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PROPERTY FROM A EUROPEAN PRIVATE COLLECTION

1

BICCI DI LORENZO

Florence 1373–1452 Arezzo

The Virgin and Child with Saints Agnes, Thomas Aquinas, Dominic, Catherine of Alexandria, Peter Martyr and John the Baptist, with a music making angel and a donor

tempera on poplar panel, gold ground, shaped top, in an engaged frame
painted surface: 43.5 x 24 cm.; 17¹/₈ x 9¹/₂ in.
overall: 50.3 x 28.9 cm.; 19³/₄ x 11³/₈ in.

± £ 60,000-80,000

PROVENANCE

Acquired by the father of the present owner, by 1965;
Thence by inheritance and descent.

EXHIBITED

Frankfurt, Städel Museum, *Kult Bild Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino. Cult Image – Altarpiece and Devotional Painting from Duccio to Perugino*, 7 July – 22 October 2006, no. 56, reproduced in colour (as Bicci di Lorenzo di Bicci).

LITERATURE

H. Mayer Brown, 'Catalogus. A Corpus of Trecento pictures with Musical Subject Matter', part II/1, instalment 4, in *Imago Musicae*, 5, 1988, p. 220, no. 641, reproduced p. 221 (as Bicci di Lorenzo);
Kult Bild – Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino. Cult Image – Altarpiece and Devotional Painting from Duccio to Perugino, J. Sander (ed.), exh. cat., Städel Museum, Frankfurt, 2006, p. 304, no. 56, reproduced in colour pl. 65 (as Bicci di Lorenzo di Bicci);
S. Weppelmann, 'Kollektives Ritual und persönliche Andacht – Collective Ritual and Personal Devotion' in *Kult Bild – Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino. Cult Image – Altarpiece and Devotional Painting from Duccio to Perugino*, J. Sander (ed.), exh. cat., Städel Museum, Frankfurt, 2006, pp. 225, 244 and 246, no. 56, reproduced in colour p. 227, pl. 65 (as Bicci di Lorenzo di Bicci).

Intimate in scale, this portable panel is a highly appealing example of the devotional work of Bicci di Lorenzo. It retains in beautifully preserved state the fine detailing of the figures and delicate punchwork in the gold haloes and pinnacle. The work is representative of the rich tapestry of early fifteenth-century religious art in Florence and reflects the gradual shift in style from the late Gothic to the early Renaissance that characterises the period.

From a family of artists, Bicci di Lorenzo was the son and pupil of Lorenzo di Bicci (d. 1427) and the father of Neri di Bicci (1419–1491). His early works are influenced by the style of his father, whose successful workshop he continued to run after the latter's death. Bicci became a member of the Guild of St Luke in 1424 and enjoyed a long and prolific career, securing many prestigious commissions; to name but one – and on a very different scale to the present painting – the altarpiece of the Compagni chapel in Florence's Santa Trinita, now in Westminster Abbey, London.¹



Scholars who have written and commented on this little devotional painting underscore its Dominican focus, noting the presence of Saint Dominic, at the upper left, as well as St Thomas Aquinas, centre left, and St Peter Martyr, centre right, all of them dressed in the distinctive black and white habit of their order. Also prominent here, positioned to the right of the Virgin and Child, is St John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, pointing others to Jesus and holding the scroll inscribed with the words *'Ecce Agnus [Dei]'* ('Behold the Lamb of God'). The presence of the kneeling figures of Saints Agnes and Catherine in the foreground underscores the role of the saints in the spiritual lives of Christians.

An unusual feature of this painting is the inclusion of a child, rather than an adult donor figure. He is shown here beside a music-making angel and with saints interceding on his behalf to the Virgin and Child. Gaudenz Freuler (Professor emeritus, University of Zurich), pointing out that this is a Dominican painting due to the presence of St Dominic, St Thomas Aquinas, as well as St Peter Martyr, went on to suggest that the child could be the boy Tobias – an exemplar of filial piety.² His presence here would be an allusion to the biblical story taken from the Book of Tobit in the Apocrypha (6: 2–9), in which Tobias, the son of Tobit, meets the archangel Raphael without realizing his divine nature, and is later instructed to use the gall from the fish that he had caught to restore his father's sight. Arguing against this identification is the absence of the fish with which Tobias is usually shown and if this were indeed Raphael – the embodiment of the concept of the 'guardian angel' and protector of the young – his attribute is atypical as he is not usually depicted playing a musical instrument.

Stefan Weppelmann (former Curator of Italian and Spanish Renaissance Paintings at the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, and now Director of the Museum der bildenden Künste, Leipzig), in the catalogue of the exhibition on devotional painting held at the Städel Museum, Frankfurt, in 2006, where this painting was included, argues that the boy is being presented to the Virgin and Child by a Dominican friar (in all likelihood St Peter Martyr) who appeals for mercy on his behalf. Albeit that in Weppelmann's opinion the boy depicted cannot have been the donor, it was not unusual for contemporary figures to be portrayed in pictures 'with the salvation of their souls uppermost in their minds'; and so, the painted figure stands in for the real person and the saints serve as patron saints.

A portable triptych, comparable in scale to the present work but with only St John the Baptist and St Catherine flanking the Virgin and Child in the central panel and retaining the wings with narrative scenes of the Passion of Christ and the Annunciation, sold in these Rooms on 4 July 2007, lot 46, for £168,000.

¹ Polyptych, tempera on panel, 210 x 292 cm.; Fototeca Zeri, Fondazione Zeri, Bologna, no. 10297.

² Written communication with the owner dated 1991.





THE PROPERTY OF A PRIVATE COLLECTOR

2

GIOVANNI DI CORRADUCCIO

Foligno, doc. 1404–37

A triptych: The Virgin and Child enthroned with Saints and scenes from the lives of the Virgin and St Clare

tempera on poplar panel, gold ground, shaped top, in an engaged frame

central panel: 105 x 55 cm.; 41³/₈ x 21⁵/₈ in.

each wing: 98.5 x 45 cm.; 38³/₄ x 17³/₄ in.

overall: 126 x 159.5 cm.; 49⁵/₈ x 62³/₄ in.

W # £ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

Elia Volpi (1858–1938), Florence, until 1927;

His sale, New York, American Art Association, 31 March – 2 April 1927, lot 377 (as Umbro-Sienese, XIV Century), for \$1600, to Keller and Funaro;

Hans Leuchter (b. 1901), Munich, 1964;

By whom sold ('The Property of Herr Forstmeister Hans Leuchter of Munich'), London, Sotheby's, 3 December 1969, lot 70 (as Cola Petruccioli), for £17,000, to 'Giovanello';

Anonymous sale, London, Sotheby's, 8 December 1971, lot 56 (as Cola di Petruccioli), for £9,000, to 'Holstein';

Acquired by the father of the present owner.

LITERATURE

F. Zeri, 'Tre argomenti umbri', in *Bolletino d'Arte*, 48, January–June 1963, p. 43 n. 7 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio);

F. Santi, 'Un capolavoro Orvietano', in *Pantheon*, November–December 1964, pp. 358–62, reproduced, with detail in colour (as Cola Petruccioli?);

G. Previtali, 'Affreschi di Cola Petruccioli', in *Paragone*, 17, 1966, 193, p. 34;

F. Zeri, 'Un aggiunta a Giovanni di Corraduccio', in *Diari di lavoro* 2, Turin 1976, p. 20 ff.;

P. Scarpellini, *Giovanni di Corraduccio*, exh. cat., Foligno 1976, pp. 27–29 and 58–59 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio, datable to the late 14th or early 15th centuries);

M. Boskovits, 'Osservazioni sulla pittura tardogotica nelle Marche', in *Rapporti artistici fra le Marche e l'Umbria*, Atti del Convegno di studio, Fabbriano–Gubbio, 8–9 June 1974, Perugia 1977, p. 41 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio, datable to the late 14th or early 15th centuries);

E. Neri Lusanna, 'Recensione: Pietro Scarpellini, Giovanni di Corraduccio, Foligno 1976', in *Paragone*, 29, 1978, 335, p. 98;

C. Galassi in *Iconografia musicale in Umbria nel XV secolo*, P.M. Della Porta, C. Fratini, E. Genovesi and E. Lunghi (eds), Assisi 1987, p. 68;

F. Todini, *La Pittura Umbra*, Milan 1989, vol. I, p. 83 and vol. II, p. 263, reproduced fig. 577 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio);

E. Lunghi, 'Pittori di Foligno e pitture a Foligno e dintorni', in *Pittura a Foligno 1439–1502. Fonti e studi. Un bilancio*, B. Toscano (ed.), Foligno 2000, p. 178;

M.R. Silvestrelli, in *Raccolta d'arte*, 2014, p. 243;

E. Zappasodi, 'Sorores reclusae'. *Spazi di clausura e immagini dipinte in Umbria fra XII e XIV secolo*, Florence 2018, p. 94 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio);



This large and impressive triptych of the *Virgin and Child enthroned with Saints and Scenes from the Life of the Virgin*, recently dated by Andrea De Marchi to about 1415, is a rare work by Giovanni di Corraduccio, known as Mazzaforte. Documented from 1404 to 1437, Giovanni di Corraduccio, was the leading painter in early 15th-century Foligno. Influenced by painting in Orvieto and Siena, his work shows neo-gothic stylistic tendencies and connections to the culture of the Marche. Not seen on the market in over half a century, this is one of very few paintings by this master to be found outside Italy and indeed beyond his native Umbria, because much of his production was in fresco and still remains *in situ*.

LITERATURE CONTINUED

A. De Marchi in *Federico Zeri e Milano. Giorno per giorno nella pittura*, A. Bacchi and A. Di Lorenzo (eds), exh. cat., Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan, Cinisello Balsamo 2021, p. 44 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio, datable to slightly after 1415);

G. Mancini in *Narrazioni Fiorite, Trittici di Giovanni di Corraduccio per Trevi*, A. De Marchi (ed.), exh. cat., Complesso Museale di San Francesco, Trevi, 2022, p. 20 under no. 1 and p. 44 under no. 2, pp. 66–64, no. 3, reproduced in colour p. 62, as details pp. 65–70 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio, c. 1415);

A. De Marchi, 'Il *sermo rusticus* di Giovanni di Corraduccio: la "Passione degli Umbri", il caso di Trevi e le tavole narrative per le monache', in *Narrazioni Fiorite, Trittici di Giovanni di Corraduccio per Trevi*, A. De Marchi (ed.), exh. cat., Complesso Museale di San Francesco, Trevi, 2022, pp. 93, 97, 99, 101, 107, 122, 127, 130–31, reproduced pp. 92, fig. 1 (to scale with other polyptychs by the artist), 96, fig. 3, 107, fig. 18, 122, fig. 47 (as Giovanni di Corraduccio, datable to slightly after 1415);

G. Mancini, 'I monasteri femminili di Trevi tra Trecento e Quattrocento. Un contesto per i trittici di Giovanni di Corraduccio', in *Narrazioni Fiorite, Trittici di Giovanni di Corraduccio per Trevi*, A. De Marchi (ed.), exh. cat., Complesso Museale di San Francesco, Trevi, 2022, pp. 147–48.

Recent studies place this triptych at the heart of female monastic spirituality in Trevi, an Umbrian town located between Foligno and Spoleto. Its form and iconography link it to a small group of other comparable gold ground polyptychs by Giovanni di Corraduccio commissioned by convents in the area: a folding triptych now in the Complesso Museale di San Francesco in Trevi and another in the Terruzzi collection (fig. 1).¹ Although the original location of the present altarpiece is not known, it is highly likely that it too was for a monastic community in Trevi. Indeed, as the exhibition held recently in Trevi's Complesso Museale di San Francesco has shown, between the Trecento and Quattrocento, within the walls of the town, were five female monasteries – three Benedictine and two Franciscan – an important factor in accounting for the high demand for these complex works.

The eucharistic liturgy of the closed orders of nuns dictated the typology of the works they commissioned, with their emphasis on narrative and on the prominent place given to exemplars such as Saint Clare of Assisi, founder of the Order of the Poor Clares. Here female saints – St Clare in particular – feature prominently. In the central panel, the Virgin and Child are enthroned with Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Margaret of Antioch in prime position in the foreground; behind them Onuphrius, the hermit saint; James the Greater (probably); Francis of Assisi; and Louis of Toulouse; above, in roundels, are Sts Paul and Peter. The narrative scenes to the left and right comprise on the lower register: St Michael the Archangel and St Anthony Abbot and the Annunciation; and on the upper register, two scenes that form a parallel narrative: the Dormition of the Virgin; and the Death of St Clare; in the central upper compartment, Christ on the Cross with the Virgin and St John the Evangelist mourning His passing. Giovanni di Corraduccio's polyptychs typically demonstrate an eye-catching display of narrative scenes permeated with sympathy for the everyday and organised around a central scene. Particularly touching here is the way in which the painter conveys the tender affection shown by the nuns towards St Clare on her death bed, as religious duties are performed during their pious vigil.

Federico Zeri was the first to publish the triptych in 1963 as the work of Giovanni di Corraduccio, an attribution widely supported by scholars, including Pietro Scarpellini and Miklós Boskovits, who both dated it to the late 14th or early 15th centuries, considering it to be an early work.² The attribution to Giovanni di Corraduccio was subsequently also endorsed by Filippo Todini, who listed and illustrated the triptych in his



Fig. 1 Giovanni di Corraduccio, *Triptych with Scenes from the Life of Christ*, c. 1400–10. Tempera and gold ground on panel, 129 x 170.9 cm. Pinacoteca Comunale, Complesso Museale di San Francesco, Trevi

comprehensive survey of Umbrian painting published in 1989. There he defined the *œuvre* of this painter, whose work survives mostly in fresco, and included the triptych as one of very few extant panel paintings. More recently, Andrea De Marchi in an exhibition wholly devoted to the triptychs painted by Giovanni di Corraduccio for Trevi that explores the cultural and historical factors and the role of the area's religious orders in shaping his art, proposes a later dating, placing it around or slightly after 1415. In that catalogue De Marchi also suggests that this altarpiece was painted second in a sequence of three related works commissioned by the monasteries of Trevi: the earliest being the folding triptych in the Complesso Museale di San Francesco, mentioned above, which he dates to c. 1400–10 (fig. 1), and the latest the triptych in the Terruzzi collection of c. 1415–20, both of which depict episodes from the Life of Christ arranged around a central scene of Crucifixion.

In the case of this altarpiece – an uncommon survival – not only does it serve as a notable example of the work of lesser known Umbrian artists, but also in its adoption of a late gothic idiom, it offers insights into the richness of painting in the region within the broader context of the period's artistic landscape.

¹ Each respectively 129 x 170.9 cm. and 162 x 154.5 cm.; Trevi 2022, nos 1 and 2, pp. 18–41 and 42–63, both reproduced, with details.

² Only Francesco Santi (Santi 1964) demurred and put forward a doubtful attribution to Cola Petruccioli, not taken up by others.



THE PROPERTY OF A GENTLEMAN

3

HANS SÜSS VON KULMBACH

Kulmbach? circa 1485–1522 Nuremberg

Portrait of a man, here identified as Christoph Scheurl (1481–1542)

inscribed with the age of the sitter upper left; dated upper right, and indistinctly signed with monogram immediately below:

· I · A · 33 · / 1514 / HK

oil on limewood panel, marouflaged, unframed

40.6 x 31 cm.; 16 x 12¼ in.

± £ 100,000-200,000

PROVENANCE

Anonymous sale, London, Sotheby's, 18 November 1959, lot 71, for £6500, to Johnson;

With Edward Speelman Ltd., by 1961;

From whom acquired that year by the father of the present owner;

Thence by inheritance and descent.

EXHIBITED

Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, *Meister um Albrecht Dürer*, 4 July – 17 September 1961, no. 166, reproduced pl. 30;

Manchester, City Art Galleries, 24 October – 10 December 1961, *German Art 1400–1800 from collections in Great Britain*, no. 76.

LITERATURE

Weltkunst, XXIX, 1959, no. 21, reproduced;

F.A. Van Braam, *World Collector's Annuary*, vol. XI, 1959, p. 219, no. 2397, reproduced p. 27;

P. Strieder, '[Review] Winkler, Friedrich : Hans von Kulmbach: Leben und Werk eines Fränkischen Künstlers der Dürerzeit Stadtarchiv Kulmbach, 1959', in *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg*, 50, 1960, p. 537;

P. Strieder in *Meister um Albrecht Dürer*, exh. cat., Nuremberg 1961, p. 107, no. 166 and under no. 167, reproduced pl. 30;

D. Oldfield, *German Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland*, Dublin 1987, p. 37 n. 4.

This newly rediscovered signed and dated work of 1514 constitutes a significant addition to the painted *œuvre* of one of the most prominent artists of the Northern Renaissance, Hans Süß von Kulmbach (c. 1485–1522), best known as Albrecht Dürer's disciple, collaborator and fellow citizen of Nuremberg. His ability to render animated likenesses helped establish his reputation in the field of portraiture. Here the artist describes in detail the sitter's unflinching gaze and subtly textured clothing. Kulmbach's finely crafted and expressive portraits – of which only about a dozen examples survive – are now largely in museum collections.

The man depicted here in half-length wears a cap of fine blue cloth and a brown fur-lined robe over a red doublet and patterned sleeves of blue brocaded fabric. The trim of his pleated white shirt is delicately embroidered around the collar with repeating diamond and floral motifs and his cuffs are trimmed with gold thread embroidery. Between thumb and fore-finger he holds the large coral beads of a rosary. The delicate modelling of textures can be seen in the subtle rendering of the sitter's chiselled cheekbones and in details such as the eyes, the individual hairs of the fur collar and the refined inscription painted to imitate gold, all features that bear witness to the characteristic precision of the artist's brushwork.

Mentioned only in passing in the literature, this portrait was made at the height of Kulmbach's success in this field, only three years after the prestigious commission he received to paint Casimir, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach (1481–1527), a work dated 1511, now at the Alte Pinakothek, Munich (fig. 1).¹ The latter is very similar in size, style and presentation to the present work. Another picture of the utmost sensitivity is his *Portrait of a young man* of 1520, preserved today at the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin (fig. 2).² Pointing to a consistency of approach, all three portraits are similarly composed and present the sitter in frontal, or very slightly turned pose, with hands resting as if on the lower edge of the frame to heighten the sense of presence; and set against a dark background. Each is elegantly inscribed along the top with monogram and date and the age of the sitter.





Fig.1 Hans Süss von Kulmbach, *Casimir, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach*, 1511. Oil on limewood, 43 x 31.5 cm. Alte Pinakothek, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich



Fig. 2 Hans Süss von Kulmbach, *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1520. Oil on limewood, 41.8 x 30.2 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin



Fig. 3 Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Portrait of Christoph Scheurl*, 1509. Oil on limewood, 48.5 x 40.5 cm. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg. Photo © Fine Art Images / Bridgeman Images

The portrait has traditionally been identified as a likeness of George I, Duke of Brzeg (Brieg), son of Frederick I of Liegnitz (Legnica) and Ludmilla of Poděbrady. Born on 29 June 1481 – a date that accords with the inscription along the top of the painting, which is beautifully inscribed in three-dimensional lettering and numerals with the age of the sitter (· I · A · 33 · [*Thres Alters – his age*]) – he was a member of the Piast dynasty, one of the oldest and most prominent families in Poland and Silesia. A significant historical figure in the region during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, George ruled as Duke of Brzeg and Liegnitz, holding these titles from 1503 until his death in 1521. George I's rule was marked by efforts to consolidate and strengthen his territories within Silesia and is often noted for the stability and relative prosperity it brought to his land. His marriage to Anna of Pomerania, who came from a prominent and influential family in the Baltic region, produced several children, ensuring the continuation of the Piast line in Silesia. Kulmbach's *Portrait of a woman aged 24* in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, also inscribed in a similar way with the artist's monogram at the upper right and dated 1515, has been proposed as a possible pendant to this painting.³ Although executed on a panel that matches it in size, the difference in date and the turn of the man's head away from that of the woman suggests otherwise. Moreover, Oldfield has described her clothes as being those of a wife of a middle-class Nuremberg burgher, making her identification as Anna of Pomerania highly unlikely. For now her identity remains unknown.

However, a more compelling suggestion has recently been proposed that the sitter may be the important humanist Christoph Scheurl (1481–1542). He would have been 33 years old when Kulmbach made his portrait, as indicated by the inscription. Scheurl, from a Nuremberg merchant family, was a jurist and professor at the University of Wittemberg and later deployed his expertise back in his native city, serving from 1512 as the legal adviser to the Nuremberg Council. It is more than likely that he would have met Kulmbach at that time, having returned to Nuremberg in 1511, the same year that Kulmbach became a citizen there. A portrait of Scheurl by Lucas Cranach the Elder, dated 1509, painted in Wittemberg and preserved today at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (fig. 3), depicts a man who bears a striking resemblance to this one. Both likenesses share comparable features: the same tall forehead with pronounced temples, similarly shaped lips and jawline, pale arched eyebrows and fleshy earlobes. If this identification is correct, Kulmbach here depicts the sitter five years after Cranach made his portrait. (This would not be the first instance of the two artists making portraits of the same person: Casimir, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach was painted by Kulmbach in 1511 and some years later, in 1522, by Cranach, whose portrait is now at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.⁴) Born in Nuremberg, Scheurl studied at the University of Heidelberg in 1496–97, before moving the following year to Bologna, where he was later awarded a doctorate in law. The years spent in Wittemberg among the educated elite and as Rector

of the University from 1507 made him an influential figure in the Reformation movement. Scheurl's diplomatic skills, his role as a mediator in Reformation debates between early Protestant reformers and the Catholic Church and his connections with prominent figures helped shape the discourse of the time. His intellectual contribution is documented in his extensive correspondence with German and Italian humanists, with whom he maintained contact since his formative years in Italy, and in his published writings. Initially in favour of Martin Luther's reforms, he adopted a moderate stance until finally siding with the Catholic Church. A bookplate of Christoph Scheurl, attributed to Lucas Cranach the Younger and his workshop, shows him at more advanced age with his two sons, kneeling before a Crucifix, a rosary in his hands.⁵

Portraits by Kulmbach that precede the present work include his small double-sided and badly abraded *Portrait of a Young Man* with on its reverse a *Girl making a garland* of about 1508 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.⁶ Scholars have pointed out a rapport between Kulmbach's approach to portraiture and the work of Jacopo de' Barbari (c. 1440–1516), the Venetian painter and printmaker who came to work in Germany for several years in the early sixteenth century and to whom he may have been apprenticed, a connection seen for instance in Jacopo de' Barbari's *Portrait of a Young Man* of about 1505 at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.⁷

Kulmbach gradually assumed the role as Nuremberg's leading painter of altarpieces and designer of stained glass. His ability to work across different genres showcased his versatility and broad appeal. He received prestigious commissions from influential patrons, including altarpieces for the major churches of Nuremberg and the city's patrician families; and important commissions from further afield, in Kraków for instance, for work on the St Catherine altarpiece, attesting to his reputation and the high demand for his work. This portrait is a significant instance of the network of patronage that Kulmbach enjoyed. Not only does it underscore the role of art in asserting and commemorating status and identity among the ruling class, it contributes to an understanding of the diffusion of the influence of Dürer and those in his orbit to the development of art in Renaissance Germany.

We are grateful to all those consulted for their views.

¹ Inv.-Nr. 9482; oil on limewood panel, 43 x 31.5 cm.

² Inv.-Nr. 1834; oil on limewood panel, 41.8 x 30.2 cm.

³ No. 371; oil on limewood panel, 40.7 x 31.3 cm.

⁴ Inv. no. 883; oil on beechwood panel, 37.3 x 28.5 cm.

⁵ Hollstein VI. 160. 12.

⁶ Acc. no. 17.190.21; oil on poplar panel, 17.8 x 14 cm.

⁷ Inv. no. 7719; oil on limewood panel, 38.4 x 29.6 cm. This connection is noted, among others, by Manuel Teget-Welz in 'Hans von Kulmbach, ein Nürnberger Maler macht Karriere', in *Renaissance in Franken, Hans von Kulmbach und die Kunst um Dürer*, M. Teget-Welz and H. Dickel (eds), exh. cat., Kronach 2022, pp. 43 and 47 n. 102.



THE PROPERTY OF A NOBLE FAMILY

4

BARTHOLOMÄUS ZEITBLUM

Nordlingen circa 1455/60 – circa 1518/20 Ulm

The wings of an altarpiece: Wilhelm von Schwendi (d. 1522);
Barbara Krafft von Dellmensingen (d. 1538)

a pair, both oil on pine panel
the former: 111.7 x 34.1 cm.; 44 x 13½ in.
the latter: 111.7 x 35.2 cm.; 44 x 13⅞ in.
(2)

± £ 400,000-600,000

PROVENANCE

By direct descent through the family of the female
sitter, latterly in lower Austria, to the present owner.

EXHIBITED

Stuttgart, Württembergisches Landesmuseum,
*Meisterwerke massenhaft: die Bildhauerwerkstatt des
Niklaus Weckmann und die Malerei in Ulm um 1500*,
11 May – 1 August 1993, no. 44, p. 456 (as Master of the
Pfullendorfer Altar, circa 1500);

Ulm, Museum Ulm, *Jerusalem in Ulm: Der Flügelaltar
aus St. Michael zu den Wengen*, 8 March – 12 July
2015, nos. 41a–b.

LITERATURE

M. Hammer, *Schwendi. Heimatbuch einer Gemeinde in
Oberschwaben*, Weißenhorn 1969;

D. Von Pfeil and G. Weilandt, 'Auftraggeber und Stifter
in der Ulmer Kunst', in *Meisterwerke massenhaft. Die
Bildhauerwerkstatt des Niklaus Weckmann und die
Malerei in Ulm um 1500*, exh. cat., Stuttgart 1993,
pp. 398, 400–1, reproduced fig. 545 (as Master of the
Pfullendorfer Altar);

D. Bosch, *Bartholomäus Zeitblom. Das Künstlerische
Werk*, Ulm 1999, pp. 206–7, reproduced p. 393, fig. 118;

M. Teget-Welz, *Martin Schaffner: Leben und Werk
eines Ulmer Malers zwischen Spätmittelalter und
Renaissance*, Ulm 2008, p. 474;

E. Leistenschneider, in *Jerusalem in Ulm: Der Flügelaltar
aus St. Michael zu den Wengen*, exh. cat., Ulm 2015,
pp. 178–79, no. 41a–b, reproduced in colour;

E. Leistenschneider, 'Der Stifter ist im Bild: Altar-
und Kunststiftungen in der Ulmer Kunst um 1500',
in *Zwischen Mittelalter und Reformation: Religiöses
Leben in Oberschwaben um 1500*, 2021, pp. 133–35,
reproduced in colour p. 134, figs. 1a and 1b.

Bartholomäus Zeitblom's distinctively serene style is exhibited in these large, late medieval altarpiece wings of Wilhelm von Schwendi (d. 1522) and his wife Barbara Krafft von Dellmensingen (d. 1538). Painted circa 1500, the two panels originally served as the fixed outer wings of a carved and painted altarpiece donated by the kneeling couple to St Anna's Chapel in the south German town of Schwendi. In 1758, the family of the female donor removed the panels from the altarpiece, and they have descended through the same private family ownership ever since. Not only do these panels have an unbroken provenance since their creation, but they are also among the best-preserved donor panels by the Ulm master that survive.





Fig. 1 Schwendi Altarpiece, St Anna Kapelle, Schwendi (open)



Fig. 2 Schwendi Altarpiece, St Anna Kapelle, Schwendi (closed), showing 20th century copies in the original place of the present panels

On the left panel is Wilhelm von Schwendi, a nobleman whose family were local rulers in Schwendi, a town in Baden-Württemberg just south of Ulm. On the right is his wife, Barbara Krafft von Dellmensingen, with whom he had at least one son, Marquard zu Schwendi (*d.* 1564). The identities of the two figures are confirmed by their familial coats-of-arms painted in the lower corners. Both are dressed in contemporary black robes, Wilhelm's trimmed with golden-brown fur and Barbara's with white fur. The thick, heavy folds of the dark fabric add dimension to their figures and also contrast with the delicate rosary beads they each hold. Wilhelm's distinctive features are framed by loose brown locks, while Barbara's are complemented by a white headpiece secured at her chin. A gold damask curtain with a green fringe serves as a backdrop for each, while a diagonally tiled floor provides a sense of architectural depth.

Around 1500, Wilhelm and Barbara von Schwendi commissioned Bartholomeus Zeitblom to paint an altarpiece for the high altar of St Anna's Chapel in Schwendi. The central elements of the altarpiece, carved by the Ulm sculptor Niklaus Weckmann, featured the Virgin and Child flanked by Saints Lawrence and Vitus, with the predella just below showing the four evangelists. When the wings of the altarpiece were open, Saint Barbara appeared on the left and Catherine on the right, both set against a beautifully tooled gilt background that also defined the space behind the sculpted elements (fig. 1). Only when the wings were closed were the likenesses of Wilhelm and Barbara revealed on the fixed outer wings of the altarpiece. They were shown kneeling in eternal adoration of their patron saints, Saint John the Baptist on the left and Saint Roch on the right (fig. 2). Although the donor saints were slightly smaller in scale, the similarly tiled flooring and magnificent gilt backdrops they shared with the saints on the closed wings visually suggested they occupied the same realm. In 1758, members of the Krafft von Dellmensingen family removed the present panels from the altarpiece, as confirmed by the inscriptions added along the upper sections of each panel shortly after their removal from the chapel. In 1963, the restorer Max Hammer replaced the panels with modern copies, which are visible today in the chapel.

Bartholomäus Zeitblom was born in about 1455 in Nördlingen, where he most likely trained with Freidrich Herlin (1430–1500). By 1482, he moved to the prosperous Swabian city of Ulm, where he would remain until his death around 1518/20. Zeitblom entered the successful workshop of Hans Schüchlin (1440–1505) and later married one of his daughters. Over time, Zeitblom became the head of one of the most productive and prosperous workshops in Ulm in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, a period marked by high demand for carved altarpieces from the region. For many commissions, including his Wengen altarpiece





Fig. 3 Bartholomeus Zeitblom, *Hans Georg von Ehingen* (donor wing from the Kilchberger Altarpiece). Oil and tempera on pine wood, 163.5 x 87 cm. Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart



Fig. 4. IRR of the present lot, showing significant changes to Wilhelm von Schwendi's face

of about 1500, among one of his most ambitious projects, Zeitblom focused primarily on the central figures and features, while other elements were accomplished by his workshop hands. Such division of labour was a common and necessary practice for artist workshops in southern Germany in the period and further helped to satisfy the growing demand from patrons.¹

In Ulm, Zeitblom enjoyed the patronage of some of the most important families of the region. The wide distribution of his works throughout the Swabian Alps and surrounding Danube region is thanks to the numerous noble patrons whose support Zeitblom enjoyed. Among his patrons was the knight George von Ehingen, for whom Zeitblom painted the Kilchberg altarpiece in about 1490. This altarpiece, which was praised by the poet Justinus Kerner (1786–1862) as the work of ‘a German Leonardo’, is now housed in the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart.² The Kilchberg altarpiece shares several similarities with the Schwendi altarpiece: both are comparable in scale, both resulted from a collaboration between Zeitblom and Weckmann, and both feature fixed outer donor wings. Indeed, the damaged kneeling donor panel of Georg von Ehingen in armour (fig. 3)—with the panel of his wife Anna Uhlin from Reutlingen now missing— is among the few other surviving donor wings by Zeitblom.

The 2015 exhibition *Jerusalem in Ulm* at the Museum Ulm showcased the workshop practices in the imperial city around the turn of the sixteenth century by reuniting all the extant panels of the Wengen altarpiece, a project jointly completed by various hands in the Ulm workshops of Bartholomäus Zeitblom and Jörg Stocke. Like the Wengen altarpiece, several artists from Zeitblom’s workshop assisted in the Schwendi altarpiece. Stylistically, the Schwendi altarpiece also dates to the same period. The facial types of the female saints on the interior wings, for example, compare closely to those painted by Zeitblom’s presumed pupil Hans Maler. As discussed by Leistenschneider, Zeitblom seems to have been responsible for the present likenesses of his patrons, as particularly apparent in their facial and figural types.³ Indeed, infrared reflectography reveals marked shifts in the underdrawing in both figures and their facial features, with the most notable changes visible in the positioning of eyes, nose, and mouth of Wilhelm von Schwendi (fig. 4).

¹ For further discussion on Zeitblom’s biography, the Wengen altarpiece, and contemporary workshop practices in Ulm, see M. Teget-Welz, ‘Bartholomäus Zeitblom, Jörg Stocker und die Ulmer Kunstproduktion um 500’, in *Jerusalem in Ulm: Der Flügelaltar aus St. Michael zu den Wengen*, exh. cat., Ulm 2015, pp. 10–25.

² Inv. nos 27, 37, 33, 43 1127, 1127a.

³ Leistenschneider 2015, p. 179.



5

HERRI MET DE BLES

Bouvines circa 1510–after 1550 Antwerp (?)

AND

SIR PETER PAUL RUBENS

Siegen 1577–1640 Antwerp

The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist in an extensive landscape with travellers

signed with the artist's device of an owl, sitting on the cage of one of the travellers in the lower right corner
oil on oak panel, marouflaged, the reverse bearing a fragment incised with the initials: *FH*¹
56.9 x 73.3 cm.; 22³/₈ x 28⁷/₈ in.

± £ 600,000-800,000

PROVENANCE

Presumably Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640),
Antwerp;

Probably listed in the inventory drawn up after his
death in 1640 as no. 190 (see *Literature*);

Anonymous sale, Basel, Artcurial, 22 March 2023, lot 2
(as Herri met de Bles and follower of Lambert Lombard);

Private collection, Switzerland.

LITERATURE

Probably J. van Meurs, *Spécification des peintures
trouvées à la maison mortuaire du feu messire Pierre
Paul Rubens, chevalier, &c.*, MS, Paris 1640, n. p., no. 190
(‘Vne nostre Dame dans vn paysage, de Henry Bles’);

J.F.M. Michel, ‘Catalogue des Peintures & Raretés,
qui se vendront à Anvers au mois de Mai 1641. dans la
Maison mortuaire de Massire P.P. Rubens Chevalier &
Seigneur de Steen’, in *Histoire de la vie de P.P. Rubens,
Chevalier & Seigneur de Steen*, Brussels 1771, p. 282,
no. 190 (‘La Vierge dans un Paysage, par H. Bles’);

Probably J. van Meurs, ‘Spécification des peintures
trouvées à la maison mortuaire du feu messire Pierre
Paul Rubens, chevalier, &c.’, in J.M. Muller, *Rubens: The
Artist as Collector*, Princeton 1989, p. 128, no. 190;

Probably J. van Meurs, ‘Spécification des peintures
trouvées à la maison mortuaire du feu messire Pierre
Paul Rubens, chevalier, &c.’, in *A House of Art, Rubens
as Collector*, K. Lohse Belkin and F. Healy (eds), exh.
cat., Antwerp 2004, p. 331, no. 190.

This recently rediscovered landscape is a rare and remarkably fine work by Herri met de Bles (circa 1510–after 1550) that not only almost certainly belonged to Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) but was also remodelled by the artist himself. As well as combining all the elements that contributed to Herri met de Bles’s lasting success, this painting sheds light on a fascinating aspect of Rubens’s creative working practice. Following the death of Joachim Patinir (fl. 1515–24) in 1524, Herri met de Bles became the most celebrated exponent of the new genre of landscape painting and one of its earliest practitioners in The Netherlands. Here we see the Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist in an extensive verdant landscape punctuated by fantastical jagged rock formations and a river valley in the distance. In addition to the main figural group, the artist has also included an abundance of detail and lively observation in the form of figures and animals, including a small owl sitting on the cage of one of the travellers in the lower right corner. Owls concealed in Herri’s landscapes are often interpreted as signatures, but this prominently placed owl in the right foreground, piggybacking a traveller clearly is one: Herri’s nickname in Italy where his works were much admired, was ‘Civetta’, which means ‘Little Owl’.²







Fig. 1 Infrared reflectogram of the present lot (detail)



Fig. 2 X-radiograph of the present lot (detail)



Fig. 3 Herri met de Bles, *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist*. Oil on panel, 60 x 53 cm. Kunstmuseum, Basel. © Kunstmuseum Basel

Rubens's intervention in this work is solely to be found in the arrangement of the figural group depicting the Holy Family, notably the figures of the Christ Child and Infant St John, which are thought to have been originally executed by an anonymous figure painter working as a collaborator in the style of Lambert Lombard, and most likely within Herri's workshop, or in a neighbouring workshop. Met de Bles's landscape, rich in fine and meticulous underdrawing, remains unaltered. Infrared reflectography and X-radiography reveal the original underlying composition and clearly show the changes implemented by Rubens. In infrared, the original placement of the figure of the Christ Child is visible, leaning forwards towards the Infant Saint John the Baptist, his arms raised in an act of blessing (fig. 1). Also visible, is the re-working of the folds in the drapery of the Virgin's dress, followed by the addition of white painted highlights to enliven the composition. Two concentrated darker areas of overpaint appear respectively to the right of the figure of the Christ Child and by the Virgin's left foot. An X-ray of the work reveals their significance (fig. 2): to the right is the kneeling figure of the Infant St John, holding in his right hand a reed cross, and to the left it becomes apparent that the Virgin's foot has been significantly reduced in size and placed further inwards. The figure of St Joseph appears largely to have been left untouched, apart from a few retouches to the drapery surrounding his proper right elbow.

The original placement of the figures was clearly a popular arrangement and is found in two other works by Met de Bles, both upright in format, respectively in the Kunstmuseum Basel (fig. 3) and the Historisches Museum Bamberg.³ These stand out in the artist's *œuvre* for the inclusion of large-scale, classicising figures, which take up almost half of the composition. Of the two, the Basel picture is of significantly higher quality, both in terms of execution of the figures and the landscape, and compares closely to the present work. Apart from adopting a similar diagonal arrangement of the cliffs and valleys, several comparable motifs feature in both works, such as the rock formation and tree by the figure of St Joseph, the winding path leading upwards in between the figures of St Joseph and the Virgin, and the panoramic vista extending to the right. As observed by Luc Serck, Met de Bles's landscapes are all consistent in style and are characterised by repeating motifs;⁴ for example, the clearing with the row of cottages to the extreme right is repeated in the landscape backgrounds of several other works including

two versions of *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*, respectively in the Musée des Arts anciens du Namurois, Namur, and the Museo di Capodimonte, Naples,⁵ and in *Landscape with the Offering of Isaac* in the Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati (fig. 4). Moreover, the fantastic rocky outcrop pierced with cavernous openings and crowned with a fortified building also recurs with minor variations in a number of works, including the aforementioned *Landscape with the Offering of Isaac* and *Landscape with a Foundry* in the National Gallery, Prague. Although many of Met de Bles's compositions are known in several versions, suggesting that he had an active workshop or following, the present panel appears to be the only extant example of this design and is particularly refined. As none of his works is dated, it is hazardous to attempt to construct a chronology of his *œuvre*, which in terms of the painted landscape, remains remarkably accomplished and consistent.

We do not know for certain where Herri met de Bles worked, but he may well be the *Herry de Patenir* who joined the Antwerp guild in 1533. Like all Netherlandish landscape painters of his age he was indebted to Joachim Patinir, and this painting is unimaginable without Patinir's influence. It is intriguing, however, that both painters are thought to have been from Dinant on the edge of the Ardennes in present-day Belgium, and in both artists' work the rocky outcrops bear a noticeable resemblance to the deep craggy gorges of the Meuse and its tributaries in that region, which is still known for its mine-workings that are also found in works by Herri, as well as Patinir. It may thus be more than a coincidence that the heavily classicizing figures in this and the Basel and Bamberg paintings are reminiscent of those of artists from nearby Liège, situated on the Meuse, such as the painter and draftsman Lambert Lombard and the engraver Lambert Suavius.

In reworking the figures in Herri's painting, Rubens significantly altered the relationship between the Virgin, the Christ Child and the Infant St John, making the interaction between them the central focus of the composition. By doing so, he created a more intimate, tightly knit composition, drawing attention to the tender exchange between the figures. Into this originally static treatment of the scene, Rubens injected dynamism and vitality, much influenced by inventions drawn from Italian Renaissance models, particularly the work of Raphael and Titian. His inventory lists a great number of paintings and drawings after these artists, most of which he had copied and adapted himself. Of particular interest is a drawing after Raphael and retouched by Rubens in a private collection, which depicts the Virgin and Child in a similar arrangement to the present work. The composition is related to a drawing in the Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, attributed to Giulio Romano; however, the prototype for this design is likely to be by Raphael as a similar figure group can be found in an earlier drawing by him in the Musée Condé, Chantilly.⁶

Rubens's habit of copying and adapting works by other masters is well known and a practice he sustained throughout his career. These were usually original designs by known or anonymous artists, or copies after well-known paintings, sculptures or graphic models. Although he is better known for reworking drawings,⁷ there are several cases in which he reworked paintings by other masters. As Jeremy Wood noted, Rubens retouched a number of paintings by other artists, the majority of which are now lost.⁸ Moreover, such works were usually inferior or damaged paintings touched up by Rubens, for his own interest, or possibly to make them more saleable. Of interest are three scenes of Netherlandish feasts recorded as early as the mid-1640s in the inventory of Arnold Lunden, Rubens's brother-in-law.⁹ All three are copies, deriving from compositions by Marten van Cleve, depicting respectively *The Feast of Saint Martin*, Rubenshuis, Antwerp (fig. 5); *Twelfth Night or The King Drinks* (Private collection, Brussels); and *The Procession of Lame Men on Copper Monday or The Lame Bishop* (current whereabouts unknown).¹⁰ Wood points out Rubens's changes to the pictures are economical but effective, serving to focus attention on significant details and enhance the scenes' vivacity and expressive power, rather than reworking the entire painted surface.¹¹ As in the present composition, by accentuating expressions and gestures, the painter was able to transform certain archaic and picturesque forms into his own more engaging and dramatic baroque visual language.



Fig. 4 Herri met de Bles, *Landscape with the Sacrifice of Isaac*. Oil on panel, 56.2 x 86 cm. Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati. © Wikimedia

Because the descriptions in Rubens's 1640 inventory are generally – and infuriatingly – cursory, art historians have long struggled to make from them positive identifications with individual extant paintings. In the past some have simply made assumptions and turned those into assertions, but it would be irresponsible not to précis any such assertion with 'probably', as we have done here, no matter how likely – as here – that identification is. His inventory does however leave us in no doubt that Rubens' collection including a number of paintings of extremely high quality, including works by Northern artists. One such is the Pieter Bruegel the Elder *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt* now in The Courtauld Gallery, London, a work of the same subject that might, as Jeremy Wood has tentatively suggested, have hung as a pendant to the present work.

Aside from the present landscape, the posthumous inventory of Rubens's collection dated 1640 (see *Literature*) lists several other works retouched by the artist. Unlike pictures which were commercial collaborations that are listed in the inventory with both artists' names, such as those between Rubens and Jan Bruegel the Elder or Cornelis Saftleven,¹² these are only recorded as works by an individual artist and Rubens's intervention is only known from the inventories of later owners or from the works themselves. A significant example is *Landscape with Psyche and Jupiter* by Paul Bril (fig. 6).¹³ In an unusual case of painted intervention, Rubens completely revised the iconography of the work, which originally depicted solely a figure of St Jerome beside an hourglass.¹⁴ He appears to have overpainted this figure, replacing it with Psyche and Jupiter. He also retouched elements of the landscape, introducing the rainbows and shimmering effects of spray from the waterfall on the right. Like the present painting, this landscape stands out among other retouched works as the original composition is a high-quality landscape by a prominent master. The inventory also lists other examples; however, these are now lost, notably a *Balthasar's Feast* by Jusepe de Ribera,¹⁵ and a *Psyche with a bottle of water from the Styx* by Titian.¹⁶



Fig. 5 After Maerten van Cleve, reworked by Peter Paul Rubens, *The Feast of Saint Martin*. Oil on panel, 76.5 x 107 cm. Rubenshuis, Antwerp.
© Christie's Images / Bridgeman Images



Fig. 6 Peter Paul Rubens and Paul Bril, *Landscape with Psyche and Jupiter*, c. 1610. Oil on canvas, 95 x 129 cm. Museo del Prado, Madrid.
© Bridgeman Images

Whether Rubens regarded the pictures in his collection as saleable items is unclear; however, the repainting of these works was surely done for his own pleasure as a creative exercise. His early biographer Roger de Piles was probably correct in suggesting that Rubens retouched artworks *'pour exiter sa veine & pour échauffer son génie'* (to stimulate his senses and to heat up his genius).¹⁷ In other words, this Holy Family by Met de Bles posed a challenge to his creative spirit and inventiveness. In retouching existing artworks, Rubens did not simply modify their style, he drew on the work of earlier masters and completely transformed these sources into his own manner. When discussing this practice, Sir Joshua Reynolds observed: '[...] what was stolen by Rubens, the possessor knew not how to value; and certainly no person knew so well as Rubens how to use'.¹⁸ There is surely no doubt that Rubens was here fully aware that he was reworking to improve its weakest part: the contribution of the anonymous figure painter (Rubens would surely have known that the Holy Family is not from Herri's hand). While in other works he completely reworked figures including portraits by major artists, he was fully aware of Herri's genius as a landscapist, and thus left the majority of the painted surface alone, concentrating on the figures.

We are grateful to Professor Christopher Brown for endorsing the attribution to Rubens upon first-hand inspection of the painting and to Professor Jeremy Wood for independently endorsing this attribution on the basis of digital images. Furthermore, Wood observes that the present work and the painting listed in Rubens's inventory under no. 190 must be one and the same picture. He further points out that it is listed in the inventory next to Pieter Brueghel the Elder's *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt* (no. 191; The Courtauld Gallery, London). Though this may suggest a thematic link in their possible display, he considers that the works are not close enough in size to establish that they were hung as pendants.

¹ As this fragment appears to be affixed on the reverse of the 20th-century marouflage, its age and origin cannot be determined.
² G.P. Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura*, Milan 1584, p. 475 (refers to the artist as *'Henrico Blessio Boemo, chiamato de la civetta, principal pittore di paesi'*). The co-author of this note once drove a civetta with a wounded wing to the centre for recuperation of raptors – LIPU – in Parma.
³ Both works are reproduced in L. Serck, *Autour de Henri Bles, J. Toussaint* (ed.), exh. cat., Namur 2000, pp. 179 and 181, no. 13.
⁴ Namur 2000, pp. 139–41.
⁵ Namur 2000, pp. 182, 183, 186 and 187, nos 14 and 16, both reproduced in colour.
⁶ J. Wood, *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, XXVI: Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists, Italian Artists, I. Raphael and his School*, vol. I, p. 232–34, no. 34, reproduced vol. II, n. p., figs 76–78.
⁷ We know of about 250 works on paper retouched by Rubens, of which the Italian works far outnumber those of northern origin. For an in-depth discussion of these works see K. Lohse Belkin, *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, XXVI: Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists, German and Netherlandish Artists*, vols I and II, London 2009, and J. Wood, *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, XXVI: Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists, Italian Artists*, London 2011.
⁸ J. Wood, "Damaged by Time and Rubens", Rubens's restorations and retouchings', in *Apollo*, CXLII, December 1995, p. 17.
⁹ H. Vlieghe, 'Une grande collection anversoise du Dix-Septième Siècle: Le cabinet d'Arnold Lunden, beau-frère de Rubens', in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, vol. 19, 1977, p. 180, no. 29.
¹⁰ Lohse Belkin 2009, vol I, pp. 201–207, nos 96–98, reproduced vol. II, n. p., figs 207, 272 and 275.
¹¹ Wood 1995, p. 20. These three works are also discussed in detail in H. Vlieghe, 'Rubens emulating the Bruegel tradition', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 142, November 2000, pp. 681–86.
¹² Van Meurs 1640, nos 269, 270, 294, 295, 297 and 298.
¹³ Van Meurs 1640, no. 26 ('Vn paysage de Paul Bril avec l'histoire de Psyche').
¹⁴ These changes are clearly visible in X-rays of the work. For more information about these see L. Pijl, 'Paintings by Paul Bril in Collaboration with Rottenhammer, Elsheimer and Rubens', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 140, October 1998, pp. 660–67.
¹⁵ Van Meurs 1640, no. 28 ('Vn banquet du Roy Baltazar, de Spagnolet'). This picture was later described in the mid-1640s as retouched by Rubens when listed in the inventory of Arnold Lunden, see Vlieghe 1977, p. 198, no. 122 ('Le Banquet de Balthazar par l'Espagnolet retouché par Rubens').
¹⁶ Van Meurs 1640, no. 11 ('Vne Psyche avec vne bouteille à la main, retouchée par Titian'). This work then entered the collection of Frans Snyders where it is described as a work by Titian retouched by Rubens, see J.M. Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector*, Princeton 1989, p. 96, no. 11.
¹⁷ R. de Piles, *Conversations sur la connoissance de la peinture, et sur le jugement qu'on doit faire des tableaux, où par occasion il est parlé de la vie de Rubens, & de quelques-uns de ses plus beaux ouvrages*, Paris 1677, p. 218.
¹⁸ E. Malone (ed.), *The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knight; Late President of the Royal Academy*, vol. II, London 1798, p. 281.





THE PROPERTY OF A FAMILY

6

JAN MOSTAERT

Haarlem 1475–1555

Saint Hubert in a landscape

oil on oak panel
57.2 x 82 cm.; 22½ x 32¼ in.

± £ 100,000-150,000

PROVENANCE

Possibly Baron Maurice de Hirsch (1831–1896);
Watelin collection;
By whom sold, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 17 November 1919,
lot 70 (as attributed to Henri Met de Bles);
Sir John Frecheville Ramsden (1877–1958), 6th Bt,
Bulstrode, Gerrards Cross, Bucks;
By whom sold, London, Christie's, 11 July 1930, lot 51,
to J. Howard for £252 (as Joachim de Patinir);
Where acquired by a private collector, Switzerland;
Thence by inheritance to his wife;
By whom anonymously sold, Lucerne, Galerie Fischer,
16 November 1954, lot 1855;
Where acquired by Dr Frans Heulens, Brussels, by 1955;
J. Christiaens;
By whom sold ('The Property of J. Christiaens, Esq.').
London, Phillips, 13 May 1986, lot 50;
Thereafter acquired by the father of the present owners.

EXHIBITED

Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten, *Keizer Karel en
Zijn Tijd*, 3 April – 30 June 1955, no. 86, reproduced
fig. 14 (lent by Dr. Frans Heulens, Brussels);
Mechelen, Comité stad Mechelen voor de
Wereldtentoonstelling, *Margareta van Oostenrijk en
haar hof*, 26 July – 15 September 1958, p. 8, no. 63
(lent by Dr Frans Heulens, Brussels);
Toledo, Palacio de Fuensalida, *Pintura flamenca de
tiempos de Carlos V*, May–June 1969, no. 28.

LITERATURE

E.R.M. Taverne, 'Salomon de Bray's ontwerp voor de
drinkhoorn van Het Loffelijke Gilde van St. Hubert te
Haarlem', in *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*,
vol. 23, 1972, p. 271 n. 19;
J. Snyder, 'The Early Haarlem School of Painting', in *The
Art Bulletin*, vol. 53, no. 4, December 1971, p. 451 n. 41;
C. Eisler, *Complete Catalogue of the Samuel H. Kress
Collection: European Paintings, Excluding Italian*,
Oxford 1977, p. 88 n. 4 (as attributed to Jan Mostaert
and Joachim Patinir).



The legend of St Hubert (c. 656–727), the patron saint of hunters, animates this northern Netherlandish landscape by the Haarlem artist Jan Mostaert. Dating to about the second quarter of the sixteenth century, this painting reveals the influence of Antwerp artists on Mostaert from about 1520 onward, particularly evident here in the rich palette employed, the distinctly Mannerist figure in the foreground, and the lushly rendered panoramic view. As such, it is not surprising that for much of the early 20th century, several Antwerp artists were proposed as this painting's author, including Herri Met de Bles, Joachim Patinir, and Jan de Beer. Of further interest, in 1604, Karel van Mander recorded a landscape with St Hubert by Mostaert in the Prinsenhof in Haarlem.



Fig. 1 Jan Mostaert, *Portrait of a young man*. Oil and tempera on panel, 96.6 x 73.7 cm. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. © Wikimedia



Fig. 2 Jan Mostaert, *Portrait of an unknown woman*, c. 1525. Oil on panel, 64.3 x 49.5 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

In the middle-distance of this lush forest landscape is St Hubert, a young nobleman attired here in a red tunic with a sword and a horn at his waist. The legend recounts that on Good Friday, he embarked on a hunt in the forest of Ardennes. While on his quest, he encountered a stag with a crucifix between its antlers and heard a voice beckoning him to a religious life. The vision spurred him to dismount his horse, here tied to the tree at left, and kneel in repentance before the stag. Thereafter, he renounced his worldly goods and dedicated his life to Christianity, eventually becoming the first bishop of Liège.

Although in this scene St Hubert's hunt has ended, other members of his party continue with theirs. In the lower right foreground, for example, are two vibrantly and elegantly dressed huntsmen, one of whom holds a falcon. Their dynamic poses with their arms held aloft direct the viewer back not only to the central story at hand but also to the beautiful and mesmerizing landscape that recedes into the distance. Small figures populate the vista, and a quiet village appears nestled beneath a castle, as a mountainous view rises beyond.

Jan Mostaert was born to a mill owner in about 1474 in Haarlem, where he was active nearly all his life. He trained in his hometown under one Jacob van Haarlem, possibly identified today as the Master of the Brunswick Diptych, and by 1502 he entered the Guild of Saint Luke. His earliest works, which date to about 1500–1510, reveal the influence of Geertgen tot Sint Jans. Karel van Mander noted that Mostaert served as court painter to Margaret of Austria in Mechelen for eighteen years, and while this cannot be wholly substantiated today, it is probable that Mostaert worked for her for several years between about 1519–21. Back in Haarlem, he led a successful career primarily as a painter of portraits and devotional works, garnering a strong reputation among noble patrons. The influence of contemporary Antwerp painters is reflected in his output from the 1520s and 1530s, particularly visible, for example in some of his figural types as well as in the sweeping landscapes he often employed as a backdrop to his scenes.

The legend of Saint Hubert, the patron saint of hunting, would have held particular significance in Haarlem during Mostaert's lifetime in the early sixteenth century, because the city had a confraternity dedicated to him. It is fitting, therefore, that the story should feature regularly in Mostaert's body of work. In addition to the present panel, St Hubert appears, for example, in the background of his *Portrait of a*

Young Man in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (fig. 1)¹ and in his *Portrait of a Woman* in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (fig. 2).² Furthermore, Karel van Mander in his *Het Schilder-boek* recorded a *Landscape with Saint Hubert* by Jan Mostaert in the Prinsenhof in Haarlem, characterising it as 'a picture which shows how carefully this old painter worked and how he studied life and nature.'³ It has even been suggested by several art historians that the lost work by Mostaert seen by Van Mander may be the present panel.

Another version of this composition is recorded in a panel formerly in the Samuel H. Kress collection and today in the Portland Art Museum in Portland, Oregon.⁴ That example, while very similar in composition, is much more loosely painted and has at various times been linked to Jan de Beer as well as artists in the circles of Joachim Patinir and Jan Wellens de Cock.⁵ These artists have also been connected to the present panel throughout its history, particularly as in relation to its Mannerist elements. Since 1955, however, when this panel featured in the Ghent exhibition dedicated to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, Jan Mostaert has been recognized as the author of this panel. In a letter of 1971 to Dr. Frans Heulens, a former owner of this painting, James Snyder (1928–1990) confirmed his intention to include this painting in his monograph on Jan Mostaert, although this project was ultimately never completed.⁶

Recent dendrochronological analysis of this panel concludes that the panel is made of two oak boards. Only the top board is datable. It is from the eastern Baltic region, with the latest heartwood ring of 1500. Allowing for the minimum likely amount of missing sapwood, this panel board dates from between c. 1506 and c. 1540.⁷ It is highly likely that this panel would have been available for use by the 1520s.

We are grateful to those consulted for their opinion on this painting.

¹ Inv. no. WAG 1018; oil on oak panel, 95.2 x 74.4 cm.

² Inv. no. SK-A-3843; oil on panel, 62.8 x 48 cm.

³ K. van Mander, *Het-Schilder-boeck*, C. van de Wall (trans.), New York 1936, p. 131.

⁴ Inv. no. 61.50; oil on panel, 31.8 x 57.2 cm. Samuel H. Kress Foundation Number K1887.

⁵ Eisler 1977, p. 88.

⁶ A digital image of Snyder's letter is available upon request.

⁷ Dendrochronological Consultancy Report 1558, Ian Tyers, June 2024.



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE COLLECTION

7

ALESSANDRO DI MARIANO FILIPEPI, CALLED BOTTICELLI, AND STUDIO

Florence 1444–1510

The Virgin and Child, with a landscape beyond

mixed media and gilding on panel, transferred to canvas
76.2 x 49.5 cm.; 30 x 19 1/2 in.

± £ 3,000,000-5,000,000

PROVENANCE

Alfred de Rothschild CVO (1842–1918), at 1 Seamore Place, London;

By whom bequeathed to his daughter Almina Herbert, Countess of Carnarvon (1876–1969);

Her sale *et al.*, London, Christie's, 22 May 1925, lot 58, where purchased by P. & D. Colnaghi for 330 guineas (listed in the catalogue as removed from 1 Seamore Place), to Colnaghi;

With P. & D. Colnaghi, London, by whom held in half-share with M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 26 May 1926 (recorded as no. 16183 in Knoedler stock book 7);

From whom bought by Count Contini, January 1927, for £550;

John E. Aldred (1864–1945) and his wife (*d.* 1948), Lattintown, Long Island;

Their sale ('Property of Mr and Mrs John E. Aldred'), New York, Parke-Bernet Galleries, 6 December 1940, lot 6 (as Sandro Botticelli and bottega), for \$1300, to A. Cohen;

By descent to his son;

By whom sold ('The Property of a Private Collector, New York'), New York, Sotheby's, 17 January 1985, lot 37 (as studio of Botticelli);

Anonymous sale, New York, Sotheby's, 'Arts of the Renaissance', 25 January 2001, lot 55 (as Botticelli), for £850,000;

Where acquired by a private collector, Rio de Janeiro;

By whom sold by private treaty through Sotheby's to an English private collection in 2012;

From whom acquired by private treaty through Sotheby's the following year by the present owner.

EXHIBITED

New York, Piero Corsini, *Important Old Master Paintings and Discoveries of the Past Year*, 1–29 November 1986, no. 2 (as Botticelli, c. 1489–92).

Once in the Rothschild collection, this animated painting of the Virgin and Child is a characteristic late work by Botticelli and his studio. It last appeared at auction in the *Arts of the Renaissance* sale held at Sotheby's in 2001, when it was attributed in full to Botticelli, largely on account of the support of the leading scholar on the artist, Everett Fahy, then curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Fahy regarded the present work to be typical of the type of image produced on speculation by Botticelli during his later years and so placed it in the 1490s. The painting had been considered a studio production until cleaning and examination with infrared reflectography brought about its reassessment. Indeed, more recent opinions on the picture's authorship have also been favourable, with some scholars considering it very likely executed in large part, if not entirely, by the master himself.



LITERATURE

Y. Yashiro, *Sandro Botticelli*, London and Boston 1925, vol. I, p. 247 (as school of Botticelli);

R. Van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, The Hague 1931, vol. 12, p. 227 (incorrectly described as having on the right a pillar decorated in *grisaille*);

R. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli*, London 1978, vol. II, pp. 152–53, under no. C67, 2 and 3 (under 'Workshop and school pictures', as a variant of the Colonna picture; the provenances of nos 2 and 3 are listed incorrectly as relating to different pictures but both refer to the present lot);

M. Cinotti (ed.), *Catalogo della pittura italiana dal '300 al '700*, Milan 1985, p. 111, reproduced (as workshop of Botticelli);

K. Christiansen, 'New York: Old Master Paintings (Piero Corsini)', exhibition review, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 129, no. 1008, March 1987, p. 211 (as workshop of Botticelli; 'too little is known about Botticelli's workshop practice to allow a proper conclusion');

L. Bellosi, 'Il recupero di un autografo del Botticelli', in *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 53, 2009, p. 152, reproduced p. 154, fig. 7 (as workshop of Botticelli).

A dynamically posed Christ Child presses his feet against the looped folds of his mother's cloak while twisting in her arms. They are framed by an architectural setting as if she had just stepped outdoors onto a terrace with him in her arms. She gazes tenderly at her Child, as her elegant hands wrap around him, pressing into his chubby thigh. He in turn raises his hand in blessing to an unseen figure outside the picture frame. Beyond the parapet, a verdant landscape with a church and other lakeside buildings extends beneath a clear blue sky. In the foreground a precious book – finely bound and with its clasps open – rests on a stone plinth.

Among the extant versions of this composition, this variant is regarded as the most refined. The quality of execution, coupled with the sophistication of the design, argue for this being the prime version of the composition, designed by Botticelli himself, carried out under his supervision and probably involving his direct participation. The composition is known in a number of repetitions by the workshop with differing levels of involvement from master and assistant and other paintings of lesser quality by followers. Notable among these is an almost full-length Virgin and Child in the Galleria Colonna, Rome



Fig. 2 Infrared reflectogram of the present lot, showing modifications to the design. © Sotheby's



Fig. 1 School of Botticelli, *The Virgin and Child*, last quarter of the 15th century. Oil on panel, 50.1 x 31.2 cm. Galleria Colonna, Rome

(fig. 1), ascribed to Botticelli's school, which is smaller in scale and depicts the Virgin and Child standing in a narrow niche.¹ The figural arrangement found here features in a few other examples – albeit with compositional differences – including a panel recorded in the collection of Luigi Grassi in 1905, which Bellosi judged to be of more modest quality than the present work.² Other related compositions include three in tondo format, among them one in the Jacquemart André collection at Châalis.³ The superior quality of this painting is apparent.

In 2012 technical analysis carried out by Shawn Digney-Peer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art revealed interesting information that suggests that the master himself played a leading role in the design and execution of the work. In particular, the painting was studied with infrared reflectography (IRR) to reveal underdrawing that is freely and skilfully executed and typical of Botticelli himself (fig. 2). Numerous changes can be seen in the setting out of the figures, for instance, in the contours of the Madonna and Child, their limbs, drapery, facial features and most obviously the position of the Christ Child's eyes and the fingers of his raised hand, as well as their overall placement. Modifications to the composition's framework are also in



evidence. Architectural elements were drawn into the wet gesso with a stylus; these incisions are visible to the naked eye and characteristic of the artist's working practice. Incised lines demarcate the moulding in the wall behind the Virgin, the doorway to her right, the parapet to the left, and the repositioning of the stone ledge in the foreground, where the adjustment to a less steeply angled edge is readily discernible.

This painting, together with some of the known variants, is recorded by Ronald Lightbown in his publication of 1978, which examines Botticelli's life, artistic development and body of work. There he took a restrictive view of the artist's production, accepting only a small portion of works as autograph and relegating the majority to the studio. This painting is listed under workshop and school pictures as a variant of the Colonna picture, and implicitly as a derivation, which it patently is not. Its provenance is incorrectly separated as relating to two distinct pictures, which suggests Lightbown had neither recent nor first-hand knowledge of the painting. At the Fondazione Zeri, it is classified by Federico Zeri as a school picture and as an autograph work by Botticelli in the Fototeca Fahy.⁴ In 1986 the painting was exhibited in New York by Pietro Corsini in a show of recent discoveries. In his review of that exhibition, Keith Christiansen pointed out that among the known variants this picture merited interest on account of its superior quality and the various changes made between the design stage and its final realization in paint.⁵ He acknowledged the changes visible in infrared light without reaching a definitive judgement 'too little is known about Botticelli's workshop practice to allow a proper conclusion'. Today Christiansen's view of the painting remains unchanged, namely that it is a workshop production of fine quality with very lively underdrawing.⁶ Other art historians consulted recently take a more positive view and consider this work to be by Botticelli with some studio participation.

While Botticelli's studio played a more active role in the final decades of his career, and as such, the involvement of studio assistance cannot be discounted, Laurence B. Kanter and others have noted that from the late 1480s onwards Botticelli's workshop evolved from a traditional atelier practice into a more efficient commercial production.⁷ Many of the domestic devotional pictures made in Botticelli's workshop in these years were joint endeavours and his methods would often require mechanical intervention, seen for example in the use of cartoons, and varying degrees of direct involvement. The study of Botticelli's workshop practice is an area that is being re-examined. Today many paintings that are accepted as works by Botticelli himself or by Botticelli with assistance from his workshop were for a long time dismissed as purely workshop derivations. As Kanter explains, the old paradigm favoured by Lightbown and others, of one prime version and lots of workshop copies does not match Botticelli's working procedure. With regard to this painting, Kanter agrees fully with Fahy's assessment of its authorship and would add only that in his view he would date it to the late 1490s, perhaps even into the following decade. On the basis of digital images Kanter says of the painting that it looks lovely and largely, perhaps fully, autograph, with beautiful passages in the draperies.⁸

We are grateful to all those consulted for their views.



Fig. 3 Photograph of the interior of 1 Seamore Place, London, where the Botticelli was displayed. © Bridgeman Images

Note on Provenance

At the turn of the 20th century the present work belonged to the distinguished banker, art collector and philanthropist Alfred de Rothschild (1842–1918), second son of Lionel de Rothschild and Baroness Charlotte von Rothschild, who lived at 1 Seamore Place in London and built his country retreat, Halton House, in Buckinghamshire.

While at Trinity College, Cambridge, Alfred de Rothschild befriended the Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII and at the age of just 26 became a member of the Board of the Bank of England. A passionate collector, he was on the board of both the National Gallery and the Wallace Collection. On his death in 1918 he bequeathed the present work to his only issue, his daughter Almina who in 1895 married George Herbert, 5th Earl of Carnarvon of Highclere Castle, Hampshire. Her vast dowry of £500,000 enabled her to maintain her husband's country seat and furthermore to finance Howard Carter's remarkable expedition to excavate Tutankhamun's tomb in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt which was opened to great international acclaim in 1922.

In 1925 the Countess of Carnarvon sold many of the great paintings from Seamore Place at auction at Christie's in London, including the present work (as lot 58). A photograph of the interior of Seamore Place gives an impression of the grand interiors of the house decorated in the *goût* Rothschild (fig. 3).

¹ Oil on panel, 50.1 × 31.2 cm. Reproduced in E.A. Safarik and G. Milantoni, *Catalogo sommario della Galleria Colonna in Roma. Dipinti*, Rome 1981, p. 40 no. 30.

² Lightbown 1978, vol. II, p. 152, under no. C67, 1 (as an oblong panel formerly with Grassi, then Bohler); recorded with Sarti in Paris in 1998. Bellosi 2009, p. 152, reproduced on p. 155, fig. 8 (as workshop of Botticelli). Fototeca Fahy, Fondazione Zeri, Bologna, no. 106349.

³ Lightbown 1978, vol. II, p. 153 under no. C67.

⁴ Fondazione Zeri, Bologna, no. 14535.

⁵ Christiansen 1987, vol. 129, no. 1008, p. 211.

⁶ Email communication, 10 May 2024.

⁷ As discussed in the context of *The Virgin and Child seated before a classical window*, sold Sotheby's, London, 3 July 2019, lot 4 (as Botticelli and studio), for £2,500,000; see also the saleroom notice.

⁸ Email communication, 10 May 2024.





PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE COLLECTION

8

CESARE DANDINI

Florence 1596–1657

A pair: Saint Dorothy of Capadoccia; Saint Catherine of Alexandria

both inscribed by a later hand on the reverse: *Di Cesare Dandini*
a pair, both oil on unlined canvas, octagonal
the former: 120.6 x 101.2 cm; 47½ x 39⅞ in.
the latter: 121.3 x 102.5 cm.; 47¾ x 40⅜ in.
(2)

± £ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

Del Chiaro family, Palazzo del Chiaro, Via de' Ginori, Florence;

Pier Giovanni del Chiaro, by whom donated with the contents of the Palazzo del Chiaro to the charitable confraternity the Compagnia della Purificazione della Vergine e di San Zenobi, Chiesa di San Marco, Florence;

By whom sold with the entire del Chiaro collection by auction in 1743;

Probably acquired soon thereafter by Sir Francis Dashwood, 2nd Bt, later Lord Le Despencer (1708–1781), West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire; Thence by family descent to Sir Francis Dashwood, 11th Bt (1925–2000), West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire;

By whom sold, London, Christie's, 11 April 1986, lot 76, to Algranti;

Victoria Press (1927–2015), Cheyne Walk, London;

Her sale ('Cheyne Walk, An Interior by Victoria Press'), London, Christie's, 18 November 2015, lot 120;

There acquired by the present collector.

EXHIBITED

London, Royal Academy and Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, 20 January – 18 February and 27 February – 28 March 1979, *Painting in Florence 1600–1700*, nos 12 and 13;

Augsburg, Schaezlerpalais, *Im Schatten der Medici: Barocke Kunst Aus Florenz*, The Haukohl Family Collection, 20 October – 20 January 2019;

Remagen, Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck, *In the Light of the Medici: Baroque Art of Italy*, 10 February – 8 September 2019;

Braunschweig, Städtisches Museum, *Im Licht der Medici: Kunst des Barock aus Florenz*, The Haukohl Family Collection, 15 March – 27 September 2020;

Luxembourg, Musée National d'histoire et d'art Luxembourg, *Im Schatten der – Barocke Kunst aus Florenz*, 15 October 2020 – 14 February 2021;

Brussels, Bozar Centre for the Fine Arts, *Beyond the Medici: The Haukohl Family Collection*, 25 April – 21 July 2023, nos 3a and 3b.



These two beautifully preserved unlined canvases of Saint Dorothy of Capadoccia and Catherine of Alexandria were painted in Florence in the mid- to late 1640s. Their author, Cesare Dandini (1596–1656), was one of the leading painters of the Florentine Baroque. A youth of exceptional physical beauty, he matriculated from the Accademia del Disegno in Florence in 1621 and by the middle of the same decade was an independent master. This pair of paintings with their rich colours and highly decorative elements are typical of the finest work of his later years, painted in what his biographer Filippo Baldinucci (1624–1697) described as his ‘maniera vaga’ (‘dreamy or poetic style’).¹ By this date Dandini’s refined and elegant works such as these had earned him great popularity and a high reputation in his native city, and he could number Don Lorenzo de’ Medici (1599–1648) among his many patrons. Perhaps originally painted for the Del Chiaro family, in whose well-known collection in their Palazzo on the Via de’ Ginori they hung until 1741, this pair were soon after acquired by the notorious English Grand Tourist and connoisseur Sir Francis Dashwood (1708–1781) for his country seat at West Wycombe Park in Buckinghamshire, from whose descendants they were bought over two hundred and fifty years later by the famous American connoisseur and designer Victoria Press (1927–2015).



(detail of inscription on reverse of unlined canvas)

LITERATURE

Inventory of the Del Chiaro family picture gallery, Palazzo del Chiaro, dated 7 August 1741, in Archivio di Stato Firenze, *Compagnie Religiose soppresse da Pietro Leopoldo, Compagnia della Purificazione della Vergine e di San Zenobi*, no. 1659, Florence, n.p., no. 270: 'Due quadri con cornice nera con rapport Dorati e parte di detta cornice dorata fatti in figura di ottangolo che in uno vi è il ritratto di S. Caterina delle route e nell'altro il ritratto di S. Rosa [sic] di Cesare Dandini' ('Two paintings with black frames with gilded touches and part of the said frame gilded with octagonal figures which in one is the portrait of Saint Catherine of the wheels and in the other, the portrait of Saint Rosa by Cesare Dandini');

T. Langley, *The History and Antiquities of the Hundred of Desborough and Deanery of Wycombe, in Buckinghamshire*, London 1797, pp. 415–17, as hanging in the Drawing Room;

Inventory, Hanover Square 1781–West Wycombe Park 1782, no. 25, as hanging in the Portico Room;

Apollo Magazine, January 1979 (*Saint Dorothy* reproduced fig. 4);

C. McCorquodale, 'A Dark Century. The English Taste for Later Tuscan Painting', *The Connoisseur*, March 1979, p. 176, nos 8 and 9, reproduced;

C. McCorquodale, in *Painting in Florence*, exh. cat., London 1979, pp. 38–41, nos 12 and 13;

G. Cantelli, *Repertorio della pittura fiorentina del Seicento*, Fiesole 1983, p. 57;

S. Bellesi, *Cesare Dandini*, Turin 1996, pp. 38, 168–69, no. 113, both reproduced;

S. Bellesi in *Teatralità del Barocco Fiorentino*, F. Berti and G. Luzzetti (eds), exh. cat., Florence 2007, p. 40, no. 5;

F. Baldassari, *La pittura del Seicento a Firenze: Indice degli artisti e delle loro opere*, Milan 2009, p. 255;

S. Bellesi, *Catalogo dei Pittori Fiorentini del '600 e '700*, 3 vols, Florence 2009, vol. I, p. 121;

G. Cantelli, *Repertorio della pittura fiorentina del Seicento*, 2 vols, Pontedera 2009, vol. I, p. 71;

F. Berti, in *Beyond the Medici. The Haukohl Family Collection*, Milan 2018, pp. 122–27, nos 3a and 3b, reproduced in colour;

Apollo Magazine, April 2023 (*Saint Dorothy* reproduced in colour);

P.B. Kerber, 'Francis Dashwood's Paintings Collection at West Wycombe: the Tuscan Influence', in *Art and the Country House*, essay 20 November 2020, <https://doi.org/10.17658/ACH/WWE547>.

These two early Christian saints were among the most important female martyrs of the early church and therefore are frequently paired together. Saint Dorothy was martyred in the city of Caesarea in Cappadocia in 303 at the command of the Roman governor Fabricius for failing to recant her Christian beliefs. She is shown here alongside an angel, dressed as an elegant young woman wearing her attribute of a crown of flowers and gesturing to a basket of roses.² According to the *Golden Legend*, having refused marriage on the grounds that she was already the bride of Christ, she was taunted by a lawyer called Theophilus on her way to execution, who asked her to send him roses and apples from 'the garden of her heavenly bridegroom'. After her execution, however, a child appeared to Theophilus at his home carrying a basket of roses and apples for him. At this miracle he promptly converted to Christianity, only to suffer martyrdom in his turn, for which he too was later elevated to sainthood. The fourth-century Saint Catherine (c. 287–305) from the city of Alexandria in Egypt, who was after the Magdalene perhaps the most revered of all Christian female saints, is shown being crowned with a garland of flowers by an angel, and holds a palm, symbol of her martyrdom. In her left hand she holds the wheel, symbolic of her torture and death at the hands of the Roman emperor Maxentius II (c. 270–313), who was reputedly angered by her preaching and probably even more by her refusal of his advances. She sits at a table where a book indicates her prowess as a scholar, by which she bested no fewer than fifty philosophers sent by the emperor to undermine her faith. Unsuccessfully tortured by no less than four spiked wheels, all of which were consumed by heavenly fire, she was later summarily beheaded.





Fig. 1 Cesare Dandini, *Allegory of Charity*, 1640s. Oil on canvas, 199.7 x 105.4 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. © Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Dandini largely adheres to the Florentine tradition of bold colour contrasts and elegant, linear compositions begun by his masters Francesco Curradi (1570–1661) and Cristofano Allori (1577–1621) and others at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Both the present canvases may be compared to one of the painter's acknowledged masterpieces, Dandini's elegant and sumptuously coloured canvas of *Charity* in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, in which the female figure also sits at the foot of a column and wears the same blue headdress and floral crown as Saint Dorothy in the present pair (fig. 1).³ Bellesi dates all three paintings to the 1640s, and further compares the present pendants stylistically with the *Calliope* in the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, and the *Allegory of Comedy* in the Cassa di Risparmio, Prato, both from the first half of the decade. The same model or head study used for the angel in *Saint Dorothy* also recurs in other works from this period, such as the *Saint Catherine in meditation crowned by an angel* in the Luzzetti collection in Florence.⁴ The distinctive facial types of the women, with their staring eyes, long straight noses and delicate, almost marmoreal, complexions – which (according to Baldinucci) led the painter Giovanni da San Giovanni (1592–1636) to say that they 'seemed to be made of glass' – are typical of this mature phase of Dandini's career and may be found in many other pictures of this date, such as the *Virgin and Child* in the Bigongiari collection, Florence. This aspect of Dandini's fully evolved style was probably the legacy of his contact in his formative years with Cristofano Allori and was at its best in paintings such as these, where there are relatively few figures and little movement. Another autograph version of the *Saint Catherine* of purely rectangular format is recorded by Bellesi in the church of Santi Quirico and Lucia in the Ambrogiana in Montelupo Fiorentino, which he also dates to the late 1640s.⁵ Federico Berti records a related red chalk



Fig. 2 Cesare Dandini, *Study for the leg of the angel in Saint Dorothy*, 1640s. Red chalk on paper, 29.6 x 20.6 cm. Formerly collection of Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti (1712–1783). © Karl & Faber Kunstauktionen, Munich

study of the right leg of the angel carrying flowers in the *Saint Dorothy* which was originally part of a collection of graphic works by the Dandini family formed by Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti (1712–1783) in the eighteenth century and which was sold Munich, Karl and Faber, 11 November 2016, lot 131 (fig. 2).⁶

These paintings were probably acquired by Sir Francis Dashwood on his second trip to Italy from late 1739 to the following autumn. He arrived in Florence on the 6 December 1739, and after visiting Siena left for Rome in the New Year, when he sent a letter ‘about wine, general debauchery and mayhem’ to Lord Boyne.⁷ He was certainly back in Florence by 6 September 1740, when Lady Pomfret visited his ‘Academy’, but seems to have left in early October. Character references from early sources are not entirely flattering about Sir Francis. The French scholar Charles de Brosses, Comte de Tournay (1709–1777) described ‘*le chevalier Ashewd*’ as ‘*Un des plus comiques hommes du monde*’, while Horace Walpole (1717–1797), who had formed a decidedly low opinion of him, later remarked that Dashwood was ‘seldom sober’ the whole time he was in Italy. While there, however, Dashwood had met Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu (1689–1762) and befriended the well-known antiquary and coin collector the Abbé Antonio Niccolini (1701–1769), whose influence and advice were to prove invaluable, and his appreciation of art, and classical architecture in particular, was entirely genuine and well-informed. His travels in Italy and Greece led to him becoming a founder member of the Society of Dilettanti, 1732. Dedicated to ‘promoting knowledge and understanding of classical art and taste in England’, it was in Walpole’s words, ‘a club, for which the nominal qualification is having been in Italy, and the real one, being drunk’.⁸ Sir Francis – or ‘Saint Francis’ to his friends – went on to found further Societies, such as the Divan Club (1744–46), for fellow travellers to the Levant, and the infamous Order of the Friars of Saint Francis of Wycombe (1752–60) – only later known as the ‘Hellfire Club’ – which met at Medmenham Abbey, and whose drinking bouts, mock religious and occult ceremonies cemented his reputation as a libertine, rake and debauchee (fig. 3). Notwithstanding, his improvements to West Wycombe Park and the Church and Mausoleum of Saint Lawrence (whose tower was topped by a golden sphere appropriated as a drinking den) are testament to his architectural interests. Though these took precedence over the collecting of paintings, other pictures acquired by him in Italy included several unfashionable Tuscan Seicento works, among them a large *Sacrifice of Noah* by the Florentine Giovanni Martinelli (1610–1659), a *Magdalene* by Francesco Furini (1603–1646), allegories of *Faith* and *Charity* by the



Fig. 3 William Hogarth, *Portrait of Sir Francis Dashwood at his devotions*, late 1750s. Oil on canvas, 120 x 87.6 cm. Private collection. Here, Hogarth satirises Dashwood’s notorious reputation as a libertine. The traditional Italian iconography of Saint Francis of Assisi has been parodied: the crucifix has been replaced with a figure of Venus while a notorious contemporary erotic novel, the *Elegantiae latini sermonis*, takes the place of the Bible.

Sieneese Raffaello Vanni (1587–1673),⁹ and lastly, a grand *Poultry Market* by Adriaen van Utrecht (1599–1652), for which he paid £1500 in the belief that it was by Rubens.¹⁰ These and the Dandinis were probably all purchased through (and perhaps on the advice of) his agent in Livorno, the Huguenot Anthony Lefroy (1703–1779). Dashwood’s importance as a collector and connoisseur was, however, ultimately overshadowed by his notoriety. His political career did little to enhance his reputation; its apogée, his very brief stint as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1762–63, led to riots when he imposed a tax upon cider.

After their sale from West Wycombe Park in 1986, these canvases formed part of the distinguished collection of another celebrated collector, the famous American interior designer Victoria Press (1927–2015). They were hung in another famous eighteenth-century interior, that of Press’s London town house at no. 4 Cheyne Walk in Chelsea, a five-storey Queen Anne House originally built in 1717 where the writer George Eliot had briefly lived and died in 1880, which she and her husband the South African business magnate Sydney Press acquired in 1982 (fig. 4). Press had originally studied fashion under Claire McCardell before turning to interior decoration, successfully combining the two disciplines into a uniquely personal aesthetic vision. A ‘self-taught aesthete and connoisseur’,¹¹ she became highly knowledgeable in the fields of English furniture and ceramics, and her collection of Chinese *blanc de Chine* porcelain became one of the finest in private hands.

⁶ F. Balducci, *Notizie dei Professori del Disegno da Cimabue in qua*, 5 vols, Florence 1846–48, P. Barocchi (ed.), Florence 1975, vol. IV, pp. 549–62, with additional vols VI–VII (Appendix and Index).
⁷ In the Del Chiaro inventory she is incorrectly identified as the near-contemporary Dominican Saint Rosa da Lima (1586–1617), who is frequently depicted with a garland of roses upon her head, but who was not beatified until 1667.
⁸ Inv. 1969.283; canvas, 119.7 x 105.4 cm. Bellesi 1996, pp. 195–97, no. 68, reproduced.
⁹ Bellesi 2009, pp. 159–60, no. 103, reproduced p. 161, and in colour pl. XXXVIII.
¹⁰ Bellesi 2009, pp. 169–70, no. 114, reproduced.
¹¹ Berti 2018, p. 124, reproduced fig. 2. For the group see S. Bellesi, *Pittura e scultura a Firenze (secoli XVI a XIX)*, Florence 2017, pp. 63–71. Tozzetti was married in 1747 to Brigida Dandini, a relative of Cesare’s.
¹² One of the most damaging scandals to have emerged from this part of the trip was the story recounted by Horace Walpole that on Good Friday in Rome, Dashwood had attacked the worshipping flagellants in the Sistine Chapel with a horsewhip.
¹³ Letter to Horace Mann, 14 April 1743. H. Walpole, *Correspondence*, W.S. Lewis (ed.), Yale 1937–1983, vol. 18, p. 211.
¹⁴ Now National Trust, Osterley Park. Dashwood’s acquisitions also included a number of classical landscapes by or attributed to Orrizonte, Van Lint, Marco Ricci, Codazzi and Vanvitelli.
¹⁵ The former exhibited London and Cambridge 1979, no. 37.
¹⁶ See, for example, Marella Caracciolo Chia, ‘Victoria Press’s Blithe Spirit’, *New York Times Style Magazine*, 7 April 2015.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

9

EUSTACHE LE SUEUR

Paris 1616–1655

Allegory of Poetry

oil on canvas
130 x 97.5 cm.; 51¹/₈ x 38³/₈ in.

W ₣ £ 400,000-600,000

PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned directly from the artist by Jean-Baptiste Lambert (1608–1644), or his brother Nicolas Lambert de Thorigny (1613–1692), Hôtel Lambert, Paris;

Presumably by descent to the latter's grandson, Alexandre-Louis Lambert de Thorigny, until 12 April 1732;

From whom likely acquired by Marie-Anne-Armande Carton Fontaine (1684–1745) and her son-in-law Claude Dupin (1686–1769) and daughter Louise-Marie-Madeleine Fontaine (1706–1799), Hôtel Lambert, Paris, until 31 March 1739;

From whom acquired by Marquis Florent-Claude du Chastellet-Lomont (b. 1695) and his wife Gabrielle Émilie de Breteuil, Marquise du Châtelet (1706–1749), until 1745;

From whom acquired by Marin Delahaye (1684–1753), Hôtel Lambert, Paris, 1745–53;

Thence by inheritance to his brother, Marc-Antoine Delahaye de Bazinville (1702–1785), Hôtel Lambert, Paris;

Thence by descent to his daughter, Antoinette Marguerite Joseph Delahaye de Bazinville (1733–1813), Hôtel Fieubet, Paris;

Thence by descent until 2009;

By whom sold ('From the Hôtel Lambert'), Paris, Christie's, 23 June 2009, lot 88, for €1,353,000;

Where acquired by Noortman Master Paintings, Amsterdam;

By whom sold, New York, Sotheby's, 28 January 2016, lot 37, for \$970,000;

Where acquired for the present collection.

EXHIBITED

Maastricht, TEFAF, 12 March – 21 March 2010 and 18 March – 27 March 2011;

Paris, Palais de la Bourse, *Paris Tableau, Le salon international de la peinture ancienne*, 4–8 November 2011.

LITERATURE

Inventory listing in deed of purchase of Hôtel Lambert, Paris, 31 March 1739, Archives nationales, Minutier central, LXXXVIII–565, in Boyer 2012, p. 151;

Inventory of paintings from the collection of the deceased Marin Delahaye, Paris, 13 October 1753, Archives nationales, Minutier central, LVII–408, no. 1378, in Bailey 2001, p. 70;

C. Bailey, 'Poussin's *L'enfance de Bacchus* newly identified in two eighteenth-century collections', in *Mélanges en hommage à Pierre Rosenberg*, Paris 2001, p. 70, appendix I, no. 1378;

E. de Maintenant, 'Redécouverte d'une œuvre de jeunesse d'Eustache Le Sueur provenant de l'hôtel Lambert', in *L'Estampille – Objet d'Art*, no. 447, June 2009, pp. 26–27, reproduced in colour p. 26;

Paris Tableau, Le salon international de la peinture ancienne, exh. cat., Paris 2011, p. 14, reproduced in colour p. 14 (detail);

J.-C. Boyer, 'Voltaire à l'hôtel Lambert, de Gomberville à Le Sueur', in *Revue Voltaire*, no. 12, 2012, pp. 147–61, reproduced p. 148, fig. 1.

A striking masterpiece by the young Eustache Le Sueur, the *Allegory of Poetry* is an elegant composition displaying the influence of his master Simon Vouet (1590–1649). Datable to the early 1640s when his career as an independent artist in Paris was flourishing, this work exhibits the development of his own accomplished style that would soon establish him as one of the most important painters of seventeenth-century France and a leading proponent of Parisian Atticism. Rediscovered in 2009, after having been in the same family collection for generations and unknown to scholars, the painting was found to have hung at the renowned Hôtel Lambert in the eighteenth century, and was likely commissioned directly from Le Sueur by the Lambert family to decorate their residence.

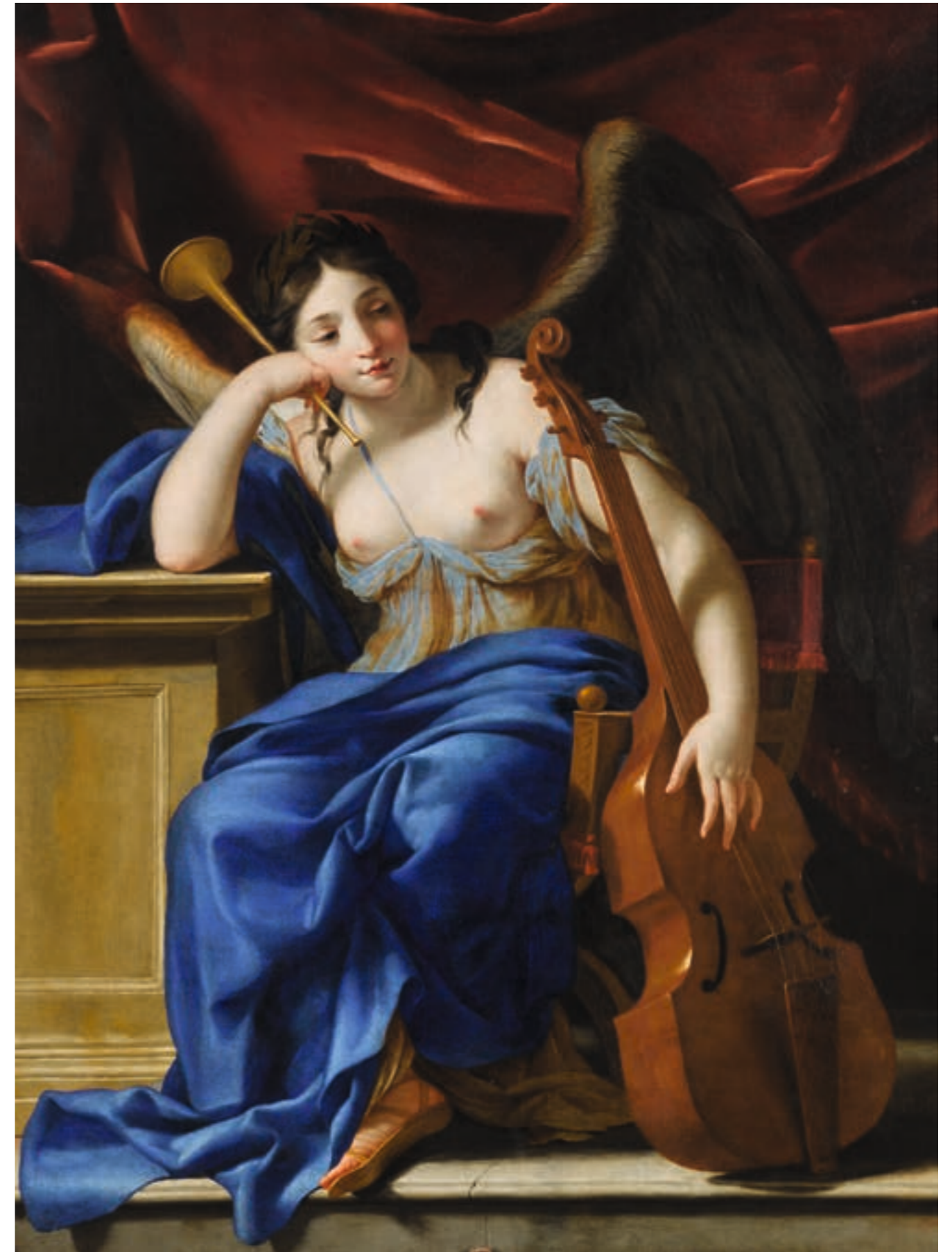




Fig. 1 The Hôtel Lambert, Paris, present day

The Hôtel Lambert sits at the eastern tip of the Ile Saint-Louis on the river Seine in Paris (fig. 1). Built between 1640 and 1644, it was designed by the architect Louis Le Vau (1612–1670) for the financier Jean-Baptiste Lambert (1608–1644). After Lambert's death in December 1644 – only about eight months after moving into the residence – his younger brother Nicolas Lambert de Thorigny (1613–1692) inherited the property and continued with its construction. It was Nicolas who commissioned most of the magnificent interior decoration, executed by the most famous French painters of the time, including Charles Le Brun (1619–1690), François Perrier (1590–1649) and Eustache Le Sueur, who in around 1646–47 executed a series of impressive canvases now in the Louvre, Paris (fig. 2). The subjects of their compositions explore themes relating to love and mythology, creating an innovative and coherent interior design that complemented the 17th-century architecture. After Nicolas's death, the residence passed by descent in his family until 1732. After that, it belonged to various owners, including Émilie du Châtelet (1706–1749), Voltaire's mistress, who sold it in 1745 to Marin Delahaye (1684–1753). Upon Delahaye's death in 1753, his brother Marc-Antoine Delahaye de Bazinville (1702–1785) inherited the property, and it is his direct descendants who in 2009 sold the *Allegory of Poetry*, having held it in the same family's ownership for more than two and a half centuries.





Fig. 2 Eustache Le Sueur, *Cupid orders Mercury, messenger of the Gods, to announce the Power of Love to the Universe*, c. 1646–47. Oil on canvas, 100 x 250 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. © Bridgeman Images



Fig. 3 Poesia, in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, 1593. © Fototeca Gilardi / Bridgeman Images



Fig. 4 Eustache Le Sueur, *The Triumph of Galatea*, c. 1643. Oil on canvas, 85.4 x 94 cm. Sold Sotheby's, New York, 8 June 2007, lot 368. © Sotheby's

The painting is first recorded in a document annexed to a deed of sale for the Hôtel Lambert dated 31 March 1739, where it is listed as an overdoor in the 'Grand Cabinet', a room that led to the 'Cabinet de l'Amour' in the state apartments.¹ While there are no records of the painting before this date, the earlier inventories of the Hôtel do not include the paintings that were inserted into elements of the décor, such as panelling, overdoors and ceilings, which likely accounts for its omission. The *Allegory of Poetry* is next recorded in an inventory dated 13 October 1753, where it is listed as *Music in the form of a winged woman*. This discrepancy is likely due to the presence of the trumpet and viola da gamba – the latter being a popular instrument in 17th-century France – although in fact the attributes of the figure in the present painting correspond directly with those of the allegorical figure of *Poesy* as described in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* of 1593, an influential emblem book that inspired many artists of the day (fig. 3). Common to both is the laurel wreath, blue robe and bare breast, as well as the stringed instrument and trumpet.

The present work was not included in the posthumous sale of Marin Delahaye's paintings held in 1754, nor in his widow's sale of 1778 but was kept by his brother Marc-Antoine Delahaye de Bazinville. It was subsequently inherited by his daughter, Antoinette Marguerite Joseph Delahaye de Bazinville (1733–1813) who brought it first to the Hôtel Fieubet, near the Ile Saint-Louis but on the right bank, and then in 1813 to her château, near Paris, where it was rediscovered almost two centuries later. Although the painting was unknown to Alain Mérot when he published his 1987 catalogue raisonné on the artist, he has subsequently endorsed its attribution.

Stylistically this painting shows a number of similarities to *The Triumph of Galatea*, which sold in these Rooms in 2007.² Datable to around to c. 1643, close comparison can be made between the female protagonists in each painting, particularly in the facial features which suggest they were both based on the same model (fig. 4). Somewhat unusually for a French artist of his stature, Le Sueur never left Paris for a tour of Italy but in 1632 was accepted into the studio of Vouet, who had returned from Rome in 1627. Le Sueur embraced the richness and sensuality of Vouet's paintings, while also developing a classical elegance and harmony in his work. By the 1640s, Le Sueur was fully established as one of the city's leading painters. In 1648 he was one of the twelve founding members of the Académie royale de peinture and he was appointed *Peintre Ordinaire du Roi* in 1649. His illustrious career was tragically cut short by his early death in 1655 at the age of just thirty-eight.

¹ Boyer 2012, p. 150 n. 8, fig. 3.

² Anonymous sale, New York, Sotheby's, 8 June 2007, lot 368, for \$99,000.



PROPERTY OF A NOBLEWOMAN

10

JOACHIM ANTHONISZ. WTEWAEL

Utrecht 1566–1638

Homo bulla: an allegory of the transience of life

inscribed on the later surround: *SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI*

oil on twelve-lobed silver, with three incuse marks of a four-leaf rosette

and two five-pointed stars on the reverse, inserted into a later painted rectangular wood panel

diameter of silver panel: 8 cm.; 3¹/₈ in.

overall panel: 13 x 11 cm.; 5¹/₈ x 4³/₈ in.

± £ 150,000-250,000

PROVENANCE

Pär Ulmgrens (1767–1846), Stockholm, no. 58 (?) (his collector's label affixed to the reverse);

Anonymous sale, Stockholm, Bukowski, 30 October – 1 November 1990, lot 302 (as RudolFINE Master circa 1600);

With Emmanuel Moatti, Paris, by 1992;

Acquired from Moatti, Sayn-Wittgenstein Fine Arts at TEFAF Maastricht, 15 March 1993.

EXHIBITED

Paris, Grand Palais, *XVIe Biennale des Antiquaires*, 18 September – 4 October 1992, no. 1.

LITERATURE

G. Georget and A.W. Lowenthal in *Moatti Tableaux Anciens*, exh. cat., Paris 1992, pp. 1–4, reproduced;

A.W. Lowenthal, 'Desire and Devotion in Wtewael's Art', in *Pleasure and Piety. The Art of Joachim Wtewael*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington; Centraal Museum, Utrecht; and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston 2015–16, Princeton 2015, p. 195 n. 18.

Joachim Wtewael was the most important exponent in the Netherlands of the last great phase of mannerist painting in northern Europe. His most successful and sought-after works were undoubtedly his small cabinet pictures, of which this remarkable *Vanitas* is an excellent and unusual example. Most of Wtewael's works in this vein were painted on his preferred surface of copper, but for this tiny cabinet piece he used pure silver, a rare and expensive support, the only known occasion on which he seems to have done so. The intimate scale of the panel, combined with the meticulous detail and smooth finish afforded by the polished silver surface, mark it out as a work of a very personal nature. Probably painted around 1605–10, its original purpose remains unknown, but it may have served as part of the decoration of a box of silver or rare wood, or bearing in mind its subject, a silver mirror or the top of an hourglass. As such it would have formed an erudite luxury item entirely appropriate for a collector's or princely cabinet or *Kunstkammer*. Wtewael's highly refined works of this type were enormously popular and earned him an international reputation. His contemporary biographer, Karel van Mander (1548–1606), writing in his *Het Schilder-boeck* (1604) ranked him 'among our best Netherlandish painters' and added that 'it would be difficult to say at which he is the more outstanding whether on a large or a small scale... One comes across many small pieces of excellent precision and neatness by him'.¹



Actual size



Fig. 1 Joachim Anthonisz Wtewael, *Mars, Venus and Cupid*. Oil on copper, oval, 13 x 10 cm. Private collection. © Sotheby's"



Fig. 2 Hendrick Goltzius, *Allegory of Transience ('Homo Bulla')*, 1595. Engraving. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. © Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund



Fig. 3 Joachim Anthonisz. Wtewael, *Allegory of transience*. Pen and black-brown, grey wash, edging line on all sides with the nib in brown (traces), on ribbed handmade paper, 85 x 85 mm. Städel Museum, Frankfurt

The subject of this *Vanitas* follows the old Roman adage of *Homo Bulla est* ('Man is a bubble'), a phrase coined by the Roman satirist Marcus Terrentius Varro (116–27 BC) and adapted by Erasmus for his *Adagia* of 1572, signifying man's impermanence, the inevitability of death and the folly of material possessions. Although the theme of Transience was already well-established, and increasingly popular in the emerging schools of contemporary still-life painting, this seems to have been the only time Wtewael treated it as a subject in its own right. His iconography here follows well established patterns. Set against a plain dark background, the naked child is seen blowing soap bubbles with a straw from a shell, traditional symbols of the ephemerality of life. The skull upon which he rests similarly acts as a *memento mori* reminding us of our universal mortality. The hourglass and the smoking cinerary urn beside him stand jointly for the rapid passing of Time, the former echoing the famous phrase '*fugit irreparabile tempus*' from Virgil's *Georgics*, and the latter recalling the words of Psalm 102, 3: 'For my days are consumed like smoke'. Just in front of the stone ledge upon which the child rests stand two dandelions, symbolic of the fleeting nature of life and hence also emblematic of decay. Collectively therefore this tiny piece of silver serves as a reminder to the beholder of the brevity of life and the consequent futility of striving after worldly pleasures and ambitions. This theme has been taken up by the later wooden frame – probably from the early nineteenth-century – upon which have been painted a butterfly, traditional symbol of both short life and the resurrected human soul, and the familiar inscription *SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI* ('Thus passes all worldly glory').

At the time of the 1992 exhibition in Paris, Anne Lowenthal proposed a date for the present silver of between 1605 and 1610 on the basis of comparison with other works by Wtewael dating from around this period. The same long golden haired child seen in the present painting, for example, reappears clothed in an almost identical pose, but in reverse, in the foreground of Wtewael's larger canvas of 1605 depicting a *Kitchen scene with the parable of the Great Supper* in the Bode Museum in Berlin.² The same child appears once more in the guise of Cupid in another intimate copper panel depicting *Mars, Venus and Cupid* of 1600–5 formerly in a private collection and sold London, Sotheby's 8 July 2015, lot 38 (fig. 1).³ For the figure of the child Wtewael was clearly aware of contemporary Netherlandish prints of the same subject, such as the well-known *Allegory of Transience* engraved in 1594 by Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617), a major influence upon his work, and from

whose design he may have adapted the pose of the child resting upon a skull (fig. 2).⁴ Wtewael himself, or more likely his studio, also painted a replica or copy of the present work, of the same dimensions but this time on a copper support.⁵ Although a full attribution of it to Wtewael himself was supported by Anne Lowenthal at the time of its sale back in 1986, the subsequent discovery of the present silver has rendered this doubtful. As Lowenthal then observed, the present composition was clearly the inspiration for a horizontal version of the subject on panel painted by Wtewael's son Pieter (1596–1660), in which the posture and gesture of the Child is reversed.⁶ As Lowenthal remarks, this may be the painting described as '*een belle blesertje*' ('a bubble blower') recorded in the inventory of the estate of Wtewael's son-in-law Johan Pater (1595–1642) and his wife Antonietta Pater-Wtewael (1603–1655), the artist's older daughter, in Utrecht in 1656.⁷

Although no other painting on silver by Wtewael of this type is known to us at present, the intriguing possibility that the present work was not unique is raised by the survival of a finished pen, ink and wash drawing of a figure of a young woman in the Städel Museum in Frankfurt am Main (fig. 3).⁸ The allegorical figure consists only of a single richly dressed young woman, who is depicted holding a smoking cinerary urn, which identifies her as an *Allegory of Transience*. She is clearly related to the present silver, both in terms of her size, and by the fact that she too is portrayed within an identical twelve-lobed circular format. The finished nature of the drawing hints that it may have been a preliminary model for an engraving, but if so, no print has survived nor any series to which it might have belonged. Whether that suggests that Wtewael had initially explored another design for this specific subject or commission, or that both works may have been intended to form part of a series of images in this format, must remain a matter for speculation.

¹ K. van Mander, *Het Schilder-boek: The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, 1603–4*, H. Miedema (ed.), Doornspijk 1994, vol. I (text), fol. 296v–297r, pp. 445–46.

² A.W. Lowenthal, *Joachim Wtewael and Dutch Mannerism*, Doornspijk 1986, pp. 112–14, reproduced pl. 52 and colour pl. X.

³ Lowenthal 1986, p. 99, no. A–19, reproduced pl. 30.

⁴ The motif of the child blowing bubbles with a straw is found in another engraving by Goltzius, this time of 1590, which is itself derived from a design by Agostino Carracci.

⁵ Anonymous sale, London, Christie's, 24 October 1986, lot 100 (as Wtewael).

⁶ Oil on panel, 55.5 x 77 cm. Sale New York, Christie's, 31 May 1979, lot 5. Lowenthal 1986, p. 177, no. D–6, reproduced fig. 167.

⁷ Lowenthal 1986, Appendix B, p. 191, no. 121.

⁸ Inv. no. 2963; pen and ink and grey wash on paper, 85 x 85 mm.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION, SOLD PURSUANT TO A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CONSIGNOR AND THE LIQUIDATORS OF LISSER & ROSENKRANZ BANK

11

JACQUES JORDAENS

Antwerp 1593–1678

Head study of a young woman

oil on oak panel
38.7 x 30.2 cm.; 15¼ x 11⅞ in.

± £ 150,000-200,000

PROVENANCE

Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam, by December 1919 (as Rubens);

From whom acquired by Thomas Agnew & Sons, London, 13 July 1923 (as Rubens);

From whom acquired by Franz Koenigs, Haarlem, 9 March 1928 (by whom lent to the Museum Boijmans, Rotterdam, from 1935–40);

Lisser & Rosenkranz Bank, by 1 June 1935 when ownership transferred as collateral for a loan;

With Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam, 19 April 1940 (on consignment alongside 34 other works from Lisser & Rosenkranz Bank);

Alois Miedl, Amsterdam, by early June 1940 (acquired together with 30 other paintings through the mediation of Jacques Goudstikker Kunsthandel NV after the occupation of The Netherlands on 10 May 1940);

By repute, Hermann Göring, Berlin;

Private collection, Switzerland, 1965;

Dr F. Schöni, Zurich, 1974 (as Rubens);

Georg Schäfer, Schweinfurt;

By whom sold ('From the Collection of Georg Schaefer, Schweinfurt'), London, Christie's, 7 July 1978, lot 166 (as attributed to Rubens, 'P.P. Rubens');

Where acquired by a private collector;

Thence by descent to the present owners.

EXHIBITED

Amsterdam, Maatschappij voor beeldende kunsten, *Collection Goudstikker d'Amsterdam*, 14 December 1919 – 4 January 1920, no. 63 (as Rubens).

London, Thomas Agnew & Sons, 1925 (as Rubens);

Amsterdam, Goudstikker, *Rubententoonstelling*, 1933, no. 55, reproduced (as Rubens, with incorrect measurements, lent by Frans Koenigs);

Rotterdam, Boijmans Museum, *Verzameling F. Koenigs Schilderijen*, 1935, no. 39, reproduced (as Rubens);

Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, *Le Siècle de Rubens*, 15 October – 12 December 1965, no. 208, reproduced (as Rubens, dated circa 1614–15).

LITERATURE

Catalogue de la Collection Goudstikker d'Amsterdam, Amsterdam 1919, no. 63, reproduced (as Rubens);

The Burlington Magazine, vol. 46, no. 264, March 1925, p. xxxvii, reproduced (as Rubens);

C. Sterling, *Rubens et son Temps*, exh. cat., Paris 1936, p. 115, under no. 58 (as Rubens, dated circa 1616);

J. Burckhardt, *Rubens*, Vienna 1937, reproduced pl. 49 (as Rubens);

L. Burchard and W. Burchard (ed.), 'Jordaens Head-Studies wrongly attributed to Rubens', in *Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts*, 1960, nos 3–4, pp. 175ff. (as Jordaens);

D.C. Rich, 'Head of a girl – a Study by Jordaens,' in *Worcester Art Museum Bulletin and Calendar*, 1964, XXIX, no. 7, np (as Jordaens);

L. van Puyvelde in *Le Siècle de Rubens*, exh. cat., Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Brussels 1965, pp. 197–8, no. 208, reproduced (as Rubens, dated circa 1614–1615);

M. Jaffé, *Jordaens*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ottawa 1968, p. 152, under no. 33 (as Jordaens);

E. Haverkamp-Begemann, in *European Paintings in the Collection of the Worcester Art Museum*, Worcester 1974, pp. 181–83 (as Jordaens);

E. Larsen, *Seventeenth Century Flemish Paintings*, Freren 1985, pp. 84, 111, 355, reproduced pl. 12 (as Rubens);

N. van Hout, *Rubens: Study Heads and Anatomical Studies*, *Study Heads*, London and Turnhout 2020, vol. 1, p. 55 n. 147.

Datable to about 1615–20, this arresting head study of a woman showcases the artistic and stylistic hallmarks of the young Jacques Jordaens, known also as Jacob Jordaens. The Antwerp master's youthful hand is found in the distinctly bold colour scheme and expressive brushwork, both used here to render the sitter's captivating presence. That this painting was ascribed to Peter Paul Rubens for much of the twentieth century is unsurprising since it was made during an important moment of artistic exchange between the two artists, when Jordaens was working in Rubens's atelier. Its reappearance after nearly half a century of private ownership allows a further appreciation of the confidence and versatility Jordaens demonstrated already at this nascent moment of his long and successful career.





Fig. 1 Jacques Jordaens, *Head of a girl*. Oil on panel, 38.4 x 29 cm. Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts. © Wikimedia



The present lot

In this head study, Jordaens captures a simply attired young woman in a bust-length format turned slightly to the right. With upturned eyes, she engages directly with the viewer, as a soft light illuminates her distinct features and casts delicate highlights on her eyelids, nose, and lips. The thick white strokes of her collar serve to draw out the full range of colour Jordaens used to capture her likeness. In addition to the rosiness of her cheeks, lips, and eyelids, he employs thick and varied tones of peach, beige, pink, green, and blue, among others, which together render her figure with a remarkable degree of dynamism. Graceful wisps of chestnut hair, otherwise secured in a hairpiece, frame her face. Despite her anonymous identity, this young model appears again in profile in a head study by Jordaens at the Worcester Art Museum in Worcester, Massachusetts (fig. 1).¹

Born to a wealthy cloth merchant in 1593, Jacques Jordaens began his artistic training in 1607 at the age of 14 with Adam van Noort, an Antwerp painter who later became his father-in-law. By 1615, Jordaens was received as a member of Antwerp's Guild of Saint Luke. Even from a young age, he was notably prolific, but because only a few early works by Jordaens are dated – such as his *Adoration of the Shepherds* of 1616 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,² and his *Daughters of Cecrops Finding the Child Erichthonius* of 1617 in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp,³ – a clear chronology of his youthful output is difficult to establish.⁴ Nonetheless, as discussed by Joost Vander Auwera, it seems almost certain that by about 1617 Jordaens, an independent master and guild member, was active in Rubens's workshop. Thus, it is hardly surprising that his works of the period, especially his early head studies, reveal a keen awareness of the techniques and working methods of Rubens.⁵

Some of Jordaens's head studies from the period, including this panel and the study on Worcester, were once ascribed to Rubens. One of the earliest published references of the present painting's attribution to Rubens can be found in the 1919 exhibition catalogue of Jacques Goudstikker. Thereafter, by way of Thomas Agnew & Sons, this painting entered the Haarlem collection of Frans Koenigs, who lent the painting in 1933 to the *Rubenstentoonstelling* exhibition in Amsterdam as Rubens, an attribution supported at the time by

several art historians, among them Leo van Puyvelde.⁶ For several decades, Ludwig Burchard, who found the quality of the execution of this head study to be remarkably high, considered attributions to both Rubens and Jordaens. Just before his death, however, he firmly landed on the side of the young Jordaens, and this attribution has held favour ever since.⁷

In 1960, Ludwig Burchard's son, Wolfgang, published an article based on his late father's notes on the present panel and the closely related profile study in the Worcester Art Museum (fig. 1). Although the connection between the two panels had already been noted earlier in the 20th century, Burchard was the first to suggest that both panels – which share similar dimensions, wood grain and loosely rendered backgrounds – may have once formed a single horizontal panel, with the Worcester example on the left and the present on the right. In his proposal, the shoulder of the Worcester panel would have extended into the lower left corner of the present lot. If the two works were once joined together, they were already separated into two independent works by at least 1898 and the Antwerp panel makers' guild brand on the reverse of Worcester panel provides a *terminus post quem* of 1617 for both works.

Like Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony van Dyck, twin oil studies of a single figure combined on a single panel were characteristic of Jordaens's *œuvre* early in his career. Some of these head studies were not only used by Jordaens himself for finished works but also by Rubens, who seems to have frequently made use of such studies painted by artists in his workshop.⁸ Such is the case in Jordaens's *Two studies of the Head of an Old Woman* of circa 1616 in the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy (fig. 2),⁹ the elderly woman of whom appears in several works that left Rubens's workshop in the late 1610s and early 1620s.¹⁰ Although the model for the present lot has yet to be definitively linked to a specific finished picture, her profile bears similarities to the model used for the figure on the far right of Rubens's *Lot and his Family Leaving Sodom* (circa 1613–15) in the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota,¹¹ as well as in Jordaens's copy of that painting from circa 1617–18 in the National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo.¹²



Fig. 2 Jacques Jordaens, *Two studies of the head of an old woman*. Oil on panel, 58.5 x 65.5 cm., Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy © Wikimedia

Note on Provenance

By 1928, this painting was part of the renowned collection of Franz Koenigs (1881-1941). In 1931 Koenigs borrowed funds from Lisser & Rosenkranz Bank and subsequently put forth his art collection as collateral. The majority of the bank's shareholders were Jewish, many of whom would come under persecution by the Nazis, and with the threat of a German invasion in the Spring of 1940, Lisser & Rosenkranz Bank was liquidated on April 2, 1940. The bank was forced to sell the collection, which included the present lot. Sotheby's is pleased to offer this painting following a settlement agreement between the consignor and the liquidators of Lisser & Rosenkranz Bank.

¹ Inv. no. 1963.96; oil on oak panel, 38.4 x 29.4 cm.

² Inv. no. 67.187.76; oil on canvas, transferred from panel, 106.7 x 72.2 cm., signed and dated 1616.

³ Inv. no. 842; oil on canvas, 169 x 279 cm.

⁴ For a full discussion of the youthful career of Jacob Jordaens, see J. Vander Auwera, 'The Young Jordaens', in *The Burlington Magazine*, 165, April 2023.

⁵ Vander Auwera 2023, pp. 376-77.

⁶ In the 1965 exhibition catalogue *Le Siècle de Rubens*, Leo van Puyvelde notes that he advised on an attribution to Rubens alongside Ludwig Burchard. See Van Puyvelde 1965, pp. 197-98. An attribution to Rubens was also endorsed in 1936 by Charles Sterling, who dated the work to about 1616.

⁷ In the spring of 1960, Ludwig Burchard came across a drawing then given to Jordaens in the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum in Braunschweig (inv. no. 189; 310 x 189 mm.), which records an older woman in profile. He linked that drawing stylistically to the present panel and its companion in Worcester.

In his 1974 catalogue of Jordaens drawings, R.-A. d'Hulst tentatively listed this drawing under doubtful attributions, further clarifying that if it was by Jordaens, it must date to the artist's earliest period. See R.-A. d'Hulst, *Jordaens Drawings*, London 1974, vol. II, p. 483, no. B5 and further discussed under no. 4, reproduced vol. V, fig. 451.

⁸ Van Hout 2020, pp. 54-55, p. 200-1. See also K. Bulckens and N. van Hout, *Turning Heads*, exh. cat., Antwerp and Dublin, 2023, especially pp. 74-87.

⁹ Inv. no. 91; oil on panel, 58.5 x 65.5 cm.

¹⁰ Van Hout 2020, pp. 200-1.

¹¹ Inv. no. SN218; oil on canvas, 220.3 x 243.8 cm.

¹² Inv. no. P.1978-0006; oil on canvas, 169.5 x 198.5 cm. For the proposed dating and connection between these two works, see Vander Auwera 2016, p. 376.





THE PROPERTY OF A GERMAN FAMILY

12

OSIAS BEERT THE ELDER

Antwerp (?) circa 1580 (?)–1624

Still life of flowers in a serpentine vase on a ledge

oil on oak panel, the reverse prepared with gesso
71.4 x 59 cm.; 28¹/₈ x 23³/₄ in.

± £ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

By family tradition acquired in the 19th century;
Thence by descent to the mother of the present owners.

LITERATURE

To be included in the forthcoming *catalogue raisonné*
by Dr Klara Alen, *Osias Beert. Pioneer of the Antwerp
laid table and flower still life.*

An exotic array of vibrantly coloured flowers fills this panel by Osias Beert the Elder, one of the most influential still-life painters of the seventeenth century. Most probably completed later in the Flemish artist's career, this work serves as a visual celebration of nature's abundance and transience. The composition is anchored by a bright yellow Crown Imperial (*Fritillaria imperialis*), and the dense bouquet set within a serpentine vase atop a wooden ledge teems with Beert's characteristically mesmerizing variety and detail, from the lush assortment of blossoms and foliage to the nearly ten butterflies dappled throughout. The painting's overall impact epitomises the evocation of exoticism and luxury that defined most of the earliest Flemish still-life paintings.

Although very little is known of his biography, Osias Beert was a pivotal figure at the forefront of the development of the still-life genre in the Netherlands—a position he held alongside his contemporaries Ambrosius Bosschaert the Elder, Roelant Savery and Balthasar van der Ast. Described in period documents as a cork merchant, Beert became a master in the Guild of Saint Luke in Antwerp in 1602 and married Marquerite Ykens in 1606. That a large number of students came under his tutelage is a testament to the high regard in which his artistic talents were held until his death in 1623.¹ Indeed, his reputation as a still-life specialist was even called upon by Peter Paul Rubens in about 1612–15 for the floral arrangement in his *Pausias and Glycera*.²





Fig. 1 Osias Beert the Elder, *Floral still life*. Oil on panel, 71 x 52 cm. Staatsgalerie Neuburg, Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlungen



Fig. 2 Osias Beert the Elder, *Floral still life*. Oil on panel, 73.5 x 53.5 cm. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg. © Bridgeman Images



Nearly all of the flowers in this refined still-life are identifiable, including several types of roses, anemones, lilies, and at least ten different tulips. That not all of these flowers bloomed at the same time during the year suggests that Beert either painted with a particular level of patience or worked from sketches and prints. Surmounting the scene is a yellow Imperial Crown, beneath which all of the flora are arranged fairly symmetrically. The fleeting nature of these blooms, the fallen petals, and the small scattered holes in the foliage collectively evoke the theme of *vanitas*, a theme that characterized many Netherlandish still-life paintings of this period.

Because Beert never dated his works, a chronology of his output is difficult to obtain. The complexity of the composition of the present example, however, suggests it is a mature work by the artist painted between 1615 and 1623. Several hallmarks of Beert's hand are found throughout this panel: delicate touches of white and pink delineate each flower, rounded edges define the wings of the butterflies, a sense of balance pervades the scene, and well-preserved hues of lead-yellow brighten the palette, even today, centuries later. It was already well-known in the 17th century that characteristically thin high-quality Flemish panels were prone to warping, which is why the most expensive ones were often prepared with gesso on both sides, a technique that solved the problem. A reverse prepared with gesso such as the present one naturally obscures any Guild brand or panel-maker's mark.

Beert's extant corpus numbers around fifty or so works. Some of these still lifes depict fruit and food, most famously oysters, while the others depict flowers. The present example is one of at least eight other floral pieces in serpentine vases known by the artist. In its style and composition, this work can be closely compared to two still-lives by Beert in which he reimagines and reinterprets the scene: one in the Staatsgalerie Neuburg (fig. 1),³ and the other in the Kunsthalle in Hamburg (fig. 2).⁴

¹ Among the artists counted among Beert's students were his nephew, Frans Ykens, Frans van der Borch, Paulus Pontius and Jan Willemsen, among others.

² The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, inv. no. SN 219; oil on canvas, 203.2 x 194.3 cm.

³ Inv. no. 5869, oil on panel, 71 x 52 cm.

⁴ Inv. no. E-706, oil on panel, 73.5 x 53.5 cm.



13

LUDOLF BACKHUYSEN

Emden 1630–1708 Amsterdam

The *Koning Willem III* and other ships in the sea-roads off Texel

signed in monogram upper centre, on the flag that tops the ship in the foreground: *LB*

oil on canvas

55.9 x 71.1 cm.; 22 x 28 in.

± £ 100,000-150,000

PROVENANCE

With John Smith & Son, London;

By whom sold to Thomas Henry Allen Poynder (1814–1873), Hartham Park, Wiltshire, on 21 October 1865, for £200;

By descent to his grandson, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, later 1st Baron Islington, GCMG, GBE, DSO, KStJ, PC (1866–1936), Hartham Park, Wiltshire;

With Alan Jacobs Gallery, London, by September 1979;

By whom sold to a private collector, New Hampshire;

By whom sold, Maine, Barridoff Auctions, 4 August 2006, lot 7, for \$375,750;

Where acquired by the present owner.

EXHIBITED

Atlanta, High Museum of Art; Denver, Denver Art Museum; and Seattle, Seattle Art Museum, *Inspiring Impressionism: The Impressionists and the Art of the Past*, 16 October 2007 – 13 January 2008; 23 February – 25 May 2008; and 19 June – 21 September 2008, no. 1.

LITERATURE

Day Book of John Smith & Son, MS, 3 June 1848 – March 1867, vol. IV, 21 October 1865, p. 666;

C. Gully, 'Ludolf Bakhuisen: Marine Painter', in *The Antique Collector*, vol. 55, no. 8, 1984, pp. 27–28, reproduced in colour fig. 8;

F. Suzman Jowell, in *Inspiring Impressionism: The Impressionists and the Art of the Past*, A. Dumas (ed.), exh. cat., Denver 2007, pp. 94, 257, no. 1, reproduced in colour.

Signed in monogram on the flag that tops the *kaag* in the foreground, this atmospheric painting by Ludolf Backhuysen was described by Gerlinde de Beer as an 'exemplary seascape' with 'clear symbolic references'.¹ Indeed, in his majestic depiction of the *Koning Willem III*, Backhuysen alludes to the honourable deeds of her namesake, King William III (1650–1702). Adorned with no less than five Dutch flags, the ship is masterfully painted sailing on a broad reach, towards the coastline. The artist's portrayal of another ship of similar size, sailing close hauled, imbues the scene with further symbolism, on account of the pelican motif emblazoned on its taffrail, which represented self-sacrifice in 17th-century humanist ideology. Backhuysen's deployment of this emblem alongside a boat named after the King thus associates his rule with this noble act. As such, this painting – which must date to the artist's mature period, given that the *Koning Willem III* was launched in 1688 – is among his most overtly symbolic and patriotic seascapes.





Fig.1 Ludolf Backhuysen, *The merchant shipping anchorage off Texel island with Oudeschild in the distance*, 1665. Oil on canvas, 106.5 x 165 cm. Royal Museums Greenwich, London. © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, Caird Collection

The *kaag*, which often appears in Backhuysen's pictures, was one of the boats most commonly found along the coast and on the inland waterways during the Dutch Golden Age. Its wide and flat-bottomed shape made it a popular choice among the East Indiemen for freight and ferry work undertaken in shipping lanes: in the present painting, a box-like fitment with a cask in front of it can be noted towards the stern, which represents the load. This activity appears to be taking place in the sea-roads off Texel, an island in north Holland, located approximately five kilometres north of Den Helder across the Wadden Sea. The dune-covered coastline just visible on the right is certainly comparable to that portrayed in another painting by Backhuysen, titled *The merchant shipping anchorage off Texel island with Oudeschild in the distance*, in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (fig. 1).²

The three-master to the left of the *kaag* is recognisable by its size and taffrail decoration. With three continuous gun decks, the ship must represent one of only eighteen three-deckers built in the Netherlands between 1682 and 1721.³ The crowned golden roundel fixed to its stern, which features a portrait of a man (fig. 2), readily identifies it as the *Koning Willem III* owned by the Zeeland Admiralty, the history of which is directly linked to its namesake, the Anglo-Dutch King William III, better known in Britain as William of Orange. From the 23 May to the 3 June 1692, the ship – together with the combined English and Dutch fleets under Russell and Philip van Almonde (1644–1711) – played a crucial part in the celebrated battle near Cape La Hogue against the French fleet under Admiral Anne Hilarion de Tourville (1642–1701). She was also employed to great effect in 1696, in another attack against the French off Dunkirk, which ultimately deterred King Louis XIV (1638–1715) from launching a landing offensive in England and forced James II (1633–1701) to relinquish his plans to mount the English throne. The *Koning Willem III*'s role in these two successful naval actions therefore rendered the ship a patriotic symbol, the significance of which would not have been lost on contemporary viewers of the present work.



Fig. 2 The present lot (detail)



Fig. 3 The present lot (detail)

The large ship on the right of the composition, closer to the coastline, also bears a decorated taffrail. This takes the form of a large gilded bird – its wings outspread and its head bowed on its breast – perching above its brood (fig. 3). De Beer has identified this bird, without question, as a pelican.⁴ Although as a general rule in the seventeenth century, the taffrail decoration of Dutch three-masters indicated the name of the boat in question, there were no ships known as *The Pelikaan* that constitute likely contenders.⁵ It seems more likely, therefore, that Backhuysen has deployed this motif on purely symbolic grounds. The pelican was prominent in Renaissance *emblemata* and was closely associated with the theme of self-sacrifice: it appears, for example, in emblem books by Joachim Camerarius the Younger (1534–1598), Nicolas Reusner (1545–1602) and Gabriel Rollenhagen (1583–1619), alongside a description reading: ‘Pelican which feeds its brood with its own blood’.⁶ Backhuysen was probably familiar with such ideology, having attended a humanist Latin school in Emden.⁷ His inclusion of the pelican emblem in such close proximity to the *Koning Willem III* can thus be interpreted as a comment on William’s rule: in praise of the King as a selfless sovereign, who prioritised the needs of his people. In this respect, the artist developed his marine paintings beyond their documentary function to contain carefully formulated intellectual statements. His educated clientele would surely have evaluated his works on similar terms.

Though the picture is undated, it must belong to Backhuysen’s late period, on the basis that the *Koning Willem III* was launched in 1688: the year of the Glorious Revolution. The artist’s majestic representation of this ship therefore provides a *terminus post quem* for the work’s date of execution. She was still in service upon Backhuysen’s death in 1708, so it is possible that the painting could have been produced at any point over this twenty-year period. While it is tempting to suggest that Backhuysen may have had the greatest impetus to include the *Koning Willem III* in his work shortly after its building in 1688, or following the victories near Cape La Hogue and off Dunkirk in 1692 and 1696 respectively, De Beer pointed instead to the fact that the unrelenting threat posed by France and Spain would have been reason enough for the artist to paint – and for patrons to commission – a picture imbued with such patriotic sentiment.⁸

Note on Provenance

In the later 19th century, this painting was acquired by Thomas Henry Allen Poynder (1814–1873), from whom it was inherited by his grandson, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, later 1st Baron Islington, GCMG, GBE, DSO, KStJ, PC (1866–1936). In 1892, Dickson-Poynder entered Parliament as the Conservative member for Chippenham, a seat he was to hold for eighteen years. During this period, he served in the Second Boer War (1899–1902) as *aide-de-camp* to Field Marshal Paul Sanford Methuen, 3rd Baron Methuen, GCB, GCMG, GCVO, DL (1845–1932), and sat on the LCC, where he promoted liberal reforms in education and housing. In 1910, Dickson-Poynder was appointed Governor of New Zealand and raised to the peerage as 1st Baron Islington. He resigned to become chairman of the Royal Commission on the public services in India in 1912 and subsequently served as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (1914–15), Under-Secretary of State for India (1915–18) and Chairman of the National Savings Committee (1920–26).

Dickson-Poynder amassed an important collection of Old Masters, many of which had been passed down from his grandfather, including the present picture. Works in his collection included a drawing by Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680), today in the British Museum, London;⁹ a pair of paintings by Antonio Joli (1700–1777), sold in these Rooms in 2005 for £848,000;¹⁰ and a *Portrait of a Young Woman* (*The Middendorf Rembrandt*) by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), now in the Leiden Collection, New York.¹¹

¹ Written opinion commissioned by the present owner.

² Inv. no. BHC0916; oil on canvas, 106.5 x 165 cm.

³ J. van Beylen, *Schepen van de Nederlanden*, Amsterdam 1970, p. 18.

⁴ Written opinion commissioned by the present owner.

⁵ In 1672, a ship by the name of *The Pelikaan* formed part of the fleet of Michiel de Ruyter (1607–1676) off Walcheren, yet this, unlike the three-master under present consideration, was a so-called fireship: a boat filled with ammunition that was steered on an opportune course towards the enemy. As early as 1653, another ship of the same name was part of the Dutch fighting fleet, but there is no obvious reason for this boat to have featured prominently in a marine painting by Backhuysen executed so many years later. No other ship of this name is included in the Admiralty Shipping Lists.

⁶ A. Henkel and A. Schöne (eds), *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart 1976, emblem 811 and 812.

⁷ Other paintings in which Backhuysen rendered a ship inaccurately in order to promote a symbolic message include *The Four Day’s Battle, 11–14 June 1666* in the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen: inv. no. KMSsp543; oil on canvas, 141.5 x 234.5 cm. The artist must have altered the appearance of the central boat’s taffrail decoration, which features a modified form of a Batavian lion holding seven arrows, signifying the seven independent provinces, as a call for unity during the second Anglo-Dutch naval war (1665–67).

⁸ Written opinion commissioned by the present owner.

⁹ Museum no. 1983.0723.35; black and red chalk on paper, with white highlights, 282 x 197 mm.

¹⁰ A pair, both oil on canvas, each: 55.7 x 98 cm. London, Sotheby’s, 7 July 2005, lot 50, for £848,000.

¹¹ Inv. no. RR-126; oil on oval panel, 62.4 x 50.4 cm.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

14

GIOVANNI ANTONIO CANAL, CALLED CANALETTO

Venice 1697–1768

Venice, a pair of views: The Churches of the Redentore and San Giacomo;
The Prisons and the Bridge of Sighs

a pair, both oil on canvas
each: 46.7 x 76.8 cm.; 18³/₈ x 30¹/₄ in.
(2)

£ 2,500,000-3,500,000

PROVENANCE

Possibly acquired directly from the artist in London in the late 1740s by Sir Richard Neave, 1st Bt (1731–1814), Dagnam Park, Essex;

By descent in the Neave family until sold before 1891 (presumably the paintings entered for sale by Sheffield H.M. Neave of 39 Bryanston Square, London, at Christie's, London, 27 June 1885, lots 25 and 26, the first described as *The Doge's Palace* but both withdrawn before the sale);

G.A.F. Cavendish Bentinck (1821–1891), M.P., P.C., 3 Grafton Street, London, and Brownsea Island;

His posthumous sale, London, Christie's, 11 July 1891, lots 625 and 626 (as *The Church of Santa Maria della Salute* and *The Bridge of Sighs*), sold together for 115 guineas, to Lesser;

With Lesser, Bond Street, London;

By whom sold to Willson Bros., Pall Mall, London;

By whom sold to Mr, later Sir, George Leon, Bt (1875–1947), 48 Brompton Square, London;

With Savile Gallery, London, 1928;

By whom sold to Mark Oliver;

With Arthur Tooth & Sons, 31 Bruton Street, London;

Private collection, by 1952;

Anonymous sale, London, Christie's, 9 December 1988, lot 40, for £620,000;

With the Walpole Gallery, London, 1989;

Whence purchased by a private collector, USA;

With Lampronti Gallery;

From whom acquired by a private collector in 2007;

By whom sold ('Property from a European Private Collection'), New York, Sotheby's, 1 February 2018, lot 54;

Where acquired by the present owner.

This pair of paintings in near pristine condition captures waterfront views of two of Venice's most imposing landmarks: the Church of the Redentore and the Prisons of San Marco on the Riva degli Schiavoni. While the *Redentore* composition exists in more than one version, the *Prisons* is a unique representation. Most likely painted during the artist's years in England in the late 1740s, characterised as they are by their light tonality, attention to detail and delicacy of touch, these pictures were once in the Neave collection and may have been acquired directly from the artist in London in the late 1740s by Sir Richard Neave, 1st Bt (1731–1814). As Charles Beddington points out, not only would this elegant pair of paintings have appealed to Canaletto's clientele for Venetian views but also to admirers of Palladian architecture.



EXHIBITED

London, Savile Gallery, *Canaletto*, January 1930, no. 9 (*The Redentore*);

London, Arthur Tooth and Son, November–December 1952, nos 2 and 4;

London, Walpole Gallery, *Italian Landscapes and Vedute*, 14 June – 28 July 1989, nos 26 and 27, both reproduced in colour.

LITERATURE

K.T. Parker, *The Drawings of Antonio Canaletto in the Collection of His Majesty the King at Windsor Castle*, London 1948, p. 35, under no. 34 (*The Redentore*);

W.G. Constable, *Canaletto: Giovanni Antonio Canal, 1697–1768*, Oxford 1962, vol. I, reproduced pl. 26 (*The Prisons*), vol. II, pp. 216–17 and 324, nos 84 and 318, and pp. 324 and 541, under nos 317 and 775;

L. Puppi, *L'opera completa del Canaletto*, Milan 1968, nos 257 (*The Prisons*) reproduced and 258 (*The Redentore*);

J.G. Links, *Canaletto, The Complete Paintings*, London 1981, p. 80, nos 275 (*The Prisons*) reproduced and 276 (*The Redentore*);

A. Corboz, *Canaletto. Una Venezia immaginaria*, Milan 1985, vol. II, p. 662, nos P 357 and P 358, both reproduced;

W.G. Constable, *Canaletto*, rev. by J.G. Links, Oxford 1976 and 1989, vol. I, reproduced pl. 26 (*The Prisons*), vol. II, pp. 225 and 347, nos 84 and 318 and pp. 346–47 and 590, under nos 317 and 775;

C. Crawley in K.T. Parker, *The Drawings of Antonio Canaletto in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle, with an Appendix to the Catalogue by Charlotte Crawley*, Bologna 1990, p. 169, under no. 34 (*The Redentore*);

J.G. Links, *A Supplement to W.G. Constable's Canaletto: Giovanni Antonio Canal 1697–1768*, London 1998, pp. 9 and 31–32, nos 84 and 318, reproduced pl. 269 (*The Redentore*);

C. Beddington in Christie's, New York, 25 January 2002, lot 78, both reproduced in colour;

C. Beddington in *Canaletto in England. A Venetian Artist Abroad, 1746–1755*, C. Beddington (ed.), exh. cat., New Haven and London 2006, p. 169, both reproduced;

F. Fruttero in *Canaletto à Venise*, A. Scarpa Sonino (ed.), exh. cat., Paris 2012, p. 138, under no. 39.

Brightly lit and painted in high definition, the buildings that here take centre stage are brought sharply into focus by Canaletto's brush. The artist describes the distinctive characteristics of the Redentore and the Prisons and their immediate neighbours, highlighting their intricacies without diminishing the grandeur of each. Animated with fashionable figures, as well as gondolas that glide in the foreground, this pair of *vedute* constitutes an enduring example of why Canaletto has long remained the undisputed leader of Venetian view painting.

The church of the Redentore, officially the Chiesa del Santissimo Redentore, is arguably the masterpiece of Andrea Palladio (1508–1580), one of the most renowned architects of the Renaissance, and represents the apex of his refined architectural ideas. Built of Istrian Stone, it was constructed on the island of the Giudecca in the years 1577–92 and was commissioned by the Venetian Senate to give thanks to God for the deliverance of the city from the plague epidemic of 1575–76, which had decimated around a quarter of the city's population, claiming the lives of many of the city's luminaries, including Titian. The Doge and Senators vowed to visit the church annually and to this day the *Festa del Redentore* is celebrated: each year on the third Sunday of July a temporary causeway made from barges is erected across the Giudecca for people to attend Mass. With its grand proportions, spacious interior and distinct elements integrated as one harmonious whole, Palladio's design for the Redentore displays his mastery of classical architecture. The Redentore in the present pair is seen slightly left of centre from the Canale della Giudecca and is flanked at right by the campanile of the Church of San Giacomo, which was demolished in the nineteenth century, in front of it the stern of a large, moored ship.





The public prisons of San Marco, also known as the Palazzo delle Prigioni, is a distinctive landmark on Venice's waterfront. Its rusticated two-storey façade is connected to the Doge's Palace by the Bridge of Sighs, both visible here to the left. Around 1580, after a fire had destroyed the original prisons in the Doge's Palace, Antonio da Ponte (1512–c. 1595), who would later complete the Rialto Bridge in 1588–90, was chosen to oversee their reconstruction, working from the original designs by Palladio's contemporary, Giovanni Antonio Rusconi. Da Ponte's nephew, Antonio Contino, helped oversee the last years of construction and also built the Bridge of Sighs. The prisons included quarters for the nocturnal security police, a wing for women, cells for victims of the Inquisition, an infirmary and a chapel. Completed in 1597 just before Da Ponte's death, the prisons were among the earliest purpose-built building of their type and remained in use for over three hundred years, until they officially closed in 1919.

Already by the late 1720s and early '30s, Canaletto had established himself as the foremost exponent of Venetian view painting, satisfying an international clientele who visited the city on their Grand Tours. His most avid collectors, though, were the British, who steadily commissioned works from him throughout his career, usually through the agency of Consul Joseph Smith. Undoubtedly the catalyst for Canaletto's rapid rise to fame, Smith was instrumental in securing the largest commission of the artist's early career: a series of twenty-four canvases (two of large format and twenty-two of small format) for the 4th Duke of Bedford in *circa* 1733–36, all of which hang today at Woburn Abbey and constitute one of Canaletto's finest achievements as painter and topographer (fig. 1). This series includes Canaletto's earliest iteration of the view of the church of the Redentore with the Church of San Giacomo (fig. 2).¹ The principal differences that distinguish the view in the present pair from the same view at Woburn can be found in the more 'close-up' vantage point, the different structure of San Giacomo, and the placement of the large moored ship in the foreground. In moving the stern of the ship to the right of the painting in the present view, Canaletto arguably creates a more balanced composition.



Fig. 1 The Dining Room at Woburn Abbey



Fig. 2 Canaletto, *The Churches of the Redentore and San Giacomo*, 1730s. Oil on canvas, 47 x 79 cm. The Duke of Bedford, Woburn Abbey



Fig. 3 Canaletto, *The Church of the Redentore*, c. 1742. Pen, brown ink and wash on paper, 31.1 x 47.6 cm. Fogg Museum, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge



Fig. 4 Canaletto, *The Churches of the Redentore and San Giacomo, with a moored man-of-war, gondolas and barges*, c. 1747-55. Oil on canvas, 60 x 94.5 cm. Sold Sotheby's, New York, 26 January 2012, lot 58. © Sotheby's

In May 1746, at the age of nearly fifty, Canaletto having been based in Venice for much of his career, moved to London, where he had a well-established reputation among his British clientele. His move may have been prompted in part by the War of Austrian Succession in 1740, which discouraged English visitors from undertaking Grand Tours, thereby significantly reducing a large portion of his client base. While in England, Canaletto's output included views of London as well as the country beyond the city; nonetheless he continued to produce views of Venice to satisfy the insatiable demand for such works among British collectors. He found considerable success in England, and, except for an eight-month return to Venice in 1750-51, he remained there for nine years.

The present pair of paintings belongs to a group of six works by Canaletto that are similar in size to the small-format canvases in the celebrated series at Woburn Abbey. The group includes two other pairs, each of which is anchored by an analogous view of the Churches of the Redentore and San Giacomo, one in which the central axis has been moved slightly right and one in which Canaletto populates the scene with slightly different staffage and vessels.² Unlike the present pair, which includes a view of the Prisons, the pendants of the other pairs are both views of the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore from the Bacino di San Marco.³ While the other pairs were separated during their history, and are held today in separate collections, the present pair has remained together since its acquisition by Sir Richard Neave (1731-1814), in whose family they likely remained until the late nineteenth century.

This group's uniformity of subject and style suggests that all the works were probably completed around the same moment. Corboz proposed an early date of 1731-46; Links suggested a date of around 1754-60, after Canaletto had returned definitely to Venice; while Puppi believed that a completion date of around 1746, just before the artist's departure for England, was appropriate. Most recently, however, Beddington has suggested that the group as a whole probably dates to the late 1740s, during Canaletto's stay

in England, due to the use of grey grounds and lighter tonality, as opposed to the Venetian russet grounds, as well as the delicate and translucent handling consistent with this period of the artist's production.⁴

Canaletto is likely to have brought various drawings of his native city with him to England, such as his pen and brown ink *capriccio* drawing of the church of the Redentore, dated 1742, now at The Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge (fig. 3). As Constable rightly noted, the vantage point and distinct lighting found in this drawing can be closely compared to that of the present view of the Redentore.⁵ Although the drawing's setting is fantastical, the façade and architecture of the church is captured with the utmost detail, and such a work would have been an invaluable reference for the artist while working abroad, especially since his views of the Redentore with the church of San Giacomo proved to be one of his most sought after and successful compositions. In England, among the most devout admirers of Palladian architecture Canaletto found a ready clientele. In addition to the painting at Woburn and the present painting and its related pairs, further examples of this view of slightly larger dimensions include one formerly in the collection of Lady Cromwell, now in the Manchester City Art Gallery,⁶ and another formerly in the collection of Lord and Lady Forte, sold at Sotheby's, New York, on 26 January 2012, lot 58, for \$5,000,000 (fig. 4).⁷

This view of the Prisons of San Marco, on the other hand, is a unique composition of which no other version is known. The landmark only appears elsewhere in an autograph *capriccio* that once formed part of a series of thirteen overdoor canvases that decorated the Palazzo Mangilli-Valmarana, a palace on the Grand Canal belonging to Canaletto's great patron, Joseph Smith, and that sold at Sotheby's, New York, on 29 January 2009, lot 89 (fig. 5). In the imaginary setting of the *capriccio*, the prisons are transposed to the Venetian mainland and set as a wing to a villa in a piazza, with coach and townsfolk. The unusual setting caused the building to go unrecognized, listed first by Constable as the *Villa Pisani, Stra(?)* and only later correctly identified by Richard Zimmerman as the Prisons of San Marco.



Fig. 5 Canaletto, *A capriccio of the Prisons of San Marco set in a piazza with a coach and townsfolk*, c. 1744. Oil on canvas, 105.3 x 127.5 cm. Sold Sotheby's, New York, 29 January 2009, lot 89. © Sotheby's



Fig. 6 Thomas Gainsborough, *Portrait of Sir Richard and Lady Neave*, 1665-66. Oil on canvas, 221 x 150 cm. Llysdulas, Anglesey



Note on Provenance

The Neave Family of Dagnam Park Essex owned a number of important works by Antonio Canaletto (and his school) from various moments in his career. Although Constable notes only that ‘the group of paintings belonging to Sir Arundell Neave... were acquired by his forebears in the early nineteenth century’, according to the Neave family they were acquired by Sir Richard Neave (1731-1814), and this seems almost certainly the case.⁸ Neave was not only the founder of the family fortunes but also a successful merchant and director of the Bank of England and it seems very likely that he would have met Canaletto in England, where he would have commissioned works from the artist and ordered more from him after he returned home to Venice. The works in the collection that were likely painted in England may include the present pair, a Venetian *capriccio*,⁹ and three views of Rome.¹⁰ Two other pairs of views in the collection date to the period after Canaletto left England and returned to Venice.¹¹ Sir Richard was also almost certainly a patron of other eighteenth-century artists, including Francesco Zuccarelli and Thomas Gainsborough, who in the 1760s painted a full-length double portrait of Sir Richard and his wife, Frances (*d.* 1830), in which he is depicted as a connoisseur of art, showing her a drawing (fig. 6). After having been in the Neave Family, this pair of paintings then passed briefly into the famed collection of G.A.F. Cavendish Bentinck, who collected paintings from the most illustrious Venetian artists, such as Tintoretto, Veronese, Giambattista Tiepolo, Guardi, and Canaletto.

¹ Oil on canvas, 47 x 79 cm.; Constable 1989, vol. I, pl. 59, no. 316.

² Reproduced in Links 1998, nos 317 and 318***, pls 268 and 269.

³ Constable 1989, vol. I, pl. 57, no. 301; and Links 1998, no. 301**, pl. 268.

⁴ Beddington 2006, p. 169.

⁵ Constable 1962, vol. II, p. 590, under no. 775.

⁶ Oil on canvas, 61 x 94 cm.; Links 1998, no. 318**, pl. 236.

⁷ Oil on canvas, 60 x 94.5 cm.; Constable 1989, vol. I, pl. 203, vol. II, no. 318*.

⁸ Constable 1962 and subsequent eds, vol. I, p. 137.

⁹ Constable 1962, vol. I, pl. 87, no. 467, vol. II, p. 443.

¹⁰ Constable 1962, vol. I, pls 72-73, vol. II, nos 394, 397 and 401.

¹¹ Constable 1962, vol. II, nos 46, 74, 71 and 176, the latter three reproduced vol. I, pls 25 and 38; no. 46 reproduced in Constable 1989, pl. 232.



THE MEDINACELI VANVITELLIS

LOTS 15-16

THE MEDINACELI VANVITELLIS

The following two lots form part of a series of views of great beauty and importance that were commissioned from Gaspar van Wittel – his name italianized as Vanvitelli – by the 9th Duke of Medinaceli, Viceroy of Naples, in around 1700. They have remained in the family of his direct descendants until recently.

Born in 1660 into one of Spain's oldest and most wealthy families, Don Luís Francisco de la Cerda Fernández de Córdoba Folch de Cardona y Aragón was heir to the Dukedom of Medinaceli.¹ He came to high office at an early age; by the time he was twenty-four, Charles II had appointed him Commander General of the Galleys of Naples and only three years later, in 1687, he was made Ambassador to Rome. There he enjoyed a lavish lifestyle and conducted a scandalous affair with the celebrated *cantatrice* Angela Voglia, known as la Giorgina, who was much sought after by his rival, the Duke of Mantua.² In 1691 Don Luís' father, the 8th Duke, died. His titles and vast fortune passed to his son, who following in the tradition of a number of his forebears, including the 1st and 3rd Dukes of Alcalá, was appointed Viceroy of Naples in 1696.³ Since 1503 the Kingdom of Naples was governed by the Habsburg monarchy under a system

of viceroys. During this period Naples was transformed into a great administrative capital, so much so that by the time of Don Luís's succession it was the most populous city in Europe after Paris. Following his arrival in the city as the new Viceroy, he developed ambitious schemes of urban construction and renewal. It was in connection with these plans that Don Luís chose to commission a series of views of the city from Vanvitelli, the leading *vedutista*, whom he invited to Naples to carry out the task. Vanvitelli accepted and left for Naples in 1699.

Medinaceli's importance as a collector is revealed in the inventory drawn up soon after his death.⁴ Of the 389 paintings listed, a number of remarkable works have been identified. These include *Rubens painting the 'Allegory of Peace'* by Luca Giordano, *The Spinners (Hilanderas)* by Velázquez and *The Wine of St Martin's Day* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, all three of which are today in the Museo del Prado, Madrid.⁵ Judging from the inventory overall, the Duke clearly favoured Italian art, with works by seventeenth-century artists particularly well represented. The work that carried the highest value in the collection was a painting by Reni valued at 20,000 *reales*.⁶



Fig. 1 Gaspar van Wittel, called Vanvitelli, *A Prospect of Naples from the sea, looking north-east towards the Castel dell'Ovo*, 1702. Oil on canvas, 72.7 x 170.3 cm. Sold Sotheby's, London, 13 December 2001, lot 86. © Sotheby's

The collection boasted a remarkable abundance of view paintings, which account for more than a quarter of the whole inventory. The largest group by far comprises thirty-six *vedute* by Vanvitelli, two of which are offered in this sale. Thirty-five view paintings are listed together – including lot 16 – and one more view of Florence by Vanvitelli (*'Mas una pintura de la Ciudad de Florencia grande [...] de Gasparo Vambitel'*) – lot 15 – appears under a separate heading with works that belonged to Don Luís's nephew and successor, the 10th Duke, Don Nicolás Fernández de Córdoba, Marquis of Priego and Duke of Feria.⁷ Its omission from the main list reads like an oversight.⁸ This brings the total of Vanvitellis in Medinaceli possession to thirty-six.⁹

It is more than likely that Don Luís would have known of Vanvitelli when he was serving as Ambassador to Rome in the late 1680s and into the 1690s. The group of six Roman views that Don Luís owned may well have been acquired at this time, although it is possible these were painted later. Of these, the most highly prized was the *View of the Piazza Navona*, still in the collection of the Dukes of Medinaceli at the Hospital de Tavera, Toledo.¹⁰ Indeed Don Luís may already have formed

a close acquaintance with the artist before he left for Naples, for later, in 1700, he became godfather to the artist's son, Luigi (d. 1773), who was to become the foremost architect in Naples in the eighteenth century.

In his biography of the artist, Lione Pascoli, art historian and collector, writes that Vanvitelli decided to go to Naples in 1699 and stayed there for more than two years. During that time he remained in the service of the Duke, for which he received a stipend of 120 ducats per month.¹¹ In 1702 Vanvitelli returned to Rome after his patron Don Luís had already gone back to Spain. Although Vanvitelli's sojourn in Naples was relatively brief, thirteen paintings of the city and its environs are recorded in the Duke's possession after his death. As Vanvitelli's practice was to paint full-scale paintings in oil in his studio based on drawings made on site, it is conceivable that some of these views of Naples were made on the artist's return to Rome and sent on to Spain. Nevertheless others were undoubtedly painted in Naples, as attested, for example, by *A Prospect of Naples from the sea*, which is dated 1702 and inscribed 'NAP', confirming that it was painted there (fig. 1).¹²



Fig. 2 Gaspar van Wittel, called Vanvitelli, *A View of the Bay of Pozzuoli, near Naples, taken from the east, looking towards the port of Baia, with the Islands of Nisida, Procida and Ischia*, c. 1700. Oil on canvas, 71 x 170 cm. Sold Sotheby's, London, 9 December 2015, lot 40. © Sotheby's

Following his return to Spain, Medinaceli took the side of the new Bourbon King, Philip V, in the War of Succession, and was appointed Prime Minister in 1709. Little over a year later however, he was removed from office on suspicion of liaising with the Austrian Pretender, a crime of high treason. He died in prison in 1711, probably murdered on the orders of the King, whom he had so recently supported.

Many of the *vedute* are depictions of Naples and the surrounding countryside but there were also views of Venice, Florence and Rome. The quantity of works that Don Luís acquired shows him to have been by far the most important of Vanvitelli's non-Italian patrons, and second only to the artist's most avid Roman patrons, the Colonna family, whose printed catalogue of 1783 lists more than one hundred works by the artist, some of which are still in the collection today.¹³ Of the 36 entries for works by Vanvitelli in Medinaceli ownership, thirteen clearly describe views of Naples or its immediate surroundings. Of these, six have been connected with works by the artist that are either recorded in the 1996 revised edition of Briganti's monograph or that have subsequently come to light. With the recent emergence of the *View of the Bay of Pozzuoli* sold at Sotheby's in 2015 and its clear identification in the inventory, it too can be added to the group (fig. 2).¹⁴

Of the five views of Venice listed in the inventory, only one can be positively identified.¹⁵ Similarly, only one of the six Roman views has been linked with assurance to the inventory.¹⁶ Of the remaining views, the imposing *View of Tivoli*, now in a private collection, was one of the five most highly valued works at 3,000 *reales*. Three of the four views of Florence – those with lower valuations of between 1,000 and 1,200 *reales* – and seven views without specific locations are so far untraced, although two of these are probably to be identified with the *View of Nisida* and the *View of Nisida and Capo Miseno*, in the Medinaceli collection at Casa de Pilatos, Seville.¹⁷

The Duke of Medinaceli's inventory records that *A View of the Bay of Pozzuoli* and *A Prospect of Posilippo with the Palazzo Donn'Anna and Naples in the background* (fig. 3), another of the magnificent views that sold in these Rooms in 2001 and today in the Peter Moores Foundation, Compton Verney, were both valued at 2,200 *reales*;¹⁸ while a third *veduta*, the one dated 1702, *A Prospect of Naples from the sea, looking north-east towards the Castel dell'Ovo*, now in a private collection (fig. 1), was deemed to be worth considerably more, at 3,000 *reales*.¹⁹ The *View of Florence* (lot 15) of the same grand format was also valued at 2,200 *reales*. The breathtaking *View of the Badia Fiesolana* (lot 16) has the same dimensions and must have been part of this 'set'.²⁰



Fig. 3 Gaspar van Wittel, called Vanvitelli, *A Prospect of Posilippo with the Palazzo Donn'Anna and Naples in the background*. Oil on canvas, 72.7 x 170.3 cm. Peter Moores Foundation, Compton Verney. © Compton Verney / Bridgeman Images

Since the eighteenth century, the collection of the 9th Duke of Medinaceli has gradually been subdivided and dispersed, particularly following the final abolition of the laws of primogeniture in Spain in 1841. With the death of the 17th Duke in 1956, seven-ninths of the estate was inherited by his youngest daughter, the Duchess of Cardona, with the remaining two-ninths passing to her two older step-sisters, the Duchess of Medinaceli and the Duchess of Lerma.

The paintings from the period of Vanvitelli's employment by Don Luís in Naples are of great significance in being the first that the artist made of the city. They established a new visual vocabulary that was to have a profound influence on future generations of artists. In the same way that Vanvitelli's Venetian works provided the starting point for the development of the Venetian *veduta* through Carlevarijs and then Canaletto, his series of views of Naples created for the 9th Duke of Medinaceli represents a crucial stage in the development of the *veduta*. In Naples Vanvitelli's legacy was to continue into the nineteenth century through Vernet and Lusieri, while his Roman views and those done in and around Florence were an important point of reference for later *vedutisti* in those cities.

¹ V. Lleó Cañal, 'The art collection of the ninth Duke of Medinaceli', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. CXXXI, no. 1031, February 1989, pp. 108–16.

² W. R. de Villa-Urrutia, *La embajada del Marqués de Cogolludo a Roma en 1687; y El Duque de Medinaceli y la Giorgina*, Madrid 1927, p. 46.

³ Lleó Cañal gives the year as 1692; see Lleó Cañal 1989, p. 108.

⁴ Lleó Cañal 1989, pp. 112–16.

⁵ These appear in the inventory as nos 1, 18 and 39 respectively.

⁶ Described in the inventory as a 'School of Children'; see Lleó Cañal 1989, p. 110.

⁷ Nos 176–210 and no. 323.

⁸ '...q. falta de poner en las treinta y siete Pinturas de Gasparo Vambitel...'; see Lleó Cañal 1989, p. 116.

⁹ The inventory actually includes thirty-seven entries for the artist but one is acknowledged as a duplicate entry.

¹⁰ No. 176 in the inventory and valued at 3,000 *reales*.

¹¹ L. Pascoli, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti viventi...*, G. Briganti et al. (eds), Treviso 1981, pp. 10 and 17, and pp. 23–24, notes 21 and 31 respectively.

¹² London, Sotheby's, 13 December 2001, lot 86.

¹³ G. Lepri, *Capolavori da Scoprire: Colonna, Doria Pamphilj, Pallavicini, G. Lepri* (ed.), exh. cat., Rome 2005. We are grateful to Laura Laureati for this reference.

¹⁴ This leaves six remaining Neapolitan views once in Don Luís's possession that cannot with certainty be connected with any recorded works: inventory nos 178, 185 or 186, 188, 197, 198 and 210.

¹⁵ No. 177: *La Plaza de San Marcos*, still in the collection of the Dukes of Medinaceli at the Hospital de Tavera, Toledo. See L. Laureati in G. Briganti, *Gaspar van Wittel*, rev. ed. L. Laureati and L. Trezzani, Milan 1996, p. 240, no. 286.

¹⁶ No. 176: *La Plaza Navona*, also at the Hospital de Tavera, Toledo. See Laureati in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, p. 148, no. 44.

¹⁷ Nos 208 and 209: *Peñascos y marina* and *Otra de peñas y marina*. See Trezzani in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, pp. 275–77, nos 395 and 396, reproduced.

¹⁸ Laureati in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, pp. 274–75, no. 392, reproduced.

¹⁹ Oil on canvas, both 72.7 x 170.3 cm. London, Sotheby's, 13 December 2001, as lots 85 and 86 respectively; the former for £2,000,000, the latter for £1,650,000.

²⁰ It is probable that the *View of the Badia Fiesolana* corresponds with no. 199 in the inventory, 'Pais y Rio de largo de dos varas', valued at 2,200 *reales*, rather than no. 179, 'Pays por una puente', worth slightly less at 2,000 *reales*. The dimensions given of the former, 'largo de dos varas', albeit not precise, suggest that the Fiesole *veduta* is another panorama of comparable width to the other four paintings.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

15

GASPAR VAN WITTEL, CALLED VANVITELLI

Amersfoort 1652/3–1736 Rome

Florence, a view of the city from the right bank of the River Arno looking towards the Ponte alla Carraia

oil on canvas
72.5 x 169.9 cm.; 28½ x 66⅞ in.

W # £ 300,000-400,000

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Don Luis Francisco de la Cerda Fernández de Córdoba Folch de Cardona y Aragón (1660–1711), 9th Duke of Medinaceli, in circa 1700;

Thence by descent to his nephew Don Nicolás Fernández de Córdoba y de la Cerda (1682–1739), 10th Duke of Medinaceli, listed in his palace in Priego, Cordoba, by 1711;

Thence by descent until acquired by a private collector in 2011;

By whom offered, London, Sotheby's, 9 December 2015, lot 39 and from whom acquired the following year by private treaty through Sotheby's for the present collection.

LITERATURE

Inventario general de todos los trastos y vienes muebles pertenecientes a la Casa del Exmo. Sr. Marques [de Priego] Duque de Medinaceli, mi Señor, MS, Archivo Ducal de Medinaceli, Seville 1711, no. 323 ('Mas una pintura de la Ciudad de Florencia grande q. falta de poner en las treinta y siete Pinturas de Gasparo Vambitel tassada en... 2.200 rs.');

V. Lleó Cañal, 'The art collection of the ninth Duke of Medinaceli', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. CXXXI, no. 1031, February 1989, pp. 110 and 116.

This unpublished view of Florence by Van Wittel – better known by his Italian sobriquet Vanvitelli – came to light just over a decade ago, having first belonged to Don Luis Francisco de la Cerda Fernández de Córdoba Folch de Cardona y Aragón, 9th Duke of Medinaceli (1660–1711), and then to his heir Don Nicolás María Fernández de Córdoba y Figueroa de la Cerda, Marqués de Priego and Duke of Feria (1682–1739), who succeeded as 10th Duke. In a manuscript inventory datable to 1711, the painting is recorded at Don Nicolás's palace in Priego, Córdoba.¹ Don Nicolás inherited the painting from his uncle Don Luis, the man responsible for commissioning Vanvitelli's celebrated series of vedute of important Italian cities and sights in the early 1700s.

The view is taken looking south-east from the Cascine on the right bank of the River Arno to the pescaia di Santa Rosa. To the left, in the distance and somewhat hidden behind trees, are the dome and bell tower of the Duomo. At the centre of the painting is the Ponte alla Carraia, the second bridge to be built over the Arno after the Ponte Vecchio, depicted beyond. Between the two bridges is the Ponte Santa Trinità, its piers just visible through the arches of the Ponte alla Carraia. The buildings along the Lungarno Corsini are greatly foreshortened, while the principal view is of the left bank, from the Lungarno Guicciardini to the Lungarno Soderini. Here, a long stretch of river is flanked by the city's ancient medieval walls, their crenelated edges catching the afternoon sun. The most prominent landmark across the river is the cupola of San Frediano in Cestello; visible just beyond to the left are the dome and belltower of Santo Spirito rising above the skyline. The Fortezza del Belvedere rises on the hill in the distance. On the hills to the left, are San Miniato al Monte and San Salvatore al Monte. Furthest to the right of the cityscape is the Porta di San Frediano, welcoming thorough its gateway a procession of minutely painted figures.



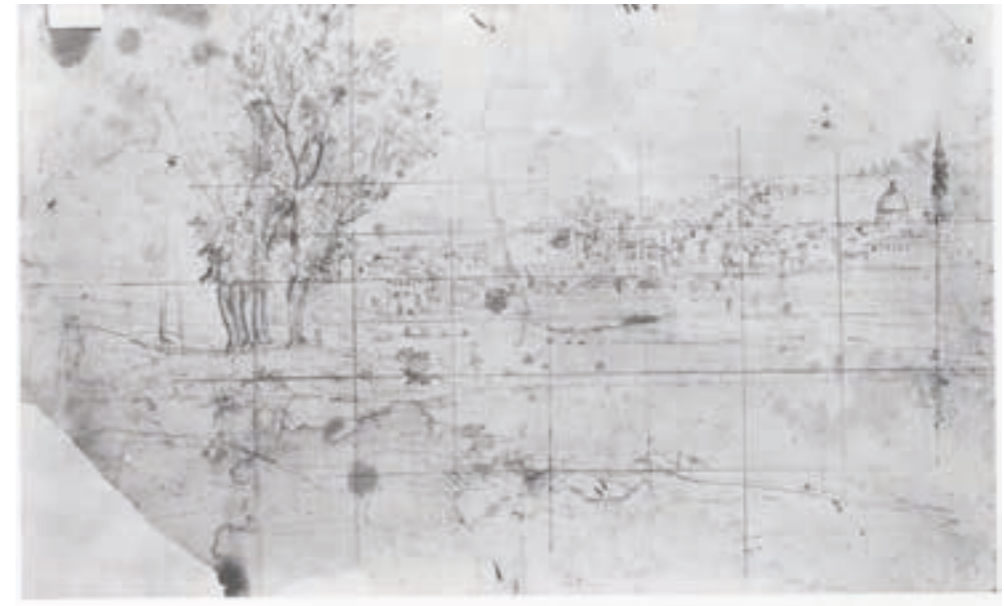


Fig. 1 Gaspar van Wittel, called Vanvitelli, *Florence from the Cascine*. Pen and black ink, on squared paper, 28.6 x 44.2 cm. Palazzo Reale, Caserta. © Palazzo Reale, Caserta

This view of Florence is cited in the inventory as: ‘*Mas una pintura de la Ciudad de Florencia grande q. falto de poner en las treinta y siete Pinturas de Gasparo Vambitel tassada en... 2.200 rs.*’. Estimated at 2,200 reales, the same sum as the *View of the Badia Fiesolana* (the following lot), the *View of Florence* was among the dozen or so most valuable of the Medinaceli Vanvitellis, of which there were thirty-six in total (one was a duplicate entry). Indeed, as might be expected, there is some correlation between size and value in the inventory; of those that can be identified today, the smaller works tend to have been given lower values than the larger ones. The identical size of this Florentine panorama and the *View of the Badia Fiesolana* may account for their equal valuation. The similarity between the two views extends beyond merely their dimensions; they also share the same breadth, scope and informality of setting. The lack of pomposity in Vanvitelli’s *vedute* is especially notable in the vivid immediacy of the people who inhabit his landscapes. He records the comings and goings of people on the road, shepherds tending their flock by the river’s edge, and even fishermen at work in the shallows.

Vanvitelli came to Florence on more than one occasion; it is certain he was in the city in 1694, staying for some months before continuing on to Bologna and Venice. This composition exists in four other versions, none of which is dated: a signed version on copper (45 x 74.5 cm.) in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence; a version on canvas (50.4 x 99 cm.) in the Colonna collection, Palazzo Colonna, Rome; another of very similar size to the latter (50 x 99 cm.) in the collection of the Cassa di Risparmio, Florence; and a reduced version (27 x 39.5 cm.) in a private collection.² As noted by Walter Vitzthum, they must postdate 1702, the year in which the cupola of San Frediano in Cestello was erected.³ Each version differs considerably in format from the Medinaceli *veduta*, which is not only the largest but the most emphatically panoramic. The most obvious differences between the versions are the cloud formations and the numerous modifications to the figures, animals and carriages. The carriage with red and gold livery, driving in the direction of the Duomo, would appear to be unique to the Medinaceli *veduta*. A pen and ink drawing of the same view, on a squared sheet that was probably cut along the right hand margin, is in the collection of the Palazzo Reale, Caserta (fig. 1).⁴

Although some of the *vedute* that were part of the 9th Duke of Medinaceli's original commission are today distributed among public museums and private collections, a number of unidentified paintings remain in the collection.⁵ The rediscovery of the *View of Florence* and the *View of the Badia Fiesolana* represents the most significant addition to the relatively few views of Florence and its surroundings painted by Vanvitelli in Italy.

We are grateful to Carolina Trupiano Kowalczyk for her assistance in cataloguing this lot, which will be cited in her forthcoming *catalogue raisonné* of the drawings of Vanvitelli.

¹ Although not listed together with the 35 other *vedute* by Vanvitelli in the inventory (see *Literature*), there is an entry for the painting in a section titled *Pinturas de la Cassa del Marques mi Sr. de Priego*, under no. 323, which states that the painting failed to be included with the other Vanvitellis. This indicates therefore that the *View of Florence* was also part of the group commissioned by the ninth Duke. Pilar Silva Maroto and Manfred Sellink in their article on another Medinaceli painting, *The Wine of Saint Martin's Day* by Pieter Brueghel the Elder, argue that the inventory was drawn up some time after the ninth Duke's death (and not immediately after his death, as stated by Lleó Cañal), when Don Nicolás acquired ownership of his predecessor's possessions; and that the title 'Sr. Marques Duque de Medinazeli' refers in fact to Don Nicolás, Marquis of Priego; see P.S. Maroto and M. Sellink, 'The rediscovery of Pieter Brueghel the Elder's 'Wine of St Martin's Day'', acquired for the Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 153, December 2011, p. 786 n. 13. That the bulk of the collection was inherited by Don Nicolás from the estate of Don Luis is confirmed by a note near the end of the first part of the inventory, which specifies that 'todas estas Pinturas son las que se trajeron de la testamentaria del Duque mi Sr. Dn. Luis de la Zerda'; see Lleó Cañal 1989, pp. 109 and 115–16.

² The first three are included in L. Laureati in G. Briganti, *Gaspar van Wittel*, rev. ed. L. Laureati and L. Trezzani, Milan 1996, pp. 231–32, nos 270, 271 and 272, the first and last reproduced. The last version was sold New York, Christie's, 29 January 1998, lot 27.

³ W. Vitzthum, in *Gaspar Van Wittel (1652/53–1736). Disegni dalle Collezioni Napoletane*, exh. cat., Gaeta, Palazzo De Vio, August–September 1980, p. 136. See also Laureati in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, p. 231.

⁴ Trezzani in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, pp. 320–21, no. D91, reproduced.

⁵ Apart from those already mentioned, other paintings from that series include: *A View of Posillipo* sold London, Sotheby's, 13 December 2001, lot 85, for £2,203,500 and today in the Peter Moores Foundation, Compton Verney House Trust; *A View of Naples from the Sea*, sold London, Sotheby's, 13 December 2001, lot 86, for £1,818,500, today in a private collection; *A View of Pizzofalcone from Chiaia* and *A View of Sorrento* in the Medinaceli Foundation, Hospital of Tavera, Toledo.





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

16

GASPAR VAN WITTEL, CALLED VANVITELLI

Amersfoort 1652/3–1736 Rome

Fiesole, a view of the Badia Fiesolana, just outside Florence

oil on canvas
73.4 x 171.1 cm.; 28⁷/₈ x 67³/₈ in.

W ₣ £ 300,000-400,000

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Don Luis Francisco de la Cerda Fernández de Córdoba Folch de Cardona y Aragón (1660–1711), 9th Duke of Medinaceli, in circa 1700;
Thence probably by descent to his nephew Don Nicolás Fernández de Córdoba y de la Cerda (1682–1739), 10th Duke of Medinaceli, listed in his palace in Priego, Cordoba, by 1711;
Thence by descent to the Duchess of Uceda (according to labels on the reverse);
Anonymous sale, Caja Madrid, Madrid, in 2011;
With Coll & Cortés, Madrid in 2011;
Acquired by private treaty through Sotheby's in 2011;
From whom acquired by private treaty through Sotheby's in 2016 for the present collection.

LITERATURE

Probably *Inventario general de todos los trastos y vienes muebles pertenecientes a la Cassa del Exmo. Sr. Marques [de Priego] Duque de Medinazeli, mi Señor*, MS, Archivo Ducal de Medinaceli, Seville 1711, no. 199 ('*Pais y Rio de largo de dos varas no. 419... 2,200 rs*');
Probably V. Lleó Cañal, 'The art collection of the ninth Duke of Medinaceli', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. CXXXI, no. 1031, February 1989, p. 115, no. 199;
L. Laureati, in *Palazzo Colonna: Appartamento Principessa Isabelle: Catalogo dei dipinti*, M. Natale (ed.), Rome 2019, p. 184, under no. 67.

This beautiful panoramic view of Fiesole was commissioned as part of the highly important series of Italian views by one of the artist's leading patrons, Don Luis de la Cerda Fernández de Córdoba Folch de Cardona y Aragón, 9th Duke of Medinaceli (1660–1711) and Viceroy of Naples. Don Luis amassed an extraordinary collection of paintings during his lifetime and the inventory taken after his death in 1711 lists 389 paintings, including fifteen said to be by Guido Reni (1575–1642), eleven by Carlo Maratta (1625–1713), and six by Luca Giordano (1634–1705).¹ By far the most numerous, however, are those by Vanvitelli, who painted no less than thirty-six works for the Duke. It is likely that this painting, a *View of the Badia Fiesolana*, commissioned in around 1700, corresponds with no. 199 in the Medinaceli inventory, '*Pais y Rio de largo de dos varas*', valued at 2,200 reales, the same sum as the *View of Florence* (the previous lot).

The present view is taken from the valley of Mugnone, near Florence, and shows the frontage of the Badia Fiesolana and its convent renovated in the 15th century by Brunelleschi. In the distance, towering above the religious complex, stands the ancient Etruscan town of Fiesole; to the left, the medieval Ponte alla Badia crossing the Mugnone river, a tributary of the Arno that runs through Florence. Along the river bank, the artist records the comings and goings of the local inhabitants on the road, people resting by the river's edge, shepherds tending their flocks and travellers resting in the shade before proceeding on their journey.

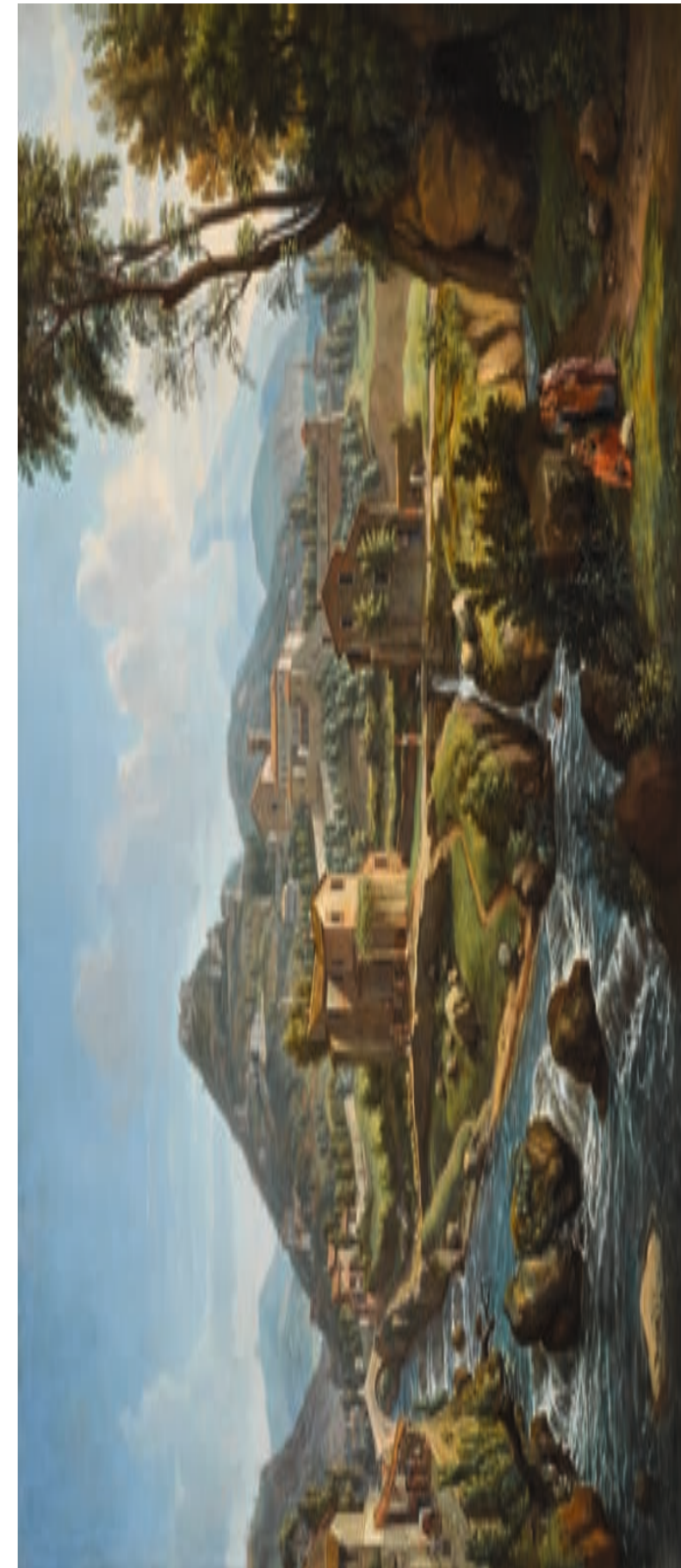




Fig. 1 Gaspar van Wittel, called Vanvitelli, *Fiesole, a view of the Badia Fiesolana*, c. 1694–95. Pen, black ink and watercolour on squared paper, 27.2 x 82 cm. Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele, Rome. © Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele

The composition is also known in three other reduced versions: one signed with initials and dated 1695 (37 x 55.5 cm.), which was acquired by Catherine the Great from the great collection of Baron Crozat in Paris and is today in the Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg;² another signed version in the Colonna Collection, Rome (39 x 48.7 cm.);³ and a third in a private collection (28.5 x 49.5 cm.).⁴ Each version differs considerably in format from the Medinaceli *veduta*, which is not only the largest but also the most emphatically panoramic. Three preparatory drawings for the composition are also known: a large study, similar to the present composition and squared for transfer, in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emanuele, Rome (fig. 1);⁵ another drawing of similar design in a private collection;⁶ and a more restricted view, depicting only the Badia and the bridge, in the Albertina Museum, Vienna.⁷

With regard to dating, the preparatory drawing in the Biblioteca Nazionale, Rome, was probably executed by Vanvitelli in 1694, the year in which the artist visited Florence to work for Prince Ferdinando de Medici, and shortly before he painted the version in the Hermitage, dated 1695. According to the artist's early biographer Lione Pascoli, Vanvitelli had already left Florence for Bologna by 10 December 1694, as attested by a dated drawing he made of that city.⁸ The present work, which is by far the most ambitious of the artist's versions, was painted a few years later in his studio in Rome, in around 1700, as part of the Medinaceli commission.⁹

We are grateful to Carolina Trupiano Kowalczyk for her assistance in cataloguing this lot, which will be cited in her forthcoming *catalogue raisonné* of the drawings of Vanvitelli.

¹ For the inventory see Lleó Cañal 1989, pp. 112–16.

² L. Laureati in G. Briganti, *Gaspar van Wittel*, rev. ed. L. Laureati and L. Trezzani, Milan 1996, pp. pp. 231–32, no. 269, reproduced.

³ Laureati 2019, pp. 184–85, no. 67, reproduced in colour.

⁴ Anonymous sale, London, Sotheby's, 17 December 1998, lot 72 (sold as a part of a pair).

⁵ Laureati in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, pp. 408, 409 and 411, no. D346, reproduced.

⁶ Anonymous sale, London, Christie's, 1 July 1986, lot 13; included in Laureati in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, p. 348, no. D177, reproduced.

⁷ Laureati in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, p. 437, no. D473, reproduced.

⁸ Laureati in Briganti 1996, rev. ed. Laureati and Trezzani, pp. 408 and 411, no. D345, reproduced.

⁹ Apart from those already mentioned, other paintings from that series include: *A view of Posillipo*, sold London, Sotheby's, 13 December 2001, lot 85, for £2,203,500 and today in the Peter Moores Foundation, Compton Verney House Trust; *A view of Naples from the sea*, sold London, Sotheby's, 13 December 2001, lot 86, for £1,818,500, today in a private collection; *A view of Pizzofalcone from Chiaia* and *A view of Sorrento*, both in the Medinaceli Foundation, Hospital of Tavera, Toledo.





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

17

BERNARDO BELLOTTO

Venice 1722–1780 Warsaw

Rome, a view of the Colosseum and the Arch of Constantine

oil on canvas
61 x 98.1 cm.; 24 x 38⁵/₁₆ in.

± £ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

Private collection, New England;

R. Birkedal, Seekonk, Massachusetts;

T. Gilbert Brouillette (1906–1970), Falmouth, Massachusetts;

Alicia Corchenuk de Buenfil, Mexico City;

With Steven Juvenis and Firestone & Parson, Massachusetts, by 1976;

Anonymous sale ('The Property of a Gentleman'), London, Sotheby's, 4 July 1990, lot 19 (as Canaletto);

Where acquired by a private collector;

Anonymous sale ('The Property of a European Collector'), London, Christie's, 7 July 2004, lot 98 (as Bellotto);

Private collection, by 2008;

With Cesare Lampronti Gallery, London, by 2009 (as Bellotto);

Acquired privately from Hampel, Munich, by the present collector in 2019.

EXHIBITED

Gorizia, Palazzo della Torre, *Le Meraviglie di Venezia, Dipinti del '700 in collezioni private*, 14 March – 27 July 2008, no. 92 (as Bellotto);

Foligno, Palazzo Trinci, *Giuseppe Piermarini, tra barocco e neoclassico, Roma, Napoli, Caserta, Foligno*, 5 June – 2 October 2010, no. B2.22 (as Bellotto);

Munich, Alte Pinakothek, *Canaletto, Bernardo Bellotto Paints Europe*, 17 October 2014 – 15 January 2015, no. 21 (as Bellotto).

LITERATURE

W.G. Constable, *Canaletto, Giovanni Antonio Canal, 1697–1768*, J.G. Links (ed.), Oxford 1976, vol. I, no. 388*, reproduced pl. 206, and vol. II, pp. 393–94, no. 388* (as Canaletto);

W.G. Constable, *Canaletto, Giovanni Antonio Canal, 1697–1768*, J.G. Links (ed.), Oxford 1989, vol. I, no. 388*, reproduced pl. 206, and vol. II, pp. 393–94, no. 388* (as Canaletto);

J.G. Links, *A Supplement to W.G. Constable's Canaletto, Giovanni Antonio Canal, 1697–1768*, London 1998, p. 38, no. 388* (as Canaletto);

C. Beddington, in *Bernardo Bellotto and the Capitals of Europe*, E.P. Bowron (ed.), exh. cat., Venice and Houston 2001, pp. 112 and 114 n. 7, under no. 26 (as Bellotto);

B.A. Kowalczyk, in *Bernardo Bellotto and the Capitals of Europe*, E.P. Bowron (ed.), exh. cat., Venice and Houston 2001, pp. 136 and 138 n. 13, under no. 35, reproduced p. 136 (as attributed to Bellotto);

D. Succi, in *Le Meraviglie di Venezia, Dipinti del '700 in collezioni private*, D. Succi and A. Delneri (eds), exh. cat., Gorizia 2008, pp. 264–65, no. 92, reproduced in colour (as Bellotto);

M. Fagiolo, in *Giuseppe Piermarini, tra barocco e neoclassico, Roma, Napoli, Caserta, Foligno*, M. Fagiolo and M. Tabarrini (eds), exh. cat., Foligno 2010, pp. 52 and 55, reproduced in colour fig. 10 (as Bellotto);

C. Lollobrigida, in *Giuseppe Piermarini, tra barocco e neoclassico, Roma, Napoli, Caserta, Foligno*, M. Fagiolo and M. Tabarrini (eds), exh. cat., Foligno 2010, pp. 190, 300 and 301, no. B2.22, a detail reproduced in colour p. 190 (as Bellotto);

T. Wagner, in *Canaletto, Bernardo Bellotto Paints Europe*, A. Schumacher (ed.), exh. cat., Munich 2014, pp. 192–93, no. 21, reproduced in colour (as Bellotto);

B.A. Kowalczyk, in *Bellotto and Canaletto. Wonder and Light*, B.A. Kowalczyk (ed.), exh. cat., Milan 2016–17, p. 150, under no. 46 (as Bellotto);

B.A. Kowalczyk, in *Canaletto 1697–1768*, B.A. Kowalczyk (ed.), exh. cat., Rome 2018, p. 150, under no. 39 (as Bellotto).

Bernardo Bellotto executed this archetypal depiction of Rome's most celebrated monuments in the early 1740s, following his visit to the city in 1742. Like many of the artist's early works, this painting was previously (and erroneously) considered the work of his mentor and uncle, Giovanni Antonio Canal, called Canaletto. Thanks to the scholarship of Bozena Anna Kowalczyk and Charles Beddington, this work has since been correctly reattributed to Bellotto. Acknowledged as one of his early masterpieces, it illustrates his emergence as a distinctive artistic personality in his own right, demonstrating the nature of the artistic relationship between him and his uncle and exemplifying his precocious talent and extraordinary qualities.





Fig. 1 Giovanni Antonio Canal, called Canaletto, *The Colosseum, Rome*, c. 1720. Pen and brown ink, with grey wash, over black chalk, 15.9 x 22.7 cm. British Museum, London. © The Trustees of the British Museum

An important factor in explaining the painting's previous attribution relates to the many similarities it shares with one of Canaletto's drawings (British Museum, London; fig. 1), which likewise depicts the Colosseum from a western vantage point.¹ Both this painting and the graphic prototype, one of an important series produced by Canaletto during his stay in the Eternal City in 1719–20, and conserved today in the British Museum, include certain salient details: the cypress trees at the composition's left, the three crosses rising from the ruins of the Colosseum (attesting to its use as a Christian cult), and the horse-drawn cart in the foreground. Although Bellotto adheres to Canaletto's overall composition and viewpoint, there are also marked differences between the two designs, such as in the row of buildings flanking the Colosseum and much of the vegetation and staffage. Moreover, Bellotto renders the view with greater perspectival breadth, including to the right the Arch of Constantine and distant hills lending more atmosphere to the skyline. By making these alterations, Bellotto has produced a composition that, in comparison with that of his uncle, is more striking and dramatic.

Bellotto is thought to have travelled to Rome in the spring of 1742, shortly after his marriage to Elisabetta Pizzorno on 5 November of the previous year. He stopped in Florence, Lucca and Livorno along the way and is recorded back in Venice on 25 July 1742. This painting must post-date his trip to Rome, and Kowalczyk has suggested a date of execution shortly after Bellotto's return from Rome to Venice of circa 1743–44.² Stylistically, this work has been associated with Bellotto's *Rome, a view of the Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano looking east* in a private collection, which must date from the same period.³ The latter also compares closely to an early drawing by Canaletto,⁴ originally part of the same series as the one related to the present landscape. Apart from being nearly identical in size, both paintings share the sharp definition of light and shadow, crisply rendered architectural details, and animated figures.

Bellotto's awareness of his uncle's drawings is also demonstrated by three other paintings directly based on the British Museum sheets, all datable to shortly after his return to Venice: the pendants showing *the Roman Forum with the Temple of Castor and Pollux* and *The Roman Forum with the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina* (both formerly in the collection of Consul Joseph Smith, Venice, and now in a private collection),⁵ and *Santa Maria d'Aracoeli and the Campidoglio* (The Egremont Collection, Petworth House, West Sussex).⁶ Bellotto is also known to have produced drawn copies after two of Canaletto's sheets, both today in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle and both long considered to be by Canaletto.⁷ Finally, the British Museum drawings are likely to have remained in Canaletto's studio during his lifetime, and Bellotto's visit to Rome in 1742 clearly inspired him to return to these sheets and to painting Roman views in general (subject matter that he had not considered for over two decades) as evidenced by the five signed and dated paintings of 1742 in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle.⁸

¹ On Bellotto's use of drawings executed by Canaletto during the latter's tenure in Rome in the 1720s, see C. Beddington, in *Canaletto prima maniera*, A. Bettagno and B.A. Kowalczyk (eds), exh. cat., Venice 2001, pp. 54–56, under nos 28–29.

² Venice and Houston 2001, p. 136, under no. 35.

³ Venice and Houston 2001, pp. 112–15, no. 26, reproduced in colour.

⁴ Constable 1989, vol. I, no. 713 (241), reproduced pl. 132, and vol. II, p. 562, no. 713 (241).

⁵ Venice and Houston 2001, pp. 96–99, nos 18 and 19, reproduced in colour. The Canaletto drawings on which they are based are included in Constable 1989, vol. I, nos 713 (224) and 713 (225), reproduced pl. 131, and vol. II, pp. 560–61, nos 713 (224) and 713 (225).

⁶ Venice and Houston 2001, pp. 100–1, no. 20, reproduced in colour. The Canaletto drawing on which this is based, formerly in Bellotto's collection, is included in Constable 1989, vol. I, no. 713 (238 [19]), reproduced pl. 132, and vol. II, p. 561, no. 713 (238 [19]).

⁷ K.T. Parker, *The Drawings of Antonio Canaletto in the collection of His Majesty the King at Windsor Castle*, Oxford 1948, pp. 51–52, nos 109 and 110, reproduced figs 48 and 49 (as Canaletto).

⁸ Constable 1989, vol. I, nos 378, 382, 384, 386 and 390, reproduced pls 70–72, and vol. II, pp. 386, 389–92 and 394–95.



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

18

GIANDOMENICO TIEPOLO

Venice 1727–1804

The Celebrated Deeds of the Porto Family of Vicenza:

Jacopo da Porto appointed Governor of Vicenza in 1022;

Donato da Porto appointed a Patrician of Venice in 1379;

Gerolamo da Porto appointed Prefect of Piedmont in 1508;

Francesco da Porto appointed General of the Republic of Venice in 1554;

Ippolito da Porto commended by Charles V in 1572;

Giovanni Battista da Porto appointed Commander-in-Chief in 1661

a set of six, each extensively inscribed with a description and date of the event portrayed
each detached fresco transferred to canvas, gold ground, in a *trompe l'œil* frame
(the latter in the scene with Francesco da Porto is an addition)
each approximately the same size (the largest: 271.8 x 185 cm.; 107 x 72⁷/₈ in.;
the smallest: 271.8 x 171.5 cm.; 107 x 67¹/₂ in.)
(6)

W # £ 1,500,000-2,500,000

PROVENANCE

Painted *circa* 1760 in Palazzo Porto, Vicenza, where they remained *in situ* until *circa* 1900;

Dr Eduard Simon (1864–1929), Berlin, from at least 1903 until 1929;

His posthumous sale, Berlin, Cassirer und Helbing, 11 October 1929, lots 13–18 (as Giambattista Tiepolo);

Where acquired by Axel Wenner-Gren (1881–1961), 32 Quai de Passy, Paris and later Stockholm;

By whose Estate sold ('The Property of the Estate of the late Dr Axel Wenner-Gren'), London, Sotheby's, 24 March 1965, lot 37 (as Giambattista in collaboration with Giandomenico Tiepolo), for £70,000;

With the Hallsborough Gallery, London, 1966 (as a collaboration between Giambattista and Giandomenico);

Acquired from the above by Dr Gustav Rau (1922–2002);

By whom bequeathed to UNICEF;

By whom sold ('Property from the Gustav Rau Collection to be sold to benefit the German Committee for Unicef'), London, Sotheby's, 3 July 2013, lot 42, for £2,800,000;

Acquired by private treaty through Sotheby's in 2016 for the present collection.

These magnificent monochrome frescoes commemorating the glories and achievements of the Porto family from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries were painted around 1760 by Giandomenico Tiepolo for the Palazzo da Porto Festa in Vicenza, built by Andrea Palladio (fig. 1). The scion of a wealthy patrician family, Giambattista Orazio da Porto (1730–1816) commissioned the artist and his father Giambattista to collaborate in the decoration of three of the palazzo's main rooms. Giandomenico produced the present series immortalising Porto's forefathers. Visually highly arresting, the set of six scenes is painted predominantly in monochrome tones, combining the texture of brushwork in fresco with lustrous gold leaf. Indeed, the three-dimensional impression is enhanced by the contrast between the figures, painted in tones of buff and grey, with yellow highlights and touches of blue, and the striking gold skies and fictive dark grey frames. The tradition of imitating sculpture here takes the form of a distinctive *trompe-l'œil* illusionism on an ambitious scale, demonstrating to splendid effect the unrivalled expertise of the Tiepolo family as the greatest exponents of fresco decoration in eighteenth-century Venetian painting.



EXHIBITED

Stockholm, National Museum, *Aldre Italiensk Konst*, 1944, nos 216–21 (as Giambattista);

Leeds, Temple Newsam House, 1967–68 (as Giambattista);

London, The National Gallery and Düsseldorf, Stiftung Museum Kunstpalast, *Monochrome: Painting in Black and White*, 30 October 2017 – 18 February 2018 and 22 March – 15 July 2018, n.n. (as Giandomenico Tiepolo; one from the series of six: *Jacopo Porto appointed Governor of Vicenza*).

LITERATURE

F. Vendramin Mosca, *Descrizione di Vicenza*, 1779, vol. II, p. 86 (as 'Tiepoletto');

P. Molmenti, G.B. *Tiepolo, la sua vita e le sue opere*, Milan 1909, pp. 271–72, reproduced pp. 269–70 (as Giambattista);

E. Sack, *Giambattista und Domenico Tiepolo*, Hamburg 1910, p. 183, nos 294–99 (as Giambattista);

M. Friedländer, *Sammlung Dr. Eduard Simon, Gemälde*, Berlin 1929, pp. 42–52, reproduced pls XV–XX (as Giambattista);

A. Scharf, 'Das Tiepolo-Zimmer des Palazzo Porto in Vicenza', in *Der Cicerone*, vol. XXI, 1929, pp. 457–62, reproduced;

M. Goering, 'Tiepolo', in Thieme–Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon*, Leipzig 1939, vol. XXXIII, p. 152 (as Giambattista and workshop);

C. Vigni, *Disegni del Tiepolo*, Padua 1942, p. 65, under no. 195 (as Giandomenico, datable 1755–60);

G. Vigni, 'Note su Giambattista e Giandomenico Tiepolo', in *Emporium*, July 1943, p. 14 and n. 2 (as Giandomenico, possibly on Giambattista's design, and dated 1760);

A. Morassi, *A complete catalogue of the paintings of G.B. Tiepolo*, London 1962, pp. 48–49 (as Giambattista with collaboration from his son Giandomenico);

A. Morassi, 'Giandomenico Tiepolo', in *Enciclopedia Universale dell'Arte*, Venice and Rome 1965, *ad vocem*;

Exhibition of Six Tiepolo Frescoes from the Palazzo Porto, Vicenza, exh. cat., London 1966 (as a collaboration between father and son, datable 1757);

K. Roberts, 'Current and Forthcoming Exhibitions', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 108, no. 756, February 1966, p. 102 (without specifying which Tiepolo is the author);

B. Nicolson, 'Current and Forthcoming Exhibitions', in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 108, no. 756, March 1966, p. 155, reproduced figs 55 and 56 (without specifying which Tiepolo is the author);

A. Noach, *Tiepolo Frescoes from the Palazzo Porto, Vicenza*, exh. booklet, place unknown 1967 (as Giambattista);

A. Pallucchini, *L'opera completa di Giambattista Tiepolo*, Milan 1968, pp. 127–28, no. 261B (as a collaboration between father and son);

A. Mariuz, *Giandomenico Tiepolo*, Venice 1971, p. 122, reproduced figs 140–45 (as Giandomenico);

E. Forssman, *Il Palazzo da Porto Festa di Vicenza*, Corpus Palladianum XVIII, Vicenza 1973, pp. 65–66, reproduced figs 74–79;

G. Knox, 'Primi Pensieri by Domenico Tiepolo and a New Painting', in *Master Paintings*, XVII, I, 1979, pp. 32–33, under nos I and J, only *Ippolito Porto* reproduced (as Giandomenico);

G. Knox, *Giambattista and Domenico Tiepolo, A Study and Catalogue Raisonné of the Chalk Drawings*, New York 1980, vol. I, p. 323, no. P.317 (as Giandomenico);

R. Menegozzo, *Nobili e Tiepolo a Vicenza. L'artista e i suoi committenti*, Vicenza 1990, pp. 119–26, all reproduced (as Giandomenico);

B.L. Brown (ed.), *Giambattista Tiepolo, Master of the oil sketch*, exh. cat., Milan 1993, pp. 279–80, under no. 44 and nn. 6 and 7 (as Giandomenico);

M. Gemin and F. Pedrocco, *Giambattista Tiepolo, I dipinti, Opera completa*, Venice 1993, p. 476, under no. 501 (as Giandomenico);

F. Pedrocco, *Tiepolo, The Complete Paintings*, New York 2002, p. 303, under no. 269 (as Giandomenico);

J. Sliwka et al. in *Monochrome: Painting in Black and White*, exh. cat., London and Düsseldorf 2017, pp. 123–24 and 240.

A stylistic analysis of the works produced suggests that the father limited himself to working on the ceiling of the main *salone*, where he painted the oval fresco depicting the *Apotheosis of Orazio da Porto*, which is now in the Seattle Art Museum (fig. 2).¹ Giandomenico, meanwhile, produced the present series celebrating the triumphs of the Porto family, and for a smaller room another set, still *in situ*, comprising three parts, possibly commissioned to replace Paolo Veronese's three allegories on canvas from 1551–52, which are today split between the Vatican and the Pinacoteca Capitolina in Rome.² To this day, Domenico Brusaporci's fresco of the *Fall of the Giants* can still be seen on the ceiling of the room in which the present series probably hung.



Jacopo da Porto appointed Governor of Vicenza in 1022 (detail)



Fig. 1 Palazzo da Porto Festa, Vicenza, 1547



Fig. 2 Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, *The Apotheosis of Orazio da Porto* (also known as *The Triumph of Valour over Time*), c. 1757. Fresco, transferred to canvas, 508 x 228.6 cm. Seattle Art Museum, Seattle. © Wikimedia

History of a Dynasty

While the frescoes celebrate the triumphant feats of the *condottieri* of the Porto family over the course of seven centuries, the chronological order also provides the modern viewer with an overarching timeline which illustrates the political shifts and events of medieval and early modern Europe. The cycle illustrates the varying fortunes and ever-changing allegiances of Europe's key players, and of course the fundamental role the Porto family played within the successes of the Republic of Venice, at times aligned with the Holy Roman Empire and latterly as an independent political force.

The first fresco shows Jacopo da Porto – count and knight, famed for his moral integrity and learning – kneeling before Holy Roman Emperor Henry II (also known as Saint Henry), who appoints him Governor of Vicenza in 1022. Two river gods accompany them to the left, while Palladio's celebrated Basilica in Vicenza

features as a distinctive yet anachronistic landmark in the background. Soldiers with the imperial standard are just visible to the right. The second fresco shows Donato da Porto joining the ranks of the Patricians of the Venetian Republic in 1379 in recognition of his help in attaining victory in the War of Chioggia against the Genoese Republic, Venice's great rival on the seas. The Venetian Republic – *La Serenissima* – is personified by the enthroned female figure, represented with her symbol the winged Lion of Saint Mark, at the lower left, while the coins and trireme symbolise Donato's financial and naval assistance. Ships at sea are visible in the distance, lower right. Tiepolo's third fresco shows Gerolamo da Porto appointed Prefect of Piedmont in 1508 by the Venetian Republic, symbolised once more by the standing female figure accompanied by the Lion. By this date Venice and the Porto family were at war again, this time against an alliance composed of virtually every other major force in Europe, united under the banner of the League of Cambrai; the flags of the inimical Holy Roman Empire, France and the Papal States are visible beyond.



Fig. 3 Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Jacopo da Porto, Governor of Vicenza*, c. 1755–60. Pen and ink with wash and traces of chalk on paper, 37.5 x 25.3 cm. Museo Civico di Storia ed Arte di Trieste

Fig. 4 Giandomenico Tiepolo, *The Emperor Charles V commends Ippolito da Porto*, c. 1757. Pen and ink with wash and chalk on paper, 21.9 x 16.8 cm. Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia. © Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia

From the sixteenth century onwards, the Porto family were still participating in the struggle for European power: the fourth fresco commemorates Francesco da Porto's appointment in 1554 as General of the Venetian Republic. He kneels on the steps of Venice's throne as he receives the general's cap, while a page stands in attendance with the baton of command on a salver. Beyond are the fortified walls of Francesco's beloved Villa Porto Colleone in Thiene, near Vicenza. The next fresco, the fifth in the series, shows Ippolito da Porto honoured by the Emperor Charles V – whose distinctive profile is readily recognisable – for capturing and handing over the Elector John Frederick, Duke of Saxony, wanted by Charles for his rebellious uprising. Ippolito, in full armour, points to a captive soldier, whose hands are shackled. Power in Europe was steadily being centralised by Charles V, as both internal rivals for his throne and foreign powers gradually submitted to his rule. The fresco's caption stating that Ippolito gave his life defending Venetian territories abroad at the battle of Corfu against the Turks, illustrates also the continuing Venetian dominance of the seas, a theme that leads on to the sixth and last fresco, arguably the highpoint of the family's history, when in 1661, against a backdrop of a fortified town, Giovanni Battista da Porto is appointed supreme commander and given the keys to Crete, Palma and Mantua.

The frescoes had always been assumed to be by Giambattista until 1943 when Vigni reassigned them to Giandomenico, proposing a dating of *circa* 1760 (see *Literature*). Preparatory drawings for the designs of Jacopo and Ippolito are known, the former in the Museo Civico in Trieste (fig. 3) and the latter in the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Virginia (fig. 4). While Vigni assigned the latter to Giambattista – thereby proposing that the compositions were conceived by the father but executed by the son – Knox assigned both drawings to Giandomenico, thereby considering the whole creative process to be by the son. Morassi and Pallucchini, both writing in the 1960s, still saw Giambattista's hand in the frescoes and proposed a collaboration between father and son, though since Mariuz's 1971 monograph all scholars have considered the works to be by Giandomenico alone.³ Mariuz in particular mentions that the hatching technique used to delineate texture, executed almost like an etching, betrays the hand of the son. On stylistic grounds the cycle is now accepted as the work of Giandomenico, although unquestionably influenced by his father in so effectively simulating sculpture.



Gerolamo da Porto appointed Prefect of Piedmont in 1508



Francesco da Porto appointed General of the Republic of Venice in 1554



Ippolito da Porto commended by Charles V in 1572 (detail)

While gold backgrounds are more often associated with Italian painting before 1500, there was a short revival in its popularity in the Veneto in the eighteenth century. Other examples of the artist's work with a gold background include the eight *trompe l'œil* monochrome bas-reliefs from 1761–62 frescoed in Villa Pisani in Stra.⁴

The paintings are homogenous both in terms of composition and content. It is likely that the position in which each painting was destined to hang in the original room would have had a direct impact on the way the artist composed each design. The painted light-fall would have been conceived in such a way as to avoid contrast with the direction of natural light coming in from the windows. Various conceits heighten the sculptural illusion: the modelling of the figures at different depths within the picture plane suggest sculpted relief; while the *cartellino* on the lower edge of each fresco evokes chiselled lettering in stone; and the painted grey frame around each scene heightens the overall three-dimensional effect.⁵



Giovanni Battista da Porto appointed Commander-in-Chief in 1661 (detail)



Fig. 5 Paolo Caliari, called Veronese, *Portrait of Iseppo da Porto and his son Leonida*, c. 1552. Oil on canvas, 247 x 133 cm. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. © Wikimedia



Fig. 6 Paolo Caliari, called Veronese, *Portrait of Livia da Porto Thiene and her daughter Deidamia*, c. 1552. Oil on canvas, 208.4 x 121 cm. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

Note on Provenance

The frescoes have enjoyed a remarkable history and have passed through the hands of some of Europe's wealthiest and most discerning collectors. Their original home, Palazzo Porto, was commissioned from Andrea Palladio by Iseppo da Porto in 1554, shortly after marrying Livia Thiene, both of whom are immortalised with their children in the celebrated portraits by Veronese (figs 5 and 6).

Painted in 1760, the frescoes were removed from the palazzo in about 1900, along with Giambattista's aforementioned *Apotheosis of Orazio da Porto*, when they were acquired by the Berlin industrialist and collector Eduard Simon (1864–1929). He had been recommended them by the curator and art historian Wilhelm von Bode (1845–1929), who would shortly thereafter found the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, subsequently named the Bode Museum in his honour.

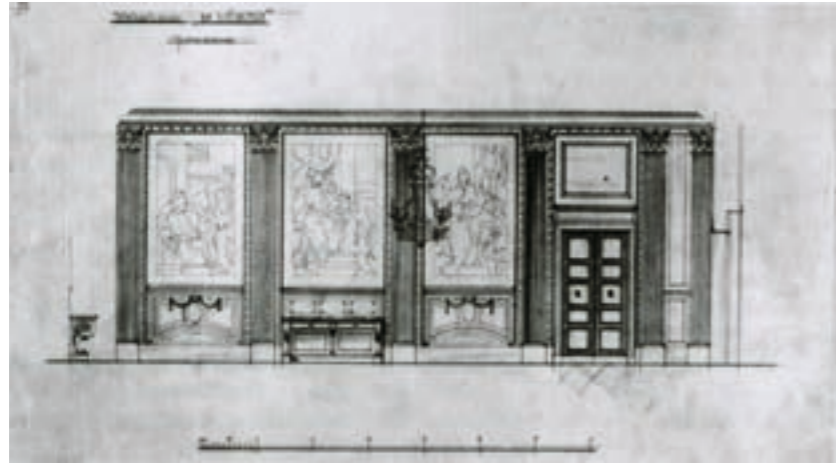


Fig. 7 Alfred Messel, A wall plan of the dining room at Villa Edouard Simon, featuring three of Tiepolo's frescoes



Fig. 8 The Dining Room at Villa Edouard Simon, Berlin

By 1903 the detached frescoes were hanging in Simon's house in 7 Victoriastraße in Berlin, which had been built shortly before by the renowned architect Alfred Messel (1853–1909). The dining room was specially designed to fit the frescoes and the plans were meticulously studied before building was allowed to commence (figs 7 and 8). Their next owner, the Swedish entrepreneur Axel Wenner-Gren (1881–1961), one of the richest men in the world at the time, took the works to Paris and then Stockholm, before they were sold to the Hallsborough Gallery in London. It was there that Dr Gustav Rau, the German industrialist and collector, acquired them, later selling them to benefit UNICEF.

¹ 61.170; fresco, transferred to canvas, 508 x 228.6 cm.; the subject has also been interpreted as *The Triumph of Valour over Time*. Gemin and Pedrocco 1993, p. 476, no. 501, reproduced p. 477. The museum also houses a very fine *bozzetto* for the design; Gemin and Pedrocco 1993, p. 476, no. 501a, reproduced p. 477.
² For the three works by Tiepolo (one octagonal and two of square format), see Pallucchini 1968, pp. 127–28, no. 261 C; for Veronese's allegories see T. Pignatti and F. Pedrocco, *Veronese*, Milan 1995, vol. I, pp. 59–61, nos 31 and 32, reproduced.
³ Vigni lists a drawing of the composition for *Jacopo*, the first of the scenes, as by Giambattista in preparation for Giandomenico's execution. The drawing is inscribed: *Giacomo* [sic]; see Vigni 1942.
⁴ Mariuz 1971, pp. 136–37, reproduced figs 179–82. Two allegories with gold backgrounds are also known to have been painted by Giambattista and are today in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; see B. Aikema (ed.), *Italian Paintings from the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries in Dutch Public Collections*, Florence 1997, pp. 159–60, nos 182–83, both reproduced.
⁵ Each inscribed as follows: 1) IACOBVS DE PORTO CO: ET EQVES/MORVM INTEGRITATE, DOCTRINA, CONSILIO/ CLARISSIMVS VICENTIAE PRÆFECTVS [sic]/ PRO HENRICO . II . REGE, ET IMPERATORE A . S . MXXII; 2) DONATVS DE PORTO COMES ET EQVES CVM NAVIBUS/ MILITE, PECVNIA REM VENETAM/ CLODIANO BELLO JUVISSET S.C. INTER VENETOS/ PATRICIOS COOPTATVS AN° S . MCCCLXXIX; 3) GRAVISSIMO AB VNIVERSA EVROPA BELLO/ PRESSA REP. VENETA HIERONYMVS DE PORTO CO: ET EQVES/ S.C. VNIVERSO PRÆFECTVS EST PEDEMONTIO/ A.S. MDVII; 4) FRANCISCVS DE PORTO CO: ET EQVES PACE ET BELLO DOMI, FORISQVE/ REBVS PRÆCLARE GESTIS REIP · VEN · COLLATERALIS GENERALIS/ A · S · MDLIV; 5) HIPPLYTVS DE PORTO CO: ET EQVES IOANE FEDERICO SAXONIAE DVCE/ DEVICTO, ET CAPTO A CAROLO V. IMPERATORE SVMIS HONORIBVS/ CVMVIATVR MOXQVE REMP. VENET. A TVRCARVM ARMIS STRENVTE/ DEFENDENS CORCYRÆ DECEDIT. A.S. MDLXXII; 6) IOANNES B[A]PTISTA DE PORTO CO: ET EQVES DIFICILLIMIS/ TEMPORIBVS CRETÆ, PALMÆ, MANTVÆ A VENETA REPV./ PRÆFICITVR AC SVPREMVS MILITVM MAGISTER CREATVR/ A.S. MDLXI



Francesco da Porto appointed General of the Republic of Venice in 1554 (detail)





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

19

ANTONIO JOLI

Modena 1700–1777 Naples

A pair of views: Naples, a view of the Riviera da Chiaia, from the north-west;
Paestum, a view of the Valley of the Temples

a pair, both oil on canvas
each: 75 x 125 cm.; 29½ x 49¼ in.
(2)

± £ 150,000-200,000

PROVENANCE

With Sestieri, Rome, by 1968 (the *View of Naples* only);

Private collection, Italy;

Anonymous sale, New York, Sotheby's, 30 January
2019, lot 78;

Where acquired by the present collector.

In this pair of paintings, the much-admired eighteenth-century artist Antonio Joli records two iconic southern Italian views: Naples and Paestum. Both of these cities, located in the Campania region, were popular stops on the Grand Tour. As such, painted scenes of their grand and memorable vistas found a ready market among the wealthy travellers passing through. Painted at the height of the artist's career around 1760, this pair is rendered with such remarkable detail and topographical accuracy that surely they were intended for an important patron.

Born in Modena, Antonio Joli was a painter of *vedute* and *capricci* who travelled as a young man to Rome, where he studied the works of Gaspar van Wittel and Giovanni Paolo Panini, under whom he almost certainly trained. He established himself in the Eternal City by 1718, and by 1732, he is documented in Venice, where he would have encountered the work of leading *vedutisti*, namely Canaletto, Marieschi and Carlevarijs. This early training, followed by sojourns to London and Madrid, served as the foundation to the great success he welcomed in Naples, where he settled in 1755 to serve as Court painter to Charles VII, King of Naples (later Charles III of Spain) and where he received a wealth of commissions from aristocrats passing through the region on their Grand Tour. Stylistically, the present pair dates to about 1760 and compares closely to a group of large city views and landscapes commissioned during the same period by Lord John Montague Brudenell, a Grand Tourist and one of Joli's most important patrons.¹



In the view of Naples from the north-west, the coastline of the picturesque suburb of Chiaia unfolds with Castel Sant'Elmo glowing in the sun on the hill above at left and the Castel dell'Ovo stretching out into the water at right. It is a brilliant, sunny day, with the light gleaming off the water, and the only hint of disquiet in the otherwise calm and peaceful scene, filled with boats and figures enjoying the day's pleasures, is the smoke billowing into the sky from Mount Vesuvius in the far distance. Such was the popularity and success of this view that Joli repeated it several times, from varying viewpoints, throughout his career, though only very rarely reaching the quality found in this example.²

In the other canvas, the ancient city of Paestum, located about 100 miles south of Naples, is immediately recognizable by the three Doric temples that rise out of the ruins. The view captured is from the west, looking east toward the Cilento Mountains. The temple of Athena is at left, the two Hera temples are at right, and remnants of the city's famed walls stretch across the centre of the composition. The ancient metropolis, known by the Greeks in antiquity as *Poseidonia*, reached its peak in the 6th century BCE. Although it was never entirely forgotten, renewed interest in the site arose alongside the eighteenth-century excavations of nearby Pompeii and Herculaneum. Joli was one of the first artists to paint views of Paestum, capturing it from a multitude of angles, including from inside the temple structures, indicating that he also ventured very close to the ruins themselves, probably also executing drawings *in situ*.³

Dr Ralph Toledano, to whom we are grateful, has inspected these paintings firsthand. He has endorsed the attribution to Antonio Joli and has underscored the splendid quality of both works.

¹ See, for example, R. Toledano, *Antonio Joli*, Turin 2006, p. 270, no. V.V.VI.1; p. 289, no. V.V.XIV; p. 292, no. V.V.XV.III; and p. 390, no. N.XXXVIII.1, among others.

² Toledano 2006, pp. 309–13, nos N.V.1–5.

³ Toledano 2006, pp. 390–401, nos N.XXXVIII.1–N.XLIV. Another version of the present view of Paestum with some variance in the staffage was sold as part of the collection of John Embling at Sotheby's, London, on 10 December 1975, lot 61.





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

20

GIOVANNI PAOLO PANINI

Piacenza 1691–1765 Rome

An architectural *capriccio* with the Colosseum and the Arch of Constantine

signed and located lower centre, on the stone: *I.P.PANINI/ ROMAE*

oil on canvas

98.7 x 136.5 cm.; 38⁷/₈ x 53³/₄ in.

W ₣ £ 100,000-150,000

PROVENANCE

The Duchess of Uzès, France;

With Galerie Cailleux, Paris, by 1979;

From whom acquired by a private collector, 1985;

By whom sold ('The Property of a Gentleman'), London, Sotheby's, 6 December 2006, lot 50, for £187,200;

Where acquired by the present owner.

EXHIBITED

Lyon, Musée de la civilisation gallo-romaine, *Quelques Antiques dans l'art du XVIII^e*, 11–29 June 1979, no. 3;

Paris, Galerie Cailleux, *Rome 1760–1770: Fragonard, Hubert Robert et leurs Amis*, 15 February – 26 March 1983, no. 60;

Nuremberg, Kunsthalle und Norishalle, *Der Traum vom Raum: Gemalte Architektur aus 7 Jahrhunderten*, 13 September – 23 November 1986, no. 65.

LITERATURE

N. Colin, *Quelques Antiques dans l'art du XVIII^e*, exh. cat., Lyon 1979, n. p., no. 3, reproduced;

J. Cailleux and M. Roland Michel, *Rome 1760–1770: Fragonard, Hubert Robert et leurs Amis*, exh. cat., Paris 1983, n. p., no. 60, reproduced;

H. Bideau, in *Der Traum vom Raum: Gemalte Architektur aus 7 Jahrhunderten*, K. Löcher (ed.), exh. cat., Marburg 1986, p. 328, no. 65, reproduced.



This *capriccio*, which depicts some of the best-known monuments from ancient Rome, was painted by the foremost exponent of such views during the first half of the 18th century, Giovanni Paolo Panini. Panini differed from his contemporaries in his approach to topographical painting, by privileging the picturesque quality of his works above their accuracy, unlike other *vedutisti* such as Bernardo Bellotto (1722–1780) and Gaspar van Wittel, called Vanvitelli (1652/3–1736). The present canvas typifies this notion: although the various edifices and sculptures are accurately rendered, they have been placed in a fanciful arrangement for maximum pictorial effect. Likely dating to the mid-1730s, on account of its strong compositional similarities with other dated works, this grand painting attests to Panini's confidence in executing *capricci* of this kind at this stage in his career.



Fig. 1 Giovanni Paolo Panini, *Roman capriccio: The Colosseum and other monuments*, 1735. Oil on canvas, 98.4 x 133.4 cm. Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana. Gift of Lila Allison Lilly in memory of her husband, Josiah Kirby Lilly

The Colosseum is the key protagonist of this composition. Its grand stature not only takes up almost the entire left-hand half of the canvas, but also provides a dramatic backdrop for the statuary and figures in the foreground. On the right, Panini has portrayed the three columns of the Temple of Castor and Pollux, which act as a visual counterpoint to the amphitheatre's vast dimensions. Beyond these are the Arch of Constantine, set at an oblique angle for greater perspectival impact, and a pyramid, which presumably represents the Piramide Cestia. The sculptures are likewise recognisable: the male nude on the left is the *Borghese Gladiator* by Agasius of Ephesus (b. c. 75–c. 25 BCE), now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris,¹ while the seated figure can be identified as the *Dying Gaul* of c. 60–40 BCE, today in the Musei Capitolini, Rome.² Panini must have studied these statues from life, as he includes them in numerous other compositions, from a variety of different angles.³

The popularity of this composition among Panini's patrons is attested to by the number of extant variants in both private and institutional collections. A painting formerly with Morandotti, Rome, which comprises all of the same architectural elements but bears differences in the staffage, is signed and dated 1734, thus providing an approximate date of execution for the present work.⁴ This dating is corroborated by three other pictures of similar design, except for the insertion of Trajan's honorary column in front of the Colosseum, in the Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery, Kent,⁵ the Indianapolis Museum of Art (fig. 1),⁶ and the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.⁷ The Maidstone painting is dated 1734, while the Indianapolis and Berlin works are both dated 1735. A fifth variant, signed and dated 1738, sold at Doyle New York in 2010 for \$365,000.⁸

¹ Inv. no. MR 224; marble, 173 x 172 x 169 cm.

² Inv. no. S 747; marble, height: 93 cm., plinth: 89 x 186.5 cm.

³ For example, the *Borghese Gladiator* is depicted from the front in a painting in a private collection, Rome; F. Arisi, *Gian Paolo Panini e i fasti della Roma del '700*, Rome 1986, p. 345, no. 228, reproduced. Both sculptures are shown, very slightly turned, in a picture in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, which is signed and dated 1736; Arisi 1986, p. 352, no. 242, reproduced.

⁴ Oil on canvas, 96 x 136 cm.; Arisi 1986, p. 343, no. 225, reproduced.

⁵ Inv. no. 00-1873-4; oil on canvas, 97.2 x 134.5 cm.; Arisi 1986, p. 345, no. 226, reproduced on p. 344. Its pendant features other Roman monuments such as the Farnese *Hercules*; Arisi 1986, p. 345, no. 227, reproduced on p. 344.

⁶ Accession no. 50.6; oil on canvas, 98.4 x 133.3 cm.; Arisi 1986, p. 347, no. 231, reproduced. Its pendant, which portrays the Pantheon, among other Roman monuments, is also in the Indianapolis Museum: accession no. 50.5; oil on canvas, 99 x 135.8 cm.; Arisi 1986, p. 347, no. 232, reproduced.

⁷ Inv. no. 454; oil on canvas, 98 x 134 cm.; Arisi 1986, p. 348, no. 233, reproduced.

⁸ Oil on canvas, 97.2 x 136.5 cm.; New York, Doyle, 27 January 2010, lot 45, for \$365,000





PROPERTY FROM A SWISS PRIVATE COLLECTION

21

ANNE VALLAYER-COSTER

Paris 1744–1818

Still life of roses in a crystal vase

oil on canvas, unlined and on its original stretcher
32.2 x 27 cm.; 12¾ x 10⅞ in.

± £ 120,000-180,000

PROVENANCE

Possibly Piat Joseph Sauvage (1744–1818), Tournai;
Possibly his sale, Paris, A. Paillet et M. Chariot,
6 December 1808, lot 29, for 36.5 francs;
Seligmann collection, before 1939;
Private collection, Paris, by 1970;
Thence by descent to the present owner.

LITERATURE

M. Roland Michel, *Anne Vallayer-Coster 1744–1818*,
Paris 1970, pp. 108 and 111, no. 18, reproduced;
E. Kahng and M. Roland Michel, *Anne Vallayer-
Coster: Painter to the Court of Marie-Antoinette*, exh.
cat., New Haven and London 2002, p. 214, no. 107,
reproduced (as current whereabouts unknown).

Untraced since 1970, this exquisitely refined and beautifully observed still life displays all the elegance and graceful palette of Anne Vallayer-Coster, painter to the court of Marie Antoinette. Depicting a fragrant bouquet of pink and white roses and white jasmine in a shimmering crystal vase, this perfectly balanced arrangement is a quintessential work by the artist, showcasing her consummate skill in rendering with remarkable realism the subtle nuances of the natural world. Moreover, the freshness of the painter's broad yet delicate brushstrokes is retained in the canvas's unlined condition.





Fig. 1 Anne Vallayer-Coster, *Still life of roses in a glass vase, with grapes beside*. Oil on canvas, 32.5 x 26.5 cm. Sold Sotheby's, New York, 26 January 2023, lot 136. © Sotheby's

At a time when male artists dominated the artistic scene, Vallayer-Coster stood out for her elegant arrangements of fruits and flowers, becoming one of the leading female painters of late eighteenth-century France. She became member of the *Académie royale de peinture et sculpture* on 28 July 1770, at the age of only 26. Her acceptance received considerable attention, including an announcement in the *Mercure de France* of September 1770,¹ which stated: *'Elle peut se placer à côté des maîtres célèbres qui composent la première académie de l'Europe, pour les arts; et dans un âge si tendre, et malgré les obstacles de son sexe, elle a porté l'Art si difficile de rendre la nature à un degré de perfection qui enchante et qui étonne.'*² The following year she made her debut at the Paris Salon, where her still lifes were universally praised and admired by the critics. Diderot himself observed: *'C'est la nature rendue ici avec une force de vérité inconcevable et en même temps une harmonie de couleur qui séduit'*;³ and finally concluding: *'Il est certain, Monsieur, que si tous les récipiendaires se présentaient comme mademoiselle Vallayer et s'y soutenaient avec autant d'égalité, le Salon serait autrement meublé.'*⁴ Named painter to the court of Marie Antoinette in 1780, Vallayer moved into the apartments in the Louvre in 1780.⁵ Though her career suffered during the French Revolution due to her connections with the monarchy, she would continue to exhibit at the Salon until 1817, the year before her death.

A comparable composition of near identical dimensions, also depicting a bouquet of roses and white jasmine in a glass vase, was sold from a distinguished Canadian private collection at Sotheby's, New York, on 26 January 2023, lot 136, for \$630,000 (fig. 1).

¹ *Mercure de France*, September 1770, p. 124. The full announcement is transcribed in Roland Michel 1970, p. 272.

² 'She can place herself alongside the celebrated masters who make up Europe's foremost academy for the arts; and at a such tender age, and despite the obstacles of her sex, she brought the difficult Art of imitating nature to a degree of perfection which captivates and astounds'.

³ D. Diderot, 'Salon de 1771', in *Héros et Martyrs: Salons de 1769, 1771, 1775, 1781*, Paris 1995, p. 196, no. 141: 'Nature is rendered here with inconceivable truthfulness and captivating harmony of colour'.

⁴ Diderot 1995, p. 199, no. 149: 'It is certain that if all new members made a showing like Mademoiselle Vallayer's, and sustained the same high level of quality there, the Salon would look very different'.

⁵ It was as Anne Vallayer that she moved into the Louvre apartments, where she was the only female artist with lodgings of her own. In the following year, on the 21 April 1781, she married Jean-Pierre-Silvestre Coster, a lawyer from Nancy, who held posts in the French government, and thereafter she was known as Vallayer-Coster.





PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED EUROPEAN COLLECTION

22

CLAUDE-JOSEPH VERNET

Avignon 1714–1789 Paris

A Mediterranean port view with figures

signed, dated and inscribed lower right, on the stone wall: *Joseph Vernet/ Roma - 1747*

oil on canvas

111.5 x 158.5 cm.; 43⁷/₈ x 62³/₈ in.

W ₣ £ 250,000-350,000

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Cardinal Frédéric Jérôme de La Rochefoucauld (1701–1757), Rome, 1747;

Acquired by Monseigneur de Philippau, France (according to an old inscription on the reverse, now covered by relining);

Elisabeth-Olympe-Louise-Armande-Félicité du Vigier, Marquise de Flamarens (1752–1835), Château de Villiers-les-Maillets, Saint-Barthélemy;

Probably by descent to her granddaughter, Elisabeth-Caroline Barnet, Comtesse de Mastin (1801–1865), wife of Philippe-Auguste-Armand-Maurice de Mastin, Comte de Mastin (b. 1780), Château de Villiers-les-Maillets;

By descent to their daughter, Alix de Mastin, Comtesse de Mastin (1825–1891), Château de Villiers-les-Maillets;

By descent to her cousin, Étienne de Bessot, Comte de Lamothe (1868–1939), Château de Villiers-les-Maillets, 5 June 1922;

Thence by descent;

Until sold, Monte Carlo, Sotheby's, 6 December 1987, lot 94, for 888,000 French francs;

Anonymous sale ('The Property of a Private Collector'), New York, Christie's, 11 January 1991, lot 73, for \$550,000;

Where acquired by the present owner.

LITERATURE

F. Ingersoll-Smouse, *Joseph Vernet, Peintre de Marines 1714–1789*, 2 vols, Paris 1926, vol. I, p. 50, nos 188–89 (as one of two marines commissioned by Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld: '*Commandées par le Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld, à cent cinquante écus les deux [...]'*).

Signed and dated 1747, this sun-dappled view of a Mediterranean port was executed while Claude-Joseph Vernet was in Rome, where he had settled in 1734. Painted for Cardinal Frédéric Jérôme de La Rochefoucauld (1701–1757), who was French ambassador to the Holy See during the papacy of Pope Benedict XIV (1675–1758), the picture's commission attests to the degree to which Vernet's reputation had been established among the Roman nobility and visitors on the Grand Tour. Besides its distinguished provenance, this painting, with its subtle rendering of light, is a beautiful example of the marine views for which he is renowned.

Although the scene represented here is almost certainly imaginary, it typifies Vernet's propensity to depict more-or-less contemporary realistic views, unlike some of the more overtly classical landscapes by artists such as Hubert Robert (1733–1808). What often makes these views remarkable, though, is the artist's ability to evoke not simply a place or time of day, but also a particular atmosphere and mood. Set beside a chapel built into the rock at the water's edge, the scene is imbued with a sense of quotidian activity, as figures can be observed going about their daily business. Prominent in the foreground is a stone statue of the Virgin and Child looking out towards the horizon, a motif that presumably resonated particularly deeply with the Cardinal. At the lower left, fishermen talk among themselves: as one passes his catch to his companion,





Fig. 1 Giovanni Paolo Panini, *Concert given by Cardinal de La Rochefoucauld at the Argentina Theatre in Rome, on the occasion of the wedding of Louis the Dauphin (1729–1765), son of Louis XV, to Marie-Joséphé of Saxony (1731–1767)*, 1747. Oil on canvas, 204 x 247 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. © Bridgeman Images

another nearby pulls in his net. Near the centre, a boat close to the jetty is approached by a figure clothed in a Franciscan habit, who proffers a pouch on the end of a stick in the hope of securing donations. Towards the right, washerwomen converse in front of a group of men depicted either fixing fishing nets, watching these activities unfold, or smoking. All of these incidental details serve to add visual interest to the composition, while in no way detracting from the overall impression of calm serenity offered by the vista.

This painting was originally conceived as one of a pair of marines.¹ Given that the majority of Vernet's compositions of this type explore mankind's relationship with nature, either celebrating the sea as a serene passage, ripe with harvest, as here, or demonstrating man's fragility in the face of nature's wrath, it is likely that the other picture, whose whereabouts are unknown, would have depicted a storm.

Note on Provenance

According to an old inscription on the reverse of the canvas, that has since been covered by relining,² the present painting was commissioned in 1747 by Cardinal Frédéric Jérôme de La Rochefoucauld. Though French by birth, the Cardinal spent around two years in Italy from 1745 to 1747 – during which he would have encountered Vernet – having been selected as the French ambassador before the Holy See by King Louis XV (1710–1774) and appointed Cardinal in the consistory of 10 April 1747 by Pope Benedict XIV, with the title of Cardinal Presbyter of Sant'Agnes fuori le mura. The musical feast at the Teatro Argentina, Rome, given by the Cardinal on 15 July 1747 to honour the marriage of the Dauphin Louis (1729–1765), son of Louis XV, to Maria Josepha of Saxony (1731–1767), was immortalised in a grand painting by Giovanni Paolo Panini (1691–1765) that now hangs in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (fig. 1).³

The work was later owned by Elisabeth-Olympe-Louise-Armande-Félicité du Vigier, the Marquise de Flamarens (1752–1835), who was lady-in-waiting to Marie Adélaïde de France (1732–1800): the sixth child of Louis XV. After the French Revolution, in 1804, Elisabeth acquired the Château de Villiers-les-Maillets in Saint-Barthélemy, which was close enough to Paris for her to visit family, while also providing a welcome break from the city. The painting remained at the château for over a century and descended in the same noble family until its sale at Sotheby's Monte Carlo in 1987.

¹ F. Ingersoll-Smouse, *Joseph Vernet, Peintre de Marines 1714–1789*, 2 vols, Paris 1926, vol. I, p. 50, nos 188–89.

² The inscription reads: 'donné à mon fils aîné, le lieutenant de Lamothe du 20e dragon, le 5 juin 1922, peint par Vernet (Joseph) Roma 1747, acheté par le Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld, acquis par Monseigneur di Philippau, succession de la Marquise de Flamarens, succession de la Comtesse Alix de Mastin, a Villiers les Maillets en 1891'.

³ Inv. no. 414; oil on canvas, 205 x 246 cm.







PROPERTY FROM AN ENGLISH PRIVATE COLLECTION

23

AGOSTINO BRUNIAS

Rome circa 1730–1796 Dominica

Sir William Young Conducting a Treaty with the Black Caribs on the Island of St Vincent, 1773

oil on canvas
56 x 61 cm.; 22 x 24 in.

£ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Sir William Young, 1st Bt (1725–1788), Governor of Dominica;

By descent to his son, Sir William Young, F.R.S. (1749–1815), Governor of Tobago;

Anonymous sale, Paris, Hotel Drouot, 9 March 1951, lot 74 (as one of a pair);

Private collection, France;

Anonymous sale, London, Christie's, 25 September 2003, lot 425 (where titled 'Pacification of the Maroon Negros in the Island of Jamaica');

Where acquired by the mother of the present owners.

EXHIBITED

New York, El Museo del Barrio, The Studio Museum in Harlem, and the Queens Museum of Art, *Caribbean: Art at the Crossroads of the World*, 12 June 2012 – 6 January 2013 (unnumbered);

London, Tate Britain, *Artist and Empire*, 25 November 2015 – 10 April 2016 (unnumbered).

LITERATURE

L. Honychurch, 'Chatoyer's Artist: Agostino Brunias and the Depiction of St Vincent', in *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, 1, 2004, pp. 105–28, reproduced in colour fig. 18;

S. Thomas, 'Envisaging a Future for Slavery: Agostino Brunias and the Imperial Politics of Labor and Reproduction', in *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Baltimore 2018, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 120–22, reproduced in colour, fig. 3;

D. Bindman and H.L. Gates (eds), *The Image of the Black in Western Art, Volume III: From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition, Part III: The Eighteenth Century*, London and Cambridge, Mass. 2011, p. 272, reproduced from the engraving;

D. Cullen and E. Fuentes (eds), *Caribbean: Art at the Crossroads of the World*, exh. cat., New York 2012, reproduced in colour on the front cover;

A Smith, D. Blayney Brown and C. Jacobi (eds), *Artist and Empire. Facing Britain's Imperial Past*, exh. cat., London 2015, pp. 92–95, reproduced in colour.

ENGRAVED

Scott, in B. Edwards, *An Historical Survey of Saint Domingo*, London 1801, facing p. 311;

Scott, in B. Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, 4th ed., London 1807, vol. 1, facing p. 529.



This painting commemorates the signing of the peace treaty of 1773 between the British Crown and the Black Caribs of St Vincent, marking the end of the First Carib War of 1769–73. Commissioned by the artist's principal patron, Sir William Young, the first British Governor of Dominica, who negotiated the treaty and is seen seated on the right of the composition, the subject is entirely unique in the artist's *œuvre*. A radical departure from his more usual subject matter, the painting represents an important visual document in the history of the political development of the Caribbean.



Fig. 1 Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770. Oil on canvas, 152.6 x 214.5 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. © Wikimedia

The Black Caribs, or Chariabes (as distinct from Carib Amerindians, see next lot) were descendants of the original indigenous inhabitants of the Caribbean islands who had intermarried with runaway and shipwrecked slaves. The island of St Vincent, of which they regarded themselves to be the indigenous owners, was a particular stronghold for the population and they had never accepted the sovereignty of the European powers, either Spanish, French or more latterly British. Under the leadership of Joseph Chatoyer, the Black Caribs of St Vincent had been resisting British attempts to settle the island since 1763. The matter had come to a head in 1769, when a British survey party supported by the 32nd Regiment was taken hostage, resulting in a full-scale military assault with the aim of deporting the Caribs from the island. So successful was the continued resistance of Chatoyer's bands, however, coupled with political opposition to the expedition back in Britain, that the government were forced to agree a treaty in February 1773, demarcating an area of the island to be reserved for the Caribs, under the terms of which land was reserved with a right to autonomous self-governance. It is the signing of this treaty, negotiated by Sir William Young on behalf of the British, that forms the subject of the present painting, which was commissioned from Brunias by Young to commemorate the event.

Painted in the artist's characteristic refined manner, the painting shows the two parties assembled in the British camp, with Sir William seated on the right surrounded by officers of the British contingent. Facing them on the left are eleven Carib chiefs, come to negotiate the peace treaty. Prominent among them is their leader Chatoyer, who stands tall and wary in the centre of the composition. Beside him the rebel's chief advisor, Jean Baptiste, explains the terms of the treaty as the twenty-four articles of the agreement are read to him by a British officer, whilst on the far left another officer lays out a map which would have delineated the respective boundaries of British and Carib land. Article two of the treaty included the condition that the Caribs surrender their arms, a point which is referenced by collection of guns, swords and bows piled on the ground at Chatoyer's feet.

With their statuesque poses Brunias imparts a classical elegance to the 'noble' Caribs, whilst the kneeling figure in the left foreground directly references Benjamin West's crouching figure of a Mohawk warrior in *The Death of General Wolfe* (National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa), which had been exhibited at the Royal Academy two years before in 1771 (fig. 1). Young himself, who commissioned the picture, is presented in a pose reminiscent of the classical figure of *Justice*, his arm outstretched in a traditional gesture of peace, and the composition has echoes of works by other British artists depicting treaties with indigenous peoples, including Francis Hayman's *Robert Clive and Mir Jafar after the Battle of Plassey, 1757* (National Portrait Gallery, London) and Robert Home's *The reception of the Mysorean hostage princes by the Marquis Cornwallis, 1792* (National Army Museum, London), which put the emphasis on an orderly meeting of leaders from different cultures.

Born and trained in Rome, Brunias was employed as a draughtsman by the neo-classical architect Robert Adam in Italy in 1756, and returned with Adam to England in 1758. He continued to work under Adam, exhibiting landscapes at the Free Society of Artists in London in 1762 and 1763 and also worked for William Chambers, the official architect to the King. In London he met Sir William Young (1725–1788) who, early in 1764, was appointed President of the Commission for the Sale of Lands in the Ceded Islands which had been acquired by Britain the previous year in the Treaty of Paris. Young, who was later appointed the first British Governor of Dominica, invited Brunias to accompany him to the West Indies as his personal artist. A reformist who, as Sarah Thomas has pointed out (see *Literature*), was an early advocate of treating enslaved Africans and their descendants with benevolence over a decade before abolitionism came to the ascendance, Young was keen to promote the Ceded Islands as a thriving colonial economy and was quick to recognize the benefits of Brunias's talents and the potential of his experience with travellers on the Grand Tour in this respect.

Brunias was to remain in the West Indies for the rest of his life, apart from a few years spent in London from the mid-1770s when the Caribbean once more became a battle ground during the American Revolutionary War. The artist painted a large number of works documenting the scenery and inhabitants of the Windward Islands (now known as the Lesser Antilles) for Sir William, who was responsible for negotiating the treaty depicted here, as well as other wealthy British patrons in the Caribbean. His work provides an important record of the life of the Lesser Antilles in the late eighteenth century, depicting the islands at the zenith of British commercial involvement in the region following the cessation of the Seven Years' War and the terms of the Treaty of Paris. However, the present work is the only known painting to record a specific political event in the history of the West Indies such as this.

The composition of this painting was adapted and reformatted by the artist for use as a print in Bryan Edwards's *History, Civil and Commercial, of the British West Indies*, published in 1801. Transformed into a vertical composition, with the number of Caribs on the left reduced to equal the balance between the two parties, the print was titled *Pacification with the Maroon Negroes in the Island of Jamaica*, thus also changing the context of the work to refer to an earlier treaty of 1739 or 1740 with the Maroon insurgents in Jamaica, which formed the focus of Edwards's accompanying text, and overlooking the realpolitik that underlay Young's settlement in St Vincent, which was the basis of the original painting. More widely circulated, however, the print became better known than the original, which passed through the hands of Young's descendants and then into a private collection in France, coming to assume the title ascribed to the print in Edwards's *History*. Thus, when the painting last appeared at auction in 2003 it was incorrectly described as depicting a treaty with the Trelawny Town Maroons of Jamaica.



PROPERTY FROM AN ENGLISH PRIVATE COLLECTION

24

AGOSTINO BRUNIAS

Rome circa 1730–1796 Dominica

A family of Charaibes in the Island of St Vincent

oil on canvas
56 x 61 cm.; 22 x 24 in.

£ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Sir William Young, 1st Bt (1725–1788), Governor of Dominica;

By descent to his son, Sir William Young, F.R.S. (1749–1815), Governor of Tobago;

Anonymous sale, Paris, Hotel Drouot, 9 March 1951, lot 74 (as one of a pair);

Private collection, France;

Anonymous sale, Christie's, London, 25 September 2003, lot 424;

Where acquired by the mother of the present owners.

LITERATURE

L. Honychurch, 'Chatoyer's Artist: Agostino Brunias and the Depiction of St Vincent', in *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, 1, 2004, pp. 105–28, reproduced in colour fig. 15.

ENGRAVED

T. Milton, published in B. Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, 4th ed., London 1807, vol. I, facing p. 407.

This painting provides a rare view of life among the indigenous inhabitants of the West Indies in the eighteenth century, shortly before they were dispossessed by European settlers and their numbers heavily reduced by disease. Commissioned by Brunias's most significant patron, Sir William Young, the first British Governor of Dominica, it is the most significant of a small and important group of such paintings by the artist.

The Kalinago, or Island Caribs (Charaibes) as they were known in the eighteenth century, indigenous Amerindians of the Lesser Antilles related to the tribes of South America, were first encountered by Columbus in 1492. By the 1760s their numbers had already been reduced to less than a hundred families, however they maintained a stronghold in the mountainous regions of the island of St Vincent, under the protection of Sir William Young. Today, only a few Caribs remain, mostly on St Vincent and Dominica, where the community is undergoing a cultural revival. Brunias's depiction here relates to descriptions of similar scenes given in ethnographic texts of the Caribbean published by French writers during the previous century. The most influential of these were the engravings of Le Clerc, which illustrated Jean Baptiste Du Tertre's *Histoires generales des Antilles habitees par les Francaise*. Jean Jacques Rousseau noted the accounts of the Caribs contained in this book in formulating his theories on the ideal of the 'Noble Savage' and Brunias has clearly adopted this concept here in his portrayal of the last of the Caribs during the peak years of Enlightenment thought in the latter half of the eighteenth century.



Here six adults and two infants, each displaying various tools and utensils, congregate before a backdrop of two different types of palm thatched hut standing in a forest glade. The larger hut, a *taboui*, in the Island Carib language, was of a type used up until the 1950s while in the background stands an open-ended *mouina* with a hammock strung across it. The Kalinago appear faithfully depicted in their tribal finery of beads, earplugs, decorated aprons and feathered hair ornaments. From the left one woman carries a *pegal* loaded with plantains and is greeted by a man holding a bow and several arrows. In the centre another woman lowers a clay bowl (*chamacou*) onto a wicker stand (*mattoutou*), whilst a third is seated on a wooden stool displaying her reed bark leg straps that were woven on at marriage to enlarge the calves – considered to be a mark of female beauty. On the far right a man drinks from a calabash gourd (*mouloutoucou*), a knife slipped into his loincloth. The artist has also included identifiable indigenous plants, including the large broad-leafed *Heliconia bihai* ‘*Balisier*’, by the hut on the right, and a towering native palm, in the centre. By the 1760s such a pristine gathering, free of European trade goods, may not have been a daily reality for the Caribs, and it may have been necessary for Brunias to piece together elements of what was left of the culture at the time. However, the painting is still a valuable ethnographic record of the Vincentian Kalinago and is an image that has inspired and been reworked by other artists in the generations that followed.

Born and trained in Rome, Brunias was employed as a draughtsman by the neo-classical architect Robert Adam in Italy in 1756, and returned with Adam to England in 1758. He continued to work under Adam, exhibiting landscapes at the Free Society of Artists in 1762 and 1763 and also worked for William Chambers, the official architect to the King. In London he met Sir William Young (1725–1788) who, early in 1764, was appointed President of the Commission for the Sale of Lands in the Ceded Islands which had been acquired by Britain the previous year in the Treaty of Paris. Young, who was later appointed the first British Governor of Dominica, invited Brunias to accompany him to the West Indies as his personal artist. Young was keen to promote the Ceded Islands as a thriving colonial economy and was quick to recognize the benefits of Brunias’s talents and the potential of his experience with travellers on the Grand Tour in this respect.





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION, ENGLAND

25

RICHARD PATON

London 1717–1791

The review of the British fleet at Spithead by King George III,
on board the flagship *Barfleur*, 24 June 1773

oil on canvas
123.5 x 147 cm.; 48⁵/₈ x 57⁷/₈ in.

W £ 200,000-300,000

PROVENANCE

William Tennant (1783–1835), Little Aston Hall,
Little Aston;

Thence by descent to his son, Captain Charles
Edmund Tennant (1811–1862), Needwood House,
Burton-on-Trent;

Thence by descent to his son, Major Charles Richard
Tennant (1851–1937) and his wife the Hon. Mrs Ruth
Tennant (d. 1943), Needwood House and St Anne's
Manor, Sutton Bonnington;

Thence by descent to their nephew, Sir Charles
Buchanan, 4th Baronet (1899–1984), St Anne's Manor;

Thence by descent to the present owner.

This monumental depiction of the British fleet at Spithead, records a significant event in naval history, namely King George III's visit to Portsmouth and review of one of the most powerful naval forces in the world. Arranged and commanded by Sir Thomas Pye (1708/9–1785), Vice-Admiral of the Red, the four-day visit by George III from the 22 to 25 June 1773 would engage the monarch in matters relating to the Navy's needs, ultimately enlisting his support for further funding and expansion. Considered a highly regarded maritime painter of the period, Paton was present during this occasion to commemorate the honours conferred on Pye, who possibly commissioned this work, and acknowledge his overall operational charge of the 1773 review. Capturing a rare moment from naval history, paintings of this quality and magnitude by Paton are scarcely seen on the market. Held in the same family collection for at least 190 years, the work is offered at auction for the first time since its acquisition by William Tennant (1783–1835).

As Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, Pye was regarded as the main organiser of the King's visit in 1773 and carefully planned the schedule of the day's events. Documents and drawings made by Pye survive to this day and contain detailed descriptions of his proposed plans, including laying out the order of the salutes, sketches for the decoration of the blades of the oars on the Admiralty shallops and a diagram displaying the sequence of the procession of these shallops on 22 June for the initial review.¹ On 24 June, the fleet was assembled in three divisions: nine line-of-battle ships, commanded by Pye, four ships commanded by George, Lord Edgcumbe, Vice-Admiral of the Blue, and six ships commanded by Richard Spry, Rear-Admiral of the White and Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth. The painting records the moment in which the *Royal Oak*, seen to the right and commanded by Pye, fires a salute to honour the King who is on board the 90-gun flagship *Barfleur*, commanded by John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty (1718–1792), shown flying the Royal Standard at the main, the Admiralty flag at the foremast and the Union flag at the mizzen. *Barfleur* was Pye's Portsmouth flagship, from which he had been displaced by Lord Sandwich for the period of the royal visit onto the 74-gun *Royal Oak*. *Barfleur*, a second-rate ship of the line, enjoyed a distinguished career in the War of American Independence (1775–83) and the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793–1815).





Fig. 1 John Cleveley the Younger, *George III reviewing the Fleet at Spithead, 22 June 1773, depicting the 'Royal Oak', 1773*. Watercolour on paper, 40.4 x 60.9 cm. Royal Museums Greenwich, London. © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

The King visited the fleet on several occasions during his stay at Portsmouth and dined in state on board the *Barfleur* on 22–24 June (for which a budget of £4,000 was allowed – over £500,000 in today's equivalent). Having dined on the *Barfleur* shortly after 2 pm on 24 June, the King knighted a number of senior officers on the quarter-deck of the ship, including Pye and Spry, and formally advanced Pye from Vice-Admiral of the Red to Admiral of the Blue. As Spry's blue flag was broken out at the mainmast-head of the *Royal Oak*, all the ships of the fleet other than *Barfleur* saluted him. In return, as this painting shows: 'The Admiral, in acknowledgement of the Honour conferred upon him, saluted the Royal Standard with all the Guns on board the *Royal Oak*'.² In comparison to Pye's new blue flag at the main in the *Royal Oak* (as shown in this painting), denoting his rise to full Admiral of the Blue, the same colour at the foremast of the ship to rear left identifies it as the *Dublin*, Edgcumbe's temporary flagship for the review as a Vice-Admiral of the Blue.

At 5.30 pm, George III left the *Barfleur* for the yacht *Princess Augusta* (depicted in lot 26), in which the royal party returned to Portsmouth harbour, accompanied by flag officers and captains in their barges, landing at the dock at 7.30 pm. Despite the high honours, Pye did not enjoy an unblemished reputation. He was known among his junior officers as 'Goose Pye',³ and is described as 'something of a naval grotesque who aroused mingled amusement and contempt'.⁴

Although George III had been King since 1760, the whole event was the first time he had ventured beyond London and Windsor to visit any other part of England. Beyond the symbolic prestige involved for Portsmouth and the Navy, it also had an underlying political agenda set by Lord Sandwich, in the last of his three terms as First Lord of the Admiralty. This was to enlist the King's close support in his campaign for long-necessary reforms in the Royal Dockyards, which was key to both the quality of naval shipbuilding and other logistical needs of the Navy. The 1773 Portsmouth review was followed up by a less formal and more dockyard-focused one in 1778, when Queen Charlotte was also present and enjoyed use of the *Augusta*, while the King was more closely inspecting the dockyard facilities.

Paton, who is thought to have been self-taught, rose to be one of the principal painters of significant naval actions of the 18th century. During a period of multiple and significant maritime events and wars, the depictions and records of the British Navy's exploits were much in demand and were made popular by the circulation of prints. On the day of the review, Paton, along with other marine painters such as Dominic Serres (1722–1793) and John Cleveley the Younger (1747–1786), were present to record the event (fig. 1). It is conceivable that Pye, who had been awarded one of highest naval honours, would have wanted a record of this momentous event and so commissioned this work from Paton. According to the descendants of Willian Tennant, the family had a number of maritime pictures by Paton before 1800, this painting was acquired by him at an unknown date. Although the Tennant family had no naval connection, their portraits were painted by the most renowned artists of the day. William's parents were painted by Thomas Gainsborough,⁵ while William himself was painted by Thomas Hudson, Sir Joshua Reynolds and George Romney.

¹ National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, *Page from a journal describing the engagement of June 1693, orders for the naval review at Portsmouth, 1773, and some papers addressed to Sir Hugh Palliser, 1794*, no. PHB/P/7/1.

² As reported in *The London Gazette*, no. 11365, 29 June 1773, n. p.

³ R. Knight (ed.) in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

⁴ N.A.M. Rodger, *The wooden world: an anatomy of the Georgian navy*, London 1986, p. 76.

⁵ Sotheby's, New York, 8 June 2017, lot 67.





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION, ENGLAND

26

RICHARD PATON

London 1717–1791

View of Portsmouth Harbour entrance on 22 June 1773, with King George III leaving in a barge procession to review the fleet at Spithead; the Round Tower on the left and the Blockhouse Fort, Gosport, to the right

oil on canvas
80.5 x 111.5 cm.: 31¾ x 43⅞ in.

£ 60,000-80,000

PROVENANCE

William Tennant (1783–1835), Little Aston Hall,
Little Aston;

Thence by descent to his son, Captain Charles
Edmund Tennant (1811–1862), Needwood House,
Burton-on-Trent;

Thence by descent to his son, Major Charles Richard
Tennant (1851–1937) and his wife the Hon. Mrs Ruth
Tennant (d. 1943), Needwood House and St Anne's
Manor, Sutton Bonnington;

Thence by descent to their nephew, Sir Charles
Buchanan, 4th Baronet (1899–1984), St Anne's Manor;

Thence by descent to the present owner.



This fascinating picture is likely to depict the first day of George III's visit to Portsmouth from 22 to 25 June 1773. The flotilla of barges can be seen sailing out of Portsmouth with the British naval fleet and Isle of Wight visible in the distance. The King is recognised by his red uniform and the Royal Standard seen flying from the bow of the second barge of the central column, whilst the flag officers, senior captains of the fleet and other dignitaries accompany him in numerous barges behind, identified by their flags and pendants. On the left, a twenty-one-gun salute is being fired from beyond the medieval Round Tower, whilst to the right soldiers are shown drawn up to attention at the Blockhouse Fort on the Gosport side of the harbour. To the right of the picture, the newly renamed royal yacht, *Princess Augusta*, which the King used during the visit, is sailing out with her sails partially hoisted. Paton would have positioned himself on the edge of Old Portsmouth, as it is known today, to capture the day's events.

“His Majesty then proceeded to Spithead, attended by the Barge of the Board of the Admiralty, with the Flag of their Office, the Three Admirals with their Flags [red, white and blue], and all the Captains of the Fleet with their Pendants in their Barges.”¹

During the four days he spent in Portsmouth, the King visited the fleet on several occasions. It seems most likely that this scene depicts the initial review day on Tuesday 22 June, as it follows a similar order and sequence of barges as Sir Thomas Pye had carefully drawn prior to the day.² A detailed account of the event was published in *The London Gazette* on 29 June 1773. Having held a levée, the King embarked at 1.30 pm in the barge provided for him and rowed towards the fleet anchored at Spithead, accompanied by Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty.

The distant fleet assembled in Spithead consisted of twenty ships of the line, two frigates and three sloops, moored in two main lines abreast. Once the king had reached the fleet, he went aboard the *Barfleur*, as seen in the preceding lot. The Royal Standard was then hoisted to replace that of the Lord High Admiral. After walking along the lower gun deck of the *Barfleur* to inspect it, the King sat down to dine with other high officials at 3.30 pm. After eating, the King rejoined his barge flotilla to pass along the lines of ships in review, each with its yards manned by cheering men and firing individual twenty-one-gun salutes as he passed. He then went aboard the *Princess Augusta* and finally landed at Portsmouth dockyard before 9 pm, retiring to the Dockyard Commissioner’s house, which was temporarily refurbished to royal standards.

By the 1770s Britain was attempting to manage the increasing hostility and uprisings in America. Sandwich’s naval reforms led to much of the Royal Navy’s successes in the past which ensured the retention of colonial and commercial dominance in both the Caribbean and India against America’s European allies – France, Spain and the Dutch Republic. However, Sandwich came to realize the importance of ensuring the King’s support and a few years later, in 1779, he was to appeal directly to the King for the funding and further improvements of the British fleet.

At the end of the 1773 visit, before setting off back to Kew early on 26 June, George III recognized the importance of shore-side naval affairs by ordering that £1,500 be distributed to ‘the Artificers, Workmen, and Labourers of the Dock-Yard, Victualling Office, and Gun-Wharf’, which was far more than the £350 given to ‘the Companies of the *Barfleur* and *Augusta* Yacht, and the Crew of His Majesty’s barge’, or the £250 distributed to ‘the Poor of Portsmouth, Portsea, and Gosport’.³

¹As reported in *The London Gazette*, no. 11365, 29 June 1773, n. p.

²National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, *Page from a journal describing the engagement of June 1693, orders for the naval review at Portsmouth, 1773, and some papers addressed to Sir Hugh Palliser, 1794*, no. PHB/P/7/1.

³*The London Gazette*, 1773, n. p.





27

JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY, A.R.A.

Derby 1734–1797

Study of a philosopher

oil on canvas
76.8 x 63.8 cm.; 30¼ x 25 in.

£ 80,000-120,000

PROVENANCE

Probably the artist's studio sale, London, Christie's, 6 May 1801, lot 29 (as 'Study of a Beggar'), for 6 guineas to Borrow;

Richard Arkwright, Jnr (1755–1843), Mark Hall, Essex;
By descent to his sixth son, the Rev. Joseph Arkwright (1791–1864), at Mark Hall, Essex;

By descent to his fourth son, Loftus Wigram Arkwright (1829–1889), at Mark Hall, Essex;

By descent to his son, Loftus Joseph Wigram Arkwright (1866–1950), at Mark Hall, Essex;

By whom sold ('Mark Hall, Harlow, Essex' sale), on the premises, Alfred Savill & Son, 29–31 March 1943, lot 619 (as Bol) for 30½ guineas;

Private collection, United Kingdom, until acquired by the present owner.

EXHIBITED

M. Craske, *Joseph Wright of Derby: Painter of Darkness*, London 2020, pp. 137 and 321 n. 6, reproduced p. 140, fig. 81.

This recently rediscovered study of an old man in the character of a philosopher is an exciting and important addition to the known *œuvre* of Joseph Wright of Derby. Painted with an acute sensitivity and delicacy of modelling, particularly in the fine curls of the hair and the rough texture of the man's hands and careworn features, it has been dated by Dr Matthew Craske to the artist's years in Liverpool, in the late 1760s. This is Wright's most celebrated period, before he travelled to Italy, when he produced his most original and ground-breaking work. Those paintings, which both established his contemporary celebrity and for which he is best known today, include: *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* (National Gallery, London; fig. 1); *The Orrery* (Derby Museum and Art Gallery); *The Old Man and Death* (Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford, Connecticut) and *An Academy by Lamplight* (two versions: private collection; and Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven), all of which have become icons of British art the world over.

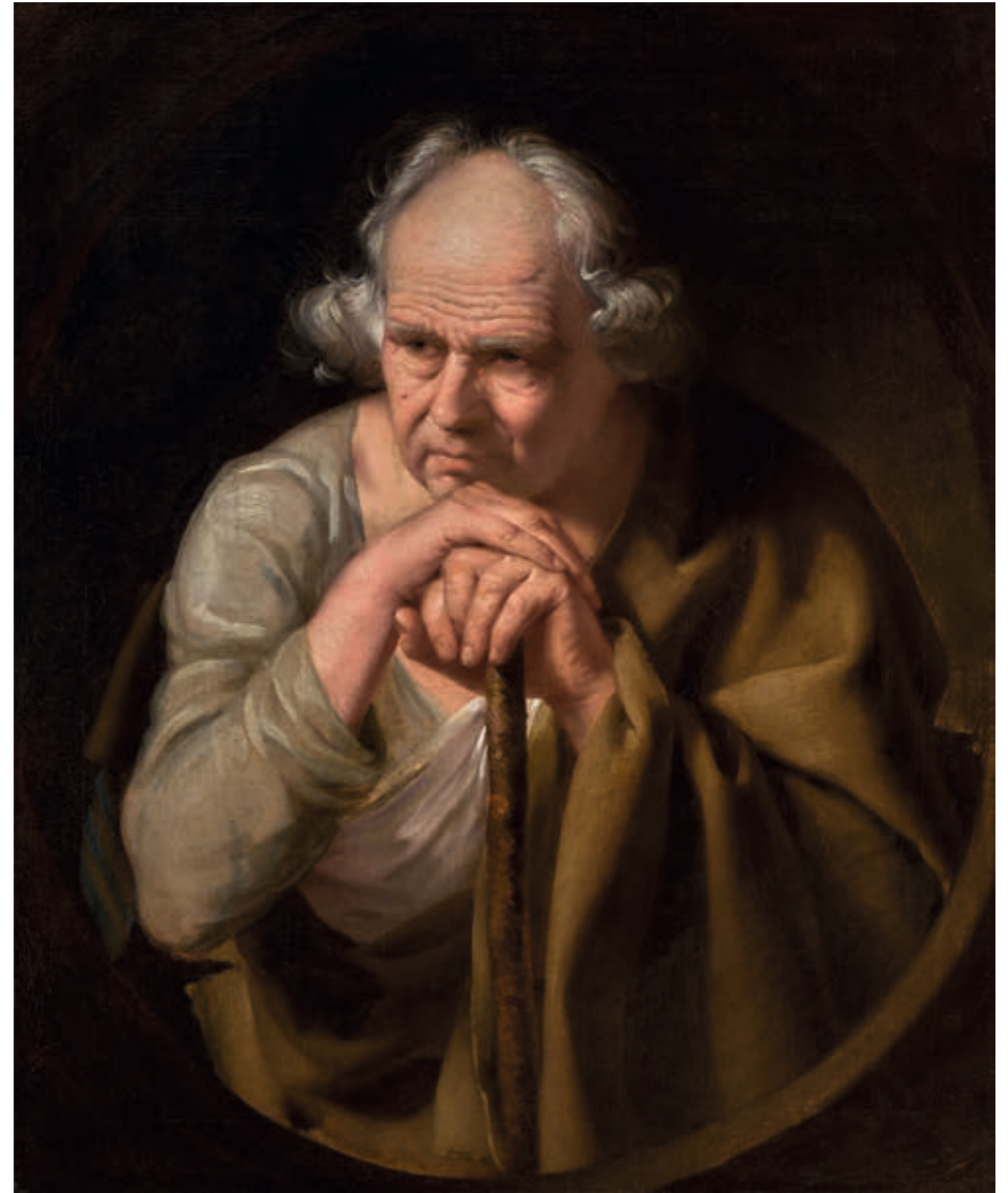




Fig. 1 Joseph Wright of Derby, *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump*, 1768. Oil on canvas, 183 x 244 cm. National Gallery, London. © Wikimedia



Fig. 2 Joseph Wright of Derby, *The Hermit, or A Philosopher by Lamplight*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 128.2cm x 102.9. Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby. © Wikimedia

It has been suggested that this work is likely a study for one of these iconic early masterpieces, a painting known as *The Hermit, or A Philosopher by Lamplight* (Derby Museum and Art Gallery; fig. 2), which the artist exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1769. The first of Wright's subject paintings set outdoors, and his earliest nocturnal landscape, *The Hermit* presented a more elusive and timeless subject than had hitherto been seen in his work. Evoking the tradition of depictions of eremitic saints found in continental Old Masters, at the same time it reflected the late eighteenth-century vogue for the romantic notion of the hermit. A closely-related figure of a grey-haired old man, leaning heavily on a stick, can also be seen in the lower right foreground of *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* (fig. 1), one of the most celebrated of all Wright's paintings, which was first exhibited in 1768. A similar figure also occurs in the first version of the artist's *A Blacksmith Shop* (Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven), exhibited at the Society of Artists in 1771.

Wright's practice of employing old men as models in the 1760s and early '70s is well documented and the artist's account book, now preserved in the archives of the National Portrait Gallery in London, includes the details and addresses of several local Derbyshire characters that sat for him on a regular basis. One such figure was a man called John Fletcher from Ormaston, a small village near Ashbourne in the Derbyshire Dales, described as an 'old, bald headed' man. Perhaps his favourite model, however, was a character known as Old John Staveley, who served as the model for the central figures in *The Alchemist in search of the Philosopher's Stone* (Derby Museum and Art Gallery) and *The Captive, from Sterne* (Vancouver

Art Gallery, British Columbia, among other versions). A number of oil head studies of Staveley survive, with his distinctive long white beard and aquiline features, and a preparatory drawing for *The Old Man Grieving over his Ass* (Pierpont Morgan Library, New York) – the finished picture is now lost – bears an inscription in the artist's hand naming Staveley as the model. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, when in Rome, Wright spent time sketching the beggars in the Colosseum, perhaps in preparation for a planned painting of *Belisarius begging for Alms*: the apocryphal story of the great Byzantine general blinded by Emperor Justinian and reduced to begging in the street, famously treated by Wright's French contemporary, Jacques-Louis David (Palais des Beaux-Arts, Lille).

The making of character studies as the basis for narrative subject paintings in this way can be traced back to Rembrandt and demonstrates the increasing influence of seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish masters on Wright's work in this period. His choice of motif too, with an old man leaning on a staff, shows an awareness of the work of artists such as Abraham Bloemaert. Bloemaert's reputation as one of the leading figures among the Utrecht Caravaggisti, with their focus on strong effects of light, would have made his work of particular interest to Wright. At least two instances have been identified of Wright copying figures from Bloemaert's *Tekenboek*, a popular pattern book consisting of useful figure studies that was well-known among artists in England.



Fig. 3 Joseph Wright of Derby, *Richard Arkwright Junior, with his Wife Mary, and Daughter Anne*, 1790. Oil on canvas, 244 x 158.5 cm. Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby. © Derby Museums / Bridgeman Images

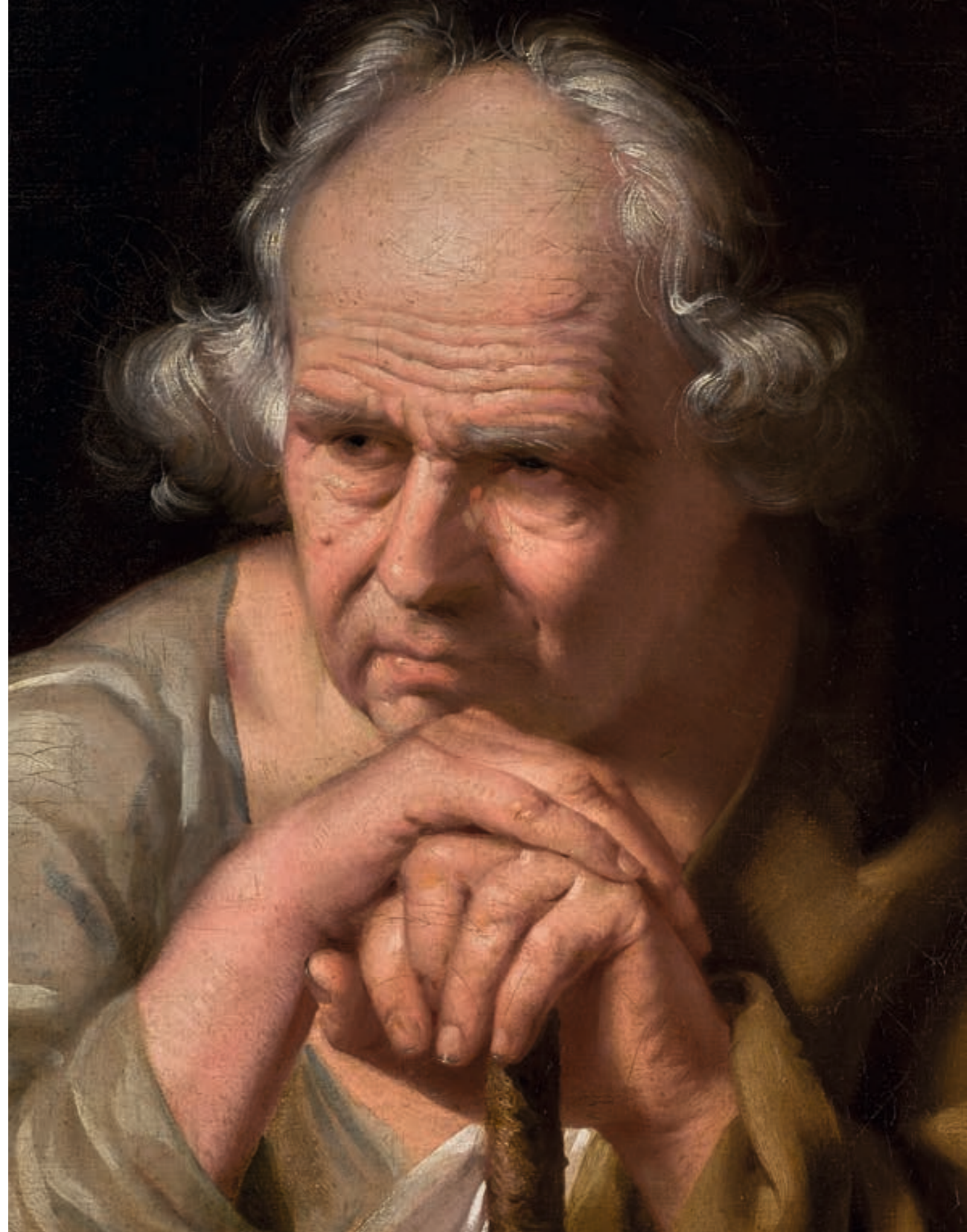
Note on Provenance

This painting was one of a number bought at the artist's posthumous studio sale through the dealer Borrow by Richard Arkwright, Jnr (1755–1843), the son of Sir Richard Arkwright (1732–1792), the inventor of the cotton spinning water-frame and architect of the modern factory system, widely credited as the 'father of the Industrial Revolution'. The younger Arkwright was one of Wright's most important patrons, commissioning the artist for a large number of works, including portraits of himself and his wife with their youngest daughter Anne (Derby Museum and Art Gallery; fig. 3); a pair of sensational conversation pieces depicting their six other children (Private collection, on loan to Tate Britain); a view of the family's principal seat, Willersley Castle in Derbyshire (Derby Museum and Art Gallery); and several views of the family's Cotton Mills at Cromford. He also bought a number of other works by Wright, including one of the most famous of the artist's late landscapes, *View of Ullswater Lake*, which he also acquired at Wright's studio sale in 1801 (untraced); *A Grotto in the Gulf of Salerno, with the figure of Julia banished from Rome* (Private collection), one of Wright's famous Italian coastal scenes; and two of his Northern Tenebrist inspired exercises in exploring strong effects of *chiaroscuro* – a *Boy blowing up a bladder* and a *Girl looking through a bladder* (both in private collections).

Brought up in the family business that his father had established, Richard Arkwright Jnr was himself an astute businessman and added significantly to the family's commercial enterprises. Diversifying the business, he invested heavily in land and purchased several great houses in Derbyshire, Essex, Herefordshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Yorkshire, income from the estates of which further augmented the family's fortunes. In 1801 he was elected High Sheriff of Derbyshire and in 1804 he became a partner in the bank that John Toplis had founded in Wirksworth to facilitate the financing of important industrial infrastructure projects. In 1829 the firm of Arkwright, Toplis & Co. became Richard Arkwright & Co., before eventually merging into Lloyds Bank. By the time of his death in 1843 Arkwright was, like his father before him, the wealthiest commoner in Britain, with an estimated fortune of £3 million.

Mark Hall in Essex, where this painting hung, was one such estate in which Arkwright invested. The house and associated property was inherited by his sixth son, the Rev. Joseph Arkwright (1791–1864), who was appointed rector of nearby Latton and himself invested in further land, becoming one of the largest farmers in Essex by the 1860s. Mark Hall remained in the Arkwright family until 1947, when the whole estate was compulsorily purchased by the Harlow Development Corporation for the development of a new satellite town. The contents, however, had been sold off in 1943, the house itself having been let on a long lease to the Gilbey family since the 1890s.

We are grateful to Dr Matthew Craske for his assistance in the cataloguing of this lot.





Geo. Stubbs pinxit 1790



THE PROPERTY OF A LADY

28

GEORGE STUBBS, A.R.A.

Liverpool 1724–1806 London

Two bay hunters communing on the bank of a lake

signed and dated lower right: *Geo: Stubbs 1790.*

oil on oak panel

67.5 x 99 cm.; 26⁵/₈ x 39 in.

£ 400,000-600,000

PROVENANCE

Samuel Jones-Loyd, Lord Overstone (1796–1883), London;

Thence by descent to his daughter, Harriet Sarah Loyd-Lindsay (née Jones-Loyd), Baroness Wantage (1837–1920), and her husband Robert Loyd-Lindsay, Baron Wantage (1832–1901);

By inheritance to Arthur Thomas Loyd (1882–1944), Wantage;

His posthumous sale ('A Portion of the Celebrated Collection of Paintings and Drawings, The Property of the late Rt Hon. Lord Wantage, V.C., K.C.B. now Sold by Order of the Executor of A.T. Loyd, Esq. (decd.)'), London, Sotheby's, 28 November 1945, lot 100, for £460, to Bernard;

With Arthur Ackermann & Son, London;

By whom sold to James Voase Rank (1881–1952), Druids Lodge, Wiltshire, by 1951;

With Arthur Ackermann & Son, London, by 1977;

Offered anonymously, on the premises, Park Paddocks, New Market, Christie's, 29 April 1988, lot 182;

Where acquired after the sale by the present collector.

EXHIBITED

Manchester, City Art Gallery, *Art Treasures*, 1857, no. 98;

Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, *George Stubbs 1724–1806*, 13 July – 25 August 1951, no. 68.

LITERATURE

Lady Wantage, MS catalogue of the collection at Lockinge, c. 1880, no. 226;

A.G. Temple, *A Catalogue of the Pictures Forming the Collection of Lord and Lady Wantage*, London 1902, p. 146, no. 226 (kept at Overstone Park);

A Catalogue of pictures forming the collection of Lord and Lady Wantage at 2 Carlton Gardens, London, Lockinge House, Berks, and Overstone Park and Ardington House, London 1905, p. 157, no. 226 (kept at Overstone Park);

M. Weaver, *Whisper of the Muse. The Overstone Album & Other Photographs*, Malibu 1986, p. 18;

B. Taylor, *Stubbs*, London 1971, p. 214, no. 115 reproduced pl. 115;

J. Egerton, *George Stubbs, Painter. Catalogue Raisonné*, New Haven and London 2007, pp. 508–9, no. 276 reproduced in colour.

This quiet and reflective scene by George Stubbs shows two horses, in the prime of life, communing in a parkland beside a lake. Stubbs was the greatest animal painter of the eighteenth century, and his equestrian works remain some of the most celebrated in the history of art. This signed and dated work of 1790 has a distinguished provenance, having once formed part of the prestigious Loyd collection, one of the most significant collections of art amassed in Britain during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Born in Liverpool in 1724, the son of a currier, Stubbs had first studied anatomy at York County Hospital in 1744, under the distinguished surgeon Dr Charles Atkinson. Later, at Horkstow, in Lincolnshire, he spent the two years between 1756 and 1758 engaged in studying and dissecting horses in preparation for the publication of his great magnum opus, a work the likes of which had not been seen in Europe since Carlo Ruini's *Dell'Anatomia et dell'Infirmata del Cavallo* of 1598. This unprecedented work cast Stubbs at the forefront of both science and art in his understanding and knowledge of equine anatomy and propelled him into the limelight as the leading authority on the depiction of the horse. However it also gave Stubbs the training and ability to dissect and study many other animals over the course of his career, and his knowledge and understanding of the physical make up of mammals of all kinds was unparalleled by any artist of his generation.





Fig. 1 George Stubbs, *Two horses communing in a landscape*. Oil on canvas, 124.5 x 123.2 cm. © Trustees of the Weston Park Foundation / Bridgeman Images

Dated 1790, this painting was executed during the later part of Stubbs' career. It was at this time that the artist was exploring representations of animals in increasingly calm and reflective moods. By the mid-1780s the animal painter had during quieter moments been experimenting with other subject matter, including what Judy Egerton referred to as the 'deeply poetic canvases' known as *The Haymakers* and *The Reapers*, developed from earlier material in the decade.¹ This bucolic lyricism seems to have resulted in his increased interest in painting the quiet and affectionate encounters of horses in unpopulated landscapes, which Basil Taylor has identified as being a theme particularly favoured by the artist in around 1790.² Freed from the contexts of the stables or the racecourse, this painting resonates with wider poetic notions of sensibility encountered in British painting at the end of the century. Egerton's *catalogue raisonné* shows that between 1783 and 1793 Stubbs painted no fewer than six paintings of horses communing in this manner. The first of these depicting hunters belonging to Sir Henry Bridgeman is now in the collection of the Earl of Bradford at Weston Park, Shropshire (fig. 1).³ This moment of introspection for the painter would eventually be taken over by a major commission received from the Prince of Wales in 1791, a project described as Stubbs' 'Indian Summer', which resulted in a significant set of paintings which remain in the Royal Collection.⁴

Note on Provenance

The first recorded owner of this painting was the celebrated banker and liberal member of parliament for Hythe, Lord Overstone, who lived at Lockinge, near Wantage, in Oxfordshire. Although the patron who commissioned Stubbs is not known, Egerton left open the possibility that it may have been inherited through the Jones-Loyd family.⁵ As a collector, Overstone's chief interest was in works of the Dutch and Italian schools, though his taste was sufficiently wide-ranging to include some early Netherlandish and German paintings, then largely overlooked by the market, as well as modern British art. Amongst the highlights of the collection were Rembrandt's *Portrait of Margaretha Trip* and *The Enchanted Castle* by Claude, both now in the collection of The National Gallery, London. He also owned several works by J.M.W. Turner, including *Walton Bridges* (Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery) and *Whalley Bridge and Abbey, Lancashire*, both of which were sold in these Rooms in 2018 and 2020 respectively.⁶ Upon his death without surviving male issue, both Overstone's fortune and his collection passed to his daughter, the Hon. Harriet Jones-Loyd, and her husband Brigadier General Robert James Loyd-Lindsay, 1st Baron Wantage, VC, KCB, VD (1832–1901). The Stubbs was eventually sold from the Loyd collection, alongside a group of mostly Italian pictures, after the death of their relative Arthur Thomas Loyd (1882–1944), who inherited a portion of the paintings in 1920.

¹ J. Egerton, 'George Stubbs', in *The Dictionary of Art*, vol. 29, London and New York 1996, p. 810. *The Haymakers* and *The Reapers*, both on panels measuring approximately 90 x 137 cm. and dated 1785, are in the collection of Tate, London.

² Taylor 1971, p. 214.

³ Oil on canvas, 128.8 x 126.2 cm.; Egerton 2007, pp. 480–81, no. 254, reproduced in colour.

⁴ Taylor 1971, p. 22.

⁵ Egerton 2007, p. 508.

⁶ The former (oil on canvas, 92.7 x 123.8 cm.) sold London, Sotheby's, 4 July 2018, lot 21; the latter (oil on canvas, 61.2 x 92 cm.) sold London, Sotheby's, 28 July 2020, lot 50, for £1,335,000.





David Roberts del. & sculp. 1844



THE PROPERTY OF A GENTLEMAN

29

DAVID ROBERTS, R.A.

Edinburgh 1796–1864 London

Venice, a view of the Church of Santa Maria della Salute and the Grand Canal

signed and dated lower right: *David Roberts June 4th 1854*

oil on canvas, unlined

50.5 x 76 cm.; 19⁷/₈ x 29⁷/₈ in.

£ 60,000-80,000

PROVENANCE

Given by the artist to his daughter, Christine Bicknell (1821–1872), for her birthday, 4 June 1854;

Thence by inheritance to her husband, Henry Sanford Bicknell (1818–1880), London;

By whose Executors sold, London, Christie's, 9 April 1881, lot 352, for 490 guineas, to Dowdeswell;

Alexander Barclay-Russell (1900–1980), London and Cambridge;

Thence by descent to his son, Roger Barclay-Russell (d. 2004);

Gifted to the mother of the present owner, by 2004.

EXHIBITED

London, South Kensington, *International Exhibition*, 1874, no. 3 (lent by Henry Sanford Bicknell).

LITERATURE

Listed in the artist's record books under works completed in 1854, 1829–64, vol. 2, p. 14, no. 173, illustrated by the artist, as 'Church of the Salute Venice a sketch';

Probably *The Art Journal*, 1 March 1872, vol. XI, p. 91;

International Exhibition, exh. cat., London 1874, p. 1, no. 3;

J. Ballantine, *The Life of David Roberts, R.A.*, Edinburgh 1886, p. 182 and p. 251, no. 194.



David Roberts presented this painting to his daughter Christine Bicknell (1821–1872) on her birthday on 4 June 1854, as described and illustrated in his record books from 1829–64 (fig. 1).¹ Rediscovered in a private collection, this beautifully preserved oil painting - which is wonderfully free in handling with passages that retain the quality of a sketch - depicts one of Roberts' most sought-after subjects, namely his views of Venice. The soft lighting that suffuses this instantly recognisable city casts a warm glow across the magnificent architecture of the Church of Santa Maria della Salute and the Dogana positioned central to the composition. Characteristic of Roberts' detailed and fluid style, these buildings subtly contrast with the looser technique he employs for the reflections in the water and the gondolas to the left of the painting. The overall effect gives the impression that it has been painted *en plein air* and captures the tranquillity of an evening in Venice as the sun begins to set.

“Venice in my opinion cannot be painted... the first 10 days so bewilder you the mind cannot settle down to judge it calmly.”²



Fig. 1 David Roberts, *Church of the Salute Venice a sketch*, 4 June 1854. Pen and ink on paper, as recorded in the artist's diary and record book, no. 173



Fig. 2 David Roberts, R.A., *Venice, Approach to the Grand Canal*, 1855. Oil on canvas, 64.8 x 115.6 cm. Sold Sothebys, New York, 1 February 2018, lot 75. © Sotheby's

Roberts travelled to Italy for the first time in 1851 at the age of 56, arriving in Venice at the end of September and staying for a total of five weeks. During this period he made countless studies of the city, mostly completed whilst on a gondola which served as his base from 9 in the morning until 4 or 5 in the afternoon. His sketches, first executed in pencil, then watercolour and eventually oil, continued to provide him with endless inspiration for the works he painted until his death in 1864, intended as they were to encourage potential patrons to commission grand compositions. Roberts' *Venice, approach to the Grand Canal* is such an example; it was commissioned by the British engineer Joseph Miller (1830–1865) in 1855 before it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1856 (fig. 2).³ The artist painted at least seven views of *Santa Maria della Salute*, including the work for Miller, the present painting and a large signed and dated canvas at Sheffield City Art Gallery.⁴

Roberts would often gift his much beloved and only daughter Christine paintings for her birthday. This painting was presented to 'Dear Christine' on her 33rd birthday on 4 June 1854.⁵ He notes this very painting in his record book and includes a pen and ink drawing that roughly captures the main elements of the composition. After Christine's death in 1872, the painting passed to her husband, Henry Sanford Bicknell (1818–1880), who was the son of one of her father's patrons, Elhanan Bicknell (1788–1861), a leading British art patron and wealthy shipowner. The painting was offered for sale after Bicknell's death in 1881 where it was sold to 'Dowdeswell', presumably Dowdeswell and Dowdeswell Gallery, New Bond Street. The work later reappears in the collection of Alexander Barclay-Russell (1900–1980), who was an artist, teacher and national figure in the realm of art education. A large number of items from his personal art collection were donated to the British Museum.

¹ D. Roberts, 1854, p. 14.

² In a letter written by David Roberts in, H. Guiterman, *Artist Adventurer David Roberts 1796-1864*, exh. cat., Musselburgh, p. 35.

³ Sotheby's, New York, 1 February 2018, lot 75.

⁴ David Roberts, *Church of Santa Maria della Salute, Venice*, 1862. Oil on canvas, 67.5 x 113 cm. Sheffield City Art Gallery, inv. no. VIS.1559.

⁵ D. Roberts, 1854, p. 14.





AN EYE FOR IMPRESSIONISM: PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT AMERICAN ESTATE

○ 30

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, P.R.A.

Plympton, Devon 1723–1792 London

Portrait of Mary Isabella Manners, Duchess of Rutland (1756–1831)

oil on canvas
128.3 x 102.4 cm.; 50½ x 40¼ in.

W # £ 100,000-150,000

PROVENANCE

Probably given by the sitter to her brother, Henry Somerset, 5th Duke of Beaufort (1744–1803);

By direct descent to Henry Charles FitzRoy, 8th Duke of Beaufort (1824–1899);

By whom sold in 1894 to Alfred de Rothschild (1842–1918);

Thence by family descent;

From whom acquired by the present owners in 1997.

EXHIBITED

London, British Institution, *Exhibition of The Works of Ancient Masters and Deceased British Artists*, June 1866, no. 118;

London, South Kensington Museum, *Second special exhibition of National Portraits commencing with the reign of William and Mary and ending with the year MDCCC*, May 1867, no. 661;

London, Grafton Gallery, *Fair Women*, Summer 1894, no. 60.

LITERATURE

Anon., 'Celebrated Beauties', in *The Strand Magazine*, vol. 1, no. 6, London 1891, p. 611, reproduced;

A. Graves and W.V. Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds P.R.A.*, London 1899–1902, vol. II, no. 854;

A.L. Baldry, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, London 1903, p. xix, reproduced pl. 51;

E.K. Waterhouse, *Reynolds*, London 1941, p. 79;

D. Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Complete Catalogue of his Paintings*, New Haven 2000, vol. I, p. 325, no. 1214, reproduced vol. II, p. 543, fig. 1446 (as painted 1784–87).

ENGRAVED

J.K. Sherwin, 1791;

S.W. Reynolds 1784–87;

W. Read, 1836.

This contemplative and sensitive portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, the first president of the Royal Academy of Arts, portrays one of the most celebrated beauties in eighteenth-century Britain. Described in her lifetime as 'the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, of high rank', Lady Mary Isabella Manners, née Somerset, Duchess of Rutland (1756–1831), coupled her looks with a fierce political spirit.¹ Often described as the counterpoint to the much-celebrated Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire (1757–1806), Lady Mary distinguished herself as one of the leading political canvassers of the 1780s and '90s. This is the first time Reynolds' portrait of the Duchess has ever been offered at auction.





Fig. 1 Joshua Reynolds, *Charles Manners, 4th Duke of Rutland (1754–1787)*. Oil on canvas. Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire. © Bridgeman Images

Mary was born the youngest daughter of Charles, 4th Duke of Beaufort (1709–1756), and his wife Elizabeth Berkley (1719–1799). Her father died shortly after she was born, and her upbringing was almost solely undertaken by her mother. The most consequential experience of her youth was most likely her prolonged Grand Tour in Italy, undertaken with the Dowager Duchess and her niece in the years 1771–74.² As well as admiring the antiquities of Rome, Naples, Florence and Venice, Lady Mary took an Italian tutor, Signor Lorenzo Pignotti, and indeed her beauty was rumored to have resulted in several unfulfilled marriage matches. In December 1775, a year after her return to Britain, she married Charles Manners, Marquess of Granby and after 1779, 4th Duke of Rutland (1754–1787; fig. 1). Considered a sterling match, and one founded on genuine love, their marriage thrived. She shared her husband's fervor for politics and became a particularly successful society hostess. Not even childbearing would dull her enthusiasm for canvassing for Whig candidates, making public appearances while eight-months pregnant with her fourth child during the 1780 general election. In 1784 Mary's efforts were focused on the election of the Manners' family friend William Pitt the Younger (1759–1806), a siding which placed her in direct opposition to Charles James Fox's own aristocratic supporter Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire (fig. 2). In the popular press her conservative and chaste manner was contrasted with that of Georgiana, who was often lampooned for her perceived indiscretions, which extended to the accusation of offering kisses for votes. Her patronage even extended to investing in fitting out privateers, in order to capture French merchants' vessels, and several ships bore her name.³





Fig. 2 Thomas Rowlandson, *The Golden Apple, or The Modern Paris*, 1785. Etching, 25.8 x 35.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (featuring, from left to right, George, Prince of Wales (1762–1830); Mary Isabella, Duchess of Rutland; Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire; and Jane Gordon, Duchess of Gordon)



Fig. 3 Joshua Reynolds, *Mary Isabella Manners, Duchess of Rutland (1756–1831)*. Engraved by Valentine Green, from *The Print-Collector's Handbook* by Alfred Whitman, published by George Bell & Sons, 1901. © Bridgeman Images

The Duchess of Rutland's beauty was legendary. The memoirs of Sir Nathaniel William Wrazall (1751–1831) recount that during these years she was the perfect subject for an artist's palette: 'It is not sufficient merely to say that she was the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, of high rank. Her person, in symmetry, elegance, and dignity, outstripped all rivalry. Grace itself former her limbs, and accompanied her movements.'⁴

Later in 1784 the Duchess accompanied her husband to Dublin where he was installed as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Their time there was remarkably successful, although ill health due to the excessive lifestyle they led saw her retreat to the English coast in early 1787. In contrast to her regaining strength, in October 1787, at the age of thirty-three, her husband died unexpectedly in Ireland from a disease of the liver. As his heir was a mere 9 years old when he ascended to the Dukedom of Rutland, Mary continued to play an energetic and active role as Dowager in protecting the family's estates and political interests until her death at the age of seventy-five in 1831.

Painted between the years 1784 and 1787, this portrait was connected by David Mannings to a possible 21 meetings recorded in the artist's sitters' book over that period (see *Literature*). This work appears to have been the last significant likeness made of the Duchess, around the time she became a widow.⁵ Stylistically, the composition and loose handling is indebted to the Baroque portraiture of Rubens and Van Dyck, particularly in the dramatic palette of deep red, white and black. The particularly sombre atmosphere of the work, showing Mary with book in hand contemplating a rocky coastline with the sea beyond, recalls Reynolds' portrait of *Mrs Mary Robinson as Perdita* painted a few years prior and now in the Wallace Collection, London.⁶ It is tempting to read the painting as showing the beautiful Duchess mourning her young and recently departed husband who died across the Irish Sea.⁷

The Manners family were personal friends and significant patrons of Reynolds – the artist had even lent her husband the Duke £3,000 to help alleviate his crippling gambling debts.⁸ In particular, surviving documents attest to the many works of art commissioned by and purchased from him: many portraits of family members, including her kin the Dukes of Beaufort, as well as subject pictures. Reynolds' intimacy with the family also extended to acting as an agent for their ever-increasing collection of Old Master Paintings. Like many of the artist's sitters, he had lived long enough to have painted Lady Mary Isabella both as a child and during her adulthood. She first sat to him at the age of five, in a portrait last recorded with Agnew's in 1984.⁹ Her first likeness as Duchess was painted around 1780, showing her in a flamboyantly plumed full-length society portrait (fig. 3). This picture, and many of Reynolds' finest made for the family, was destroyed by fire at Belvoir Castle in 1816.¹⁰

¹ N.W. Wraxall, *Posthumous Memoirs of His Own Time by Sir N. W. Wraxall*, London 1836, p. 370.

² J. Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701–1800*, New Haven and London 1997, p. 67.

³ D. Rutland and E. Ellis, *Resolution: Two Brothers. A Nation in Crisis. A World at War*, London 2018, p. 173.

⁴ Wraxall 1836, p. 370.

⁵ For other portraits of the Duchess by Reynolds during her adulthood see Mannings 2000, vol. I, p. 325, nos 1212 and 1213, reproduced vol. II, figs 1328 and 1402.

⁶ Oil on canvas, 102 x 89 cm. Notably, this painting is said to depict Mrs Mary Robinson pining for her lover Sir Banastre Tarleton (1754–1833), who at the time had fled to the continent to escape his debts.

⁷ A derivation of this painting, described as a workshop copy, was sold from a Viennese private collection, Vienna, Dorotheum, 21 April 2010, lot 284.

⁸ Rutland and Ellis 2018, p. 174.

⁹ Mannings 2000, vol. I, pp. 324–25, no. 1211; current whereabouts unknown.

¹⁰ Another three-quarter-length portrait, adopting the same head as in the Belvoir Castle painting is listed in Mannings 2000, vol. I, p. 325, no. 1213.



o **31**

JEAN-BAPTISTE-CAMILLE COROT

Paris 1797–1875

Ville-d'Avray – bucheronnes dans une prairie au bord des bois
(Wood gatherers in a meadow, Ville-d'Avray)

signed lower left: COROT
oil on canvas
31.2 x 38.7 cm.; 12¼ x 15¼ in.

£ 200,000-250,000

PROVENANCE

André Julien Prévost, Paris;

His sale, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 24 May 1887, lot 15
(as *Intérieur de bois à Ville-d'Avray*);

Heine Collection, Leipzig (confiscated in 1938 by
the Nazis and deposited at the Leipzig Museum der
bildenden Kunst until 1994);

Restituted to a Heine descendant, and thereafter
offered for sale ('Property from a European family'),
London, Sotheby's, 28 June 1994, lot 3, where unsold;

By whom acquired privately by Walter J. Johnson
(1908–1996), New York;

By whom sold ('Property from the Collection of Walter
J. Johnson'), New York, Christie's, 22 May 1997, lot 191;

Where acquired by the present owner.

LITERATURE

A. Robaut, *L'œuvre de Corot*, Paris 1965, vol. II,
pp. 102–3, no. 286, reproduced.

Painted circa 1830–35 after his return from his first trip to Italy (1825–28) and probably pre-dating his second in the summer of 1834, this is among Corot's early paintings of the environs of Ville d'Avray, the village to the west of Paris which was to play such a fundamental role in shaping his artistic vision of nature. Corot's father had purchased a house and land in the village on 17 March 1817. While Corot never became the master of the Maison Corot, which passed to his sister upon his mother's death in 1851, he often stayed there for extended periods between his peregrinations in France and Italy, occupying a room that was later built under the eaves.





Fig. 1 Claude Monet, *Meules à Giverny*, 1893, Oil on canvas, 65.5 x 100.2 cm. © Sotheby's

Ville d'Avray and the immediate countryside around it played a fundamental role in shaping Corot's artistic vision of nature as a gentle and tranquil subject, in contrast to the more dramatic, romantic landscapes of his contemporary Théodore Rousseau, for example, who displayed a fascination for the wild and thickly wooded forest around the village of Barbizon. Indeed the composition references the picturesque tradition inherited from Poussin and that the Neoclassical painters including Corot's teachers, Achille-Etna Michallon and Jean-Victor Bertin, continued to champion.

Yet at the same time works like the present were as modern in their execution as they were escapist in their subject. Corot's observation of light based on sketches made *en plein air*, and his ability to render beautiful, clear light delineated by an economic use of colour and brushwork, make him an important precursor of what Edmond Duranty in 1876 termed 'The New Painting', in other words Impressionism, the roots of which, he claimed, 'lie in the work of the great Corot'.¹

Ville d'Avray - bucheronnes dans une prairie au bord des bois is from an Important American Estate. The collection, assembled with passion over many decades, included Claude Monet's *Meules à Giverny* (recently sold at Sotheby's New York, fig. 1) and *Portrait of Mary Isabella Manners, Duchess of Rutland* by Sir Joshua Reynolds (lot 30).

¹E. Duranty, 'La Nouvelle Peinture – à propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les galeries Durand-Ruel', in *Les écrivains devant l'impressionnisme*, Paris 1989, p. 118.







32

CARLO BOSSOLI

Lugano 1815–1884 Turin

A view of the Dardanelles

tempera on linen, unlined
98.1 x 154 cm.; 38⁵/₈ x 60⁵/₈ in.

W # £ 80,000-120,000

LITERATURE

Possibly A. Peyrot, *Carlo Bossoli: luoghi, personaggi, costumi, avvenimenti nell'Europa dell'Ottocento, visti dal pittore ticinese*, 2 vols, Turin 1974, vol. I, p. 31 (as 'Panorama dei Dardanelli').

Carlo Bossoli was the leading topographical painter of his generation, often noted for both the format of his broad vistas and his inimitable wanderlust, which spurred the artist to travel extensively around Europe, North Africa and the Ottoman Empire. This view of the Dardanelles – a narrow strait that constitutes an internationally significant waterway in northwestern Turkey, which forms part of the continental boundary between Asia and Europe – is therefore a quintessential example of the artist's work, not only on account of its exotic subject matter, but also owing to its impressive size and sweeping perspective. Perhaps dating to the middle of Bossoli's career, when he is recorded as having executed two pictures of this region,¹ the present work attests to the painter's abilities in balancing the practical aim of accurately documenting different societies for his patrons, at a time when journalism was primarily limited to the news and photography was only in its nascent stages of development, with an aesthetic appreciation.²

'The East' captivated Bossoli's artistic imagination throughout his career. He first travelled through Constantinople in 1839 on his way back to Italy from Odessa, where his family had emigrated in 1820 when he was just five years old. The city, which was a regular staging post on the journeys Bossoli made between Crimea and Italy in the early 1840s, evidently made an indelible impression upon the artist, as attested to by the numerous paintings he continued to produce of it and its environs throughout his life, which likely relied on drawings he had made whilst there.



The Bosphorus was a popular subject among Bossoli's English patrons – both private collectors and commercial print-makers alike – particularly during the 1850s. Their increased interest in the strait must have been catalysed by Britain's involvement in the Crimean War (1853–56), during which the use of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, which, together, ultimately provided a through route to the Mediterranean, was fought over between the Russian Empire and an alliance between Britain and France. Pictures of the Bosphorus were certainly topical, therefore, though they also suited Bossoli's artistic sensibilities, as such depictions allowed the painter to deploy his deft ability for documenting far-flung environments alongside his eminent talents as a colourist. This combination of skills was brought to bear perhaps most successfully in *A panorama of Constantinople from Uskudar*, signed and dated 1854, which sold in 2010 for £553,250.³

Representations of the Dardanelles are rarer within Bossoli's known *œuvre*. Like the Bosphorus, it is among the world's narrowest straits used for international navigation, which accords with the geography of the region here depicted by way of the very slight gap between the two banks of land, visible along the coastline. At odds with the landscape of the Bosphorus, however, the shores of the Dardanelles are relatively sparsely populated, thus allowing for their identification in the present painting, in which the right bank features only a scattering of buildings.

Although this work is undated, it is possible to suggest that Bossoli may have executed it around 1855–56. In addition to the impetus provided by the Crimean War, as mentioned above, the artist returned to the theme of the Dardanelles repeatedly over these couple of years, as demonstrated by two pictures of this subject listed in Bossoli's own catalogue of his autograph works.⁴ One of these pictures was painted for 'Manati' in 1855, when Bossoli was in Turin, and the other for 'S.A.R. il Principe Alberto' – identifiable as Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha (1819–1861), the husband of Queen Victoria (1819–1901) – in 1856, when he was working in London. The latter picture appears to have remained in the Royal Collection ever since.⁵

We are grateful to Dott.ssa Arabella Cifani for endorsing the attribution to Carlo Bossoli on the basis of digital images.

¹ A. Peyrot, *Carlo Bossoli: luoghi, personaggi, costumi, avvenimenti nell'Europa dell'Ottocento, visti dal pittore ticinese*, 2 vols, Turin 1974, vol. I, p. 31 (as '*Panorama dei Dardanelli*' and '*Marina lo stretto dei Dardanelli*').

² Peyrot 1974, vol. I, p. XVI.

³ London, Christie's, 7 December 2010, lot 42, for £553,250.

⁴ Peyrot 1974, vol. I, p. 31 (as '*Panorama dei Dardanelli*' and '*Marina lo stretto dei Dardanelli*').

⁵ Inv. no. 450659; watercolour, 30.6 x 52.1 cm.





33

ARNOLD BÖCKLIN

Basel 1827–1901 Fiesole

The Battle on the Bridge

signed lower right: A. Böcklin, over the remains of monogram AB
oil on canvas laid on panel
100 x 142 cm.; 39¼ x 56 in.

€ W £ 800,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE

Max and Theodor Klopfer, Munich, by 1902;

Their sale, Munich, Hugo Helbing, 24 November 1908, lot 7 (as *Cimbernkampf*);

Where purchased by Philipp Rosenthal (1855–1937), Berlin and Berg am Starnberger See;

Acquired by Leberecht, Berlin in 1943 and since then in the family;

By whom offered, Düsseldorf, Christie's, 13 November 1973, lot 2 (as *Kampf der Cimbern und Teutonen*);

Private collection, Germany, until 2015;

From whom acquired and sold thereafter to the present owner.

EXHIBITED

Darmstadt, Mathildenhöhe, *A. Böcklin, 1827–1901*, 23 October – 11 December 1977, no. 51;

London, Fischer Fine Art Ltd, *The Bourgeois Paradise*, 15 March – 12 May 1978, no. 9;

Zurich, Kunsthaus; Munich, Haus der Kunst; and Berlin, Nationalgalerie, *Arnold Böcklin, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst*, 3 October 1997 – 18 January 1998; 5 February – 3 May 1998; and 20 May – 10 August 1998, no. 77;

Basel, Kunstmuseum; Paris, Musée d'Orsay; and Munich, Neue Pinakothek, *Arnold Böcklin*, 19 May – 26 August 2001; 1 October 2001 – 15 January 2002; and 14 February – 26 May 2002, no. 81;

Zurich, Kunsthaus (on long term loan until 2014);

Brussels, BOZAR, Centre for Fine Arts and London, Royal Academy of Arts, *Rubens and His Legacy*, 25 September 2014 – 4 January 2015 and 24 January – 10 April 2015, no. 20.

LITERATURE

H.A. Schmid, *Arnold Böcklin, Eine Auswahl der hervorragendsten Werke des Künstlers in Photogravüre*, vol. 1, Munich 1892, reproduced pl. 3;

H.A. Schmid, 'Arnold Böcklin. Sein Leben und sein Schaffen', in *Arnold Böcklin, Eine Auswahl der hervorragendsten Werke des Künstlers in Photogravüre*, vol. 4, Munich 1901, p. 66;

A. Frey, *Arnold Böcklin*, Stuttgart 1912, pp. 95–96 and 136;

H.A. Schmid, 'Böcklin und die Alten Meister', in *Die Kunst*, part 2, vol. 37, Munich 1918, p. 240;

F. von Ostini, *Böcklin*, Bielefeld 1925, p. 112;

G.J. Wolf, *Arnold Böcklin. Aus Leben und Schaffen*, Munich 1927, p. 53, reproduced;

G. Kleineberg, *Die Entwicklung der Naturpersonifizierung im Werk Arnold Böcklins*, Göttingen 1971, p. 161;

S. Wichmann, 'Der Kampf auf der Brücke von A. Böcklin', in *Weltkunst*, 46th Annual, 1 August 1976, p. 1391, reproduced (reproduced in colour on the cover);

S. Wichmann, *Arnold Böcklin, 1827–1901. Schlachten, Amazonen- und Brückenkampf, Sindelfingen 1977*, pp. 12–43 (for a discussion of the signature and monogram);

R. Andree, *Arnold Böcklin. Die Gemälde*, Zurich 1977, p. 488, no. 418, reproduced;

B. Krimmel, *A. Böcklin, 1827–1901*, exh. cat., Darmstadt 1977, vol. 1, pp. 133–35, reproduced p. 134, vol. 2, no. 51 and in colour p. 119;

Fischer Fine Art Ltd, *The Bourgeois Paradise*, exh. cat., London 1978, n. p., no. 9, reproduced in colour;

G. Magnaguagno and J. Steiner (eds), *Arnold Böcklin, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst*, exh. cat., Bern 1997, p. 190, p. 439, no. 77, reproduced in colour p. 190;

K. Schmidt and C. Lenz, *Arnold Böcklin, 1827–1901*, exh. cat., Paris, Munich and Basel 2001, p. 304, no. 81, reproduced in colour p. 307.

N. Van Hout, 'Violence', in *Rubens and His Legacy*, exh. cat., Brussels and London 2014–15, pp. 56–58, no. 20, reproduced in colour pp. 60–61.





Fig. 1 Peter Paul Rubens, *The Battle of the Amazons*, c. 1618. 120.3 x 165.3 cm. Alte Pinakothek, Bavarian State Painting Collections, Munich



Fig. 2 Arnold Böcklin, *Battle on the Bridge*, 1889. Oil on panel, 50 x 61 cm. Private collection



Fig. 3 Arnold Böcklin, *Battle on the Bridge*, 1889. Oil on panel, 96.5 x 148 cm. Koller International Auctions, Zurich, 29 March 2019, lot 3209



Fig. 4 Arnold Böcklin, *Battle of the Centaurs*, 1872-73. Oil on canvas, 105 x 195 cm. Kunstmuseum Basel

Completed in 1892, *The Battle on the Bridge* is among Arnold Böcklin's most iconic and dynamic compositions, a *tour de force* of painting replete with cultural and art historical references.

Inspired by Rubens' *Battle of the Amazons* (fig. 1),¹ Böcklin depicts the crescendo of a battle between a primeval fair-skinned (Germanic) tribe against a civilised and organised (Roman) army. Begun in 1888 and completed in 1892, it is the final of three closely related paintings of the subject Böcklin painted, and the culmination of his developing thoughts on, and ambitions for, the subject. Its completion was preceded by the two other versions, both dated 1889: one sketchier in execution, offered Sotheby's, London, 11 June 2012, lot 10, and now in a private collection (fig. 2);² and one similar in size to the present work, sold at Koller, Zurich, 29 March 2019, lot 3209 (fig. 3).³

The representation of combat or skirmishes on a bridge has a long tradition in Western art, the theme having acquired its noble status through an event in Roman history: the victory of Emperor Constantine at the Milvian Bridge at the gates of Rome. In both Rubens' and Böcklin's paintings, the mighty classical stone bridge is replaced by a simple wooden structure, bringing the dramatic action to the very forefront of the composition and giving precedence to the clash of the combatants. Whereas Rubens adopts a circular movement to choreograph his battle of the Amazons, Böcklin's substitutes this for a linear confrontation: the two sides enter the picture plane from left and right, their confrontation culminating in a pyramid of intertwined horses and fighters. It was a dramatic device he had explored as early as 1873 in his *Battle of the Centaurs* (fig. 4).

The battle on the bridge between the Roman army and the advancing Germanic tribes reflects a broader fascination during the nineteenth century for the fall of the Roman Empire. But Böcklin's choice of subject was no doubt also influenced by philosophies current at the time, notably Nietzsche's notion of the 'blond beast' expounded in his polemic, *Zur Genealogie der Moral (On the Genealogy of Morals)*, published in 1887. In recoiling from what he saw as a flaccid nineteenth-century European culture, Nietzsche

suggests that in all civilisations, pent up resentment (alienation, oppression) becomes a creative force. Referring to the lion, the great feline predator with its shaggy blond mane and terrific roar, he called longingly for 'some pack of blond beasts of prey, a conqueror and master race which, organized for war and with the ability to organize, unhesitatingly lays its terrible claws upon a populace'. In this context, Böcklin's painting can be read as the slave revolt of Christian morality by the alienated, oppressed masses of the Roman Empire.

Born in Basel, Böcklin trained in Germany, Flanders and Paris before a prolonged stay in Rome (1850-57). His early work, characterised by lyrical naturalism, owed much to Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot but in Italy his emphasis shifted to the creation of mood, in landscapes, figure compositions, and mythological subjects, like *Pan in the Reeds*, which established his reputation and gained him the sobriquet 'great Pan'. During a visit to Pompeii in 1863 he was inspired by the frescoes to experiment with bright colours, flattened perspective, and classical subjects. Settling in Munich in 1871, he influenced a new generation of painters, many of whom worked in his studio. In 1874 Böcklin returned to Italy, setting up a studio in Florence, where he began to paint a series of haunting Symbolist landscapes including *Villa by the Sea*, 1877 (Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart) and arguably his most famous painting, *Island of the Dead* (fig. 5). His mythological paintings of the 1880s, when he was widely acclaimed as the most famous contemporary artist in the German-speaking world, often include some violent conflicts which profoundly influenced the Munich Secessionist painter Franz von Stuck.



Fig. 5 Arnold Böcklin, *Island of the Dead*, 1880. Oil on canvas, 111 x 155 cm. Kunstmuseum Basel

It was the themes of Böcklin's paintings, leading the viewer to make mental associations, that fascinated art lovers from the outset. His friend the historian Jacob Burckhardt wrote of the poetic depth in the work of the young Böcklin. Even Böcklin, speaking of *Island of the Dead*, said that this was a picture for dreaming about. His paintings exerted their influence even in reproductions and helped the painter achieve enormous popularity. The material for Böcklin's art was provided by the classical education of his time, which he used to explore the human condition and the problems of the relationship between one man and another. He sought his examples in the classical art of Italy, in Antiquity and the Renaissance and in the Dutch Old Masters and painters such as Matthias Grünewald and Peter Paul Rubens; he remained aloof from fashionable painters like Bouguereau, Kaulbach, Lenbach, and Makart who were being fêted by cultured society and art connoisseurs all over Europe.

The wartime whereabouts of this work remain uncertain, as do the details of when and how it left the collection of porcelain factory owner Philipp Rosenthal (1855–1937). Despite extensive research, including inquiries with the Rosenthal museum and Philipp Rosenthal's heirs, no evidence of expropriation has been found. It is possible that the painting left Rosenthal's collection between 1908, when he acquired it, and 1933, but no supporting documents have been discovered. We thank all researchers and archives who have kindly supported our research. Notably, this painting does not appear on any consulted lists or databases of Nazi-era losses, including the Art Loss Register.

¹ Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. no. 324; oil on panel, 120.3 x 165.3 cm.

² Andree 1977, no. 416.

³ Andree 1977, no. 417.





PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

34

ALBERT JOSEPH MOORE, A.R.W.S.

York 1841–1893 London

Topaz

signed with the artist's device of an anthemion lower right
oil on canvas
91.4 x 43.5 cm.; 36 x 17 in.

± £ 600,000-900,000

PROVENANCE

Humphrey Roberts (1819–1907), 15 The Esplanade,
Waterloo, Liverpool and 8 Queen's Gate Place, London;

From whom acquired by Thomas Agnew & Son,
London in 1899;

From whom acquired by Charles Dunell Rudd
(1844–1916), Ardnamurchan, Argyll;

By whose Executors sold ('The Collection of the late C.
D. Rudd, Esq., of Ardnamurchan, Argyllshire'), London,
Christie's, 2 May 1919, lot 63 (as *Sisters*), to Gooden &
Fox, London;

William Hesketh Lever, 1st Viscount Leverhulme
(1851–1925);

By whom presented to H.R.H. Princess Mary
(1897–1965) on the occasion of her marriage to
Henry, Viscount Lascelles (1882–1947) in 1922,
Goldsborough Hall, Yorkshire;

With Durlacher Brothers, New York, by 1964;

Lillian Bostwick Phipps (1906–1987), New York;

By whose Executors sold ('Property from the Estate
of the Late Lillian Bostwick Phipps'), New York,
Sotheby's, 24 May 1988, lot 94;

Where acquired by a private collector;

Thence by descent;

By whom sold ('Property of a Lady'), New York,
Sotheby's, 24 May 2017, lot 10;

Where acquired for the present collection.

Topaz by Albert Joseph Moore exquisitely embodies the idealistic philosophy of the Aesthetic Movement in the 1860s and 1870s – that painting should be primarily concerned with a celebration of harmony, colour and beauty rather than having a prescriptive narrative impetus. Swathes of clear, brilliant colour were placed carefully within compositions that were designed to harmonise the forms and hues in a similar way to how composers made music. There are echoes of classical sculpture in the two statuesque female figures and the gathered folds of the fabric, but *Topaz* also anticipates the abstract ideas of Modernism. Moore is believed to have worked upon *Topaz* for at least two years before it was exhibited at the 1879 annual exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery, where the progressive artists of London found sympathy among an audience who were more radical in their tastes for contemporary art. It was described as 'one of the most singular and novel pictures of modern times'.¹ *Topaz* has a prestigious provenance, having been given in 1922 to Princess Mary as a wedding gift from Lord Leverhulme of Sunlight Soap fame, who had one of the finest collections of modern art.



EXHIBITED

London, Grosvenor Gallery, *Summer Exhibition*, 1879, no. 172;
Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, *Autumn Exhibition*, 1879, no. 400;
Manchester, *Royal Jubilee Exhibition*, 1887, no. 162, lent by Humphrey Roberts (as *The Sisters*);
London, Grafton Galleries, *Exhibition of Pictures by the Late Mr. Albert Moore*, 1894, no. 154;
London, Guildhall, *Loan Collection of Pictures by Painters of the British School who have Flourished During Her Majesty's Reign*, 1897, no. 93, lent by Humphrey Roberts;
New York, Durlacher Brothers, *Painters of the Beautiful*, 1964, no. 13.

LITERATURE

Building News, 2 May 1879, p. 469;
London Daily Chronicle, 8 May 1879, p. 5;
Daily Telegraph & Courier, 10 May 1879, p. 3;
The Graphic, 10 May 1879, p. 403;
London Evening Standard, 12 May 1879, p. 3;
Globe, 12 May 1879, p. 6;
John Bull, 24 May 1879, p. 7;
Pall Mall Gazette, 26 May 1879, p. 4;
Bedfordshire Mercury, 21 June 1879, p. 4;
Liverpool Albion, 30 August 1879, p. 4;

Liverpool Post, 30 August 1879, p. 5;
W.G. Herdman, 'Walker Art Gallery', in *Liverpool Mercury*, 23 September 1879, p. 8;
'The Poetic Phase in Modern British Art', in *The New Quarterly Magazine*, vol. II, July and October 1879, p. 158;
C. Pascoe, 'The Grosvenor Gallery Summer Exhibition', in *The Art Journal*, vol. 5, 1879, p. 224;
Prescot Reporter, 6 December 1879, p. 5;
A.L. Baldry, *Albert Moore: His Life and Work*, London 1894, pp. 20, 48–49, 54 and 104;
Art Journal, 1894, pp. 88–89, reproduced;
Daily News, 19 January 1894, p. 5;
Weekly Dispatch, 21 January 1894, p. 6;
The Graphic, 27 January 1894, p. 106;
Illustrated London News, 3 February 1894, p. 131;
F.G. Stephens, 'Mr Humphrey Roberts's Collection. Modern English Oil Pictures', in *Magazine of Art*, 1896, pp. 44–47, reproduced (as *Turquoise*);
The Graphic, 10 April 1897, p. 447;
Manchester Evening News, 15 April 1899, p. 2;
T. Borenius, *Catalogue of the Pictures and Drawings at Harewood House and Elsewhere in the Collection of the Earl of Harewood*, 1936, p. 147;
R. Asleson, *Albert Moore*, London 2000, pp. 137, 150, 153, 163 and 195, reproduced in colour pl. 147.

Moore was not alone in his pursuit of an Aesthetic language for his art. Paintings such as *Symphony in White, No. 3* by James McNeill Whistler (fig. 1), *The Golden Stairs* by Edward Coley Burne-Jones and *The Blue Bower* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti challenged ideas about art in the 1860s and '70s by presenting figures within interiors that were not obviously inspired by literature, mythology or a desire to tell a story. Frederic Leighton's *Flaming June* (fig. 2) painted more than ten years after *Topaz* demonstrates the endurance of the Aesthetic Movement towards the end of the nineteenth century. *Flaming June*, like *Topaz*, depicts a pseudo-classical reverie in which women laze languidly in loose-fitted togas. We are not given the names of these women, we are not told their stories and we are not invited to make any other demand upon these pictures but to allow them to please us.

Although Rossetti, Whistler, Burne-Jones and Leighton were important members of the Aesthetic Movement, Moore was the most consistent in his vision. He adhered to an essentially narrative-free stimulus for most of his career and on the rare occasions that he attempted to present a mythology, he was less confident or convincing. An unassuming man, of whom we know relatively little compared to his contemporaries, he was a highly-influential radical with a sophisticated style that was emulated but never bettered. In a studio in Kensington frequently invaded by an army of half-feral cats, Moore toiled at his paintings, creating some of the most gorgeous and innovative pictures of the period. In quiet opposition to the Victorian taste favouring the telling of a story or moral lesson, Moore focused on the purely visual properties of his pictures, with the exclusive aim of creating supremely beautiful arrangements of line and colour. The choice of the title *Topaz* is indicative of Moore's approach to painting – the jewel is a very minor element of the picture but it is essential to the colour scheme which is based upon the clear iridescence of gemstones and the colours of emerald, ruby and topaz. *Topaz* wasn't the only painting titled with the name of a gemstone – in 1877 Moore titled a study in blue *Sapphires* (Birmingham Museum & Art Galleries) and in 1878 he exhibited *Garnets* at the Royal Academy (sold Sotheby's, London, 13 July 2017, lot 5).



Fig. 1 James Abbott McNeill Whistler, *Symphony in White, No. 3*. Oil on canvas, 51.4 x 76.9 cm. Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham. © Wikimedia



Fig. 2 Frederic, Lord Leighton, P.R.A., *Flaming June*, 1895. Oil on canvas, 120 x 120 cm. Museo de Arte de Ponce, Puerto Rico. Photo © The Maas Gallery, London / Bridgeman Images

The importance of *Topaz* in Moore's career can be gauged from the fact that it was this one that he chose to represent him at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1879. Initiated in 1877 as a rival to the prestigious but more traditional Royal Academy, the Grosvenor became the venue of choice for avant-garde artists and their patrons. *Topaz* was among the most frequently exhibited of Moore's paintings and critics recognized it as one of the artist's finest works. Exhibition reviews dwelled on the exquisite delicacy of the colour scheme, which (it was often said) lay beyond the capacity of words to describe. Such comments bear out Moore's belief that a visual work of art, by definition, should appeal directly to the eye and had no business with words. This radical notion constituted a challenge to the narrative traditions of British art and compelled a more sophisticated mode of art criticism.

Moore made clear his abstract intentions in *Topaz*, as in other paintings, by treating the figures as formal design elements, rather than psychologically and physically individualized human beings. The nearly identical female figures are based on Moore's careful studies of professional models, which he gradually transformed to match an ideal of human beauty derived from Greek sculpture. We can also perceive this in pictures like *Dreamers* of 1882 (fig. 3) in which the three figures are essentially variations of each other, placed for decorative effect. The faces of the women in *Topaz* and in *Dreamers* have the passive serenity of marble Venuses and the poses of the women in *Topaz* also echo the stances of countless Greek and Roman sculptures. The two women were clearly painted nude before Moore added the drapery and their forms can be seen beneath the diaphanous drapery. Embroidered fabric in the background of *Topaz* appears in several other paintings by Moore, including *Dreamers*. With this flat, decorative backdrop, Moore leaves us in no doubt that this is a scene designed and arranged for the purposes of the painting rather than any semblance of reality. The delicate filigree pattern of the fabric also provides a lively counterpoint to the rhythmic swags of the figures' apple-green gowns. The superb decorative effect was pointed out by the correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph and Courier*: 'Mr. Albert Moore's *Topazs* [sic] presents the effect of a cameo of three colours.



Fig. 3 Albert Moore, *Dreamers*, c. 1882. Oil on canvas, 70 x 121 cm. Birmingham Museums Trust. © Wikimedia

He seems to have carved the topaz-coloured draperies of his two beautiful female figures on the uppermost superficies of his shell or his pietra dura, then to have cut down to the lower level of pink to find the faces, the arms, the hands, and the feet of the figures, and finally to have delved down to a third level of pale yellow to form a background. The predominating effect produced is that of a basse relievo very tenderly tinted. It is highly unreal, but extremely beautiful.²

Moore seems to have been inspired not only by the colours of nature but also by the design principles he discerned in natural forms. He formulated a unique composition process in which the placement of every element – from the slightest stroke of colour to the myriad folds of drapery – was determined in advance through the creation of an underlying grid of intersecting lines and curves. Even the placement of his characteristic anthemion signature (visible in the lower right corner of *Topaz*) was analysed as an integral element of the composition. Through these exhaustive preparations, Moore ensured that the final canvas was carried out with absolute certainty. The ease and spontaneity of his brushwork enhances the picture's sparkling gem-like appeal and we are left with the impression that the picture could not be improved upon by the removal or addition of any element.

Moore worked on the composition for *Topaz* for at least two years and among the studies for the painting are two full-size figure and drapery studies each depicting one of the two figures (Sotheby's, New York, 5 May 2011, lots 74 and 75; figs 4 and 5). In 1881 Moore replicated the pose of the figure on the right

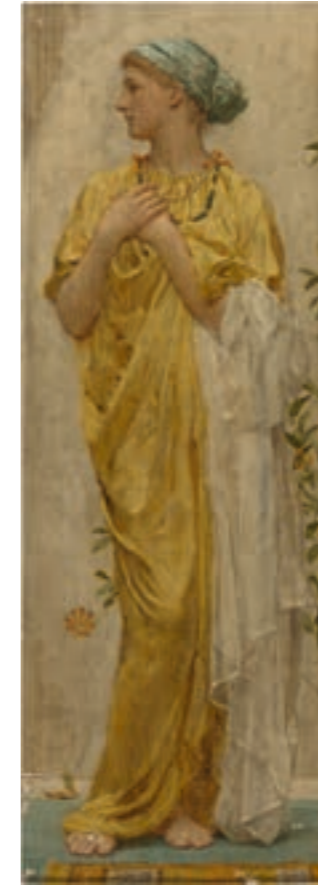


Fig. 4 Albert Moore, *Standing Figure in Yellow and Blue: Study for Topaz*. Oil on canvas, 83.8 x 29.5 cm. Private collection. © Sotheby's



Fig. 5 Albert Moore, *Standing Figure in Yellow and Orange: Study for Topaz*. Oil on canvas, 83.8 x 33 cm. Private collection. © Sotheby's

in *Topaz*, for a picture he titled *Forget-me-nots* (Christie's, New York, 'The Ann and Gordon Getty Collection', 14 June 2023, lot 24). The colour-scheme was entirely different – a blue gown and saffron-yellow head-scarf instead of green and pink and her left arm was twisted, somewhat awkwardly, into the balustrade of a screen. Another picture which emerged from the studies for *Topaz* was the watercolour *Companions* of 1883 (Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts). Ten years after *Topaz* was painted, the pose of the model on the left was used again when Moore designed a pastel of a female nude standing on the shore of a lake entitled *A Bathing Place* (Private collection). Again her hands are clasped over her breast and she looks over her shoulder as though someone were approaching.

Topaz was owned by the timber merchant Humphrey Roberts, of whose collection the art critic Frederic George Stephens wrote: 'He experiences an embarrassment of riches who writes upon that treasure house at Kensington which is lined with pictures, the constant and intimate companions of the owner, whose rare taste has brought them together and who lends them so freely that, in a sense, it may be said the public enjoys them almost as much as the collector allows himself to do. Not an entire number of this Magazine would suffice for justice to be done to the whole of the English oil paintings with which Mr. Roberts has adorned his walls...'³ Room was given to illustrating and describing *Topaz* (although mis-identified as *Turquoise*): 'which shows two comely damsels in pale citron, gracefully posed like painted statues of a delicious kind, beautiful in their Athenian serenity, and beautifully draped. A gem in its way,



Fig. 6 Photograph of the Jacobean staircase at Goldsborough Hall, North Yorkshire. Albert Moore's *Topaz* on the left. © Harewood House Trust



it exists under the limitations of antique art, and remains one of the finest specimens of a sort of pictorial music drawn as from a lyre of but few strings. Although it cannot be said to “overtake far thought with music that it makes”, the exquisite, if circumscribed, melody of Albert Moore had more than a touch of the diviner harmonies of art in it.⁴ In 1899 Roberts sold or exchanged *Topaz* at Thomas Agnew’s and as the *Daily Telegraph* pointed out in 1908: ‘At one time he owned Whistler’s *Barber’s Shop* and Albert Moore’s *Topaz* but these have disappeared. Mr. Roberts was indeed a great believer in a ‘swap’ and at various times bartered his possessions for others.⁵ In 1922 *Topaz* was given as a wedding gift to H.R.H. Princess Mary (in 1936 she was given the title of Princess Royal following the death of her aunt Louise), the only daughter of King George V and Queen Mary when she married Viscount Lascelles. It was gifted by Lord Leverhulme who had a magnificent collection of Victorian art, including at least three examples by Albert Moore. The gift of *Topaz* demonstrates Lord Lever’s generosity and also the refined taste of the Earl and Countess of Harewood. Although they owned the magnificent Harewood House near Leeds, *Topaz* hung at Goldsborough Hall, their more intimate private residence (fig 6).

Although Albert Moore’s paintings were widely admired in his lifetime for their sheer beauty and were in the collections of many of the most important private collections and also those of the public galleries, the experimental aesthetic theories that underlay them were perceived by only a select few of his contemporaries. For them, Moore’s work was a revelation. His paintings are in public collections around the world from Johannesburg to Adelaide, many museums in America and the UK. Paintings of the quality of *Topaz* rarely come to auction and in the last twenty years there have been no more than three comparable examples.

We are grateful to staff at Harewood House for confirming details of the provenance.

¹ Herdman in *Liverpool Mercury*, 23 September 1879, p. 8.

² *Daily Telegraph & Courier*, 10 May 1879, p. 3.

³ Stephens 1896, p. 41.

⁴ Stephens 1896, pp. 44 and 47.

⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 8 April 1908, p. 8.




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
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