

## Research Incentive Fund Report

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In November 2013, I received a generous grant from the Indiana University Librarians Association to support travel to Bologna and Florence, Italy, to conduct research necessary for the completion of my doctoral dissertation, titled “The Presentation of Incorrptibility: The *Praesentia* of the Female Saint,” which is scheduled to be defended in the Fall of 2014. My project seeks to insert the incorruptible body into the discussion of image devotion and relic veneration that followed the Council of Trent’s (1545-1563) decrees concerning the use of images, which affirmed Thomas Aquinas’s position that worship is passed from representation to archetype. This is addressed in terms of the image and the relic within the same sacred space, primarily in the context of the chapels of S. Caterina de’ Vigri (1413-1463; canonized 1712) in Bologna and S. Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi (1566-1607; canonized 1669) in Florence, where there were not only man-made representations of the saint, but also the whole and entire body of the saint herself. Bringing together an array of visual and textual materials including such objects as the presentation of the preserved body, hagiographies, altarpieces, votive images, sculpted icons, frontispiece illustrations, and popular prints, I analyze the powerful physical presence of the incorruptible relic body in relation to the saint’s somatic miracles, the visual commemoration of those miracles at the shrine, and the ultimate transportation of this means of access to the divine when portable images moved away from the body.

This research trip allowed me to obtain access to images and to secure publication rights on images for the dissertation. I was also able to conduct a final review of important repositories to evaluate material relevant to the devotional cults of these two women. During the trip, I visited the shrines of the two saints – at the Church of the Corpus Domini in Bologna and the Church of Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi in Florence. I also visited a number of primary resource repositories, including, the Archivio di Stato di Bologna, the *Biblioteca Comunale dell’ Archiginnasio*, and the Archivio della Beata Caterina at the Archivio Generale Arcivescovile in Bologna and the *Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze* and the Centro Studi Internazionale S. Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi – Firenze [CISMAF] in Careggi (outside Florence).

In addition to my dissertation, this research was shared in a paper, titled “Impressing the Female Relic Body,” at the Renaissance Society of America (RSA) Annual Meeting in New York City in March 2014. I have also presented my research to the Indiana University Bloomington community through an invited talk sponsored by the History of Art Department here at IUB. I am currently working on an article, also titled “Impressing the Female Relic Body,” which I will submit for publication in the coming year.