

COLLECTING ART
IN THE ITALIAN
RENAISSANCE COURT

OBJECTS AND EXCHANGES

LEAH R. CLARK

The Open University



CONTENTS

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	page vii
<i>List of Colour Plates</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
INTRODUCTION: MOBILE OBJECTS AND SOCIABLE EXCHANGES IN THE RENAISSANCE COURT	I
Object Knowledge, Collecting, and Court Culture in the Quattrocento	11
Diplomacy, Politics, and Historical Paradigms	17
1 CARAFA'S <i>TESTA DI CAVALLO</i> : THE LIFE OF A BRONZE GIFTHORSE	22
Introduction	22
Lorenzo de' Medici and Diomedede Carafa: Arbitrators between Florence and Naples	27
The Literary Life of a Horse's Head	39
The Significance of the Equine: Horseracing and Gift-horses	47
The Horse's Head and the Culture of Collecting	53
The Agency of the Thing Given: Conclusion	56
2 PRACTICES OF EXCHANGE: MERCHANT BANKERS AND THE CIRCULATION OF OBJECTS	59
Introduction	59
Florentine and Neapolitan Networks: Merchants, Clients, and the Courts	63
<i>Lettucci</i> , Gems, Jewels, and Books: The Circulation of Goods	74
The Practices of Pawning: Objects, Contenders, and Currency	95
Fraught Relations: The Bejewelled Cross	105
Between Commodity and <i>Sémiophore</i> : Conclusion	108
3 INTERTEXTUALITY AND COLLECTION AT THE COURT OF FERRARA: ROBERTI'S DIPTYCH	112
Introduction	112

The Painting and <i>Scriptura</i> Debate: Paragone, Social Positioning, and the Status of Art in Ferrara	116
The <i>Studiolo</i> and Eleonora d'Aragona's Collections	120
Folding Images: Engaging with the Diptych Form	124
Word and Flesh: Caterina Vegri and the Corpo di Christo	130
<i>Fabula</i> and Forms of Assembly: Paragone and the Intertext	133
Citation, Imitation, and the Spaces of Collection	139
Other Forms of Citation in Eleonora d'Aragona's Collections	152
Collection as Assembly: Conclusion	156
4 THE ORDER OF THE ERMINE: COLLARS, CLOAKS, AND THE CIRCULATION OF THE SIGN	158
Introduction	158
The Aragonese Orders of the Jar and the Ermine	164
The Statutes of the Order of the Ermine	168
Members and International Association	170
Representations of the Ermine: The Circulation of the Sign	174
Ceremonial: Mantles, Collars, and Bodily Inscription	193
Allegorical Representations of the Order of the Ermine: Ercole de' Roberti's <i>Famous Women</i>	198
The Obligation of the Sign: Conclusion	206
CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF OBJECTS AT COURT	208
<i>Appendix: Eleonora d'Aragona's Inventories</i>	217
<i>Notes</i>	235
<i>Primary Archival Sources</i>	285
<i>Bibliography</i>	287
<i>Index</i>	315