

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910450338003321
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Titolo	Living on the edge in Leonardo's Florence [[electronic resource] ] : selected essays // Gene Brucker
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berkeley, : University of California Press, c2005
ISBN	1-282-35748-4 0-520-93099-1 9786612357480 1-59734-720-5
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (239 p.)
Disciplina	945/.5105
Soggetti	Renaissance - Italy - Florence Electronic books. Florence (Italy) History 1421-1737 Florence (Italy) History To 1421 Italy History 1268-1492
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- List of Maps -- Acknowledgments -- Permissions -- Introduction -- 1. The Italian Renaissance -- 2. Civic Traditions in Premodern Italy -- 3. From Campanilismo to Nationhood: Forging an Italian Identity -- 4. "The Horseshoe Nail": Structure and Contingency in Medieval and Renaissance Italy -- 5. Fede and Fiducia: The Problem of Trust in Italian History, 1300-1500 -- 6. Florence Redux -- 7. Living on the Edge in Leonardo's Florence -- 8. Florentine Cathedral Chaplains in the Fifteenth Century -- 9. The Pope, the Pandolfini, and the Parrocchiani of S. Martino a Gangalandi (1465) -- 10. Alessandra Strozzi (1408-1471): The Eventful Life of a Florentine Matron -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	In Living on the Edge in Leonardo's Florence, an internationally renowned master of the historian's craft provides a splendid overview of Italian history from the Black Death to the rise of the Medici in 1434 and beyond into the early modern period. Gene Brucker explores those pivotal years in Florence and ranges over northern Italy, with forays into

the histories of Genoa, Milan, and Venice. The ten essays, three of which have never before been published, exhibit Brucker's graceful intelligence, his command of the archival sources, and his ability to make history accessible to anyone interested in this place and period. Whether he is writing about a case in the criminal archives, about a citation from Machiavelli, or the concept of modernity, the result is the same: Brucker brings the pulse of the period alive. Five of these essays explore themes in the premodern period and delve into Italy's political, social, economic, religious, and cultural development. Among these pieces is a lucid, synoptic view of the Italian Renaissance. The last five essays focus more narrowly on Florentine topics, including a fascinating look at the dangers and anxieties that threatened Florence in the fifteenth century during Leonardo's time and a mini-biography of Alessandra Strozzi, whose letters to her exiled sons contain the evidence for her eventful life.

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