



# The Culture of Anatomy: Material, Intellectual and Artistic Spaces in the Early Modern Age

International  
Workshop  
March 19–20 2026  
Lugano



**Workshop venue**  
Lugano  
Università della Svizzera italiana  
East Campus  
Foyer Aulla Polivalente  
Via la Santa 1

**Information**  
margherita.schellino@usi.ch  
www.usi.ch

**Organized by**  
**Linda Bisello**  
Università della Svizzera italiana

**Sofia Bollini**  
Università degli Studi della  
Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli"

**Imma Iaccarino**  
Università della Svizzera italiana

**Margherita Schellino**  
Università della Svizzera italiana  
Università degli Studi di Torino

**Scientific Board**  
Linda Bisello (USI)  
Marco Maggi (USI)  
Carla Mazzarelli (USI)  
Stefano Prandi (USI)  
Raffaella Scarpa (Unito)

Funded by  
Swiss National Science  
Foundation (SNSF)

 **Fondo nazionale  
svizzero**

Putti perform an anatomical  
dissection on a dog; others hold a  
jar containing a human foetus;  
two more play with a spider,  
representing anatomy and natural  
history. Etching by B. Picart, 1729.

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On the occasion of the closing event of the SNSF Project *The “Civilization of Anatomy”: the genre of Literary anatomies in Seventeenth-century Italy* (April 2022–March 2026), we are organizing an international and interdisciplinary workshop devoted to exploring the concept of the material and metaphorical spaces of anatomy. The event is conceived as the culmination of two previous international conferences: *Seeing Anatomy in Literature and the Arts: Words, Images and Spaces since the Early Modern Age* (Lugano 2023), which focused on the relationship between medical knowledge and its scientific and artistic forms of visualization; and *The Body of the Text and its Parts: Anatomy, Language, and Academies in the Early Modern Age and Beyond* (Lugano 2024), which addressed the historical, linguistic, and literary dimensions of the anatomical reception.

A distinctive feature of the workshop lies in its format, which fosters direct dialogue between early-career scholars and established researchers. This approach aims to support scholarly renewal while encouraging sustained exchange between research grounded in established disciplinary frameworks and the development of new lines of inquiry. The structure of the meeting foregrounds specific conceptions of space, understood first and foremost as a crossroads for the circulation and exchange of knowledge. It therefore examines physical sites (such as medical institutions, scientific and artistic academies, cultural circles, museums, and public and private collections) as well as venues of transmission (for example, intellectual, medical, and literary correspondence) that have influenced particular artistic and literary production. Secondly, the workshop addresses the space of anatomical images, both visual and imaginative, investigating their epistemic value. Alongside images (didactic illustrations, whether scientific, artistic, philosophical-moral, or religious), the program also considers anatomical artifacts (specimens and preparations for scientific use, as well as relics, instruments, and ex-votos connected to the sacred sphere).

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14.30	<b>Institutional Greetings</b>
14.45	<b>Introduction</b> Linda Bisello (Università della Svizzera italiana)
<b>I. Spaces as Crossroads for Knowledge Exchange</b> Chair: Margherita Schellino (Università della Svizzera italiana)	
15.00	<b>Keynote speech</b> Antonio Clericuzio (Università Roma Tre) <i>Medicina e chimica a Napoli: l'Accademia degli Investiganti</i>
16.00	Elisa Andretta (CNRS-LARHRA, Lyon) <i>Dalla tavola di dissezione al museo: reperti anatomici nelle collezioni naturalistiche cinquecentesche</i>
16.30	Coffee break
16.45	Maria Teresa Monti (Università del Piemonte Orientale) <i>Macro e microanatomie del testo. Gli “estratti” del giovane Spallanzani</i>
17.15	Matteo Valleriani (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science) <i>The Knowledge Economy of Geocentric Astronomy from the 13th to the 17th Century</i>
17.45	Final Discussion
18.00	Closing Remarks
20.00	Dinner

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<b>II. Spaces of Anatomical Figuration: Visible Space and Imaginary Space</b> Chair: Imma Iaccarino (Università della Svizzera italiana)	
9.00	<b>Keynote speech</b> Dániel Margócsy (University of Cambridge) <i>Vesalius in Asia: Visions of the Human Body in the Indian Ocean World</i>
10.00	Ofer Gal (University of Sydney) <i>“The eye is a darke roome” – Hobbes’ Cartesian Optics (online)</i>
10.30	John Ødemark (University of Oslo) <i>Mistranslating Bodies, Constructing Cultures: The Body in Translation between Anthropology and Early Modern Cultural History</i>
11.00	Coffee break  Chair: Sofia Bollini (Università degli Studi della Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli”)
11.15	Alessandro Arcangeli (Università degli studi di Verona) <i>Spazi e tecniche del corpo nel loisir cinquecentesco: danza, scherma, equitazione</i>
11.45	Fabio Zampieri (Università degli Studi di Padova) <i>Gli spazi dell’anatomia a Padova. Lo spazio fisico – chi progettò il teatro anatomico padovano – e lo spazio epistemico – il primo laboratorio delle scienze mediche</i>
12.15	Giulio Sodano (Università degli Studi della Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli”) <i>Miracolo e scienza medica nei processi di canonizzazione del XVIII secolo</i>
12.45	Final Discussion
13.00	Closing Remarks and Buffet