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Thinking about our children and future generations,
this catalogue has been entirely printed on recycled paper.

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Romano Fine Art

*A Selection of
Master Drawings*

1 Lelio Orsi

Novellara, Reggio Emilia, 1508 ca. – 1587 Novellara, Reggio Emilia

Recto: *Two Male Nudes* (after Michelangelo), 1555 circa

Verso: *Study of a Male Nude Seated Astride on a Wall with his Hands on his Head*

Pen, brown ink and traces of black chalk on white laid paper
190 x 126 mm (7 1/2 x 4 15/16 in.)

Inscriptions

On the verso, top right, in old handwriting, *Camelleute* and the number 20.

The four pen studies, equally distributed between the *recto* and *verso* of the present sheet, can be attributed to Lelio Orsi based on stylistic evidence. His painterly career only came under scrutiny in the 1980s, having been unknown to Giorgio Vasari, as he was restricted to the Gonzaga county and to Reggio Emilia, when at the service of the Gonzaga of Novellara¹. The in-depth research carried out thus far, has aimed at reconstructing the evolutionary path of the artist from his adherence to the style of Correggio and Giulio Romano in his youth, to the definitive Michelangelesque influences of his maturity.² Not surprisingly, Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi, the first to compile a brief biography in 1704, defined Lelio Orsi as « *Correggesco nel colorito, e Michelagnolesco nel disegno* ».³

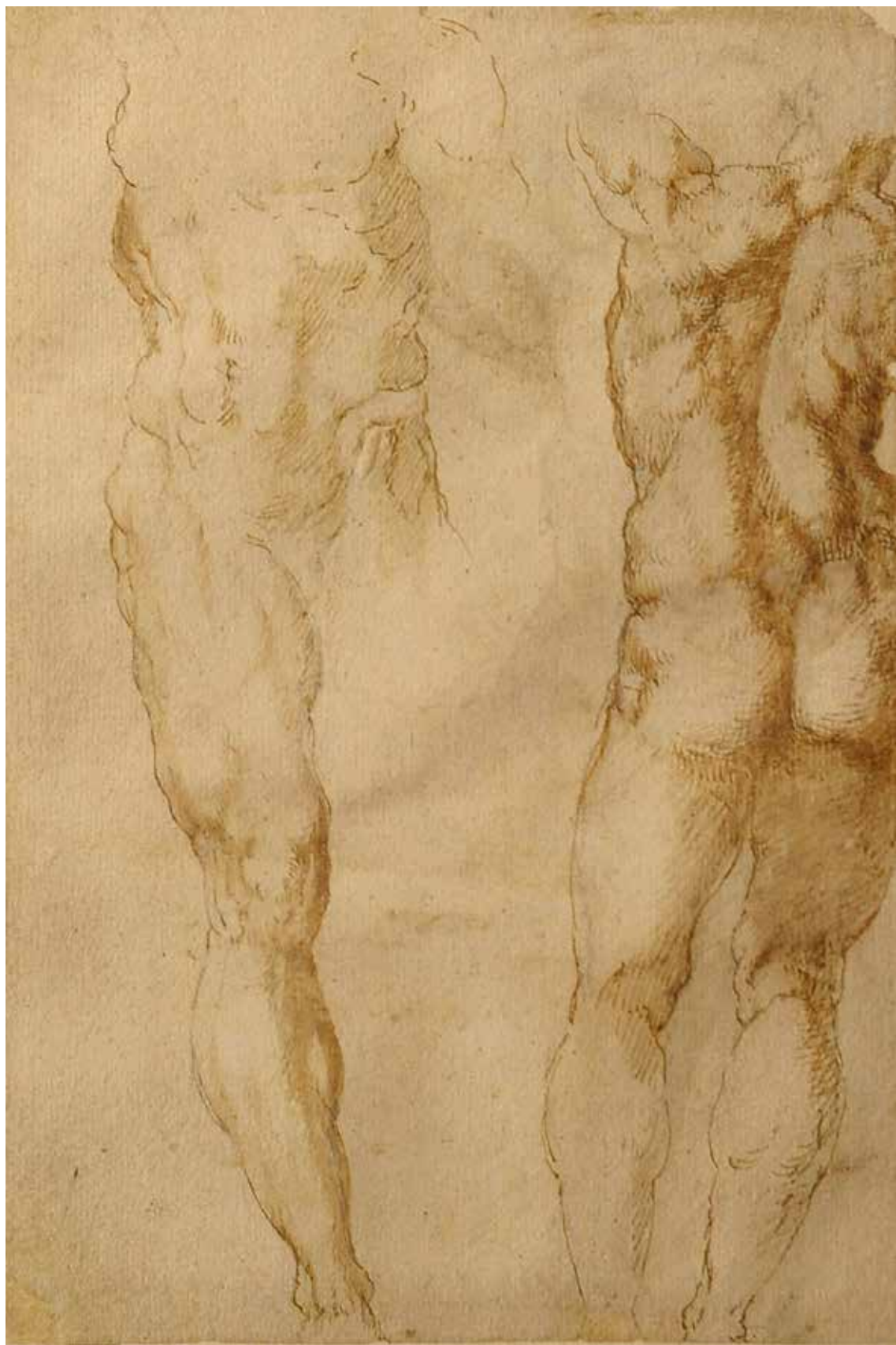
I believe that Orsi executed the present drawings during his documented sojourn in Rome, where he stayed with Count Alfonso Gonzaga for about a year – from 6 December 1554 until the end of September 1555 – in the now destroyed Marmorata Palace close to the church of Saint Sabine.⁴

His Roman stay is devoid of any further documented evidence, but the *Annunciation* at the Gonzaga Museum in Novellara⁵ can be dated to this time; judging by its composition, the panel was certainly inspired by the now lost painting, depicting the same subject, executed around 1550 by Marcello Venusti (1510-1579) for the Cesi Chapel in Santa Maria della Pace, itself stemming from a Michelangelo cartoon supplied by Tommaso de' Cavalieri, a renowned collector, associated to both Michelangelo and Alfonso Gonzaga.⁶ Thanks to this network of contacts in the city and following the example of Venusti, a copyist of the *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel

for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese⁷, Orsi most probably not only studied the frescoes in the Sistine and Pauline Chapels, but he also had the privilege to meet Michelangelo and then make copies directly from several of his drawings.

The fact remains that, after his return to Novellara in the autumn of 1555, Orsi's graphic production sees a sort of "splitting", both in technical and stylistic terms: along with the customary pen, brown wash and white lead heightening drawings, he also produced elaborate experimental sheets executed in pen only, featuring emphasized hatching, originating from Michelangelo, obtained with very thin rectilinear marks, at times parallel, at times crossed, which thicken or thin out according to the variation of light. Several autograph pen drawings carried out by Orsi in the early 1560s, similar in style to the present sheet, bear witness to this stylistic turning point and his keen adherence on a formal level as well; we refer to the *Triumph of Galatea* from the Gonzaga Museum in Novellara, a preparatory drawing for one of the *Mythological Floods* frescoes, formerly in the Rocca in Novellara (c. 1556 ca.),⁸ the *Apotheosis of Hercules* at the Pierpoint Morgan Library in New York (c. 1660) and the composition study for the *Conversion of Saint Paul* at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (c. 1660), freely inspired by the fresco depicting the same subject in the Pauline Chapel.⁹

The two male nudes outlined in pen on the *recto* of the present sheet both originate from works by Michelangelo. The nude to the left, resuming the dynamic pose of Amman in one of the Sistine Chapel vaults, was used by Orsi a few years later in the drawing depicting the *Myth of Prometheus* (c. 1560), in pen and brown wash, now at the Jan Kruger Collection in Munich.¹⁰ The tangible proof



that the four drawings in the present sheets were actually executed during Lelio's stay in Rome between 1554 and 1555, when in close contact with Michelangelo and Tommaso de' Cavalieri, lies in the second nude seen from behind to the right: Orsi faithfully reproduces, in fact, the renowned original in pen by Michelangelo dated to around 1503, also with thick hatching, now at the Albertina in Vienna.¹¹

Instead, the male nude on the *verso*, portrays a bearded model sitting astride on a wall, both hands resting above his head, as if simulating a Telamon. This drawing, too, outlined in black chalk and gone over in pen – with vivid changes in the position of the forearms – served as the model on which Orsi, once returned to Novellara,

developed the figure of a telamon riding on a fruit garland, seen in two autograph drawings finished in pen, wash and white lead, at the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung in Munich and at the Louvre. In turn, these are preparatory drawings for the same wall frieze, hitherto wrongly dated to around 1553-1554.¹²

The image of the chameleon outlined on the *verso* further supports the Roman execution of the present drawing; Orsi must have seen this animal several times during his stay in the Eternal City, combined with the dolphin and the *Festina Lente* motto, in the coat of arms of the deceased Pope Paul III Farnese, which occurs in several areas in Castel Sant'Angelo, decorated by Perin Del Vaga between 1545 and 1547.

Maria Cecilia Fabbri

- 1 Vasari's silence is counteracted by the 1678 perfunctory mention of Lelio Orsi's critical misfortune by Carlo Cesare Malvasia (*Felsina pittrice. Vite de' pittori bolognesi*, 2 vols., Bologna 1678, II, p. 288).
- 2 Giuseppe Tiraboschi's documented research (*Biblioteca modenese*, 7 voll., Modena 1781-1786, vol. VI part I, 1786, pp. 493-502), was followed by relevant monograph studies: V. Romani, *Lelio Orsi*, Modena 1984; *Lelio Orsi*, exhibition catalogue (Reggio Emilia, Valli Theatre, 5 December 1987 – 3 January 1988) edited by E. Monducci and M. Pirondini, Cinisello Balsamo (Milan), 1987; *Lelio Orsi a Novellara. Un grande manierista in una piccola città*, Proceedings from the Study Day (Novellara, 19-20 November 2011) edited by A. Bigi lotti and G. Zavatta, Forlì 2012; M. Pirondini, *Lelio Orsi, aggiornamenti ed inediti*, in *op. cit.*, 2012, pp. 25-39; V. Romani, *Orsi, Lelio*, in "Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani", vol. 79, Rome 2013, *ad vocem*; M. Pirondini, *Lelio Orsi, i Gonzaga di Novellara e Roma*, in *Michelangelo a colori. Marcello Venusti, Lelio Orsi, Marco Pino, Jacopino da Conte*, exhibition catalogue (Rome, Gallerie Nazionali di Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, 11 October 2019 – 6 January 2020) edited by F. Parrilla and M. Pirondini, Rome 2019, pp. 37-58.
- 3 P. A. Orlandi, *Abecedario pittorico*, Bologna 1704, p. 254.
- 4 On the documented Rome trip of Lelio Orsi, see, most recently, M. Pirondini, *op. cit.*, 2019, pp. 37-58 (with previous bibliography).
- 5 M. Pirondini, *op. cit.*, 2019, pp. 68-72, entry no. 2.
- 6 Michelangelo's original cartoon is at the Pierpont

- Morgan Library in New York. The lost altarpiece by Marcello Venusti, inspired by it, is visually documented by an autograph copy at the Galleria Nazionale di Arte Antica at Palazzo Barberini in Rome. Concerning the *Annunciation* by Venusti, the above mentioned copy and the Roman activity of the painter, see F. Parrilla, *La carriera di un petit-maître. Marcello Venusti oltre Michelangelo*, in *op. cit.*, 2019, pp. 17-36 and pp. 64-67, entry no. 1.
- 7 F. Parrilla, in *Op.cit.*, 2019, p. 22.
- 8 On this drawing – a recent acquisition of the Novellara Municipality – and on the frescoes at the Rocca, detached and transferred to the Galleria Estense in Modena ever since 1773, see M. Pirondini, *Lelio Orsi, gli acquisti del Museo Gonzaga di Novellara*, in *op.cit.*, 2012, pp. 41-45.
- 9 On the Oxford drawing and concerning other sheets by Lelio Orsi referring to the same composition, see F. Frisoni, in *op. cit.*, 1987, pp. 141-143, entries nos. 125-128; M. Pirondini, *op. cit.*, 2019, pp. 47-48, 56 note 40.
- 10 On the Munich drawing, see F. Frisoni, in *op. cit.*, 1987, p. 150, entry no. 138.
- 11 On this autograph drawing by Michelangelo, usually associated with the *Battle of Cascina*, see V. Birke – J. Kertész, *Die italienischen Zeichnungen der Albertina. Generalverzeichnis, Band I: Inv. 1-1200*, Vienna – Cologne – Weimar 1992, pp. 64-65, Inv. 118 and the corresponding *on line* entry of the Albertina Museum in Vienna, compiled by Achim Gnann in 2010 (with previous bibliography).
- 12 On these two studies, see N. Clerici Bagozzi, in *op. cit.*, 1987, pp. 88-89, and entries nos. 57-58.



2 Marco Marchetti known as Marco Da Faenza attributed to

Faenza, Ravenna, before 1528 – 1558

Study of a Grotesque with Sphinxes, Telamons and a Representation of Fame, 1570 – 1575 circa

Pen, brown ink, brown wash and traces of black chalk on white watermarked laid paper
230 x 174 mm (9 1/16 x 6 7/8 in.); with the border 284 x 194 mm (11 3/16 x 7 5/8 in.)

Inscriptions

Top right-hand corner, in pen 82; on the verso two autograph writings by Ulrich A. Middeldorf in pencil: on the left «*From Sir Robert / Witt's Collection / Xmas 1937*». On the right: «*Francesco Galli / Called Bibiena / 1659-1739 / Born Bologna architect [...]*».

Provenance

John of William Talman, Hinxworth, England (L. 2462); Sir Robert Witt, London; from 1937 with Ulrich A. Middeldorf, Florence; Private Collection, Florence.

Literature

A. Griffiths, *The Talman Collection, marks and sales*, in "The Annual Volume of the Walpole Society", LIX, 1997, p. 197 («Italian, XVI c., *Design for a pedestal*»).

The present sheet, with a distinguished provenance and here attributed to the mature style of Marco da Faenza, depicts a complex grotesque, trapezoidal-shaped construction, originating from the juxtaposition of two bodies that are separate in view of their drawing and dimension, although both displaying strict symmetry criteria.

The upper part, surmounted by a low architrave, looks bordered sideways by a pair of winged sphinxes striking a mirror pose, acting as caryatids, set in profile looking outwards. Featuring a long, curvilinear neck and a bulging nest, the hook-nosed wings of both sphinxes converge in correspondence of the small head in the middle, under which the personification of Fame with wings and two trumpets stands out in a circular medallion. Both the racemes supporting the medallion and the leonine paws of the sphinxes weigh on a double dividing cornice, decorated with vegetable motifs displaying ovules and darts, supported by two telamons at the far ends. The latter feature anthropomorphic heads, busts and feet –facing each other in the lower register with the final part of their bodies sporting an architectural shape, draped in fruit garlands. They both sustain the central mask with their hands, wedged between two scrolls turning outwards, crowning the rich cornice, compressed by two masks in profile on both sides; the cornice outlines the animated contours of the shield, left empty and suspended on

two phytomorphic scrolls. In its entirety, the grotesque construction raises on a high projecting base, displayed in this drawing in two possible variations, that is either smooth or decorated with stylized leaves.

The black mark, composed of three uppercase, interwoven T and stamped in full view at the centre of the shield, has been linked to the English architect and antiquarian John Talman (1677-1726) for some time, a renowned collector of drawings and engravings from several schools. He was a prolific draftsman himself as well as being the first director of the Society of Antiquaries in London, from 1718 to 1726.¹ During the previous eight years spent in Rome (1709-1717) – interspersed by trips to Venice, Padua, Genoa, Ravenna, Pisa, Florence and Naples² – he had considerably increased his already significant collection of works on paper, assembled by his dad, the architect William Talman (1650-1719), the founder of the triple-T mark adopted by his son.³ The vast Talman collection of old master and contemporary drawings, inherited by John in 1719 and divided by him according to subject matter into more than two hundred volumes of varying sizes were originally kept in their Hinxworth residency in Hertfordshire. The collection was mostly dispersed upon the collector's death at the London auctions organised by Christopher Cock on 19 April 1727 and 5-10 April 1728.⁴

Starting from the two auction sale catalogues,



modern studies and especially the project initiated by the University of Pisa and supported by the Getty Research Institute in 2002, called *John Talman: an Early Eighteenth-Century Collector of Drawings*, considerably helped to locate a copious number of loose drawings in the many European and US collections – firstly The British Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Morgan Library in New York – in addition to three volumes that reached the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford intact (called *Small Album*, *Large Album* and *Largest Album* according to their sizes) and those in the collections of the Dukes of Devonshire at Chatsworth, largely rearranged.⁵ In the absence of the recognisable mark (not always present), the drawings from the Talman Collection can be recognised in view of their golden, complex border, unique to every sheet, which frames every composition and enhances the overall effect. Talman himself, laying out a blend of pulverised gold, Arabic gum and water on the mounts with a very thin brush, previously drawn in pencil and cut out to fit every single sheet, often executed such frames.⁶

The present *Study for a Decoration*, where the Talman trigram is paired with the golden border with a Greek-style decoration, easily falls into the limited number of sheets that Talman must have deemed among the finest in his collection, showing both features. An opinion shared by the subsequent owners of the present drawing, testified by the writing on the verso, in the equally prestigious collections of Sir Robert Witt and Ulrich A. Middeldorf.

The English art historian Anthony Griffiths included the present sheet in a group of architectural drawings by various artists in 1997, relying on the number 82 put by Talman on the right-hand corner, that were themselves numbered and located in various museums; they would have formed a hypothetical Talman album of funeral monuments, that was dispersed in individual lots at the two Cock auctions⁷, to this day the subject of reconstruction at the University of Pisa.⁸ The present drawing, however, strongly adheres to the grotesque genre – defined by Griffiths as a *Design for a pedestal* by an anonymous Italian artist of the XVI century⁹ – thus entirely falls outside the funerary theme of the recomposed Talman volume and the numerous drawings that were deemed as being part of it, among which the XVI century projects for the *Tomb of Pope Clemens VII* by Baccio Bandinelli (Providence, Rhode Island School of Design) and the *Tomb of Pope Paul IV* by Giovanni Antonio Dosio (London, The British Museum).

Fame, alongside the sphinxes, symbolising wisdom, and the empty space inside the shield, introduced by

a pair of telamons, rather suggest the recognition of this *Study for a Grotesque Decoration* as a presentation piece. Decorated with pen and wash in a harmonious manner, it was intended for the printing of a frontispiece, clearly inspired by the famous xylographs that open and close Vasari's *Lives* in both the 1550 and 1568 editions, in view of their frameworks and choice of decorative vocabulary. The stylistic data characterising the present frontispiece model – a type of drawing that Talman enjoyed, as he already owned a very famous study with the same function by Peter Paul Rubens (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard College Library)¹⁰ – invariably lead back to Marco Marchetti da Faenza, who specialised in grotesque design and grew professionally alongside Giulio Vasari as his main collaborator: first in Rome, in Bindo Altoviti's palace in Via Giulia (1550 – 1554), then in Florence for the decoration of the apartments (1555 – 1558) and courtyard (1563) of Palazzo Vecchio, as commissioned by Duke Cosimo I de' Medici.¹¹

The extremely long neck of the sphinxes and the bizarre features of the masks, painted both in profile and from the front, make up recurring themes in the vast grotesque repertoire employed by Marco da Faenza in the period between the above-mentioned Florentine years and the last Roman sojourn of the painter (1572-1580), spent at the service of Pope Gregory XIII in the Vatican. The graphic style of this sheet appears useful for its correct dating, featuring a firmness of stroke distant from the brisk, darting style of his early drawings, but still immune from the contrasting watercolour effects that he would derive from the graphic style of Cesare Nebbia. Comparisons with several autograph drawings by Marchetti, executed in pen within 1570-5 – we refer to the refined model for one of the parietal panels in the Marcheselli Lettimi Palace in Rimini (1570) at Windsor Castle;¹² the two studies relating to grotesque decorations of the Rondinini Mazzolani Palace in Faenza (1570-1573 circa)¹³ and *Christ Descending to the Limbo* at the Galleria Estense in Modena (1570-1573)¹⁴ – show convincing analogies, both in the manner and in the unmistakable physiognomies of the faces, with the present *Study for a Decoration* suggesting a dating around 1570-1575, halfway between the periods spent by the artist in Romagna and Rome.

It is difficult to say where and when John Talman may have acquired the present drawing, attributed to Marco da Faenza: was it during the many years spent in Rome or, more likely, in Romagna, during one of his recurrent stays in Ravenna between 1714 and 1716?¹⁵

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- 1 Explanations on the Lugt mark 2462 in A. Griffiths, *The Talman Collection, marks and sales*, in "The Annual Volume the Walpole Society, LIX, 1997, pp. 202-203 on. The biography of John Talman has been pieced together by G. Parry, thanks to the correspondence the antiquarian held over the years. G. Parry, *The John Talman letter-book*, in "The Annual Volume of The Walpole Society", LIX, 1997, pp. 3-179.
- 2 G. Parry, *Ibid.*, 1997, pp. 11-39.
- 3 A. Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 1997, p. 202.
- 4 On this matter, see two seminal essays: C.M. Sicca, *The Making and Unraveling of John Talman's Collection of Drawings*, in *John Talman: An Early Eighteenth Century Connoisseur*, edited by C.M. Sicca, New Haven-London, 2008, pp. 1-75; C.M. Sicca, *I disegni di figura nella Collezione Talman: dalla formazione alla dispersione*, in *Libri e Album di Disegni 1550-1800. Nuove Prospettive metodologiche con esegesi storico-critica*, International Conference Proceedings (Rome, 30 May-1 June 2018) edited by V. Segreto, Rome 2018, pp. 148-160.
- 5 C. M Sicca, *op. cit.*, 2018, pp. 154-155.
- 6 C. M Sicca, *op. cit.*, 2008, pp. 154-155.
- 7 A. Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 1997, p. 197
- 8 On this matter, see C. M. Sicca, *op.cit.* 108, p.156
- 9 A. Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 1997, p.197
- 10 We are referring to the study carried out by Rubens for the frontispiece of the volume by Cornelio a Lapide, *Commentaria in Pentateuchum Mosis*, published in Antwerp in 1616. See C.M. Sicca, *op.cit.*, 2018, pp. 150-151, fig.1.
- 11 On the life, works and drawings by Marco Marchetti da Faenza, see E. Allegri - A. Cecchi, *Palazzo Vecchio e Medici. Guida Storica*. Florence 1980, ad indicem; A Cecchi, *Per la ricostruzione dell'attività romana di Marco da Faenza*, in "Paragone", 529-531-533, 1994, pp. 89-93; V. Da Gai, *Marchetti Marco, detto Marco da Faenza*, in "Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani", 69, Rome 2007, p. 650-653; A. Bigi lotti - G. Zavatta, *La "Conversione di San Paolo" di Marco Marchetti ai Servi. Disegni Inediti*, in "L'Arco, VII, 2009, pp. 40-49; G. Zavatta, *Marco Marchetti e Domenico Beccafumi: su un disegno della Galleria Estense di Modena*, in "Romagna Arte e Storia", 89, 2010, pp. 90-97.
- 12 Windsor Castle, Royal Collection Trust, Inv. no. 905034: the drawing depicts *A Roman Emperor Receiving the Levies by the Subjugated Barbarians*, within a frame flanked by two sphinxes.
- 13 A. Bigi lotti - G. Zavatta, in *Italian Master Drawings from the Princeton University Art Museum*, edited by I. M. Giles, L. Markey and C. Van Cleave. New Haven 2014, pp. 86-89, no. 36.
- 14 G. Zavatta, *op. cit.*, 2010, pp. 95
- 15 G. Parry, *op. cit.*, 1997, p.24

3 Taddeo Zuccari

Sant'Angelo in Vado 1529 - 1566 Rome

Study of a Nude Seated on an Architectural Stand for a Figure of a Prophet or Evangelist

Red chalk on ivory laid paper
396 x 265 mm (15 ⁵/₈ x 10 ³/₈ in.)

Provenance
Private Collection, UK; Private Collection, Florence.

This study of a nude marked out in sanguine with great confidence and freedom by the artist's hand, which has built up the anatomical forms with strength and steady precision, immediately recalls the nudes on the arched ceiling of the Sistine Chapel painted by Michelangelo at the start of the 16th century. These became the model



Fig. 1 T. Zuccari, *Standing nude man*, red chalk highlighted with traces of white gouache on laid paper, 420 x 287 mm (16 ¹/₂ x 11 ¹/₄ in.), Metropolitan Museum, New York.

of beauty and strength for the whole century, until the creation of the frescoes on the arched ceiling of the Palazzo Farnese by Annibale Carracci. In the context of Rome, a comparison with these nudes was inevitable for anyone who wanted to display a figure seen from below within an architectural setting. In this case too, the powerful musculature of the chest and the build of the right leg, with the contracted thigh, almost deformed from the strain of supporting the whole figure, are a clear meditation on the style of Michelangelo. The sudden interruption of the line also derives from his style, becoming faint where it suggests the volumes of the head and of the architectural stand, almost as if to indicate that the purpose of this drawing is solely an anatomical study of the figure. However, other stylistic characteristics are also evident in the piece: a sweeter and more harmonious tone to the stroke, a rounded construction of the shapes, which are classically formed, and a clear light defining the skin on the athletic body in a more naturalistic way, almost caressing the layers of the musculature. These elements recall the methods of Raphael, the other great and essential role model for every artist who was trained during the first two decades of the 16th century and therefore seeing the respective artistic climates of Florence and Rome. A similar synthesis between the two routes, together with the more natural tone of the drawing, reminds us therefore of the midpoint of the 16th century, when, especially in Rome, attempts were made to marry these two expressive visions which were quite distant from each other. An example of an artist taking this route - both mindful of the masterful strength of Michelangelo and also of the harmonious balance of Raphael, was Taddeo Zuccari, and this beautiful piece is





Figs. 2-3 T. Zuccari, *A man seen from behind* (verso); *A man seen from behind* (recto), red chalk heightened with white on laid paper, 344 x 183 mm (13 ½ x 7 ¼ in.), Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

attributed precisely to his hand. It is datable to the time when he was most strongly bonded to the “Michelangioliism” of Rome, when he created the frescoes in the Cappella Mattei at Santa Maria della Consolazione¹. A direct comparison can be made with a piece in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (inv. no. 68.113) (fig. 1) wherein the use of sanguine in defining a nude with “polydioresque” origins has many points which connect it to the sheet we are presenting here. Despite the figure in the American drawing being at a later stage of completeness, there are several similar aspects such as the persistent outline marked out in definition of the edges of the figure, and above all the double parallel hatching with which Taddeo observes the light and shade of the musculature. In particular on the legs of both figures the outline has the same style, as well as the lighter, more rounded and freer stroke, which suggests only the edge of the head.

Another comparison can be made with a drawing held at the National Gallery in Washington (inv. 1972.4.2.b) (fig. 2), a preparatory piece for a dressed figure seen from behind at the centre of the fresco showing the *Last supper* in the cappella Mattei. On the recto of the sheet (inv.

1972.4.2.a) (fig. 3) the same figure has been carefully completed in sanguine, whilst on the verso the freer stroke of the edges builds up volumes similar to those in the drawing that we are presenting here. The line forming the edge of the figure has also been drawn over several times as if in an attempt to find the line which is most functional to the movement of the figure, whilst the shadows are defined with the characteristic parallel hatching also appearing on this sheet. In addition one can observe how the same Michelangiolesque character penetrated the anatomical forms in both pieces, providing a clear basis for the dating of the sheet in question to within the almost four years in which Taddeo worked on the cappella commissioned by Jacopo Mattei, between 1553 and 1556. The reaching pose of the figure lightly sketched in sanguine, with the arm raised to hold a tablet which could be the outline of a large open book invites one to consider the hypothesis that the sheet is a first idea for an Evangelist figure. If in the frescoed arched ceiling the Evangelists overlook as half-busts within small polygonal spaces, one can easily observe how in an idea which was more advanced in terms of its progress, Taddeo still continued to study whole figures. In this case two sheets in particular can be pointed out; the first in a private collection published by Cristina Acidini², the second held in the Archdiocesan Museum in Kroměříž, (inv. KE 4504) (figs. 4, 5). On the verso of this latter sheet there are two partial



Figs. 4-5 T. Zuccari, *Luke the Evangelist*, pen and brown washes, black chalk, heightened with white on laid paper (recto); *Two sketches of sleeping male nudes* (verso), black chalk on laid paper, 364 x 257 mm (14 ¾ x 10 ½ in.), Archdiocesan Museum in Kroměříž.



Fig. 6 T. Zuccari, *Nude youth*, pen and brown wash, black chalk and red chalk on laid paper, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

studies of a figure, marked out in black chalk, where a Michelangelo-inspired torso presents considerable analogies with the figure in the drawing examined, so much so that it supports the theory that in a first idea for the cappella Mattei, Taddeo Zuccari had allocated a larger and more ascending space to the Evangelists than in the definitive frescoed composition.

At a more advanced stage the figures, now clothed, were then compressed into polygonal spaces which were already defined in the two pieces cited, whilst they were reduced to only the bust to give them a greater scale in proportion to the figures on the scene. Finally, the pose of the reaching figure on this sheet is compared with that of a nude marked out in pen in a sheet held at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. (inv. 1932.299) (fig. 6), usually referred to by critics as being from the time of the Cappella Mattei, or of the Cappella Frangipani di San Marcello al Corso, which followed soon after³. Finally, one could point out that a pose similar to the one studied by Taddeo around 1554 - 1555 in this sheet was to be chosen by Federico Zuccari in 1571 for the clothed figures of the Evangelists Luke and Mark in the Cappella Ruiz, in Santa Caterina dei Funari in Rome. This partial revival is evidence of the long-standing use by the youngest of the Zuccaris of Taddeo's sheets, which remained in the workshop after his death in Rome on 1st of September 1566.

Carlo Falciani

1 See C. Acidini Luchinat, *Taddeo e Federico Zuccari, fratelli pittori del Cinquecento*, Milan-Rome, 1998, I, pp. 44-58, regarding this important episode in the youth of Taddeo Zuccari.

2 Cf. C. Acidini Luchinat, *op.cit.*, 1998, I, p. 50, fig. 14.

3 See *Renaissance into Baroque. Italian Master Drawing by the Zuccari 1550-1600*, exhibition catalogue, by E. James Mundy, (Milwaukee Art Museum November 1989 - January 1990) Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 83-84.

4 Jacopo Negretti known as Palma Il Giovane

Venice 1548/1550 – 1628

Seated Bearded Male Figure

Charcoal and white chalk on watermarked laid paper
420 x 270 mm (16 ⁹/₁₆ x 10 ⁵/₈ in.)

One of the most prolific artists of sixteenth-century Italian Cinquecento and one of the leading figures of Venetian painting, Jacopo Palma was a restless and acclaimed draftsman during his long career. Indeed, if today barely forty autograph drawings are by Titian, and not more than one hundred and fifty survive by Tintoretto, over one thousand sheets can be securely attributed to Palma.

The son of a little known Venetian painter, Palma's prodigious natural talent was first recognized by the Duke of Urbino, Guidobaldo II della Rovere, in visit to Venice in 1564. It was in fact the Duke himself to sponsor the young painter's study trip to Rome where he moved to in 1567. Here Palma exercised copying classical antiquity as well as the most celebrated works of Michelangelo and Raphael. Unfortunately nothing remains of his stay in the Eternal City, and one could state that Palma's career only started eight years later when, around 1573, he finally returned to his homeland. Here, according to one of his first biographers, the Venetian erudite Marco Boschini, Palma further refined his style in Titian's workshop, becoming shortly after his apprenticeship in the master's studio, one of the most lauded painters active in the Lagoon.¹

Palma drew this previously unpublished drawing in a similar technique to one favoured by Titian. With rapid and vigorous strokes of black chalk, Palma outlines the body of the figure on a sheet of blue paper to determine the posture, most certainly a (no longer very young) *garzone*. It

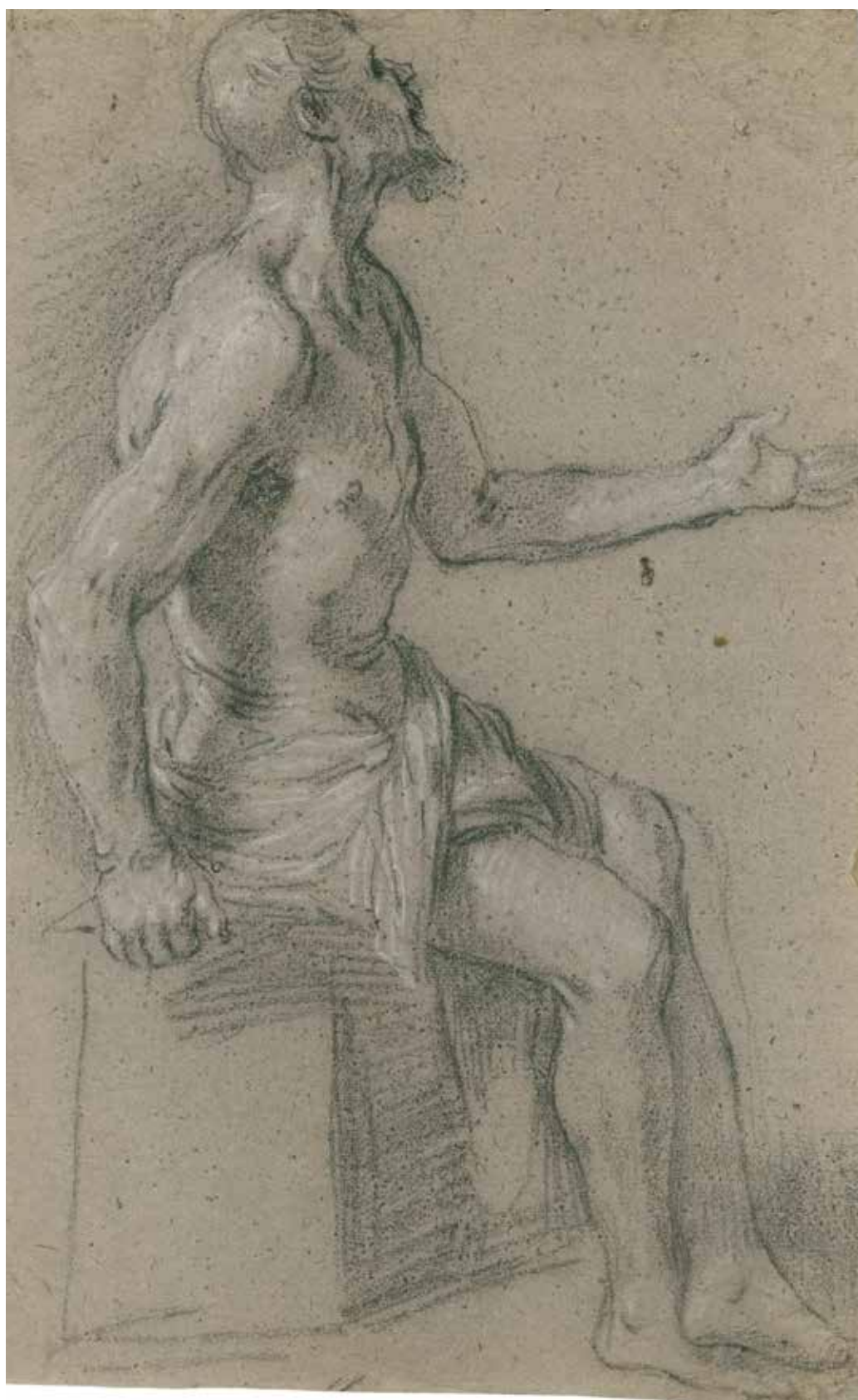
is only when the anatomy of the man is finally defined that Palma added touches of white chalk to describe the fall of light on the model's body. Instead of inanimate mannequins or statuettes made in wax, Palma probably executed this sheet from life with the precise intent to study the anatomy and determine the figure's posture. Indeed, as it can be seen in many other studies after a living model, the figure is sitting on a support that enables him to hold the pose chosen by the master for a long time, and his nudities have been covered with a thin cloth wrapped around his waist.

The drawing does not reappear directly in any of Palma's works, however, the figure can be compared in style and technique with those depicted in a group of life studies that were once part of the so called "Quaderno della Carrara" (Carrara's album).² The album, today in the Accademia Carrara, Bergamo, contains a number of sheets which had been extracted from an older and certainly numerically more substantial volume, possibly assembled in Palma's workshop. With few exceptions, the drawings of the Quaderno della Carrara are not related to any painting by the artist and therefore were probably made exclusively as exercises rather than preparatory drawings for specific works. According to Stefania Mason Rinaldi the group of sheets in the Accademia di Carrara were probably executed around 1575, immediately after Palma's Roman sojourn, a date of execution shared with our sheet.

1 A detail and complete view of Palma's career is provided by S. Mason Rinaldi, *Palma il Giovane: l'opera completa*, Milano 1984.

2 On the Carrara Album see in particular *Jacopo Palma*

il Giovane: disegni inediti dell'Accademia Carrara di Bergamo e del Museo Fantoni di Rovetta, Bergamo 1964; and S. Mason Rinaldi, *Palma il Giovane: l'opera completa*, Milano 1984, p. 153, cat. D3-D7.



5 Cherubino Alberti

Borgo San Sepolcro 1553 – 1615 Rome

Beheading of St. John the Baptist

Pen, brown ink, brown washes and traces of black chalk on laid paper
250 x 285 mm (9 ¾ x 11 ¼ in.)

Inscriptions

On the verso in brown ink *Al Illustr.mo Sig. et Pa.*

Provenance

Private Collection.

Born in San Sepolcro into a family of artists (his father, Alberto di Giovanni, was an architect, sculptor, carver, and his two brothers, Alessandro and Giovanni, painters and engravers), Cherubino mainly worked in Rome where he was active, particularly as a printmaker and draughtsman, until the end of the 1570s. "Principe" (Director) of the Accademia di San Luca for four years (from 1611 to 1614), Cherubino is primarily remembered for his extremely fine engravings. He also worked in the field of painting and amongst his most memorable works are the frescoes of the Clementine Hall in the Vatican (1597-1598) created with the collaboration of his brother Giovanni for Pope Clement VIII, the arched ceiling of the Aldobrandini chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva (1606), and finally, the frescoes of the sacristy of San Giovanni in Laterano. As well as hundreds of engravings by Cherubino, there are numerous drawings attributed to him. A great number of these are held in Florence, at the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe in the Uffizi, and in Rome, at the Istituto Centrale per la Grafica which holds a volume of drawings, purchased by the Italian State in 1913, which originates directly from Alberti's heirs¹.

Amongst the many works on paper which make up the volume, the largest part is, precisely like the work that we present here, a body of studies. Indeed, our drawing appears to be the first conception for a *Beheading of St. John the Baptist*: outlined only in pen, without the use of any watercolour (reserved for the second stage of a work), this lively sketch in brown ink manifests the first projection of an idea on paper for the

narration of the epilogue of the story of St. John the Baptist. As in *Group of figures with vases* in the Istituto Centrale per la Grafica², which is similar to our drawing in its technique, style and level of finishing, in the sheet that we present here the artist is captured at work: after having traced the *silhouettes* of the figures with black chalk, he goes over them in pen, finding different solutions for the poses of the figures (see the hand of the executioner drawn twice), and finally erasing the parts which he is not sure of, such as the two eagle heads drafted in the centre of the piece and redrawn more definitely at the centre of the frame. The outer border, typical of the decorative exuberance of Cherubino, similarly expressed in other well-known drawings by the artist such as in the *Portrait of Henry IV King of France*³, Alberti tries different solutions: on the left, the body of the eagle is finished with an acanthus curl within which appears a little male head, instead on the right this is transformed into the foot of the bird of prey clawing at the edge of the frame.

The imaginative zoomorphic invention expressed in the frame, as well as the restless line that outlines it, show a clear dialogue with the Roman works of Perin del Vaga, a painter who Cherubino Alberti always regarded with profound admiration. The same *Beheading* reminds one of the painted and graphic work by Perino whose influence is captured, for example, in the gracious poses of the figures, who move almost as if in a dance, in the long and flexible physiques of the figures, and in the quick fluid lines that depict them.



The scene is skilfully built up in groups, in a diagonal direction which leads from the foot of the soldier facing away from us at the front on the right, and extends along the sword of the executioner, the sloping line of Salome's sword and finally disappears, in the group of onlookers who close the image at the top left. This is a composition which is not found in any painting or print by Cherubino but which is closely reminiscent of a drawing in the British Museum (this one is slightly more finished), *Gnaeus Pompeius before his consuls*, a preparatory work for a fresco in the lodge of Palazzo Ruggeri, in Rome (ca. 1591) to which the *Beheading* can be close to chronologically⁴. Thus, the figure of Salome, who "leaps" on tiptoe towards the front of the picture, is reminiscent of *Judith with the head of Holofernes*, the protagonist of an early print by Cherubino⁵.

Our *Beheading*, whose charm lies in the clear incompleteness of the work, allows us to follow Alberti in the creative process of designing the image, which was perhaps intended to be translated into print form or into a painting for a decorative section of a larger cycle.

- 1 In the volume of drawings by the Alberti family held at the Istituto Centrale per la Grafica and more generally, with regards to the drawings by Cherubino, Giovanni and Alessandro see: *Disegni degli Alberti*, exhibition catalogue by K. Hermann Fiore, Rome, Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe, 25th November 1983 - 2nd January 1984.
- 2 Rome, Istituto Centrale per la Grafica, Inv. FN 2934; pen, brown ink, 241 x 171 mm. Cf. *Disegni degli Alberti*, exhibition catalogue by K. Hermann Fiore, Rome, Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe, 25th November 1983 - 2nd January 1984, pp. 146-147, cat. 87.
- 3 Rome, Istituto Centrale per la Grafica, Inv. FN 2882.
- 4 London, British Museum, Inv. 1965,1203.1, pen, brown ink, light blue washes, 161 x 206 mm; the drawing is published and discussed in relation to the fresco (probably the work of a collaborator) in: K. Hermann Fiore, *Studi sui disegni di figure di Giovanni e Cherubino Alberti*, in "Bollettino d'arte", 65, 1980, 5, p. 41, fig. 2.
- 5 See: R. Manescalchi, *Cherubino Alberti: la luce incisa*, Florence, 2007, p. 38, cat. 6.





6 Cristoforo Roncalli, known as Il Pomarancio

Pomarance, 1553 circa – Roma, 1626

The Prophets Daniel and David, 1588-1590

Pen, brown ink and wash heightened with white on laid paper
194 x 180 mm (7 ⁵/₈ x 7 ¹/₁₆ in.)

Provenance

Jean-François Gigoux, Paris and Besançon (L. 1164); Raymond de Bailleul (?); Jean de Bailleul, Paris (L. 335); Alfred Normand, Paris (L. 153c).

Literature

J. L. Baroni, *Master Drawings*, New York and London, 1-31 May, 2002, and 1-12 July 2002, cat. 10.

Previously ascribed to Cherubino Alberti (1553-1615), this unpublished drawing is in fact a rare example of Cristoforo Roncalli's early style.¹ Born from a merchant family of Lombard origins in the small town of Pomarance, in western Tuscany, sometime between 1551 and 1552, Cristoforo first worked in Siena, where he moved to in the mid-1570s. Probably in 1578 the painter decided to settle in Rome, where his brother Donato was practicing law. Giovanni Baglione, one of Roncalli's first biographers, noted that in the Eternal City Cristoforo was apprenticed to Niccolò Circignani, Pomarance's other notable painter, who had established himself in the city by the 1570s. It is improbable, however, that Roncalli – whom at the time was almost thirty years old – required an additional period of apprenticeship, but it is certainly true that Cristoforo and Niccolò soon became closely acquainted as fellow professionals. Probably aided and influenced by his older compatriot and friend, Roncalli was able to successfully integrate himself on the Roman artistic scene, profiting from the constant exchange with artists such as Cesare Nebbia, Paris Nogari, and the young Giuseppe Cesari with whom he often collaborated during his early Roman years.² In the Eternal City Roncalli executed altarpieces and devotional paintings and participated in a number of prestigious decorative schemes, including the decoration of Pope Clement VIII's chapel in St. Peter's (1599-1604). At the end of the 1580's Roncalli obtained a major commission, the decoration of the cappella Mattei in Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, to which the present sheet is connected.³ On 23 May 1585, the chapel (the second on the

right) was donated to Paolo Mattei – one of the most prominent men of his times – by Mauritius Morelli, a cleric from Rennes. A pious man, Paolo Mattei was a member of the Arciconfraternita del Santissimo Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum, the Arciconfraternita del Gonfalone and the Arciconfraternita del Crocifisso. In addition to these religious activities, Mattei also held the secular office of Conservatore dell'Urbe in 1578.

The recent discovery of a previously unknown document of 28 January 1588 (the agreement stipulated by the painter and his patron), has allowed to reveal the exact date in which Roncalli began working at the chapel's frescoes, completed by 1590.⁴

Dedicated to the Pietà (a painting by Marco Pino of this subject was in place on the altar when Paolo Mattei obtained the chapel), Cristoforo designed eight scenes depicting the main episodes of the Passion of Christ: the two principal ones, that face each other on the lateral walls of the chapel represent the *Descent from the Cross* and the *Entombment*. On the lunettes above these are *Christ carrying the Cross* and on the opposite wall the *Crowning with Thorns*. Finally, the ceiling is divided into four main areas depicting *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, *The Taking of Christ*, *Christ led before Pilate* and *The Flagellation of Christ*.

Hardly any changes occurs between the figures depicted on our sheet and two of the four prophets painted by Roncalli in the arches of the chapel. The man drawn on the left side of the sheet served in fact as a preparatory drawing for the figure illustrated on the right side of the arch above the altar (fig. 1). Accompanied by a lion,





Fig. 1 C. Roncalli, *The Prophet Daniel*, 1588-1590, fresco, Rome, Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Mattei chapel.

the man represents the prophet Daniel and stands in one of the corners of the chapel opposite Jonah. The other figure, drawn on the other half of the page, is the prophet David carrying the head of Goliath, depicted on the right side of the outer entrance arch, opposite Samson (fig. 2).

Only a handful of drawings related to the complex cycle of the Mattei chapel survive today.⁵ The present sheet, drawn primarily in wash, differs in technique from Roncalli's known studies related to the Mattei's frescoes, executed in red or black chalk, the artist's favorite medium. It however presents several points in common with contemporary draughtsmanship, proving Roncalli's attempts to align his manner to the Roman fashion of the time. In fact, the use of wash, freely applied in deep, dark passages to create depth, and the subtle strokes of white used to model the fall of light on the figures, corresponds closely to the works of Cesare Nebbia or Giuseppe Cesari, one of Roncalli's closest followers?⁶

Almost unique in the context of Roncalli's corpus of surviving works on paper for its distinctive technique, this lively and confidently executed drawing is an impressive example of the artist's fluid and graceful manner, and contributes in providing a more complete picture of the painter's development as a draughtsman during the early years of his career.



Fig. 2 C. Roncalli, *The Prophet David*, 1588-1590, fresco, Rome, Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Mattei chapel.

- 1 On Cristoforo Roncalli as a draftsman see mainly W. C. Kirwin, *The life and drawing style of Cristoforo Roncalli*, in "Paragone", 29, 335, 1978, p. 56, n. 89. pp. 18-62.
- 2 The friendship between Cristoforo Roncalli and Giuseppe Cesari is early documented by a charming black-and-red-chalk drawn portrait that Cesari made of Cristoforo. The sheet is now conserved at the Uffizi (inv. 2179 F; see M. S. Bolzoni, *Il Cavalier Giuseppe Cesari d'Arpino: maestro del disegno*, Rome 2013, pp. 41, fig. 26, and 405, cat. 310).
- 3 On the commission of the cappella Mattei see J. E. L. Heideman, *The Cappella della Pietà in Santa Maria in Aracoeli in Rome*, in "Paragone", 31, 369, 1980, pp. 28-51; and L. Sickel, *Cristoforo Roncalli in Santa Maria in Aracoeli: der Vertrag mit Paolo Mattei zur Ausstattung der Cappella della Pietà*, in "Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz", 55, 3, 2013, pp. 463-471.
- 4 L. Sickel, *Cristoforo Roncalli in Santa Maria in Aracoeli: der Vertrag mit Paolo Mattei zur Ausstattung der Cappella della Pietà*, in "Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz", 55, 3, 2013, pp. 463-471.
- 5 The drawings related to the cappella Mattei are listed and partially discussed in W. C. Kirwin, *The life and drawing style of Cristoforo Roncalli*, in "Paragone", 29, 335, 1978, p. 56, n. 89.
- 6 For a stylistic comparison with Cesari's style see, for example, his *Justice of Brutus*, now at the Louvre, drawn around 1585-1586. On Cesari's *Justice of Brutus* see M. S. Bolzoni, *Il Cavalier Giuseppe Cesari d'Arpino: maestro del disegno*, Rome 2013, pp. 17, fig. 7, and 161-162, cat. 2.



7 Aurelio Lomi

Pisa, 1556 – 1623/26, Pisa

Saint Sebastian Before Diocletian

Pen, brown ink and wash on laid paper squared in black chalk
353 x 250 mm (13 ⁷/₈ x 9 ¹³/₁₆ in.)

Inscriptions

On the verso in old hand writing in ink *Aurelio Lomi*; on the mount bottom left corner in pencil *For the Pucci Chapel 384x244 mm* and bottom right corner *Aurelio Lomi*.

Provenance

With Rich, London; R. Holland Collection, London; Sotheby's, London, 5 July 2013 (lot 389).

Literature

L. Turčić, *Drawings by Aurelio Lomi*, in "Paragone", 42, 29, 1991, p. 39, and pl. 35.

A native of Pisa, Aurelio Lomi was born in a family of artists. His father was a goldsmith, and both his brothers, Baccio and Orazio, worked as painters. Probably trained in Florence, Aurelio moved to Rome for few years. Almost nothing remains, however, of his early works in the Eternal City. In 1597, few years after returning to Pisa, Lomi moved to Genoa, where he soon became one of the leading artists active in the city. Around 1605 Lomi finally moved back to Tuscany. Here he mainly worked in his native town, Pisa, but also served some important patrons in Florence. It is the case of the Pucci family, who commissioned him one of his most important Florentine works: one of the paintings decorating the family chapel in the church of Santissima Annunziata (Fig. 1),¹ Florence, for which the presents drawing was made as a preparatory design.

According to Filippo Baldinucci, who first described Lomi's canvas in the Santissima Annunziata,² the construction of the chapel began around 1604, and was concluded in 1611, when it was finally consecrated. It is between these two dates that the chronology of the Pucci canvas – and consequently of our drawing – should be placed.

The painting represents a rarely depicted episode of the life of the Saint, that is when Sebastian, captain of the Praetorian Guards under Diocletian and Maximian, is condemned to the martyrdom because of his Christian faith.



Fig. 1 A. Lomi, *Saint Sebastian before Diocletian*, oil on canvas, 300 x 197 cm, Florence, Basilica Santissima Annunziata.



Standing in front of the tyrant, seated on his throne on the left, is young Sebastian surrounded by a crowd of soldiers and knights. The far back of the scene is occupied by a view *all'antica*, in which stands out the silhouette of Castel Sant'Angelo, a clear reference, according to Pierluigi Carofano, to the life of cardinal Pucci, who died in Rome where he was buried in the church of Santi Quattro Coronati.³

The fortress also clearly appears in the *modello* that, as it has already been noted by Lawrence Turčić, "is the most complex and detailed compositional drawing by Lomi known".⁴ Squared for transfer, the sheet is in fact carefully refined in every detail and presents only minor

differences with the painting, the composition of which was inspired by the most typical late-sixteenth-century Roman models. Frescoes like those of Raffaellino da Reggio, or Cesare Nebbia in the Oratorio del Gonfalone, or the stories of St. Catherine by Federico Zuccaro in Santa Caterina dei Funari, that Lomi had most certainly seen and carefully studied during his stay in the Eternal City, seem to have constituted the primary source of inspiration for the Pucci canvas and for its preparatory drawing.

Elegantly drawn in pen and brown ink, this impressive sheet leaves no doubt to the artist's ability to handle the composition of a crowded scene, and shows the artist's draftsmanship at his best.

1 On the painting see See P. Carofano in: R. P. Ciardi, M. C. Galassi, P. Carofano, *Aurelio Lomi: maniera e innovazione*, Pisa, 1989, pp. 230-232, cat. 50.

2 Baldinucci describes the two painting in the Pucci chapel, the *St. Sebastian Before the Tyrant* by Lomi, and the *Apparition of St. Sebastian* by the Genoese painter Giovan Battista Paggi: "una ove è S. Sebastiano Avanti il tiranno [...] fece per iscudi duecento Aurelio Lomi, pittore pisano, e l'altra ove il santo apparisce in atto di essere percosso con verghe di ferro, fu bellissima opera

di Giovanni Battista Paggi, pittore Genovese, a cui fu dato lo stesso onorario che al Lomi". See F. Baldinucci, *Notizie de' Professori del Disegno da Cimabue in qua*, Firenze, 1681-1728, ed. P. Barocchi and A. Boschetto, Florence, 1974-1975, vol III, p. 295.

3 See P. Carofano in: R. P. Ciardi, M. C. Galassi, P. Carofano, *Aurelio Lomi: maniera e innovazione*, Pisa, 1989, p. 232.

4 See L. Turčić, *Drawings by Aurelio Lomi*, in "Paragone", 42, 29, 1991, p. 39, and pl. 35.



8 Pietro Sorri

San Gusmè, Castelnuovo Berardenga 1556 – 1622 Siena

Madonna and Child with Saint Augustine and Saint Monica in the Presence of a Group of Clergymen and Patrons, 1579 - 1582 circa

Oil on paper laid down on canvas
530 x 272 mm (20 ⁷/₈ x 10 ¹¹/₁₆ in.)

This polychrome oil model on paper, attributed to the early artistic output of the Sienese artist Pietro Sorri in view of stylistic evidence, anticipates the strictly symmetrical composition of an altarpiece that is highly developed vertically and structured along two equally important diverse and superimposed levels. In the upper part, encased within the painted arch are the Virgin and Child lifted by the angels, Saint Monica and Saint Augustine to their sides; mother and child are dressed in Augustinian black clothes and kneeling next to each other on the blanket of clouds that ideally separates the otherworldly sphere from the earthly world underneath. Here, a substantial crowd of clergymen following an old Bishop kneeling in the foreground – perhaps Saint Ambrose, responsible for the younger Augustine to be converted to Catholicism – stands up to a group of laymen gathered in prayer to the right, around a young lady kneeling and her young son, dressed according to Cinquecento and Seicento fashion. Behind the lady, very near the right margin and slipping out of the paint, we can make out the sepia-coloured silhouettes of two other worshippers, among whom a male standing figure in his dual role as husband of the lady and patron of the present work. This would indicate that the present model was initially executed as a *chiaroscuro*, colour being added at a later stage to better represent the altarpiece in its entirety before the final laying.

Carrying out monochrome compositional models in oil on paper was standard practice for Pietro Sorri; stemming from San Gusmè at Castelnuovo Berardenga, he trained in Siena in the workshop of Arcangelo Salimbeni (1536 ca. - 1579), a late follower of Domenico Beccafumi. Thereafter, Sorri became familiar with Domenico Cresti, called il Passignano (1559-1638), whom he had met in Rome in 1580 and with whom he would move

to Venice two years later, laying the foundations for an artistic collaboration that would continue intermittently for over thirty years¹. Active both in Siena and Florence for extended periods, Sorri can in any case be defined as a touring artist, because of the numerous stays in other cities, which would mark his eventful professional path. His movements were traced ever since the publication of his three biographies²: Venice (1582-1587), Lucca (1593-1595), Genoa (1596-1598), Pavia (1599-1600), Rome (1611-1612) and Pisa (1617-1618).³

Pietro Sorri represented the means for understanding the Northern Italian pictorial schools in Siena, but this did not prevent him from developing his own, personal style; although Passignano's influences can be seen from time to time, Sorri would keep some strictly individual features over time, that can be seen in the present drawing as well. Both the physiognomy of the child and the profile of the lady portrayed in the foreground are, in fact, typologies that often occur in the early maturity of Sorri: we refer to the *Madonna and Child with Saint John the Evangelist and Cecilia* (location unknown), dated around 1588⁴, the *Circumcision* in the Lucca Pinacoteca (1593-1595 ca.)⁵ and the *Forgiveness of Saint John Gualberto*, handed to the Astino Abbey, close to Bergamo, in 1601. Nonetheless, the decidedly XVI century framework of this composition, the Beccafumi echo in the figure of the Virgin and particularly the complete absence of references to painters from Veneto (Tintoretto, Veronese), which are nonetheless firmly established in the *Miracle of Saint Catherine* (Siena, Oratory of Saint Catherine in Fontebranda) – sent from Venice in 1587⁶ – lead us to move back the execution of this model to the three-year period between Pietro Sorri's degree from the Sienese Academy of Saint Dominic in 1579 and his departure for Venice in



1582. As far as style is concerned, this early dating is reflected in a comparison with the polychrome tondo oil on paper depicting the *Resurrection* (Siena, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo), completed by Sorri around 1575 and that, like in the present drawing, associates facial characterisations typical of the painter with Beccafumi reminiscences, derived from the Master Arcangelo Salimbeni.⁷ We cannot rule out the fact that the present model may be a *prima idea*, subsequently modified both

in terms of compositional method and in the choice of figures, for the lost altarpiece portraying *and Monica* – that ancient sources quote as a work by Pietro Sorri, formerly on the altar of the Turamini Chapel in Saint Augustine in Siena⁸ and attested by a monochrome study of the entire composition – that is arched, as well – kept at the Uffizi and bearing the name of the painter.⁹

Maria Cecilia Fabbri

- 1 The modern reconstruction of the biographic and professional profile of Pietro Sorri are credited to the following studies, specifically dedicated to the painter: L. Martini, *Pietro Sorri*, in *L'arte a Siena sotto i Medici 1555-1609*, exhibition catalogue (Siena, Palazzo Pubblico, 3 May – 15 September 1980) edited by several artists, Rome 1980, pp. 94-119; *Itinerario di Pietro Sorri (1556-1622)*, exhibition catalogue (San Gusmè, 1983) edited by L. Martini, Genoa 1983; L. Martini, *Aggiunte a Pietro Sorri*, in "Annali della Fondazione di Studi Roberto Longhi", I, 1984, pp. 87-113; M. Ciampolini, *Sorri, Pietro*, in *La pittura in Italia. Il Cinquecento*, edited by G. Briganti, Milan 1987, II, pp. 843-844. M. Ciampolini, *Pittori senesi del Seicento*, 3 vols., Poggibonsi 2010, III, pp. 820-861.
- 2 I. Ugurgieri Azzolini, *Le Pompe Sanesi*, Pistoia 1649, II pp. 380-381, no. LXIII; *Di Pietro Sorri*, second half of the XVII sec., Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, *Miscellanea G. Milanesi*, vol. XXII, ms. P.III.51, pp. 377r.- 389v.; F. Balducci, *Notizie dei professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua*, Florence 1681-1728; edited by F. Ranalli, Florence 1845-1847, III, 1846, pp. 458-465.
- 3 See note 1.
- 4 The photographic reproduction of this painting is kept

- at the Dutch University Institute in Florence and it is published with the correct attribution to Pietro Sorri by M. Ciampolini, *Op. cit.*, 2010, pp. 821, 847-848, ill.
- 5 For this painting, see the corresponding sheet in L. Martini, *Op.cit.*, 1980, pp. 107,108, n. 37.
- 6 See L. Martini, in *Op.cit.*, 1983, pp.36-37; M. Ciampolini, *Op cit.*, 2010, p. 821.
- 7 On this circular model, see A. Bagnoli, in *Op.cit.*, 1983, p. 54, n. 4; M. Ciampolini, *Op.cit.*, 2010, p. 820
- 8 F. Chigi, *Pitture, sculture e architetture di Siena*, 1625-1626, Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Chigiana, ms. Chigiano I.I.11, critical edition by P. Bacci, *L'elenco delle pitture, sculture e architetture di Siena compilato nel 1625-1626 da mons. Fabio Chigi poi Alessandro VII (secondo il ms. chigiano I.I.11)*, in "Bullettino senese di Storia Patria", XLVI, 1939, p. 308; A. M. Carapelli, *Notizie delle Chiese, e cose ragguardevoli di Siena*, 1717-1723, Siena, Biblioteca Comunale, ms. B. VII. 10, c. 82v.
- 9 This is the oil on paper glued onto paper, inventoried as an autograph work by Pietro Sorri at the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe at the Uffizi with no. 19205, see the entry by L. Martini, in *Op.cit.* 1980, p. 102, no. 33 (with preceding bibliography).



9 Giulio Benso

Pieve di Teco 1592 – 1668

The Stoning of Saint Stephen

Pen, ink, wash and chalk on laid paper
233 x 215 mm (9 ³/₁₆ x 8 ⁷/₁₆ in.)

Inscriptions

On the old mount, bottom left, in an old hand writing in pen and ink *N. 65 Gio Batta Paggi*
and bottom right
Collezione S. Varni; on the verso bottom right *N. 10*.

Provenance

S. Varni (L. 3531), Genoa; Franchi Collection, Bologna.

Literature

M. Newcome – S. Bareggi, *Artisti a Genova. Disegni dal XVI al XVIII secolo*, exhibition catalogue, Milan 1985, pp. 22-23; P. Boccardo in ... *di Bella mano. Disegni antichi dalla collezione Franchi*, exhibition catalogue, Bologna 1997, pp. 76-77, entry 34; V. Frascarolo, *Genova Disegnatrice. Considerazioni sugli allievi di Giovanni Battista e l'Accademia di Giovan Carlo Doria*, in *Disegno genovese. Dal Bergamasco all'Accademia di Paggi*, edited by D. Sanguineti, Genoa 2018, pp. 28-30.

The Genoese sculptor Santo Varni (1807-1885) noted on the mounting sheet of the drawing in question – as he normally did on the sheets belonging to his large collection (see *Santo Varni*

2018, to which I refer for further bibliography) – the name of Giovanni Battista Paggi (1554 - 1627), recognizing that master in the rapid but very effective delineation of the *Stoning of Saint Stephen* depicted.

The simplification of the figures with dynamic pen lines, which perfectly render the scene's richness of action, must have seemed to him close to those of the *Martyrdom of Saint George* (fig. 1), also in his collection, now in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe at the Palazzo Rosso, Genoa (GDSPR inv. D4653). Although it is possible to confirm Paggi's hand for the latter, being a preparatory study for the canvas painted by the Genoese master for the church of San Benigno, relative to which a further graphic model is also known, now in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe at the Uffizi (cf. Frascarolo 2018, p. 28), closer comparisons may be found for the *Stoning of Saint Stephen* within the body of drawings by Giulio Benso, a brilliant pupil of Paggi himself.

Mary Newcome and Silvana Bareggi had already returned the sheet to Benso in 1985, adding that the same subject had been approached in the altarpiece placed on one of the side altars in the church of the Gesuiti in Genoa in 1604, signed by Giovanni Battista Paggi (mistaken in the entry for Ansaldo; cf. Newcome-Bareggi 1985, p. 22). The



Fig. 1 G. B. Paggi, *Martyrdom of Saint George*, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Palazzo Rosso, Genoa.





Fig. 2 G. B. Paggi, *The Stoning of St Stephen*, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Palazzo Rosso, Genoa.



Fig. 3 G. Benso, *The Stoning of St Stephen*, Département des arts graphiques, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

memory of this celebrated composition by the master was undoubtedly a further factor that led an astute connoisseur like Santo Varni to make an attributional error, a composition moreover studied by Paggi in several drawings, including a big sheet (Genoa, GDSPR inv. D2528) that belonged to Marcello Durazzo, noble collector and client of Varni himself (fig. 2).

In 1997, on the occasion of an exhibition of the Franchi collection of Bologna, of which the *Stoning of Saint Stephen* had in the meantime become a part, Piero Boccardo persuasively asserted the attribution of the drawing to Giulio Benso, comparing it to other works on the same subject returned to him and dating it, because of its close similarity to his teacher's approach to

drawing, to the third decade of the seventeenth century (Boccardo in ... *di bella mano* 1997, p. 76).

According to Raffaele Soprani, the first biographer of the artists working in Genoa between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries, Benso was accepted at a very early age into the prestigious school that Paggi had set up in his Genoa home (Soprani 1676, p. 237), practicing with chalk and pen, also on the compositions formulated by the teacher of which some drawings remain as testimony (see for example that portraying the *Assumption of the Virgin*, now in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, inv. n. 5128, after the altarpiece by G. B. Paggi in the church of Santa Maria del Carmine in Genoa).



Fig. 4 G. Benso, *Martyrdom of Saint Agatha*, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, Florence.

The spatial dynamics in the first of his known works, dated by critics to the third decade of the seventeenth century, which allow a practice still in the fullness of its development to be placed, effectively hold the memory of the calculated settings within which the numerous figures of Paggi's compositions move, in poses that are still somewhat strained: in the *Stoning of Saint Stephen*, one of the altarpieces painted by Benso for the Bavarian abbey of Weingarten in around 1630 (Bartoletti 2004, pp. 84-103), of which a preparatory drawing is also known, held in the Kestner Museum, Hanover (cf. Newcome 1979, p. 31), he again adopts the compositional format used by Paggi in the painting in the church of the Gesù, along with the unavoidable model provided for Genoese painters by the panel Giulio Romano had painted in 1520 for the church of Santo Stefano in Genoa.

The latter was faithfully reproduced by Giulio Benso himself on a sheet, bought in 1990 by the Louvre (Mancini 2017, pp. 196-198, entry 297), which has a sketch on the *verso* of the same scene of martyrdom. Its graphic style is fairly close to that of the *Stoning of Saint Stephen* presented here, which was typical of Benso's drawing work (fig. 3).

His graphic body of work has been considerably enriched in recent decades, often at the expense of that of his teacher, as in the case of a *Martyrdom of Saint Agatha* in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe at the Uffizi in Florence (fig. 4), classified under the name of Paggi but rightly returned to his hand (cf. Newcome 1989, pp. 80-81, entry 37).

Giulio Benso's drawing practice is distinguished from that of Paggi by a more marked expressiveness in the proportions and the physiognomic types of the figures, built up with lines onto which a vigorous and fairly rhythmic undulating progression is imprinted and often magnified, as in this case, by an evocative alternation of areas in light and areas in shade created by patches of more or less diluted ink.

The result is a swarm of figuration and action that gives the drama greater prominence, on the basis of the painted examples of Lombard masters and the other renowned painters who were enriching the collections of Genoese aristocrats and the altars of the city's churches in the first decades of the seventeenth century, starting with Rubens.

But an overall study ordering the rich nucleus of drawings made known and attributed to this artist is still missing. They are mainly compositional studies distinguished by figures caught in marked foreshortening - and one looks in this sense to the Saint Stephen laid on the ground in the sheet described by this entry - in which he tries to create continuity between the fictional space and that of reality, demonstrating his growing interest in the perspective problems that were to lead him from easel painting to the big wall decoration, an activity in which he achieved enormous success.

Valentina Frascarolo

10 Baldassarre Franceschini known as Il Volterrano

Volterra 1611 – 1690 Florence

Portrait of a Young Man with a Hat Seated on a Chair, 1643 -1644 circa

Red chalk on white laid paper
261 x 189 mm (10 1/4 x 7 7/16 in.)

Exuding the fresh vibrancy of an instant photograph, this *Portrait of a Young Man With a Hat Seated on a Chair* captures the moment when he raises his gaze towards the painter to his left, pausing from reading the papers he holds in his hands; it is precisely this mutual visual contact that informs us of the presence of the artist, well beyond the boundaries of this sheet.

This fine red chalk drawing, certainly derived from a live posed model, may be immediately ascribed to Volterrano, although it cannot be linked to any preparatory drawing, within the corresponding pictorial oeuvre of the artist, as laid out by the biographer Filippo Baldinucci¹ and recently analysed in the monograph.²

Among the most original figures in the Florentine Seicento, Baldassarre Franceschini was an adamant supporter of drawing meant as the foundation of any art form. He trained in Florence in the workshops of Matteo Rosselli and Giovanni da San Giovanni, after an initial apprenticeship in his native Volterra. Thanks to his frequent trips in northern Italy and Rome (1640-1641; 1650; 1653), and to his acquired capability of modernising local painting, adding a Baroque and neo-Correggionesque connotation, he stood out in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany as a skilled fresco-artist and author of room paintings, obtaining the unreserved support of the Medici family and other noble clients.

The clothes worn by the young man represented here – composed by a shirt with cuffs and a wide collar, a sleeveless jacket fastened in front and longer at the back, three-quarter trousers fastened to the knee – correspond to the informal male clothing widely fashionable during the first half of the Seicento and beyond. The style details emerging in this *Portrait* limit the time frame of this work, in the interest of a correct dating of the present drawing; thin pencil marks, swiftly executed albeit highly precise, characterize the figure and define shadows, alongside with thick

parallel hatching. This stylistic output, still distant from the more heavily pronounced lively strokes characterising Volterrano's graphic oeuvre, prior to the illusionistic Baroque backgrounds in the Colloredo (1650-1652)³ and Niccolini (1653-1661)⁴ domes, refer to the vast body of preparatory drawings for the cycle in the Villa La Petraia courtyard, frescoed by the painter between 1636 and 1646, commissioned by Ferdinando I de' Medici.⁵ More precisely, we refer to the numerous studies associated with the scenes under the eastern loggia, carried out after work resumed, as documented in January 1643⁶. Two studies in particular, both outlined with red chalk and linked with the lunette portraying *Clemens VII Crowning Charles V in Bologna*, show coherent similarities with the present drawing, both in style and for the use of models posing,



Fig. 1 B. Franceschini, *Figure of a Boy, Half - Length, Climbing a Wall*, red chalk and white chalk on paper, 206 x 178 mm, Sotheby's, London, 5 July, 2016, lot.n.19.



perhaps two workshop young men, portrayed wearing clothes contemporary to the painter; the former is the famous study from the Uffizi (GDSU, n. 3325 S), a preparatory drawing for the figure of the trumpet player hanging from the balustrade of the staircase with a leg hanging loose,⁷ while the latter, sold in London in 2016 with the correct reference to Baldassarre Franceschini,⁸ is here referred to the young man in the top right-hand corner, represented while he climbs on a parapet to watch the Crowning (fig. 1).

The most fitting comparison can however be traced to a room painting by Volterrano dating to around 1643-44, thus contemporary with the above-mentioned Petraia lunette and the frescoes in the Grazzi Chapel in the Florentine church of Santissima Annunziata.⁹ We are talking about the famous *Wine Jest*, now in the Galleria Palatina in Palazzo Pitti, a tempera on canvas painting executed for Francesco Parrocchiani, a

helper of Don Lorenzo, subsequently part of the Medici Collections of the Cardinal Giovan Carlo and the great prince Ferdinand.¹⁰ The young man portrayed in this sheet recalls the young priests portrayed in the *Jest*, sat at a table and displaying varying gestures and facial expressions, for he wears the same hat; his style is also akin to the red chalk model of the entire composition recently acquired by the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.¹¹

It is plausible to consider that Volterrano may have laid out numerous studies from live models revealing several postures, during the initial phases of graphic development of the Parrocchiani tempera: he would later make a final choice among them, that would have been transformed into a painting. Quite possibly, our *Portrait of a Young Man with a Hat Seated on a Chair* was part of the group of drawings developed by Volterrano in preparation for the *Wine Jest*.

Maria Cecilia Fabbri

1 F. Balducci, *Notizie dei professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua*, Florence 1681-1728; edited by F. Ranalli, Florence, 1845-1847, V, 1847, pp. 141-198.

2 M.C. Fabbri - A. Grassi - R. Spinelli, *Volterrano. Baldassarre Franceschini (1611-1690)*, Ospedaletto (PI) 2013.

3 M. C. Fabbri, *Cappella Colloredo nella Santissima Annunziata*, in *Cappelle barocche a Firenze*, edited by M. Gregori, Cinisello Balsamo (MI) 1990, pp. 79-98; *Eadem*, in M. C. Fabbri - A. Grassi - R. Spinelli, *Ibid.*, 2013, pp. 160-164, sheet 34.

4 On the fresco decoration in the Niccolini Chapel dome in Santa Croce see R. Spinelli, in M. C. Fabbri - A. Grassi - R. Spinelli, *Ibid.*, 2013, pp. 201-210, sheet 54 (with earlier bibliography).

5 On the frescoes in the Petraia courtyard (and corresponding dating) and on the *corpus* of the related

drawings, see R. Spinelli, in M. C. Fabbri - A. Grassi - R. Spinelli, *Ibid.*, 2013, pp. 83-105, sheet 11 (with earlier bibliography).

6 *Ibid.*, p. 93-99.

7 Reproduced in R. Spinelli, in M. C. Fabbri - A. Grassi - R. Spinelli, *Ibid.*, 2013, p. 103, fig. 10.

8 *Old Master and British Works on paper including drawings from the Oppé collection*, Sotheby's, London, 5 July 2016, lot n. 19.

9 M. C. Fabbri, *Cappella Grazzi nella Santissima Annunziata*, in *Ibid.*, 1990, pp. 56-78; *Eadem*, in M. C. Fabbri - A. Grassi - R. Spinelli, *Ibid.*, 2013, pp. 129-134, sheet 21.

10 R. Spinelli, in M. C. Fabbri - A. Grassi - R. Spinelli, *Ibid.*, 2013, pp. 139-141, sheet 24.

11 N. Turner, *European Drawings 4: The J. Paul Getty Museum. Catalogue of the collections*, Malibu 2001, p. 52, sheet 18.



11 Domenico Maria Canuti

Bologna 1620 – 1684

A River God

Pen, brown ink, brown wash on laid paper
150 x 211 mm (5 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 8 ⁵/₁₆ in.)

Inscriptions

On the old mount in pencil, bottom right corner *L. Carracci*, bottom left corner in pencil *Lud. co Carracci*; on the verso in ink *n. 67*.

After training in Bologna under Guido Reni, Guercino, Giovanni Andrea Sirani and Francesco Gessi, Domenico Maria Canuti visited Rome (1651-1655) under the patronage of Abbot Taddeo Pepoli, a distinguished Bolognese erudite. Here he attentively studied the major decorative Baroque works of the time, which became the

landmarks for his later paintings. Canuti is in fact today renowned for his spectacular Baroque decorations, executed both in Bologna and Rome: the *Apotheosis of Hercules on Olympus* painted on the ceiling of the Gran Salone in the Palazzo Pepoli Campogrande (1660-70), the *Apotheosis of St Dominic* (1673-75) on the vault and apse of SS Domenico e Sisto, Rome, or the *Apotheosis of Romulus* decorating the large antechamber ceiling in the Palazzo Altieri, Rome (1675-56), can be mentioned here as the most representative examples of his art.

A notable and sensitive draftsman, Canuti's style owe much to those by Ludovico Carracci (1555-1619) and Guercino (1591-1666), whom influence appears particularly evident in the sinuous, flowing pen strokes that outline the herculean body of the God River, protagonist of our drawing. The vibrant contours of the figure, the spirited movement of the washes, and the rapid parallel strokes used to reinforce the passages of shadows, speak in favor of Canuti's autography. They result in fact as typical elements of the artist's vocabulary, and appear almost identical in a number of his secure drawings by the painter: in the study for the *Apotheosis of Hercules* in the Graphische Sammlung, Munich, for example.¹

Slightly seen *di sotto in su*, leaning against a large amphora from which the river's waters are flowing, the River God seems to hold one of his most typical attributes, the oar, quickly rendered with few, immediate line strokes.

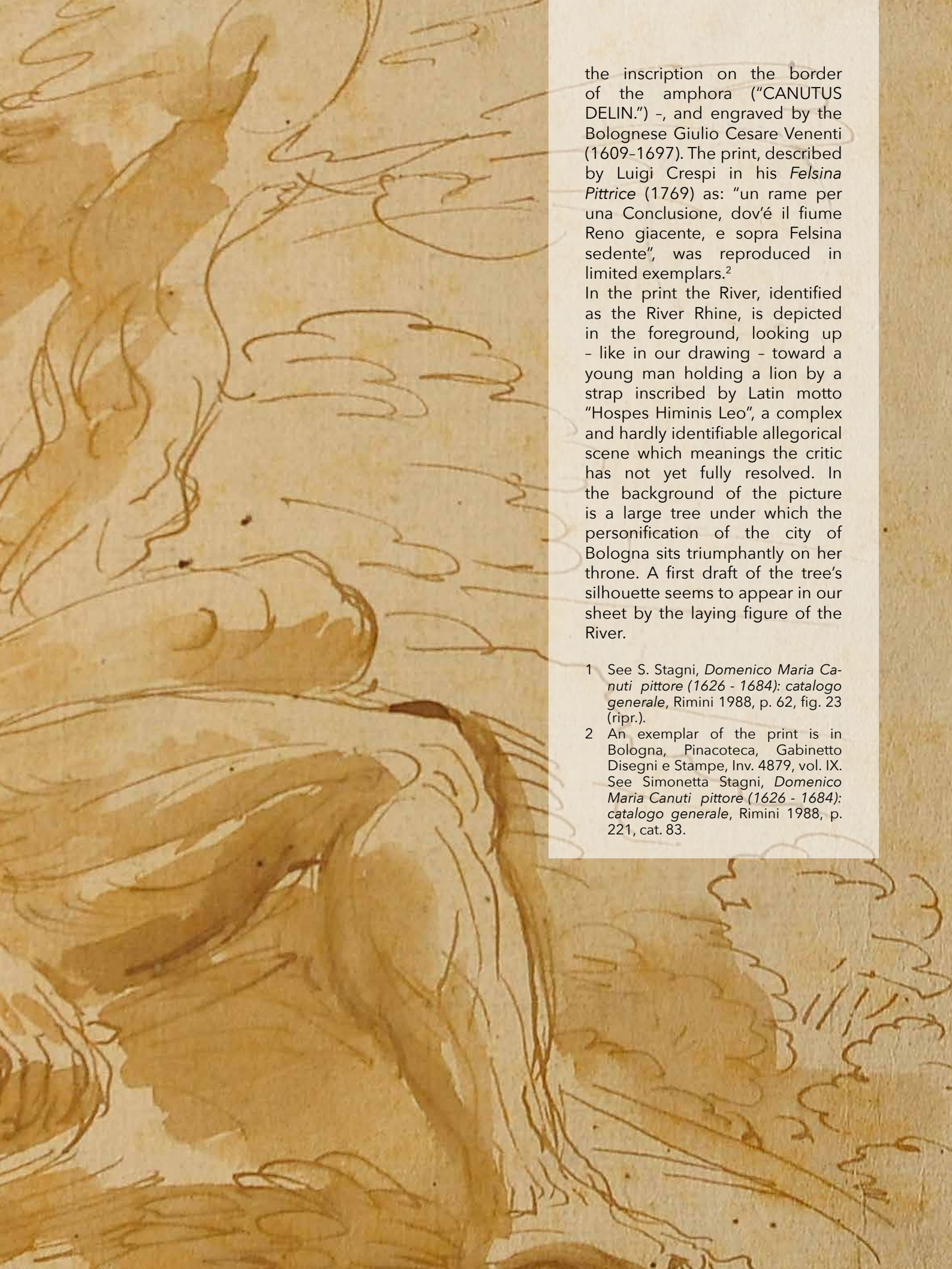
The destination of this charming preparatory drawing has not yet been identified. The sheet, however, could be tentatively connected with a print depicting the *Town of Bologna and the River Reno with a Man Holding a Lion by a Strap* designed by Canuti (fig. 1) – as suggested by



Fig. 1 G. C. Venenti, *Town of Bologna and the River Reno with a Man Holding a Lion by a Strap* designed by Canuti.







the inscription on the border of the amphora ("CANUTUS DELIN.") -, and engraved by the Bolognese Giulio Cesare Venenti (1609-1697). The print, described by Luigi Crespi in his *Felsina Pittrice* (1769) as: "un rame per una Conclusione, dov'è il fiume Reno giacente, e sopra Felsina sedente", was reproduced in limited exemplars.²

In the print the River, identified as the River Rhine, is depicted in the foreground, looking up - like in our drawing - toward a young man holding a lion by a strap inscribed by Latin motto "Hospes Himinis Leo", a complex and hardly identifiable allegorical scene which meanings the critic has not yet fully resolved. In the background of the picture is a large tree under which the personification of the city of Bologna sits triumphantly on her throne. A first draft of the tree's silhouette seems to appear in our sheet by the laying figure of the River.

1 See S. Stagni, *Domenico Maria Canuti pittore (1626 - 1684): catalogo generale*, Rimini 1988, p. 62, fig. 23 (ripr.).

2 An exemplar of the print is in Bologna, Pinacoteca, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Inv. 4879, vol. IX. See Simonetta Stagni, *Domenico Maria Canuti pittore (1626 - 1684): catalogo generale*, Rimini 1988, p. 221, cat. 83.

12 Giovan Battista Beinaschi

Fossano 1636 – 1688 Naples

Saint Stephen, 1680-1682

Black chalk and white chalk on cerulean laid paper
494 x 356 mm (19 7/16 x 14 in.)

Inscriptions

Bottom right corner in pencil *Francesco De Mura* and in pen and ink *n.6*;
on the verso bottom right corner in pen and ink *g.a 30*.

Giovan Battista Beinaschi was a prolific artist active between Rome and Naples in the second half of the XVII century. Since very little is known about his training in Piedmont, his known activity can be restricted to about 25 years, that is between circa 1651, when he was recorded in Rome, until his death in Naples in 1688. Despite the limited timeframe, the artist was highly prolific executing altarpieces, canvases and numerous preparatory drawings¹. Correggio, Giovanni Lanfranco, Domenichino, Mattia Preti and Giacinto Brandi are only a handful of examples which allow us to understand the stylistic orientations of the receptive Beinaschi. Beinaschi's graphic output enjoyed great success among collectors already in the late Seicento and Settecento. Bernardo De Dominici, his main biographer, defined the artist as "copiously creative" and "highly productive at inventing", informing us that "We see exceptional quantities of drawings by him, all of which are beautiful, full

of knowledge, and mainly from the bottom up"². Critics often underlined the stylistic connection with the art of Lanfranco, a telling relationship illustrating the quality of the drawings by the Piedmontese painter, which can securely be distinguished from the ones of the Parma master, on the basis of contemporary research.

The present drawing is a preparatory study for the figure of Saint Stephen, within the fresco of *Paradise* on the dome of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Naples, in 1680-1682 (figs 1-2). The sheet thus dates to the second and last Neapolitan stay of Beinaschi and is representative of his mature style, marked by many commissions and a rich graphic production. The technique employed here is the one the artist used the most for his figure studies: a thick black chalk, paired with delicate chalk strokes on blue paper. Brisk, contouring lines often feature in Beinaschi's drawings, the result of a dynamic principle which governs every single



Fig. 1 G. B. Beinaschi, *The Paradise*, fresco, Church of SS. Apostoli, Naples.



Fig. 2 *The Paradise*, fresco, detail.



one of his creations on paper, from his youth to his late maturity, where oblique dominants prevail, seen in the entire figure and in the details, as well as in the graphic *ductus*. This way, the present sheet, heavily featuring baroque vigour and a restless approach to the human figure typical of Beinaschi, becomes a work in itself, despite being a preparatory study for a fresco composition, rich in various elements. The drawing can be compared to several autograph studies by the artist, some of which are linked to the same decoration today dispersed in several collections, among which the Royal Collection in Windsor, the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa and the Museum Kunstpalast in Düsseldorf, where the highest number of Beinaschi drawings is kept. These belonged to

the German collector Lambert Krahe.³ The studies executed at this time highlight the outcome of a fully independent artistic personality, with the use of lighter chiaroscuro, softer shapes and a greater attention to gestures and emotions. A distinctive feature of a prominent artistic figure in the Roman and Neapolitan Baroque scene, drawings constantly appeared in Beinaschi's artistic output, both in quality and quantity. In his *Abcedario pittorico* (1704), Father Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi remembered the painter, of whom he had acquired several sheets in Rome, to promote them in Bologna, as a "highly productive draftsman, possessing a creative mind, extremely inventive, swift and determined"⁴, all features that clearly emerge from the present drawing.

Francesco Grisolia

1 On G.B. Beinaschi, see in short: Vincenzo Pacelli and Francesco Petrucci (edited by), *Giovan Battista Beinaschi. Pittore barocco tra Roma e Napoli*, Rome 2011, with previous bibliography; Alessandro Brogi, *Per Giovan Battista Beinaschi. Aggiunte, in: Studi di storia dell'arte in onore di Fabrizio Lemme*, edited by Francesca Baldassari and Alessandro Agresti, Rome 2017, pp. 221-229. On his drawings: Jacob Bean and Walter Vitzthum, *Disegni del Lanfranco e del Beinaschi*, in "Bollettino d'Arte" 46, 1961, pp. 106-122; Gabriella Nicodemi, *Disegni di Giovan Battista Beinaschi*, in: *Arte Cristiana*, LXXXI, 1993, vol. 754, pp. 35-45; Francesco Grisolia, «Famoso disegnatore». *I disegni di Giovan Battista Beinaschi nella collezione della Kunstakademie Düsseldorf al Kunstpalast*, Fulda 2019, with another

bibliography.

2 Bernardo de Dominici, *Vite de' Pittori, Scultori ed Architetti napoletani* [1742], commented edition by Fiorella Sricchia Santoro and Andrea Zezza, vol. III, part I, Naples 2017, p. 525.

3 *The Art of Italy in the Royal Collection: Renaissance and Baroque*, London 2007, cat. 148; Vincenzo Pacelli and Francesco Petrucci (edited by), *Giovan Battista Beinaschi. Pittore barocco tra Roma e Napoli*, Rome 2011, pp. 37, 260; Francesco Grisolia, «Famoso disegnatore». *I disegni di Giovan Battista Beinaschi nella collezione della Kunstakademie Düsseldorf al Kunstpalast*, Fulda 2019, pp. 93-110.

4 Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi, *Abcedario pittorico*, Bologna 1704, p. 115.



13 Luigi Vanvitelli

Naples 1700 - 1773 Caserta

Recto: *Study for Section (rib) of Umbrella Vault*

Verso: *Study for Half Ceiling with Two Pendentives*

Pen, brown ink, grey washes and black chalk on laid paper
245 x 164 mm (9 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.)

Inscriptions

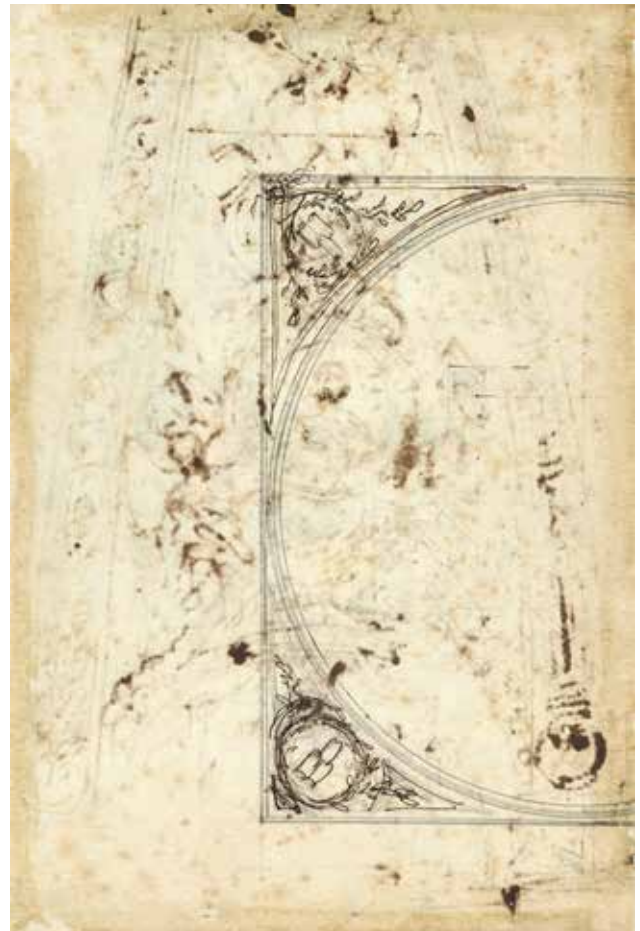
Bottom right corner in ink *Vanvitelli*; on the verso top right corner in pencil 78.

Provenance

Private Collection, Milan.

Luigi Vanvitelli, son of Dutch-born Gaspar Van Wittel, the most famous *vedutista* of the seventeenth century who lived and worked his whole life in Rome, was an important protagonist of the Late Italian Baroque. Though born in Naples, he was raised in the *Urbe* by his father and maternal grandfather who was also an artist¹. Luigi, who started drawing when he was only a child, was introduced early on to the cultural and artistic environment that his father frequented who even helped him with his paintings. However, he decided to focus on architecture in the early 1730s. His first important commission was the restoration of the Renaissance-style palace Albani in Urbino (1728), after being nominated architect of the Reverend Apostolic Chamber, to which other important commissions followed. Clement XII commissioned him to restore the port and the hospital of Ancona (1733), where he also built the Cappella delle Reliquie in the Cathedral of San Ciriaco (1739), he worked on the Chiesa del Gesù (1743), as well as on other buildings. He also worked in Macerata, Pesaro, Loreto and Perugia where he built the church and the convent of the Olivetani (1739). In Rome, where Luigi was nominated architect of the *Fabbrica* of St. Peter, he was also entrusted with other important commissions, such as to strengthen Michelangelo's dome in the Basilica di San Pietro (1742), decorate Palazzo Sciarra (1743), build the Convent of St. Augustin (1746), and restore Santa Maria degli Angeli (1748). In 1751 and until his death, Luigi worked on the planning and designing of the Royal Palace of Caserta upon the request of Charles of Bourbon, all the

while still working on the other assignments he was entrusted with in Rome, as well as in Naples, Capua and Benevento. Luigi Vanvitelli's hundreds of designs, mostly preserved at the Royal Palace



Verso



of Caserta, bear witness to the numerous activities he carried out as architect, designer, decorator and scenographer: landscapes, figure studies, illustrations for the publishing sector, stage and theatre studies, architectural and decorative studies, some of which allow us to make precise reference to documented works or works still in existence today.

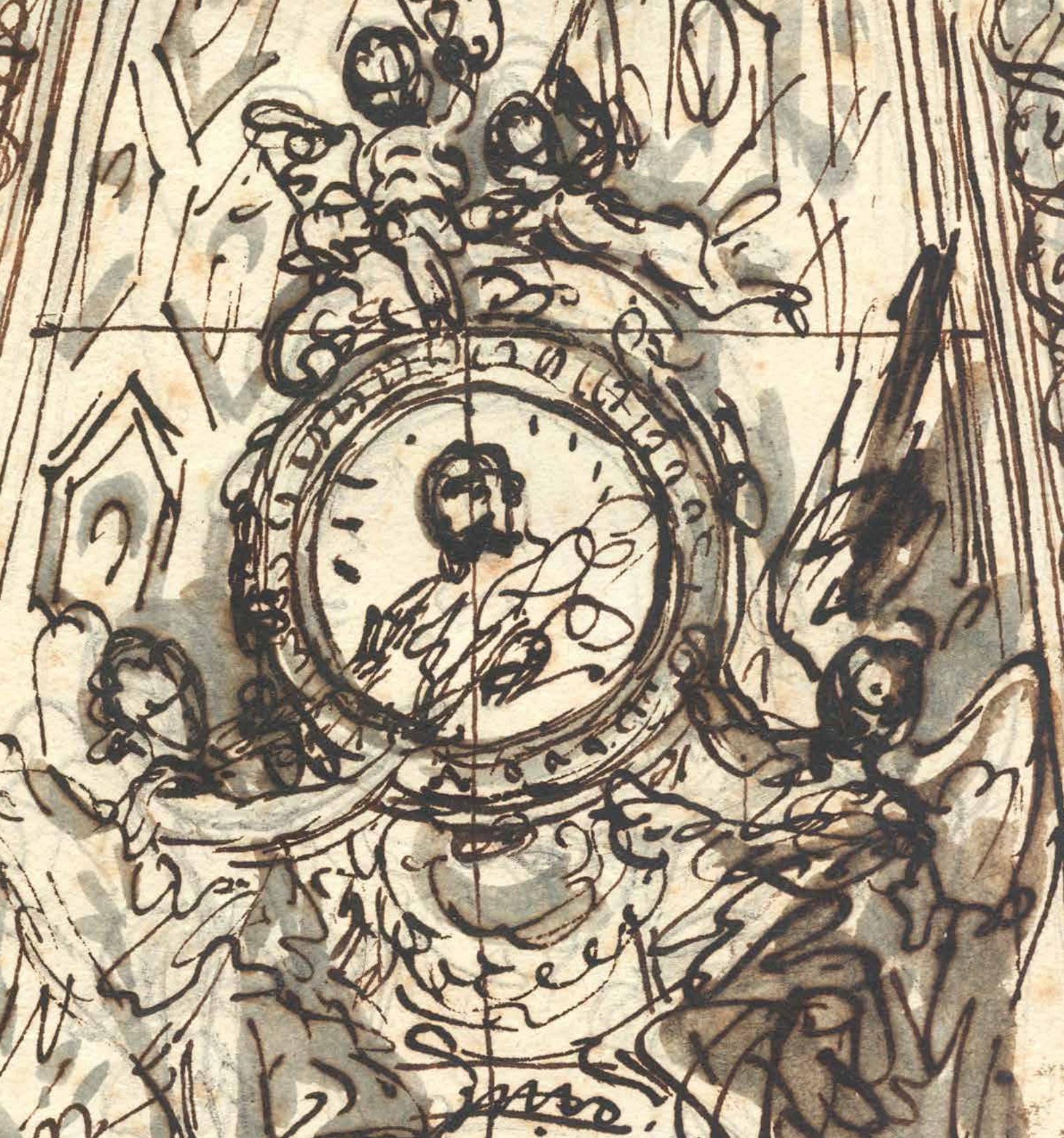
The drawing, here the object of examination, which can be attributed with certainty to Vanvitelli as per the inscription, appears on the front wall decoration of part of an umbrella vault. Starting from the bottom, it shows a rectangular frame, which seems to be a coat of arms under a well-rounded arch; above the arch, two winged angels hold a round medallion depicting the portrait of a person. Above them, two small angels carry a crown (of victory), and the palm (of martyrdom) on a diamond-shaped coffered background. Above them, the drawings (maybe flying angels) are hard to decipher. Two ribs flank the vault, one on each side, and are decorated with a ribbon-like motif. The drawing on the verso shows half of a flat ceiling with two pendentives decorated with the coat of arms of the Albani family between garlands.

Claudio Marinelli explained the artist's *modus operandi*: «Luigi Vanvitelli, come disegnatore, abitualmente fissa la prima idea in schizzi via via sempre più elaborati e, per fasi successive di autostilizzazione, arriva al progetto; con lui si raggiungono vertici qualitativi che suscitano meraviglia: incredibile è la padronanza con cui si serve del disegno a inchiostro acquarellato, tanto che, se pure questa tecnica ha origine in ambienti romani e precisamente nel circolo del Cardinal Albani e in particolare in Carlo Fontana, risulta in lui come rivitalizzato»². Being the key protagonist of the artistic panorama of the eighteenth century, Luigi Vanvitelli modernised Baroque style, thanks to his modern way of seeing and conceiving a space, something he learned from his *vedutista* father and which he expressed throughout his activities, where «architettura e decorazione interagiscono in una forma di dipendenza reciproca»³, a fundamental aspect of how he conceived a drawing. The drawing here represents a preliminary sketch by Vanvitelli, a fresh and instant idea expressed through loose strokes, a very expressive *ductus*, enriched by the use of watercolours that highlight the light/

dark contrasts on white paper. The drawing of the diamond-shaped coffered ceiling is inspired by the white and golden stucco cover and with the same decorative motif and rosettes inscribed in the hexagons, as seen in the dome vault of the church of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale by Bernini. The angels and small angels are also inspired by Bernini models, most probably envisioned in stucco.

It seems that the drawing calls to mind an early drawing of Vanvitelli, *Study of a chapel* on the recto and on the verso *Figurative and architectonic sketches*⁴ drawn with the same technique and with similar decorative motifs, stylistically speaking similar to this drawing. In particular, it also has a coffered ceiling on the front and flying cherubs bearing an oval form on the back. Another useful comparison can be made with the⁵ *Study for the stucco of the Tribune* made on the verso of a sheet held in the image collection of Caserta. The latter was identified as being the project made for one of the domes on the sides of the choir of Basilica di San Pietro. The three circular medallions supported by angels are almost identical to the one represented in our drawing, just as the figures around it. With regards to this drawing, Jörg Garms suggested that though the dome's decoration was executed between 1752 and 1757, it may have represented a preliminary study Vanvitelli made in the early 1730s⁶. Because there are no other elements, it is not possible to compare the study drawn on the verso of the sheet to the one made on the recto. It most probably refers to a patron, Albani, as it bears the coat of arms of that family. Just like with Luigi's father, Gaspar, who had maintained artistic relations with the cardinals Alessandro and Annibale, nephews of Pope Clement XI, they entrusted Luigi too with prestigious commissions ever since he started his career as an architect. So, in summary, the drawing here, after having compared it stylistically-speaking with other drawings of Vanvitelli, represents a preliminary sketch of a project that has not yet been found but, according to the verso of the drawing, may refer to a part of a vault dedicated to a martyred saint while the recto refers to a commission ordered by Albani. Therefore, we suggest dating the drawing to somewhere in the early 1730s.

Luisa Berretti



- 1 For a complete monograph regarding Vanvitelli, please see: C. De Seta, *Luigi Vanvitelli*, Naples, 1998.
- 2 C. Marinelli, *L'esercizio del disegno. I Vanvitelli*, in *L'esercizio del disegno. I Vanvitelli. Catalogo generale del fondo dei disegni della Reggia di Caserta*, exhibition catalogue by C. Marinelli, Rome, 1991, p. 13.
- 3 A. Pampalone, in C. Marinelli, *op. cit.*, 1991, p. 70.
- 4 Caserta, Royal Palace, Prints and Drawings, inv. 1689.

- 5 A. Pampalone, in C. Marinelli, *op. cit.*, 1991, p. 110-111, No. 253.
- 6 *Disegni di Luigi Vanvitelli nelle collezioni pubbliche di Napoli e di Caserta*, exhibition catalogue (Naples, Royal Palace), by J. Garms, Naples, 1973, p. 67, No. 68.

14 Carlo Alberto Baratta

Genoa 1754 - 1815

Venus Surrounded by the Graces and Cherubs (allegory of marital faithfulness?)

Pen, brown ink, wash and traces of black pencil heightened with white on ochre laid paper
242 x 171 mm (9 1/2 x 6 3/4 in.)

Inscriptions

On the old mount in hand writing bottom left corner in pen and ink *n. 6 Collezione Santo Varni*.

Provenance

S. Varni (L. 3531).

Federico Alizeri, biographer of the Genoese Carlo Alberto Baratta, says that the latter began his art studies at the age of twenty-four, later than the average age at which this discipline was normally approached, but that, by applying himself assiduously to drawing and the study of early paintings and prints, he quickly made up for the lost years, such as to become one of the outstanding figures of the Genoese art world in the move from Rococo to Neo-classicism¹. Recent studies though have established that Baratta was actually enrolled in the Accademia Ligustica di Belle Arti from 1770, where he quickly became known for his drawing gifts, already winning prizes from the following year². The young talent frequented the workshop of the painter and architect Tagliafichi for some time, where he learnt the technique of engraving and practised painting along with drawing. According to Alizeri, Carlo Alberto made his debut on the Genoese art scene painting curtains rich in perspective inventions and pleasing subjects for the Teatro di Sant'Agostino and other private clients. In the 1780s he worked under the protection of one of the most important families of the Genoese aristocracy, the Brignole Sale, in whose city home he frescoed some rooms with allegorical subjects (1783), which are recorded among his best works, and decorated the theatre at their villa in Voltri (1785)³. His finest altarpieces, with their Baratta inspired layout, date from the end of those years and the early 1790s, painted for churches in Genoa and its surrounds, though his masterpiece is unanimously considered the later frescoed pictorial cycle in the chancel of the Basilica di Nostra Signora dell'Orto in Chiavari (1805).

Skilled and particularly prolific in drawing, such as to be considered the most versatile among the Genoese artists of his time, Baratta had an "innate gift for vast things", as Alizeri writes⁴. His graphic production has been studied on more than one occasion by Mary Newcome⁵, who has incisively noted that many of his drawings held in public collections in New York, Florence, London, Worms and Weimar (but also, we add, in private collections), are mostly "finished" and can rarely be referred to paintings. Influenced by the greats of the Genoese Baroque - Valerio Castello, the Piola and Gregorio de Ferrari - the artist liked to use brown or grey ink washes on prepared coloured sheets for his elegant drawings, and completed the compositions by elevating them with dense highlights in lead white. His biographer describes his sheets as follows: "Baratta's papers are mostly shaded in bistre and highlighted with lead white on a light blue ground, with a strength of chiaroscuro and firmness of touch that lack nothing in either the shades or the diligence of the oil paintings"⁶.

The fine sheet under consideration is one of the most characteristic examples of Baratta's graphic production, with stylistic and technical qualities similar to many of his known drawings, often portraying delightful mythological and allegorical figurations. Venus, the Roman goddess of beauty, love and fertility is portrayed on clouds, surrounded by the Graces and putti. Depicted as a beautiful woman adorned in light clothes and with long hair, the divinity is seated on a chariot drawn by two white doves, birds consecrated to her, which are being held by two putti. The three Graces, companions and daughters of the



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goddess, are behind her. The one on the left, towards whom Venus is turning, is dipping her fingers in a cup and seems to be murmuring some words; the one in the centre is about to place a garland on her head and the one on the right is holding a branch of flowers and turning to the others. Other putti are present in the composition: two at the top right with bows and arrows, and three others at the goddess's feet described as occupied in holding a torch or other actions.

The fine composition attains a perfect harmony in the balance the artist managed to establish between the figures that rotate around the goddess Venus at the centre of the sheet. The clouds are made frothy by the wash and the passages in lead white; like the spontaneous gestures of the Graces, beautiful and natural without ornament, and of Venus, whose faces are described with soft touches of the brush, brown ink and lit by lead white. The feminine features clearly correspond to those painted and drawn by Baratta in his compositions, such as those of the woman at bottom right in the *Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple* in a private collection published by Newcome Schleier⁷. The attribution to the Genoese artist is made even more convincing by the fact that the main figures are painted with more definite features and those in the background, such as the putti, are more abbreviated, as observed by the American scholar⁸.

Moreover, the drawing from the collection of the Genoese sculptor Santo Varni (1807-1885), who held about a hundred of these by the artist,

compares favourably with others by him held in public and private collections⁹.

On the basis of Alizeri's observation of Baratta in his biography that "... where the others prosaically follow other people's concepts or unfold the iconographies like a dictionary of symbols, he happily dared to create new ones"¹⁰, and because various symbolic contents may be noted in the scene, the iconography of the subject portrayed can probably be read as an allegory related to a nuptial event or a dedication to a lady.

Primarily there is an allusion to Eros, the god of love, represented by the motif of the putti. Then there are the doves, linked by the celebrated love knot: the further they move away, the more the knot tightens, as the famous Latin motto recites: "Exemplio iunctae tibi sint in amore columbae"¹¹. Doves, according to an iconographic tradition derived from Vincenzo Cartari, author of *Le immagini delli Dei degli antichi* (first ed. 1556), and taken up by Cesare Ripa in his *Iconologia*, are considered sacred to Venus by Apuleius "because these birds more than any other seem to conform to her, and they are still known as the birds of Venus, as they incline towards the sensuous and there is no part of the year in which they do not stay together"¹². The garland, presumably woven from roses and myrtle, and the flame near her breast, also derive from the same iconographic source, which sees the goddess assimilated to procreation, pleasure and beauty. Finally, the three Graces, daughters of Venus, in the Latin literary tradition, are inevitably linked to beauty and love.

1 For Baratta's biography, cf.: F. Alizeri, *Notizie de' professori del disegno in Liguria dalla fondazione dell'Accademia*, 2 vol., Genoa, 1864-1866, II (1865), pp. 93-159.

2 Cf. E. Gavazza, L. Magnani, *Pittura e decorazione a Genova e in Liguria nel Settecento*, Genoa, 2000, p. 414, note 32. In the same publication (pp. 421-422) see the biographical profile of the artist written by Lilli Ghio.

3 M. Newcome, *Drawings by Carlo Alberto Baratta*, in "Studi di Storia dell'arte", 24, 2013, pp. 261-266, in particular pp. 262-263.

4 F. Alizeri, 1864-1866, cit., II (1865), p. 96.

5 *Disegni genovesi dal XVI al XVIII secolo*, exhibition catalogue, edited by M. Newcome Schleier, Florence, 1989; M. Newcome Schleier, *Several drawings and paintings by Baratta, the last gasp of the Genoese baroque*, in "Paragone", 2013, 111, pp. 58-62; M. Newcome Schleier, 2013, cit., pp. 261-266.

6 F. Alizeri 1864-1866, cit., II, (1865), p. 101, note 1.

7 M. Newcome Schleier, 2013, cit., p. 60, n. 42b.

8 M. Newcome Schleier, 2013, cit., p. 264.

9 See *Catalogo della Collezione Santo Varni di Genova (prima parte)*, Milan, 1887. On the collections of Santo Varni see P. Boccardo, *I grandi disegni italiani del Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe di Palazzo Rosso a Genova*, edited by P. Boccardo, Cinisello Balsamo, 1999, pp. 88-92 (with previous bibliography). See also the recent contribution by Luisa Berretti in H. Damm, *Galleria Portatile. Handzeichnungen alter Meister aus der Sammlung Hoesch*, Petersberg, Michael Imhof Verlag, 2017, pp. 386-388, n. 100.

10 F. Alizeri 1864-1866, cit., II, (1865), p. 110.

11 "Let doves coupled together in love prove your image", Propertius, *Elegies*, II, 15, 27; Pliny, *Naturalis historia* X, 104.

12 C. Ripa, *Iconologia del cavaliere Cesare Ripa perugino notabilmente accresciuta d'immagini, di annotazioni, e di fatti dall'abate Cesare Orlandi patrizio di Città della Pieve accademico augusto. A sua eccellenza d. Raimondo di Sangro ...*, 5 vol., Perugia, 1764-1767, (1764), I, pp. 298-299.



15 Mauro Gandolfi

Bologna 1764 – 1834

Study of Three Figures, Head and Shoulders: a Bearded Man, a Woman and a Child

Pen and ink on laid paper
232 x 187 mm (9 1/8 x 7 3/8 in.)

Provenance

With Rich, London; R. Holland Collection, London; Sotheby's, London, 5 July 2013 (lot 318).

Exhibition

Newcastle 1964, no. 85 (as Gaetano Gandolfi).

The youngest son of Gaetano Gandolfi, Mauro goes back to Bologna after a stay in France between 1782 and 1787 and starts studying at the Accademia Clementina, an institution that would employ him as Figurative Arts Professor from 1794 to 1797. At the same time, his father accepts him into his workshop, where he stays until 1795: under his guidance some of his most famous works will be shaped. A connection has been established between the present, fascinating sheet representing an old man, a woman and child and the substantial corpus of head studies, which the market deems of high interest even as finished works in their own right; both Gaetano and Mauro grappled with them, causing concern among the critics, who sometimes find it hard to recognise one or the other's hand (cf Newcastle 1964, no. 85). Furthermore, in his autobiography written one year before his death, Mauro recalls his habit of spending his nights copying his father's drawings, while he was young, «with such zeal that he himself could not distinguish the original from the copy» (cf Zanotti 1925, p. 75). Even Ralph Holland, the last person to own the present drawing, initially presented it as a work of Gaetano, but subsequently changed his mind in view of the precise, regular system of strokes and dots, which help to define the modelling of the three figures. Since the studies of Mary Cazort, the pictorial style typical of Mauro has been identified in the extremely controlled stroke, alongside the methodical use of diagonal cross hatching and the "pointillé"; this was a technique usually employed by engravers, a profession the young artist had learnt in Paris, where he had gone for the second time in 1800 and would stay until 1806. As pointed out by the same Cazort during the first exhibition dedicated to drawings by

Gandolfi, held at the Cini Foundation in Venice in 1984, Gaetano used the same techniques, as well, but exuded more freedom (cf Cazort 1987).

The same collection has been the subject of a recent in-depth analysis by Marco Riccòmini: with reference to Gaetano Gandolfi's *Heads*, he precisely points out the lively cross-hatching that detaches them from the background and how copious they were, almost «looking for the perfect interlocking». In contrast to such examples, which were part of the Certani Collection and kept at the Cini Foundation, and other examples of the same type, in the present drawing a calculated attention in the arrangement of the three heads emerges; this is achieved in such a way as to create a connection between them, in addition to the smooth lines typical of engraving techniques that restore the sway of the hair, the refinement in the sculptural quality of the heads, as already mentioned, and the regular, somewhat dense scheme that defines shades. Cases in point are the arrangement of the old man, who seems to want to embrace the other two figures, and the hand close to the right edge, most certainly belonging to the female figure, delicately caressing the head of the child. The present drawing can thus be read as a Holy Family, or rather a projected idea for a Holy Family. It is highly significant to compare it with another painting, formerly in the Sarti Collection in London, re-attributed to Gaetano Gandolfi, but traced back to the time when Mauro had brought the experience gained while he was in France to his father's workshop, when he had been in contact with Neoclassicism. In this painting, the intertwining between the Mother, with the same gaze as someone praying up to heaven, the Child and Saint Joseph are very similar to the present drawing.



16 Felice Giani

San Sebastiano Curone 1758 – 1823 Rome

Allegory of Architecture

Ink and wash on watermarked laid paper
221 x 286 mm (8 11/16 x 11 1/4 in.)

Inscriptions

Bottom right corner hand writing in pencil *Pinelli*.

This elegant drawing can be undoubtedly traced back to Felice Giani, in view of its style, technique and composition; Anna Ottani Cavina aptly illustrated the prominent role Giani played in the Italian art scene, gained in the decades between the XVIII and XIX century, in her two-volume monographic study, a role widely recognised by artistic historiography.¹

His drawing style shows exceptional vitality in the line that defines the increasing number of shapes, as well as the use of iron-gall ink. Giani favoured this *medium*, as it possessed a particular fluidity that allowed his hand to move swiftly, following his creative urge; this ink can be seen in the present sheet, if we observe the brownish colour and a sort of smudge emerging on the paper, coinciding with denser deposits.

From a compositional and iconographical point of view, this fine *Allegory of Architecture* can be referred to two other solutions adopted by the painter in the representation of the so-called *Arts*. Felice Giani was a very talented creator of objects that fully reflected the intended use of a space, thus satisfying his clients' tastes, without being repetitive, especially with regards to the decoration of a library ceiling, a music room or a smaller *studiolo* dedicated to the Arts. Following tradition, the latter were represented in the form of female figures; taking inspiration from classical reliefs and Antonio Canova's reinterpretations, Giani depicts them seated, their faces in profile and having a three-quarter bust, draped in the old-fashioned way, holding the identifying instruments of the discipline.

A case in point of such representations is the Sala della Arti at Palazzo Bianchetti in Bologna, frescoed in 1814, where the allegories of Poetry, Sculpture, Painting and Architecture – the last two within two rectangular tablets – are placed around the central

octagon depicting Music²; another example refers to one of the cabinets intended as a private study for the emperor Napoleon, called Sala della Pace, in the Quirinale Palace – Giani had been entrusted with this decoration. Here, the figure of Peace – within several octagons – is surrounded by Fine Arts, portrayed with the aim of celebrating Napoleon as promoter of peace and patron of artists and poets³.

The high degree of compositional and executorial finish, however, would lead us to exclude that this drawing was preparatory for a fresco – the drawings related to frescoes are, in fact, sketchier. What's more, the figure of *Architecture* wears a helm featuring a snake, thus characterising her as Minerva – the protector of the Arts. Consequently, the drawing can be compared to another one by Giani: *Minerva writes a Date in a Clypeus*, belonging to the Terence Hodgkinson Collection and dated 1804⁴. The quality of the stroke is so similar to the one displayed in the present sheet that we may put forward a similar dating. As far as the compositional layout is concerned, it is also interesting to draw comparisons with the project for a frontispiece of the 1803 volume by Giovanni Antonio Antolini, displaying a central octagon portraying *Minerva Protector of the Arts and the Temple of Minerva at Assisi* (Cooper Hewitt National Design Smithsonian Museum Institution, inv. no. 1901-39-3319)⁵. Furthermore, we cannot rule out that our *Allegory of Architecture* may be a work executed for its own sake, intended for the art market, considering the great success Giani's drawings enjoyed right from the very beginning. The bigger space given to the background, opening onto a landscape to the left, combined with the care in detailing the room furnishings, as well as the pronounced pictorial effect achieved by the interaction of two watercolour inks of



varying colours - tawny and grey - bring the present sheet closer to several drawings inspired by episodes drawn from literature and mythology, that were similarly painted and stand out because of their refinement. We refer to a series of ninety-two drawings by Giani, which have been in the collection of the Institute for Graphics in Rome

since 1910 and that do not refer to any known works. For instance, *Sappho studies Volumes of Love Poetry* - as stated in the autographed writing inside it; although on a larger scale, considering the setting, hence the bigger dimensions, the drawing shows the same compositional approach and the same degree of finish as the present one⁶.

1 The inscription written in pen, lower right, must be referred to the fact that, as a young artist, Bartolomeo Pinelli was fully exposed to the sublime climate of the Accademia dei Pensieri, that sort of artistic circle founded by Giani in his Roman home around 1790. See A. Ottani Cavina, *Felice Giani 1758-1823 e la cultura del suo tempo*, 2 vols., Milan 1999; *L'officina neoclassica*, exhibition catalogue (Faenza 2009) edited

by F. Mazzocca and F. Leone, Cinisello Balsamo 2009.

2 See A. Ottani Cavina, 1999, vol. I, pp. 277-279.

3 *Ibid.*, 1999, vol. II, pp. 610-611.

4 *Ibid.*, 1999, vol. II, p. 782, fig. 1127.

5 *Ibid.*, 1999, vol. II, p. 819, fig. 1164.

6 Rome, National Institute for Graphics, inv. FN 4324 in A. Ottani Cavina, 1999, vol. II, p. 902, fig. 1271.

17 Vincenzo Gemito

Naples 1852 – 1929 Naples

Portrait of a Young Girl

Charcoal and white tempera on paper
465 x 323 mm (18 ⁵/₁₆ x 12 ³/₄ in.)

Inscriptions

Signed and dated bottom right, in charcoal *Gemito 1925 Napoli.*

Provenance

Private collection, Naples; Private Collection, Florence.

This intense portrait stems from the graphic production of Vincenzo Gemito's artistic maturity, when he drew upon themes dear to him from the very beginning of his career, namely the depiction of adolescents and young girls, as always inspired by real models. The features of the young girl have a striking resemblance to those of Bice, the granddaughter of the artist, as appears from photo of 1928 where she's standing alongside her grandfather (fig.1). The full lips, pronounced cheekbones and the same hairstyle, fashionable at the time, combined with a strong sense of introspection conveyed by this study from life, would lead to such hypothesis. Assumptions aside, this is a marvellous portrait, where the vivid expressiveness of the face, as well as the gentle look, come to the fore with the clever use of charcoal. With this medium, the artist established the framework of the figure, at first with brisk strokes, then dipping it into water to

achieve stronger shades of black. White tempera, with which Gemito fashioned the interplay of light and shade, adds the final touch: the portrait thus acquires a plastic, almost three-dimensional relevance, as if we were close to the figure and could touch her face. The present sheet embodies the mastery achieved by our artist at this time, and his ability to interpret the character and nature of the subject before him; these qualities would earn him many commissions from the rich Italian bourgeoisie from about 1915 until the 1920s.

Perhaps best known as a sculptor, Vincenzo Gemito was, in fact, a prolific, outstanding draftsman. He was born in Naples in 1852 from an unknown mother¹ and was put at the "ruota degli esposti" (baby hatch) of the Annunziata, which served as an orphanage for abandoned infants. He was adopted by a peasant woman, Giuseppina Baratta, and by Giuseppe Bes, a French decorator working at the Bourbonist court. Vincenzo spent his youth trying his hand at the most humble professions, however he showed signs of his natural talent early enough; his mother Giuseppina perceived his skill and placed him as an apprentice in the workshop of the sculptor Emanuele Caggiano, where he became friends with the young painter Antonio Mancini. She also enrolled him at the Istituto di Belle Arti in Naples in 1864. A restless character, not prone to discipline, Vincenzo most certainly did not attend the courses regularly enough to gain much education, however his genius and thirst for research certainly profited from the artistic richness of his city. He had a realm of gems at his disposal: numerous churches, art galleries, with mostly 16th century paintings, and also the Archaeological Museum, where he could draw inspiration from ancient models. During



Fig. 1 Vincenzo Gemito with his daughter Giuseppina on the right and his granddaughter Bice with her husband Nicola Guerriore on the left, 1928.



that time, he also regularly went to the studio of the sculptor Stanislao Lista, together with his friend Mancini, where he would draw from nude models. This brought about his first significant commissions, with portrait busts of Domenico Morelli, Francesco Paolo Michetti, Giuseppe Verdi and his wife, among others. It was such a favourable period that Vincenzo managed to open a studio of his own in the Capodimonte area in 1876. He moved to Paris the following year, where he met Giovanni Boldini² and Paul Dubois; thanks to Mancini, with whom he shared his studio for a time. He also met the art dealer Goupil, who must have interceded to allow him to take part in the *Salon*.³

During this first stay in Paris (1877-1880), characterised by a striving enthusiasm for the many stimuli received by the city, but also by sacrifices and financial difficulties⁴, a meeting proved pivotal for Gemito, that with Jean Louis Ernest Meissonier⁵, who was then at the height of his career. The portrait of the artist executed by Gemito in 1879 increased his fame: from that moment onwards, he would successfully take part in numerous international exhibitions, both in Paris and in the rest of Europe. He returned to Naples in 1880 and set up his own foundry. He received many prestigious commissions, the most notable from the King of Italy, Umberto I, for a statue

representing Charles V, to be placed in one of the niches in the Royal Palace in Naples. The sculpture was to be executed in marble, a material the artist was not so fond of and that would bring along many problems, to the point of leading him to a nervous breakdown. Already mentally fragile, his condition worsened and he had to be hospitalised at the Fleurent asylum. After this period, Gemito isolated himself and became a recluse at his home in via Tasso, where he took comfort from the affection of his wife Anna and his daughter Giuseppina⁶.

Twenty years went by before Gemito emerged from such isolation to start a new life and a new artistic phase, when he executed drawings, portraits, self-portraits and sculptures revisiting old or ancient subjects.⁷ A genuine revival took place, with the artist reconnecting with Antonio Mancini and moving to Rome from 1915 to 1917, where his clientele increased, along with vivid success. It was precisely his renewed interest in drawing that brought him new fame, as recorded in the numerous letters he sent to his daughter Giuseppina in those years. In one of them, dated 7 July 1916, he wrote: «*Gemito turned out to be the greatest, most skilful draftsman of his time*».⁸ After a second stay in Rome, from 1922 to 1923, and a short trip to Paris in 1923, Gemito went back to Naples, where he continued to work restlessly until his death.

1 He was given the name of Vincenzo Genito, converted into "Gemito" because of a transcription error in the records of the Naples Municipality. Before being adopted, he spent many years in the orphanage.

2 Boldini welcomed him whole-heartedly and became a dear friend and protector. The portrait of the painter, now at the Giovanni Boldini Museum in Ferrara, dates back to his first Paris stay.

3 He was given the chance to exhibit at the *Salon of the Society of French Artists* where he showed *The Fisherman* (1875), (the bronze sculpture, later donated to Jean Louis Ernest Meissonier), a bronze version of the Verdi portrait and the bust of Domenico Morelli. He was awarded a «Mention of Honour» on this occasion. Cf. J.-L. Champion, *Gemito, Le sculpteur de l'âme napolitaine*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, 2019.

4 Gemito wrote many letters to his mother, describing his financial strain. See the essay by Emilia Ambra, *Parigi e Roma: i luoghi della lontananza dal carteggio Gemito della Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli*, in *Gemito*, exhibition catalogue by Denise Maria Pagano, Naples, 2009, pp.71-77. This is how Boldini recalls the young Neapolitan sculptor: «He turned up one day, filthy, with a beard like a prophet [...] He is penniless. He

executed very few things, but they are all good. The *Water Vendor* is a masterpiece». We also know that Gemito was not used to receiving money for his works; he preferred donating them, believing that his generosity would bring recognition.

5 A strong bond was established, that would carry on over the years. Not only did Gemito have a high esteem for Meissonier, but he also felt a strong affection, akin to a son. Over time, Gemito would write many letters to him, asking for advice on his artistic output.

6 As is well known, two difficult decades followed (1887-1909) when the artist nonetheless obtained considerable success, thanks to his Neapolitan and Parisian admirers. We know, in fact, that Gemito took part in the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1900. He exhibited *The Water Carrier*, the *Portrait of Meissonier* and a sketch for Charles V, for which he won the Grand Prix.

7 He took part in the Eight International Exhibition in Venice in 1909, followed by the Fine Arts Exhibition in Rome in 1911 and the XI International Fine Arts Exhibition in Munich in 1913.

8 See *op cit*, 2009, p.76.



18 Eduard Bargheer

Hamburg 1901 – 1979

Two Figures on a Beach

Watercoloured tempera and traces of pencil on writing paper
219 x 276 mm (8 ⁵/₈ x 10 ⁷/₈ in.)

Inscriptions

Signed and dated in pencil, bottom right *Bargheer 47*; on the verso, in pencil 87) *Eduard Bargheer Ruth [...] 1947*.

Provenance

Domsch Collection, Germany; Private Collection, Florence.

Born in Hamburg in 1901, Eduard Bargheer studied to become a primary school teacher, following his family's wish, a career he abandoned in 1924 in order to devote himself to painting, his true passion. In the same year, he enrolled in the private Gerda Koppel artschool, where he became a pupil of the expressionist painter Friedrich Ahlers-Hestermann. He won a scholarship and made his first trip to Italy in 1925, where he studied Renaissance artists, primarily in Florence. He went to Paris the following year, a sojourn that would prove pivotal for his artistic development, when he broke away from the Nordic expressionism of his master Ahlers-Hestermann in favour of abstract art. Many trips followed, that would take him to Holland, Belgium, England and Denmark. In 1928 he became a member of the Hamburg Secession, achieving his first success thanks to the increasingly strong contacts with the historical-artistic scene linked to Aby Warburg and Erwin Panofsky. At the beginning of the 1930s, Bargheer developed his own painting style in which his landscapes, characters and objects were reduced to essential forms, employing a palette with grey, brown, yellow and violet hues, unlike the Expressionists, whose freedom in the choice of colour was greater. With the rise of the Nazi dictatorship, his painting style became subject to increasing discrimination. Many of his exhibitions were closed and his supporters and collectors, mostly Jewish, fled from Hamburg. This situation, combined with his strong desire not to disavow his ideals of artistic freedom, led him to leave Germany more and more often and

to go to Italy once a year, from 1935 onwards. That same year he went to Ischia for the first time, becoming fascinated with the island and its inhabitants. On the way back, he stopped in Bern to meet Paul Klee. In 1939, Bargheer decided to relocate to Italy and went to live in Forio d'Ischia; in September of that same year, however, the German Institute of Art History in Florence entrusted him with the execution of drawings for a publication on Michelangelo's New Sacristy, an assignment that required him to stay in the city. Here, he met Bernard Berenson and came into contact with other artists, who were guests at the Pensione Bandini, as he was: Kurt Craemer, Heinrich Steiner, Rudolf Levy, Hans Purrmann, and Herbert Schlüter. The set designer, Steiner, remembers Bargheer as «[...] a noisy man, with a remarkable, almost fanatical, temperament. And then he was a tireless worker! When we knocked on his door, he would always say: "One second, wait a second until I remove the sheets". His floor was always full of watercolours. In one day, he would paint ten or twelve versions of the same subject».¹ In the spring of 1942, he held a personal exhibition at the "Il Ponte" Gallery in Florence. A few months later, to avoid being called to arms and sent to the battlefield, he got himself hired as an interpreter at the German military shipyards at La Spezia; he would stay there until July 1944, when he was summoned to Florence by the German Consul, Gerhard Wolf, once more, in order to help the Superintendent of the *Belle Arti*, Giovanni Poggi, to protect the art treasures from the aerial bombardments.





When the collaborators of the German consulate were ordered to move to Milan, Bargheer decided not to follow suit and to remain in Florence, where he took shelter with the archbishop Elia della Costa, who found him a place to hide in the Pitti Palace. With the liberation of the city by the allied troops and partisans, Bargheer was deemed an exile, who escaped institutionalisation thanks to the numerous depositions proving his aversion to Nazism and for not having taken part in the military service. In 1945, he was again a guest at the Pensione Bandini, where he established his studio. That is where he met Klaus Mann for the first time, a renowned, politically engaged writer and director of "Die Sammlung."² Two years later, he moved to Ischia, building a house in Forio. The memory and his love for this island had indeed stayed with him during the war, as told by the writer Carlo Levi: «Above all I liked the way he talked about Ischia [...] We were in the middle of a war, and yet this young German thought and spoke as if the savagery, division and the absurd madness did not exist and didn't affect him, nor did he complain about what he himself had suffered ... He held no preconceptions against the others, he blatantly lived in a free world. In his eyes, Ischia epitomised this world [...]».³ It was here that our artist found the serenity and joy of living, as can be seen in the many works executed in those years, characterised by a harmony of bright colours, applied as if to form the tiles of a mosaic.

The present drawing is representative of this period: with a few, brisk pencil strokes, enriched by the skilful use of watercolour, the artist captures this precise moment. Two figures are on a beach: a lady is lying to the left, while the other, a man, is next to her and pictured tightening his knees to his chest. The two figures face the sea and Bargheer seems to look at them from there. Black is used to outline the figures and establish boundaries, however the colour blue, in its

various hues of green and violet, permeates the composition. The sea seems to take centre stage in this composition: it surrounds the island and, as a result, the figures as well. The clever blend of colours recalls Nabis references, seen through the eyes of Klee, albeit revised in a profoundly intimate and personal fashion. This work exudes a feeling of renewed serenity – following the horrors of WW2 – characterised by gracefulness and elegance, which set aside Eduard Bargheer as an artist, as well as a human being.

This sheet comes from the Ruth Domsch collection: she was a friend of his, met in Florence during the war, whom he would always feel bound by deep affection, as he was grateful for the help and protection that Mr and Mrs Domsch offered him during those troubled years. The artist, in fact, donated many drawings to them, such as the present one, probably during a short Florentine stay in the winter of 1947.

The numerous watercolours painted during his long sojourn in Ischia, mostly dedicated to local landscapes, harbour scenes, figures on the shore or in the streets, bear witness to the pivotal creative role played by this island experience in Bargheer's artistic path, influencing his thematic and stylistic choices. Moreover, he fully fitted in with the rustic Forio lifestyle of the 1940s and 1950s, integrating into the local community so much so that he was awarded an honorary citizenship in 1948. Because of this strong bond with the island, he would often return in the following decades, which were also marked by his many journeys to Greece and Africa, alternated with his stay in Hamburg, where he died in 1979.

In addition to numerous solo exhibitions in Italy and Germany, Bargheer took part in Documenta I in 1955 and Documenta II in 1959. Many of his works are now in private collections and in German museums including Hamburg, Berlin, Duisburg, Bonn, Fribourg, Stuttgart and Hanover.

1 See *Eduard Bargheer. Immagini di Forio*, exhibition catalogue edited by the Galleria del Monte, Forio, 1991, p. 4.

2 See *Klaus Mann - Eduard Bargheer. Due esuli tedeschi nella Firenze liberata 1944-1945*, exhibition catalogue by Klaus Voigt, Florence, 2004. Although the two of

them met after the war ended, it is interesting to see how both of them did not comply with the folly of Nazism, but were instead champions of culture and peace in such difficult years.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26.

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