“BUSTS, BODIES, AND SOULS: ANIMATING PORTRAIT SCULPTURE IN ROMAN BAROQUE COLLECTIONS”

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ART HISTORY
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The Baroque portrait busts of sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini are known for their liveliness: figures pray, leaf through books, gesture outward, or clutch their chests in piety. Patrons and collectors used display - conjunctions of carefully selected pictures as well as secondary sculptures and sculpted objects, particularly urns or vases - to foster a sense of an individual living presence in portrait busts. This talk examines several instances of such displays in the collections of papal nephews, and considers how the sculptural bust as an embodied presence was made to serve political, aesthetic, and pious ends.

Karen J. Lloyd is Assistant Professor of Art History at Stony Brook University. She is the co-editor of A Transitory Star: The Late Bernini and his Reception and author of articles and book chapters. She is the recipient of grants and fellowships including Queen’s University, the Institut National de l’Histoire d’Art/French Academy and the Kress Foundation/Bibliotheca Hertziana. Her current work focuses on the visual apologetics of nepotism in papal Rome, from rhetoric to modes of reception.