

Forza e coraggio: “Strength and courage”

THE LEGACY OF NERINA SIMI (1890 - 1987)



Paper presentation **Joke Frima** at TRAC 2018 - The Representational Art Conference
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PART I - how I found studio Simi



The river Arno with Uffizi and Ponte Vecchio

I am going to tell you about Nerina Simi and her studio in Florence, but first I want to tell you how I discovered Studio Simi when I went to Florence to see the museums in 1976.



Hugo van der Goes
Uffizi



Caravaggio
Canestra di frutta

As I had previously been to Rome in summer, I knew that Italy was unbearably hot, so I chose to go to Florence in February. I was twenty-four and travelled down to Italy by myself on the train. I took the cheapest lodgings available in Florence: a dormitory in a sort of convent, Pio X, in Via dei Serragli. The room was big and very cold, with numerous beds. It was 1,000lire a night. I think the Pensionato Pio X is still there...





Studio Simi in Florence, Via Tripoli



Two girls in the dormitory got up early every morning and ran out hastily, which made me wonder where they were off to, in such a hurry. When I asked, they told me they were going to Studio Simi. I explained that I was an art student too, and asked if I could come and have a look at this ...Studio Simi. An appointment was made for 12 o'clock, at the end of the morning pose.



The Arno
near studio Simi
in Florence



Studio Simi
near the tower
on the right



Studio Simi

When I arrived at number 1 Via Tripoli, I found the door onto the street open. I went in and when I rang the bell outside the Studio upstairs, a very grumpy woman opened the door; this was Gina, the maid. I don't think Gina had instructions to scare new people away, but she surely was very unwelcoming to people she did not know. Theresa McAllister, one of the girls from the dormitory, came to save me and told Gina that I was a friend.



Stepping into the Studio was like stepping into the past. From floor to ceiling, the walls were covered with old paintings and drawings. A wood stove was standing immediately next to the door to keep the nude model warm in the morning.

Studio Simi



Theresa showed me the drawing she was working on and I was immediately impressed. It was a life-size study of an arm,.

Simi encouraged her students to do life-size studies from the model. We just chose a part of the body to fit it to the normal size sheet of paper which was 65 x 45 cm.

Here is a drawing I did in 1983, similar to the one Theresa showed me.

Joke Frima
male torso
charcoal on Roma
63 x 45 cm
1983

And here is another example of a drawing of a full figure done at Studio Simi.

When I first saw drawings like this, they were a revelation to me.

Filadelfo Simi's paintings on the walls were much more skilful than Theresa's drawing, but Filadelfo's work was painted a long time ago: hers was from the present. I clearly remember being impressed by Theresa's drawing because it was done NOW, not in the past. I had the idea that the PAST was separate from the PRESENT: that contemporary art was completely different and detached from the art made in the past.

The fact that a full study of a figure or part of a figure could be done in 1976 was a revelation to me. The possibility that studying the full figure in a drawing was reachable was completely new to me. I had not seen any drawing at art school that went further than a sketch.

When I enrolled in the Academy of Fine Art in the Netherlands, I was 18 and didn't know much about art. I just loved to draw and I was good at it. My expectations were to develop my talent and learn. But instead, I was told that Art was something else ... Every teacher had his own truth. I stayed for four years and was led, among many other things, to do abstract sculpture, and I was good at it ...but I dropped out after four years, confused and depressed ... I was at a dead end.



Joke Frima,
2 male legs
charcoal
48 x68 cm
1984



Joke Frima
2 female legs
charcoal on Roma paper
63 x 47 cm
1984

I was good at abstract sculpture!!.



Academie Tilburg
1972

Meeting Signorina Simi and discovering her studio in Florence was a complete coincidence for me. I had not been searching for this kind of education because I did not know it existed – I was completely ignorant – it was chance that led me to Studio Simi and it was a chance that I took.

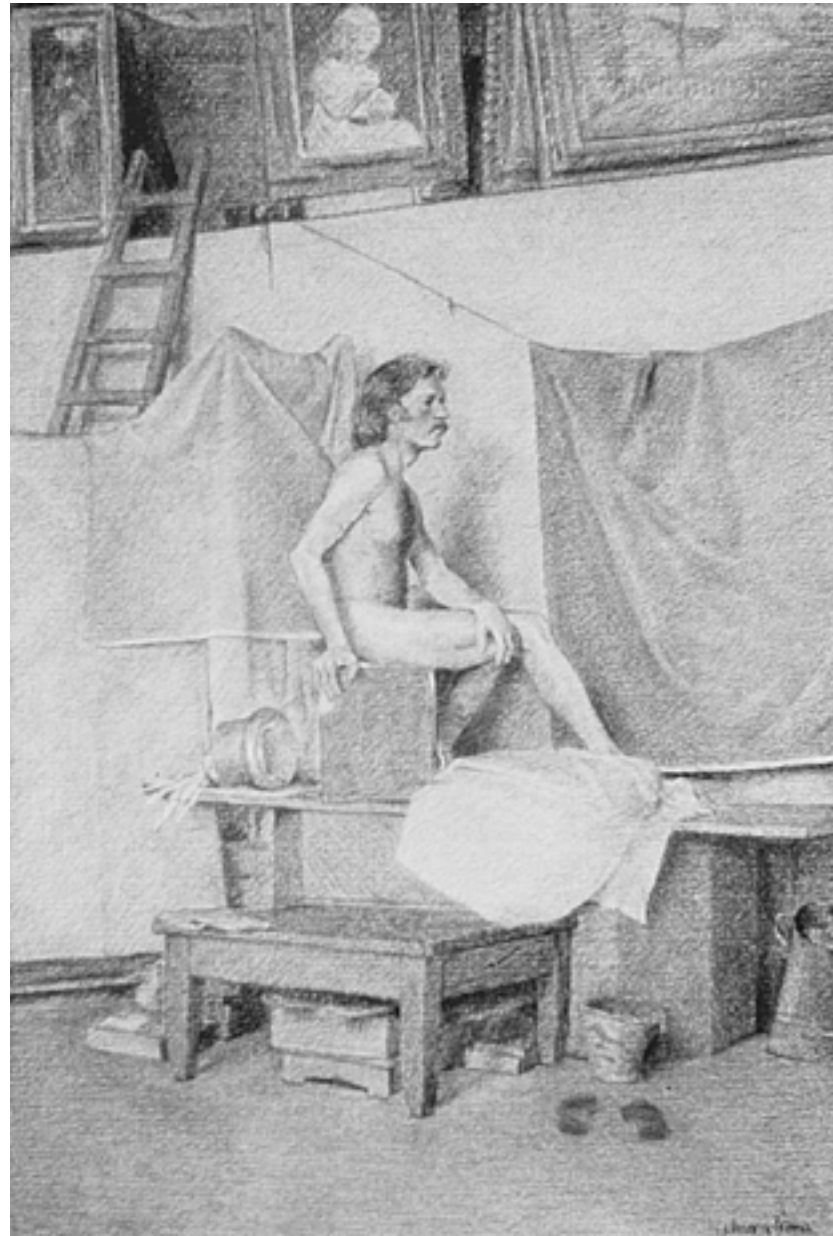
After going back home to Holland, I thought things over and wrote to ask if I could go to study at Studio Simi for a while. I saved up and went back to Florence in the September of the same year, planning to stay for three months ... but I stayed for eight years – from 1976 to 1984. At Studio Simi, it was as if everything fell into place for me right from the beginning. Unerring advice from Nerina Simi helped my drawing to improve very quickly.



Joke in Studio Simi

PART 2 - daily routine at the studio, renzo, annigoni

At Studio Simi there was no discussion about views on modern art or anything of that kind. Simi was just interested in teaching her pupils how to draw from observation – directly from life. From 9 to 12 in the morning, there was a nude model.



Joke Frima
charcoal drawing
about 1977



The model posed for a full hour from 9 to 10am and then there was break. The next two hours were 45 minutes. It was considered to be impolite to come in late, so if you were late, it was best to wait for the second hour. The model posed sitting on a box on a platform, and the students sat around the model. There were lots of us, perhaps twenty, so it was crowded and we were in each other's way.

Anne Shingleton
oil
40 x 30 cm



Alessandra Marrucchi
charcoal
50 x 70cm

In the afternoon there was a dressed model, for portraiture.
On Wednesday and Saturday afternoons the Studio was closed.
Here is an example of a portrait in oils by Anne Shingleton and a drawing
in charcoal by Alessandra Marrucchi, both done in the Studio-Simi years.



Joke Frima
the little room
oil
1980 (?)
45 x 60 cm

Beside the big studio there was also the little room or still-life room where Nerina's paintings were hanging on the walls. It was there that beginners did plaster casts and still-lifes, and new students were taught the principles of comparative measurement.



LIFE of Nerina SIMI



A photo of of
Nerina Simi
taken in 1978

Nerina Simi was born on 13th of April 1890 in Florence. Her father was the famous painter Filadelfo Simi and her mother Adelaide Beani. She was baptised Nerina Maria. On his return trip back from Paris, her father stayed for a short period in Umbria, in Val Nerina, and this is where Nerina's name comes from. Because her father was so fond of Umbria, he burdened his daughter with the unusual name Nerina (nera is "black" in Italian). Nerina Simi signed her work, "Nera Simi;" the name was her signature and her badge of honour.



Filadelfo Simi
Nera Simi - portrait in red
60.2 x 39.4 cm

Fiume
Nera





Nerina enrolled at the Accademia in Florence in 1909. She was 19 at the time and had already been drawing and painting for many years in her father's International Studio in via Tripoli. The Studio was in the Simi family home. Painting and drawing is what Nerina was force-fed on since she was born.

Filadelfo Simi
Renzo Simi
50 x 40 cm



Nerina's brother Renzo (short for Lorenzo) was born in 1889. Renzo was a teacher and an art critic. He studied Classics and graduated in Classical Literature with a thesis on Cennino Cennini. (Cennino d'Andrea Cennini was a Florentine artist who wrote one of the most influential painting books of the late Middle Ages, *Il libro dell'arte*. He was the first professional artist to reveal the secrets of his profession so extensively in a book.)

In Filadelfo's painting L'Altalena, both children are depicted, Nerina in a red dress and Renzo with a blueish shirt on. This is the preparatory sketch for the painting. The small child behind Nerina is missing in the big painting because unfortunately it died of diphtheria.



Filadelfo Simi
Study for
L'Altalena
circa 1894

The figure of the grandmother was added in the final version.



Filadelfo Simi
L'Altalena
70 x138 cm
circa 1894

In the photo of the interior, you can see L'Altalena on the wall.



Annigoni, who lived from 1910 to 1988, was a famous Italian painter living and working in Florence.

His work was in the renaissance tradition, contrasting with the modernist style that also prevailed in Italy. He painted portraits and did frescos. He was a friend of the Simi family, in particular of Renzo Simi.

Here is a portrait that Pietro Annigoni did of Renzo Simi in 1931 and other paintings and drawings by him, including a self-portrait painted in 1946 (45 x 35.5 cm in *Tempera grassa* on canvas).



Annigoni
Renzo
portrait pencil on paper
27 x 19 cm



Annigoni
Selfportrait,
oil



Annigoni
Selfportrait
Tempera grassa su tela
45 x 35.5 cm
1946



Annigoni,
portrait Margeret Rawlings
Tempera
49,8 x 40 cm
1951



Annigoni

Annigoni was well-known in England and America. He did a portrait of Queen Elisabeth and of many other important people.

Many young art students knocked on Annigoni's door to ask him for tuition. However, although he had some students and assistants working in his studio, he did not teach. He preferred to send everyone to Nerina Simi for real professional training.

The Signorina had a difference of opinion with Pietro Annigoni about his painting technique. Annigoni at a certain point started to use a technique called tempera grasso which Nerina did not like, and they had a fight over it.



PART 3 - Filadelfo Simi

A few words about the life and work of Nerina Simi's father, Filadelfo Simi. This is a photo and a self-portrait.



Filadelfo Simi
Selfportrait
118 x 80 cm
1905



Levigliani di Stazzema

In this picture there is a view of Levigliani di Stazzema; the house on the right is where Filadelfo was born on 11th February 1849. His father, Lorenzo, was a blacksmith and his mother was Angiola Barsottini. Levigliani is in a mountain area where marble is mined.





At an early age, Filadelfo showed an aptitude for drawing, so he was sent to the School of Fine Arts in Seravezza.



Filadelfo Simi
un Saluto,
86 x 60 cm



Filadelfo Simi
Il sole su Serravezza

In 1869, when he was 24, he was sent to study at the Accademia in Florence, where he graduated in 1873 when he was 28. In the same year, he took part in a big Exposition of the Promoter of Fine Arts with the painting "La giovinezza dell'Alfieri".

During his studies in Florence, Filadelfo was noticed by Angiolo Vegni, an engineer and influential politician of the time. He took him under his wing and made sure that he could go to Paris, to perfect himself at the studio of the famous artist, Jean Leon Gérôme.

Here are some pictures of Gérôme and his work ...



Jean-Léon Gérôme
Pygmalion and Galatea
French
1824–1904

A study and The truth coming out of the well. This is about the Dreyfus affaire.



Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904)
study
Fille Jeanne



Jean-Léon Gérôme
Truth coming out of the well



Gérôme
Black Bashi Bazouk
1869



Bastien Lepage



Bastien Lepage

Filadelfo Simi remained in Paris for four years from 1874 to 1878, until he was 33, attending among others, the atelier of Bastien Lepage.

In 1876 he made a trip to Spain in the company of the American painter Alden Weir. Filadelfo produced an interesting series of paintings at the Alhambra which were influenced by Orientalism.



Alden Weir painted by Sargent



Filadelfo Simi
Alhambra, Cortile con il cipresso
oil on canvas
43.5 x 36 cm



In 1878, at the "Exposition Artistique" of the Paris Salon, he exhibited an imposing work, "La foresta di Fontainebleau"

Filadelfo Simi
Foresta di Fontainebleau
185 x 270 cm



Here is a study for the "Foresta". In the photo, the same little painting can be seen on the wall of the Studio, between the Signorina and the easel in front of her. During Filadelfo's return trip to Italy, he visited Switzerland and Umbria, staying for a short period in the town of Papigno, in Val Nerina. Then he settled in Florence, and in 1879 he exhibited "La Foresta" again,

this time at the Donatello Society. In 1882 he held his first solo exhibition at the Regia Accademia with 26 works, the most notable being "La tisica", "The Morra Players," and "San Gerolamo" which were heavily criticised for the themes represented and the realism of the subjects; Filadelfo's approach was regarded as being too realistic as opposed to classical.



Studio Simi
The study for la Foresta di Fontainebleau
24 x 31 cm



In "The Morra Players", the depiction of gambling and the realistic representation of peasants was heavily criticised. Filadelfo was so upset by the criticism that he cut the painting into two pieces. The Signorina told us he did this on the stairs before entering the Studio. In this slide you see the whole painting, while on the next slide, the painting, cut in half, is hanging in two separate frames on the Studio wall.

Filadelfo Simi,
I giocatori di mora,
intera
127 x 157 cm



I giocatori di mora,
framed in two
peaces on the wall
in Studio Simi



In 1883, the year of the death of his patron Angiolo Vegni, Filadelfo was named Cavaliere della Corona d'Italia for artistic merits and in 1886 he was awarded the title of Academic Honor of the Accademia di Firenze. In 1886 Filadelfo opened his international studio which was judged by his students to be more stimulating than the Parisian ateliers. Here you can see two photos of ateliers in Paris, in the late-19th century.



Examples of a Painters Studio (Atelier) in Paris



Studio Simi existed 101 years 1886-1987, run by Filadelfo and Nerina Simi.

Studio Simi existed for 101 years, between 1886 when Filadelfo Simi founded it and 1987 when it ceased to exist at the death of Nerina Simi. The Studio was run by only two people: Filadelfo and his daughter Nerina Simi. In 1888, Filadelfo was appointed professor of the Academy of Florence, where he worked at the Scuola del Nudo, and in the same year he married Adelaide Beani, whom he portrayed in this drawing and painting.



Filadelfo Simi
Adelaide Beani (wife of Filadelfo Simi)
reading newspaper
1895
95 x 75 cm



Filadelfo Simi
The parents - Mother
diptych
73 x 75 cm



Filadelfo Simi
The parents - Father
diptych
81 x 75 cm



In 1889 he participated in the "Exposition Universelle" in Paris with the diptych "The Parents", for which he was awarded the bronze medal.



In 1890 he began his association with the Giorgini brothers (in particular with Vittorio, who was also a painter). Filadelfo was the Artist Director of a joint commercial enterprise with the Giorginis which produced sculpture. An important work is the statue of Garibaldi and his wife Anita at Porto Alegre in Brazil which was installed in 1911. Filadelfo Simi received many international commissions in Brazil, Canada and Egypt ...

He took part in high level exhibitions in Paris, Milan, Venice, Faenza, Bologna, St. Petersburg, Bristol, Munich, Berlin. His works can be found in the National Galleries of Modern Art in Florence and Rome.



Galleria d'Arte Moderna
Palazzo Pitti, Florence
Bice, o Iridescenza della madreperla
or
Bice, Iridescenza di una perla.
(rainbow colours)
60 x 178 cm



He died in Florence on January 5th 1923 from a heart attack, and was buried in the cemetery of the Porte Sante at San Miniato. Here are some more of his paintings.

Filadelfo Simi
Un Riflesso
1887
Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Roma





Filadelfo Simi
La Ricamatrice (The Embroiderer)
120 x 85cm





Filadelfo Simi
La sarta (The seamstress)

was exhibited at Montecatini Terme:
Il Nuovo dopo la Macchia -
Origins and affirmations of Tuscan naturalism.



PART 4 - Nerina Simi's work



Studio Simi,
via Tripoli 1
Florence, Italy

Nerina Simi dedicated her life above all to teaching, but she was also a very accomplished painter.

This is Studio Simi where Nerina Simi taught for 64 years, from 1923 to 1987. Students came from all over the world to attend her atelier.

In 1914, when she was twenty-four, Nerina obtained her diploma at the Accademia together with the qualification to teach drawing in the middle school (for children from about twelve to fifteen).

She told me that her father thought it was nonsense to get a teaching qualification, but she insisted and she probably did the right thing, because during her long life in an era of enormous political turmoil, it served her well.

The year after she finished her studies at the Accademia, she obtained a position as a teacher at the Montalve Institute "Alla Quiete". This was an exclusive school for girls from wealthy Florentine families.



This is a photo of the art class at the Montalve Institute. Simi usually taught at "La Quiete" two afternoons a week. She remained in service there until her retirement in 1964 (when she retired from this school, she was 74 and she had been teaching there for 50 years).

Art class at Montalve Institute
"Alla Quiete"

Nerina Simi chose to remain unmarried in order to dedicate her life entirely to art and teaching. In those days marrying meant the end of any personal ambition for a woman. When asked why she did not marry, she answered: "I never found a man who would support my independence."
Another time she answered: "La Libertà è una bella cosa!! Freedom is a beautiful thing!"



La Libertà e una bella cosa!

On the photo on the left, the moment was captured in which she said, "La Libertà è una bella cosa." The other two photos were taken in the fifties and sixties in the Studio.

This is the poster we made for the exhibition in Cardoso last year, 2017.

In Italy, unmarried women are called Signorina. We, her students, called our teacher "La Signorina" as her second badge of honour, and we decided to name the exhibition "La Signorina" to honour her memory.

We certainly felt she was a admirable person and we were all very fond of her. She had a lot of humour and knew how to encourage her students, stimulating many of us to discover unimagined abilities in ourselves.





Nera Simi
Ritratto di fanciulla
Olio su tela
40 x 27 cm



Nera Simi
Ragazzo
Olio su tela
52 x 30 cm



Nera Simi
Bambina bionda
Olio su tela
44 x 43 cm

This is the painting used for the poster and the cover of the book.
Here I show you more of her paintings.



A nude made under the supervision of Filadelfo Simi; it was a general custom at that time also for the teacher to sign the works produced under his supervision. It says visto, seen.

Nera Simi
Nudo di donna
Olio su tela
67 X 38 cm

Painted on a piece of linnen
pinned on a board
Made under supervision professor,
signed: visto F. Simi



A more mature work done in
1917, when she was 27.



Nera Simi,
Nudino
Olio
48 x 101 cm
1917



Nera Simi
Ritratto di Vecchia
Olio su tela
96 x 67cm

Old woman in black, La vecchia in nero
– another important mature work.



This tiny painting was on the wall of the little room in via Tripoli.



Nera Simi
Bambina timida
Olio
24 x 16 cm

These are plein air landscapes



Nera Simi
Paesaggio in collina
Olio su cartone
13 x 24 cm



Nera Simi
Marina di Portoferraio
Olio su tavola
13 x 19 cm



Nera Simi
Marina
Olio su tavola
9 x 19 cm



Nera Simi
Castagni in Versilia (garden studio le Scale Stazzema)
olio su legno
45 x 38 cm



Nera Simi
Cipresso
olio su tavola
25x15 cm

On the left Nera Simi's work and on the right Filadelfo's, at least that is what we think, but we can't be sure because there are no signatures. A young man dressed in a sort of folkloristic dress, called Ciociaro, from a region near Rome.



Nera Simi
Ragazzo in costume
ciociaro
Olio
43 x 32 cm



Filadelfo Simi



A woman from Sardinia, sitting.

Nera Simi
Donna Sarda
Olio
20 x 29 cm

A portrait of a young blond girl.



Nera Simi
Ritratto di fanciulla
Olio
39 x 30 cm



The head of a child. On the right corner of the painting of the interior, you can see this painting on the wall.

Nera Simi
Testa di Bimba
Olio su cartone
25,5 x 20,5cm



Nerina Simi taught until the end.
Simona Dolci was her last student and of great support in the last years of the Studio.

Simona wrote:

“I think all of us who were privileged to have had her precious teaching remember the period of our life with Simi not only for its educational value, but also for the human and artistic presence of Nerina.....

Today the testimonies in honour and memory of Nerina Simi are not only a tribute to a wonderful painter and teacher but also respond to the need to transmit to the younger generations of artists, the valuable experience of her life completely dedicated to the art.”

Simona Dolci

Nerina Simi died in Florence on February 4th, 1987 and was buried next to her parents in the cemetery of San Miniato.



Simona Dolci
Giulia II 2011
Olio su tela su pannello
80 x 60 cm

PART 5 - Stazzema



Lo studio, Scale, Stazzema



Every summer, the Simi family went to Stazzema, a municipality (comune) near Filadelfo's birthplace in Versillia in the Province of Lucca in Tuscany. Filadelfo preferred Stazzema to his birthplace, Levigliani: he considered the peasant population in Stazzema to be more picturesque. This is the studio Filadelfo built at Scale, just before entering Stazzema.



Villanella or Casa del Pittore, Stazzema



Later he had another house built higher up on the mountain. It was called Villa Nella, but now they call it La Casa del Pittore, The Painter's House. It was built next to the Giorgini house. The Giorgini's were friends and business partners.

Interior of Villanella with a drawing of the mountains on the wall by Nerina.

Another interior with a girl near the fireplace, a drawing on the wall and a little painting by Filadelfo

Filadelfo Simi
Ragazza al focolare
oil on canvas
24 x 18 cm



Evening prayers, an important painting by Filadelfo Simi of a scene in Stazzema with the people of Stazzema posing.



Filadelfo Simi
Pregiera della Sera
oil on canvas
112 x 85 cm



'Evening prayers' were painted in this square at Stazzema

The square where the evening prayers took place. The door on the right behind the flowerpot is the entrance to the apartment we always rent when we go to paint in Stazzema in the summer.



Filadelfo Simi
Le Parche 1894
oil on canvas
220 x 252 cm

A painting by Filadelfo with the picturesque peasants of Stazzema posing.



Filadelfo Simi
Ragazza in Giallo (detail)
1891
oil on canvas
102,9 x 71,2 cm

Girl in yellow, The dress was probably specially made for the girl to pose for the painting.

In 2014, the Municipality of Stazzema invited former Simi students to hold an exhibition in memory of their teacher Nerina Simi in the newly built Casa della Cultura at Cardoso, a small town not far from Stazzema.



The poster on the left is from the show in 2014. In the Exhibition that followed in 2017, a selection of Nerina Simi's paintings were also exhibited .



Exhibition, 'La Signorina',
Stazzema, Cardoso, 2017

This is the exhibition in 2017. In this photo you see a marble bust that we commissioned Fred Brownstein, also a former Simi student, to make.





Here are some photos showing the progress of the making of the bust.



Fred Brownstein working on Simi bust, work in progress, 2017



All former Simi students present
at the opening of the exhibition
Stazzema 2017

All former Simi students present at the exhibition in 2017.
Since the first exhibition in 2014, a small group of Simi students goes to
paint together every summer. We intend to continue our visits to Stazzema
and paint outdoors together for a few weeks in the summer. The Stazzema
area is very beautiful.



La Pania,
Alpi Apuane,
Stazzema



Monte Forato
Alpi Apuane,
Pruno, Stazzema

It is also a very good place to have good meals...



Lunch at Povromo, Pruno near Cardoso 2017

...and to have nice walks.



We were on our way to
Acqua Pendente near
Pruno and Cardoso 2017

Very nice to paint together



Painting together
in Stazzema
near the church
2016



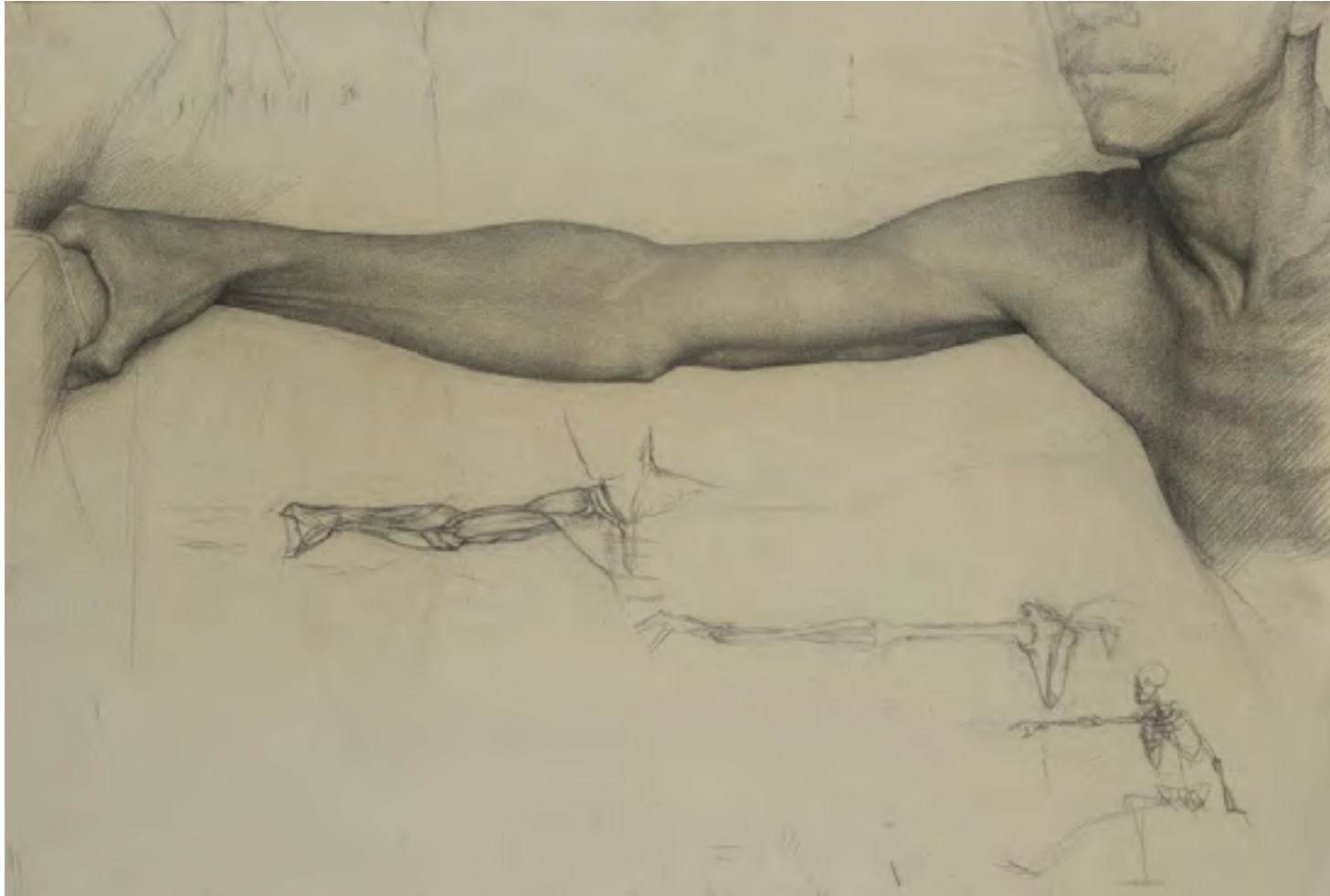
Painting together on the terraces of
the Palazzo della Cultura
Cardoso
2017



And to paint each other. A little painting of mine with
Alessandra near the Ponte a Pruno.

Joke Frima
Painting at Ponte a Pruno 2016
oil on panel
30 x 40 cm

PART 6 - How a Simi drawing and painting was made

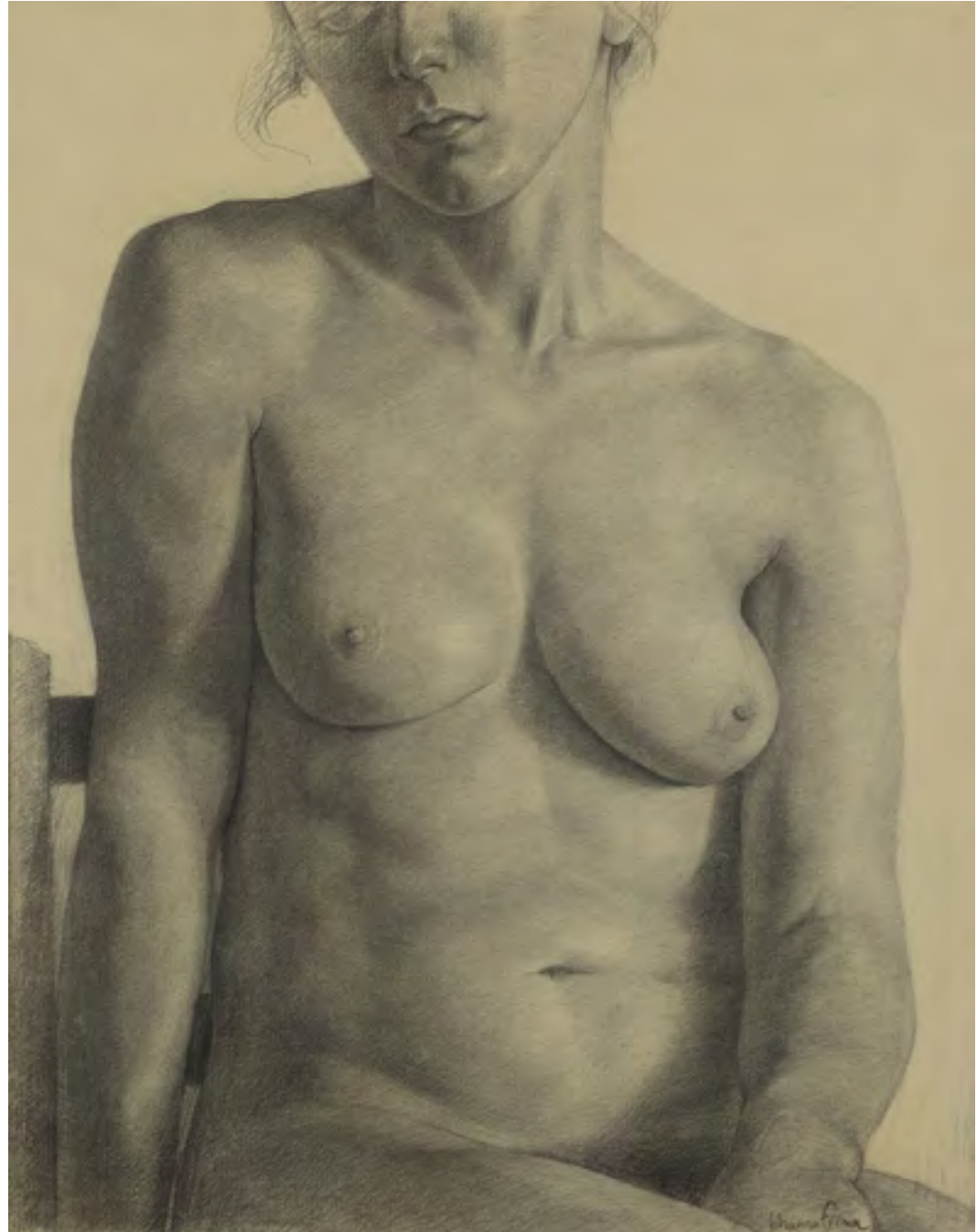


Joke Frima
Arm, anatomical studies
charcoal on Ingres
50 x 65cm
1979

Nerina Simi used comparative measurement for setting up a drawing. She wanted us to draw with charcoal, because it is easy to make corrections and it teaches the hand to be sensitive. A rubber, a thin stick and a plumb line were the tools we used. First we look at the model and decide which part to do. As I said before, Simi wanted us to do life-

size studies. In this case, I decided on the arm. With the help of comparative measurement, I first drew a construction, with all the spaces correctly in proportion to the other spaces. In this case, the Signorina instructed me to look for the anatomy, so I had my anatomy book on my lap to know what it was that I was seeing. It helped to know what was under the skin.

This is another example of a life-size study in charcoal.



Joke Frima
female torso
charcoal on Roma,
60 x 48 cm
1979



Joke Frima
English lady
charcoal
1977



Joke Frima
English lady - detail
charcoal
1977

Here is an example of a dressed model, a very early drawing of mine from 1977.

I made a special study of the neck and shoulders, because this model was so good at keeping her head turned.

Simi wanted us to do drawings covering the whole sheet of paper, including the background, and to study the values. This is an excellent exercise to understand the light and values in preparation for painting. With a painting you cannot leave your canvas uncovered.



Joke Frima
interieur
still-life on model's podium
charcoal drawings
1978

Another two drawings that include the background, but in a different way.



Joke Frima
Batik folds
charcoal
47 x 32 cm
1982



Joke Frima
Riace bronze
charcoal pencil
38 x 19 cm
1981



Simi recommended brushes:
 3 bristle brushes
 small, middle, large
 flat square and short.
 These are to start of with
 and later what ever you
 like best,
 but Simi preferred
 square flat brushes

Simi's painting technique is very simple. I will demonstrate it to you with some photos that follow the progress of a portrait in steps.

Simi recommended a series of about 12 colours: white (zinc); cadmium lemon yellow; cadmium yellow; cadmium yellow deep; cadmium yellow orange; cadmium red; chinacrindonrosa; alizarin deep; burnt sienna; viridian green; cobalt blue; ultramarine deep; (ivory black)

In the beginning, only 3 bristle brushes were needed: flat, square and short to start with, and later whatever you preferred.

She wanted us to work on an absorbent ground.

No medium was used, just plain paint from the tube.

If necessary, retouch varnish was used.



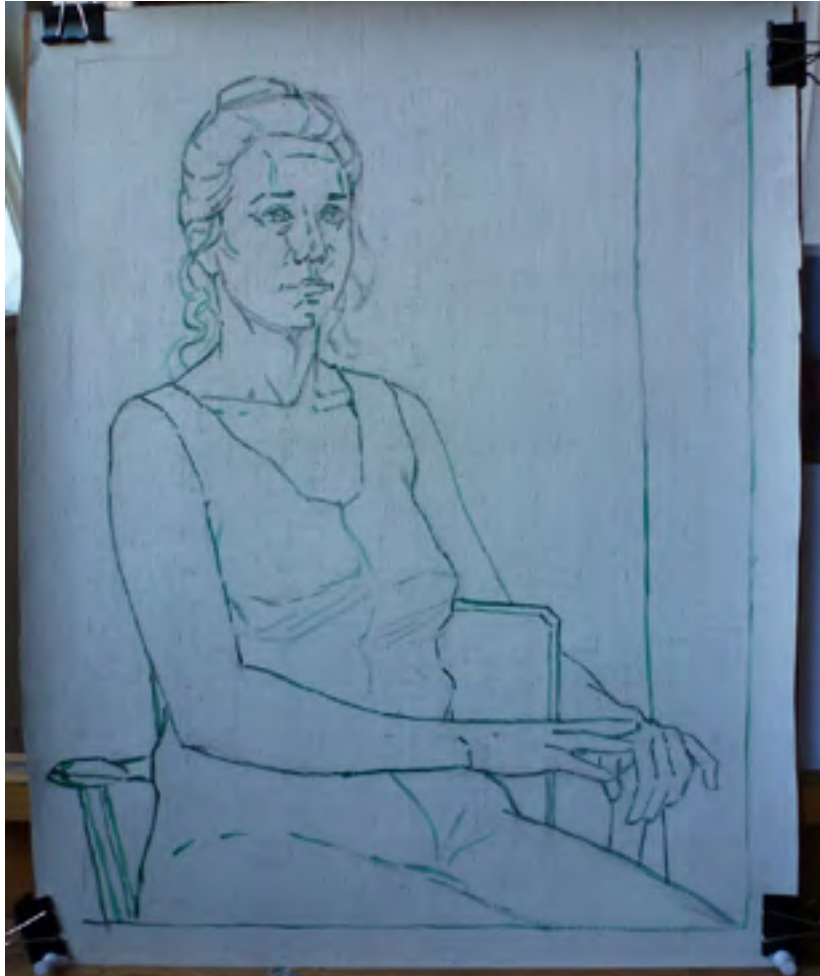
Simi palet:
 white
 cadmium lemon yellow
 cadmium yellow
 cadmium yellow deep
 cadmium yellow orange
 cadmium red
 chinacrindonrosa
 (magenta)
 alizarin deep
 burnt sienna
 viridian green
 cobalt bleu
 ultramarine deep
 (ivory black)

And then, there was a very important ingredient: natural light ...

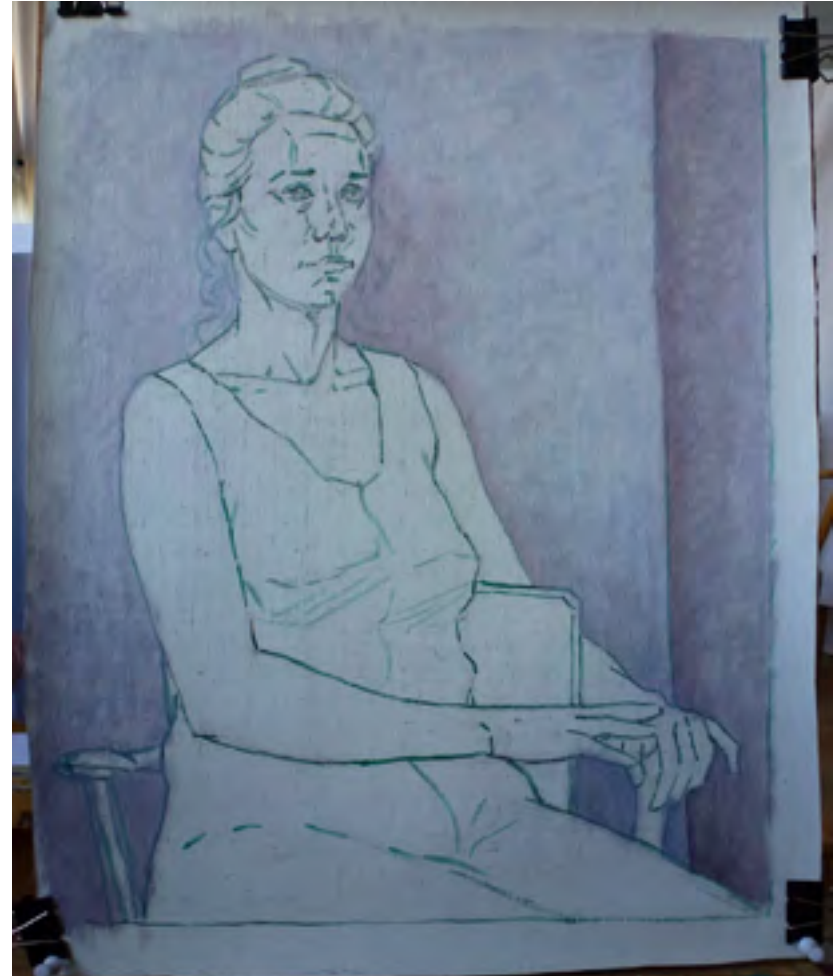


Atelier Joke Frima

Painting as taught by Nerina Simi



First, I make an accurate drawing in the right proportions with charcoal. This is called the construction.
Then I trace the lines with thinned paint and wipe away the charcoal.
Second, with an old brush, I start rubbing in a first thin layer of paint.



start of a painting,
1. an accurate drawing
2. rubbing in a preparation with paint



Continuing the preparation, rubbing in paint, immediately towards the right colour

I continue rubbing the paint in all over the canvas, covering the white as soon as possible and putting in the darks, which help to judge the values.

We call this the **preparation**.



After the preparation, we continue with brushstrokes full of paint and we go slowly.



putting in
the darker
parts to
help to get
the right
values

I decided to give my attention to the arms and hands first.



I was annoyed by the big empty space, and decided to put a mirror in.



I worked on Clara's face to soften the expression.



I decided to put something on her lap: a piece of yellow fruit – a quince – with some leaves.





A close-up showing the top of my head with my eyes visible in the mirror to show the two ways of looking.



A close-up of the eyes, showing the brushstrokes.



A close-up of the hands, showing the brushstrokes.

A photo of the finished painting.
'To look and to be looked at' is the title I gave it, because this painting is about posing and observation.



Joke Frima
To look and to be looked at
oil on linen on panel,
45 x 36 cm
2015

This is the painting that won fifth prize in the TRAC competition. It is a portrait that the former Simi student Alessandra Marrucchi recently did of her daughter Francesca.



Alessandra Marrucchi
Francesca
oil
35 x 65 cm
2018

Conclusion

For me, remembering Nerina Simi responds to the need to transmit to the younger generations of artists the valuable experience of her life, which was so completely dedicated to art. Studio Simi was not just a place to study and create art, but also to experience all of Italy. Simi often said, "Remember, I am your guide; Nature is your teacher."

2018 has shown the power of women across industry, media, theater, art, politics and more.

Nerina Simi's unwavering independence, her commitment to teaching, and determination ensured that students received and achieved far more than they ever could have imagined. Nerina Simi was a powerhouse long before it was a "cause célèbre", and the art world is all the better for her contributions.

Joke Frima

Leeuwarden

2 mei 2018



Nerina Simi
as a child
foto
with la Foresta
de Fontainbleau

