

**Summary**

**COSTANZA BROLI (University of Naples Federico II) / Not just an environment. Role and significance of ruins in 17th c. Italian art through the example of Viviano Codazzi**

The main purpose of this brief article is to trace some of the paths which classical architectural elements have followed during 17th c. in art, especially within easel paintings. Since their first appearance, ancient monuments have always had an important role as iconographical elements, but, as time went by, their function within the artwork changed, and so their meaning: the 17th c. is probably a period when this phenomenon is the easiest to observe. This review of some of Viviano Codazzi's works provides a glimpse of how artists (and by extension, patrons) chose to incorporate ancient and classical elements into compositions, even with clear inconsistencies, not to give them up. The desire to own a representation of antiquities was stronger than rules of logical and historical coherence, so figures and their environment did not always go along, even until the contamination between Christian and classical sphere. The persistence over time of archaeological motifs is not due to creativity laziness or cultural tradition, it happens because people still wanted to watch them and get caught by them. It is not a rational matter; it is a matter of emotions.