



PUBLISHED BY

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Palla, 25. 08002 Barcelona

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PRINTING AND PHOTOMECHANICAL  
PROCESSING

Gràfiques Ortell S.L.

ISBN

We would like to thank the following for their professional help:

*Nous tenons à remercier les professionnels suivants pour leur collaboration :*

**Queremos agradecer la colaboración de los siguientes profesionales:**

Christophe Defrance, Bénédicte de Donker, Viviana Farina, Guillem Fernández, Anna Gabrielli, Arianne Garaizabal, Yann le LanLemaître, Pilar Lorte, Manuela Mena Marqués, Benito Navarrete Prieto, Montserrat Pérez, Pere and Horacio Pérez-Hita, Dr Andrew Robinson, Jaume Sanahuja and the entire team at ARTUR RAMON ART.



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# TEFAF MAASTRICHT WORKS ON PAPER

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# SALON DU DESSIN

25 – 30 mars 2015

Paris. Palais Brongniart – Place de la Bourse

Stand 29

ARTUR RAMON 1926 ART

# Seriousness and passion for drawing: from the *Raíz del arte* to the international fairs

I came to drawing through visual education, surrounded by works on paper in the family collection. Then, in my training days, I was initiated into engraving, particularly the work of Giovanni Battista Piranesi. I discovered it through some books my father bought when I started work and delved more deeply into it in the late 80s in London, thanks to Professor John Wilton-Ely. Back in Barcelona, I devoted a number of monographic exhibitions to the Venetian master and through him I returned to drawing, because in it the artists' first voice, their most intimate and honest part, can be heard.

The passion for drawing led me to an outlandish venture for a country like mine, in which there is hardly any tradition of collecting works of this kind: a series of exhibitions under the title *Raíz del arte* (Root of Art)—to paraphrase Michelangelo, who thus defined drawing—, which brought together works by Spanish and Italian artists. They were presented at the gallery more or less biennially (1993, 1996, 1998, 2000 and 2003), and were illustrated and studied through catalogues with contributions from experts, notably Bonaventura Bassegoda, Fernando Benito and Benito Navarrete. Little by little I acquired some customers and the notice of institutions like the Spanish National Library and the Prado Museum. I obtained important works such as *Female Nude* by Alonso Cano, one of the most beautiful Spanish drawings of all time, or Murillo's *Study for the Good Shepherd*, which ended their journey in the Prado Museum; also one of the few known drawings by Juan Ribalta, *Nativity*, which today is kept in the San Pío V Museum of Fine Arts in Valencia.

Through Professor Benito Navarrete, we managed something unusual in Spain, for two colleagues, professionals working in the same sphere, to meet to set up an exhibition. In that way, in association with Galería Caylus in Madrid in 2006 *The role of drawing in Spain* came into being. Its cata-

logue has remained a reference point in the bibliography of the subject. The exhibition managed to encourage a timid emergence of Spanish collections, while winning an international recognition that crystallised in the acquisition of drawings by Francisco Bayeu and Mariano Salvador Maella by the Louvre Museum.

In acknowledgement of that task, in 2009 I managed to take part in the Salon du Dessin in Paris as sole Spanish representative. And one year later, in 2010, also in the new *Works on Paper* at the prestigious TEFAF Maastricht. At both events I have promoted the dissemination of Spanish drawing in the world and managed to place some works in the hands of European and American collectors, as well as museums such as the Louvre and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, but also the Morgan Library in New York, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, LACMA in Los Angeles and the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

On the occasion of our presence at TEFAF Maastricht and the Salon du Dessin in Paris, we are presenting this catalogue with our finest works. Italian and French drawings we have been collecting for years, plus three outstanding paintings. We are no more than the works we present and our way of exhibiting them. Now we will let them speak for themselves.

**Artur Ramon**

# Rigueur et passion pour le dessin : de *Raíz del Arte* aux salons internationaux

Je suis arrivé au dessin par éducation visuelle, entouré d'œuvres sur papier de la collection familiale. Ensuite, lors de mes années de formation, je me suis initié à la gravure, particulièrement à l'œuvre de Giovanni Battista Piranesi. Je la découvris grâce à des livres achetés par mon père quand j'ai commencé à travailler, et je l'approfondis à la fin des années quatre-vingts, à Londres, grâce au professeur John Wilton-Ely. De retour à Barcelone, j'ai consacré plusieurs expositions monographiques au maître vénitien et, à travers lui, je suis revenu aux dessins, parce qu'on y écoute la première voix des artistes, leur partie la plus intime et honnête.

La passion pour le dessin me porta à une entreprise pèlerine pour un pays comme le mien, dans lequel la tradition pour le collectionnisme de ce genre d'œuvres est peu développée : une série d'expositions, intitulées *Raíz del Arte* (Racine de l'Art) — pour paraphraser Michel-Ange, qui définit ainsi le dessin —, qui réunissaient des œuvres d'artistes espagnols et italiens. Ces expositions étaient organisées dans la galerie avec une périodicité plus ou moins biannuelle (1993, 1996, 1998, 2000 et 2003), et elles étaient illustrées et étudiées moyennant des catalogues auxquels participaient des experts, parmi lesquels se distinguent Bonaventura Bassegoda, Fernando Benito et Benito Navarrete. Peu à peu, j'ai réussi à intéresser quelques clients et des institutions comme la Bibliothèque Nationale d'Espagne et le Musée du Prado, entre autres. J'ai obtenu des œuvres importantes, comme le *Nu féminin*, d'Alonso Cano, l'un des plus beaux dessins espagnols de tous les temps, ou l'*Étude pour Le Bon Berger*, de Murillo, qui finirent leur voyage au Musée du Prado ; également, l'un des rares dessins connus de Juan Ribalta, *Nativité*, aujourd'hui conservé au Musée des Beaux Arts San Pío V de Valencia.

À travers le professeur Benito Navarrete, nous réussîmes une chose insolite en Espagne : nous réunir deux collègues, professionnels qui travaillions dans un même domaine, pour organiser une

exposition conjointe. Ainsi, avec la Galerie Caylus de Madrid est née en 2006 *Le rôle du dessin en Espagne*, dont le catalogue est devenu une référence de la bibliographie sur ce thème. Cette exposition réussit à encourager un timide collectionnisme espagnol, tout en obtenant une reconnaissance internationale qui se traduit par l'acquisition de dessins de Francisco Bayeu et de Mariano Salvador Maella par le Musée du Louvre.

Comme reconnaissance à ce labeur, en 2009 je réussis à participer au Salon du Dessin de Paris comme unique représentant espagnol. Et une année plus tard, en 2010, également à la nouvelle section *Works on Paper* de la prestigieuse TEFAF Maastricht. Au cours des deux rencontres, j'ai promu la diffusion du dessin espagnol dans le monde et j'ai réussi que quelques œuvres arrivent à des collectionneurs européens et américains, ainsi qu'à des musées comme le Louvre et le Rijksmuseum d'Amsterdam ; mais également à la Morgan Library de New York, au Museum of Fine Arts de Boston, au LACMA de Los Angeles et à la National Gallery de Canada à Ottawa, entre autres.

Maintenant, à l'occasion de notre présence à TEFAF Maastricht et au Salon du Dessin de Paris, nous présentons ce catalogue contenant nos meilleures œuvres. Des dessins espagnols, italiens et français que nous avons collectionnés pendant des années, auxquels viennent s'ajouter trois peintures exceptionnelles. Nous, nous ne sommes que les œuvres que nous présentons et la manière dont nous les exposons. Maintenant, laissons-les parler d'elles-mêmes.

**Artur Ramon**

# Rigor y pasión por el dibujo: de *Raíz del Arte* a las ferias internacionales

Llegué al dibujo por educación visual, rodeado de obras sobre papel de la colección familiar. Luego, ya en mis tiempos de formación, me inicié en el grabado, particularmente en la obra de Giovanni Battista Piranesi. La conocí por unos libros que compró mi padre cuando empecé a trabajar, y profundicé en ella a finales de los años ochenta, en Londres, gracias al profesor John Wilton-Ely. De vuelta a Barcelona, dediqué varias exposiciones monográficas al maestro veneciano, y a través de él regresé a los dibujos, porque en ellos se escucha la primera voz de los artistas, su parte más íntima y honesta.

La pasión por el dibujo me llevó a una empresa peregrina para un país como el mío, en el que apenas hay tradición de coleccionismo de este tipo de obras: una serie de exposiciones, bajo el título de *Raíz del Arte* —parafraseando a Miguel Ángel, que definió así el dibujo—, que reunían obras de artistas españoles e italianos. Estas muestras se presentaban en la galería con una periodicidad más o menos bianual (1993, 1996, 1998, 2000 y 2003), y se ilustraban y estudiaban mediante catálogos en los que participaban expertos, entre los que destacan Bonaventura Bassegoda, Fernando Benito y Benito Navarrete. Poco a poco, fui consiguiendo algunos clientes y la atención de instituciones como la Biblioteca Nacional de España y el Museo del Prado, entre otras. Obtuve obras importantes, como el *Desnudo femenino*, de Alonso Cano, uno de los más bellos dibujos españoles de todos los tiempos, o el *Estudio para El Buen Pastor*, de Murillo, que acabaron su viaje en el Museo del Prado; también, uno de los pocos dibujos conocidos de Juan Ribalta, *Natividad*, que hoy se conserva en el Museo de Bellas Artes San Pío V de Valencia.

A través del profesor Benito Navarrete, conseguimos algo insólito en España, reunirnos dos colegas, profesionales que trabajamos en un mismo ámbito, para realizar una exposición conjunta. Así

junto a la Galería Caylus de Madrid nació en 2006 *El papel del dibujo en España*, cuyo catálogo ya ha quedado como referencia en la bibliografía sobre el tema. Esa exposición consiguió alentar un tímido coleccionismo español, a la vez que obtuvo un reconocimiento internacional que cristalizó en la adquisición de dibujos de Francisco Bayeu y Mariano Salvador Maella por parte del Museo del Louvre.

Como reconocimiento a esa labor, en 2009 conseguí participar en el Salon du Dessin de París como único representante español. Y un año después, en 2010, también en la nueva sección *Works on Paper* de la prestigiosa TEFAF Maastricht. En ambos certámenes he promovido la difusión del dibujo español en el mundo y he conseguido que algunas obras lleguen a coleccionistas europeos y americanos, así como a museos como el mismo Louvre y el Rijksmuseum de Ámsterdam; pero también a la Morgan Library de Nueva York, el Museum of Fine Arts de Boston, el LACMA de Los Ángeles y la National Gallery de Canadá en Ottawa, entre otros.

Con motivo ahora de nuestra presencia en TEFAF Maastricht y en el Salon du Dessin de París, presentamos este catálogo con nuestras mejores obras. Dibujos españoles, italianos y franceses que hemos ido coleccionando durante años, a los que se suman tres pinturas excepcionales. Nosotros no somos más que las obras que presentamos y la manera que tenemos de exponerlas. Dejemos ahora que ellas hablen.

**Artur Ramon**

## Diana Ghisi known as Mantuana, or Scultori

Mantua, 1547–Rome, 1612

### Preparations for the Banquet of the Gods

c. 1575

Brown ink with pen

70 × 212 mm

PROVENANCE: London, Thomas Dimsdale collection (Lugt 2426); Germany late 19th century, B.S. seal (Lugt 414b)

Diana was only 19 when Vasari, who was passing through Mantua in 1566, discovered the talents of the young woman to whom he would devote a fragment in his *Lives of the Artists*. The daughter of Giovanni Battista Ghisi, who worked with Giulio Romano in Mantua, Diana Ghisi signed her engravings as Scultori or Mantovana and later Mantuana, the patronymic which has been conserved for posterity. Her precocious talent won her the favours of the Pope and of Claudio Gonzaga and opened the doors to privileges hitherto reserved for male artists. Thanks to her good business sense, Diana contributed to the success of the career of her husband, the architect Francesco da Volterra, and, although she showed an exceptional gift for her work as an engraver, she abandoned that activity in 1588.

The engraving for which she did this sketch is dated 1575 in the dedication and is therefore one of her first. Our drawing, which in no way differs from the engraving except in its size (380 × 1120 mm), may be regarded as a prowess insofar as the forty-three figures are contained in a tiny space. The grid executed with a dry line seems to have been done so as not to affect the readability of the trace of the pen. It has 36 sections in width and 12 in height, which provides the approximate dimensions of the coppers which Diana Mantuana would work with the burin. And so this is the preparatory sketch for the three coppers which form the matrix of the engraving and can be placed at one of the stages of its execution.

Battista Franco also engraved this composition with major variations and one of his preparatory sketches for the left hand part is conserved in the British Museum (Gere and Pouncey, 1983, no. 133, fig. 144). He cannot be the author of this drawing and nor can Diana's brother, Teodoro Ghisi. We believe that the dry grid process and this small, precise pen line are Diana's, as is the composition of the engraving. The sketch bears witness to a rare visual acuity, a quality she would conserve until 1588. However, in 1993 Stefania Massari considered that Giulio Romano was the author of the composition which would have taken up and condensed the motifs of the south, east and north walls of the Hall of Cupid and Psyche in the Tea Palace into a single composition for which two drawings from Chatsworth would prepare the studies of details.

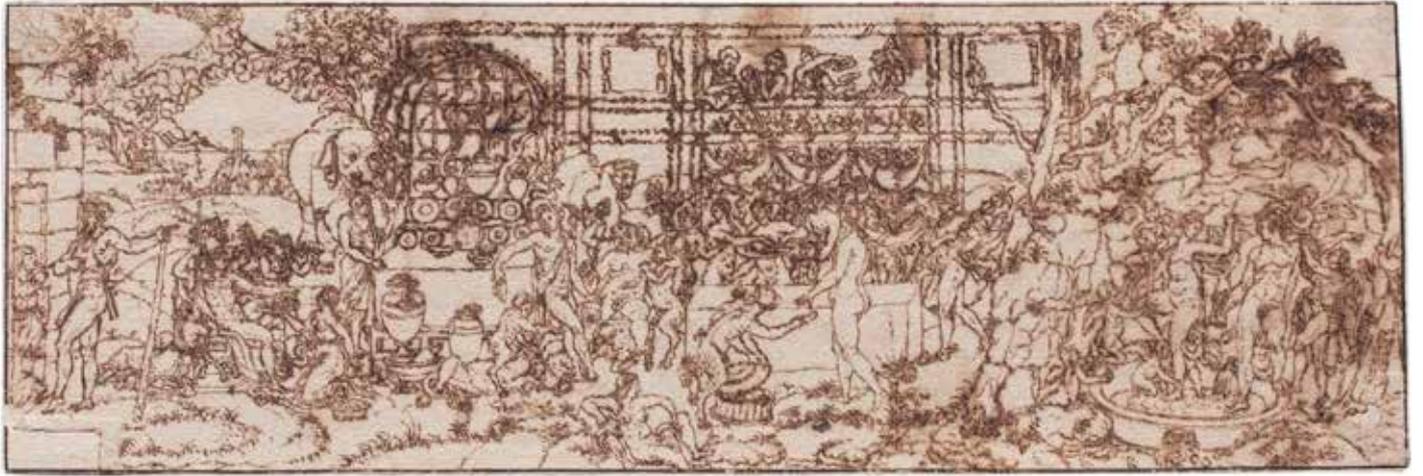
Christophe Defrance

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## Angelino Medoro

Rome, 1567–Seville, 1633

### Angelica and Medoro

c. 1627

Ink with pen and brown wash, with wash highlights. Charcoal and brown ink with

pen: two sides of *putti*, a Mercury and a *putto* in the air (reverse)

370 x 248 mm

PROVENANCE: France, private collection

Trained during the last years of Mannerism in Rome, Angelino Medoro is recorded from 1585 in Seville; from that first period he is known to have produced a *Flagellation of Christ* dated 1586 (Malaga, private collection).

A year later he left Seville and travelled to the Spanish colonies in America to make his fortune. From 1587 he painted for the Dominicans of Santa Fe de Bogotá and later, in 1588, in Tunja in Colombia, he signed a number of paintings for the cathedral and the churches of Santo Domingo and San Francisco. In 1600 and again in 1616-1618 he was in Lima, where he directed an important studio which dealt with the many commissions for altarpieces, whose quality eventually suffered.

His return to Seville in 1624 brought him up against a very different situation, which obliged him to pass an examination in 1627, demanded by the rules of the corporation presided by the young Alonso Cano. Although it seems that he devoted himself to drawing for most of his last years, there are few surviving works attributed to him; indeed, ours is the fourth known today.

Medoro took the Medoro and Angelica episode from Ariosto, "On bark or rock, if yielding were the stone... and in as many places graved, within MEDORO and ANGELICA were traced in divers cyphers quaintly interlaced" (*Orlando Furioso*, canto XIX).

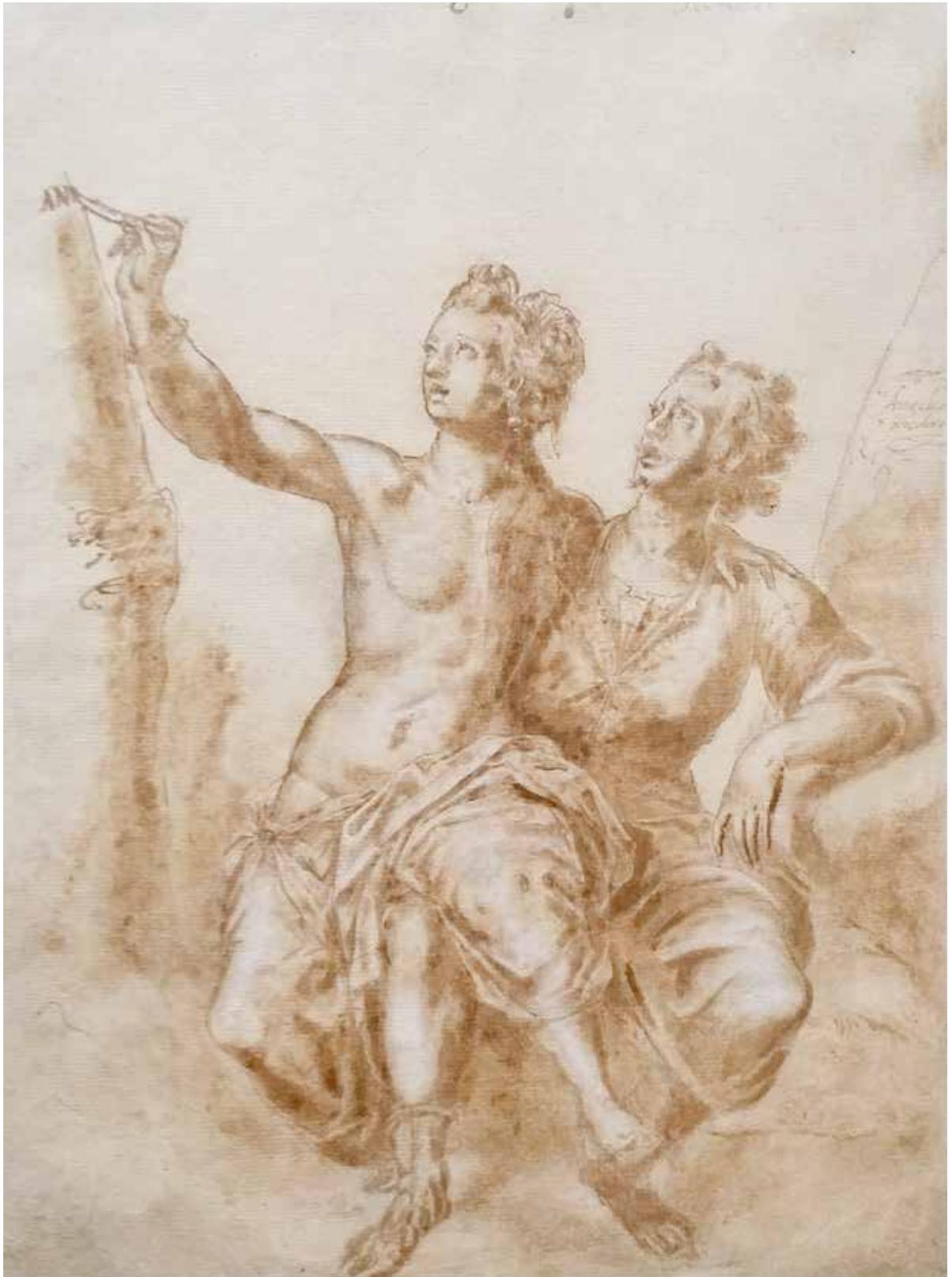
The motif of Angelica's legs –she is half naked and wearing a diadem– intertwined with those of Medoro was borrowed from Bartholomeus Spranger (*Angelica and Medoro*, Vienna, Kunst). It has a strong erotic connotation which is almost unique in Spanish art in the first third of the 17th century. Only Alonso Cano dared in a few drawings to approach eroticism with some lascivious Venuses. Medoro used a precise wash highlighted with white gouache to give this drawing a highly pictorial tone which, with greater refinement, shows surprising similarities with the one in the Juan Abelló collection (*Sybille*, Álbum Albuquerque, cat. 12, fol. 1) dated 1627. It seems evident to us to assign our drawing to a nearby date. Because of its singularity, it seem improbable that this important drawing was a preparatory sketch for a painting.

Christophe Defrance

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## Giovanni Bernardino Azzolino

Cefalù, 1572-Naples, 1645

### St. Charles Borromeo Giving Alms to the Poor (Study for the Borrello Chapel in the Church of Gesù Nuovo in Naples)

1619

Black pencil, pen and brown ink and grey and red watercolour on paper

221 x 160 mm

Inscription bottom left, in pen and brown ink and old lettering "Jacopo Robusti A. 15..."

PROVENANCE: Ralph Holland Collection

The episode in the life of the well-known archbishop and Milanese saint led Ralph Holland, the previous owner of the work, to advance his attribution to an anonymous Lombard of the 17th century. It was subsequently suggested that an unknown Roman produced it between 1605 and 1615. The piece was acquired, however, under the more generic heading of "Italian School of the 17th century".

The first supposition, albeit mistaken, that the work might come from northern Italy concurs with the suggestion made about another splendid work that was also part of the collection owned by Artur Ramon and now currently held in a private collection in New York, the *Transfiguration of Christ*, attributed on several occasions to Camillo Procaccini and a work which I myself recognise as being by Giovanni Bernardino Azzolino, the Sicilian active in Naples who was the father-in-law of José de Ribera.

As in the *Transfiguration of Christ*, the refined combination of the chosen graphic media, in this case grey and red watercolours overlaid on the brown ink on a base done in black pencil, do not easily convey us to Naples unless we are very familiar with the drawings produced by Azzolino and above all with his artistic imaginary. The immediate recognition of the master as the artist responsible for the drawing in question is possible thanks to the earlier identification of an extremely valuable third folio, *Study for a Vault with Angels Carrying Cardinals' and Bishops' Emblems*, which I have identified among the unknown Italians of the 17th century in the Louvre (inv. no. 12315). The lively line, elaborately worked or concise, and the intense effort to achieve a diluted colour make it possible to easily recognise the same characteristics that define the scene showing St. Charles Borromeo distributing alms.

The example in the Louvre, as I have indicated elsewhere, is the design for a fresco on the bishop and cardinal we can identify as St. Charles Borromeo. More particularly, I believe that the drawing uses the original perspective of the central decoration of the arch over the altar in the third chapel, the Chapel of the Maritaggi in the left aisle of the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli a Pizzofalcone, Naples. This space was decorated almost in its entirety by Azzolino around 1630, with iconographic motifs related to the saint from Milan. In addition to the altarpiece, which depicts *St. Charles in Prayer*, two bands in poor condition have survived in the sections of the dome situated before the chapel, in the cornices and in the lighting arch. These bands feature *Four Angels Carrying the Emblems and Symbols of the Virtue of St. Charles Borromeo* and,





inside the compartment with golden stucco on a deep blue background, *Cherubs with the Iconographic Attributes of the Saint and Cherubim*. In this case, these are frescoes that enable us to establish a stylistic connection with the study in the Louvre. Azzolino himself is usually credited with the small scenes of the altar arch – three *Episodes from the Life of St. Charles Borromeo* – but I have attributed them, given their stylistic traits, to Belisario Corenzio, who worked alongside the Sicilian on the construction of the Roman chapel in the Church of Gesù e Maria (1609-1610) and on the Muscettola Chapel in Gesù Nuovo (1613-1617).

Just as the beautiful drawing in the Louvre could be the first idea for the area of the high altar in the Chapel of Spouses, an area then entrusted to Belisario Corenzio, my initial proposal is that the folio of *St. Charles Borromeo Giving Alms to the Poor* could be the study for one of the two lateral scenes of the arch in this same space due to the apparent similarity of the forms and concepts.

However, Azzolino had already worked on the theme of St. Charles Borromeo some ten years before devoting himself to the work for the Theatine Order on Santa Maria degli Angeli a Pizzofalcone: in fact, he had already received the commission to decorate in oil and fresco the Chapel of Tommaso Borrello, the first in the right nave of the Church of Gesù Nuovo in Naples. Valuable archive documents (Documenti 1939-1940, p. 478; Ferrante, 1979, p. 26; E. Nappi in *Seicento*, 1984, pp. 322, 333, doc. no. 16) confirm that between 1619 and 1620, Azzolino painted *St. Charles Borromeo in Prayer with Angels* on the altar, the frontal painting of the *Holy Trinity* and the frescos of the high altar arch, the dome at the front and the cornices. Following the earthquake of 1688, Giuseppe Simonelli undertook the restoration of the frescoes of the dome, while the *Four Great Doctors of the Church* of the cornices were damaged by damp, as were the small scenes of the high altar. An old black and white photograph I found in 1994 revealed that the folio that passed through Ralph Holland's hands was precisely the preparatory study for the right panel of the arch, which shows *St. Charles Borromeo Giving Alms to the Poor*, opposite the scene of the *Blessing of Plague Victims*. The most recent restoration of the fresco makes a comparative reading of both works even straightforward.

In the transition from the graphic work to the painting, Azzolino painted in the bottom part of the frame the figures of two naked beggars to the left and of a woman with two children to the right. A little higher up, the balustrade with small columns has been reformed and completed without breaks; the bearers of the sacks of money do not appear, just a small isolated figure to the right. In addition, in the area to the left, now in poor condition, the saint can be seen, standing and stretching out his arm to give the alms.

*St. Charles Borromeo Giving Alms to the Poor (Study for the Borrello Chapel in the Church of Gesù Nuovo in Naples)* is, then, the second drawing I have been able to connect so far with the important commission received from Tommaso Borrello. It is also possible to include in the same group the *Study for a Corbel with Pope Gregory the Great and Angels Carrying the Saint's Iconographic Attributes*, which I located in the Courtauld Gallery (inv. D. 1963.WF.4716). It is recognisable in the precise and refined design, with minimal variants, that circumscribe the monochrome cherubs never realised, supported on small pillars on either side of the saint's throne, for the *Saint Gregory the Great* painted in fresco in one of the four sides of the small chapel in front of the Borrello sanctuary. In this last figure, it is still possible to make out significant cultural references to Giuseppe Cesari, also called the Cavalier d'Arpino; specifically, the similar detail painted in fresco by the Roman master in the Olgiati Chapel in the Church of Santa Prassede.

As could be already be deduced following the finding of the *Transfiguration of Christ*, our work, *St. Charles Borromeo Giving Alms to the Poor*, confirms the place of honour occupied by Giovanni Bernardino Azzolino in the realm of Neapolitan graphic work in the early 17th century. It is, in any event, pleasantly surprising to see that the work demonstrates the systematic use of drawing to carefully prepare a painting, in contrast with what the critical tradition was prepared to recognise in Parthenopean culture. This discovery confirms our hypothesis that the longstanding lack of care for artistic collections was the cause of the dispersal of graphic material that was originally similar to that which existed in other Italian cities.



Detail

This drawing will be explained and published shortly in a publication of mine currently in the process of being edited.

### Viviana Farina

*This text is a summary of a study in greater depth on the work.*

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### Beheading of St Barbara

c. 1616

Charcoal, brown ink wash, wash highlights

270 × 397 mm

PROVENANCE: Leipzig, Wilhem Campe collection, sold on 24 September 1827 with the seal of the Palace of Justice in Leipzig (Lugt 2731); Köln, Henrich Lempertz (Lugt 1337); France, private collection

Quentin Varin is the artist who best marks the transition between the painting of the second Fontainebleau School and that of the Simon Vouet period. After a supposed time spent in Italy, Varin settled in Amiens and sought his way in difficult times when commissions were rare and modest. He seems to have painted exclusively in Picardy and Normandy. The Les Andelys pictures dated 1612 mark a surprising evolution which would grow in the years to follow. He moved to Paris in 1616 and was connected with the learned and titled sphere of a royal patent. He did important commissions and from then on painted his finest canvases, showing through his great personality skills that enabled him to achieve a truly monumental quality. Quentin Varin was certainly the best painter in Paris until his premature death in 1626. There are still too many gaps in our knowledge of his paintings and even more of his drawings – only five so far – for us to be able to measure the importance of the discovery of this work.

The spectacular evolution of his style from the first signed works (1600) to the last Paris altarpieces inevitably affects his dedication to drawing over the twenty-six years of his career:

We owe to Dominique Cordellier the discovery of Varin's oldest drawing, the first idea for *The Martyrdom of St Vincent* from Les Andelys (1612). Although this drawing is quite different from the one conserved in the Louvre, it already contains many distinctive elements that are to be found even in his last compositions. The two paintings from Les Andelys, the martyrdoms of *St Clare* and *St Vincent*, with their preparatory sketches and ours, make up a coherent group when we compare the solid morphology of the figures and the violence of the gestures. This way of drawing – though it was to deviate after 1616 in contact with the work of Martin Fréminet – is still a constant when Varin deals with the figures with helmets, the muscular bodies, the curls of the hair, the elegant hands, the folds of the clothes and the characteristic position of the arms which we see in other compositions like the figure on the right in *The Wedding at Canaan* (1620).

Everything in this drawing is done with a knowledge, a mastery and a perfect virtuosity which allows us to date it around 1616 and to reconsider Quentin Varin as the most important artist in Paris at that time.

**Christophe Defrance**

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## Giovanni Battista Caracciolo (also called Battistello)

Naples, 1578-1635

### Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Cross

Brown ink on white paper

155 x 119 mm

Signed "Gio. Battistiello Caracciolo" (Father Sebastiano Resta)

PROVENANCE: Naples, collection of Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán, Seventh Marquis of El Carpio, Viceroy of Naples (1682-1687)

This work on paper is very similar in style and theme to a *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Symbols of the Passion* from one of the albums in which the Viceroy of Naples Gaspar de Haro, Seventh Marquis of El Carpio, organised his graphic work, thanks to the expert advice of Father Sebastiano Resta. The collection in fact consisted of 42 volumes bound in red and green morocco leather that filled shelves 42 to 49 of one of the bookshelves in the private rooms in the Viceroy's Palace in Naples.

The particular volume we are now referring to, a miscellany of graphic work by Italian and especially Neapolitan masters, was intact when it was sold at Christie's in London in March 1973. Originally comprising 103 pages – a calculation based on the consecutive numbering of the drawings – the volume consisted at the time of its sale of just 38 pages, together with a number of fragments of two other documents, which included 45 sheets from the Italian Cinquecento and Seicento, among them eleven by Aniello Falcone. The handwritten attributions and notes that appear in the margin of several drawings are believed to have been made by Father Sebastiano Resta, whose hand had only previously been recognised in the footnote of the *Study for Ruth and Boaz* by Aniello Falcone, a sheet acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (lot no. 35 at that time). According to a classification criterion that is somewhat inconsistent for a contemporary, *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Symbols of the Passion*, correctly assigned by the Oratorian priest to the Neapolitan, was on a *Rape of Europa* attributed to Perino del Vaga (Farina 2009, p. 355 and fig. 15).

Shortly after it was sold, the same sheet we are concerned with now was immediately published under the name of Caracciolo by W. Prohaska ("Beiträge zu Battistello Caracciolo", in *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, LXXIV, 1978, pp. 153-269: 168, fig. 142, 205, note 187).



# 5

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Gi. Battistello Caracciolo

The author also identified the hand of Resta in the note "Gio. Battistello Caracciolo", written at the foot of the *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Cross* referred to here (Farina, 2006. Also: V. Farina "La collezione del viceré: il marchese del Carpio, padre Sebastiano Resta e la prima raccolta ragionata di disegni napoletani", in *Le Dessin Napolitain*, Proceedings of the international colloquium [Paris, École Normale Supérieure, 6–8 March 2008], under the supervision of F. Solinas and S. Schütze, Rome, 2010, pp. 183-198: 190).

The two drawings demonstrate Caracciolo's interest in the particular iconography that illustrates the prefiguring of the death of Christ, though it seems it was not expressed in pictorial form.

Our work was published for the first time by Marina Causa Picone (1993, pp. 25-87: 52 and fig. 73). She indicates that José Milicua had a hand in the recompilation and points to the connections with the *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Symbols of the Passion* published by Prohaska. As a result, in the succinct catalogue note written as a coda to her essay (Causa Picone, 1993, p. 85), she states that the *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Cross* also comes from the collection of the Marquis of El Carpio.

Stefano Causa reiterates this information (2000, p. 153, cat. G3, 160, fig. 122), though without making reference to the documented origin of the *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Symbols of the Passion* in the collection of the Marquis of El Carpio (2000, p. 153, cat. G3; work not reproduced).

In reality, as I had occasion to communicate verbally to José Milicua in July 2006, it is only Resta's handwritten attributions on both drawings that make us seriously consider the possibility that the *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Cross* comes from the famous collection of the Viceroy of Naples and that it was found among the drawings removed from the volume before it was sold in London in 1973 (Farina, 2009, p. 362, note 99).

Marina Causa (1993, p. 52) determined that Battistello produced *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Cross* during the 1620s and 30s, and she specifically links it to the sheets referring to the later *Scenes from the Life of the Virgin* in the Chapel of the Assumption in the Charterhouse of San Martino in Naples (1631-1632: Causa, 2000, pp. 203-204, cat. A 112). The dating to the 1630s was confirmed by Ippolita di Majo (1999 [2000], pp. 182-194: 189).

In fact, it is not at all easy to establish Battistello's catalogue of graphic work in a well-reasoned manner given the barely perceptible variations in style between one drawing and another. I shall attempt to briefly explain why the dating suggested for the sheet we are concerned with probably ought to be revised.

The discussion stems from a second drawing hypothetically of El Carpio provenance, an *Annunciation* in a private collection in Naples. This work could possibly be included in the marquis' collection due to the handwritten attribution which, though the name given is wrong, I identified once again as being in the hand of Sebastiano Resta ("Cavalier Guarino": Farina, 2010, pp. 190-191, fig. 7). Marina Causa described this sheet as "perhaps chronologically more advanced" than the *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Cross* (Causa Picone, 1993, pp. 52-53, 85 and figure 75; Causa, 2000, p. 158, cat. G 108, fig. 122). As she indicated, there are similarities between the style of the *Annunciation* and that of two pictorial works that probably date from



Detail

Caracciolo's last period of activity: it could have constituted an initial idea for the *Annunciation* of the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, produced around 1630 (Causa, 2000, p. 201, cat. A102), and it could have been used for a similar painting done in fresco in the Chapel of the Assumption in the Charterhouse of San Martino, mentioned earlier. The complex system of the chaotic folds in the oil on the wall matches the drawing, as in the *Study of an Angel for the Annunciation*, correctly identified by Di Majo (1999, p. 189 and fig. 20) in the Tessin centre of the National Museum in Stockholm. This parallel in style cannot, to my mind, be found in the *Virgin and Child with an Angel Carrying the Cross*.

Characterised by the *retino incisorio* that Battistello took from the Neapolitan graphic tradition of Fabrizio Santafede and, above all, of Francesco Curia, the drawing is more elemental in its execution, which at least leaves open the possibility that it is an older example of Caracciolo's work. In short, the head of the Virgin, which easily connects with the world of Battistello, can indisputably be successfully compared with a pictorial theme as old as it is famous, namely the *Virgin and Child with the Infant St. John the Baptist* in the Prior's Room in the Charterhouse of San Martino, dating from around 1610, from the representation of the Mother and Child, reminiscent of Raphael, to the shading that leaves the face surrounded by darkness.

### Viviana Farina

*This text is a summary of a study in greater depth on the work.*

## Salvator Rosa

Naples, 1615–Rome, 1673

### Study of three heads and a caricature

1638–1640

Red pencil, pen and brown ink on white paper

178 × 130 mm

Fold marks on the sheet. Inscription on the back in pen and ink: "C... Incluso a esos Monsù Pusin / Les animo a ver esta cabeza de arte" (handwritten).

Watermark: polygonal coat of arms with a crown on top

An anonymous work from a private collection, this valuable folio, irrefutably Neapolitan in attribution, has features that take us back in time, specifically to the legacy of José de Ribera and Aniello Falcone. Those two artists are the poles of the training of another celebrated master born and trained in Naples: Salvator Rosa. As we will recount in more detail, this work on paper may mean a new incorporation into the catalogue of drawings of his youth.

The male profile that appears on the upper part of the drawing, done with pen and ink, is a clear and genuine tribute to the repertoire of grotesque heads in which Ribera was outstanding. In the extreme confidence of the touch and the precision of the straight oblique line that crosses the left part of the silhouette we can recognise the personal interpretation of Ribera's style by Rosa.

The reference model could coincide with the *Grotesque head of a man with a hood in left profile*, a drawing by the Spanish artist known since 1984, and more recently in the New York art market (fig. 1; Farina 2014a, p. 225, note 132, with bibliography; Farina 2014b, pp. 473–474, note 10). It has been demonstrated that Salvator Rosa himself used this artistic genre, at least since the *Grotesque portrait of a man in left profile and half length*, a beautiful pen and ink plate in the Cabinet of Drawings and Etchings at the Uffizi (inv. 2236F; fig. 2), whose attribution is particularly reinforced with a second work in the same museum (inv. I 2022; Mahoney 1977, cat. no. 20.12; fig. 3): *Two heads of mature men, a bearded man seen from the front and the other grotesque in left profile*. It is a drawing done in red pencil, signed "Rosa" and dated, although at a later date than that of the companion piece in the Uffizi mentioned above. He must have done the *Grotesque portrait of a man in left profile and half length* (fig. 2) at the end of the 1630s, bearing in mind Lo Spagnoletto's lesson, as in the caricatures by Gian Lorenzo Bernini to which Salvatore seems to be alluding, especially for the stylised lines of the neck and the blouse worn by the man portrayed.

The dating of the drawing corresponds to the historical circumstances of Rome in the summer of 1639, according to the biographer Giovan Battista Passeri, there present, who recounts the contrast between Rosa, devoted to the improvisation of comedies, as he did in the Carnival of that same year 1639, and Bernini's theatrical *entourage* (to reconstruct the events, Farina, 2010, pp. 32-33).





The same chronology applies at the end of the fourth decade of the Seicento to the work we have here, *Study of three heads and a caricature*. The suggestive force of Ribera's red pencil is softened in the line by Aniello Falcone's pictorial sense, as we can perceive especially in the bony head and wrinkled neck, as well as the expressive power of the gaze of the mature man, whom we see turning three-quarters towards the young man to his right. Stylistic features that could correspond to a relatively early phase of Rosa's activity, still closely linked to his years in Naples, although they already show an interpretative maturity that leads us to attribute this drawing to the high point of Rosa's first stable and lasting stay in Rome, between 1638 and 1640. Moreover, the inscription we can see on the back of the drawing, to which we will refer later, leads to the same chronological hypothesis.

The male typology referred to, which here specifically shows Rosa's free reinterpretation of Leonardo, is often found in his repertoire, with occasional variations in the age of the figure chosen: angular face, high cheekbones, more or less square jaw, mouth marked by a cut in the middle. The attribution of this folio is irrefutable, for example, if we compare it with the younger individual portrayed in another graphic example from the Uffizi (inv. 12115F; Mahoney 1977, cat. 20.28; fig. 4), done in this case with pen, brown ink and brown watercolour on a base of black pencil; signed "Rosa", it is a *Triple study of heads*, the third cut off above the eyebrows, which for its style we date in the artist's first years in Florence (1640–1645). We find a variant of the same physiognomy in the old man represented full face in another graphic example from the Uffizi (inv. 2231; Mahoney 1977, cat. 25.10; fig. 5): *Study of two male heads and one female head and a study for St Sebastian*. That definition, which recalls Ribera, has not contributed to a correct attribution so far: indeed, in my opinion it is a new incorporation into the catalogue of the drawings of Francesco Fracanzano, Rosa's brother-in-law and an important reference for his "Riberesque" training. This work from the Uffizi refers to his creations; first, the man with spectacles, who can be related to the *Poet crowned with laurel with a trumpet and old man with spectacles* ("Aristide di Bineo"), in the British Museum (inv. 1965.0410.1; fig. 6); that drawing is traditionally related to Fracanzano, as I have already argued, in the period 1635–1645, precisely because of the cultural coincidences with Rosa (Farina 2012, p. 10 and fig. 18). Moreover, in the *Study of two male heads and one female head and a study for St Sebastian* (fig. 5) the execution of both the saint and the woman's head do not seem to coincide with the commonest features of style in Rosa.

However, it is more difficult to find a worthy parallel with the sketched head, with lighter workmanship, which in the *Study of three heads and a caricature* emerges from below in a diagonal, offering the left profile. The deep socket of the eye and the hooked nose, together with the hair on the crown of the head which we imagine is thick and untidy, allow us to suppose that it is a sketch for a witch's head. We cannot know whether the artist conceived this sketch according to the two main heads, although they are engaged in an exchange that brings out their relation.

Furthermore, the young man, who is looking into the old man's eyes and opening his mouth to speak, is the most interesting thing in the whole drawing. Indeed, what seems irrefutable, and also surprising, in this work is that, in terms of technical execution, it recalls the young protagonist of a famous creation by Annibale Carracci. I am referring to the drawing *Monkey on a boy's shoulders and study for a monkey's head* (London, British Museum, inv. Ff, 2, 115; fig. 7), one of the ones related to *Man with monkey*, a work in the Uffizi dated 1588–1590 (Posner 1971, II, fig. 58a; about the drawing, see D. Benati in Bologna-Rome, cat. no. IV.24, and cat. no. IV.23). I conclude that Salvator Rosa must have seen that work of Carracci's in Rome and created almost a replica /variant of it.

We are also taken to Rome by the inscription that appears on the back of the drawing. From its content and the crease in the paper, it seems evident that the drawing was deliberately folded in two and sent as a letter for Nicolas Poussin to see. Indeed, the text, originally part of a longer one as indicated by the word that has remained incomplete and can be seen in the upper left margin of the paper, reads: "C... Incluso a esos Monsù Pusin / Les animo a ver esta cabeza de arte". We can state with fair certainty that the writing is in the hand of Salvator Rosa, and that the phrase refers to his purpose to show his creation to Poussin through an unknown intermediary. It is clear that by defining it as "cabeza de arte (head of art)" Rosa was attributing special value to his work and may have been referring to a successful representation of the human expression rather than the technical mastery demonstrated.

If we appraise once again the stylistic and chronological data already set out, and we remember that Nicolas Poussin arrived in Rome in 1624, that he only left the city for the period 1640-1642 and that he remained there until his death, it is logical to deduce that the folio in question dates from before 1640. At the end of that year Rosa left the city too and went to Florence, and it is difficult to believe that he would have sent the drawing to Poussin from Florence to Rome after 1642, at a time when he was concentrating as never before on fully integrating himself into the Florentine artistic milieu.

The drawing had already been presented at the international studies colloquium *Les Carracci, l'autre voie de la modernité* (Paris, INHA, 27 October 2014), organised by the Association des Historiens de l'Art Italien in association with the Louvre Museum, in a talk entitled *I Carracci e Napoli: echi nelle opere di Ribera, Falcone e Rosa* (Farina, at press).

### Viviana Farina

*This text is a summary of a study in greater depth on the work.*

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## Sebastián de Herrera Barnuevo

Madrid, 1619–1671

### The Dormition of Mary Magdalene

c. 1650–1660

Brown ink with pen and wash

83 × 180 mm

PROVENANCE: Amsterdam, Jan Baptist Graaf collection (1742-1804), with dry seal on the edge of the montage (Lugt, 1120); New York, Suida Manning collection; France, private collection

Since Harold Wethey's publications, knowledge of the work of Sebastián de Herrera Barnuevo has been considerably enriched with the contributions of B. Navarrete Prieto, A. Díaz García and Zahira Véliz, who has distinguished his drawings from those of Alonso Cano, his master. Like Cano, Herrera, who was architect, painter and sculptor, was appointed court painter to Carlos II and had a brilliant career.

In 2001, Benito Navarrete published the preparatory version of our drawing. Done with a pen as rapid as it is inspired, it achieves on a small surface area the full tragic intensity of Mary Magdalene's journey to heaven. This small sheet can be easily related with another similar technical study which Z. Véliz distinguished from the Cano corpus to attribute it to Herrera Barnuevo. Later this *Triumph of Apollo* has been related to the projects of the Guadalajara gate for the entrance of Marianne of Austria into Madrid in 1649.

To return to our drawing, in the general layout of the preparatory sketch we can observe a variant concerning the *putti* placed alongside the Magdalene, about to take flight with the urn that contains the saint's spirit. Here Herrera uses a thick pen for the figures and reliefs of the rocks and a finer one for the details with (as usual with this artist) a carefully applied wash. For its closeness to the drawings mentioned above, it seems possible to determine a date between 1650 and 1660 for this unpublished work.

#### Christophe Defrance

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## Guillaume Courtois, Guglielmo Cortese called Il Borgognone

Saint-Hyppolite, 1628–Rome, 1679

### Satyr Gazing at a Bunch of Grapes

c. 1660

Sanguine, chalk highlights and white wash

290 x 425 mm

PROVENANCE: France, private collection

Arriving as a very young man in Rome in 1639-1640 with his older brother Jacques, from 1647 Guglielmo trained in Pietro da Cortona's studio and was influenced by him for a time. He gradually affirmed his own style working for Prince Camillo Pamphilj on the decorations for Piazza Navona Palace in 1650-1655 and, three years later, for Valmontone Palace. Shortly afterwards Bernini, who had noticed his talent, turned to Cortese for the decorations of the churches which he conceived and whose building works he supervised.

Our drawing is fairly close to the one conserved in Rome –*Recumbent Man Leaning on his Elbow*, INPG, FC 126870, vol. 157 H–, although it can be distinguished from it by its exceptional size and finish. The drawing in Rome which S. Proserpi Valenti Rodino dates around 1658-1659 is related to the Valmontone frescos. In both drawings we can observe a singular finish through the accurate placing of white lines to highlight the volumes. Our drawing is signed and Cortese further refined the highlights by superimposing white wash and chalk. The mesh of shadows that covers the whole work and the presence of Borgognone's signature clearly show that this drawing cannot be preparatory; it is a work perfectly independent from any project and may be considered a demonstration of his virtuosity as a draftsman, an artist who today, with Ciro Ferri, is considered the most talented of Pietro da Cortona's students.

Christophe Defrance

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## Giovanni Battista Piranesi

Mogliano Veneto, 1720–Rome, 1778

### Man standing, seen in profile, examining a small object in his hands

c. 1760

Pen and brown ink on a fragment of a design for the cover of the work *Trofei di Ottaviano Augusto innalzati per la vittoria ad Actium e conquista dell'Egitto* (1753)

140 x 68 mm

For Piranesi, the drawing was a laboratory where he found ideas and formulae which he incorporated into his magnificent work as an engraver. The work we are looking at is related to a series of pen drawings from the mid 1760s.

The standing figure, with his hands joined and holding a small object, may be related to one of the figures that appears in the engraving of the remains of the so-called Canopo at Villa Adriana in Tivoli, done in 1760-1778.

The ink drawing is done on a laid paper support, a fragment of the cover of a series of engravings by Piranesi, *Trofei di Ottaviano Augusto innalzati per la vittoria ad Actium e conquista dell'Egitto*, published for the first time in 1753; that is indicated in red ink by the letters of the Roman numerals. Three other studies of figures in charcoal, which belonged to the Robert van Hirsch collection, were done in fragments of another test for the same engraving; one of them, like the sample here, shows the printed date "MDCCLIII".

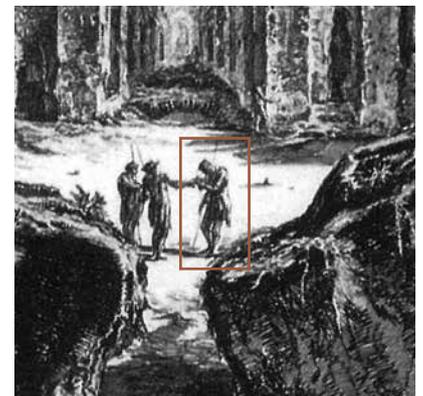
We would like to thank Dr. Andrew Robinson, who has confirmed the attribution verbally.

Artur Ramon

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## Pablo Picasso

Malaga, 1881-Mougins, France, 1973

### Four Nudes

1905

Indian ink and pen

290 × 310 mm

#### Bibliography

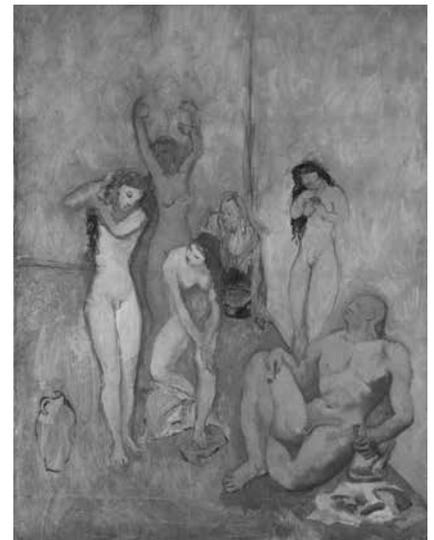
Zervos, Christian. *Pablo Picasso. Vol. 22. Supplément aux années 1903–1906*, rep. p. 64, cat. no. 183.

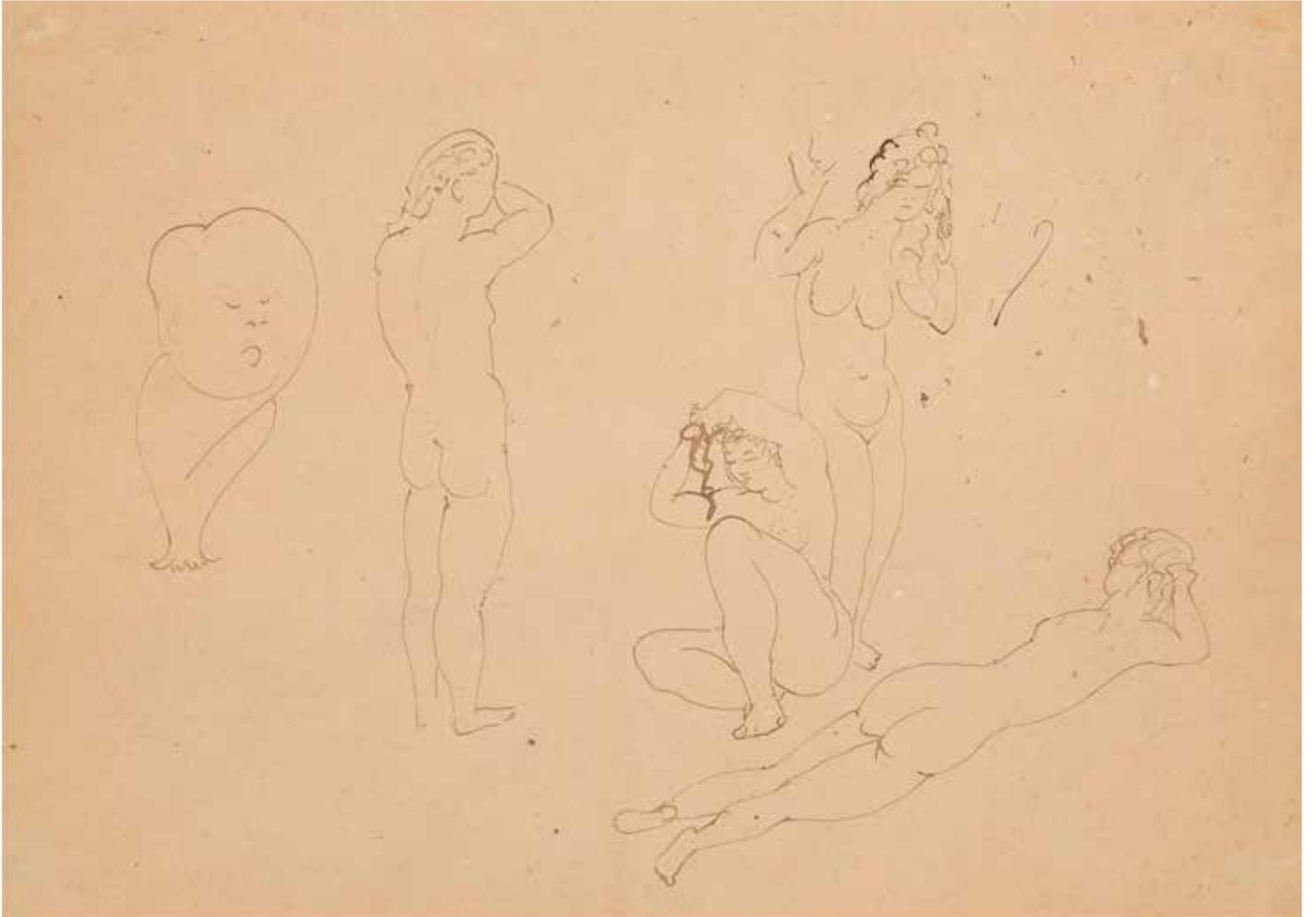
The drawing that is the subject of this commentary comes from one of the young Picasso's most creative years, 1905, the start of his Rose Period. This was a time that brought Picasso, with all his curiosity, together with the artistic and intellectual world that developed at Le Bateau-Lavoir. There he met Max Jacob, Leo and Gertrude Stein, Fernande Olivier, his first wife, and in particular Guillaume Apollinaire, a poet he admired. Apollinaire's first visit to Picasso's studio was a revelation for both of them: the poet was captivated by the harlequins and Picasso's sad, rose world, while the painter was overcome by Apollinaire's lyrical genius.

In thin lines and brown ink, Picasso drew four nude women, all busy doing their hair. Absorbed in their task, they do not look at the spectator; they are figures whose visual referents are in life and painting, which for Picasso were one and the same. From life he took the brothel scenes that he drew and painted from his bohemian days in fin-de-siècle Barcelona and in Paris in 1900. As for painting, he observed Ingres's odalisques, visual orgies with milky skin, and Cézanne's women naked in the countryside. A caricaturesque figure apparently unrelated to the group bursts in strangely from the left: it is the head of a fat man with the body of a fish, his eyes closed and his mouth grimacing in disgust. This must be a joke on Picasso's part aimed at one of his friends from that time, the ultimate meaning of which we do not know; perhaps it represents a sad and abandoned spermatozoon. In concept, this drawing is related to one of the key works from the artist's Rose Period, *The Harem* (1906), painted while he was in Gòsol in the Pyrenees. Picasso drew his inspiration from the body of his wife, Fernande Olivier, and from *The Turkish Bath* by Ingres, which he viewed on numerous occasions in the Louvre. In technique, it is connected with various pen drawings – such as *Three Women in an Interior* and *Apollinaire Smoking a Pipe* – that Picasso produced compulsively during these years; ideas that were developed in the laboratory of drawing, which always came before that of painting. We find the same round-headed grotesque figure, half baby, half old man, in some of these drawings, as in the caricatures and portraits of Apollinaire, Paul Fort, Jean Moréas, Fernande Olivier, André Salmon and Henri Delormel.

A year after producing this work, Picasso made his name with a painting that not only determined his future but also that of the history of western painting, *Les Femmes d'Alger*. A seminal work that marked a turning point and was the seed of Cubism, which, oddly, also developed within the walls of a whorehouse on the street from which it takes its name in the old quarter of Barcelona.

Artur Ramon





## Salvador Dalí

Figueres, 1904–1989

### Allegory

1958

Watercolour, sepia and gouache

660 × 661 mm

Signed and dated Dalí / 1958

Certified by Robert Descharnes (Paris, 19 January 1990; D-I 503/674)

Salvador Dalí was an artist who returned obsessively to the same themes, and so some of his works are variations on a single score. The one we are presenting, a drawing in a generous format done in gouache and highlighted with sepia, is a sample of his work process. Dated 1958, it is related to the large pieces in which he reinterpreted Piero della Francesca's *Brera Madonna*.

In the first version of *The Madonna of Portlligat* (1949, Haggerty Museum, Milwaukee) we can already see his obsession with the folds of fabrics, which he eventually expressed in his definitive version (c. 1950), an oil on canvas of extraordinary dimensions, 275.3 by 209.8 cm (Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan). In later paintings he also used his model Gala Madonna, whom he depicts in *St Helen in Portlligat* (c. 1956) and in his great work *The Ecumenical Council* (1960), both in the Dalí Museum (St. Petersburg, Florida).

In our *Allegory*, Dalí focuses on the body of this classical sculpture and leaves the head unworked. He is interested in lingering over the sculptural aspects of the image, and the figure in white with flowing garments stands out against an ochre background, whilst with small lines of sepia ink, as if they were musical notes, he completes the anatomy and endows it with volume. Behind this idea is Piero, yes, but also Michelangelo's *Pietà*. On the back are the labels of the major retrospectives dedicated to Dalí at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (1979) and at the Tate Gallery in London the following year (cat. no. 223), which consolidated his fame on the international scene.

Artur Ramon





## Giovanni Battista Caracciolo, known as Battistello

Naples, 1578–1635

### St Barbara

c. 1630

Oil on panel

59 x 53 cm

PROVENANCE: acquired in Madrid in 1950. Since then in private collections (Barcelona and Bilbao)

A work well known to historiography, this St Barbara is an exquisite piece that shows the finest qualities of Giovanni Battista Caracciolo, Battistello, the first and most faithful of Caravaggio's Neapolitan followers. As De Dominicis says, "Caravaggio's manner had a deep impact on his imaginary". This work makes a pair with *St Cecilia* (or *Saint Praying*) in the Museo San Telmo in San Sebastián, which has the same compositional idea, measurements and oval shape.

The formula of the head comes from Reni's devotional solutions and the "beautiful turning of the eyes" (De Dominicis) from Niobe's sensual gaze, which captivated the artists of his generation. With eyes turned to heaven and lips parted to allow a glimpse of the ivory white of her teeth, the saint is presented in a mystical ecstasy, a current that runs through the *Seicento*, from Santa Teresa de Jesús to Bernini. Her hair stands out, alternating zones of strands and tresses with the sensual curl that runs down her neck, like a hook in transition with the red tunic. The hands raised in prayer form a triangle, a new space in the composition, and have echoes of the best Antonello. Behind stands the tower, the saint's attribute.

The origin of this pair before reaching Spain is unknown. The *St Cecilia* arrived at the San Sebastián museum through the Artistic Recovery Services, whilst our *St Barbara* was in the Madrid market in 1950, when it was acquired by the father of the current owner. Since then it has been part of her private collection in Bilbao and Barcelona.

The work is related to *The Assumption of the Virgin* in the San Martino Museum in Naples, which dates from 1631. In that painting Battistello shows himself to be faithful to his ideas: the clean polish of the flesh like enamel, the spherical volume of the faces ... A taste more Bolognese than Neapolitan, not shared by the painting of Ribera, which was all the rage at that time, marked by a starker descriptive naturalism that seeks the marks on the skin. This was the current that became dominant with painters such as the Master of the *Announcement to the Shepherds* and Bernardo Cavallino.

Artur Ramon

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Causa, S. "Santa Barbara", Naples 1991, p. 251.

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## Andrea De Lione

Naples, 1610–1685

### Still Life

Oil on canvas

41 x 62.5 cm

Signed on the upper right part

### Bibliography

Zeri, Federico. “Andrea De Lione e la Natura Morta”, in *Scritti di Storia dell’Arte in onore di Raffaello Causa*. Electa Napoli, Naples, 1988, p. 207, figs. 7, 8 and 9.

This superb and rare still life by Andrea de Lione was a major discovery. It was acquired as anonymous in a private collection in Mallorca, but during the cleaning process the signature appeared clearly on the upper part. Professor Federico Zeri –one of the leading art critics of modern Italy– published it and the work entered a private collection of Spanish still lifes, from which it comes now.

The painting depicts a still life with late summer fruit: bunches of grapes of different shapes and colours which are mixed in a cascade on the table, between pomegranates, two figs and two white roses. On the left we see a dead partridge, on a pedestal an owl with its eyes wide open; beside it a pear; in the background a wicker basket. The composition is as colourful as it is symmetrical; an ordered chaos where the vine leaves, of a bluish green hue, stand out, recalling the ones Caravaggio painted in his *Basket with Fruit* in the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana in Milan.

As Federico Zeri notes, the fact that the preparation of the picture is white and not reddish, as was De Lione’s custom, and the excellent state of conservation of the painting endow the whole with an air of extraordinary freshness and liveliness. Moreover, above and beyond the repeated models and formulae, De Lione shows that he is observing what he paints: the fruit and the living and dead animals.

This is the only known still life signed by Andrea De Lione.

**Artur Ramon**





## Juan Gris

Madrid, 1887–Boulogne-Billancourt, 1927

### The Letter

1921

Oil on panel

28 × 22 cm

Dated and signed "Juan Gris / 7-21" on the upper left part

PROVENANCE: Galerie Simon, Paris (stock number K. 6738); Dr. Gottlieb Friedrich Reber collection (1880-1959), Lausanne, 1925; Eberhard W. Kornfeld collection, Berne  
EXHIBITIONS: *Juan Gris*. Galerie Simon, Paris, 20 March-5 April 1923, no. 17. Catalogue written by Maurice Raynal

### Bibliography

Cooper, Douglas. *Juan Gris. Catalogue raisonné de l'œuvre peint*. Paris, 1977, rep. p. 184, cat. no. 373.

Juan Gris (the pseudonym of José Victoriano González) was a key figure in the gestation and evolution of the Cubist movement. His work focused on a reworking of the analytic and hermetic Cubism of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, a fundamental Copernican turn in 20th century art. Cubism meant the annulment of two basic concepts on which Western painting had been based since the Renaissance: the unity of time and the unity of space. The picture is organised from a new space-time order autonomously instituted by the artist himself, who is free to fragment, to juxtapose, to omit or to introduce simultaneity at will, according to his experience of things.

Whilst Picasso and Braque delved deeper into that seam for years until they exhausted and abandoned it, Gris devoted the whole of his short life to it. He made Cubism the reason for being of his work, a religion he dedicated himself to with enthusiasm and seriousness, constructing a new art that was to rediscover the pictorial qualities of ancient art, understanding that to be the classical tradition of French painting. The work we are presenting was done in July 1921. It appeared in the monographic exhibition at Galerie Simon, the art dealer Daniel H. Kahnweiler's new gallery, held in the spring of 1923 with 54 paintings and a number of drawings, among them this one. The text for the catalogue was written by Maurice Raynal, who at the time had also published his famous article "Juan Gris et la métaphore plastique" in *Feuilles Libres*. Many of its fundamental ideas would later be collected by Raynal in the chapter on Gris in his book *Anthologie de la peinture en France de 1906 à nos jours* (Paris, 1927).

"I work with the elements of the spirit, with imagination, I try to make concrete what is abstract, I go from the general to the particular, which means that I start from an abstraction to reach a real event. My art is an art of synthesis; a deductive art as Raynal says. I consider that the architectural side of painting is mathematics, the abstract side; I want to humanise it [...]". Juan Gris, "Déclaration personnelle", in *L'Esprit Nouveau*, Paris, no. 5, 1921, p. 534.

Our painting was acquired by Dr. Gottlieb Friedrich Reber (Lage, Lippe, 1880-Lausanne 1959), a German textile magnate and art collector who, after the First World War, focused his attention almost exclusively on Cubism. In 1929 he was considered one of the most prominent collectors of the movement; he was the owner of some two hundred paintings, sculptures and works on paper by Georges Braque, Juan Gris, Fernand Léger and Pablo Picasso.

Later the work went into the collection of Eberhard W. Kornfeld, one of the best Swiss gallery owners of his time.

### Artur Ramon



