

# Foreword

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In the summer of 2012, I made a pilgrimage to Perugia and Città di Castello to see the Luca Signorelli exhibitions. I say “a pilgrimage” because I live a distance away and was unfamiliar with both places, but fairly obsessed by Signorelli in large part because he was one of the most important painters in the life of Sigmund Freud. (Freud considered Signorelli’s work some of the best painting ever made, but then, a year later, could not for the life of him recall the artist’s name. That lapse of memory fascinated him, as it has intrigued many other psychoanalysts; what was it Freud did not want to see?)

In Città di Castello, I simply asked a question of a museum guard. I was eager to find one Signorelli in particular, and the “guard” was more than exceptional. He ushered me to the painting, and, to my good fortune, spoke perfect English. In front of one of Signorelli’s masterpieces, the young man answered my questions with a great knowledge of art history and of Christian iconography; he was smart without being arrogant. At the same time, unlike many art historians, he really looked at the work, responding deeply to its emotional power, taking on its strength.

Our conversation continued, and I asked him to join my driver for the day and me for lunch. By then I knew the name of my pleasant conversant: Samuele

Boncompagni. He led us through the beautiful streets of Città di Castello to a friendly local restaurant. In the course of an hour or so, he explained to me the work of his cooperative organization, Atlante.

I was more than impressed to learn of a group of recent university graduates determined to devote their lives to realizing their passion for visual art. And I was impressed with the way that Samuele kept coming back, in our conversation, to Atlante and what it was doing and could do – not to himself. This idea of a collaborative effort struck me as being the essence of the spirit of the Bauhaus.

One thing led to another. Samuele became engrossed in Josef Albers’s teaching, and he and other members of Atlante developed ideas pertaining to Josef’s art that none of us at the Albers Foundation had ever before imagined. This exhibition and the projects and activities which accompany it are the result.

Anni Albers often said to me: “You can go anywhere from anywhere.” The new connection between the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation and Atlante is a perfect example. When one has passion and loves beautiful art, much is possible.

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