



Smithsonian American Art Museum

Piero della Francesca and America (1900–1960)

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Piero della Francesca's *fortuna* in the United States has never been studied systematically and comprehensively. The proposed research aims to fill this gap by looking at a range of issues. It will examine the role and influence of Piero advocates such as Bernard Berenson and Roger Fry, and the circumstances that led to the acquisition of several paintings by, or attributed to, Piero by private collectors. It will also investigate the curricula at major universities and art institutions to see the extent to which Piero was taught. The bulk of the research will be devoted to the art movements that, as suggested by preliminary work I have undertaken, were responsive to Piero. These include the post-surrealists (e.g. Lorser Feitelson), the precisionists (e.g. Ralston Crawford and Niles Spenser), the magical realists (e.g. Jared French and George Tooker), and the muralists of the 1930s and 1940s, in particular those who contributed to the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration. This investigation will equally deal with the painting fellows of the American Academy in Rome (some of whom copied and imitated Piero during their stay in Italy), and with Piero-influenced artists who do not fit into specific movements or categories.