



CANOVA QUATTRO TEMPI VOL. III

The third volume of the editorial project *Canova. Four Tempos*, devoted to the plaster casts by Antonio Canova held at the Gypsotheca in Possagno, opens with one of the sculptor's best-known works, the *Three Graces*, in which Zeus's three daughters—Aglaia, Euphrosyne, and Thalia—are joined in a delicate embrace.

Accompanied by an introductory text by Vittorio Sgarbi, Luigi Spina's photographic research dwells upon other masterpieces, their bronze nails eliciting an insatiable reflection on the work process of the great neoclassic sculptor. We thus find a full-figure portrait of George Washington depicted as a Roman potentate, the only work Canova ever made for an overseas patron, and a statue of Elisa Baciocchi Bonaparte, one of the most important and enterprising of Napoleon's descendants, posing as the Muse Polyhymnia. Spina's gaze then turns to the *Dancer* with her hands on her hips, carved for the empress Joséphine de Beauharnais; to the *Venus Italica*, which fully displays Canova's study not only of the *Venus de' Medici*, but also of masterpieces such as the *Capitoline Venus* and the *Venus Callipyge*; and finally to the *Sleeping Nymph*.

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Luigi Spina is a photographer. With 5 Continents Editions he has published *The Buchner Boxes* (2014), *Hemba* (2017), and *Diario Mitico* (2017). With the same publisher and with the cooperation of Valeria Sampaolo he has also created the series "Rare and Precious Objects from the National Archaeological Museum in Naples" and "Hidden Treasures," which includes the following volumes: *The Farnese Cup*, *Alexander's Mosaic*, *San Domenico di Niccolò dell'Arca*, and *The Riace Bronzes*.

Vittorio Sgarbi is an art critic, the curator of internationally acclaimed exhibitions, a refined collector, and the author of popular volumes on the importance of culture and art. Among his most recent publications is *Ecce Caravaggio. Da Roberto Longhi a oggi* (La Nave di Teseo, 2021). He is also a politician and an independent free thinker.