marks the final step in the 20 year long restructuring process of the whole Lingotto site, signed by Renzo Piano. The structure that today hosts the pinacoteca is the result of a long historical and architectural process of development that begins at the turn of the 20th century. So I thought it was important to give you a history of what the Lingotto used to be before it then becomes what it is today.



Pictures of the current appearance of the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli

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After a few trips to the United States and much discussion, in 1915 my great great great grandfather went to visit the Ford factories where they would basically chain belt and that was a huge inspiration to him and he decided to bring back this new technique to Europe. The Fiat board of directors decided to construct its new American- style factory in the Lingotto area. Work began in 1916 and the project and work management were entrusted to the engineer Giacomo Matté Trucco. Work on the rooftop car test track, perhaps the factory's best know symbol, was completed in 1921. The ramps north and south, Lingotto's other two symbols, were finished in 25 and 26, the date when the office block, seat of the company's board of directors, was also inaugurated. The factory remained in production, employing thousands of workers, until 1982.

(Pictures of the old factory designed by Giacomo Matte Trucco)

Serious discussion of possible new uses started at the end of the 70s, particularly after the 1980 recession. This period saw interesting exchanges between company, administration, unions, intellectuals, and technicians. Hardly anyone, however, questioned the need to conserve the factory. Twenty architects selected from among the most famous worldwide were invited to present projects for the possible new use of Lingotto.

In 1986 Fiat commissioned Renzo Piano to produce the design for the new Lingotto. Work on the shop show floor started in 1993 and it was completed in September 2002. The project preserves the 6 x 6 meter grid of the building featured in the original design by Matté Trucco and manages to save the two façades and their rhythms.

(Interior of the Factory after the Renzo Piano's remodeling)

So here you can see the way it's cut and the new Lingotto. There are two additions to this new building. One is the first bit over there where you see there is a globe, that is a meeting room and a helipad and on the other side over there, that's the pinacoteca. Underneath that you have a mall, a bit of the university, two hotels, an auditorium, a cinema, and I think that's it.

Here you can see some of the auditorium; you can see the Meridien hotel, and the new structure. So unlike other restructuring that essentially substitutes the original building and reduces its to a few symbols, Lingotto today presents the visitor with a subtle distribution of functions and rules that allow a unitary passage through the spaces, creating the effect of a city, where people and functions mix without, however, breaking the unity of the architecture, which is today unique in Europe. So within this structure they, my grandparents, as you see here, decided, as a last phase of this restructuring, to do the pinacoteca.

(Picture of Giovanni e Marella Agnelli)

The Pinacoteca Agnelli's mission today is dedicated to collecting. How this happened is basically we thought, you know, *Torino* is a very vivid city for art. There are a lot of museums. There's a real system for contemporary art, but you know there's a very important Egyptian museum, a cinema museum, Rivoli, which is probably the most important museum of contemporary art, art foundations, so what would the pinacoteca bring that wasn't in the city and what could we do? What we thought is we were born from a collection and that it would be very interesting to see other collections and to

understand other people's visions and see how, why they had decided to collect which would also allow us to show very different things which could go from contemporary to more ancient or jewelry, furniture, all sorts of different, of different, collections. Which is also a different way to show art, which is not so objective or studied, not too academic, exactly. The idea is that it would be more about subjectivity and more about people's passions and the way they see art, what they choose and so it would give a completely different vision.

(Pictures of the permanent exhibition of the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli)

So basically the permanent collection is all in that building that you saw that is above the Lingotto. It was built and it's called *scigno*, which means jewel box, and it contains 25 masterpieces: 23 paintings and 2 sculptures dating from the 18th century to the 20th century. So we start with the canvas of the *Halbardier in a Landscape* by Giambattista Tiepolo.

(Picture of *Halbardier in a Landscape*, 1736, Giambattista Tiepolo)

This is a bit of a painting it's so, let's say it's a quarter of a painting. All the rest of this painting is at the national Gallery in Edinburgh and we will actually put them together this year in Udine, to see them for the first time together.

It continues with two statues of dancers by Antonio Canova that you can see here.



Danzatrice con dito al mento, 1809/1814, Antonio Canova

The collection hosts six splendid views by Canaletto, which are two older views of a Canaletto that is more, more grandiose let's say, and then we have four younger paintings. You could very well see this difference of a Canaletto that is young and full of vivid colors and his paintings are so full of movement and here is one of the younger Canalettos and above you have the more important Canaletto, the one that is older.



Il ponte di Rialto da nord, 1725, Canaletto



Il Canal Grande dalle prossimà del ponte di Rialto verso nord, 1725, Canaletto

You see we have two Bellottos of Dresden and these were used for the reconstruction of Dresden. Dresden was bombed and when they had to reconstruct they didn't know, you know, they had to reconstruct it precisely. They went to these Bellotto paintings because they were so, so precise and detailed that it really helped them in the reconstruction of the city.

(Picture of Il Mercato Nuovo di Dresda visto dalla Moritzstrasse, 1750 y La Hofkirche di Dresda con il castello e il ponte di Augusto (Dresda dalla riva sinistra dell'Elba), 1748, Bernardo Bellotto)

So the room with the two Bellottos is followed by a room with seven Matisse, which is a very important number for an Italian collection. In Italian museums there are no Matisse. I don't know why but Italians are not interested by Matisse. This is a very interesting group of Matisse because it goes from the very beginning to a much later

period when he becomes much more abstract. So here in the middle you see this is a younger period and then we go on to these later, two later, moments of his life.

(Picture of *Michaella, robe jaune et plante*, 1943 ; *Méditation – Après le bain*, 1920 y *Tabac Royal*, 1943, Henri Matisse)

And here is, this is the last room, and it has two Picassos, this is *Un Homme Appuyé Sur une Table*, and it's probably the most important painting we have in the collection. It's a very rare Picasso because it uses so many different techniques and, different from many of his paintings which he did very fast, this is a painting that took him two years to do. This doesn't do it justice really. You should come to *Torino* to see it.

(Picture of *Un homme appuyé sur une table*, 1915/1916, Pablo Picasso)

Then we have a Manet and you see this lady in the middle. She was also the model for the painting *Olympia* and this is the second, the other version of her. It was probably study of *Olympia*, this painting.

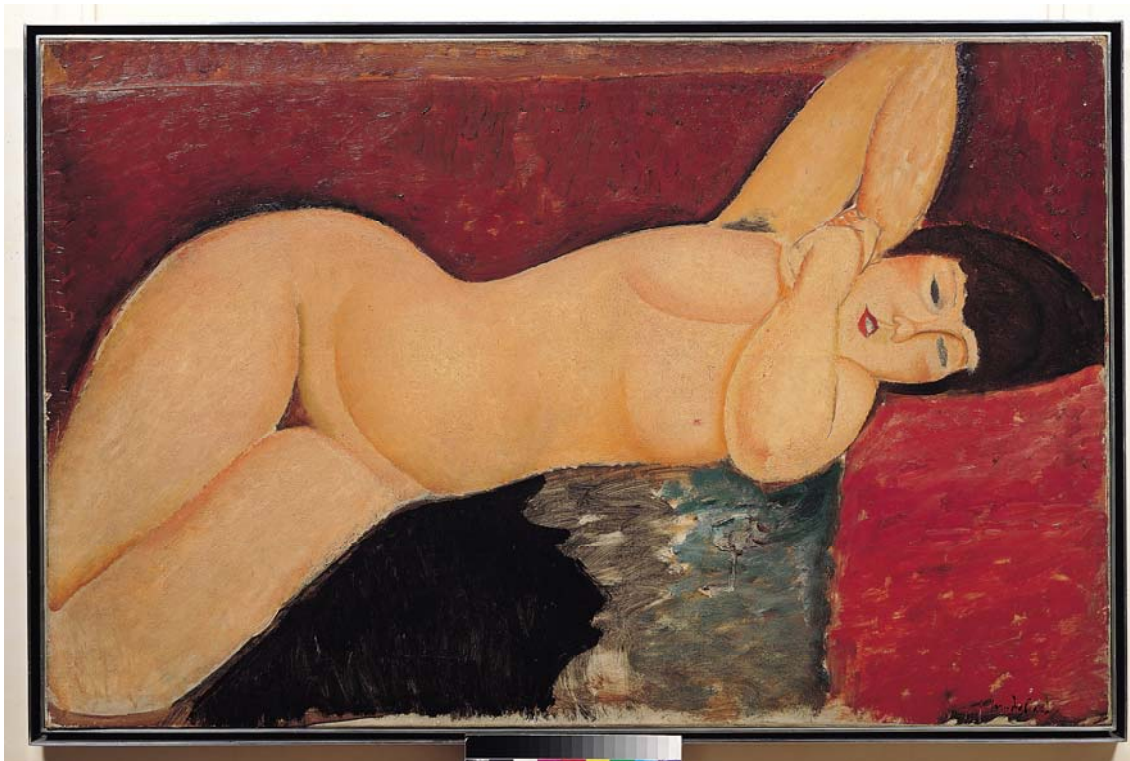
(Picture of *La Nègresse*, 1862/1863, Édouard Manet)

Then we have a Renoir. I like this story. They say that Renoir gave this painting to his fiancée. She was his fiancée and since he didn't have enough money to give her an engagement ring, he painted her and painted a ring on her finger and then he gave her this as a present on this trip they did to Naples.

And this was, this painting, was for a very long time at the Museum of Capodimonte. My grandfather had lent it to them because it had the *Vesuvio* in the back, and then it came to the pinacoteca when they decided. And then here you see, there's a Picasso, *La Belle Hétaïre* it's called. They say it's most probably a portrait of La Belle Otero, which was this famous woman so it reminds of a Toulouse Lautrec and those days.

(Picture of *La Baigneuse blonde*, 1882, Pierre-Auguste Renoir)

This is by far our most popular painting. I think they ask us for this painting every month to be brought to an exhibition and it's incredible, I mean, Canaletto never, Modigliani all the time. It's very popular.



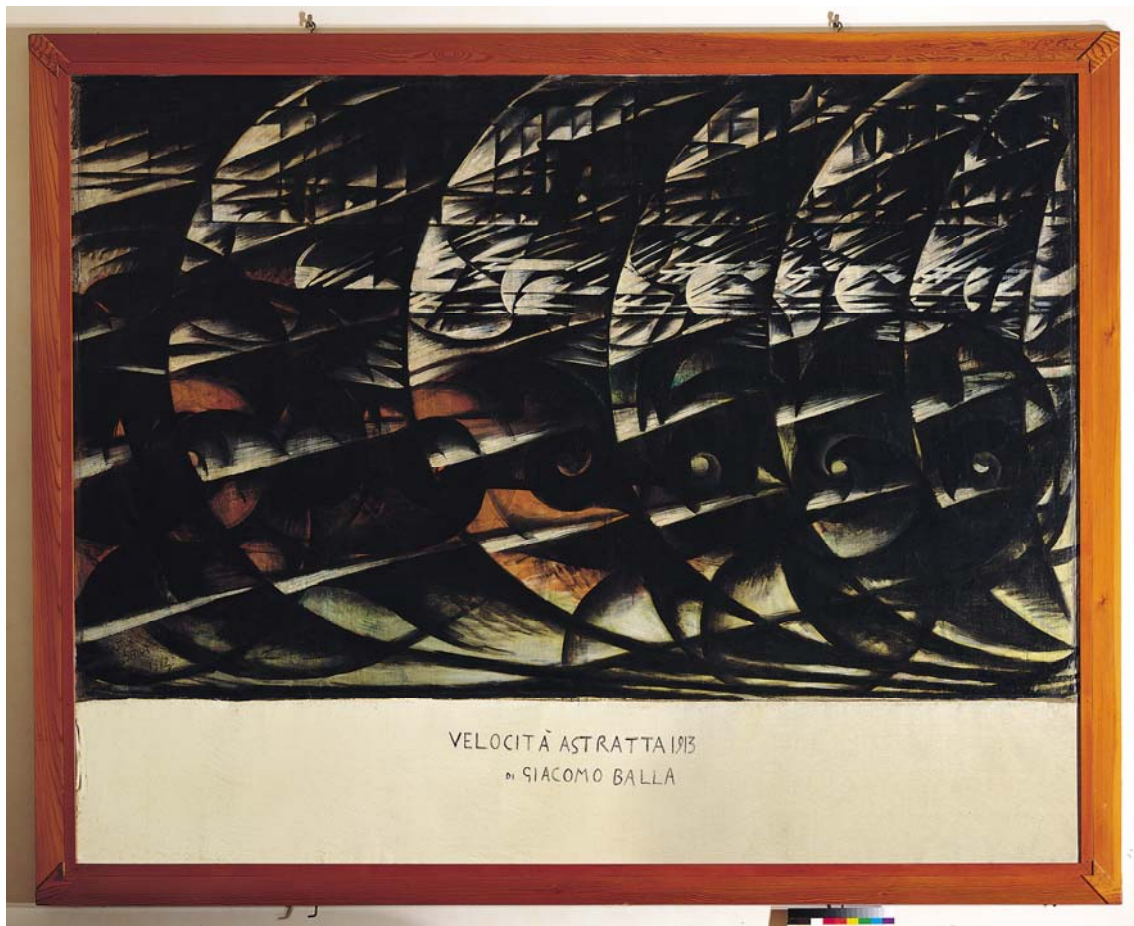
Nu couché, 1917, Amedeo Modigliani

And then the collection ends on these two futurists. One is, this is Severini and this is, this is actually very small



Lanciers italiens au galop, 1915, Gino Severini

and this one is very big, the one next to it.



Velocità astratta, 1913, Giacomo Balla

It's interesting because it's double, it has another painting on the back of this, which is the *March of Rome*, it's a very figurative painting and you see Mussolini and everyone marching on Rome. My grandfather decided not to show that side. It would have been very complicated because we would have needed a mirror etcetera, but also I think he was not that interested in that side of the painting.

So as you see this is an extremely diverse collection and a lot of people ask, you know, "What is the sense of this, why do you go from Canaletto to Picasso to Matisse?" It was a bit nonsensical to them in many ways, but my grandfather's answer to this was, "Well this is because this is what I find beautiful and that's why I want to show these. These are my favorites; this is my idea of beauty and so that's why I choose these paintings."

The museum opened in 2002 and my grandfather passed away very soon after and but he had very much wanted this museum. He had chosen every single color on the walls. I remember going around with him looking at museums, thinking, "Is this white, or is it best to have a color?" Or, "What height the paintings?" He had been very, very careful in the choice of which paintings were how the architect... This is why, to answer your question, we don't have as a mission to buy any more paintings because we want to keep it, as a legacy to Giovanni and Marella Agnelli and what their taste was and how they built this collection.

So then in 2005-2006 I started working at the pinacoteca and, as I said, started thinking about this program on collecting. The first exhibition that we did was **Why Africa?**



Picture from *Why Africa?*

This was an exhibition of the Johnny Pigozzi Collection. It's probably one of the biggest collections of African contemporary art in the world and it's quite an interesting story. He went to see a show at Pompidou it was called *Magiciens de la Terre* and it was a show on African, Asian and South American art. A lot of art that had never been seen before. He went to see this exhibition and he saw the African art and he fell in love. He says, "I thought to myself, I had an Andy Warhol, I had other paintings but I would have gotten the same collection as a dentist in Cincinnati, you know, it wouldn't have been that special." He saw in African art something that was closer to him, but also, I think, an opportunity to have a very special collection that only he would have. And so he started, together with André Magnin who is a curator, a French man who had grown up in Africa, and they started collecting all sorts of very important African art. Starting from photography, like Seydou Keita, and Malick Sidibé, to you know, Chéri Samba, Frédéric Bruly Bouabré, Bodys Kingelez. And very different mediums too – sculpture, photography, paintings.

For that exhibition also we asked Ettore Sottsass to do the layout for the show and that was a very important thing because Johnny Pigozzi lives in homes made by Ettore Sottsass and so to put together his collection and the architects who did his house was like putting together his world, and his taste. So that was the beginning of this idea of collections and it was a very successful show and for the first time it was shown in Italy, this African art.

Then it was the year of design in *Torino* and I met Alexander Von Vegesack, who is the director of the Vitra Museum, near Basel now, in Weil am Rhein. He had this incredible design collection and he and the curator were very generous.



Pictures from *Adventures with Objects*



Picture from *Adventures with Objects*

This was a very interesting show because Alexander was willing to give a lot of himself and a lot of his history and the history of his collecting. Basically his collection is of furniture and textiles, all sorts of catalogues of design, a lot of Thonet furniture, but also of things he had bought in his travels. You see this for instance, all the pink over here is Mexican, all the things he bought in Mexico. I mean it was incredible, the amount of things that were in the exhibition. There was this idea of the accumulation of collecting, so a lot, a lot, a lot of things. But also throughout the exhibition he was a narrating voice of how he had started collecting, his interest when he sold part of his collection, bought it again, all the history, of his which was very generous and actually worked very well because this is, to this day, our most successful show. In this case Alexander showed his furniture and the Vitra Museum helped us with the whole, so again we managed to reconstruct his world.

(Picture from *From Prehistory to the Future*)

This is from *Prehistory to the Future*. It was the collector Bruno Bischofberger, who is a very important art dealer. He was the art dealer of Andy Warhol and Basquiat and he

was probably the one who started the collaborations between Andy Warhol, Basquiat and Francesco Clemente and he is an incredible collector. I've never seen anything like this in my life. When I went to Zurich and I went into these hangars that were full and full of things, one more different than the other. But his knowledge was what was the most impressive because he remembers each one of his purchases and who he had bought them from and what it is and the reason why he has it. And this goes from prehistoric axes to probably one of the most important collections of Appenzeller paintings, which is where he is from, fashion photography, furniture as well. We had a series of cupboards and chairs, Fontana ceramics, and obviously all of the paintings that he had thought so beautiful, Andy Warhols and... But that was almost not the most impressive. The most impressive is really this accumulation of things that was just almost impossible to bring to the pinacoteca. His son Magnus curated the show. It had started off just by, he just wanted to show portraits of his family that painters that he had worked with had done. But then we couldn't resist asking for more and he very kindly did and so we had a very, very beautiful show of all these different worlds he knows so well. But in that moment I really realized how much knowledge you need to have to be a collector of his kind, how much he knew about every collection that he had and this knowledge then takes you to know, if you go maybe to a market and you find something that someone else obviously wouldn't see because they don't know about it. It was also this idea of posing your eyes on something that to you has value but to someone else really doesn't. For me a painting of the Appenzell is something, but for him, since he collects them, as soon as he finds one, it's something of extreme importance as much as having the shark of Damien Hirst or something of this kind.

So this show was followed by *The Museum of Everything*. *The Museum of Everything* belongs to a man called James Brett who is a very young collector. He collects outsider art, which basically means art made by people who are not considered artists. They're people who very often live at the margins of society.



Picture from *The Museum of Everything*

James did something very interesting because he took each artists and asked someone more famous to, you know, let's say there was an artist called Morton Bartlett, who was a man who would make dolls and then he would dress them and he would make all these dresses for them and you'd have all these suitcases and all sorts of very obsessive work. So he asked Maurizio Cattelan, who knew the work of Morton Bartlett, to write something about him. Then you know probably one of the most famous outsider artists is called Henry Darger and Henry Darger was an artist who was a janitor for most of his life. He worked in a hospital and cleaned the hospital and when he died they found all these books in his room with these incredible collages and drawings, colors that you wouldn't believe, I mean, a colorist, an incredible colorist. So he became a bit like, let's say, the star of outsider art and so Paul Chan, a very famous contemporary artist, wrote about Henry Darger, or someone like Mamma Anderson. All these artists, and there were a lot, a lot of works, were accompanied by an explanation. This, for instance, is an Indian artist called Nek Chand and he was a man who worked on the streets in India. He would find bits and pieces from ceramics and make all these men that are in a city now, in a garden in Chandigarh. All these stories were so incredible. I think that in this exhibition we must have had a quantity of pieces, almost 600 pieces, all put together. There was this idea again of accumulation, obsession, between the works as well as the collecting.

All these exhibitions are extremely far away from what we have in the permanent collection. The permanent collection remains always where it is and then we have the shows downstairs and it's interesting, the way they dialogue with each other. So, obviously, let's say that there had never been an outsider art show as big as this in Italy and the fact it was put in a museum where you have Canaletto, Bellotto, Matisse, also gave it a life that was completely different.

So then we had *China Power Station* that was a very interesting show.





Pictures from *China Power Station*



Picture from *China Power Station*

I met with Gunnar Kvaran, who is the curator of a collection called Astrup Fearnley in Norway. The Astrup Fearnley Collection is a fairly big collection, you know, a lot, a lot of Jeff Koons and Bacon and that's why I had first gone to see the collection in Norway, to see if we could bring that side of the collection, the most famous side of the collection. But then we were going through the catalogues and all the works that they had, and then came all the works from China Power Station. That was very interesting because what the Astrup Fearnley did was they, Gunnar Kvaran together with Hans-Ulrich Obrist and

Julia Bitten-Jones, curated the show for the Serpentine Gallery and the Astrup Fearnley, that was shown first at the Battersea, in London, and then in Norway. So they curated this show but what happened is that at the end the foundation bought the exhibition for the collection. We thought this was a very interesting way of collecting, to make an exhibition and then buy the entire exhibition for your collection, which they also did for a show they did on American art, and on Indian art, partly, I mean that they didn't buy completely. We thought that it would be interesting to show Chinese contemporary art, but also to show another way of collecting that was a more... I mean I had personally never heard of such an idea. So this is, apart from these two big Chinese artists who are Huang Yong Ping and Cia Guo-Qiang, who are more of the '70s, then all the artists are from a sort of younger generation, so that is mainly a lot of video art, people like Yang Fudong here, and, a lot, a lot of video art I have to say and also monumental art. The size of things is just so completely different.

This was followed by *The Urethra Postcard Art of Gilbert y George*. Someone told me that Gilbert and George were doing these new pieces and that these new pieces were made out of postcards and sex ads that they had collected during the 60s and the 70s and that they had made these works of art from their collection.



Gilbert & George and a picture from *The Urethra Postcard Art of Gilbert y George*

Again this was another way of seeing, of collecting and of using your collecting and your accumulation to do art. And so you'll see this was basically 130... It was also very interesting, these collages, because it's almost a way of archiving a collection. You could

archive like that. It was basically the same kind of postcard, all the same, put together and then underneath they are very carefully labeled to, you know it says, vertical, and the kind of postcard that it is, flag, the number, so it's almost like they have archived, in the most careful way, all of their collection.

This is the show we have on now and it's largely a collection from *Torino* of a man who has an incredible collection: *Quilling*.

(Pictures from *Quilling*)

I went into his apartment and it was 300 square meters of things all over the place. All the walls were covered with paintings, tables filled with things, *nécessaire* of couture made out of tortoise shell on one table and the other table had other *nécessaire* made out of ivory and then another room had things made out of paper. An incredible collection but out of this collection were mainly these devotional creations. They are reliquaries that were made in the, mostly in the 17th, 18th, 19th century, in cloisters, by nuns. They would take paper and roll it very thinly in this technique called quilling and they would decorate around the relics. These were given mostly to aristocratic families that would help the convents and they would gift them with these. I saw this collection and then someone told me that Nan Goldin, the photographer, was also a collector of these, they are called paper rolls. We asked her if she would lend us hers, so she did and then she came to *Torino* and she photographed the house of the collector for us. The show is really also about collecting and when you see the photographs, you can very much see this accumulation again and the way things are put in the room and you know the history of this collector, this man who asked to be, his name is undisclosed. He used to be a very big collector of *Arte Povera*, and then he sold it because he got fed up with it. He wanted to collect other things, namely these paper rolls, so he sold all of his collection and started again completely.

Our next exhibition is the Damien Hirst collection.

(Pictures of Damien Hirst's personal collection)

He very kindly said we could take anything from his collection. He couldn't be bothered to tell us what we could or could not take, so he said, "Take anything you like." This is an interesting collection because, well one thing that is very interesting is that he is one of the main collectors in the world of Jeff Koons, which is quite surprising to me. The show is going to be divided into four parts. One in the first room is all about skulls and his obsession, there are so many paintings of skulls, sculptures, around the skull, that we then find in his work with his famous Diamond Skull. Then in the other room there is going to be all the animal-related paintings, which also are quite a few. Then downstairs there's American art and British art because he has collected a lot of his contemporaries. You can kind of see how he almost wanted to, you can see certain people he really wanted to help, to promote. Someone like Banksy for instance. He has a lot of Banksy and then someone like Sarah Lucas and Angus Fairhurst and a lot of his friends.

That's going to be in November, and then, I don't have images here, but we know that in March of 2013 we'll have a very interesting collection that belongs to a man called Patrick Seguin and it's a collection of pre-fabricated homes by Jean Prouvé. So it's going to be the homes and the furniture and part of his collection of paintings as well

and I think that's going to be quite beautiful to see in this building that was an inspiration to Le Corbusier and then Renzo Piano and then in it Jean Prouvé is going to be... I think we're going to have a big house on the track and then inside the pinacoteca we're going to have two other, one I think is a gas station that was also prefabricated, and then another house.

So to finish on what we do, we have a library. As you see it's pretty empty, basically it works on donations.



Picture of Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli library

We opened last year, completely on donation, all of it, and it's completely dedicated to collecting, to books on collections and collecting. We had also started to send questionnaires and a study on collecting in Piemonte, which seemed, in the region near *Torino*, but it seemed totally impossible to get answers from anyone. People are actually very discreet about collecting and they don't want anyone to know what they own or have. For the moment we've stopped that. That was not very successful.

But to continue, we buy some volumes and then we get donations so if any of you have books on collecting, please feel free. This place is open to the public and they kind of consult books and this space as well is for our conversations on collecting. Every month someone comes and talks with a person of their choice on their collection, so we had someone like Arturo Schwartz, who is a very important collector of surrealist art who was friendly with the surrealist movement, who came and gave a talk.



Picture of a conference in Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli

Or James Brett of the Museum of Everything, or someone like Patrizia Sandretto of the collection of Sandretto Re Rebaudengo and they tell ... but for the moment we've stayed

very local. Someone who's a big collector of letters, also we try to diversify so we have a collector who has airplane models or someone who is a very big collector of Mollino furniture and also all sorts of different kinds of designs. We do these talks and then we take them and they become the Quaderni del Collezionismo, which is a publication we do, it's twice a year and we publish these conversations and they are sold in bookstores.

I think that's pretty much all of our activity. I mean obviously we also have a very big program for children and adults, a didactic program. For this year we have 20,000 children that come for free and they get a little booklet they can draw in and they get to do a whole activity around the pinacoteca, as well as adult didactic which seems to be the most important thing to do right now. People really, even adults come with their children, or people alone. People tend to, I feel that they more and more need to have things explained, so even the exhibitions, I mean the guided tours, all that is guided seems to be working much more.

If you have any questions...

LR: Preguntas ... preguntas en inglés, francés, o castellano.

Question: How many works do you bring together in the pinacoteca, in the permanent collection.

GE: Twenty-five. Yes, it's 23 paintings and two sculptures.

Question: Have you stopped with the collection of your grandfather?

GE: Yes we've stopped because we want to keep it this way. Well first of all it would be very difficult to buy that kind of painting right now, I mean you'd lower the quality of the collection probably. I mean that's a reason as well, but also we think that, unless we would collect something completely different, so we do a new collection of, let's say, video art, then that would be different, but in this space, this is the way I think it's going to stay. For the moment.

Inaudible question: Ginevra, thank you for your lecture – may I ask you, I mean I don't want to be impolite, but may I ask how do you finance that? Is it financed by Fiat or by the family or do you have public help?

GE: No, we have no public help at all. The pinacoteca is financed, the building and let's say all that is linked to the permanent collection, is financed by Fiat. All the rest is, we have to find sponsors. So that's my main job and it's very difficult for us because when you go they say, "Well if you don't have the money to put into this, why should we give it to you?" But I mean now we have someone who does it, a specialist. It's very difficult because in Italy we have no fiscal help. If you were a private person, and you wanted to help us or give a donation to pinacoteca, you get no tax refund like they do in America. This makes it much more difficult work, especially for a private institution like us. So yes, I feel that mainly now the best way to do it, for instance I was saying about the children and how we have all the children come for free, we've been sponsored by a company called Eni, which is an oil company. Eni has given us money for our educational program, so that works very well when it's like that because you construct with them your educational program, talking to them and then they fund it much more easily. It's very difficult today to go to someone and say, "Now we have our Damien

Hirst show, will you sponsor it?" Now people are not that keen on that kind of sponsorship. They like to collaborate, they like to, you know, that you construct things with them. That's the way we have to work.

Question: I've got a question. I mean public spaces tend to be much more academic. What do you find so interesting about private collecting to be shown in a public space? Why are you focusing on that particular view or what are you trying to show to the general public?

GE: Voyeurism. No, but it's kind of a bit voyeuristic, in some kind of way. You go into the life of someone. I think it would be very difficult for the public to see Bruno Bischofberger's collection because not everyone can go to his house, or has access to his hangars, so in that way we can show the possibility of going into someone's collection. I also personally am interested in the history of the collecting. I think that a lot of collections come from very interesting stories and the more I work at this, the more stories I hear that are interesting. Also there is great dedication for someone, these people really dedicate their lives to their collection and so they, as I was saying before, they have a knowledge and they have a quantity that then makes something interesting. Let's say this quilling exhibition; this is the first time in a museum that is not a museum that is linked to the church, that there's a show on quilling. Why is that possible? Because this man bought a massive quantity from all over the world of a certain, I mean I know the quality of it is very good because someone who is a specialist came to see. If he hadn't it put together all these works, this wouldn't have been possible. So in that sense I think that our interest is that, and the possibility of showing very different things, sometimes showing together very different things. You know this show on Jean Prouvé will have Jean Prouvé together with paintings that you probably wouldn't, in an academic situation, couldn't, see together. So it's a very subjective way of seeing art but sometimes I think it's easier for the public to relate to, because they see it as more close to them somehow.

Question: Every time there is any consideration about collecting, or promoting collecting, there is always this idea that what is needed is a legal and fiscal frame with an incentive and I think that the approach of your pinacoteca is extraordinarily interesting, at least for me. What you are offering, as far as you can't offer fiscal incentives, you are a private group, but I didn't know that in Italy this situation is even worse than in Spain, because in Spain if you give some money to a foundation, although it's a private one, you have a very small incentive, but some. We are trying to improve it but in this time of crisis it is not so easy. I think that this approach in the area in Europe where the tradition of collections goes so far away and there has been such people there with good taste, not only money but also good taste, this approach of promoting collecting via social recognition and showing to the public what others do, some very wealthy collectors, some others not so much but just they have devoted to collecting for a long time, I think this is really extraordinary. And my question is, whether with the perspective of the short time, of course because you are a relatively young foundation, if you have made any kind, or someone has made, if you have some kind of evaluation of the influence of this kind of promotion of collecting.

GE: I have noticed two things since I started which I think are interesting. First of all when we started, you know, we were new and no one knew. Now I get so many requests to show collections, so people are, well I guess they know we are there, that's what we

do, and they are less shy about it. Also I have, I mean obviously, it's a very complicated to show collections because there's a problem with the market and people say, "Are you going to show this and then they are going to sell it," and how do you deal with the market and for the moment I have not looked too much at that. But I know for instance for something like the Museum of Everything, the show on outsider art, certainly having shown their collection in, because they had shown this collection, but in a place that was not a museum, having shown this in the museum has increased the value of their collection. That's, you know, I know because the collector told me and then he went on to show in other places, but, so I don't know if I answered your question with this, but this is what I've been noticing.

Inaudible question:

GE: Well to tell you the truth, here it is not actually, the first ever show I did was a show that was not there because it wasn't really a collection, but it was a show on porcelain of Capodimonte. And from there, obviously, we've turned our attention a lot to contemporary art and design. I'd like that ...I think there's the possibility of, for instance, one show that is a very interesting story, it's a great show but it's also a very interesting collecting story is a collection called Kostakis Collection, and it's a Russian avant-garde collection. It was created by a man called Kostakis who was the driver of the Canadian embassy in Moscow. He was there and he befriended artists. It was during the Soviet time and they were going to eliminate a lot of these paintings so he bought them for very little. His very small flat in Moscow was filled with this very important collection that he then gave to the Thessaloniki Museum. To me that's a very interesting story. So you see that you don't need to be super wealthy but occasions in life give you the possibility of collecting.

That's an example, but I see that there's a show here on Piranesi that would be great. I think that today what you need, like let's say now we have this quilling show and we've put Nan Goldin together with it, it helps, that kind of approach, because people will come for Nan Goldin and then they'll end up seeing something that they're really surprised with. The people who came to see the opening are more people who were interested in Nan Goldin, so people who are in the contemporary art world. Then they saw the quilling and they very much fell in love with this. So I think that now mixing different things works. If you take, let's say Piranesi, and then you get someone who is a contemporary designer to put up the show, that kind of thing seems to function to bring back interest, but we very much now would like to do more shows on different, not just contemporary.

LR: Any other questions? Well thanks for coming.

GE: Thank you, thank you very much.

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GINEVRA ELKANN



Ginevra Elkann was born in London in 1979, lived in England, Brasil and France, and is currently based in Rome and Turin.

She has a degree in visual communications of the American University in Paris and a master in Film Making of the London Film School, and she has produced several film projects. She has been assistant director on Bernardo Bertolucci's *L'assedio* (1998); video assistant on Anthony Minghella's *The Talented Mr. Ripley's* (1999). In 2010 she founded and is the CEO of Asmara Film Company. She is president of Good Films, a film production/ distribution company, co-founded in 2011 together with Francesco Melzi d'Eril and Luigi Musini.

Since 2006 she is the president of the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli in Turin, which promotes a program focused in exposing private art collections worldwide. The aim is to provide other ways of appreciating public and private collections, not only in terms of its aesthetic quality but the meaning they have for collectors and the collection to which they belong. All this fostered by the rationale behind of the Pinacoteca that through public exposure of private heritage, conveys a passion for the art of his collectors.

Some exhibitions of the Pinacoteca are *China Power Station*, Astrup Fearnley Collection of Contemporary Chinese Art, curated by Julia Peyton, Gunnar B. Kvaran and Hans Ulrich Obrist; *From Prehistory to the future*, private collection of Bruno and Christina Bischofberger from Zurich, and *Why Africa?*, Pigozzi Contemporary African Art Collection of Jean Pigozzi and André Magnin.

In 2010 the center opened a library completely dedicated to the study of collecting that has a research specialized department.

She is on the advisory board of Christie's and she is a member of the Comité d'acquisition and the Comité Exécutif of the Fondation Cartier in Paris.

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Fundación Arte y Mecenazgo
Avda. Diagonal, 621, 08028 Barcelona, Spain.
aym@arteymecenazgo.org



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