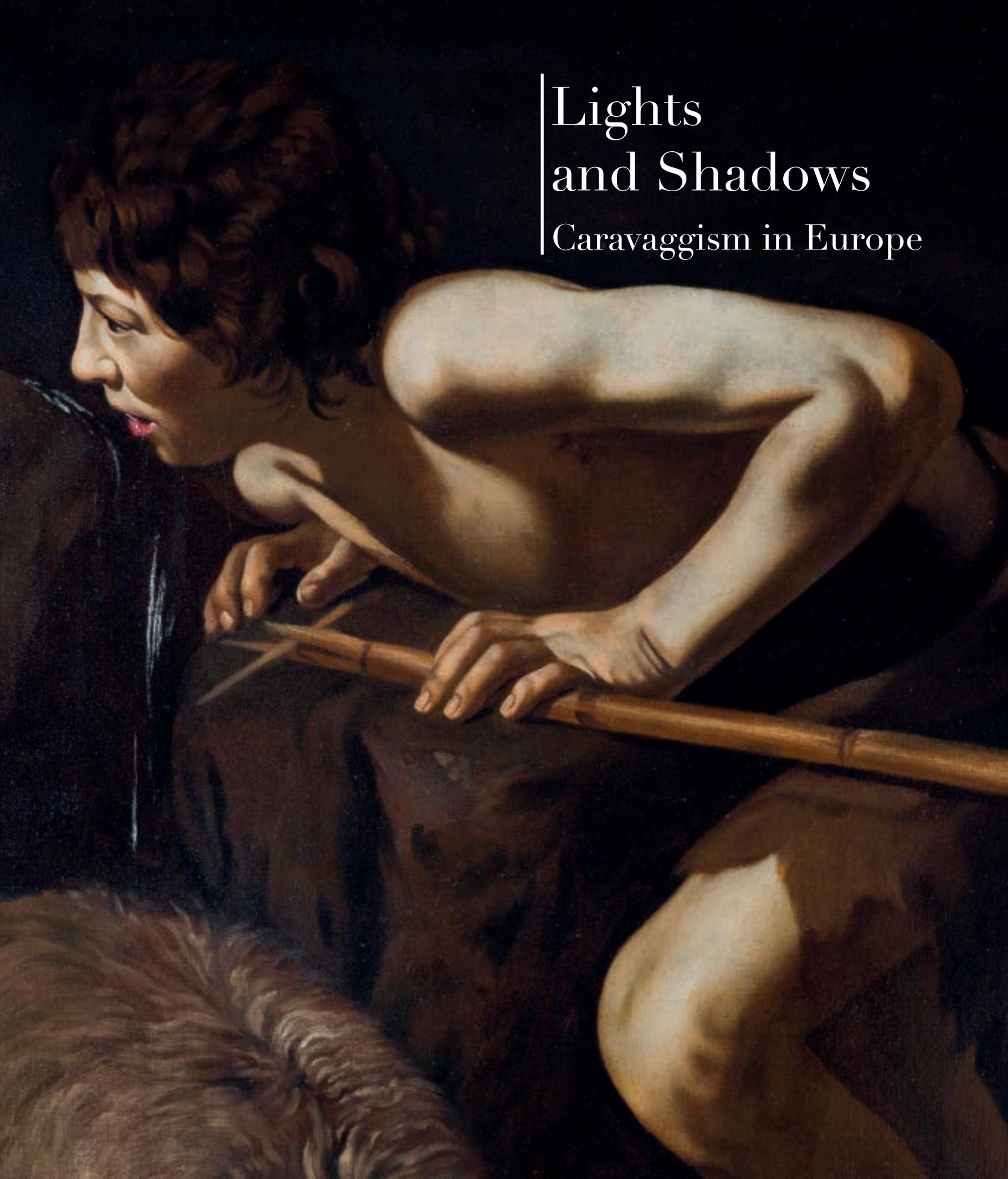


Lights
and Shadows
Caravaggism in Europe



Lights and Shadows:
Caravaggism in Europe

CESARE LAMPRONTI
fine old masters since 1914





Lights and Shadows: Caravaggism in Europe

Valentina Rossi and Marcella di Martino

DE LUCA EDITORI D'ARTE

Lights and Shadows:
Caravaggism in Europe

Cesare Lampronti Gallery
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from 9.30 am to 6 pm

Exhibition curated by
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“**L**o studio della pittura caravaggesca è sicuramente il segmento della storia dell’arte più attuale ma anche il più delicato e colmo di difficoltà. Proporre una rassegna di questa tipologia di dipinti nella mia galleria londinese ha il significato non solo di aprire una finestra della nostra cultura nel cuore di Londra ma anche quello, attraverso confronti, di approfondire alcuni argomenti che ad oggi risultano ancora molto controversi. Tutto questo lungi da presunzioni di infallibilità.

Il catalogo è stato accuratamente realizzato con il contributo di storici dell’arte importanti come Claudio Strinati, Nicola Spinosa, Riccardo Lattuada, Andrea de Marchi, Anna Orlando, solo per volerne menzionare alcuni.

Il percorso espositivo della mostra si snoda attraverso cinque aree tematiche corrispondenti a cinque zone geografiche. Si parte da Roma, per allargarsi verso Napoli e poi verso la Toscana, Genova e l’Europa.

È interessante osservare come nel gruppo di dipinti da me proposti, per i maestri italiani sia prevalente nelle opere il fattore emozionale, mentre per i maestri nordici la priorità della tecnica analitica risulti determinante.

Alcuni dipinti di grandi dimensioni avrebbero necessitato di essere esposti in grandi spazi, purtroppo le gallerie londinesi non hanno queste caratteristiche. Spero quindi che la mia galleria di Londra non mortifichi l’essenza di alcune opere, ma che anzi la possibilità di osservarle una accanto all’altra sia un punto di partenza per nuovi approfondimenti su una stagione pittorica di gran fascino come quella caravaggesca”.

Cesare Lampronti



Rome

[...] Seventeenth century sources describe the development of the caravaggesque movement, which brought about a new artistic language and a more literal interpretation of subjects represented. The Tuscan master Orazio Gentileschi, the Venetian painter Carlo Saraceni and the German artist Adam Elsheimer affiliated themselves with this creative development during the years 1605-1606. Other artistic admirers, such as Rubens and Guido Reni, who had developed different stylistic evolutions during their lifetime, also participated in this cultural climate [...]vDriven by the demand for caravaggesque works outside of Italy, the lessons of the Caravaggesque masters spread far across Europe, thanks to the circulation of Caravaggio's paintings and the travels of Roman artists such as Orazio Borgianni and Luigi Finson,. The former travelled to Spain whilst the latter settled in France in order to disseminate the essential elements of the movement. It was towards the end of the first decade that an international caravaggesque group was established surrounding its oldest members. Roman masters played a vital role in converting European painters to follow this movement [...] By around 1610 and 1620 Caravaggism had isolated itself as an independent and well-defined movement in Rome, and its principles were established according to its founders. Beside the older generation of caravaggisti, some Northern personalities as Dutch Gerrit van Honthorst soon acquired a prominent role in spreading the current of the movement to other parts of Europe. It would therefore be difficult to separate the Italians from the Northern paintings in locating its origins and in observing its early manifestations, evolutions and divergences [...]

M. Sennato, *Dizionario Larousse della pittura italiana: dalle origini ai nostri giorni*, Rome 1993, pp. 102-103.

1.
MASTER OF THE AQUAVELLA STILL LIFE
(active in Rome, c. 1615-1640)

a. Still life with peaches in a wicker basket and a boy

b. Still life with apples, pears and peaches on a plinth with classical motifs

Oil on canvas, 95 x 128,5 cm

PROVENANCE

The collection of a Roman cardinal;
Private English collection, 1880.

LITERATURE

Nature in the Spotlight, European Still life 1600-1700, exh. cat. ed. by V. Rossi and A. Hilliam, exhibition Lampronti Gallery, London, 4-11 July 2014, Rome 2014, pp. 18-19.

EXPERTISE

Federico Zeri, 27 May 1998.

In studying the pair, the viewer is immediately drawn to the exuberant fruit bathed in Caravaggesque light. In one canvas, the fruits cascade over a Roman plinth decorated with classical reliefs, whilst in another, fruits are held by a large wicker basket, with a wide handle and a dark border: this rustic type is represented in at least thirty Roman still-life paintings of the first half of the seventeenth century. The present works in Lampronti's collection serve as one of the earliest examples of this *genre*, and are dated to around 1620/25. The pair demonstrates a close adhesion to Pietro Paolo Bonzi, and echo the vegetal arrangements assigned to Michelangelo Cerquozzi and Michelangelo del Campidoglio. The painting's uniqueness is founded on the artist's realistic treatment of the leaves, where as in more conventional works of this *genre* fruit and flowers received greater attention in order to achieve a more appealing appearance.



Fig. 1. Master of the Aquavella Still Life, *Still life of flowers and fruit*, oil on canvas, cm 77 x 110, already in the Aquavella collection, New York.

In a letter written in May of 1998, Federico Zeri attributed the pair to the anonymous artist who owes his name to the *Still Life of flowers and fruits* (fig. 1), previously in the ownership of the Aquavella Gallery in New York.¹ The following attribution has led to the identification of a small body of works under the name of the Master of Aquavella Still Life. Prior to the current attribution, scholars affiliated these works with several other still life painters, namely an anonymous Neapolitan master, Angelo Caroselli and Pietro Paolini.² More recently however, Gianni Papi has attempted to identify him with Bartolomeo Cavarozzi, a Viterbese Caravaggist whom in this case would have painted the youthful boy in *Still life with peaches, a wicker basket and a boy*.³ Yet the alert figure depicted in this painting differs from surviving examples by Cavarozzi, and the association between the group and this artist is thus subject to debate.⁴ The current attribution is indeed what Zeri concluded in the same letter in which he compared Lampronti's paintings to a work owned by the art dealer Fritz Mont in New York, and to a *Still life of fruit in a glass basin* (fig. 2), now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (Inv. 59,193). Zeri argued that these works initially belonged to an old noble Italian collection but were in an English collection by 1880.

The state of conservation is good.

A.G. D.M.

¹ F. Zeri, written communication, 27 May 1998.

² C. Volpe, catalogue entry, in *La natura morta italiana*, exh. cat. ed. by S. Botteri, F. Battagli, B. Molajoli (Milan 1964), p. 32, pl. 12a; C. Volpe, *Una proposta per Giovanni Battista Crescenzi* in "Paragone" n. 24, 1973, 275, 25-36; *Natura in posa. Aspetti dell'antica natura morta italiana*, exh. cat. ed. by F. Bologna (Milan 1968), pl. 20; *La natura morta italiana. 1560-1805*, ed. by L. Salerno (Rome 1984), pp. 84-89.

³ G. Papi, *Riflessioni sul percorso caravaggesco di Bartolomeo Cavarozzi* in "Paragone", 5-6-7, 551, 553, 555, 1996, pp. 89, 90-91.

⁴ This proposition was at odds with the previous theory advanced by Volpe – upheld by Marini and then accepted by many – that divided the two artists but suggested the idea of a collaboration between them, assigning the figures in the *Supper at Emmaus* in the Getty Museum and the *Aminta's Lament* in a private collection to Cavarozzi (M. Marini, 'Caravaggio e il naturalismo internazionale', in *Storia dell'arte italiana* (1979-1983), 1981, VI.1, p. 392).



Fig. 2. Master of the Aquavella Still Life, *Still life of fruit in a glass basin*, oil on canvas, cm 61,2 x 75,9, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



a



b

2.
GIACINTO BRANDI
(Poli, 1621 - 1691, Roma)

St. Peter Penitent

Oil on canvas, 83 x 65 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

Unpublished

Born in Poli, the son of Giovanni Brandi, active as a tapestry designer and painter, Giacinto moved to Rome with his father at an early age, from around 1630. In Rome, Giacinto Brandi trained in the studio of Alessandro Algardi, Giovan Giacomo Sementi as well as joining his brother-in-law Giovanni Battista Magni, who was also active as a painter specialising in decorative friezes.

On account of Giacinto's immediate success, still only his twenties, he was accepted to the Accademia dei Virtuosi del Pantheon, and soon after became a leading member of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. Brandi was deeply indebted to Giovanni Lanfranco's style with whom he is known to have collaborated with on several projects between the years of 1646 and 1647. Particularly influential were Lanfranco's later works, which left a lasting impression on Brandi's *oeuvre*, especially for their forceful application of *chiaroscuro* effects and dramatic contrasts of light and dark.

In the early 1650s Brandi received his first important commissions namely, the canvases decorating the ceiling of Santa Maria in Via Lata, and especially significant were the frescoes of the sala d'Ovidio for Palazzo Pamphilj in piazza Navona, commissioned at the request of Pope Innocenzo X whom had appointed Brandi the honour of *cavaliere*. The success of the Palazzo Pamphilj frescoes, executed collaboratively with the help of successful painters of his generation such as Pietro da Cortona, Gaspard Dughet and Pier Francesco Mola, led to Brandi's widespread reputation and a growing demand for his works displayed inside church and palace interiors in Rome. Some of these works included the altarpiece for Ascoli Piceno, completed in 1655, and the decorations for the Crypt of the Cathedral, in Gatea, Italy, realised in 1666. Brandi's

later works acquired an intensified baroque manner, drawing on the influences of Mattia Preti and Giovan Battista Gaulli.¹ However, in his very last paintings, Brandi decided to return to an earlier phase of his career as evidenced by the darker colour palette and dramatic intensities of *chiaroscuro* found in his earlier works. The present painting retells one of the most momentous episodes in the life of Saint Peter as described in the four gospels. At dawn on Good Friday, Peter, on hearing the crowing of the cock, recalls the prophecy of Jesus thereby causing him to repent as shown here. This hitherto unpublished painting of *St Peter Penitent* is a new contribution to Brandi's catalogue and on the stylistic evidence provided, should be categorised as one of his late works belonging to the last quarter of the XVII century. The Lampronti painting highlights the important turning point in Brandi's career when he returned to a more dramatic style as demonstrated by a very similar painting of *Saint Jerome* at the Musée des Beaux Arts of Nantes (fig. 3). In both canvases there is a shared concern for *chiaroscuro* effects and flashes of light alluding to Lanfranco's paintings. This painting therefore serves as a fine example of a Baroque painter such as Brandi, choosing to paint in a caravaggesque manner almost a century after the death of Caravaggio, proving the everlasting influence of the great master.

V. R.

¹ G. Serafinelli, *Giacinto Brandi (Roma 1621-1691): scoperte documentarie attorno alla sua vicenda biografica e un dipinto inedito*, in "Arte documento", 25.2009, 152-157.



Fig. 3. G. Brandi, *Saint Jerome*, oil on canvas, cm 98 x 74, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes.



3.
MICHELANGELO MERISI DA CARAVAGGIO
(1571 - Porto Ercole Milan, 1610)

Saint Francis in Meditation

Oil on canvas, 127 x 95,7 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

LITERATURE
Caravaggio. Originale und Kopien im Spiegel der Forschung, exh. cat. ed. by Jürgen Harten and Jean-Hubert Martin (Düsseldorf, 9 September 2006 - 7 January 2007), Hatje Cantz, 2006, p. 194, kat. n. 9; C. Strinati, *San Francesco del Caravaggio in Il Museo dei Cappuccini*, ed. by A. Nicosia, M. Pizzo (Rome 2012), pp. 71-79.

This painting is among the most celebrated of all surviving versions of *Saint Francis in Meditation*. The two other versions, nearly identical to each other, and belonging to the Museum of Capuchins at the Church of Santa Maria della Concezione in Rome (fig. 4) and the Church of S. Pietro in Carpineto Romano (fig. 5), have both been attributed to Caravaggio. However, recent technical investigations have revealed that only the Carpineto version was painted by the master.¹

In the absence of documentary evidence, the dating of the painting by Caravaggio and of the version at Lampronti gallery can only be established through stylistic comparisons. In terms of subject, there is no precedent for this type of iconography in ancient literature, and thus scholars fully accord the iconographic invention to Caravaggio – during the time he had spent between Sicily and Malta, and on his final return to Naples, although it is impossible to propose a precise date.

Lampronti's *Saint Francis* presents some features of the artist's early work, suggesting that this is not a later copy after the artist. Tellingly, this *Saint Francis* exhibits Caravaggio's "economical" technique of painting. He typically exploited the first layer of paint not only as a priming layer but rather as the starting point on which he modelled forms by applying a few brushstrokes of lighter paint to describe solids and voids. Even the obscure yet gleaming appearance of the saint and the stark treatment of the background are typical of the last phase of Caravaggio's career. It is with these considerations that one can affiliate the present painting to the master.

Yet the question of an exclusive attribution of Lampronti's *Saint Francis* to Caravaggio remains open. Scholars generally agree that Caravaggio established a workshop or that he had an informal circle of painters who followed him, both in Rome and Naples as well as in Sicily. Those painters emulated his motifs and style as suggested by the *Denial of St. Peter* (Metropolitan, New York), and the *Martyrdom of S. Ursula* (Banco di Napoli, Naples), which reveal more than one artist's hand.²

The survival of numerous versions of *Saint Francis in Meditation* shed



Fig. 4. Caravaggio, *Saint Francis in meditation*, oil on canvas, cm 128,5 x 97,5, Convento dell'Immacolata Concezione, Ministero dell'Interno-Patrimonio del Fondo Edifici di Culto.





Fig. 5. Caravaggio, *Saint Francis in meditation*, oil on canvas, cm 128,2 x 97,4, Chiesa di San Pietro a Carpineto Romano, in deposit at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome.

light on the artist's working process. His oldest iconographic models were used as prototypes for continuous reworking and experimentation, thereby resulting in several variations. Due to the nature of his ever evolving practice, it is therefore difficult to distinguish between his own works and those of his collaborators. However, the process of reworking his iconographic prototypes in sev-

eral versions becomes apparent in the case of *Christ's Capture in the Gardens*, the *Incredulity of St. Thomas*, and his several *Mondafrutto*; highlighting the issue of collaboration as a relevant concern throughout his career.

The mentioned stylistic features of the *Saint Francis* supports an early date, and closely resembles the Carpietto's, particularly in the deeply meditative character and dramatic contrast of light and dark. The subject, is not a generic representation of meditation but rather, a meditation on the death of Christ in adherence to the mentality of the Capuchin Franciscans. Unusually, Saint Francis is not picking up the skull from the ground but returning it to the earth. Light is centred on the skull to suggest an overall motion downwards, to the earth, as an allusion to Christ's fate. And the present version confirms that Caravaggio manipulated the shadows to heighten the palpability of the Saint emerging from the deep, shadowy space into the light. The Saint's fingers touching the surface of the skull further stimulate the viewer's sense of touch. Moreover, the darkness symbolically evokes the Saint's pain and suffering for he is contemplating Christ's death.

Of all the known versions, the present painting is the most delicate, arguably demonstrating the most refined suffusion of light: it succeeds in drawing enough attention to each detail whilst remaining veiled by an all embracing shadow. This is evident in the detail of the cave, almost imperceptible yet visible. Monumental yet humble, the painting at the Lampronti Gallery can ultimately be firmly attributed to Caravaggio by virtue of its elegance, precision and masterly chiaroscuro.

C. S.

¹ C. Strinati, *San Francesco del Caravaggio*, in *Il museo dei Cappuccini*, Gangemi editore, Rome 2012, pp. 71-79.

² B. Savina, *Caravaggio tra originali e copie. Collezionismo e mercato d'arte a Roma nel primo Seicento*, Foligno 2013, pp. 72-82.



4.

MASTER OF THE HARTFORD STILL-LIFE
(active in Rome, beginning 17th century)

Still life with fruits and vegetable in an open setting

Oil on canvas, 114 x 154 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection, France.

Unpublished

The present painting - published here for the first time - is an important addition to the master's *oeuvre* and a relevant contribution to the development of early still lives in Italy. Both the monumental scale and its subject matter are unusual: the *naturalia* are dispersed across an abstract space, fenced by a brick wall and a tempestuous sky. The surreal choice of setting which is all but uncommon in early still lives, does not however limit the painter from skilfully rendering the illusion of depth through the use of *chiaroscuro* and the naturalistic representation of flora and fauna. The employment of *trompe-l'oeil* effects discretely counterbalances the abstract nature of this painting: the fly perched on the turnip on the far left, the grasshopper in the foreground, as well as the snail and the lizard resting on the brick wall.

The minute description of each element and the metaphysical isolation is rooted in *herbaria* that were invented in the sixteenth century by Italian botanists. These volumes were initially made with actual plant specimens, but growing demand led to their replacement with drawings and watercolours, and as a result, an exemplar model was established. The choice of an outdoor setting can date back to late 16th century Flemish and Italian market scenes. Such compositions allowed painters to experiment with a type of subject that was not yet established as a *genre*, and thus masterfully disguised in market scenes. On this basis, the present painting dates to the first years of 17th century, particularly to the first decade, and therefore serves as a superlative example of archaic still life painting.

The debate concerning the attribution of this work is noteworthy as its peculiar features are shared only by one other surviving painting attributed to the Master of the Hartford Still Life: the *Flowers, Fruit, Vegetable and two Lizards*, in the Borghese Gallery, Rome (fig. 6). Though the dating and composition are indeed consistent



Fig. 6. Master of the Hartford Still-life, *Flowers, Fruit, Vegetable and two Lizards*, oil on canvas, cm 105 x 184, Borghese Gallery, Rome.

with Lampronti's version, these two paintings cannot be ascribed to the same master according to stylistic differences. In this respect, the Borghese version, along with its pendant *Still-life with birds* in the same collection, should be excluded from the Master of the Hartford Still Life's artistic output.

In resolving the attribution, attention should be paid to the snail crawling up the wall and the strawberries turned up-side-down as these are particular to the Master of Hartford Still Life's vocabulary. Such motifs also appear in the *Still Life with flowers, fruit and vegetables*, once belonging to the Frederick Mont collection, New York.

A.C.



5.
BARTOLOMEO MANFREDI
(Ostiano, 1582 - 1622, Rome)

The Denial of Saint Peter

Oil on canvas, 142,9 x 208,9 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection, United Kingdom.

Unpublished

The chronology of Bartolomeo Manfredi's *oeuvre* – considered perhaps the first and most relevant pupil of Caravaggio – is not clear for the lack of surviving signed, dated, or at least well-documented paintings. Even if recent archival research has made a decisive contribution to the understanding of his artistic narrative, the disappearance of many executed and well-documented works still makes it difficult to paint a clear picture of his life and works. Nevertheless, according to its iconographic and stylistic features it is probable that this *Denial of Saint Peter* is indeed one of the oldest works ascribed to a very early stage of Manfredi's career. Lampronti's painting, therefore, assumes a significant intrinsic value for its truly unique and superb appearance but also an extrinsic quality for it serves as an important historical and artistic document. In this respect, the present painting is probably one of the first examples of the so-called *manfrediana methodus*, invented precisely by Manfredi, and coined retrospectively by the famous German historical painter Joachim von Sandrart. It is not possible to condense this *methodus* into a schematic definition, but one should in any case consider that Manfredi did not discover or arrive at this new method of painting alone. It is plausible that he was preceded by Jusepe de Ribera, should one accept the reattribution advanced by



Fig. 7. J. Maestro del Giudizio di Salomone, (J. de Ribera), *The Denial of St Peter*, oil on canvas, cm 163 x 233, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Corsini, Rome.

Gianni Papi of an anonymous group of works gathered under the name of the so-called Master of the Judgement of Solomon to Ribera. Within this *corpus* of works there are undeniable indications of the *methodus* as in the case of *The Denial of St Peter* in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte antica in Palazzo Corsini in Rome (fig. 7), configured with the device of half-length figures composed into a rectangular composition – a core element of the *methodus manfrediana* that was particularly receptive among French followers of Caravaggio.

Manfredi, following Caravaggio but then immediately distinguishing himself by developing significant stylistic and content innovations, invented the idea of merging into a singular composition different episodes that are not necessarily related to each other. These episodes normally represented tavern and gaming scenes, depicting aristocrats in the same settings as peasants. Caravaggio indeed established some innovative iconographies including, the fortune-teller, the merry group and the card players all seated around the table. From these prototypes Manfredi established new compositions, combining together these type of subjects in a deep, shadowy space struck by flashes of colour. *The Denial of St. Peter* is a fine demonstration of this method of representation: on the left, the scene recalls certain details of Caravaggio's *Arrest of Jesus* intended for the Mattei, and on the right, a game playing scene is taking place.¹ One player suddenly stands up, pointing towards the dice, accusing the other game player of cheating while a third onlooker observes the unfolding scene without intervening. Between sacred and profane, the underlining theme of the disparate episodes communicates both betrayal and deception.

Among the several works that apply the *manfrediana methodus*, Lampronti's painting is perhaps the only one that cites prototypes by Caravaggio in such a precise way; borrowed in this case as singular details rather than as a whole. In this respect, the detail of the soldier who holds Christ in the *Arrest* belonging to the Mattei, and one of the screaming figures in the *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew* for Contarelli family are the shared elements. On the basis of the evidence presented, one can conclude that the painter of the *Denial of Saint Peter* had a direct contact with Caravaggio's prototypes, especially those completed between the years 1600 and 1603. On the other hand, those same models have been reinterpreted by the artist through the lens of Cristoforo Roncalli's mannerism, thereby assigning Lampronti's painting to an early elaboration of Manfredi's *methodus*.² The present painting can therefore be dated to around 1605, and presumably made for the Mattei family on the basis of the carved eagle decorating the frame.

C. S.

¹ F. Cappelletti - L. Testa, *Il trattenimento di virtuosi. Le collezioni secentesche di quadri nei palazzi Mattei di Roma*, Rome 1994, pp. 101-104.

² The relationship between Manfredi and the roncalliano environment is mentioned in: G. Baglione, *Le Vite de' pittori, scultori, architetti e intagliatori*, Roma 1642, in the life of Bartolomeo Manfredi: "da giovinetto col Cavalier Pomarancio se ne stette. Ma poi fatto grande si diede a imitare la maniera di Michelangelo da Caravaggio", a relevant information not analysed yet by modern scholars.



6.

ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI

(Rome, 1593 - 1654, after January, Naples)

Portrait of a saint

Oil on canvas, 45 x 35,5 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection.

Unpublished

The present painting was attributed to Artemisia Gentileschi on stylistic grounds according to the scholar Gianni Papi in a written communication on May 21, 2013. The document dates this work to sometime between 1620 and 1626, during Artemisia's second stay in Rome, upon her return to Florence. The expertise also compares this painting to another body of famous works completed during this period: the *Portrait of a Gonfalonier* in the Civic Museum of Bologna; *Judith Slaying Holofernes* at the Uffizi, Florence; *Judith and Maid-servant with the Head of Holofernes* in the Detroit Institute of Arts Museum. Additionally, a *Christ Blessing the Children* was re-discovered by myself in 2001 at San Carlo al Corso, Rome.

Gianni Papi convincingly compares the *Portrait of a saint* to works by Vouet during his Roman period (1630s), when he was appointed *Principe* of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. The close relationship between the two artists is also demonstrated by a portrait of Artemisia Gentileschi intended for the Cassiano dal Pozzo, which was in fact attributed to Vouet by Roberto Contini (fig. 8).¹ References to Vouet's works can be traced throughout Artemisia's artistic career, namely an *Allegory of Fame* at Robilant-Voena, firstly referred to the painter by Papi (fig. 9), and then by Roberto Contini.² The latter proposed the relationship between the *Fame* and various works by Vouet, concluding that this work must have been completed between the end of his Roman period (1630s) and his residency in Naples.

As a matter of fact, both the *Allegory of Fame* and the *Portrait of a saint* are related to engravings ascribed to Vouet and his circle, no-

tably his wife Virginia da Vezzo, whose *Judith* was engraved by Claude Mellan.³ One only needs to focus on the saint's head in da Vezzo's *Judith* (fig. 10) to conclude that both the *Allegory of Fame* and the painting in Lampronti's collection could not have been conceived without the antecedent model of da Vezzo. On a separate note, the *Judith's* twisted head positioned along a diagonal line is an obvious neo-Venetian solution.

In his expertise, Papi suggests that the Lampronti painting can be considered a self-portrait by Artemisia, however at this point in research there is insufficient evidence to support this claim. Based on the newly proposed comparisons, together with those previously offered by Papi, one can safely confirm the attribution of *Portrait of a saint* to the celebrated Artemisia Gentileschi.

Dating Artemisia's works can prove difficult because of her ever-changing style that often returned to earlier compositions for inspiration. Nevertheless, it seems plausible to date the present painting sometime after 1620-26, between the end of her Roman stay (c. 1630) and her almost definitive relocation to Naples.

R. L.

¹ Artemisia Gentileschi. *Story of a passion*, exh. cat. ed. by F. Solinas (Milan, 24 Ore Cultura, 2011), pp. 142-143, n. 7.

² R. Contini in *Artemisia Gentileschi*, cit., 2011, pp. 200-201, no. 29.

³ J. Thuillier on Vouet, exh. cat. ed. by J. Thuillier, B. de Lavergnée, D. Lavalley (Paris 1990), p. 35.



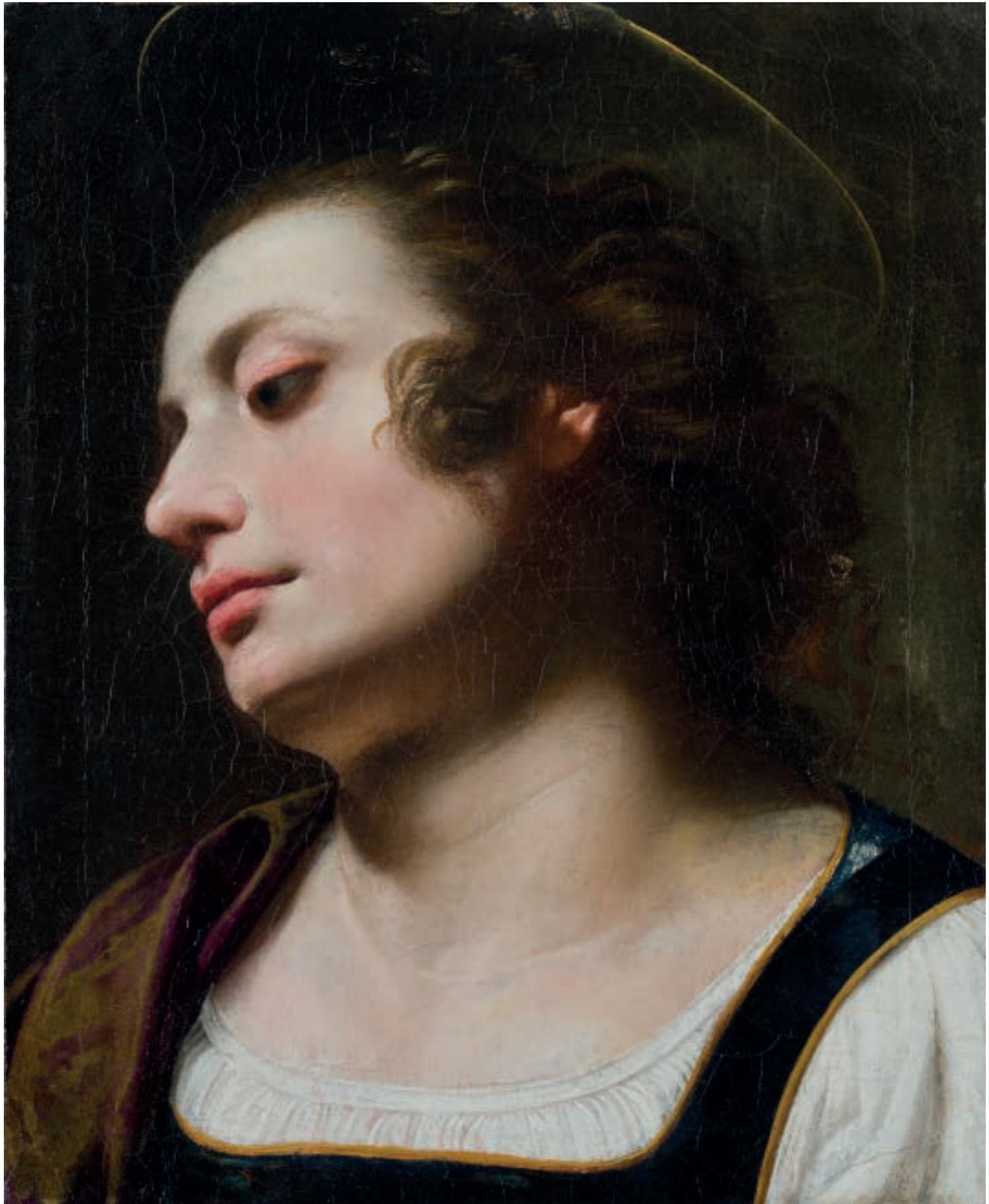
Fig. 8. S. Vouet, *Portrait of Artemisia*, oil on canvas, cm 90 x 71, private collection.



Fig. 9. S. Vouet, *Allegory of Fortune*, oil on canvas, cm 57,5 x 51,5, Robilant-Voena, Milan.



Fig. 10. C. Mellan, V. da Vezzo, *Judith*, graver, cm 10,8 x 14,8, Museo dell'Accademia di Carrara, Bergamo.



7.

ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI
(Rome, 1593 - 1654, after January, Naples)
AND CONTRIBUTOR (BERNARDO CAVALLINO)

Bathsheba at Her Bath

Oil on canvas, 145,4 x 185,2 cm

PROVENANCE

United Kingdom, private collection;
London, Matthiesen Gallery.

LITERATURE

M. Nicolaci in *Artemisia Gentileschi. Storia di una passione*, exh. cat. ed. by R. Contini and F. Solinas (Milan 2011), pp. 228-231; M. Nicolaci in *Artemisia, 1593-1654*, exh. cat. edited by R.P. Ciardi, R. Contini e F. Solinas, Paris, Gallimard, 2012, pp. 184-185; *Grazia e tenerezza in posa: Bernardo Cavallino e il suo tempo 1616-1656*, ed. by N. Spinosa (Rome 2013), p. 403, fig A3.a.

EXHIBITIONS

Artemisia Gentileschi. Storia di una passione, Milan, Palazzo Reale, 22 September 2011 - 29 January 2012.

Artemisia, 1593-1654, Fondation Dina Vierny - Musée Maillol, Paris, 14 March - 15 July 2012.

The story of Bathsheba (*Second Book of Samuel*, 11, 2) is one of the most ambiguous episodes in the life of David and a powerful tale of morality. In the story, Bathsheba falls victim of King David's libido: wanting to wed her, he sends her husband to his death in a deadly battle. Later punished by God, the King recites the famous prayer of repentance and plea for forgiveness known as the *Psalms of David*.

Scholarship has long insisted that Artemisia chose female nude subjects in order to cater to the tastes of her patrons and clientele. Yet, Bathsheba is a popular subject of seventeenth-century paintings – and can only be represented naked for narrative reasons. Moreover, greater critical attention should be paid to her nudity as a symbol of innocence and heroism, for she unintentionally and unknowingly stimulated David's libido when he spied on her.

According to Nicolaci, this painting is the finest among various versions of the type,¹ the earliest being the version formerly in a private collection in Halle, and then sold at Sotheby's, (London 3-12-2014, lot 20) (fig. 11). The comparison between them is instructive as it enables us to understand Artemisia's working process, a method inherited from her father Orazio.

The location and proportion of the figures appear to be the same in the two paintings, while the secondary elements pose some differences. This could have been the result of a specific working process: working on the main elements according to a preconceived formula, and in a more spontaneous manner for the rest of painting.

It is evident that an identical cartoon has been employed for the composition and placement of figures, with some notable changes for minor elements, namely the architecture. In the Halle version,



Fig. 11. A. Gentileschi, *Bathsheba at Her Bath*, oil on canvas, cm 204,5 x 155,5



Fig. 12. A. Gentileschi, *Birth of the Baptist*, oil on canvas, cm 184 x 258, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



the dark tones of The Corinthian Colonnade reveal a resemblance to Viviano Codazzi's chromatic palette, while the fast brushstrokes in Lampronti's painting are close to Codazzi's technique. However, the rapidly sketched small figures depicted in the latter, bear more similarities with the style of Ascanio Luciani (Naples, 1621-1706). Moreover, other differences can be recognised: the colour of Bathsheba's dress and the physiognomy of both maids, which nevertheless, presents the same countenance.

The Handmaid's standing figure was firstly attributed to Bernardo Cavallino by M. Nicolaci, who identified "the ways of Bernardo Cavallino (1616-1656) – an intimate collaborator and friend of the painter – in the pale complexion of the figure brightened up by an intense redness around the eyes and in the pronounced lips".² This attribution was later confirmed by N. Spinosa in Bernardo Cavallino's monograph.³

In questioning this hypothesis, one should take into account, as already noted before, that the present painting bears resemblance to the Halle version, and therefore, Cavallino would have painted the draperies and face of the woman on Artemisia's cartoon. Although this hypothesis is tentative it is perhaps not significant to trace a collaboration effort with Cavallino since Artemisia was perfectly able to complete them herself. Moreover, these details reveal her typical manner: Like Cavallino, the draperies and the chiaroscuro of this figure are full-bodied and sharp, but much less delicate than those typical of Cavallino. Even without mentioning the now documented partnership between Artemisia and Onofrio Palumb, models of this figure can be found among the most prominent personalities of the artistic milieu of Massimo Stanzione (which, incidentally, was the first guarantor of Artemisia in Naples)⁴.

The issue concerning collaboration between Artemisia and other

Neapolitan painters is complex and cannot be fully discussed here. According to the current analysis, the Lampronti painting is fully realised by the painter, and reflects her tendency to adapt the formal characteristics of her paintings according to the circumstances and even the locations in which she worked in, specifically, Naples. Nicolaci suggested that the Lampronti 'Bathsheba' should be affiliated with the 'Birth of the Baptist' by Artemisia in the Prado Museum (fig. 12), where the figure of the kneeling maid is repeated with few variations. This paintings was commissioned to Gentileschi as part of a cycle dedicated to the life of Saint John and intended for the chapel of Buen Retiro in Madrid. The commission was coordinated and largely executed by Massimo Stanzione who was the first guarantor for Artemisia in Naples, and could have provided the necessary introduction.⁵

It is credible to date the Lampronti painting between c. 1645 and 1655, as also suggested by Nicolaci, who posed Artemisia's journey to London in 1636 as a terminus *ante quem*.

R. L.

¹ For other versions with variations in position and number of figures see M. Nicolaci and R. Contini in *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 2011, cit., pp. 234-235, 240-241, 246-247.

² *Ibidem*, p. 228.

³ *Grazia e tenerezza in posa: Bernardo Cavallino e il suo tempo 1616-1656*, ed. by N. Spinosa (Rome 2013), p. 403, fig. A3a.

⁴ Cf. R. Lattuada - E. Nappi, *New Documents and Some Remarks on Artemisia's Production in Naples and Elsewhere in Artemisia Gentileschi: taking stock*, ed. by J.W. Mann, Turnhout, Brepols, 2005, pp. 79-98.

⁵ J.W. Mann, *Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi*, exhibition catalogue, ed. by J.W. Mann and K. Christiansen (Milan 2001), pp. 405-407, no. 77.





Tuscany

[...] The influence of Caravaggio's naturalism is well represented in the Medici capital since the beginning of the seventeenth century [...] During the second decade his influence intensified, and it is known that Antonio Pomarancio (1613-15), Artemisia Gentileschi (1614-21) and Battistello Caracciolo (1618) spent a period of time there disseminating his ideals. These painters imported a new found interest in light and colour, and focused on representing their models with increased verisimilitude while interpreting sacred themes in a lifelike manner. Increased interest in the master's innovations was further generated by the arrival of Caravaggio's paintings, and the positive reception of his teachings in the local artistic *milieu*. [...]

S. Bellesi, *Trends and naturalistic Florentine painting guidelines in the first half of the seventeenth century in light and shadow. Caravaggisti and naturalism in Tuscan painting of the seventeenth century*, ed. by p. Carofano, Pisa, 2005 pp. XCI-CXLII.

8.

BARTOLOMEO CAVAROZZI, circle of

Boy Bitten by a Crab

Oil on canvas, 65 x 49 cm

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, United States.

Unpublished

The playful subject of a youthful boy bitten by a crab achieved relative success in Rome and Florence during the early half of the seventeenth century. This subject allowed painters to portray their models with extreme and theatrical expressions, an attractive feature assimilated by the followers of Caravaggio. In this painting, the youthful man is shown bitten by a crab although the same subject can be presented bitten by other smaller creatures, based on a formula conceived by Caravaggio in his early painting of a *Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, known in two versions, at the Fondazione Longhi and the National Gallery, London (figg. 13, 14). There are many ways of reading this ambiguous choice of subject matter; an allusion to the Sorrows of Life is the most convincing one.

Although to modern viewers might find this subject might seem unusual, surviving inventories record many paintings of this type in notable early modern collections. For example, a painting recorded among the possessions of the Cardinal Carlo Barberini in 1663 was "Un' quadro in tela con 2 figure, frutti, et un' grancio attaccato ad un'dito, alto p.mi 3 1/4 e largo p.mi 4 1/2..."¹ while the Roman inventory of Giuseppe Pignatelli registered in 1647 records a similar painting as stated in f. 294v: "Una testa d'un buffone con un granchio che li morde cornice indorata di Carlo Piamontese alto p.mi..."² The latter painting is attributed to the hand of the Piedmontese painter Carlo Battaglia, also known as Paiola. Little is known today of this painter, who specialised in miniature bird paintings, yet he must also have experimented with this genre of portraiture.



Fig. 13. Caravaggio, *Boy bitten by a lizard*, oil on canvas, cm 65,8 x 52,3, Longhi Collection, Florence.



Fig. 14. Caravaggio, *Boy bitten by a lizard*, oil on canvas, cm 66 x 49,5, National Gallery, London.

The technical mastery of the present painting evokes the name of Bartolomeo Cavarozzi's among the circle of better-known painters of Caravaggio's school, although it should be noted that his artistic output has yet to be categorised.³ The attribution of this painting remains therefore open to debate: certain features can be traced in the works of the so-called RG Monogrammist, a very complex personality whose works were sometimes attributed to other artists. This issue can be applied to a *Vanitas* in La Spezia (Lia Museum, inv. 42), cautiously attributed by Zeri and myself to a Siennese master, Pietro Paolini.⁴ Consequently, *Boy bitten by a crab* could be referred to an artist from a broad artistic milieu situated in Low Tuscany or Lazio, and dated from around 1620/25. Among the artists from this region, Cavarozzi was well esteemed, and thus based on stylistic evidence the present painting can tentatively be attributed to his circle.

The state of conservation is good.

A.G. D.M.

¹ The head of a fool with a cab that is biting him, and a gilded frame by Carlo Piamontese; height p. mi..

² A painting on canvas with two figures, fruits, and a crab attached to a figure; height 3 1/4 p.mi and wide 4 1/2 p.m.

³ See *David* of unknown location attributed to the artist by G. Papi in *The first "Aminta's lament"...*, in *Paragone*, 2008, 685, table 24.

⁴ *La Spezia. Museo Civico Amedeo Lia. Paintings*, ed. by F. Zeri and A.G. De Marchi (Milan 1997), no. 184.



9.

ORAZIO LOMI GENTILESCHI, attributed to
(Pisa, 1565 - 1639, London)

Rest on the Flight into Egypt

Oil on canvas, 148 x 267 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Austria.

LITERATURE

Caravaggio en Cuba, exh. cat. ed. by R. Vodret and G. Leone (Cuba, La Havana 2011), pp. 100-103, cat. no 9.

EXPERTISE

Nicholas Turner, 10 August 2012.

This version of Gentileschi's *Rest onto the flight into Egypt* is of an exceptional quality, and survives in several versions though not all are firmly attributed to the painter.¹ In the absence of archival documentation, scholars are only able to rely on stylistic analysis in order to confirm the authorship and dating of these works. The existence of numerous versions attests to the attractive charm of Gentileschi's choice of iconography, in particular, the emotive charge evoked by the thematic tension between Joseph, in a deep sleep, and the Virgin suckling the Infant Christ. Behind Lampronti's painting and all other versions for that matter, lies a powerful theological concept: an elaboration on the scepticism exhibited by Joseph towards Christ's eventual redemption overridden by the primacy of motherly love at Christ's infancy. On looking at Caravaggio's *Rest* it soon becomes clear that this type of iconography is entirely the invention of Gentileschi: in the masterpiece at the Doria Pamphilj Joseph is in fact represented awake and very much alert whilst his counterparts are at rest.

In order to date the presenting work one must take into account an arguably finer version dated to around 1625, formerly in the collection of Duke of Buckingham, and now at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (fig. 15). The stylistic differences between this work (probably sent to the Duke by Gentileschi himself during his stay in Paris) and Lampronti's version set a *terminus ante quem* for the latter.

In support of a firm attribution, one only needs to draw stylistic comparisons with the version at the Louvre (fig. 16), sold by the banker Jabach to King Louis Everhard XIV in 1671, and another at the Museum of Birmingham (fig. 17), both of which are attributed to the artist. The latter, which is the only one that depicts the donkey, is widely considered the prototype for a great number of versions, most of which were painted by the workshop. The present painting's dark colour palette and delicate execution could allude to a mature phase of the artist's career and therefore close to the prototype. Moreover, certain stylistic affinities, such as the dense application of brushstrokes and the simplification of geometric forms are present in both the prototype and the present painting. Nevertheless, there are some conspicuous differences between these two versions, namely the sumptuous and grand tone of the prototype against the severity of Lampronti's that have generated some doubt among scholars.

To explain how a work such as Lampronti's could appear along side



Fig. 15. O. Gentileschi, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, oil on canvas, 137,2 x 215,9 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Fig. 16. O. Gentileschi, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, oil on canvas, cm 158 x 225, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



the sumptuous versions of his mature phase (Vienna, Louvre and Birmingham), one needs to take into consideration Gentileschi's attempt to increase his artistic activity in England for commercial gain with the assistance of his two sons, Giulio and Francesco. It is very plausible that the two sons served as art advisors to the Duke of Buckingham, and were in charge of sourcing works of art from Italy to England according to the patron's requirements. In this likely scenario, the brothers could have brought over works from Gentileschi's Italian workshop that were either unfinished or the product of his assistants to be sold on the English market. In this respect, it is reasonable to assume that the Lampronti painting belonged to a group of works realised at an early stage of Gentileschi's career but sold at a later date by his sons. It is indeed more in tune with Gentileschi's earlier works than those realised during his mature phase from around 1620s, as one can see in the figures of the Virgin and Joseph, which closely resemble Orazio's earlier paintings such as the *Holy Family* in the Gallery of Cassa di Risparmio di Pisa.

It is therefore plausible that the Lampronti painting could have been the prototype for Gentileschi's other versions. In favour of this argument, the background has not quite yet been defined, the secondary elements such as the mule are not present in this composition and the figures more closely resemble the classical figures found in Florentine painting than those commissioned in England.²

¹ *Orazio Gentileschi en la Corte de Carlos I*, Bilbao 1999, pp. 17-20 and cat. n. 3 p. 58.

² Andrea del Sarto's *Rest of SS. Annunziata* in Florence is probably the model to which Gentileschi turned to for inspiration.

C. S.



Fig. 17. O. Gentileschi, *The Rest on The Flight into Egypt*, oil on canvas, cm 176,6 x 219, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Birmingham.



10.
ORAZIO RIMALDI
(Pisa, 1594 - 1631)

Daedalus and Icarus

Oil on canvas, 132 x 99 cm

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Florence, 1969;
Anonymous sale; Christie's, London, 28 October 1977, lot 6.

LITERATURE

Caravaggism in Europe, ed. by B. Nicolson, Turin 1990, p. 163, no. 239, illustrated;
Da Santi di Tito a Bernardino Mei, ed. by P. Carofano, San Giuliano Terme 2004,
p. 80, illustrated p. 68, fig. 4; *Luce e ombra, Caravaggismo nella pittura toscana del
Seicento*, ed. by P. Carofano, Pontedera 2005, p. CLXXXVII; *Corps et Ombre, Car-
avage et le Caravaggisme européen*, Musée Fabre, Montpellier, exh. cat., 2012, un-
der no. 19.

The well-known subject of *Daedalus and Icarus* was explored by Riminaldi on several occasions but only five of which are currently attributed to the master himself or to his immediate circle of painters. In Carofano and Paliaga's opinion the aforementioned category of works dates to about 1625. In terms of attribution, the present painting – sold at Christie's in 1977 and later in Zanchi's collection, Lugano – was initially attributed to the master by Didier Bodart though later ascribed to Riminaldi. Among the group of works, the canvas at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford (No. 1944.38) is regarded as his finest in terms of quality and therefore serves as a starting point for attributing other works to the artist (fig. 18). The piece in Lampronti's collection is of great art historical significance for it reveals, more emphatically than in the case of the Hartford, the stylistic influence of Orazio Gentileschi and Bartolomeo Manfredi on Riminaldi.

It is evident that Riminaldi had a particular predilection for the subject of *Daedalus and Icarus*, which he painted on many occasions.¹ A possible explanation for his constant interest in the subject is its scientific connotation, which would have appealed to the flourishing scientific community of Pisa, Galileo Galilei's birth place, and where the scientist developed his famous studies on flight. Inspired by Daedalus' technical feat, Riminaldi strove to achieve technical mastery of his own craft, a concern that remained throughout his career and enabled Riminaldi to succeed as one of *the* most eminent followers of Caravaggio in the third decade of the century. The present painting epitomises Riminaldi's ability to absorb and excel in emulating Caravaggio's painting technique, showcasing Riminaldi's ability to recreate Caravaggio's thick yet sculptural brushstrokes, and to heighten the pitch of the painting's theatrical

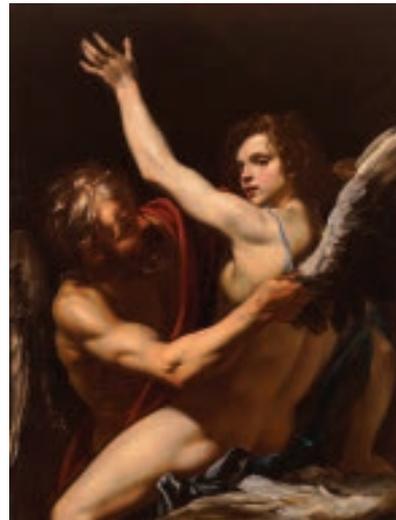


Fig. 18. O. Riminaldi, *Daedalus and Icarus*, oil on canvas, cm 132 x 96,1 cm, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut.

effect through chiaroscuro contrasts. The iconography of this work is similar to that of his other versions of the same subject, however it is unique in its representation of Icarus' gaze. Unlike in his other works, Icarus looks intensely out at the viewers, thereby drawing them into the scene in order to reflect on Icarus' fate. The direct gaze is a typical feature of the Caravaggesque school, where it was sometimes employed to convey a feeling of scepticism and irony towards the subject itself.

As in other examples belonging to Riminaldi's oeuvre, the mischievous expression on Icarus' face not only draws the viewer's attention to the event, but also unveils the artist's sceptical attitude towards the great myths of his time, both secular and religious. It is precisely these layers of meaning that add an intellectual dimension to this painting, a version that is entirely attributed to the hand of the master as initially proposed by Nicolson.²

C. S.

¹ See paintings in Cassa di Risparmio, Carrara, private collection, New York, previously in the Bonello collection, Malta, and the Pizzi collection in Venice. Four versions representing *Daedalus and Icarus* are known, the prime being the canvas now in the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford (see Montpellier, 2012, no. 19). While Piero Carofano suggests that Riminaldi's workshop participated in the lower section of the present painting, the crudeness that characterises the studio version in the Pierluigi Pizzi collection is absent here. Rather, the subtle rendering of tonal contrasts and textures in the skin, feathers and hair is identical in to that of the Hartford version, verifying Riminaldi's authorship. It was not uncommon for artists of this period to reproduce identical versions of successful compositions on several occasions, with or without the assistance of apprentices.

² B. Nicolson 1990, p. 193.





Naples

[...] Although having stayed in Naples only twice during his lifetime, Caravaggio succeeded in modernising the artistic school quite easily as the local sixteenth century tradition was not yet well established. Since the beginning, the Neapolitan and Roman School developed simultaneously, however Neapolitan painters successfully distinguished themselves as shown in the works of Battistello Caracciolo. His approach was deeply naturalistic and his scenes were dominated by dynamic and sculptural forms, a method that elevated his status as a leading European caravaggesque painter active in the first decade of the seventeenth century. The arrival of Jusepe de Ribera in 1620 generated a heightened sense of realism in caravaggesque painting, shifting the direction of the next generation of artists away from Caracciolo's naturalism. As a result of this evolution, one can enumerate the rich and eclectic style of Bernardo Cavallino and Massimo Stanzione, the academic approach of Artemisia Gentileschi and Francesco Fracanzano's empiric use of lighting. It was after Matti Preti's stay in Rome between 1630 and 1640, that he turned to Caracciolo's paintings, attempting to combine the early Neapolitan caravaggism with the new Baroque style [...]

M. Sennato, *Dizionario Larousse della pittura italiana: dalle origini ai nostri giorni*, Rome 1993, p. 105.

11.

BATTISTELLO CARACCILOLO
(Naples, 1578 - 1635)

Saint John at the Fountain

Oil on canvas, 130 x 97 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

LITERATURE
Battistello Caracciolo e il primo naturalismo a Napoli, ed. by F. Bologna, Naples 1992, p. 40, fig. 15; *Battistello Caracciolo, l'opera completa*, ed. by S. Causa (Naples 2000), p. 44, fig. 44; *Pittura del Seicento a Napoli, da Caravaggio a Massimo Stanzione*, ed. by N. Spinosa (Naples 2010), n. 380, p. 379.

EXPERTISE
G. Briganti, written communication;
R. Longhi, written communication.

Caravaggio left Naples in July 1610. He had arrived in the city the previous year after having fled Malta and stopping in Sicily where he stayed in Siracusa, Messina and Palermo. He was en route to Rome awaiting the pope's pardon for having killed Ranuccio Romassoni in 1606. He travelled in a felucca near the Lazio coast, carrying three of his paintings – a *Penitent Magdalene* (fig. 19), a *Saint John at the Fountain* and a *Saint John in the Wilderness* – gifts for Cardinal Scipione Borghese, nephew of Pope Urban VIII with whom the artist had close ties in Rome. Thanks partly to the intervention of Costanza Colonna, who had hosted the artist – her protégée – in her Naples home, the cardinal was interested in Caravaggio's pardon. Unfortunately, when the artist stopped at Palo, he was arrested by papal guards and imprisoned for a few days. So the felucca returned to Naples with the three paintings. Caravaggio was released from prison and traversed the Maremma district – probably on foot – to arrive at Porto Ercole where he died in hospital on 10 July 1610, probably from malaria.

We do know from documentary sources that the three paintings were initially delivered to Costanza Colonna, and then seized by the Knights of Malta. Later, Scipione Borghese, the official recipient, requested the pictures through the offices of the viceroy Count Lemos. But while the *Saint John in the Wilderness* was indeed returned to Urban VIII's nephew (and it is now displayed in the Galleria Borghese in Rome), all traces of the other two have been lost. One was a *Penitent Magdalene* which Caravaggio painted shortly before reaching Naples in 1606, the other was *Saint John at the Fountain*, executed during his second Neapolitan sojourn, probably shortly before the other Saint John painting that reached the cardinal. All that we know from sources is that both were temporarily in the viceroy's hands and that they were copied by several artists. Some of the copies, as well as derivatives, are known to scholars. These include anonymous and signed versions of the *Penitent Magdalene*. Two are by Louis Finson (Marseille, Musée des Beaux-Arts; Saint-Rémy de Provence, private collection, dated 1613), and one by Rembrandt's brother-in-law, Wybrandt de Geest dated 1620 (currently in a private collection in Barcelona)¹.

There are also several known copies or derivatives of *Saint John at the Fountain*. Some of these have significant variations: a full-figure young saint facing right (in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vi-



Fig. 19. Caravaggio (copy from), *Penitent Magdalene*, oil on canvas, cm 106,5 x 91, Private Collection.

enna, attributed to Pedro Orrente with many reservations) or left (two identical renderings one in a private collection in Switzerland and another, previously in a Rome collection which is the canvas presented here), is drinking at a fountain, with the lamb, next to him drinking from the stream. Then there is the three-quarter length figure of the saint, turned to the left to drink with the crouching lamb in the foreground (Malta, formerly in the Bonello collection, fig. 20) and another with a half-length figure of the saint lying on the ground drinking, but without the lamb (Rome, formerly with Galleria Gasparrini, fig. 21; the canvas now in a private Florentine collection is surely a copy of this one).

The painting formerly with Gasparrini was published for the first time in 1993 by Mina Gregori as an autograph work by Caravaggio, but that attribution did not meet with unanimous agreement. At a later and more thorough examination, the painting in Malta





Fig. 20. Caravaggio (copy from), *Saint John The Baptist at the source*, oil on canvas, cm 100 x 73, Bonello Collection, la Valletta, Malta.



Fig. 21. Caravaggio (copy from), *Saint John The Baptist at the source*, oil on canvas, cm 45,5 x 65,5, Gasparrini Collection.

– formerly with Bonello – which Longhi in 1941 believed to be by Caravaggio’s hand, was found to be an anonymous rendering of the Caravaggesque original. The picture in Vienna, that is still attributed to Orrente could be a painted rendering of an engraving (obviously with the figure of the saint inverted) based on the Caravaggio original which has not yet been identified. As to the version in Switzerland, we are awaiting the results of in-depth studies that can be conducted now that a recent restoration has brought to light some of the original features that had been darkened by a previous conservation treatment. An identical version of the *Saint John at the Fountain* recently appeared on the art market and entered a collection in Rome after restoration. It is more than likely that, given the iconographies and compositional arrangements, these two versions (which differ only slightly in size – the one in the Swiss collection is 127 x 95 cm), are the only “literal” copies of Caravaggio’s lost original. Like the painting formerly with Gasparrini, the *Saint John at the Fountain* was also displayed, prior to restoration, in the section of the 2004-2005 Caravaggio exhibition dedicated to various works attributed to the master, but yet to be studied in-depth.² The painting discussed here, however, has not been exhibited before. It was only known from a black-and-white photograph taken while it was still in Rome and published for the first time by Ferdinando Bologna in his introductory essay for the catalogue of the exhibition *Battistello Caracciolo e il primo naturalismo a Napoli* which he curated.³ He also reproduced it in his introduction to the catalogue for the *Caravaggio. L’ultimo tempo* exhibition.⁴ In the catalogue for the 1991-1992 exhibition, Bologna also published a *Saint John the Baptist* – also in Rome – in which the no longer young saint is seated on the ground and pointing to heaven with his left hand, with the lamb to his right⁵ and yet another *Saint John at the Fountain* that had been in a private collection in Naples before entering a Rome collection. In this painting⁶ the young saint is facing left and partly stretched out on the ground and the lamb is to the right beneath a lavish drapery.⁷

In his 1991 essay Bologna who, mentioned that in a letter dated 1963 (although it would seem that the date is actually 1955), Roberto Longhi had attributed the Lampronti painting to Battistello Caracciolo (an attribution which Giuliano Briganti confirmed in a letter written in the 1980s), ascribed these three canvases to a single painter, the Sicilian Alonzo Rodriguez. The artist, whose family was originally from Spain, worked in Rome and Naples, between 1606 and 1619 copying Caravaggio’s models. There are however, no definitely attributed paintings. Upon his return to Sicily, Alonzo created several paintings for churches in and around Messina some of which are displayed in the Museo Regionale di Messina. His works which have a strong Caravaggesque imprint, are characterized by a formal stiffness and marked chiaroscuro – like the *Meeting of Saints Peter and Paul Being Led to Martyrdom* – that are not evident in the *Saint John* presented here or in the other two paintings we have mentioned.

Furthermore, on the basis of Francesco Negri Arnoldi’s hypothesis in a study of the painter, that puts Rodriguez back in Naples between 1615 and 1617, Bologna – still in 1991 – suggested dating the three different versions of Saint John to those years or immediately thereafter.⁸ Having found similarities between the still missing *Saint John at the Fountain* with the saint stretched out and facing left, and some compositions the young Velázquez painted in Seville in 1618, he went so far as to say that paintings by Rodriguez – like one of those discussed here – could have been sent to Spain along with works by Caravaggio and other early Neapolitan naturalists, and have given a decidedly Caravaggesque thrust to some local artists. Finally, during the *L’ultimo tempo* exhibition Bologna also attributed the identical version of the *Saint John at the Fountain* – which was still in Rome to Rodriguez. That painting had moved to a Swiss collection and was displayed in that same exhibition before undergoing a recent and more skilful restoration.⁹

The attribution of the three paintings of the Baptist to Rodriguez was later accepted by Stefano Causa and by myself.¹⁰ It is the painting presented here but at that time only known from a photograph.¹¹

This summarises what we knew of the copies and derivatives of Caravaggio's as yet unidentified *Saint John at the Fountain* until recently when we were able to examine the painting presented here, and not just its photograph. After having been carefully restored, we can see that it not only lacks the features which prompted Bologna to ascribe it to Alonzo Rodriguez between 1614 and 1617, but now reveals all the features and stylistic qualities that can confirm Longhi's and Briganti's earlier attributions to Battistello Caracciolo. However, given marked similarities with Caracciolo's works datable between 1620 and 1622 (specifically *Saint Catherine of Siena*, already with Gilberto Algranti in 1974; the *Way to Calvary* previously in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo agli Incurabili or *Tobias and the Angel*, formerly with the Walpole Gallery, London), it can be dated around 1620 when Caravaggio's original was most likely still in Naples.¹² Although Battistello Caracciolo had begun substantially modifying his earlier propensity for striking Caravaggesque lighting effects around 1617-1618, he was still closely and continuously committed to the naturalistic style of the "Neapolitan Caravaggio" to the point that he either copied the paintings "literally" like this *Saint John at the Fountain* now available for first-hand study, or developed his own famous compositions with alternative solutions. These include *Christ at the Column* at Capodimonte, a famous variation that can be dated around the

middle of the 1620s, and the poignantly powerful *Flagellation* which the Lombard master painted for the De Franchis family chapel in the church of San Domenico Maggiore, but has been in the Capodimonte collections for several years.¹³

N. S.

¹ For further information about these copies, see *Caravaggio. L'ultimo tempo*, Naples exh. cat. ed. by N. Spinosa, Museo di Capodimonte: 23 October 2004 - 23 January 2005, Naples 2004, pp. 164-165.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154, 160-162.

³ *Battistello Caracciolo e il primo naturalismo a Napoli*, ed. by F. Bologna (Castel Sant'Elmo, Naples 1991-1992), p. 40 and ff., fig. 15.

⁴ *Caravaggio. L'ultimo tempo*, Naples 2004, pp. 39-40, fig. 39.

⁵ *Ibid.*, See fig. 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, See fig. 9.

⁷ *Idem.*

⁸ "Alonzo Rodriguez: un caravaggesco contestato", in *Prospettiva*, 9, 1977, pp. 17-37.

⁹ Cat. entry no. 24, by F. Peretti, in *Caravaggio. L'ultimo tempo*, pp. 160-162.

¹⁰ Especially the "lost" version with the Saint partially stretched on the ground to the left: *Battistello Caracciolo. L'opera completa*, Naples 2000, p. 44, fig. 44.

¹¹ *Pittura del Seicento a Napoli, da Caravaggio a Massimo Stanzione*, Naples 2010, no. 380, p. 379.

¹² *Battistello Caracciolo, l'opera completa*, ed. by S. Causa (Naples 2000), nos. A66, A68 and A72, pp. 190-193.

¹³ Causa 2000, cit., no. A91, p. 198.

12.
LUCA GIORDANO
(Naples, 1634 - 1705)

Crucifixion

Oil on canvas, 57 x 102 cm

PROVENANCE
Enrico Franscione Antiquities, Florence;
Private collection, Venezuela;
Private collection, Italy.

Unpublished

This *Crucifixion* by Luca Giordano can be dated to the late 1680s, sometime before the Neapolitan artist moved to Spain in order to serve the House of Habsburgs until 1702, and soon before his return to Naples. It is a smaller version, with very few exceptions to the figures positioned on either side of Christ, of a larger canvas that appeared at the Galeria Caylus, Madrid in 2007 (fig. 22). The Madrid painting, which originated from the Medinaceli family, and then entered the Don Joaquin Payá collection, was probably completed between 1689 and 1694 that is, either shortly before or immediately after Giordano moved to Spain.¹

The picture in the Madrid gallery does not represent the *Crucifixion* but the *Raising of the Crosses*, a more faithful rendering of the Gospel passage describing the episode of Christ's condemnation



Fig. 22. L. Giordano, *Crucifixion*, oil on canvas, once belonging to Galleria Caylus, Madrid.

on Mount Calvary. It is pertinent to note, that the Madrid *Raising* is a version of a signed work by Giordano (118 x 224 cm), completed in 1690, and on display at the Martin von Wagner Museum in Wurzburg, together with its *pendant* depicting the *Multiplication of the Loaves*.

The Lampronti *Crucifixion*, however, only portrays the scene with the already crucified Christ. It is an exact borrowing of the central section from the Madrid painting, particularly in the details of a soldier on a ladder stabbing Christ's rib with a sword, the Virgin Mary standing with open arms in grief, the sorrowful Saint John the Evangelist, and finally, the weeping Mary Magdalene on her knees.

The major variations with respect to the Madrid painting are displayed to the far right whilst the left portion of the canvas has been entirely omitted. The mounted soldier in armour and the figure seated on a rock and viewed from behind wearing a red cloak and a blue turban are identical, whereas the cloaked figure is not flanked by the boy as in the Madrid canvas. Unchanged is the quality of the painting and technique in both versions, although the intensity of the drama reaches a higher pitch in Lampronti's composition due to the dedicated focus on the main scene.

The bold composition is further accentuated by the thick colours applied "in splotches", a technique that would characterize Giordano's work until the final years of his life.

Having recently undergone conservation, the current state of the painting is very good.

N. S.

¹ N. Spinosa, "Qualche aggiunta per Luca Giordano in Spagna", in *Ricerche sul '600 Napoletano. Saggi in memoria di Oreste Ferrari* 2007, Naples 2008, p. 123, pl. 1.



13.
MATTIA PRETI
(1613 - 1699, Malta, La Valletta)

The Incredulity of St. Thomas

Oil on canvas, 127 x 173 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

Unpublished

This painting is an earlier version of the one at the Galleria di Palazzo Rosso in Genoa (fig. 23).¹

The latter, acquired in 1959 and attributed to Mattia Preti by Caterina Marcenaro, measures 123 x 173 cm, dimensions roughly equal to the present painting. Studying this version, John T. Spike noticed "the influence of Bolognese painters, especially Guercino and Cavedone," and thus dated Lampronti's painting to the mid-1630s.² The catalogue note dedicated to the Genoa version and published in *Mattia Preti: il Cavalier calabrese*, 1999, states that "Although Spike dates this painting to the mid-thirties, its elaborate approach to the subject and the display of technical mastery strongly contrast with the more traditional practice of Mattia Preti's early years".³ In support of this argument, Lampronti's painting provides an example of Preti's style in an earlier stage of his career: the compact design of the figures, the sculptural modelling of forms, and the sharp application of light and dark, all of which reference to the *Manfrediana Methodus*.

The figure of St. Thomas is shown with his back turned away from the viewer and the face illuminated by the light of Christ, an inconceivable invention without the influence of the second and third generation of the Caravagesques, such as the Mathias Stomer in Madrid, Prado (fig. 24) and the Bernardo Strozzi in Galleria di Palazzo Rosso, Genoa. Preti further emphasises this solution by casting a beam of light on Thomas's skull.



Fig. 23. M. Preti, *The Incredulity of St. Thomas*, oil on canvas, cm 123 x 173, Galleria di Palazzo Rosso, Genoa.

On the basis of the evidence provided, the Lampronti painting can be dated to c. 1630-35 and therefore before the Palazzo Rosso's version. The neo-Venetian influences visible in the latter's support this argument, as they can only be found in Preti's oeuvre from the fifth decade.

Gregorio Preti must have inherited the drawings used for the figures in *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*, as many years later (c. 1660-70) the pose of Saint Thomas reappears in the *Noli me tangere* that was recently at Christie's (Milan, 29-11-2006, lot 79). Here the vertical format recalls Matthias' works from the 1660s and 1670s, however the use of the figure seen from behind references to an earlier stage of his brother's career.

R. L.

¹ *Mattia Preti ed il seicento italiano*, ed. by A. Pelaggi (Catanzaro 1972), La Tipomeccanica, p. 40; J.D. Clifton - J.T. Spike, *Mattia Preti's Passage to Naples: A Documented Chronology, 1650-1660*, in 'Storia dell'arte', 65, p. 47; *Mattia Preti*, exh. cat. ed. by E. Corace (Rome 1989), Fratelli Palombi, p. 77, fig. 8; *Mattia Preti. Catalogo ragionato dei dipinti*, ed. by J.T. Spike (Florence 1999), p. 143, n. 44; Anonymous catalogue note in *Mattia Preti: il Cavalier calabrese*, exh. cat., Naples 1999, p. 119, fig. 26; p. 177, n. 26.

² *Mattia Preti. Catalogo ragionato dei dipinti*, ed. by J. Spike (Florence 1999), p. 143.

³ Anonymous catalogue note in *Mattia Preti: il Cavalier calabrese* 1999, p. 177, n. 26.



Fig. 24. M. Stomer, *The incredulity of St. Thomas*, oil on canvas, cm 125 x 99, Museo Nazionale del Prado, Madrid.



14.
JUAN JUSEPE DE RIBERA, called LO SPAGNOLETTO
(Xativa 1591 - 1652, Naples)

Saint Roch

Oil on canvas, 84,5 x 66 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Italy.

EXPERTISE
L. Salerno, written communication;
Nicola Spinosa, 15 October 2014;
C. Strinati, March 2015.

Unpublished

The present painting – unpublished and in excellent state of preservation – is a partial replica, limited solely to the upper half of the *Saint Roch* (cm 212 x 144) at the Museo del Prado in Madrid (fig. 25), and differs from the latter in terms of physiognomy. The *Saint Roch*, along with the *Saint James the Greater* (fig. 26) in the same collection, display the artist's signature and completion date of 1631, and belong to an *Apostles* series of full-length figures. The group was originally held in the Royal Collection of Spain until 1657, when Philip IV, Duke of Austria moved it to the Escorial, and it only entered the Prado collection in 1837. The pair received great critical attention since the end of 18th century, when Ponz on seeing the works, described them as “grandiose por la fuerza, el espiritu y la verdad”.¹

The Prado pair demonstrates a turning point between his earlier naturalistic phase and his more mature expressionist phase. The former (1626-1628) is exemplified by the *Drunken Silenus* del Museo di Capodimonte, the two versions of *Saint Jerome and the Angel of judgment*, respectively at the Neapolitan Museum and the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg and the *Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew* in the Galleria Palatina at Palazzo Pitti, Florence. Though these works display a certain level of naturalism they do not express the same vigour that characterise his early works (1612-1620). In Ribera's second phase,



Fig. 25. J. De Ribera, *Saint Roch*, oil on canvas, cm 212 x 144, Museo del Prado, Madrid.



Fig. 26. J. De Ribera, *Saint James the Greater*, oil on canvas, cm 202 x 146, Museo del Prado, Madrid.

his works became increasingly monumental, displaying a heightened degree of verisimilitude, a balanced contrast of light and dark and a lighter colour palette with a thicker application of brushstrokes.² Aside from the *Apostles* series of 1630-1632, several other works illustrate this artistic shift in Ribera's corpus: the *Five Senses* completed during the same years (in various European and American collections), the *Classical Philosophers* of 1632 (held in the Prado, the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, and at the Hispanic Society of America in New York) and notably *The Bearded Lady*, commissioned in 1631 by the Duke of Alcalá (previously at the Foundation Casa Ducal de Medinaceli in Toledo, and now at the Prado).

This key moment of Ribera's career was particularly significant since not only did he receive substantial and increasingly prestigious public and private commissions but he also successfully exerted an influence on various Neapolitan painters including, Filippo Vitale, Caesar and Francesco Fracanzano, the young Bernardo Cavallino and Francesco Guarino. Moreover, his influence spread far across the Italian peninsula to influence on southern painters, particularly the Sicilian Pietro Novelli, otherwise called *il Monrealese*, who had also come in contact with Ribera during his stay in Naples at the end 1631. A direct consequence of his monumental success in those years, led to a growing demand by the wider public to replicate his works, namely those commissioned by esteemed collectors. Due to this phenomenon, there now survives an abundance of paintings that were often the product of a collaboration between the master and his workshop, or solely the outcome of his collaborators depending on the wealth of the client.

Among these replicas, there survive several versions of the mentioned *Apostles* series (the *Saint Peter*, the *Saint Bartholomew*, the *Saint Matthew* and the *Saint James the Greater*), the *Classical Philosophers* (*Aesop*, *Thales*, the alleged *Archimedes holding a mirror* or *Heraclitus*) as well as several other *Apostles* series now dispersed. The *Saint James the Greater* is known in at least two other version: the canvas in the collection of the Marquess of Exeter at Burghley House in England, and a second one now lost, of which survive several copies by Pietro Novelli, such as those in the Museo de Bellas Artes in Seville, at the Galleria Corsini in Rome, in a private collection in Geneva or at the Alte Pinakothek of Munich.

As already mentioned, the Lampronti's *Saint Roch* is a fine example of this type of replica, and therefore it displays many variations from the original prototype. On looking at the present painting, the expressive qualities of *Saint Roch* are the most striking, along with the lighter and more fluid brushstrokes. These features confirm the attribution to the master himself, and cancel out the hypothesis of assigning the painting to his workshop or Pietro Novelli. Further, these stylistic observations provide a framework for its completion date, to sometime after the prototype of 1631 and before his Neo-Venetian phase in 1634.

The intimate scale of this portrait suggests that it was intended for a private chapel, commissioned as a visual manifestation of the patron's personal devotion to Saint Roch.

N. S.

¹ [Magnificent for their vigour, spirit and truth].

² For further information please see Ribera. *L'opera completa* ed. by N. Spinosa (Naples 2006, Italian Edition); Idem, *Ribera. La obra completa* (Madrid 2008, Spanish Edition).



15.
MASSIMO STANZIONE
(Orta di Atella, c. 1585 - 1656, Naples)

Madonna and Child or the Virgin of Redemption

Oil on canvas, 127 x 100 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection, United Kingdom.

Unpublished

The figurative components in the present painting suggest an attribution to Massimo Stanzione, who was along with Jusepe de Ribera, one of the leading artists in the development of Neapolitan painting before the plague in of 1656.¹

After a brief Caravaggesque period between Rome and Naples from which only a few paintings survive, Stanzione then turned to Guido Reni's classicism, thereby earning himself the name of *Guido partenopeo*, "the Neapolitan Guido". He continued to explore this formula throughout his successful career, combining references to the figurative worlds of both Guido and Domenichino and achieved great artistic freedom.

There are some very close resemblances between the present painting and Stanzione's other works, though there survives no other known versions of this subject. Stanzione used the same model – more or less in the same position or reversed – in both his *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (fig. 27), and in the *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* held in a private collection in Naples (fig. 28). These two paintings are dated to the second and first half of the 1630s, respectively, and the similarities alone are enough to support an attribution of Lampronti's *Virgin of Redemption* to Stanzione.²

In terms of dating, the *Judith* and the *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* have been assigned between the first and second half of the 1640s.

On this note, the present painting can be referred to an earlier period, perhaps the beginning of the 1630s or even slightly earlier. Further, the chromatic palette can support the dating with its nearly-cobalt blues and the bright reds which seem to appear colder than the pigments employed in Stanzione's mature works.

The vertically aligned faces of the Virgin and Child figures, which are balanced and form the centre-line of the painting, are composed in a classically-inspired arrangement. The effective combination of objectively rendered figures, sharp and vigorous *chiaroscuro* and luminous colours speak of a painter who added an awareness of Emilian models to his Caravaggesque roots. Among the several sources for this painting's arrangement one can mention the *Holy Family* by Annibale Caracci (Paris, Musée du Louvre) also known as the '*Madonna of the Cherries*', as well as the *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Francis and Christina* by Guido Reni in the Pinacoteca Comunale, Faenza.

The drapery and the intense *chiaroscuro* are thus an attempt in combining Caravaggesque realism through the lens of an Emilian-type composition, yet the painting's general tone seems to be rooted in a more classical Caravaggism. This artistic direction follows in the manner of Simon Vouet which Stanzione referred to around the end of the third decade of the century, while in his mature phase, he softened the lighting and used an increasingly warmer colour palette.

For these reasons, Lampronti's *Virgin of Redemption* can be firmly attributed to Stanzione as an important addition to his *corpus* and dated to the 1630s.

R. L.

¹ Massimo Stanzione. *L'opera completa*, ed. by S. Schütze and T.C. Willette (Naples 1992), Electa.

² Massimo Stanzione, ed. by S. Schütze and T.C. Willette, cit., pp. 208-209, A45, p. 312, fig. 170; and p. 245, A113, p. 110, colour plate XLI.



Fig. 27. M. Stanzione, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, oil on canvas, cm 124,5 x 103,5, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Fig. 28. M. Stanzione, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, oil on canvas, cm 70 x 60,5, Private Collection, Naples.



16.
MASSIMO STANZIONE
(Orta di Atella, c. 1585 - 1656, Naples)

Portrait of a Lady with a Breviary

Oil on canvas, 64 x 48 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

LITERATURE
V. Pacelli, *Questioni metodologiche, nuove proposte e qualche puntura sul primo Seicento a Napoli*, in "Studi di Storia dell'arte", no. 24, 2013, pp. 222-223.

EXPERTISE
F. Petrucci, 19 aprile 2012;
E. Schleier, 1 luglio 2012.

The present painting was attributed to Massimo Stanzione by Francesco Petrucci in a letter dated April 19, 2012; Erich Schleier agreed on this attribution in a letter dated 4th July 2012. The attribution was recently confirmed by Vincenzo Pacelli in a note written in 2013.¹

Petrucci, in discussing the painter, recalls the eighteenth-century biographer Bernardo de 'Dominici, who extolled Massimo Stanzione's reputation as a skilful portrait painter. In an attempt to uncover the identity of the female sitter, Petrucci finds a possible lead in an inventory belonging to Ottavio Orsini (1704), which records a portrait of Donna Anna Carafa. The coat of arms on the upper left corner of the Lampronti's portrait does indeed match with the Carafa's.² Schleier, on the discovery of other payment documents dated to 1621, believes that the sitter is rather Geronima (or Gerolama) Carafa, daughter of Giovanni Battista Carafa della Staderal, Baron of Colubrano, and Eleanor (or Dianora) di Colubrano Carafa Cicinelli, and wife of Fabio Carafa, Duke of Colubrano.³ The latter's hypothesis is credible: born in 1593, Geronima Carafa died in 1635, at the age of 42. On completion of the portrait, Geronima Carafa would have been 28 at the time the portrait was painted, an age that corresponds well with her appearance in the present portrait, yet Petrucci would disagree on this matter as he estimates the sitter to be between the ages of 30 and 40.

The coat of arms on the top left corner is perfectly integrated within the original paint layers of the Lampronti's painting, strongly suggesting that it is part of the painting's original design. As already mentioned, the coat of arms seems to correspond to the Carafa family, although Petrucci has interpreted it as belonging to the Sanseverino's instead. This eminent southern family thrived between the middle ages and seventeenth century. As the House of Sanseverino was extremely large during the seventeenth century, it is however difficult to match the coat of arms with a specific branch of the family. Composed of a red band on a silver shield, can be safely connected to the Sanseverino Conti di Marsico family (fig. 30). It is therefore difficult, if not impossible, to associate the Portrait of a Lady with Geronima Carafa, re-opening the question of the sitter's identity. Indeed, if one accepts Petrucci and Schleier's dating of the present painting, Stanzione could only have worked

for the Sanseverino family in the third decad of the 17th century when we know that he was travelling regularly back and forth from Naples to Rome.

As the association of the painting with the Neapolitan *milieu* of Carlo Sellitto and Battistello Caracciolo is only hypothetical, it seems reasonable to turn to the late Roman mannerism in order to find iconographic and conceptual sources for this painting. The portrait of a Lady, dressed in a fashionable Spanish attire, lifting her gaze from the Breviary towards the viewer, conveys an image of morality, piety and nobility first seen in the painting of Lucrezia Cenci by Scipione Pulzone, signed and dated 1591, originally from the collection of Cardinal Antonio Barberini which has appeared on the market in 2006 (fig. 31).⁴ It thus becomes clear that Stanzione – who may have well seen works by Pulzone in Naples – could also refer to a number of contemporary Roman paintings, particularly those by Ottavio Leoni. Stanzione refers to Leoni's portraits by imitating their half-length format, which creates immediate empathy between the sitter and the viewer. The most representative example is the extraordinary drawing depicting the *Countess Cantalmaggio* by Leoni (fig. 32), (New York, The Antiquaire and the Connoisseur), dated by the painter to August, 1619. Another drawing, the bust of *Lucrezia Magalosi Varni* (fig. 33) (already in Paris, Millon & Associés, 25-VI-2010, lot 38), dated 1628, is strikingly similar to Lampronti's painting and may well have served as the preparatory sketch for it. Both the drawing and the painting contain the hint of a veil, which has however not been completed in the finished works. It can therefore be assumed that Pulzone's *Lucrezia* could have been the model for both works, although they were later altered to draw more attention to the sitter's face.

Additionally, Stanzione refers to Leoni from a stylistic point of view, copying Leoni's paintings in the refined application of *chiaroscuro* on the face and hand of the Lady, her solemn expression and upright stance. Thus, he created an effigy of powerful stature which surpasses the stillness typical of fifteenth-century portraiture and instead characterised by the animation and liveliness of seventeenth-century portraiture.

Seventeenth century Neapolitan portraits are rare, and only very few portraits by Stanzione survive. The discovery of this new work constitutes an important addition not only to the painter's catalogue *raisonné* but also to our general knowledge of early seventeenth-century Neapolitan.

R. L.

¹ V. Pacelli, *Questioni metodologiche, nuove proposte e qualche puntura sul primo Seicento a Napoli*, in "Studi di Storia dell'arte", no. 24, 2013, pp. 222-223.

² For the reputation of Stanzione as a portraitist cf. B. de' Dominici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti Napoletani*, Naples, 1742-45, ed. by F. Sricchia Santoro, Naples 2008, vol. I, pp. 82-83; to the document relating to Donna Anna Carafa see G. Labrot, *Documents for the History of Collecting. Italian Inventories 1: Collections of Paintings in Naples, München, 1992*, ad vocem Ottavio Orsini, Prince of Fernando.

³ For the payments receipts assigning portraits from 1615 to 1622 to Stanzione cf. S. Schütze - T.W. Willette, *Massimo Stanzione. The complete works*, Napoli, Electa, 1992, Nos. 22, 25-29.

⁴ Cf. Italian market. Y. Primarosa in *Scipione Pulzone Da Gaeta, Rome to the European courts*, exh. cat. ed. by A. Acconci and A. Zuccari, Roma, Palombi, 2013, pp. 366-369, n. 36.





Genoa

[...] The lessons of Caravaggio spread throughout Genoa during the second decade of the Seventeenth century [...] Owing to Luciano Borzone's presence, the movement gained momentum in Genoa[...] In spite of this, the "genre" did not achieve great success in the town; there is in fact sparse mention of caravaggesque paintings in inventories of private collections, only the names of Honthorst and Valentin sometimes appear. On the other hand, these sixteenth century sources record a wealth of Venetian paintings and works by Rubens and Van Dyck [...] These names were gradually replaced by those of Caravaggio, Azzolino, Caracciolo, Gentileschi, Cerano, Procaccini and Morazzone [...] The peculiar distribution of light and shadow and thickness of paint displayed in the works of Titian and Bassano which were inherited from the Flemish tradition, became key features enabling the growth of a local caravaggesque idiom at the start of the century [...]

F. R. Pesenti, *The first of the Caravaggisti in Genoa in Genova in età Barocca*, exh. cat. edited by E. Gavazza, Bologna 1992, pp. 74-81.

17.
GIOACCHINO ASSERETO
(Genoa, 1600 - 1650)

Ecce Homo

Oil on canvas, 121,2 x 95,3 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

EXPERTISE
A. Orlando, April 2004;
M. Newcome Scheiler, 11 May 2004;
M. Gregori, 3 June 2008;
G. Sestieri, 22 June 2008;
C. Manzitti, written communication;
F. Arisi, written communication;
C. Strinati, April 2015.

LITERATURE
A. Orlando, "L'Ecce Homo" di Assereto. Genesi di un capolavoro", in *In ricordo di Enzo Costantini*, ed. by A. Costantini, Turin 2006, pp. 72, 81, note 4, fig. 3 (Assereto); T. Zennaro, "Il Ritrovamento nella coppa del sacco di Beniamino" e una traccia per la ricostruzione del catalogo del Maestro di San Giacomo della Marina (Giuseppe Assereto?)", in *Tre opere de La Pinacoteca*, La Pinacoteca, Naples 2009, pp. 61-62 note 45 (circle of Assereto); *Dipinti genovesi dal Cinquecento al Settecento. Ritrovamenti dal collezionismo privato*, ed. by A. Orlando (Turin 2010), p. 17 (Assereto); *Gioacchino Assereto e i pittori della sua cerchia*, ed. by T. Zennaro (Soncino 2011), II, B20, pp. 533-534 (circle of Assereto).

Scholars have long marvelled over Gioacchino Assereto's ability to capture the height of the drama, as shown in the present *Ecce Homo*. The intensity of his compositions became even more apparent in his later works as a result of combining multiple sources quoted from the *oeuvres* of Caravaggio, Van Dyck and the Lombard painters. This is particularly noticeable in the *Supper at Emmaus* for-

merly belonging to Mowinkel and later in the Costa collection. Assereto's early and decisive move towards this expressive manner developed from his meticulous studies of the Lombards (Cerano, Morazzone, Procaccini), who were either active in Genoa or whose works were there at that time. Giulio Cesare Procaccini, who has already been working for the Genoese by the 1610s, was clearly the starting point for Assereto's studies on space, colour and brushwork. He became the main reference point for Assereto's style which enabled him to distance himself from the local dominance of naturalist painters.

The present *Ecce Homo* is extremely "Lombard", in manner whereas the two known versions – one signed and in a private collection (fig. 29) and the other in the Galleria di Palazzo Bianco (fig. 30) – are both closer in style to Van Dyck. In these works, one can appreciate Assereto's ability to combine the early features of Caravaggism with the local stimuli, as in the case of the present painting which illustrates the Milanese language as a dominant influence.

In this work the livid flesh tones recall Cerano's chromatic palette whereas the brushstrokes are similar to Morazzone's technique, but the overall influence is still very much in line with Procaccini, whose *Ecce Homo* in the Dallas Museum of Art was the main source of inspiration for Assereto. Moreover, a resemblance to the facial features found in Daniele Crespi's paintings can be observed in the figure of Christ. Although Crespi is not documented in Genoa, Assereto may well have met with him during a hypothetical trip to Milan, which could have occurred in the third decade of the seventeenth century.

The remarkable *Ecce Homo* in the Lampronti collection can therefore be dated to this phase, as demonstrated by the expressiveness of the figures and the theatrical choice of their arrangement.

A. O.



Fig. 29. G. Assereto, *Ecce Homo*, oil on canvas, cm 123 x 196, Private Collection.



Fig. 30. G. Assereto, *Mocking of Christ*, oil on canvas, cm 181 x 144, Galleria di Palazzo Bianco, Genoa.



18.
GIOACCHINO ASSERETO
(Genoa, 1600 - 1650)

Lot and His Daughters

Oil on canvas, 135 x 206,5 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

EXHIBITION
A. Orlando, in *Arte e vino*, exh. cat. ed. by A. Scarpa and N. Spinosa, Verona 2015, cat. N. 28, pp. 96-97, 271.

EXPERTISE
Anna Orlando, July 2014.

Having absorbed Rubens' influence in the application and textural rendering of colour, and the way of capturing and conveying the emotional intensity that Van Dyck had shown in his religious works, Gioacchino Assereto combined these innovations with the well-established avocation for the "story" which was an inherent part of naturalism in Genoese painting.

His effective and convincing formula, consisting of a narrative steeped in pathos, is evident in this hitherto unpublished *Lot and his Daughters*. As opposed to the other versions, here the artist did not zoom in on the figures bringing them close to the viewer, but rather let them fill the space asymmetrically, in a manner that could be described as scalene.

His groups of figures are always constructed with intersecting gestures and gazes. Here, we see the recumbent Lot resting his head on the girl's lap while her body is poised in the opposite direction with respect to the axis of the scene. As always, there is a compositional and emotional fulcrum, and as in other paintings, it coincides with the intersection of two hypothetical diagonal lines, and it is where the gazes of the father and his daughter meet. This is



Fig. 31. G. Assereto, *Lot and his daughters*, oil on canvas, cm 122,5 x 171,5, Paris, Galerie Canesso.

the point where the drama of the Biblical episode is played out: the story of a man who must lay with his daughters to guarantee the survival of his lineage.

The digressions in the story are isolated at the sides or in the background where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are in flames; to the left is a dog witnessing the scene; to the right, Lot's second daughter is pouring the wine and participates only partially in the emotional intensity of the centre group. It is as if to say that history is not made by deeds, human actions, but by man himself with all the complexity of his values, sentiments and ideals.

The still-life in the foreground, which is unsettlingly modern, even as regards the arrangement of the items on a plane that appears tilted, aims at taking us back to reality. Because this is neither myth nor legend, it is the real story, told by the Bible (Genesis 19: 30-38) and hence an *exemplum*, a story that is a warning to all.

This unpublished painting can be flanked by two already known versions of the same theme: the beautiful canvas with the Galerie Canesso in Paris that is datable to the 1630s (fig. 31) and another in a private collection in Reggio Emilia (fig. 32).¹ The painting shown here should have a later dating than the others, that is in the 1640s.

An inventory dated 22 July 1679 mentions a "Lot with his two daughters" by Gioacchino Assereto in the home of Marcantonio Grillo in Piazza S. M. delle Vigne, Genoa; the attribution by Domenico Piola should clearly be considered authoritative. However, since the inventory entry does not give any dimensions, we cannot know for certain whether it refers to our painting or another of the known versions of the subject.²

A. O.

¹ *Artistes génois du XVIII^e siècle*, ed. by V. Damian (Paris 2005), pp. 20-23; *Dipinti genovesi dal Cinquecento al Settecento. Ritrovamenti dal collezionismo private*, ed. by A. Orlando (Turin 2010), p. 21, fig. 6.

² *Giacchino Assereto e i pittori della sua scuola*, ed. by T. Zennaro (Soncino 2011), vol. I, p. 363.



Fig. 32. G. Assereto, *Lot and his daughters*, oil on canvas, cm 145 x 190, Reggio Emilia, Private collection.



19.
LUCIANO BORZONE
(Genoa, 1590 - 1645)

The Flagellation of Christ

Oil on canvas, 119 x 155,3 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

Unpublished

The “unfinished” painting of the *Flagellation of Christ* owes much of its charm to the composition: four figures emerge from a dark background with a dramatic force of light in an unquestionable Caravaggesque manner.

The master behind this painting, Luciano Borzone, is described by the Genoese biographer Raffaele Soprani as a “painter and lively poet”.¹ Scholarship has always stressed Borzone’s vital role in the renewal of the local artistic *milieu* of Genoa through the introduction and re-interpretation of Caravaggio’s naturalism.²

Borzone’s Caravaggism is obviously mediated at the very start of his career by the elegant manner of Simon Vouet who was in fact working in Genoa in 1621 on the grand commissions of Gio. Carlo Doria. Borzone received his early training from his uncle Filippo Bertolotto (circa 1600-1606), a specialist in portraiture, and thereafter by Cesare Corte (from 1606 to 1610 circa), also a portraitist. Painting from life was thus a fundamental chapter of Borzone’s artistic training.³

By 1612, Borzone had already become an independent master, and in fact Gioacchino Assereto was recorded as his pupil in that same year. By this date, he was already acknowledged in the *milieu* of Gio Carlo Doria, an avid patron of the arts. Borzone’s close relationship



Fig. 33. L. Borzone, *Saint Jerome*, oil on canvas, cm 154 x 122, Private Collection, Spain.

with him is evidenced by his role as an art advisor on an accompanied visit to Milan in October of 1614. In Milan, he forged relations with the poets Giambattista Marino and Gabriello Chiabrera, and came into contact with Orazio Gentileschi and Guido Reni. Moreover, the poet Giovanni Battista Paggi appreciated his paintings there by confirming Borzone’s acclaimed reputation in Italy.

His oeuvre, which still awaits a Catalogue Raisonné is difficult to date based on stylistic features and pictorial effects because over the years Borzone oscillated between styles.⁴ For example, in his early works (around 1620) the brushstrokes are densely distributed whereas in his later works (around 1640s), the brushstrokes are more loosely applied. In terms of *chiaroscuro*, like other artists of his time, Borzone employed the dramatic contrast of light and shadow in a sporadic manner, and thus it is difficult to date this painting on such grounds. Although it is difficult to date Borzone’s works, it is nevertheless much easier to identify them, for his manner unites and alternates very thin veils of colour, according to the lessons of Van Dyck and Netherlandish masters who were active in Genoa.

The same executive alternation that we see in this single canvas where the soft, gently incarnated *chiaroscuro*, almost evanescent parts in the shadow, are battling it out with bold parts, in bright colour and warm light, as for example the red sling on the right where the force adds colour to the template with a more compact layout.

The ability of “cutting out” the figures from the background, a fact enhanced perhaps by the likely unfinished background, does not limit Borzone’s mastery to position the figures in a coherent and deep space. In this painting, Borzone manages to capture the height of the drama: Christ is to be tied to the column and nearby a young man is preparing a bundle of thorns with which he will be flogged. The background reveals the sculptural figure of a guard and four figures, in their sense of independence one from another, the absolute lack of communication in the realm of evil.

Between storytelling and theatricality, this canvas synthesises the traditional Genoese naturalism with Caravaggio’s celebrated drama. Among the works available for comparison, is the *San Girolamo* in a Spanish collection, especially the sculptural yet animated plasticity of the figure (fig. 33). Our painting also bares an overall resemblance with the *Denial of Peter* by Zerbone in the Costa collection, as one notices his preference for neutral backgrounds from which the figures project out of the picture plane, as in the case of ours, although this is obviously heightened by the unfinished state of the painting.

The *Feast of Rosamund*, with the recurrent motif of the armiger in shadow is another work of Caravaggio’s known to Borzone. Who, however, draws from that model not only in his youth, as evidenced by elements found in the *Nativity* for the Church of the Annunciation in Genoa, which was realised in 1645, the year of the death of the painter.

A. O.

¹ R. Soprani, *Le Vite de’ pittori genovesi...*, Genova, 1674.

² P. Boccardo - A. Orlando, *L’eco caravaggesca a Genova. La presenza di Caravaggio e dei suoi seguaci e i riflessi sulla pittura genovese*, in *Caravaggio e l’Europa*, exh. cat. Milan and Vienna, 2005, pp. 103-115.

³ *Ritrattisti genovesi del Seicento. ‘Punti fermi’, aggiunte e precisazioni*, in “Paragone”, series 3, (613), March 2001, pp. 24-26, with bibliography.

⁴ A. Manzitti is finalising it for Sagep, Genoa.



20.

DOMENICO FIASELLA, called SARZANA
(Sarzana, La Spezia, 1589 - Genoa, 1669)

Angelica and Medoro Carving their Names

Oil on canvas, 149,5 x 224 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

Unpublished

The *Angelica and Medoro* was originally conceived as a *pendant* to the hitherto unpublished *Silvio and Dorinda* (fig. 34) in a private collection, and attributed to Domenico Fiasella as important additions to his *corpus*.

In both cases, the subjects were inspired by highly popular literary works of the Baroque period. The latter scene refers to *Il Pastor Fido* by Battista Guarini (1538-1612), while the former painting depicts an episode of *Angelica and Medoro* from the Canto XIX of *Orlando Furioso* by Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533).

The story tells of Medoro, wounded in battle and found by Angelica who takes care of him in a shepherd's cabin until he is completely healed – here, we see the shepherd's family to the left. Fiasella chose to depict one of the most famous episodes: according to Ariosto (Canto XIX, 36) the two, who had fallen in love, carve their names into a tree and Orlando flies into a jealous rage upon this proof of their feelings. The artist, however, took some liberties by placing their names on a wall.

Since both *Angelica and Medoro* and *Silvio and Dorinda*'s subjects represent a theme of love, it could therefore be assumed that they were commissioned as a wedding gift or intended for a couple's home. Fiasella was a successful artist who received many large public religious commissions, in the forms of altarpieces or furnishings decorating the interiors of churches and convents. He also worked actively for collectors, creating smaller pictures intended for private devotion. On some occasions he did indeed paint grand scale canvases for aristocratic homes as in the case of the present painting and its pendant. There survive two other known paintings of *Angelica and Medoro* by Fiasella which Piero Donati mentioned in his monograph of

1974.¹ One of which is in the Musei di Strada Nuova collection (114.5x147.5 cm; inv. PB 295, here fig. 35), whilst the other more similar in size to the present painting (172 x 247 cm; fig. 36) is held in a private collection in Milan.

The most striking difference however, is the choice of episode: Lampronti's *Angelica and Medoro* is in fact the name-carving scene. There is yet another painting of a literary subject that could belong to the same series as the present pair, the *Erminia with the Shepherds* in a private collection (175,5 x 176 cm; fig. 2).² Although it is unusual because of its square format, it is nevertheless the same height as the others, and its peculiar shape may be explained by the fact that it was intended for a designated room.

Once again, we see the artist's flair for "storytelling" and for inventing passages and figures. In our painting there is a child building a house of cards, and in the other a boy is playing with his reflection on a shield. Moreover, in each there is an older woman lost in thought.

Although no current information on the painting's patron and original location survives, this series can be dated to some time after his early stay in Rome, roughly between 1625 and 1635, on the evidence of present Caravaggesque elements.

A. O.

¹ Domenico Fiasella, "Il Sarzana", ed. by P. Donati (Genoa 1974), p. 116.

² *Dipinti genovesi dal Cinquecento al Settecento. Ritrovamenti dal collezionismo privato*, ed. by A. Orlando (Turin 2010), Allemandi, p. 113, with previous bibliography.



Fig. 34. D. Fiasella, *Silvio and Dorinda*, private collection.



Fig. 35. D. Fiasella, *Angelica and Medoro*, oil on canvas, cm 114,4 x 147,4, Genoa, Musei di Strada Nuova, Palazzo Bianco storage facilities.



Fig. 36. Fiasella, *Angelica and Medoro*, oil on canvas, cm 172 x 247, Milan private collection.





Europe

[...] The revolution that Caravaggio accomplished became an international movement. Painters from France and the Netherlands brought back from Rome the astounding new style to their own countries and started up the art of everyday life in the North among the young who had never crossed the Alps [...] Caravaggism may have been an international movement, but it took a national form wherever it prospered. One can observe, for instance, how Terbrugghen was always harking back to the graphic works of Lucas van Leyden [...] and how gleefully Adam de Coster and Honthorst adopted the device of artificial light to heighten the drama of a scene, or how all Utrecht painters preferred themes of moralistic genre, never quite revealing their moral attitude [...]

B. Nicolson, *Caravaggism in Europe*, vol 1, Oxford 1979, pp. 21, 23.

21.

ANTONIO DE PUGA, attr. to
(1602 - 1648)

*Diogenes Breaks a Cup Seeing a Child Drinking
with His Hands*

Oil on canvas; 197 x 144 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

Unpublished

The subject of the present painting was unusual but not unknown to seventeenth-century paintings as shown by the works of Poussin and Salvator Rosa.¹ In this little-known episode, Diogenes of Sinope (circa 413-323 BC), the Greek philosopher famous for his writings on Cynic philosophy and ascetic lifestyle, sees a child holding a cup with his bare hands and understands the superfluity of owning it, hence he smashes his own. His exemplar action exhorts the viewer to strive for ascetic virtue and to remove oneself from social pressures in order to return to the natural order.

Certainly a work of great interest, the present painting can be attributed to a Spanish artist, as it clearly resembles the works of Nuñez de Villavicencio and Galician Antonio de Puga, in particular. De Puga's *The Arrotino* (fig. 37), St. Petersburg, the Hermitage Museum) and *The Oil Seller* (fig. 38, Castres, Musée de Goya), are

especially similar to *Diogenes*, which can arguably, if cautiously, be attributed to the same hand.

The provenance of the piece is further proven by its exalted provenance: it possibly belonged to the vast collection of Napoleon's uncle, Cardinal Joseph Fesch, who had established a vast collection at Palazzo Ricci in Rome. Indeed, a painting in the collection's inventory is described as: "Diogène jette sa coupe en voyant un jeune garçon qui boit dans le creux de sa main" (Inv. 1843, f. 66 1493).

A.G.M.

¹ Please see the work of the same subject by N. Poussin, dated 1648, currently in the Musée de Louvre, Paris (oil on canvas, cm 260 x 221), or the work by Salvator Rosa currently at the Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen (oil on canvas, cm 344 x 212,5).



Fig. 37. A. de Puga, *The Arrotino*, oil on canvas, cm 120 x 160, St. Petersburg, the Hermitage Museum.



Fig. 38. A. de Puga, *The oil seller*, oil on canvas, cm 121 x 86, Castres, Musée de Goya.



22.

JEAN DUCAMPS, called GIOVANNI DEL CAMPO or
"THE GOLDEN ASS"
(Cambrai, c. 1600 - after 1638, Spain)

Head studies of two young boys

A pair, oil on panel, 33 x 23 cm

PROVENANCE

Possibly the Negroni family, Rome, due to the «N» stamp on the reverse of each panel;
Rome, private collection.

LITERATURE

Caravaggio's friends & foes, exh. cat. ed. by E. Clark and C. Whitfield (London 2010), pp. 142-143.

EXHIBITIONS

Whitfield Fine Art, London, *Caravaggio's friends & foes*, 27 May - 23 July 2010.

The unquestionable quality of these two paintings makes it possible to relate them to the painter Jean Ducamps. Active in Bent, he was also known as Giovanni del Campo, or the "golden ass". In the absence of any documented or signed paintings, Gianni Papi has tentatively ascribed him to a group of works that were previously classified under the name of "Master of the Incredulity of Saint Thomas". According to Papi, this anonymous but productive master must have been the mysterious artist mentioned in the sources and known for having shared lodgings (during the 1630s) with Peter van Laer, who was the founder of the Bamboccianti.¹ This information, in turn, makes it possible to place Giovanni del Campo among the Bentveugels, a lively and passionate artist circle of Dutch and Flemish painters active in Rome. The group's artistic contribution and cultural values that would have triggered a second "Caravaggesque revolution" have received little recognition until quite recently.

Jean Ducamps trained in Valentin's immediate circle and later on developed his own highly naturalistic style. By retaining a certain classicism, he was able to combine the most elegant aspects of Caravaggism with a more lyrical and monumental approach. In fact, he decided to emulate the innovations brought about by Giovanni Antonio Galli, also known as Spadarino, who reinterpreted Caravaggism in the 1630s according to a formula based on profound thought, morality and great eloquence. This approach imbued Caravaggesque painting with the *dignitas* that fuelled the meditations of the Bamboccianti.

Joachim von Sandrart mentioned several works which cannot be

found, except for the beautiful *Liberation of Saint Peter from Prison* in the DeVito collection (Naples) which was recently discovered by Gianni Papi. This interesting discovery makes it possible to support the attribution of the Lampronti's *Head studies* to Ducamps, and indeed there exists several stylistic affinities with the DeVito's *Liberation of Saint Peter*.

In terms of style, Papi described Ducamps as a "sort of alter ego of Valentin". This association is enhanced by the *Allegory of Virtuous Love* (United States, private collection) which is almost certainly attributed to Giovanni del Campo and datable to the mid-1620s. The attribution and dating of this painting is further supported by a testimony given by Leonart Bramer during a trial in 1672. His deposition, found in the Delft city archives, states that forty years earlier in Rome he had seen a beautiful and unusual picture by Giovanni del Campo. The text elucidates that his painting portrayed a three-quarter length figure of a standing angel wrapped in a sheepskin and holding a crown of laurel in his hand. Retrospectively, the *Allegory* can be matched to the mentioned description, in the same way that the style is identical to the portrait heads presented here. Therefore, one can firmly conclude that the *Head Studies* were almost certainly painted by Jean Ducamps.

C. S.

¹ *Spogliando modelli e alzando lumi. Scritti su Caravaggio e l'ambiente caravaggesco*, with previous literature, ed. by G. Papi (Naples 2014), pp. 185-196.



23.

GERARD VON HONTHORST
(Utrecht, 1592 - 1656)

A brothel scene

Oil on canvas, 105 x 133 cm

PROVENANCE
Private Collection.

LITERATURE

The International Caravaggesque Movement, ed. by B. Nicolson (Oxford 1979), pp. 59, 240; B. Nicolson, *Caravaggism in Europe*, ed. revised and increased by L. Vertova (Torino 1989), I, pp. 49, 125; *Gerrit van Honthorst*, ed. by J.R. Judson and R.E.O. Ekkart (Doorspijk 1999), no. 263, tav. 152, p. 202.

The intimate scene contains an obvious erotic and promiscuous overtone, presenting an old man in the act of offering a jewel to a seductive, half-naked woman with a flute. The director behind the performance is Gerard van Honthorst, one of the notable exponents of the Caravaggesque movement who favoured the movement's spread in the Netherlands. On completion of his training under the direction of Abraham Bloemart, Honthorst spent a period of time in Rome (ca. 1610 – 1620), where he studied the masterpieces of Caravaggio which thereafter informed on his artistic direction. His exceptional reputation throughout the peninsula earned him the sobriquet, "Gherardo delle Notti" (Gerard of the Night), for his masterful candlelit scenes.

His specialisation in genre painting was favoured by distinguished patrons, helping him to attract important large-scale commissions. He returned to Holland in 1620, and later moved to the Hague, and then to England in 1628. By then, Honthorst had largely adapted his style and choice of subject matter according to his patrons' preferences. In England, he accepted various commissions for the Royal Court of Charles I, including portraits and large-scale allegorical paintings. This phase of his career prompted him to noticeably lighten his palette and greatly alter his style.

While the present canvas is an exemplary work by Honthorst, scholars have not always universally accepted its authorship. According to a reconstruction undertaken by J.R. Judson and R.E.O. Ekkart (1999), the present work seems to have long been in circulation on the international market, including Amsterdam (1943), Brussels (1952), Antwerp (1953), Dallas (1967), Boston (1967) and New York (1967, 1991).¹ These scholars admit to have only having studied the present painting through reproductions of this canvas and in such varying states of preservation as to be uncertain of a conclusive attribution to the master. The photo published in the catalogue presents the young woman's breast covered, as the painting was photographed before 1962, when the naked breasts were brought back to light during a restoration. After scanty mention as a copy, the present painting was later illustrated in the artist's ca-



Fig. 39. G. van Honthorst, *The concert*, oil on canvas, cm 168 x 202, Gallery Borghese, Rome.

talogue raisonné as an original.² J.R. Judson and R.E.O. Ekkart (1999) also cite a smaller copy (102 x 125 cm)³ and firmly date this work to 1623, close to the *Concert* of the Borghese Gallery (fig. 39). Since he was documented to be in Utrecht from 1622 – where he is recorded as head of the guild of local painters – it is plausible that the *Brothel scene* was completed during this period.

A.G. D.M.

¹ *Gerrit van Honthorst*, ed. by J.R. Judson and R.E.O. Ekkart (Doorspijk 1999), no. 263, tav. 152, p. 202.

² *The International Caravaggesque Movement*, ed. by B. Nicolson (Oxford 1979), pp. 59, 240; B. Nicolson, *Caravaggism in Europe*, ed. revised and increased by L. Vertova Torino 1989, I, pp. 49, 125.

³ This copy, now whereabouts unknown, appeared in an auction in Amsterdam (Zwaan), 7-23 October 1986, as n. 5146, as mentioned in Ekkart 1999, p. 202.



24.

ABRAHAM JANSSENS
(Antwerp, c. 1567 - 1632)

Allegory of Spring

Oil on canvas; 118 x 87.8 cm

PROVENANCE

Dr. E.C. Carter;
Christie's, London, 27 October 1950, lot. 11;
Private Collection, United Kingdom.

EXPERTISE

Dr. Joost Vander Auwera, verbal communication.

Unpublished

The current depiction of *Allegory of Spring*, previously owned by E. C. Carter and then on the London market (Christie's, London, 27 October 1950, lot n. 11), illustrates Aries, Taurus and Gemini, and corresponds quite closely to the traditional description of *Spring* given in Cesare Ripa's *Iconology* of 1593.¹ However, in the Netherlands, this subject was more commonly represented according to a particular stanza in the *Eunuch* of Terence.² The typical Dutch embodiment of *Spring* is expressed in Joachim Anthonisz Wtewael's (1586 - 1638) painting on copper, which was previously at Sotheby's, New York (New York, 24 January 2008, lot. 3).

The *Allegory of Spring* forms part of a series of four, along with three others representing the seasons and their corresponding zodiac signs, all dated around 1610-15. These works are of equal dimensions, and painted on *tele imperatore*. The series' present whereabouts is unknown, with the exception of *Winter* that was at Sotheby's (London, 16/4/1980, no. 52, previously in the collection of A.A. graaf Golenistcheff-Koutouzo,ff, St. Petersburg and Morris I. Kaplan, Chicago, Illinois) and *Summer* (cm 118x97, previously in the collection of Van Merlen, then exhibited at the Koninklijk Museum yet the group is largely known by scholars.³

Moving away from the series and onto the artist's career, Janssens – who sometimes signed his works as "Van Nuysen" – is particularly notable for his role in upgrading International Mannerism to the Netherlands, drawing on elements from Caravaggio and Rubens. Only the latter's return to Antwerp in 1608, curtailed the painter's influence in the area. Janssens was in Rome, from 1597

to 1601, and possibly stayed on a few years. Here, he founded the Brotherhood of the Romanists, uniting artists and intellectuals active in the Italian peninsula. In the past, scholars have insisted on the direct influence of Caravaggio on Janssens, while little attention has been paid to his relationship with Annibale Carracci's *Galleria Farnese*. Janssens as a master painter trained some significant artists, including his son Abraham Janssens II, Michele Desubleo and his half-brother Nicolas Régnier, Gerard Seghers, Theodor Rombouts and Giovanni del Campo.

The quality of the Lampronti painting is exceptional, and its authorship is fully supported by prof. Vander Auwera, who will publish it in his forthcoming monograph. Unlike the present painting, there survive two copies of smaller dimensions and lesser quality, namely the one in the Museum of Antwerp (Inv. 5001), and another at Servarts in Brussels (12/11/1998, no. 499, 64 x 48,5 cm). The condition of this painting is very good.

A.G. D.M.

¹ C. Ripa, *Iconologia*, ed. by S. Maffei (Turin 2012), reedited from the edition of Milan 1602, pp. 556-557.

² According to the verse IV, 6, 731 "since Cerere et Baco friget Venus", taken from the *Eunuch* by Terence, the *Allegory of Spring* often illustrates Ceres and Bacchus offering food and wine in order to keep the fire of love burning; *Mytologie et Maniérisme. Italie Bavière Fontainebleau Prague Pays Bas*, ed. by A. De Bosque (Anversa 1985), p. 299.

³ Cfr. about N. Pevsner, *Some notes on Abraham Janssens*, in *The Burlington Magazine*, LXIX, 1936, p. 129.



25.

ABRAHAM JANSSENS
(Antwerp, c. 1567 - 1632)

Vanitas

Oil on canvas, 147,5 x 117,7 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

EXPERTISE
J. Vander Auwera, oral communication March 2015.

LITERATURE
R. Longhi, *Le prime ascendenze caravaggesche in Abraham Janssens*, in *Paragone*, 1965, 183, pp. 51-52, tav. 44; R. Longhi, in *Edizione delle opere complete di Roberto Longhi. Studi caravaggeschi. II* (Florence 2000), pp. 287-288, tav. 190.

The present picture may have belonged to Roberto Longhi, who published it in 1965, as an “incredibly eccentric” work by the great master of Antwerp.¹ Certainly the painting was in Florence in the remarkable collection of Longhi’s doctor, himself a man of refined taste, and undoubtedly advised by Longhi.

And indeed the *Vanitas*’ composition and style evoke other works by Janssens, realised around 1610-15. In fact, the sculptural blonde female figure, on the left, reappears in various versions of his compositions, such as the *Venus with Bacchus and Ceres* (fig. 40) in the Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu (inv. 597), and the *Juno* (fig. 41) of the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (inv. 4884). While the model of the old woman, here on the right, follows the examples of *Winter*, known in different versions.²

Generally speaking, this work can usefully be compared to paintings consistently attributed to the master, specifically to identify patterns in the representation of female figures within upright compositions. On seeing the painting, prof. Vander Auwera, fully supports its current state of attribution and will include it in his upcoming monograph.

The conservation status is very good.

A.G. D.M.

¹ Please see cat. note n. 24 for further information on the artist.

² Please see cat. note n. 24.



Fig. 40. A. Janssens, *Venus with Bacchus and Ceres*, oil on canvas, cm 235 x 138,8, Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu.



Fig. 41. A. Janssens, *Juno*, oil on canvas, 206 x 239 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.



26.

JAN JANSSENS
(Ghent, 1590 - c. 1650)

Roman Charity

Oil on canvas, 149 x 112 cm

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

Unpublished

The scene illustrated in the present painting tells the virtuous story of Cimon and his daughter Pero as recorded by the Latin writer Valerius Maximus in his *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium*. Janssens returned to this subject repeatedly as demonstrated by the important version in the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid (fig. 42), signed and commissioned by the marquis of Leganés.¹ In Lampronti's version it is evident that Janssens studied the works of Dirck van Baburen by reinterpreting his models through the teachings of Gerhard Honthorst and employing a lighter colour palette as well as returning to a more classical design.

The dedicated attention to the prison cell accords it a certain level of importance that is achieved by the lifelike qualities of the large blocks of dark stone and chain, all of which recall elements from a still-life painting. Indeed Janssens excelled in this *genre*, rivalling both van Bylert and Honthorst and reinterpreted the Gospel lesson by concentrating on the humility of inanimate elements over people. The classical figures of Cimon and Pero are rendered with meticulous care, especially the flesh tones, while the prison setting lends the painting its nobility and power. With his exquisite almost sculptural modelling, Janssens transformed the prison setting into a regal stage showcasing mankind's potential and infusing every facet of the painting with an element of grandeur.

It is indeed a prison, but it is conceived in the truest Caravaggesque spirit: the spirit of the final years of *The Burial of Saint Lucy* in Siracusa or *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist* in Malta. It was Caravaggio who impressed the schools of Utrecht and Ghent to the point that he inspired them to develop a manner of painting that focused on human dignity, and the grandeur of the humble and the derelict.

This work fully belongs to the 1620s movement known as the "International Caravaggism" which spread wide across Italy and the rest of Europe. Some of the great exponents of this movement were



Fig. 42. J. Janssens, *Roman Charity*, oil on canvas, cm 173 x 215, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid.

Flemish artists who had spent some time in Rome before returning to their native place.

It is generally believed that Janssens was among them and his presence is recorded in Rome between 1612 and 1621. Due the lack of evidence it is difficult to expand on his activity during these years and to finalise a dating for Lampronti's *Roman Charity*. It is equally probable that he executed this painting shortly after his return home or during his stay in Rome.

C. S.

¹ Another interesting version belonging to a private collection is mentioned by Benedict Nicholson; *Caravaggism in Europe*, ed. by B. Nicholson (Oxford 1979), vol. I, p. 130.



27.

R.G. MONOGRAMMIST
(Active, c. 1610 - 1630)

The Crowning with thorns

Oil canvas, 142.5 x 196.5 cm

PROVENANCE

Collection of the Marchese Acugna, Sicilia;
Private collection, New York;
Matthiesen Fine Art, London;
Private collection

LITERATURE

Around 1610: *The Onset of the Baroque*, exh. Cat. Matthiesen Fine Art, London, London 1985, pp. 70-72, n. 19; G. Papi, *Il monogrammist R.G. e un indizio per Terbrugghen in Italia*, in "Paragone", 5-6-7/551-553-555, 1996, p. 98, tav. 75; *Idem*, *Cecco del Caravaggio*, Soncino, 2001, pp. 41-42 e p. 100, tav. XLIV; *Idem*, *Aggiornamenti nelle Collezioni d'Arte Carige: il monogrammist R.G. e il suonatore che accorda la chitarra*, in "La Casana", 44, 2002, pp. 32-33; *Idem*, *Il genio degli anonimi: maestri caravaggeschi a Roma e a Napoli*, Milan 2005, p. 17.

Gianni Papi attributed the important painting examined here to an anonymous master. In his study, the scholar managed to reconstruct the artistic output of the latter with convincing arguments mainly based on the identification of a signature visible on the *Lutenist* (Cassa di Risparmio di Genova); a work previously attributed to Cecco del Caravaggio and then to Francesco Gentileschi on the basis of the initials mistakenly read for 'F.G.' instead of 'R.G.' To firmly ascribe the Lampronti's painting to either Francesco Gentileschi or to Cecco del Caravaggio would be impossible due to the lack of surviving documentary evidence related to Gentileschi, and on the evidence that the present painting does not share any stylistic affinities typical of Cecco.

It is therefore in Papi's opinion that the present painting seems to be closer in style to the *manfrediano* environment than to Cecco del Caravaggio's. In one respect, Lampronti's *Crowning with Thorns* reflects the composition and iconographic system developed by Bartolomeo Manfredi. Yet, the sharp definition of the figures and the cold atmosphere are closer in style to Boneri, who turned to Caravaggio's abstraction in the same manner as his early followers. In a *Status Animarum*, dated to the year 1617, it mentions of a certain Raphael Cassallo working as an apprentice in Bartolomeo Manfredi's workshop. On this evidence, it seems plausible to suppose that the anonymous Monogrammist master could have been the author of Lampronti's painting, since the 'G' of the initials could be read as 'C', although it is impossible to confirm this identification due to the scarcity of documentation concerning his identity. In *Sta-*



Fig. 43. Francesco Boneri called Cecco del Caravaggio, *Resurrection of Christ*, oil on canvas, cm 339 x 199,5, Museum of Fine Arts, Chicago.

tus Animarum of S. Andrea delle Fratte, it mentions "a painter working for Bartolomeo Manfredi", inferring that the anonymous painter was a close follower of the master, who presumably reached his maturity around the 1620s, at the time in which he could have painted the *Crowning of Thorns*, and the other works mentioned by Papi.¹ The *Crowning of Thorns* can be dated to the years ranging from 1620 to 1625 at the height of Cecco del Caravaggio's career, around the completion date of the *Resurrection of Christ* (1620), intended for the Capponi Chapel in Santa Felicità, Florence, and now at the Museum of Fine Arts, Chicago (fig. 43). The refined and solemn execution of Lampronti's *Crowning* can in fact allude to the Golden Age of Caravaggism.

According to this evidence, one can assume that the corpus assembled under the name of R.G. Monogrammist by Papi, can be assigned to a follower of Manfredi active in the crucial years. During these years the influence of Cecco's *Resurrection* spread far across Caravaggist circles, which would therefore explain the shared features with Cecco in the present painting, while the similarities with Manfredi can be justified by his overwhelming influence after the 1620s. Manfredi's authority was indeed widely regarded among Florentine artistic circles, and it is within this Tuscan context that one can begin to piece together the enigmatic identity of the anonymous master, now known as R.G. Monogrammist. Therefore Lampronti's *Crowning with Thorns* serves as a precious document in marking a turning point in Caravaggism.

In synthesising the different influences, the anonymous painter has marked his individuality by translating the caravaggesque style into a classical idiom, particularly the overall technique is reminiscent of an oil fresco, and the significance of the physical and mental isolation of figures recalls renaissance ideals of solitude and contemplation.

C. S.

¹ *Alla ricerca di "Ghiongrat". Studi sui libri parrocchiali romani (1600-1630)*, ed. by R. Vodret (Rome 2011), p. 491, n. 1952.



28.

GERARD SEGHERS
(Antwerp, 1591 - 1651)

The Mocking Christ

Oil on canvas, 185,5 x 136 cm

INSCRIPTIONS

«CARCCI» on the lower left.

LITERATURE

D. Bieneck, *Die Verspottung Christi. Ein neu entdecktes Gemälde des Flämischen Historienmalers Gerard Seghers (1591 – 1651)*, in *Ein ist ein Weites Feld. Festschrift für Michael Bringmann*, ed. by M. Bringmann-Gaadt, P. Grimbach, S. Laur, K.T. Weber (Aachen) 2005, p. 141-158.

EXPERTISE

D. Bieneck, 27 November 2004;
G. Papi, 9 September 2005;
A. De Marchi, February 2015.

This impressive painting depicts the *Mocking of Christ*: six men are shown seated or standing upright against a dark, artificially lit background, with Christ at the centre of the composition. Following medieval representations, the present painting refers to two different stages from the cycle of the Passion of Christ namely, the *Mocking* and *Crowing with Thorns*. After Christ's condemnation by Pilates, he was flogged and mocked by Roman soldiers according to Caiaphas' orders. Some of these debasements included punching, spitting and scoffing Christ. In medieval iconography, two or more Roman soldiers are commonly shown standing behind or flanked by Christ, whilst the protagonist is nearly always shown with his hands tied. The iconography refers to the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, where it mentions that Jesus was blindfolded and beaten, and then mocked: "You Christ, if you're a prophet, tell us who hit you."

At first, the Mocking and the Crowing were represented separately though with time, painters combined these two stages as an embodiment of the Passion of Christ. In this type of composition, Christ is always positioned at the centre with a staff in his hand symbolising a sceptre, while a crown of thorns is placed on his head by a Roman soldier.

The Lampronti's *Mocking* bares an inscription «CARCCI» on the lower left, below the shoe of the executioner, and could perhaps refer to the identity of the patron or owner. The theologian Monsignor Cappellini, offers the following interpretation of the inscription: "CAR (*dinali*) SS (*Sanctae*) C (*ru-cis*) H (*Ierusalemnis*)" recalls the name of Cardinal Zapata, who was the patron of the Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome. Interestingly if not coincidentally, the cardinal's Italian name translates as "shoe", and therefore provides a possible explanation for the unusual placement and choice of inscription.

According to the brushstrokes and preferred colour palette, the present painting can be identified as an early work, situated in the second or third decade of the 17th century. Moreover, the present painting is of particular significance since all but a few works survive from this period of Seghers' career. Though not determined, it is plausible that at this stage of his life, Seghers had made a trip to Italy and Spain for a duration of about ten years. Yet the lack of surviving evidence supporting these visits, makes it virtually impossible to confirm the patronal connection with cardinal Zapata e Mendoza as previous scholars have suggested. If it were true, the Lampronti painting would serve as *the* evidence for his trip.

Owing to the success of Bartolomeo Manfredi's method, the present theme of the *Mocking of Christ* became popular among the Dutch Caravaggesques. The subject's popularity is attested by the

fact that there survives another *Mocking* by Seghers, intended for the Cappuccini convent in Bruxelles. Though its current location remains unknown, it previously hung over the main entrance of the church until the French Revolution.¹

In terms of composition and iconography, the full-figured composition is reminiscent of a painting by Rubens of the same subject, dated 1602, intended for The Basilica di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, Rome, and commissioned by Cardinale Gonzaga, now in the Grasse Cathedral (fig. 44). There exists strong affinities, in particular, the multi-figured composition, and the Roman soldiers that move away from or kneel before Christ. Further, the guard emerging from the right is depicted leaning on *fasces licatorii*, the attribute of the Roman justice, a feature individual to Rubens that is also present in the Lampronti painting. It is indeed well-known that at the beginning of his career, Seghers turned to Dutch painters, although this painting is closer in



Fig. 44. P.P. Rubens, *The Mocking of Christ*, oil on panel, cm 224 x 180, Hospice, Grasse.





Fig. 45. Gerard Seghers, *St. Peter's Denial*, oil on canvas, 185,4 × 256,5 cm, Raleigh, North Carolina Museum of Art Foundation.



Fig. 46. G. Seghers, *Christ's capture with kiss of Judas*, oil on canvas, cm 154 x 239, D. Manuel González Collection, Madrid.

style to the Caravaggesque manner. The concept of a shallow, dark and empty background is deduced from Caravaggio and Manfredi while Rubens preferred to create an open composition. The lack of spatial depth and the distribution of figures in a narrow setting, annul the distance between the scene and the viewer, while the cropped profiles at the edges of the painting add a sense of immediacy. Moreover, the microscopic attention to detail, in particular for the warts, wrinkles and all as well as the tactile rendering of surfaces, are indebted to Caravaggism whereas the visible light source is drawn from Dutch tradition.

The profile of the kneeling soldier, with a handkerchief around his head, recalls the figure on the right side of the *Denial of St. Peter* (fig. 45).² Since his body is cropped out of the composition increased attention is drawn to his head. The most noteworthy similarity is the handkerchief on the forehead of the figures in both composi-

tions, and the helmet of the soldier standing in the second line which echoes the shape of the figure's head in the *Capture of Christ* (fig. 46).³ Moreover, the hairstyle with the receding hairline and the deep, sunken wrinkles of the executioner in the *Christ at the column* in Ghent (fig. 54), recall the physiognomy of the executioner hammering the crown of thorns onto Christ's head in the Lampronti painting.⁴

D. B.

¹ D. Bieneck, *Gerard Seghers, 1591 - 1651; Leben und Werk des Antwerpener Historienmalers*, Lingen 1992, cat. B 107.

² Bieneck *op. cit.*, cat. A 9 and cat. A 12.

³ Bieneck *op. cit.*, cat. A 8.

⁴ Bieneck *op. cit.*, cat. A 77.



29.

CORNELIS SCHUT
(Antwerp, 1597 - 1655)

Apollo and Marsyas

Oil on canvas, cm 200 x 230

PROVENANCE
Private collection.

EXPERTISE
D. Bodard, written communication.

Unpublished

The *Apollo and Marsyas* was first attributed to the Flemish artist Cornelis Schut by Didier Bodard, who had remarked on its superb quality and excellent composition.¹ Although he is mostly known for his affiliation with Rubens, Schut achieved great technical and stylistic mastery as demonstrated in the present painting. He was active in Rome in the 1620s, where he set up a workshop that has not yet received enough scholarly attention.

Upon his arrival to Rome in 1624, he joined Rubens' circle, however he was able to distance himself by holding on to his Manneristic grounding and introducing an element of *grandeur* into his narrative scenes. In doing so he was in fact addressing a popular interest in the Antique, and in particular drawing on the *pathos* of Classical Tragedy. This artistic movement of the 1620s and 1650s, was commonly known as "Neo-Renaissance" and focused mainly on the revival of historical and mythological painting.

In addition to Bodard's opinion, several stylistic observations support the conclusive attribution of the *Apollo and Marsyas* to Schut. One only needs to focus attention on the *Triumph of Juno* or *Allegory of Air* and on the *Triumph of Cybele* or *Allegory of Earth* (both dated from around 1628-29 and now in Rome, at Palazzo Montecitorio) to notice that they are indeed a product of the same hand.² In the case of the latter, the satyr on the far right closely resembles Lampronti's King Mida, both of which are painted in a *virtuoso* pose and skilfully modelled with the use of *chiaroscuro*.

The monumental scale of the figures, as well as the naturalistic style and dramatic tone of the scene, recall Rubens' manner and date the present painting to 1628-1629.³ At this time, mythological subjects were particularly in vogue as a characteristic feature of the Neo-Renaissance movement. It is therefore entirely possible to propose that the Palazzo Barberini's *Triumph of the Divine Providence* – painted in the 1630s by Pietro da Cortona – was in fact the result of this artistic wave and of Schut's mythological works.

C.S.

¹ Written communication.

² E. Borea, *I quattro elementi di Cornelis Schut*, in "Prospettiva", n. 3, 1975, pp. 52-55 e H. Vliege, *Cornelis Schut in Italy*, in "The Hoogsteveer Mercury" 112, 1990, pp. 28-41.

³ *Apollo and Marsyas* was painted once Schut had moved from Rome to Florence on escaping a murder charge (1627). He decided to stay there until his return to Antwerp in 1631.



Fig. 47. C. Schut, *Allegory of the earth*, oil on canvas, cm 282 x 201, property of Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale della città di Firenze.



Fig. 48. Cornelis Schut, *Allegory of the air*, oil on canvas, cm 290 x 199, property of Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale della città di Firenze.



30.

HENDRICK TER BRUGGHEN and studio
(Deventer, 1588 - 1629, Utrecht)

Sleeping Mars

Oil on canvas, 116 x 85,5 cm

PROVENANCE

The Independent Gallery, London;
London, Pall Mall Studios, 1922;
Private English collection;
Sotheby's, New York, January 1988, lotto 213.

LITERATURE

The Burlington Magazine 40, April 1922; *Hendrick ter Bruggen*, ed. by B. Nicolson (London 1985), pp. 75-76, 102, cat. n. A42, tav. 41a; E. de Jong, *De Slapende Mars van Hendrick ter Bruggen*, Utrecht 1980, p. 29, nota 16; *The painting of Hendrick ter Bruggen 1588 - 129. Catalogue Raisonné*, ed. by L.J. Slatkes and W. Franits, 2007, p. 147, W13, plate 43a.

EXPERTISE

W. Franits, 9 March 2014.

The present work is attributable in part to the Dutch artist, Hendrick ter Bruggen, pupil of the mannerist painter Abraham Bloemaert from Utrecht, who was present in Rome between 1607-08 and 1614. During his stay in Italy, ter Bruggen came into contact with the art of Caravaggio, Orazio Gentileschi, and Carlo Saraceni, and hence acquired a profound knowledge of the treatment of light and the arrangement of space. There are no surviving paintings from this period, but ter Bruggen's study of Merisi and the more classical *Caravaggisti* greatly informed his art. Following his return home, ter Bruggen's pictures demonstrated his highly original interpretation of *Caravaggism*, found particularly in his accentuation of emotional and dramatic elements, as well as in his use of an enlivened technique characterised by vibrant colour and delicate brushstrokes. Together with Gerrit van Honthorst and Dirck van Baburen, Hendrick ter Bruggen is today considered one of the most important Dutch followers of Caravaggio. In contemporary poems by the Dutch authors Lambert van Ben Bos and Jan Vos (authors respectively of *Konstakabinet van Marten Kretzer* and *Op de schildery daar mars op een trommel slaapt: in de zaal van dn E. Heer Pieter Six*) it is possible to trace various influences that relate to the creation of the present painting. The painting depicting



Fig. 49. H. Ter Bruggen, *Sleeping Mars*, oil on canvas, cm 152 x 140, Centraal Museum, Utrecht.

Mars Sleeping in the Centraal Museum in Utrecht (fig. 49), undoubtedly an autograph work by Hendrick ter Bruggen, served as the source for these poems as well as the reference for two workshop versions (W13, W14) and three copies from the same period (R57, R58, R59), all published and analysed in the monograph on the painter (L. J. Slatkes, W. Franits, 2007). In accordance with these poems, the subject of ter Bruggen's work is identifiable as Mars, god of war, and not a mere sleeping soldier. The depiction of the warrior god suggests numerous political allegories that can be directly tied to contemporary historical events. In order to understand correctly the painting's subject it is important to remember that the prime version in Utrecht is dated 1625, and so was completed only a few years after the end of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621), a period of prosperity that interrupted the long and bloody path to Netherland's independence from Spanish control, better known as the Eighty Years' War, or the Dutch War of Independence (1568-1648).

The iconography of the sleeping Mars was not the invention of ter Bruggen, but its rarity in northern Europe and the complete absence of any previous life-size figurative depictions of the subject render the Dutch master's offering truly unique and thus emphasizes its symbolic value. The Twelve Years' Truce corresponded with an unexpected period of economic growth in the Dutch Republic that led to numerous appeals for a permanent peace. The subject of ter Bruggen's work is not an isolated case from the period, and, in this context, it is interesting to note a surviving merchant's token from the period, now in a private collection in Amsterdam, shows on its *recto* a sleeping Mars, and, on the *verso*, a sleeping merchant being awakened by Mercury, god of commerce and exchange. This small, but hardly isolated example, indicates the diffusion of the theme employed by the Dutch master, and confirms the allegorical significance of the present painting: an appeal for the end of Mars's reign and the concomitant flourishing of that of Mercury.

When considering the two versions on canvas based on the original in Utrecht, it is important to note that Leonard J. Slatkes only viewed a photograph of the one in the Lampronti collection. He regarded it as an example of excellent quality, derived directly from the Utrecht original, but by a follower of the master. The direct repetition of details found in the armour and the accurate reproduction of the depiction of light, however, prevented him from considering the possibility that it could have been painted in part by ter Bruggen himself. The critical reception of this work did not end in 2007, with the publication of the Slatkes-Franits monograph. Slatkes' attribution has been recently revised by Franits, who, after examining the canvas firsthand, restituted part of it to the artist himself. Indeed, he called attention to the high quality of the painting's protagonist – the figure, and particularly the face – assigning the armour, breeches and drum to the workshop.

The excellent quality of the example in the Lampronti collection is further emphasized when considered alongside additional evidence drawn from a comparison with the second version on canvas, the so-called 'Speelman version' (W14), in which both Slatkes and Franits point out pictorial weaknesses and various inaccuracies.

W. F.



31.

NICOLAS TOURNIER

(Montbéliard, 1590 - before February 1639, Toulouse)

The taking of Christ

Oil on canvas, 116 x 147 cm

EXPERTISE

Maurizio Marini, written communication.

Unpublished

This hitherto unpublished painting is an important addition to Tournier's *oeuvre* which was first attributed to the master in a written communication by Maurizio Marini.

As proposed by Marini, the Lampronti's *Taking of Christ* can be dated to sometime between 1619 and 1626, during Tournier's documented period in Rome. However, in the absence of signed or documented Roman paintings, it would be impossible to reconstruct a comprehensive chronology of the artist's activity in Italy.

Moreover, owing to the few works in notable Roman collections, and the lack of Marini's name in documentary records belonging to academies and societies, his isolation in the artistic climate of Rome is perhaps caused by his religious affiliation as a Protestant in a Catholic city.

Stylistically, Marini's deep awareness and imitation of Bartolomeo Manfredi and Valentin de Boulogne's style, makes it impossible to attribute the most Caravaggesque works to his hand. Indeed, he is known to have copied several compositions such as the *Drinkers* in the Musée Tessé, Le Mans, which was once attributed to Manfredi, and the *Deposition* in the Musée des Augustins, Toulouse, formerly attributed to Valentin.¹

In dating the *Taking of Christ*, one can refer to the generally accepted hypothesis offered by Charles Sterling, that Tournier was influenced



Fig. 50. V. de Boulogne, *The Tribute to Caesar*, oil on canvas, cm 111 x 124, Château du Versailles, Versailles

by Manfredi at the beginning of his stay in Rome, and later turned to Valentin.² These conclusions, along with the severity of the composition, the lack of anecdotal details and the isolation of figures in the present painting, led Marini to propose a dating to the early years of Tournier's sojourn in Rome, circa 1619-20. In the *Taking of Christ*, the prevailing influence of Manfredi is joined by that of Tournier's slightly younger compatriot, Valentin. The subject matter and composition are presented with vestiges of Valentin's simple, intense, and controlled clarity, replacing the preferred Manfredian vivacity of gesture as recalled in Sandrart's definition of the 'Manfrediana Methodus'.³

Compared to the *Christ and the adulteress*, in the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique in Brussels, and the *Denial of Saint Peter*, previously at Colnaghi and now in a European private collection, the Manfredian influence is emphatically noticeable in the painting belonging to the Lampronti collection. Particularly striking is the standing soldier in the foreground, recalling the soldier on the far left of the Brussels painting, while the contorted pose of another, resembles the soldier pointing to Saint Peter at the Colnaghi. In retaining Manfredi's lateral lighting and deep light contrasts, which forcibly separate the figures and throw them out of the background and into the foreground, the present work is enhanced by a simplicity directly influenced by his close appreciation of Valentin and works such as *The Tribute to Caesar* (fig. 50), in the Château du Versailles, Versailles.

Several stylistic affinities further support the addition of the present painting to Tournier's corpus, as categorised in the artist's latest exhibition.⁴ The noticeably sharp profiles of the figures, the distinctive aquiline noses, the strong casting of shadows as well as the flashes of earthly colours, are all features typical of Tournier's Roman works, and clearly visible in Lampronti's *Taking of Christ*.

V. R.

¹ *Caravaggism in Europe*, ed. by B. Nicholson, (Turin) II ed. 1979, I, p. 198, II, n. 630.

² *Il Seicento Europeo* (1956), pp. XXXX.

³ J. von Sandrart, *Teutsche Akademie der Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste*, 1675; supplements in the Latin addition of 1683, p. 294.

⁴ A. Brejon de Lavergnée, *Pour Nicolas Tournier sur son Séjour Romain* Paragone, n. 287, January 1974, pp. 44-55; A. Brejon de Lavergnée, in *Valentin et les Caravaggesques Français*, exh. cat. by A. Brejon de Lavergnée (Rome-Paris) 1974, pp. 106-21.



32.
VALENTIN DE BOULOGNE and workshop
(Coulommiers, 1591 - 1632, Rome)

a. Tavern Scene with Musicians and Soldiers
b. Tavern Scene with a Fortune-teller and a Soldier Stealing a Chicken

A pair, both oil on canvas, 128 x 181 cm

PROVENANCE
Alex Wengraf, London (1989).

LITERATURE
B. Nicolson, *Caravaggism in Europe* (1st ed., Oxford, 1979), 2nd ed., Turin 1989, I, pp. 204-205, II, tav. 693; *Valentin de Boulogne*, ed. by M. Mojana, 1989, p. 221 e p. 239.

EXPERTISE
Denis Mahon, written communication.

The present paintings are significant works from Valentin de Boulogne's large workshop.

Within these tavern scenes there are several Caravaggesque features that include card players, fortune-tellers, musician players and brawling soldiers. One particularly unusual detail is the soldier looking directly at the viewer – possibly a self-portrait of the artist – while stealing a chicken from the fortune-teller. These type of subjects are depicted with many variations, but always displaying the eloquence and elegance typical of Valentin's manner.

A correct historical-critical analysis of these works requires a re-evaluation in the context of other known versions. The Lampronti paintings were first published in a monograph by Marina Mojana as eighteenth-century copies of Valentin's originals, although the prototypes have never been definitively identified. It is known that the National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen owns a pair of tavern scenes believed to be copies of Valentin's originals, though some infer that they are partly by the master's hand. Moreover, there

a



is also another magnificent version of the *Tavern Scene with Musicians and Soldiers* at the Musées des Beaux-Arts, Strasbourg that may well have been entirely by the master. The recent discovery of a *Tavern Scene with a Fortune-teller and a Soldier Stealing a Chicken* at the Matthiessen Gallery in London has re-opened the discussion about the identification of the prototypes. If one accepts the Matthiessen's as the model for all other versions, then the Copenhagen paintings should be regarded as early copies, and the Lampronti tavern scenes as later renditions. In fact, on close examination it becomes clear that the present paintings should be of a much earlier date, to sometime within in the seventeenth century and contemporary to Valentin's activity. An hy-

pothesis that was previously presented by Denis Mahon who had already inspected the paintings in 2005.

It is worth noting that these two paintings are close in manner to Valentin's mature phase, which in terms of style and composition refer to the *manfrediana methodus* dated to around 1625. Even if they were undoubtedly painted at a later date, their technique and quality suggest a date prior to Valentin's death in 1632.

In the absence of documentation associated with the circle of Valentin, it is impossible to identify the unknown master of the Lampronti paintings, however according to stylistic evidence, one can safely assume that the pair is a product of his workshop.

C. S.

b





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