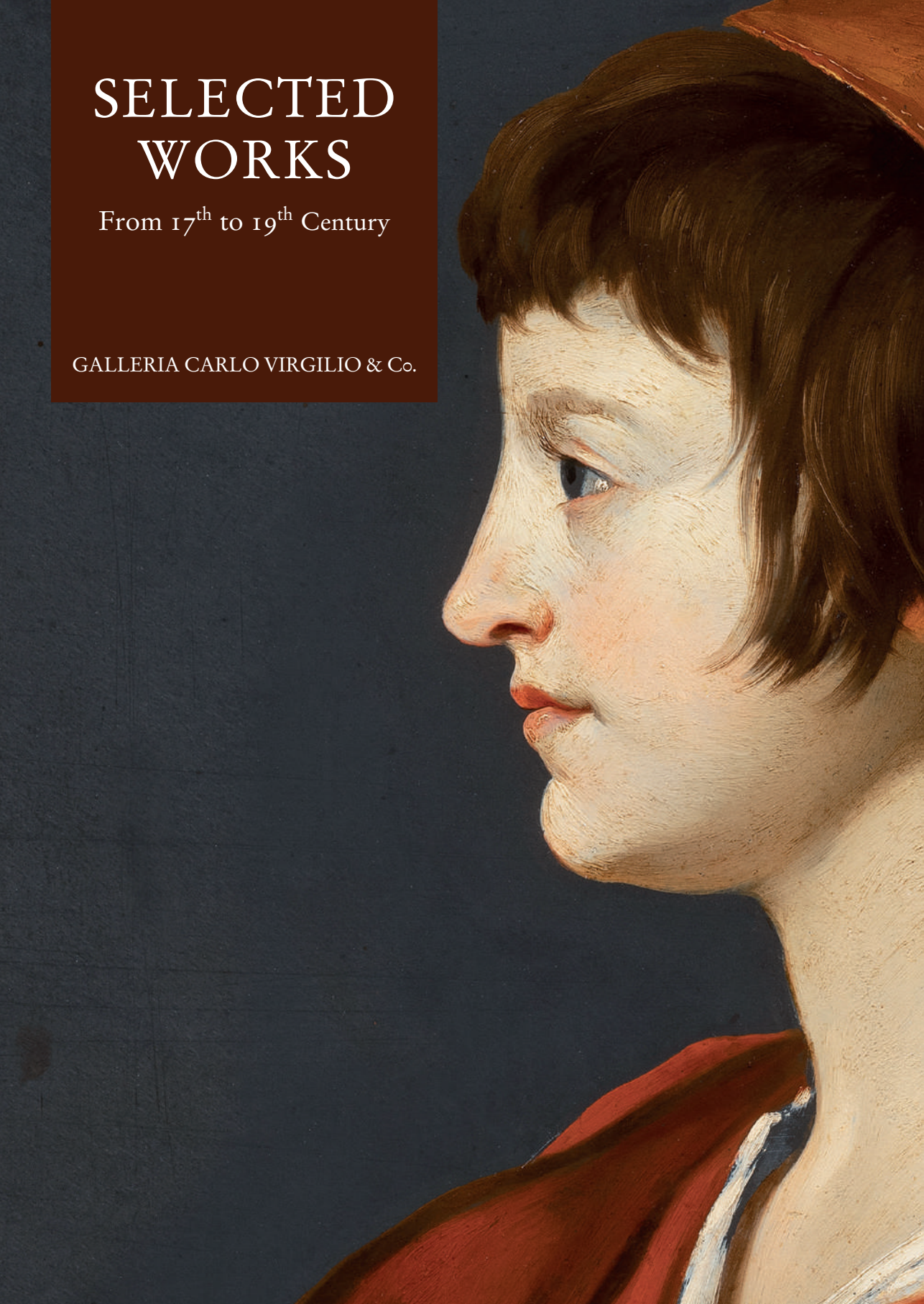
SELECTED WORKS

From 17th to 19th Century

GALLERIA CARLO VIRGILIO & Co.



GALLERIA CARLO VIRGILIO & Co.

Arte antica moderna e contemporanea

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From 17th to 19th Century

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Catalogue

1. Matthias Stom

Netherlands, ca. 1600-Northern Italy (?), post 1645

Incredulity of St. Thomas

ca. 1635-1638

Oil on canvas, 99.5 × 74.5 cm

Provenance: Rome, private collection

Caravaggesque theme par excellence – Merisi's famous prototype, today in Potsdam, was taken on as the manifesto of his pictorial method, based on the restitution of the sacred and mythological to the condition of "natural thing", in other words imbued with a quotidian dimension, experienced directly (cfr. Most 2005; Bologna 2006) – this *Incredulity of St. Thomas* is a vigorous and, as far as we know, unpublished work by Matthias Stom.

The authorship of the great Dutch painter, last protagonist of the Caravaggesque movement in Europe, is immediately apparent; comparisons with Stom's production of Christological subjects, for the most part set in candle light, are so specific as to make any other proof superfluous.

The painter's vast oeuvre, still awaiting rigorous cataloguing after the initial monographic works by Benedict Nicolson (1977; 1990, pp. 179-188), so far included three versions of the pericope that recounts the doubts and resistance of the apostle Thomas faced with the risen Christ, taken from the Fourth Gospel (20, 27-28): the canvas at the Prado (inv. P002094; Posada Kubissa 2009, pp. 136-138, no. 53) (fig. 2), the most famous of all, vertically developed like the work in question; an exact replica was in Giorgio Franciosi's collection in Rome: *Caravaggio en de Nederlanden* 1952, p. 45, no. 65); and two more, with horizontal layouts, one in a private collection in Bergamo, (reproduced in *L'eredità di Caravaggio* 2018, pp. 42-45, no. 9; from which however, there emerges harshness and simplifications typical of a copy), the other, at the Fondazione Brescia Musei, (R. Contini, in *Serodine e brezza caravaggesca* 2012, pp. 132-133, no. 18). Perplexities have been advanced with respect to the authenticity of this last and probably older work, which can most likely be explained by conservational damage.

The version discussed here, in excellent condition, stands out from the others for its more concentrated and intimate style, as though the inspection of the wound in Christ's side were a truly personal and incommunicable experience; besides Christ, there are only two other figures and it is hard to make out the features of Thomas, whose profile is in deep shadow.

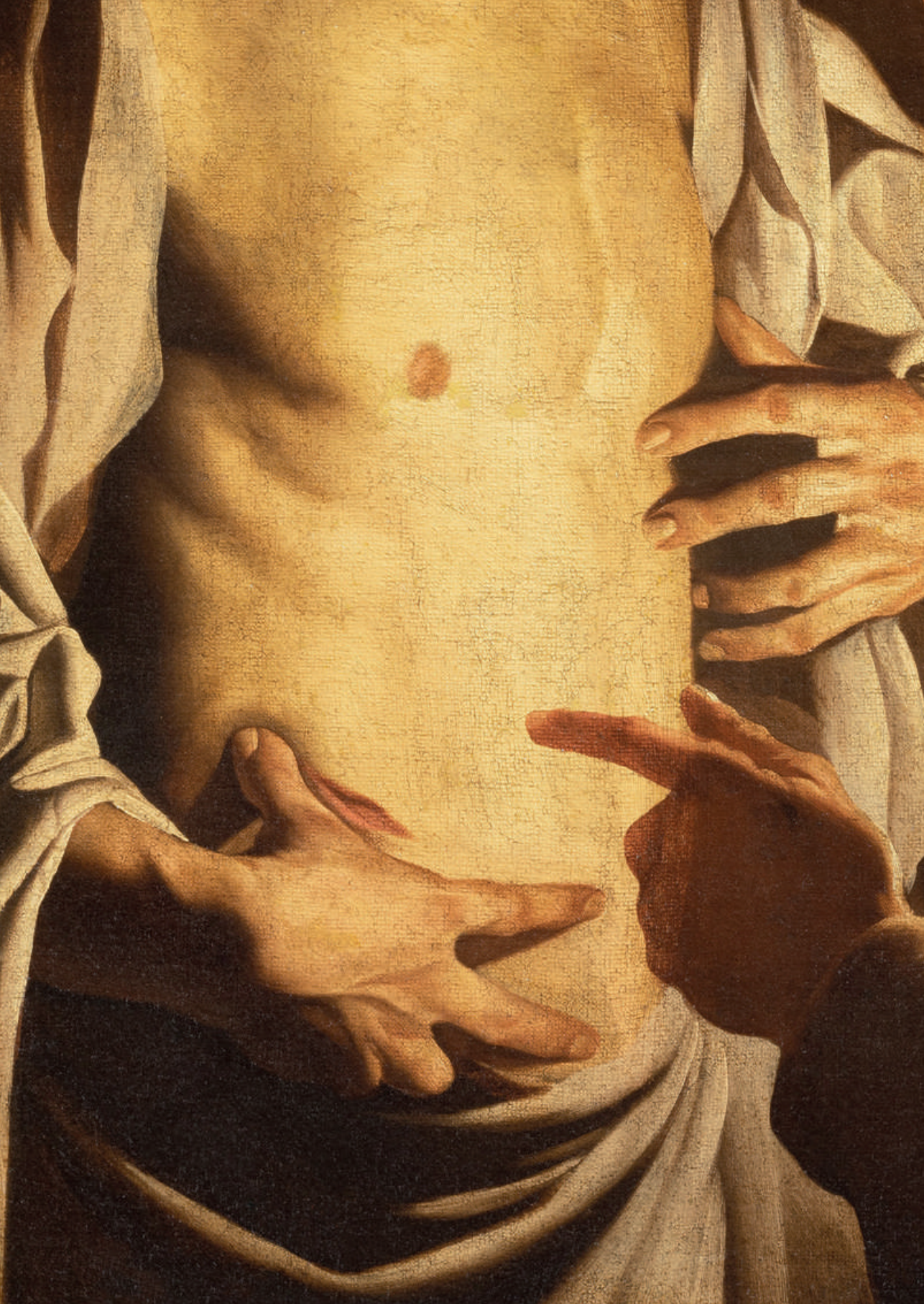
While, as we have said, attribution poses no problem, as usual the painting's chronology is more difficult to ascertain given the author's strongly standardised language: the execution certainly points at Stom's southern phase, although it is trickier to work out the exact moment, there being no clear separation between his Neapolitan and Sicilian production (the latter, according to the most recent documentary research, being quite short, between 1640 and 1643; for an updated biography see Porzio 2017, pp. 5-18); the more compressed format with respect to the monumental and baroque compositions carried out on the island, as well as the similarity of physiognomic types and warm luminous atmosphere with the series of canvases donated in 1635 to the Church of Sant'Efremo Nuovo in Naples – now divided, in their core nucleus, between Museo di Capodimonte (fig. 1) and Pinacoteca Metropolitana in Bari – (M. Santucci, in *Museo e gallerie nazionali di Capodimonte* 2016, pp. 97-99; cfr. also Osnabrugge 2019, pp. 181-187, mistaking however *Supper at Emmaus* illustrated here [inv. Q 667] with the other, inv. Q 197) - suggest the fourth decade of the seventeenth century, which is to say in the middle of Stom's sojourn in Naples. Moreover, "A S[aint] Thomas

1. Matthias Stom, *Supper at Emmaus*, detail, Naples, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte

touching the side of Our Lord by the light of night, by the hand of Matteo Romar [*sic*] 4 palms [*sc.* circa 1m] with gilded engraved frame", is registered in the city in 1699 among the assets bequeathed by the juristconsult, originally from Amalfi, Pompilio Gagliano (Labrot, Delfino 1992, doc. 41, p. 198, no. 52).

Giuseppe Porzio

2. Matthias Stom, *Incredulity of St. Thomas*, Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado



2. Jacobus Agnesius from Calvi (Giacomo Agnesi)

Presumed to be active in Corsica and Liguria in the 1630s

Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence

ca. 1630

Four pieces ivory group on base (h. 13 cm) and column in ebony and tortoiseshell on silver foil, 61.2 × 43.8 × 23.5 cm; *Angel* h. 19 cm; *Saint Lawrence* h. 25.5 cm; *Torturer* on left h. 26 cm; *Torturer* on right h. 25.5 cm

Provenance: Italy, important Italian noble family collection

This ivory group, mounted on an ebony and tortoiseshell structure, coeval but perhaps not the intended original, portrays the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence (225-258 a.D.) in a scenographic manner full of *pathos*. The saint was a young archdeacon under Pope Sixtus II, victim of the edict of Emperor Valerian: according to hagiographic tradition, Lawrence was killed on 10 August, at 33 years of age, burnt alive on a gridiron.

The figure of the saint dominates the scene; he is depicted as young and muscular, caught in a moment of intense suffering, while in a spasm of pain that tenses up his body he cries out and raises his arm to heaven. Two torturers stand near him: the one to the left, with typically oriental

1. Jacobus Agnesius, *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew,* Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec

facial features and hairstyle (beardless, long moustache and hair), revives the fire while his companion sadistically pushes a fork through the martyr's ribcage. As a delicate counterpoint to the violence of the scene the small figure of the angel appears above the column on a cloud with rays, perhaps there to gather the saint's *animula* (soul).

In the current arrangement the group is structured on a horizontal and prevalently frontal axis, although it is possible that the torturer on the right, placed in line with the figure of Lawrence and balancing precariously on one knee, was originally mounted in a slightly different position. From a technical point of view, as is normal in the art of ivory and wooden sculpture, all the figures are constructed from several pieces.

There is no doubt that the work stands as a masterpiece in the rich production of ivory sculptural groups and, more frequently, of single statuettes that flourished in Europe at the end of the XVIth century and the first half of the XVIIth. A field that is generally considered the preserve of masters in the Germanic, Austrian and Northern European area, a collection of exceptionally skilful artists both from a truly technical point of view and from one of invention. Masters of the skill that stand out, just to recall the most famous, are Leonhard Kern (Forchtenberg 1588-Schwäbisch Hall 1662), Georg Petel (Weilheim in Oberbayern 1601/1602-Augsburg 1633/1634), Adam Lenckhardt (Würzburg 1610-Vienna 1661), and the anonymous but not less astonishing Master of the Furies and the Master of the Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, thought by experts to be both of Austrian origin, and the Master of Guadalcanal, who was either Spanish or Genoese.

In Italy, besides Rome, Venice, Florence – from where Francesco Fanelli hailed (Florence 1577-*post* 1662), who also sculpted in ivory – and Naples, from where Kern set sail on a Florentine galley on his voyage to Mauritania perhaps for

2. Jacobus Agnesius, *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew,* Remagen, Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck

3. Jacobus Agnesius, *Flagellation of Christ*, detail, whereabouts unknown

4. Jacobus Agnesius, *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew*, detail, Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec

the purpose of procuring ivory, Genoa was an important, if not famed, centre for ivory sculpture in the XVI[th] and XVII[th] centuries (Schmidt 2013, pp. 19, 21).
This phenomenon, picked up on only recently by critics (Ibidem), must nonetheless have been of reasonable magnitude; possibly attached to the 'Arte dei bancalari' (carpenters' guild) from a point of view of corporative organisation (Sanguineti 2013, pp. 156, 187), harbingers can be traced in the activity of Filippo Santacroce from Urbino, who worked in Genoa from 1569 to 1607 and also carved ivory (Sanguineti 2013[b], pp. 129, 446-448; Sanguineti 2017, p. 332), but it was then Domenico Bissoni (Bissone [Lugano], *ante* 1574-Genoa 1637; Magnani 1992, pp. 291-292; E. D. Schmidt in *Diafane Passioni* 2013, pp. 190-191 cat. 52; Sanguineti 2013[b], pp. 135-140, 390-392; A. Bacchi in *A taste for sculpture* 2014, pp. 14-19 cat. 3; Sanguineti 2017[b], p. 16), wood sculptor of Lombard origin, and his son Giovan Battista (Genoa?, first decade of the XVII[th] century– Genoa 1657; E. D. Schmidt in *Diafane Passioni* 2013, pp. 192-193 cat. 53; Sanguineti 2013[b], pp. 152-159, 392-393), who distinguished themselves in the carving of ivory, as the biographer Raffaele Soprani informs us (1674, pp. 199-200, 329-330). Furthermore, in 1622 the abovementioned Georg Petel was also operating in Genoa (Ibidem, pp. 320-321; P. Boccardo in *Diafane Passioni* 2013, pp. 180-181 cat. 48; Sanguineti 2013[b], pp. 140-142, 438-439).
There were many masters of ivory carving active in Genoa from XVII[th] to XIX[th] centuries, whose activity and also often identity await accurate reconstruction.
The mysterious Jacobus Agnesius, of

whom we have three signed ivories (*Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew*, Albi, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec (fig. 1); *Crucifix*, Calvi [Corsica], church of Sainte-Marie-Majeure; *Crucifix*, formerly London, Sotheby's 2015, lot 167 [fig. 6]) but no biographical data, was probably linked to the Genoese context: as will be shown, he must have originally come from Calvi in Corsica, an island that was under Genoese control from the late Middle Ages until the XVIIIth century (with occasional interruptions). The cornerstone for the reconstruction of the sculptor *corpus* is the spectacular *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew* conserved at Musée Toulouse-Lautrec in Albi in the South of France, signed "Jacobus Agnesius/ Caluensis sculp[sit]" and dated 1638 (fig. 1; E.D. Schmidt in *Diafane Passioni* 2013, pp. 199-201 cat. 56), which also provides the most important point of reference for the present *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*. Our group, besides having an analogous subject, has notable and substantial points of contact with Agnesius' key work, to begin with the layout of the figures, portrayed in forced positions using gestures full of violent and emotional physical tension. Particularly significant are the parallels that can be made between the figures of the persecutors of Saint Lawrence and those of the torturers in the Albi group: in the muscular clearly defined strapping bodies (fig. 4), the high, square-shaped calves, the extravagant shapes of headwear, the oriental facial features, implied in a caricatural key with short, stubby noses, their expressions distorted with fury (bared teeth and staring eyes are recurrent); of which a particularly successful example in the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* is the ferocious portrait of the right-hand torturer's furrowed face. Another typical aspect seen in heads worked by Agnesius are the arched and protruding eyebrows, accompanied by elongated and sunken eyes with swollen and prominent lower eyelids; comparisons of this can be seen not only in the faces of the torturers but also in that of Saint Lawrence and the protagonists of the two groups of the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew*, one at Albi (fig. 1) and

the other attributed to him in the Rau collection ([figs. 2, 8] on loan at the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck, Remagen, inv. GR 2.104; E.D. Schmidt in *Leibhaftig* 2014, pp. 8, 86-88, 115), as well as the faces of the two figures of Christ crucifixed, both signed, one at the church of Sainte-Marie-Majeure of Calvi in Corsica (Malgouyres 2013, p. 796 with fig. 51), and the other in the (spurious) group of the *Crucifixion* auctioned by Sotheby's in 2015 (fig. 6).
The very same characteristics can also be found in the spectacular *Flagellation* previously at Christie's (London, 2016, lot 44; figs. 3, 5), an unsigned work but convincingly attributed to Agnesius. And this group, besides sharing the physical and facial personification of the

5. Jacobus Agnesius, *Flagellation of Christ,* whereabouts unknown

torturers (fig. 7), provides an interesting link with the piece in question due to the extravagant detail of an animal head that appears on the bag of the left hand torturer closely resembling that on the beret of the right hand persecutor in the *Flagellation* (fig. 10) and again in the version of the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew* in the Rau collection (fig. 9).

Further works from Agnesius' *corpus* help to contextualise the group presented here: the young Lawrence, with his ideal beauty, finds a fit, at least in terms of the face, with that of *Saint Sebastian* at the Musée du Louvre (inv. TH 158; P. Malgouyres in *Ivoires du Musée du Louvre* 2005, pp. 78-81 cat. 19), in two further examples of the same subject to be found in the Prince of Liechtenstein's collections (invv. SK 306, SK 1493; Schmidt 2011, pp. 29-32, 34-35) and in a fourth version today in the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto (Schmidt 2011). As regards the torso, convincing parallels can be drawn with the body of *Christ Scourged* previously at Christie's (fig. 5); equally, with this figure Saint Lawrence shares the rendering of thick drapery. Furthermore, the saint's arms – like those of the torturers – with muscles and tendons well pronounced beneath the fine skin, almost as if he was an *écorché*, are typical of the anatomical canons of Agnesius' figures and indeed resemble both those of the persecutors in the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew* at Albi (fig. 1), and those of other martyrs, such as the figures of Saint Sebastian in Toronto and Prince of Liechtenstein's collections.

The manner of assembling the various ivory parts is also typical of Agnesius, the joints being cleverly placed in the folds of the drapery and thus mistakeable – at a glance – for simple pleats of cloth. This technique is used in the drapery at the

6. Jacobus Agnesius, *Crucifix,* detail, whereabouts unknown

7. Jacobus Agnesius, *Flagellation of Christ*, detail, whereabouts unknown

8. Jacobus Agnesius, *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew,* detail, Remagen, Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck

waist of the henchman on the right (with the pitchfork).

All that is known of Jacobus Agnesius can be gleaned from his three signed works. He was active, as mentioned above, around 1638, and has been considered a Germanic artist, the adjective "caluensis" possibly referring to the German city of Calw (Baden-Württemberg). However, it has been noted that the Latin name itself – associated with the artist's signature on the *Martyrdom* at Albi (fig. 1) not of German style but Romance (Schmidt 2011, p. 36) – would have been more appropriate for a Flemish or French artist and that the adjective "caluensis" might quite likely have referred to another city with a similar name (P. Malgouyres in *Ivoires du Musée du Louvre* 2005, pp. 80-81; Malgouyres 2010, pp. 34, 36; Schmidt 2011, p. 36; P. Malgouyres in *Diafane Passioni* 2013, pp. 196, 198). Eike D. Schmidt suggested that it might be the homonymous town in Corsica (in *Diafane Passioni* 2013, p. 200), a theory that seems to be confirmed by the discovery of the abovementioned ivory *Crucifix* in the church of Sainte-Marie-Majeure in Calvi, signed (Malgouyres 2013, p. 796; generically considered to have a Germanic air and dating to the XVIIth century, in no author in *Corsica christiana* 2001, II, p. 37 cat. 63; Julien 2001, pp. 202, 203 fig. 1). Agnesius was perhaps born in Calvi, or at least must have worked there.

A consideration of the *corpus* of works attributable to Agnesius strongly reveals his position at the forefront of the panorama of the production of Baroque ivory statuettes in the first half of the XVIIth century: his work stands out for the technical virtuosity in the treatment of material and for the meticulousness in the anatomical definition of the bodies, whose flesh is prodigiously rendered thanks to the milky softness of ivory. The subject matters are also entirely unique – in large part scenes of martyrdom and torture – treated in an exasperatedly emotional tone, whose intense, crude expressionism is underlined by the caricatural and grotesque depiction of human types, probably taken from examples in daily life, as was the habit in the field of painting at the time.

Moreover, looking at the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, it is the dynamism of his figures that once again confirms the extraordinary capacity Agnesius had for instilling his groups with a monumentality typical of large format statuary.

While his known works and those attributed to him manifest echoes of the creations of Lenckhardt – to the extent that two statuettes previously thought to be by Lenckhardt are today considered to be by Agnesius (the two *Saint Sebastian* figures in the Prince of Liechtenstein's collections) – the resemblance of his works to ivories attributed to Petel and Domenico Bissoni are easily explained by the hypothesis that Agnesius had a direct relationship with Genoa, of which Calvi (and the whole Corsica), as mentioned above, was a colony. Indeed, today we know of at least two individuals in Corsica at that time sharing the surname Agnese/i, a Giovan Battista, priest and poet originating from Calvi itself and then living in Rome (1611-1671; Mazzuchelli 1753, p. 198), but above all a Carlo Agnese, active in Bastia in 1656, for whose Oratorio dell'Immacolata Concezione he made a wooden *Crucifix* (Sanguineti 2013^{b}, pp. 158-159, 385). It is also true, however, that other sculptors with the same surname are recorded in Genoa in the XVIIth century: Nicolò Agnese, son of Ambrogio, and Agostino Agnese, son of Battista, listed among the 'bancalari' (carpenters) for the taxation for the city walls in 1630 and registered as members of the 'Arte dei bancalari' (carpenters' guild) on 16 November 1650 and 17 July 1669 respectively (Ibidem, p. 385); Bernardo Agnesi, carpenter and father-in-law of Filippo Parodi (Ibidem, pp. 173, 189-190); Giovan Battista Agnesi (doc. 1667-1729), son of Bernardo, carpenter and carver of furniture, who was Parodi's brother-in-law but also the uncle and master of Anton Maria Maragliano (1664-1739; the most important wood sculptor in Baroque Genoa), as well as the author of a *Crucifix* and a *Madonna of the Rosary* in the church of San Maiolo in Albignano d'Adda (Milano; Ibidem, p. 386, plates CVI-CVII); Francesco Maria Agnesi known as Corsetto – an epithet that evidently indicates a connection

with Corsica –, author of a *Crucifix* in the collegiate church of San Biagio in Finalborgo (Savona) made in 1693 (Ibidem, p. 386, plate CIII).
Reflecting on the possible links with Genoese artistic culture, the forced and almost theatrical expressions of the protagonists in the group works by Agnesius, accompanied by an arrangement of figures around a central element which invites 360 degree observation, suggest that the author wished to reduce in scale the typology of the processional cases with wooden sculptures – that place figures almost on a stage – typical of Genoese *casacce* (oratories), the heart of lay devotion of the confraternities (*La Liguria delle Casacce* 1982).

Lorenzo Principi

9. Jacobus Agnesius, *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew,* detail, Remagen, Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck

10. Jacobus Agnesius, *Flagellation of Christ,* detail, whereabouts unknown

3. Johann Liss

Oldenburg 1595/1597-Verona 1631

Sleeping Nymph

ca. 1619-1625

Oil on canvas, 67.5 x 43.5 cm

Provenance: Italy, private collection

This exquisite painting of a sensual female figure asleep might portray a nymph, considering the rustic setting, while the detail in the top right, a nocturnal gleam, could suggest it is Ariadne asleep, abandoned by Theseus on the island of Naxos. As becomes apparent in the following discussion, the first hypothesis is more coherent.

The canvas is in excellent condition, the recent cleaning and conservation treatment, have restored the layered, soft texture of the painting with its original bright colour accents.

The piece is the work of Johann Liss, native to Oldenburg, in the north of Germany, who had a brilliant if fleeting career on a European scale.

Johann Liss' artistic training and education are complex and extremely rich: going from the initial rudiments received from his parents, both painters, to the various experiences in different countries starting with a sojourn in Amsterdam around 1615 and ending with his untimely death in Verona in 1631, after contracting the plague in Venice around 1629 and 1630. Biographic and documentary information concerning the artist is scarce, and derived mainly from Joachim von Sandrart (1675, ed. 1925, pp. 187-188) who knew him personally in Venice in 1629. According to his account, Liss first trained with Hendrick Goltzius then in Haarlem with Frans Hals, Dirck Hals, Willem Buytewetch and the late mannerists of that school. This work experience provided the confidence of his drawing and his sensual approach to anatomic portrayal.

His next visit, to Antwerp, was fundamental for the acquaintance of Rubens, the young Jacob Jordaens and Abraham Janssens, figures that left a decisive trace on his style, about which critics agreed (Klessmann, 1999, pp. 11-23), bringing a vertiginous development to the orientation of his artistic personality.

A brief visit to Paris preceded Liss' arrival in Venice around 1620; this first experience is characterised by his encounter with the great examples of Venetian painting of the Cinquecento and with contemporaries Domenico Fetti and Nicolò Renieri.

Later – probably around 1623 – the painter travelled to Rome, where he experienced an intense and vortex-like update that included the followers of Caravaggio, Annibale Carracci, and the works of Northern artists, Adam Elsheimer, Paul Bril and Cornelis van Poelenburgh. Here Liss integrates perfectly with the Roman scene: he frequents the Bentvueghels, the boisterous and dissolute group of Northern artists (Lemoine, 2014, pp. 23-41) and he assumes the moniker of Pan, to indicate exuberance and vitality associated with licentiousness of the mythological figure.

Around 1625, the artist returned to Venice, where his outstanding wealth of experience and contacts bring him commissions, but he also works from inspiration, above all at night, until his early death.

In the painting in question the mythological theme shows the artist's compositional and receptive style with regard to the great examples of Cinquecento Venetian painting, *in primis* Titian, and not forgetting the Emilians, in particular Correggio: the soft sensuality of the figure slumbering with her arm behind her head recalls *Sleeping Antiope* at the Musée du Louvre, Paris. Such elements in his painting also link to the artist's Roman experience of the Carraccis' painting and that of van Poelenburgh.

Comparisons with other paintings by Liss are notable, as his varied and eclectic production includes mythological and pastoral subjects. In particular *Nymph and Shepherd* at the Metropolitan Museum, New York: as the sleeping figures share anatomy, sumptuous soft rendering and chromatic range.

There are also convincing similarities to

1. Aegidius Sadeler II, *Landscape with Nymphs*, drawing, Paris, Musée du Louvre
2. Johann Liss, *Bathing Nymphs*, oil on canvas, 104.5 × 95 cm, Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen

Nymphs Bathing (now entitled *Salmacis and Hermaphrodite*), in Augsburg (Klessmann, 1999, cat. no. 126, pp. 159-160; Trepesch, in *Die deutsche Barokgalerie…*, 2016, cat. no. 72). The German painting has the same free brushstroke, the rich and consistent pictorial matter, as well as dark, rapid intonation in the background (fig. 2). However, the most surprising aspect is the structure and composition of the Augsburg canvas: starting from Steinbart's research (1959, p. 175f.), it was noticed that the painting had been reduced on the left, the original composition being identifiable in a drawing attributed to Aegidius Sadeler conserved in the *Cabinet des Dessins* at the Louvre (F. Lugt, 1949, II, no. 1280; Klessmann, 1999, p. 159, fig. 70, p. 74; fig. 1). It is undeniable that the figure on the left, now no longer visible in the Augsburg painting, coincides perfectly with that in our painting. Following Klessmann it becomes clear that the Augsburg canvas was reduced on the left by about a third, an operation substantiated by scrutiny of the support, which presents cuts on the left hand edge. Hence, the proposition is that the eliminated part of the German painting is the one under examination here. Not least because Galleria Virgilio's work has clearly been cut along the right hand edge. A further element supporting the original unity of the two canvases is the stitching that appears right the way across the lower part, present in both paintings and visible in the reproduction of the painting; interestingly the stitching is also present in the New York painting, unequivocally pointing to use of the same roll of canvas.

The attribution to Liss of the paintings cited has never been contested; indeed the presence of small *pentimenti* in the Augsburg painting is a sure sign of the artist's creative process.

More complex is dating the works, in general on the basis of the stylistic elements and assimilation of Italian models, the New York and Augsburg paintings are given a date coming into the artist's Roman period – which is to say 1625 – a chronological location that must however be reconsidered in the light of comparison with a later drawing by Sadeler connected to the New York painting. In the detailed information available on the Metropolitan Museum site (entry: Joshua P. Watermann 2012: Johann Liss/Nymph and Shepherd/The Metropolitan Museum of Art), reference is made to a communication from Doroty Limouze in 2004 mentioning a drawing by Aegidius Sadeler (1570-1629) conserved at the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, with the same composition as the New York painting, but more extended on the right. Hence, the New York painting was also reduced by a third: on the right it included the figure of a nymph sitting on the bank of a brook. Here too a technical examination has confirmed that the canvas was reduced, this time along the right side. On the one hand therefore, the presence of another Sadeler drawing would confirm Liss' compositions were copied by Sadeler in view of a series of reproduction prints, either not realised or lost (and not the opposite, as Limouze suggested for the drawing in the Louvre and the Augsburg painting; cfr. D.A. Limouze, 1997, p. 438, no. I.236); on the other hand, the presence of the date 1619 on the Hermitage drawing compels us to review the chronology of the works, shifting their execution to before the artist's arrival in Venice. Although it must be said that in Holland there were collections boasting the works of Italian artists and numerous reproduction prints, not to mention the shining example of Rubens, untiring populariser of Italian figurative culture. Liss also refers to the Flemish master in technical choices, obvious in our painting, such as preparing a cold colour base for areas of flesh, then moving on to pinkish, warm tones to recall the throb of life.

Mari Pietrogiovanna

4. Charles Mellin

Nancy, ca. 1598-Rome 1649

Portrait of a Young Man

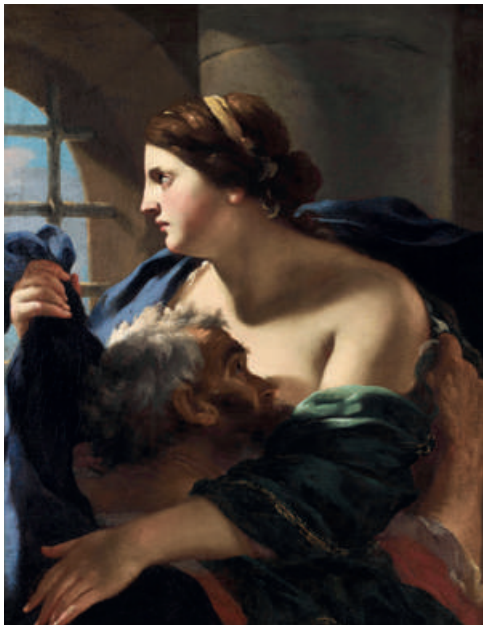
ca. 1627

Oil on slate, 56.5 × 54 cm

Inscription, lower left, "Masaniello S.R."; on the back of the slate seal of the Custom of Ancona, on the back of the wooden support seal of the Administration of the Regie Rendite with the Medici-Lorraine coat of arms

Even at a glance, the style of this charming portrait, not researched until now, recalls the French circle active in Rome around Simon Vouet; more precisely, the creamy pictorial manner, brilliant palette, softness of shapes and purity of profile that are typical elements of Charles Mellin, without doubt foremost follower of "Monsù Simone". Over recent decades, critical appraisal has brought both a reassessment of the career of Mellin, active essentially between the Papal capital and the Kingdom of Naples, and attempted above all to redefine his profile by identifying the contributions of Vouet's Italian production, with necessarily fluctuating and – in the absence of certain data – provisory results.

Moreover, the work on slate in question, although certainly from a time when he had reached expressive autonomy, still seems to be in active dialectic with Vouet. Indeed the strongest comparisons to support the attribution, although with different format and support, seem to be the *Angel with Lance and Sponge* today in Capodimonte (inv. 1141) (figs. 2-3), the surviving element of a dispersed series of twelve angels with the instruments of the passion, completed in 1627 by Vouet and his atelier for Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino (Malgouyres 2007, pp. 48-52; Jacquot 2007, p. 725, fig. 1); and the two versions of *Roman Charity* at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva (inv. 1831 2) and the Louvre (inv. RF 1985-



1. Charles Mellin, *Roman Charity*, Paris, Musée du Louvre

2. Charles Mellin, *Angel with Lance and Sponge*, Naples, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte

4. Anonymous, (after Charles Mellin), *Portrait of a Young Man*, Stamford, Burghley House, Exeter Collection

(p. 32)
3. Charles Mellin, *Angel with Lance and Sponge*, detail, Naples, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte

81; fig. 1), of a few years later (Malgouyres 2007, pp. 113-117, nos. 16-17).
There is a more modest replica of the composition on canvas at Burghley House (inv. 310), attributed to Jean Tassel, in cultural confirmation of the French area (fig. 4).
The most interesting piece of data, however, is certainly the apocryphal inscription on the lower left, identifying the young man as Masaniello, the famous protagonist of the Neapolitan revolt of 1647, and the author of the painting as Salvator Rosa, one of the artists that according to late tradition had actively supported the popular leader and carried out his portrait (De Dominici 1742-1743, III, 1743, in part. p. 226). In short, this is an example of the posthumous success of Masaniello, whose iconography was soon to evolve on a European scale, moving away, however, from historical reality and feeding on images that originally had nothing to do with the Neapolitan hero. As a result, it became possible, for example, *a posteriori* to mistakenly take a portrait of Masaniello for the young *Tobacco Smoker* at the Museo di San Martino in Naples (inv. 84404), which still figures on the cover of an important monograph about him (D'Alessio 2007), in fact belonging to a seventeenth century scholar from the Utrecht school, like Christiaen van Couwenbergh (Nicolson 1990, p. 102 e fig. 1217), and something of the sort must have occurred to the small portrait under examination.
Masaniello's features – as is known – were handed down 'directly' by Alessandro Giraffi (1648, p. 11): "a witty and facetious man, of middling height, with dark eyes, thin rather than fat, with a thick mane of fair hair and small moustache, barefoot, with coarse cloth shirt and breeches, a sailor's beret on his head, handsome but with a look about him". However, the collective imagination moved on from this description to focus on the detail of clothing, and in particular his shirt and beret, while his physiognomy was progressively idealized, losing consistency.
It is certainly curious how the end of Mellin's Neapolitan activity, documented between 1643 and 1647, should coincide with the tumults surrounding Masaniello; but, although tempting, the hypothesis that the slate might date back to that moment in Mellin's career is convincingly gainsaid by elements of style, which, as mentioned above, refer the work to the latter half of the sixteen twenties.

Giuseppe Porzio

5. Bartolomeo Cennini

doc. 1625-1674

Head of Saint Sebastian

1649-1650

Terracotta, h. 26.5 cm

Provenance: Italy, private collection

The terracotta portrays the head of a young man, with a thick head of curly hair, looking upwards; the forceful movement of the head is accompanied by the elevation of the right shoulder, as might be supposed from the cut near the collarbone. The work, in good condition and with all its parts, although some abrasion on the lower left edge, is a preliminary study for the head of the statue of *Saint Sebastian* conserved at the church of the same name in the small town of Boccheggiano (Grosseto), and is at the centre of an interesting artistic commission of Roman baroque involving the papal antiquary Leonardo Agostini and the Florentine sculptor Bartolomeo Cennini, of which this study is the only preparatory model in terracotta known today.

On 11 July 1649 Leonardo Agostini arranged a deed of gift in favour of the Florentine lady Maria Arieta, in which the antiquary, expert on glyptics, having reached the age of 56, wanted to dispose of his assets, favouring the woman to whom over the years he had accrued a large debt of thanks (Rome, Archivio di Stato, Trenta Notai Capitolini, ufficio 10, vol. 197, ff. 495*r*-497*v*/532*r*-534*r* transcribed by Vaiani 2001, pp. 93-101). As will be seen below, the document is central to understanding the circumstances in which Agostini commissioned the sculptor Bartolomeo Cennini to make a statue of *Saint Sebastian*, to which the terracotta study of the saint's head is preparatory. An important figure in the relationship between Tuscany and the Papal State, Leonardo Agostini reached Rome at the start of Urban VIII's papacy (1623-1644) and distinguished himself for his skill and knowledge as connoisseur of ancient medallions and sculptures, to the extent that, in 1639, Cardinal Francesco Barberini chose him to replace Claude Ménestrier from France in his role of papal antiquary. Agostini, native of Boccheggiano, in the countryside in the diocese of Grosseto, where in 1593 he was born to Michelangelo and Lucrezia Taddei, lived mainly in Rome and his time there became for the Tuscan erudite an important occasion for study and expertise, allowing him to develop a network of relationships with the members of the more prominent circles and the most prominent scholars living in Rome. During the Barberini papacy and those that followed, of Innocent X Pamphilj and Alessandro VII Chigi, Agostini established many crucial friendships: from Cassiano and Carlo Antonio dal Pozzo to Athanasius Kircher, from the young Giovan Pietro Bellori to Francesco Angeloni and Virgilio Spada, to cite some major names in a plethora of experts and enthusiast collectors. A prolific author, Agostini published *La Sicilia di Filippo Paruta descritta con medaglie (Filippo Paruta's Sicily Described through Medallions)* in 1649 and later on *Le gemme antiche figurate (Ancient Figurative Gems)*, a volume first published in 1657 involving the collaboration of Bellori, the painter Andrea Sacchi – who he doesn't hesitate to call "my very dear friend" and thanks for encouraging him in "such an undertaking" – and the Florentine engraver Giovanni Battista Galestruzzi. This illustrated volume assembles the likenesses of the most important figures of antiquity taken from ancient cameos and intaglios. This key publishing venture had come to light two years after the appointment of Cardinal Francesco Angelo Rapaccioli, chamberlain of the Apostolic Chamber to Commissario *supra Antiquitatibus tam Almæ Urbis quam extra eam* on 9 December 1655 (ASR, Camerale I, Diversorum del Camerlengo, vol. 552, ff. 8*r*-9*r*, published by Amendola, p. 272). The nomination was made by his fellow countryman, Pope Alexander VII, following the death of the sculptor Niccolò Menghini,

1. Bartolomeo Cennini, *Saint Sebastian*, 1649-1650, marble, Boccheggiano (Grosseto), Church of Saint Sebastian

who had previously carried out the role of Commissario delle Antichità. The pope's choice appears to us significant because, coming only eight months after his election to the throne of St Peter's, he immediately demonstrates the distinctive trait of the Chigian papacy, based on a restoration of the erudite and cultural guidelines of Urban VIII's papacy and his *cardinali nepoti*.

The relationship between Agostini and his predecessor Niccolò Menghini, sculptor and "court statuarist" of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, was one of absolute esteem and friendship and Menghini's activity in his capacity of Commissario delle Antichità was closely followed and his work continued by Agostini (Sickel 2007, pp. 221-230), who engaged in constant relations with the Roman nobility, the clergy and the artists, who had to apply to him to export their works from Rome, as occurred with the Berninian sculptor Lazzaro Morelli and with Cosimo Fancelli (Amendola 2010, pp. 268-275). This network of relations, favoured by the crucial role conducted at the heart of the Apostolic Chamber, was assisted by less well known individuals, such as the Roman goldsmith Girolamo Ricci, who dealt in the antique gems so sought after by the antiquary with whom he was involved in the Roman artistic market, combined with that of the jewellers Giuseppe Conticelli, active between 1643-1665, and the no better identified Francesco al Pellegrino (Bertolotti 1882, pp. 100-101).

In a reading of the deed of gift mentioned above and overlooking the last will and testament, never completed in the established terms, the antiquary's choice in nominating the executors of his will seems important. The sale of assets, in the case of his death – which in fact occurred in 1676 – is entrusted to three artists "Signori Andrea Sacchi, Niccolò Menghini and Girolamo Ricci", also summoned to contribute are: "His Eminence Cardinal Barberino, Most Illustrious and Reverend Monsignor Virgilio Spada, Most Illustrious Cavalier Cassiano and Carl'Antonio del Pozzi". So Agostini expresses his cultural indebtedness as well as the devotion he holds for the lords and masters who shared his interests: a passion for glyptich and for the antique (Herklotz 1999, pp. 56-64, 89-97, 106-112; Sparti 1992, pp. 54, 60, 89-90, 175). Such instances demonstrate the importance of choices made in the artistic field and reflected in his collection (Vaiani 2001). In fact, in the deed of gift, also listing two canvases by the Frenchman Pierre Mignard, who had lived in Rome from around 1630 for over twenty years, and a tondo of the *Madonna of the Angels* thought to be by Domenico Ghirlandaio, there are precise instructions with regard to the Venerable Confraternity of St. Sebastian founded by him in those years in his native Boccheggiano (Barabesi 1926-1927, pp. 184-189), in the church dedicated to the martyr on the edge of the town. Contextually Agostini declared his intention: "to make a statue in marble of Saint Sebastian to be displayed at an altar to be constructed in said Church of Saint Sebastian in Boccheggiano and said work produced and almost finished, hereby Signor Leonardo instructs that should he die before said work is completed, Signora Maria must have it completed, paying from the capital [f. 497] the list as above *etiam* to bring and display said statue in said church, and have made said altar, and everything else needed".

2. Bartolomeo Cennini, *Saint Sebastian*, detail

Agostini's legal arrangements weren't necessary; he had probably dictated the deed before making a journey or because he was suffering from some sort of illness. In any case, the inscription at the base of the sculpture states: «STATUAM MARMOREAM DIVI SEBASTIANI ROMAE EXCULTAM LEONARDO AGOSTINI D. D. ANNO IUBILEI 1651

BARTOLOMEUS CENNINUS FIORENTINUS FECIT», it was donated and probably also placed on the main people's altar in the little church in Boccheggiano in 1651. The sculpture stands under an arch and not in a niche, allowing the marble to be seen both from the body of the church, and from the entrance to the sacristy behind two doors set to the side hiding two square closed bays with decorated wooden doors for storage of liturgical objects. The altar, in classical style and dated, is made of stucco painted with faux marble, whose original colouring has been altered by a recent restoration.

As can be deduced from the inscription, the statue of *Saint Sebastian* was made by Bartolomeo Cennini, an interesting figure in sculpture whose career was conducted in Florence and Rome in the shade of the more influential masters of the period. His date of birth and origins remain unknown, but researchers are inclined to consider that his father was the Florentine founder Giovanni Battista; a hypothesis that finds confirmation in the information given by Filippo Baldinucci who declares him pupil of Pietro Tacca, with whom the young Bartolomeo certainly improved the technique of fusion in bronze, of which he became a specialist. The historian cites him working alongside the maestro from Carrara in 1625 at the casting of the figures of the Moors for the *Monument of Ferdinand I* for Livorno; and in the same year, a trip to Rome on the Jubilee with a recommendation from Tacca to Gian Lorenzo Bernini to welcome him as a collaborator "in the great works you are doing in metal for the Vatican Basilica", beginning with the complex production of the *Baldacchino* at St. Peter's (1624-1633). From that moment on, the professional relationship with Cavalier Bernini would be a constant in the career of Cennini, who would divide brief periods of work in his hometown with long sojourns in Rome to take part in the new artistic ventures initiated by Urban VIII, Innocent X and Alexander VII.

If in 1643 documents indicate that he was in Prato to restore the two half rosettes in the bronze grill in the Cappella della Sacra Cintola at the Duomo (Marchini 1963, pp. 77, 109), in 1647 he is back in Rome at the *Fabbrica* decorating pilasters for the nave at St. Peter's, where, again under Bernini's direction, he makes "bas-reliefs in marble, putti, palms and crowns", with the addition of the figure of *Obbedience* in stucco seated on the arch near the Capella del Coro (Enggass 1978, pp. 101-103). After a brief stay in Florence to make the ciborium in pietra dura for the altar of the Church of San Chiarito (1648, today at the Convento delle Mantellate), from 1650 Cennini would stop in Rome for a series of important commissions, to begin with the statue of *Saint Sebastian* for Leonardo Agostini sent to Boccheggiano. However, it would be Bernini once again to avail himself of his expertise as a bronze sculptor: for him Cennini worked on two *Crucifixes* destined for St Peter's Basilica (Battaglia 1942, pp. 4, 24) and, between 1661 and 1663, he worked on the waxes and metals for the elements of the *Cattedra* at the Basilica (Battaglia 1943, pp. 28, 31, 34-35, 167-168, 207) as well as an angel and three putti for the altar frame in the Capella del Voto at the Duomo of Siena, at the behest of Pope Alexander VII (Golzio 1939, pp. 82-83). Again in 1663, he received the balance for a travertine statue for St. Peter's colonnade, perhaps to be identified as *Saint Genesius* (Pedroli Bertoni 1987, p. 100).

Back in Florence, where he presumably spent the final years of his career, Bartolomeo sculpted the fine marble bust of Grand Duke *Ferdinand II* located beneath the balcony of the façade of the Spedale di Santa Maria Nuova (Bocchi, Cinelli 1677, pp. 394-399), the *Head of Christ* and the statue of *Saint Philip* for the main aisle of the Church of Santi Michele and Gaetano (Chini 1984, p. 326) and lastly, perhaps his most famous and successful non-commissioned work, the bronze *Crucifix* for the main altar of San Salvatore in Ognissanti, begun in 1669 and placed *in situ* on 14 July 1674 (Giglioli 1916-1918, pp. 269-272). The following 24 August his burial is recalled at the Florentine Convent of San Francesco.

The sculptor's prolonged presence in Bernini's *entourage* and his frequenting the cultural *élites* of Rome of the time, determined his proximity to and acquaintance with Leonardo Agostini. In particular, they were

united by a respective link to the Barberini family, in the case of Cennini, confirmed in an episode recalled by Baldinucci, according to whom Urban VIII, wanting to reward an artist applying himself so well, gave him "the sacred body of the martyr San Romano, that Cennini then […] very decently placed in a chapel of his on the road to his villa at Settignano". Therefore it must have been equally natural for the Barberini antiquary to choose the young Tuscan sculptor for a private commission like the statue of *Saint Sebastian*, at the same time giving Cennini the chance to work on a freestanding work in marble, a challenge for which the artist had had little opportunity to date, as mentioned, having worked with marble only in the pilasters for the nave of St. Peter's. What is more, Cennini's entire career of plastic work focussed on a clear specialization in the techniques of bronze casting, right from his debut with Pietro Tacca in Livorno. This dichotomy should be taken into account in an analysis of *Saint Sebastian* at Boccheggiano, which presents in the terracotta elements of Berninian taste, above all in the mystical inspiration of the half open mouth. A parallel might be made with the terracotta head of the *Angel with the Sponge* made by Antonio Giorgetti for Ponte Sant'Angelo, in 1668, conserved in St. Petersburg, at the Hermitage, showing a freshness and delicacy of trait that is missing in the definitive version in Carrara marble due to the multiple working phases left to the master stonemasons, before the sculptor himself. Cennini must have encountered a similar problem in translating his model into marble, hampered by lack of familiarity with the chisel and perhaps also with the block of marble provided, apparently obtained from a half column, as the rough part of the base suggests. In the short span of about a year, the sculptor finished the slightly smaller than life size *Saint Sebastian* (h. 134 cm) that, although well made, shows some diffidence of hand, in part no doubt due to taking on the role of independent creator, entirely new for Cennini who until then was used to working in group contexts and under the direction of a foreman. It is in the details of the face, such as the clearly defined teeth, and the hair, outlined curl by curl, that the artist's technical quality emerges, as he seems

3. Bartolomeo Cennini, *Saint Sebastian*, detail

to apply to marble the incisive stroke more typical of bronze working.

These characteristics of execution can also be found in the terracotta head of *Saint Sebastian*, which is approximately the same size as the marble version. Skilful use of the yardstick allows Cennini to accurately draw every part of the physiognomy, from the teeth seen between slightly open lips, to the irises carved in wide-open eyes bringing a lyrical emphasis to his expression. It is above all the hair that instils the whole with a vein of particular intensity, divided into thick curls, of a clearly Berninian inspiration, almost dishevelled in the way they intermingle to emphasize the saint's mystical rapture. In the transfer to marble the sculptor seems to lose the vigorous touch with which he modelled the terracotta, and above all the rendering of the hair is far more muted, having shed some of the prototype's plastic vivacity. The manner of realising locks of hair in a simplified way remained a constitutive element of Cennini's art; by now distanced from Bernini's workshop, the artist recreates the same formal *ductus* in his mature masterpiece, the fine bronze *Crucifix* in the Church of S. Salvatore in Ognissanti, Florence, in 1669.

Adriano Amendola
Cristiano Giometti

6. Dominikus Stainhart

Weilheim 1655-Munich 1712

Saint Agnes on the Pyre

ca. 1676-1682

High-relief in ivory with halo, rays and flames in gilded bronze, 23.5 × 18 cm, in the original ebonized wood box frame with interior clad in ivory pilasters, 27.2 × 21.8 cm

Provenance: bought for a private collection from the antique market in Munich in 2003; Italy, private collection

Bibliography: Safarik 2016, pp. 186-191.

From the beginning of the modern era art workshops in southern Germany distinguished themselves for the production of luxury items in precious materials, from silver to ivory, gold to enamel, and semi-precious stones to ebony. Augsburg, Munich and Salzburg were the main centres for the creation of elaborate and often bizarre objects, appreciated by collectors from all over Europe for their technical skill and complex composition. Salient in this panorama was the Stainhart family, originally from Weilheim, a town half way between Munich and Augsburg. The forefather Matthias († 1672) was an ivory and wood engraver, while his sons Dominikus (1655-1712) and Franz (1651-1695) specialized respectively in work on ivory and ebony, and notably enriched their formal vocabulary during a long period spent in Italy, lasting from 1674 to 1682, and culminating in a Roman sojourn documented between 1678 and 1680, although likely to have been longer (Killy, Wierhaus 2005, p. 454). The presence in Rome of the Stainhart brothers fits well in the larger migratory inflow of German artists attracted to professional possibilities in the papal city, such as the Schors – working, like the Steinharts, for the princely Colonna family – or the painter Daniel Seiter, as in grand-ducal Florence, which hosted artists of the calibre of Balthasar Permoser and Bernardo Holzmann. As Benedetta Chiesi noted, particularly in relation to the working of chryselephantine material, «Italy from the close of the Cinquecento to mid Seicento was not excluded from this tendency, in part thanks to the presence of German, Flemish and French artists: in those years Rome became a major centre of the artistic transformation of ivory, alongside other cities where the art was practised, such as Genoa, Florence, Naples and Venice» (Chiesi 2018).

Saint Agnes on the Pyre by Dominikus Stainhart, analysed here, presents the young Christian martyr kneeling on burning logs with arms open in acceptance of divine destiny materialising before her ecstatic eyes. A gust of air from the left is blowing her garments so they adhere to her body and making her mantle billow behind her back with locks of wavy and finely carved hair. Her head is inclined backwards as if to capture the golden rays issuing from behind the heads of the cherubs above; the scene is taking place in an architectonic space quite clearly recalling the crypt of Borromini's church dedicated to her, Sant'Agnese in Agone in Piazza Navona, held to be the place where the young woman met her death. Generally speaking, artists who specialize in relief ivory carving use the full thickness of the slab at their disposition, carving out layers of support and delineating elements of the landscape, without having recourse to the assembly of ivory elements as in this case, which is made up of several flat sheets for the architectonic and perspective setting, to parts in high-relief for the figurative elements. Further embellishing the milk white relief are gilded bronze inserts such as the saint's halo, the fiery flames and the divine rays of paradise, bringing fresh life to a composition that plays on the sophisticated elegance of the design *ductus* in which there are numerous references to the Roman figurative culture of the period. In 2016, Eduard A. Safarik, in publishing the work for the first time with an attribution to the brothers Stainhart, recalled as closest model the famous sculpture by Ercole Ferrata portraying

the martyr at the altar of the chapel of Sant'Agnese in the Pamphilj church, carved between 1660 and 1664. In particular, the scholar cites a terracotta statue from Ferrata's workshop that he himself found in a private collection in Rome (Safarik 2016). The visibility of the marble displayed in church may certainly have constituted a point of reference for Stainhart, although while the chryselephantine saint is kneeling, the female figure by Ferrata is standing and wearing an elaborate jewelled appliqué around the neckline of her garment. In view of such stylistic considerations, today it is possible to clarify that Dominikus Stainhart – to whom we fully attribute authorship of the work due to the high quality and coherence of the carving, without the involvement of his brother Franz, given the simplicity of the box frame – seems usually to have set out from a famous prototype to then bring changes in order to create a new version, as occurs for example in the reliefs of the famous *Colonna Cabinet* made to a design by

1. Pietro da Cortona, *Martyr of St. Martina of Rome*, 1656, Siena, Basilica of San Francesco

Carlo Fontana in which compositions by Michelangelo, Raphael and Lanfranco are freely reworked, as can clearly be seen in the central panel showing *The Last Judgement* (Safarik 1999, p. 149, fig. 270; Strunk 2005). Likewise, in *Saint Agnes on the Pyre* close observation reveals numerous stylistic and compositional references derived from coeval works of sculpture and panting: for example the pose of Stainhart's kneeling figure certainly owes a debt to the large stucco relief by Alessandro Algardi originally destined for the main altar of Sant'Agnese in Agone, today conserved at the Oratorio dei Filippini, Archivio Storico Capitolino (Montagu 1985, cat. 45 A.B.3). Here the saint positioned on the forestage is portrayed during another episode of her prolonged martyrdom, that of the attempt at carnal violence: she is seen kneeling with arms raised to heaven, turning towards the celestial apparition of Christ accompanied by the angels. This was in all probability a further reference model since it is a monumental work, not kept among the materials in a sculptor's workshop as was the case of the terracotta by Ferrata flagged by Safarik, which could more plausibly go unnoticed, as well as the copy made by Paolo Morelli from the model by Ferrata recorded among the possessions of Prince Livio Odescalchi (see Getty Provenance Index, Archival Inventory I-629, item 0641). From the obvious starting point of the stucco model one can add further figurative stimuli such as *Santa Bibiana* by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, conserved on the main altar of the homonymous church (Bacchi 2017), above all in the tilt of her head, the volume of her face and her enraptured expression, almost literally cited by Stainhart. No less important to this creative path is baroque painting, of a purely Cortonesque style; Saint Agnes betrays an interesting link to the altarpiece with the *Martyrdom of Santa Martina* (fig. 1) painted in 1656 by Pietro da Cortona for the Bandinelli Chapel at the Basilica of San Francesco in Siena (Briganti 1982, p. 260), today conserved at the local Pinacoteca, which prompts a reconstruction of the main

stages of the Bavarian engraver's journey across Italy via Venice, mandatory stop on the descent of Germans through the Bel Paese, and then Florence, Siena and Rome. So it is not surprising we find concentrated in the ivory - to be considered among the most elegant of Dominikus Stainhart's achievements - various compositional ideas that have clearly sparked the engraver's interest, as contact with the Roman environment causes him to move away from the traditional engraving technique matured north of the Alps. Moreover, reference to the figurative culture of Pietro da Cortona seems to be a constant in Stainhart's Italian period, considering that another small relief in ivory preserved in the Colonna family's private apartment in Rome (29.8 x 23.2 cm), is obviously based on a painting by the circle of Pietro da Cortona representing the *Assumption of the Virgin* (Safarik 1999, pp. 190-191). This item is contained in a very similar box frame as that of *Saint Agnes on the Pyre*, nonetheless distinguishing itself with a more intense quality of workmanship above all in the rapt and ecstatic expression of the saint, raising her to a *unicum* in Stainhart's production in his Roman period and the immediately following years. Although made from a single slab of ivory, the *Martyrdom of Saint Eustace* (fig. 2 at the Liebighaus in Frankfurt (ca. 1685) shows significant affinities with the piece under consideration, both for the ample architectonic background setting, and for its strong dependence on Roman baroque sculpture (Bückling 2019, cat. 47); indeed the figure of the saint and the movements of the lions openly recall the composition ideated by Melchiorre Cafà in the relief of the *Martyrdom of Saint Eustace* for one of the side altars at Sant'Agnese in Agone (Ferrari, Papaldo 1999, pp. 6-7). The church was hence a constant point of reference for Stainhart, precisely at the moment when the holy building bustled with activity and the altarpieces for the side altars by Antonio Raggi, Ercole Ferrata, Giovanni Francesco De Rossi and Melchiorre Cafà were being put in place.

2. Dominikus Steinhart, *Constantine's Vision of the Cross*, Frankfurt, Liebieghaus

In producing *Saint Agnes on the Pyre*, a noble, virtuous object, and expression both of devotion and of the magnificence accessible to the chosen few, Stainhart appears to be engaged in a representation of great relevance to the papal milieu, where ivory small pictures were widespread, as the collection of Cardinal Domenico Maria Corsi shows (see Getty Provenance Index, Archival Inventory I-2249, item 0358). Saint Agnes is the only Roman martyr to be celebrated in the city since Paleochristian times with the erection of an imperial basilica, decreeing her worship and elevation to patron saint of the Romans. Celebrated by Saints Ambrose, Augustine and Prudentius, the martyr is recalled every 21 January, in the Basilica di Sant'Agnese Fuori le Mura, with a rite – that has taken place for over 500 years – of the blessing of two lambs, whose wool is used for the pallium, an ecclesiastical vestment of honour and jurisdiction consisting in a strip of white wool curved in the centre so as to lie over the shoulders on top of the chasuble of metropolitan archbishops and bishops, bestowed by the Pope on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, 29 June. Hence, given the lamb's significance and its reference to the saint's name, Stainhart couldn't leave it out of the

composition; he chose to locate it lying on the floor to the extreme right, roused by the angelic apparition towards which it has turned its head, echoing the martyr's gesture, whose name recalls the adjective *haghnòs*, or "chaste and pure". And it is also in this semantic framework that we can best understand the choice made by the unknown patron – probably a member of the Colonna or Pamphilj families or their close associate – to commission from the German artist a work made in ivory, a pure substance, incorruptible over time, which well reflects the essence of the soul and the hagiography of the Roman saint.
The sense of stupor and wonder when faced with artistic masterpieces, like *Saint Agnes on the Pyre*, therefore, finds one of its greatest expressions in the chryselephantine material.

Adriano Amendola
Cristiano Giometti

7. Simone Pignoni

Florence 1611-1698

Saint Ursula

ca. 1660-1670

Oil on canvas, 94 × 72 cm

Provenance: Italy, private collection

The canvas portrays the dying figure of Saint Ursula, slain by an arrow for opposing marriage to Attila, King of the Huns. Indeed, a *Passio* from the tenth century tells of the beautiful young daughter of a Breton king, who agrees to marry a pagan king on condition he converts to the Christian faith, and she can carry out a pilgrimage to Rome before their marriage. So she sets out with eleven noble young women (who later become eleven thousand due to an error in transcription) and reach Rome, where the Pope receives her, but on the return journey, in Cologne - meanwhile conquered by Attila's Huns - she is tortured and killed by an arrow, along with her companions, for remaining resolutely steadfast in the Christian faith.

The delicate languor of the beautiful young girl is pure Pignoni, her long hair falling in curls over her shoulders, caught as she swoons, feebly abandoning life with the serene expression of the martyr's acceptance. Draped in a white chemise, fallen to reveal a breast, brown dress and blue mantle, the saint shows the notable chromatic taste that marks the maestro's best works. Pignoni's long and glorious activity, stretching from the third decade of the seventeenth century to the threshold of the next, is studded with "chamber" paintings, like the one in question, destined for a private clientele, mainly dedicated to sensual female figures characterised by flourishing bodies and pale breasts, by a psychological taste both unsettling and seductive, and by breathtaking delicacy and elegance discernable in the soft skin tones and sentimental inspiration (see Baldassari 2008). Pignoni was ready to pay handsomely for such models, a passion judged severely by the religious confessor to whom the painter turned in later life, although we don't know how much he was convinced to "purge the error with flames".

The iconography of the saint is closely tied to another protagonist in a composition by Pignoni, known in three signed versions: the *Communion of Saint Lucy,* in which the martyr repeats Saint Ursula's pose with open arms and the same tapered hands. It is very likely that these similar images also have comparable dating: 1660s.

Saint Ursula's iconography was particularly dear to Pignoni, who depicted her in several signed canvases, immediately replicated in his workshop. The only example by the hand of the master that compares for quality of drawing and colour to this version, carrying the same signature, is that conserved in the Gianfranco Luzzetti collection in Florence.

Francesca Baldassari

8. Anton Raphael Mengs

Ústí nad Labem 1728-Rome 1779

Portrait of a Young Noblewoman

ca. 1760-1770

Oil on canvas, 42.5 × 34 cm

Provenance: Rome, Studio d'Arte Palma (1944-1951); Italy, private collection

Until now attributed to Maurice Quentin la Tour (1704-1788), technically and stylistically the painting shows the hand of Mengs. Both the framing of the sitter on the canvas and the fluid, unelaborated craftsmanship are typical of a life study carried out in an initial and probably single sitting, disregarding details – secondary in this state of execution – namely the sketched bust and lightly powdered hair. All the artist's attention is focussed on the charming, delicate but at the same time very personal face, seen in a frontal position so as to show her individuality and extreme refinement as well as psychological intensity, which is indeed the greatest merit of this type of work by the painter. With her eyes concentrating on the portraitist, the young woman is participating and responding to the act of making her likeness with an expression in which besides the concentration we sense an element of scepticism, perhaps due to the circumstance of finding herself thus "exposed".

Many of Mengs' portraits and above all his life studies reveal similar stances, perceived by his contemporaries as a singular quality: "you'd say they're talking", a definition given by Gian Ludovico Bianconi for early works in pastel by a sixteen-year-old Mengs well distinguishing the distinctive feature of his portraits from those of Rosalba Carriera – according to Bianconi "beautiful and laughing" (Bianconi 1998, p. 251). Maurice Quentin de la Tour's portraits are also "laughing", famous for their vivacity and immediacy, which explains the previous attribution of the painting to him, defined

1. Anton Raphael Mengs, *Maria Josepha of Saxony, Dauphine of France*, ca. 1745-1751, Kassel, Staatliche Museen

2. Anton Raphael Mengs, *Maria Luisa of Parma*, 1765, Madrid, Museo del Prado

by his contemporaries as the "great wizard" at portraying the feelings of the soul, and certainly studied by Mengs in his youth in Dresden, where some of his works were exhibited in the famous *Gabinetto della Rosalba* at the Palazzo Reale.
In the portrait under examination the mute and intense dialogue between painter and model can be seen in the stare of the spirited, observant woman who nonetheless gives no sign of the contentment and posing characterising the portraits of de la Tour. While instead of the immediacy of expression typical of the French painter, we are faced with a likeness that despite his "presence", makes the temporal moment of depicting disappear; a characteristic shared by all Mengs' portraits, independent of sex, date and individual circumstances.
So it isn't surprising to find the same effects in a variety of life studies despite the subjects being men and women of different ages and social status. Comparable for their sketchy workmanship and frontal pose are the portraits of Cardinal York, datable to 1756-1757, the portrait assumed to be of Maria Josepha of Saxony, Dauphine of France, made between 1747 and 1751 (fig. 1), the portrait of Count Brühl from 1749, and the head of Maria Luisa of Parma of 1765 (fig. 2), all life studies.
The length of sitting with the model was limited to a maximum of two hours, as is apparent from the various sources using the term "two-hour portrait" (cfr. Roettgen 1999, cat. 225). That this portrait is the product of such a sitting can be seen not only in the fluidity of the brushstroke on the accessories, but also in the *pentimento* in the shaping of the lower part of the face on the left (of the canvas), quite visible given the subtlety of the paint layer. In its delicate and varied quality, synchronizing the skin tone in the face with that of the neck and bust, the portrait perfectly follows the rules for portraits outlined by Mengs in his "Practical Painting Lessons", which confirm the particular attention he lends to the complexion and its tonalities. This applies to all the hues of the face: "all faces, and bodies have a variety of colours and hues due to the nature of place: meaning lips, cheeks, junctures, extremities […] all need to be given a general tone […] as the varieties of skin tone in the same person depend on things that are beneath the skin: so that the finer it is, the more the above will be visible" (Azara, Fea 1787, p. 259).
Given the dearth of information relating to the early provenance of the painting it is not possible to ascertain a date or identify the person portrayed. The elegant hairstyle, valuable earrings and soigné collar in blue and white pleated silk do however indicate the woman's high social standing, and given her youthful age of around sixteen to eighteen years, she is most likely sitting at the time of her marriage.
The only female portraits mentioned by biographers that correspond to the social status of the portrait are those of the daughters of Camillo IV Borghese: Livia Maria (1731-1801), who married Altieri in Rome, and Eleonora (1724-1779), married to Imperiali di Francavilla and resident in Naples, painted during the Neapolitan sojourn of 1759-1760. However, due to the subject's youth it is unlikely to be one of these as yet unfound portraits (Roettgen 1999, p. 502: QU 148, QU 151).
Requests for portraits of this genre were certainly numerous above all during the first Spanish period (1761-1769), when in his role of first *pintor de camára,* Mengs was inevitably in contact with many members of the court, and here as in Rome more than once he didn't uphold commitments entered into with people outside the royal family so only the life studies survived. Circumstances of the sort are very probable not least because in 1779, biographers only noted down the finished and unfinished works in his Roman studio, while the inventory of the Madrid studio was dispersed and sold directly in Spain as we know from the papers of Pier Paolo Giusti (1742-1808), secretary to the Imperial Ambassador to Madrid from 1772 to 1781 (cfr. Mayer 2021, pp. 321-322).
The painting will be included in the digital supplement of Mengs' catalogue raisonné: https://sempub.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/wv_mengs/en/

Steffi Roettgen

9. Giovanni Domenico Cherubini

Rome 1754–1815

Self-portrait with Bust of Mengs

ca. 1783

Oil on canvas, 95 × 75 cm

Provenance: France, private collection

In the portrait a young artist is holding up a drawing folder and *toccalapis*, with charcoal and white chalk, emblematically alluding to the practise of drawing as basis for the figurative arts, being the place where study from living nature and from exemplary artistic models happens. Next to a green drape in the background, a bust is sitting on the marble top of a gilded console, decorated with a mythological relief in which we can make out the figure of Cupid. It is the portrait of Anton Raphael Mengs, sculpted by the Romanised Irishman, Christopher Hewetson, and seems to preside over the conduct and fate of the young man like a tutelary deity. The presence of the effigy of the great German master seems to constitute an attribute for his pupil, programmatically defining his references and ambitions, as a sort of manifesto.

Considered the innovator of European painting on account of his influential theoretical writings, the new Raphael and philosopher painter Mengs was the protagonist of a new classicism, exemplified in figurative terms by *Parnassus* painted in fresco at Villa Albani and on the methodological level by an eclectic formula founded on retrieval of the lesson from antiquity, combined with the study of the Italian pictorial schools of the Renaissance, with an eye to an ideal of perfection reached in the different parts of painting. In the last years of his life, from 1777 to 1779, Mengs planned the execution of two sculptural portraits in dialogue with his own self-portraits, entrusting them to the German, Friedrich Wilhelm Döll, (Gotha, Schlossmuseum) and Christopher Hewetson, then foremost in sculptural portraiture in Rome. In his heroic bust in the style of the ancients, the Irish sculptor succeeded in portraying the painter in talking effigy, an unadorned and natural portrait expressing not only the sitter's moral dimension, but also his existential state.

Hewetson had initially made the portrait in bronze, destined for the Pantheon, where, to follow the original location of the busts of Raphael and Annibale Carracci, a vast collection of portraits of illustrious artists was in the planning, including those of Nicolas Poussin, Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Marco Benefial. On the initiative of the Spanish ambassador, José Nicolás de Azara, who in 1780 curated the exemplary edition of Mengs' *Opere,* and who had also commissioned his own portrait from Hewetson, that version was substituted in 1782 by a second, made in marble, a material considered more appropriate for the monumental collection. It was a contribution to an extraordinary collection that, notably enlarged, was transferred to the Campidoglio after the Restoration, to form the Protomoteca (cfr. Tiziano Casola, in *Grand Tour* 2021, cat. VI.3). That exemplar portrays the bust complete with shoulders and chest down to the diaphragm, while the one shown in the painting corresponds to the smaller bust, witnessed in the plaster version seized by the French in 1778 on board the merchant ship Westmorland among the Roman works of art heading for England (Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, cfr. *The English Prize* 2012, cat. 135), and the marble version in Prague (fig. 1).

Whilst iconographic research on the noted paintings of Mengs' direct students brought no results (a list is in Roettgen 2003, pp. 411-415), a formal comparison with a painting recently identified and attributed on

1. Christopher Hewetson, *Bust of Anton Raphael Mengs*, ca. 1780-1785, Prague, Národní Galerie

2. Giovanni Domenico Cherubini, *Portrait of the Nobleman Daniele Ippolito degli Oddi*, 1793, Paris, private collection

documentary bases to Giovanni Domenico Cherubini (S. Grandesso, in *Selected Works* 2019, cat. 7) suggests attribution for the painting, very possibly a self-portrait, to this little known but not secondary student and collaborator of Anton von Maron, in turn a pupil of Mengs and husband of his older sister, Teresa. The portrait of *Daniele Ippolito degli Oddi* by Cherubini shows the young Paduan aristocrat who was in Rome between 1792 and 1793 to develop his architectural studies in the circle of Antonio Canova, of whom he would later purchase the plasterworks that had previously belonged to the Venetian ambassador and patron of sculptor Girolamo Zulian (fig. 2). The rendering of this painting seems very similar, if not identical even down to small details, to the portrait with the bust of Mengs, in any case a work ascribable to von Maron's sphere. If this is correct, the reference to the great German painter in a chronology nearing his death and probably datable to around 1783 could be read as a homage from the young man and his mentor von Maron to their shared maestro. Indeed, from that year and until 1808 Cherubini is recorded as a "young man" in the Catholic census *Status Animarum* at the Austrian painter's dwelling, opposite the Church of Santa Maria in Via. His pupil and then adoptive son destined to become his heir (cfr. Michel 1996, pp. 402-404), Cherubini remained in his teacher's shadow, documented today with few paintings, all of an exceptional class and great elegance, like the portrait of the miniaturist *Sofia Clerk Giordano* (1801, Rome, Accademia Nazionale di San Luca), "successfully influenced by the more delicate Maron of later years" (Susinno 1974, p. 270), that of Marchese *Luigi Amat di Sorso* (Villa d'Orri, Sarroch) and the two paintings displayed at the famous collection *Mostra del ritratto italiano* in 1911 in Florence, among which the portrait of Anna Serafini, later married to Capalti and mother of the painter Alessandro, portrayed as a painter (private collection). The census records that she too resided at von Maron, being a favourite pupil of his wife Teresa Mengs.

Stefano Grandesso

10. Carlo Albacini

Fabriano? 1734-Rome 1813

Sappho

ca. 1782

White marble, h. 39 cm

Provenance: Europe, private collection

This unpublished bust depicts a young woman with an elaborate hairstyle, her head encircled by braids and crowned with laurel leaves, elements that make it possible to identify the figure as the poetess Sappho. Her long hair is gathered into a plait brought forward from the nape of her neck, partly hidden by the *sakkos*, a sort of hair net or hood typical of the classical era that the poet is shown wearing on ancient coins and some herms (Palma Venetucci 1992, pp. 45-48), so much so that over time it was established as one of the distinctive traits of her likenesses. Anchoring the plait, just above her brow, is a braid in which classical tradition recognises the value of consecration, and in the case of Sappho, who often presents this element in ancient marbles, refers to the sacredness of poetry. There are many marble portraits of Sappho, or presumed such, featuring holy braids, among which *Sappho type Aphrodite*, already in the Villa Borghese collection in the XVII century (Rome, Galleria Borghese, Sala dell'Ermafrodito, inv. CLXXIV). In ancient portraits, in order to accentuate the ritual value of the braid, plant elements are added such as petals, leaves or sprigs. Tradition testifies to the Greek custom of making garlands from various different plants, since they have varied characteristics and meanings (Corsi 2012, pp. 537-560).

The figure of the poetess, born in Eresos in 630 B.C.E., on the island of Lesbos, in part due to her uncertain biographic profile, left profound marks in literary tradition, from the ancient world to the XX century, focussing on various episodes of her life, transforming her from protagonist of a tragic love affair to heroine and even paradigm of poetical excellence (Puggioni 2014).

Sappho's popularity re-emerged in the XVIII century, her image being reproduced by many artists of the period, not only in the narrative of her unhappy love for Phaon but renewed in the vision of the poetess recalled by Homer and Plato as the "tenth muse".

This bust is the work of Carlo Albacini, who ran one of the most important ateliers in Rome, visited by prominent collectors and patrons of the arts. In the rendering of face and hairstyle as well as the masterly treatment of the marble surfaces, the work holds close analogies with some signed copies of famous ancient masterpieces, which the artist reproduced in a reduced format, among which *Farnese Flora* and *Isis* (St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, invv. Н.ск-481, Н.ск-2340), and *Capitoline Flora* (Indianapolis, Museum of Art, inv. 72.85.5). One of the models for this bust might have been *Sappho*, an image considerably appreciated by collectors (as demonstrated by the several copies in different materials) that belonged to Vincenzo Giustiniani (Madrid, Prado Museum, inv. 10010401), which also inspired the grey marble version that was once in the Kircherian collection (B. Cacciotti in *L'idea del Bello* 2000, pp. p. 616; Gasparri, Paris 2013, p. 142). As in the versions in the aforementioned well-known Roman collections, the portrait of the poetess sculpted by Albacini has her hair parted in the centre, undulating curls and two corkscrew locks in front of her ears.

Albacini adds the details of plait and crown of leaves to the cap, as Raphael had in his famous portrayal of the poetess on *Parnassus* in the Stanza della Segnatura at the Vatican, following a particular iconography in part made popular through glyptics and ancient coins. Given the affinity with the figure shown in the sixteenth century fresco, seen with a particular hairstyle and leaf crown, Raphael might have been a further source of inspiration for the sculptor.

This bust of Sappho by Albacini (who made two versions of the portrait; one in

1782 and another in 1786) might be linked to the series of the *Nine Muses with Apollo Citharoedus* commissioned by the Grand Dukes of Russia, Paul son of Empress Catherine II and Maria Feodorovna (born Sophie Dorothea of Württemberg) on their trip to Italy in 1781 under the pseudonym "Conti del Nord" (di Macco 1991, pp. 65-70; Androsov 2008, pp. 24-29). The sculptures were carried out between 1782 and 1786 (St. Petersburg, Pavlovsk Palace, invv. ЦХ-209-VIII, ЦХ-210-VIII, ЦХ-211-VIII, ЦХ-212-VIII, ЦХ-213-VIII, ЦХ-214-VIII, ЦХ-215-VIII, ЦХ-216-VIII, ЦХ-217-VIII, ЦХ-218-VIII) and are inspired by those from the Villa of Cassius in Tivoli, displayed in the Museo Pio Clementino (Spinola 1999, pp. 192 *passim*). The copies produced in Albacini's atelier could easily have been completed by a portrait of Sappho, considered since antiquity as the tenth muse. Besides the underlying theme linking the ancient divinities, the format of this bust is also perfectly coherent with the copies from the Vatican Museums (smaller than the originals), destined for the grand duchess' library, a place for study and reflection, at the royal couple's residence at Pavlovsk (Tret'jakov Korolev 2007, pp. 90-96).

In conclusion, the bust of Sappho is an important addition to Carlo Albacini's catalogue, as through it he confirms himself as one of the most valued interpreters of erudite subjects of his time, as well as a skilled author, well able to satisfy the demands of an international clientele.

Valeria Rotili

11. Jakob Philipp Hackert

Prenzlau 1737-San Pietro di Careggi 1807

Galleria di Sopra on the Road to Albano

1790

Oil on canvas, 96 × 78.3 cm

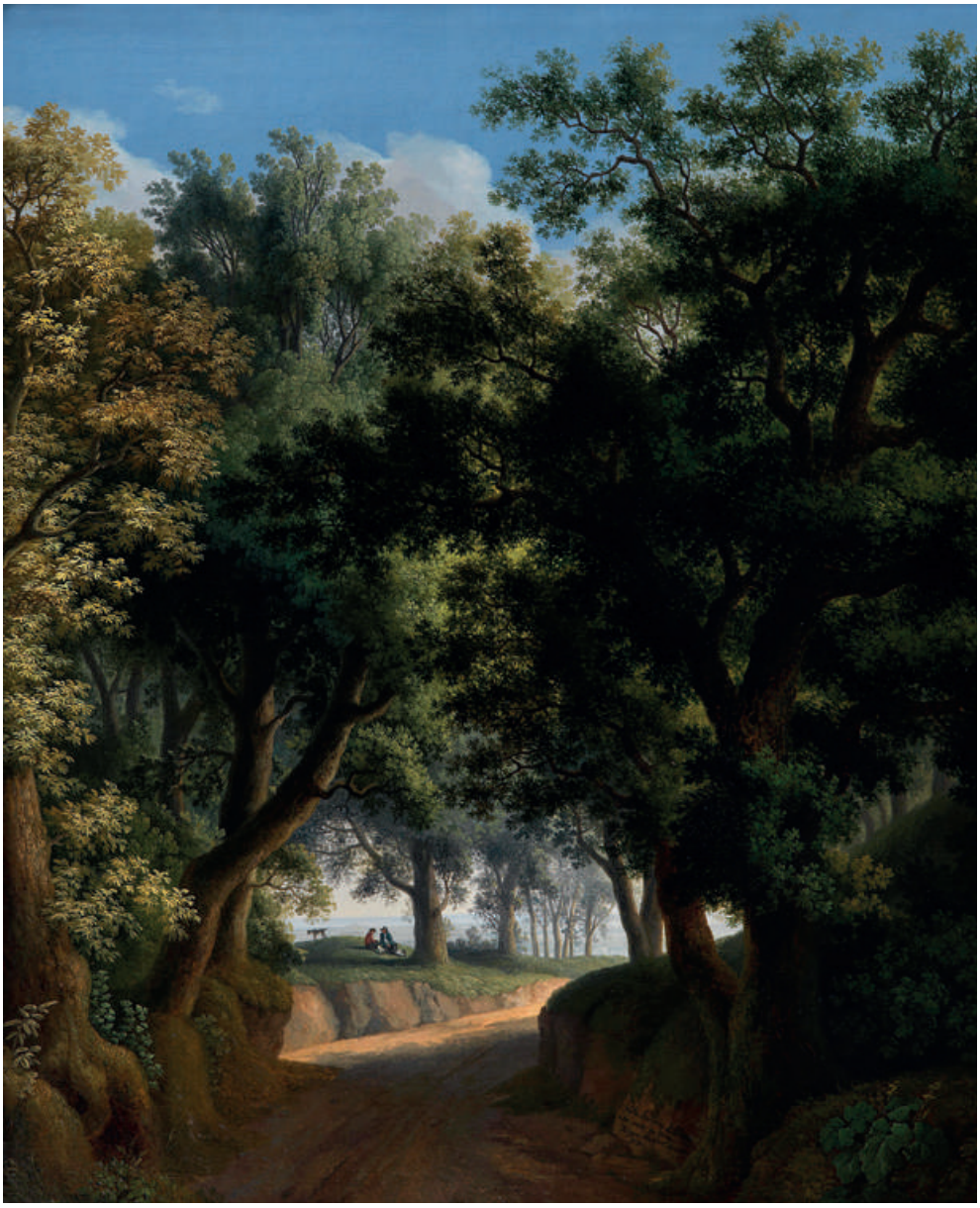
Signed, dated and inscribed lower right: "Nella Galleria d`Albano / a due poste da Roma. / Filippo Hackert dipinse / 1790"; fragments of an old adhesive label on the back: *[…]-Spediteur / Wichmannstra[…] / Kunst-Abt[…]*

Provenance: European private collection

The landscape artist Jakob Philipp Hackert received his early training in Berlin (1753-1762). After spending time in Stralsund and on the Isle of Rügen (1762-1765), he went to Paris, where he worked for the next three years with increasing success. In the summer of 1768 he left France, reaching Rome in December of that year. Here he advanced rapidly to become the most famous landscape painter not only in the Eternal City, but throughout Europe. Among his clients were monarchs such as Catherine II and Gustav III of Sweden; he sold his works to nobles visiting Rome from all over the world and was received by Pope Pius VI. In 1786 Hackert entered the service of Ferdinand IV of Naples as First Court Painter. The French occupation of the city forced him to flee in 1799. He settled in Florence, buying a small estate at Careggi in 1803 and finally ended his life in Florence on 27 April 1807. Hackert is buried in the protestant cemetery in Livorno (cfr. Nordhoff, Reimer 1994; Weidner 1998; de Seta, Nordhoff 2005; *Jakob Philipp Hackert* 2007; *Jakob Philipp Hackert* 2008; Nordhoff 2012).

1. J.P. Hackert, *Oak near Marino*, 1779, pen and brush in brown, Vienna, Akademie der Bildenden Künste

2. J.P. Hackert, *Galleria di Sopra on the Road for Albano*, ca. 1770-1780, pen, brown wash and pencil, Weimar, Klassik Stiftung



Soon after his arrival in Rome, Hackert began to explore the areas surrounding the city. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, who met Hackert in Naples in 1787 and published his biography in 1811, mentions a first excursion in the spring of 1769 that took the painter to "Frascati, Grotta Ferrata, Marino, Albano, Nemi and so on [to] have an initial, general look at the beauty of nature in these places". (Goethe 1891, p. 126, the biography is based on Hackert's own notes sent to Goethe in 1806 at the poet's request).

The places commented on by Goethe are all in Colli Albani, a hilly area to the southeast of Rome, which over the course of the centuries were numbered among the most popular destinations for Romans in the hot summer months: they fled the heat of the city to spend time holidaying (*in villeggiatura*) near the Lakes Albano and Nemi.

As dated drawings show, Hackert also regularly visited Colli Albani during the seventeen seventies and early eighties. Around 1773 he rented a country house at Albano, where he spent the summer months: an arrangement that lasted until the summer of 1785, when he moved to Caserta. At which point Hackert did not return to Colli Albani. Hackert's friend, J. F. Reiffenstein was also regularly invited to Albano by the painter (cfr. Nordhoff 2012, p. 306).

During his sojourns in Colli Albani, Hackert concentrated most of all on the rich population of trees around Lakes Albano and Nemi. Already in the early seventies, it was here the painter developed the artistic subject of the "tree portrait" that he presented in ever changing variations, above all in sepia drawings in a vertical format. The protagonists of the drawings are single trees whose trunks, branches and leaves are rendered with great precision. What is more, Hackert almost always noted down the location of the illustrated tree on the folio: they were not general images of trees, but a sort of inventory of forestation in Colli Albani, trees found by the painter beside the paths he walked along (see for example fig. 1, see Nordhoff, Reimer 1994, II, Entry 752).

For Hackert it was most important that single trees were clearly identifiable in their species both in his drawings and paintings. An anonymous article published after his death, states: "among other things, he was only satisfied with a specific representation of a tree; it annoyed him if a tree in his paintings were not immediately recognisable" (*Fragmente über Jakob Philipp Hackert* 1807). In his brief essay on landscape painting written in Naples in the 1790s, Hackert develops a method to classify different types of trees in three groups, according to the shapes of their leaves: rounded, elongated or serrated. He advised young artists to dedicate a lot of time to the study of trees: "The painter can easily imitate the great variety of trees and bushes, there being thousands of them, if he has practised drawing these three classes of trees [...] one should be able to make out the type of tree from the outline alone [...] What I would like is for a botanist to immediately recognise the tree, plants and leaves in the foreground" (cited in: *Il paesaggio secondo natura* 1994, p. 315-317). Even in old age Hackert made two cycles of incisions of single trees, one of which was meant as a guide to landscape drawing, the other for the classification of single species of trees (a copy is conserved in Rome, Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica; for both series see Nordhoff 2012, pp. 603-604).

There were particularly beautiful trees along the sides of two roads between Albano and Castel Gandolfo. Originally charted as bridle paths, they were transformed into tree-lined avenues in the first half of the seventeenth century under Urban VIII, who also had a papal church built at Castel Gandolfo. Shaded by large Holm oaks, the footpaths came to be known as the *Gallerie*.

Both roads have been described by many travellers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Friedrich Johann Lorenz Meyer (1760-1844), who was a guest of Hackert's in Albano in 1783, jotted down: "From Castel Gandolfo [...] there is an excellent path to Albano. Here it leads to an avenue of tall oaks [called] La Galleria [...] I've never seen the oak [...] in such flourishing growth [...] The landscape painters of Rome choose these oaks more than any as models for their paintings". (Meyer 1792, p. 293-294).

The American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) wrote after his trip to Italy in 1828: "A third, and the most beautiful of all, runs in an undulating line along the crest of the last and lowest ridge of the Albanian Hills and leads to the borders of the Alban Lake. […] The part of the road which looks down upon the lake, passes through a magnificent gallery of thick-embowering trees […] This long, sylvan arcade is called the Galleria-di-sopra, to distinguish it from the Galleria-di-sotto, a similar, though less beautiful avenue, leading from Castel Gandolfo to Albano, beneath the crest of the hill" (Longfellow 1835, pp. 180-181).

The art essayist Oreste Raggi (1812-1882) also mentions the two roads in 1844: "From Castel Gandolfo you can reach Albano by two roads they call upper and lower *gallerie*. The first, for anyone coming from Marino, leaves the castle on the left and […] leading to right outside the gateway of Albano; the second, crossing the castle town, leads to the Church dei Riformati and flanking the lake reaches the Albano Capuchins' vegetable garden; to the left of the lakeshore you reach Palazzuolo, to the

right you go down into Albano" (Raggi 1844, p. 258).
Artists also frequently portrayed the trees of the two *Gallerie* in the nineteenth century: Oreste Raggi, for example, met the landscape artist Giambattista Bassi (1784-1852) who followed Hackert's model (Ibid. pp. 258-259). However it was the latter painter who claims the honour of discovering the tree-lined avenues of the *Gallerie* first.
A drawing by Hackert datable to the 1770s or early 1780s shows tall oaks to either side of a path; this leads from the foreground to the depth of the image in a right hand curve, where it meets another path coming from the left. Three minuscule figures of excursionists relaxing on the high bank at the side of the path in the middle distance give an idea of the scale of the oaks (fig. 2; see Nordhoff, Reimer 1994, II, Entry 1289). The same subject is to be found in another of Hackert's drawings, datable to the same period (fig. 3).
Our painting is based on one of these two drawings. We can see the path entering the image in the foreground, flanked to right and left by the same tall trees in the drawing; two excursionists with a dog are resting on the high ground bordering the road in the middle distance. Alongside his signature Hackert more precisely identifies the area: the road is the "Galleria" from Albano, although he doesn't state which of the two. While in the drawings the distant view is only just visible through the trees, it is portrayed more clearly here: we can see the bell tower of a church with some buildings sketched alongside; the Campagna Romana stretching out beyond. In the eighteenth century, the country to the southeast of Rome was purely agricultural and swampland: hence, the place featured can only be Albano itself with the Duomo S. Pancrazio's bell tower shown in the painting. Setting out from this assumption, a more precise identification of Hackert's position is possible.
The painter is on a stretch of the *Galleria di Sopra*, today Via Pio Undicesimo, looking towards Albano, which he would reach by going down a sunny path in the centre of the painting if he went left. To the right, the road continues to Lake Albano and Castel Gandolfo; its extension in the foreground, beyond the image where the spectator stands, leads to Palazzolo. In the foreground to the left, outside the field of vision, we should imagine the Capuchin convent, whose vegetable garden Raggi mentioned: today the view of Albano is similar from here. Finally, Hackert's inscription: "due poste da Roma" refers to the staging posts to change horses, most of which also had a hostelry for travellers. The first staging post on leaving Rome was on Via Appia at Torre di Mezza Via, the second at Albano. The distance between the two places was around 20km: So the distance given by Hackert corresponds more or less to the real distance between Rome and Albano (Finodi s.d., p. 7).
Hackert painted the oil in 1790, fifteen years after his last visit to Albano. In that year he was busy with an important painting cycle of the Kingdom of Naples' ports for Ferdinand IV: for which he made a trip to Sicily from April to July 1790. Moreover, drawings dated 1790 document Hackert's excursions to the Gulfs of Sorrento and Gaeta and to the Monti del Matese: journeys he would have made early in the year or in autumn. The rest of the time, he carried out our painting. It was no doubt commissioned by a private client travelling between Rome and Naples who probably stopped on the way at the *Galleria di Sopra* at Albano, choosing the subject from Hackert's drawings. It is no longer possible to say with certainty who the client was, but from May 1789 to April 1790 stayed in Naples Anna Amalia, Duchess of Weimar (1739-1807), and her entourage, and in January 1790 Crown Prince Karl-Georg-August of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (1766-1806) joined the group: the purchaser of the painting might be found in this circle, but it is also possible that the commission dated from some years before but that the painter only found time to paint it in 1790.
The painting holds appeal for the viewer due to the contrasts of near and far, light and shade. The protagonists are the tall trees, whose detailed botanical rendering recalls Hackert's ample studies of trees. Indeed, the different species are evident: the fan-like leaves of the tree to the far left obviously belong to a chestnut, as presented by Hackert in his instructions for drawing landscape after 1800 (fig. 4; the preparatory study for the engraving of a chestnut in the series of instructions on how to draw trees, see Nordhoff 2017, vol. I, scheda D 20), while

the jagged leaves on the group of trees to the right suggest holm oaks. The rounded leaves on the branches reaching into the blue sky in the background could be elms since they too grew in the *Galleria di Sopra*. In the bottom right corner of the painting we can make out the fleshy leaves of an Arum plant in the shade, among the gnarled roots of the tree in the bottom left corner a single branch of laurel is sprouting, whereas the rounded leaves of the creeper next to it belong to a type of ivy (Hackert was familiar with the botanical names of plants. As can be seen for example in his letter to Count Dönhoff of 21 December 1802 in which he describes the vegetation in one of his paintings with a hare and landscape; see Nordhoff 2012, p. 189. He knew the botanical work of Carl von Linné, 1753; see Nordhoff 2012, p. 614. Lastly, the play of light and shade on the leaves produces a multitude of shades of green. In this way, the painting imparts a lesson in botany, showing the viewer the great diversity and beauty of the single species of tree and plant.

While the close-range details of vegetation give the viewer the illusion of being on the shady path of *Galleria di Sopra* and seeing only a small section of the landscape, in the background a surprisingly large view opens up. We recognise the outline of Albano and the vast Campagna Romana over which bends the sun gilded sky. Next to the small figures of the excursionists enjoying a closer point of view, the dog lends a special emphasis: it is looking curiously into the distance, as if it couldn't wait to continue the walk, bringing in the theme of departure and movement. It also recalls Hackert himself, a great lover of dogs and always accompanied by a dog on his excursions, indeed often featuring his own dogs in drawings or paintings.

The painting is a masterpiece by Hackert depicting a small area easily identifiable as the zone near Albano. While on the one hand the painting is a precise "landscape portrait", on the other it transmits an almost tangible impression of the light in Italy and the warmth of a Roman summer day on which two walkers and their dog are on the move: they might have come from the cool shade beneath the trees in the foreground, later heading on towards Lake Albano.

Both for its pictorial qualities and as a document of the *Galleria di Sopra* near Albano, the painting is very significant and greatly enriches Hackert's oeuvre.

Claudia Nordhoff

3. J.P. Hackert, *Galleria di Sopra on the Road for Albano*, ca. 1770-1780, pen, brown brush and pencil, Rudolstadt, Thüringer Landesmuseum Heidecksburg

4. J.P. Hackert, *Chestnut in mountainous landscape*, ca. 1797-1798, pen in brown and pencil, Roma, Museum Casa di Goethe

12. Giovacchino Belli
Roma 1756-1822
Pietro Belli
Roma 1780-1828
Monument to Maria Christina of Austria, after Canova
ca. 1815

Carrara statuary marble, black marble, bronze riveted by hammer, chiselled and double gilded, 21.7 × 18.5 × 7 cm
Provenance: Italy, private collection

This valuable scale reduction of the *Monument to Maria Christina of Austria* by Antonio Canova (Vienna, Augustinerkirche), witnesses the cult of Canova's contemporaries around the works of the great sculptor, which immediately became popular thanks to the diffusion of engraved versions and plaster casts that he himself promoted. Furthermore, such fame was soon contributed to by other artists making sophisticated replicas in various formats and techniques, from painting (for example the monochromes painted by Bernardino Nocchi), to the cameo and *pietra dura* intaglio, as in the case of the famous gems engraved by Giuseppe Girometti for the patron of arts Giambattista Sommariva.
The Strazza and Thomas workshop in Milan made a splendid reduction in gilded bronze of *Hebe* for the Marchese Giovanni Edoardo de Pecis, who also requested a reproduction of the *Monument to Appiani* by Bertel Thorvaldsen (Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana). At the same time the Roman workshop belonging to Wilhelm Hopfgarten and Benjamin Ludwig Jollage also obtained bronze reductions of Bertel Thorvaldsen's mythological statues, of the same typology, for an extraordinary *surtout de table* for Christian Frederik, crown prince of Denmark (Copenhagen, Amalienborg Palace, Kongernes Samling; cfr. *Canova Thorvaldsen* 2019, pp. 171-181).
The small version in gilded bronze and marble of the *Monument to Maria Christina of Austria*, approximately a fortieth in size, is an example of this type of production. However, it did not appear alongside the works mentioned, but with three magnificent scale reductions of the triumphal arches of Titus, Septimius Severus and Constantine made by the Roman master silversmiths Giovacchino and Pietro Belli, between 1808 and 1815, to a ratio respectively of a fortieth for the first, and a forty-fifth for the other two. These lavish works represented memories of antiquity, souvenirs destined for travellers on the Grand Tour, but at the higher level, suitable for the "tables of the great, or the studies of princes; where in place of mute ornaments, subject to capricious changes in fashion, these arches alone are sufficient to give them a series of heroic actions, a progressive story of art, the most authentic code of infinite customs as barbarous as they are Roman, from Titus to Constantine, almost as if to say from the cradle to the grave of the Roman Empire" (Guattani 1815, pp. 5-6).
So wrote Guattani, secretary of the Accademia di San Luca and erudite compiler of the "Memorie Enciclopediche Romane per le Antichità e Belle Arti", in his description in print of the works that the Belli silversmiths had executed, based on the architectonic reliefs by Giuseppe Camporese, raising up from the statuary marble the refined bronze versions of the sculptural elements. Both architectonic and sculptural parts include ideal reconstructions of what was lost, according to antiquarian erudition, and, for the Arch of Titus, pre-empting the solution later adopted by Raffaele Stern and Giuseppe Valadier for subsequent restoration, still today considered exemplary.
As predicted by Guattani, the three works entered a royal collection, bought by George IV of England, although he had never been able to do the Grand Tour. Following the purchase by Pietro Santi Ammendola, the Roman dealer who had promoted the works' execution and taken them to London, were housed at Carlton House in 1816, as "most ingenious specimens of sculpture in miniature" (W.H. Pyne) and are now at Windsor Castle, in the Garter Throne Room (figs. 1-2; cfr. Roberto

Valeriani, in Colle, Griseri, Valeriani 2001, cat. 65, pp. 230-232; *George IV* 2019, pp. 187-188, 252; Enrico Colle, in *Grand Tour* 2021, cat. IX.17-18, pp. 351-352).
George IV was a patron of Canova at the time and the great sculptor himself had sanctioned the artistic perfection of the three arches and in particular the skill of Pietro Belli, not only the hereditary goldsmith and successor to the great family tradition, but also an artist who succeeded in clinching awards for drawing offered by the Accademia di San Luca (on Bellis see Bulgari 1959, pp. 123-129). Guattani reported: "I attest to having seen the abovementioned works carried out with talent, accuracy and infinite precision, as much in the areas of marble, as in the gilded parts and the bas-reliefs; the industrious and praiseworthy work of art seems in my opinion to deserve great esteem and approval of connoisseurs". (Guattani 1815, p. 56).
Canova must have held Pietro Belli in great esteem for he turned to him for "the aforementioned vase and bowl worked with hammer and chisel, decorated with foliage and double gilded", the bronze elements added to the marble *Hebe* intended for Contessa Veronica Guarini (Forlì, Musei di San Domenico; letter from Pietro Belli to Antonio D'Este, 2 May 1817, in Canova 2003, no. 714, p. 802).
It is in the context of such professional relationships and this chronology that we should locate the Bellian execution of the reduced *Monument to Maria Christina*. The technique, described in the above letter as a fusion in bronze beaten with a hammer, chiselled and finished in double gilding, and the highly refined results correspond in every way to the three triumphant arches. Intended for a specific client, perhaps even solicited by Canova himself, or made as a work of sculpture in miniature as a challenge of emulation to the larger sculptural model, the Bellian pyramid might have reminded its owner of the significance of what Stendhal judged the most beautiful monument ever made. Canova, revolutionising the centuries-old tradition of funerary sculpture, here substituted the usual allegorical figures with the collective and sentimental action of a procession, to evoke a universal reflection on the meanings of life and death.

Stefano Grandesso

1. Giovacchino and Pietro Belli, *Arch of Titus*, 1808-1815, The Royal Collection / HM Queen Elizabeth II

2. Giovacchino and Pietro Belli, *Arch of Constantine*, 1808-1815, The Royal Collection / HM Queen Elizabeth II

13. Gabriele Smargiassi

Vasto 1798-Naples 1882

View of the Gulf of Naples from the Terrace of the Royal Palace

1846

Oil on canvas, 105.5 × 196 cm

Provenance: St. Petersburg, Winter Palace; 1920-1928, Hermitage Museum, depository; private collections

The view, immersed in the afternoon light, is from the terrace running along the left side of the Royal Palace of Naples, linking the first floor state apartments to those for entertaining and now occupied by the National Library. The cast iron railing cuts an oblique line across the whole painting, dotted at regular intervals with plants in terracotta vases; other vases in different shapes are sitting at the foot of the wooden arch of the grillage. To the right of the terrace, below, is the lower end of Salita del Gigante, now via Cesario Console, coming from Largo di Palazzo. Foundation arches can be seen on the side of the sea, and on the right is the flank of the Admiralty building on the corner of via S. Lucia; the end of the Salita is enclosed by a military quarter, occupied in the early eighteen hundreds by the infantry, with the façade on one level, accented by pilasters and ionic columns, replaced around 1935 by a building also pertinent to the Marines (Ferraro 2010, p. 143). The height of the terrace means not all the industrial buildings below are visible:

1. Eduard Hau, *Interiors of the Winter Palace. The Third Reserved Apartment. The Drawing-Room*, 1872, watercolour, Saint Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum (on the back wall the two views by Smargiassi, see cat. 13, and by Carelli, see cat. 14)

only a few roof trusses in the dockyard and buildings around the harbour, from which you can see the first stretch of the access channel from the sea but not the body of water where the presence of two ships at anchor is indicated by the tops of their masts emerging from among the buildings. The dockyard disappeared at the end of the 1920s, substituted by the Giardini del Molosiglio and via Acton; the harbour, now known as Darsena Acton, has the same perimeter as the Bourbon version and also, in part modified, a pair of the buildings visible in the painting. On the left, demarcating the military port, the large wharf emerges, ending in the so-called "Wharf Lantern", a lighthouse of fifteenth century origins and the hallmark of many Neapolitan views from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, demolished in 1932. The gulf is enclosed at the far end by the bulk of a smoking Vesuvius, extending on the right until it merges with the Monti Lattari chain, dominated by Mount Faito and girding the sea to close the gulf and form the Sorrentine peninsula. The presence of the grillage, and the viewpoint, exclude the city's sea front from the picture but not the stretch of coast that, just beyond River Sebeto, unfolds at the foot of Vesuvius. While from the left, we can make out the final extremities of Naples, which is to say the long building of the Granili, divided into four continuous bodies. Following on from there are the coastal houses and villas of San Giovanni a Teduccio, Barra, Portici, Resina (now Herculaneum), and Torre del Greco, with their farmhouses climbing up the slopes of the volcano. In the stretch of sea next to the royal terrace, among sailing boats and recreational vessels, six frigates are at anchor, two sail and steam and four sail, bearing the Russian flag.

The work, neither signed nor dated, has always been held to be by Gabriele Smargiassi and linked to a commission from Nicholas I of Russia, a great connoisseur and acquirer of works of art, often destined for the Hermitage Museum (Palermo 2007). Sources and documents allow us to date the work to 1846, to confirm the attribution and include it in those ordered by the Tsar during his sojourn in Naples (6-12 December 1845). The presence of the canvas in the third private apartment of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg is confirmed in 1872 by a watercolour by Eduard Hau (1807-87), conserved at the Hermitage Museum (inv. OP-14419). The artist captures the interior of a drawing room with exceptional descriptive skill: on the walls, clearly recognisable, our veduta, next to one by Gonzalvo Carelli, also known (see cat. no. 14, pp. 82-85).

The week Nicholas I spent in Naples was very intense, amidst military parades and visits to symbolic places of culture and modern industry. Nor were meetings with local artists neglected, and perhaps due to the small amount of time at the sovereign's disposition, these didn't occur so much at the ateliers as through the filter of a Russian individual who knew the milieu well, such as Ambassador Count Potocki, and thanks to an exhibition, organised at the palace and hence with the consent of the King of Naples, where painters such as Frans Vervloet, Smargiassi and the Carellis exhibited their works. The Russian source supplying this information states that Nicholas I bought a lot of art and commissioned more (Karčeva in Palermo 2007, p. 15). *View from the Terrace* certainly didn't belong to the group of paintings bought on that occasion but it was ordered at the time, as was the large (126 × 214 cm) *View of the Neapolitan Coast*, still conserved at the Hermitage (inv. 4240), signed by Smargiassi and dated 1847 (Serafini 2021, p. 757, fig. 2).

These two paintings, specifying the patron and original titles, namely *View of the Gulf of Naples from the Terrace of the Royal Palace* and *Mouth of the New Posillipo Road Facing Campi Flegrei*, were immediately mentioned in a biography of Smargiassi, revised up to the final months of 1845 (Giucci 1845, p. 458). Here the bibliography of the painting runs out and we move to archival sources for mention of the work's considerable cost, 1,523 ducats, and when it reached Russia, on the ship "Baron Stieglitz", early in 1847. After being shown to the Tsar at his Peterhoff residence (РГИА [Russian State Historical Archive], f. 1338, op. 4, d. 37, 15 ffv.), the work was hung in a room at the Winter Palace in St.

Petersburg, as can be seen in the painting by Hau. In 1856 it was inventoried among the paintings of the deceased sovereign (n° 366) as "G. Smargiassi, View of the Vesuvius from Naples" while around 1894, listing paintings at the Winter Palace, Baron Lieven makes reference to it with a more generic title, "Smargiassi, View of Naples", but with the same inventory number (366) allowing us to identify it (Архив ГЭ [Hermitage Archive], ф. 1, оп. 6, лит. А. Дело 42-А, л. 50). After the fall of the monarchy, the canvas ended up in the Hermitage depository and in 1928, declared to have little historical value, was put on the market.

These two cited works might have been the only requests Nicholas I made of Smargiassi, less than those commissioned of Gonzalvo Carelli or Giacinto Gigante, although Smargiassi at the time enjoyed greater prestige, due to his vast international experience, the fact that from 1838 he held the chair of landscape at the Royal Institute of Fine Arts of Naples, and the esteem of the Bourbon court. All in all, an official figure, able to meet the needs of a high level clientele whose tastes he had been familiar with from youth. Indeed, after training with Pitloo, in 1824 he moved to Rome, enjoying the protection of the Duchesse de Saint-Leu, wife of Louis Bonaparte, ex King of Holland, who employed him as painting master for her son, the future Napoleon III, took him to Switzerland in 1828 and then facilitated his entry into the Parisian milieu Smargiassi frequented, with rare trips back to Italy and a trip to London in 1831, until the end of 1837. In Paris he worked for a selective clientele, among whom the Queen of Belgium, and, above all, the court of Louis Philippe, whose children he taught drawing, and Queen Maria Amalia, aunt of Ferdinand II of Naples (Ortolani 1970, pp. 176-184).

Hence, by 1845 the figure of Smargiassi was hard to ignore, by now he had matured a language that took up elements of late eighteenth century vedutism and Northern tradition as well as Poussin, arriving at a "figurative compromise of atmospheric landscape, of vague Pitloo ascendency, but almost always elaborated in the studio with composed inserts of naturalistic elements, to achieve a final rendering with a scenographic character" (Martorelli 1997, p. 420). In short, while never betraying the study of nature, the artist had passed the phase more intensely tied to the Posillipo School, painting from life and the lyrical and immediate tone, and was on the point of reaching an elegant composition landscape painting pervaded by romantic and historical accents, and populated by figures from Ariosto and the Bible (For Smargiassi see essays in *Smargiassi* 1987).

In the *View from the Terrace* Smargiassi gives an eloquent show of his art, creating a very interesting work from an iconographic point of view. Clearly the patron's request was for him to portray the gulf from the palace terrace, but it might be supposed that it was he who chose the angle at the end, towards the façade. The result is an unusual painting, quite different from coeval works, in that it displays the well-known view of the gulf from a new angle, from the terrace of the roof garden added along the southern side of the palace after the fire of 1837 and completed around 1844. So, for the first time this place assumes the role of protagonist in foreground composition, shown in detail, and given its height with respect to sea level also allowing unprecedented views of the buildings below, from the Arsenal and Darsena, which we intuit more than see when they were and would generally be seen in their entirety: structures and spaces. Moreover, this new point of view brings out another so far neglected aspect, which is to say the military building at the end of Salita del Gigante, towards S. Lucia, which existed for centuries and only now shows itself in its recent neoclassical guise. So the Royal Palace becomes simultaneously part of the veduta and of its point of view. Being a private place difficult of access, this angle would not have a great following and perhaps only towards 1868 do we see it reappear, with substantial variants, in a painting by Giuseppe Castiglione, for now only known through prints, where Margherita of Savoy, Princess of Piedmont, appears on the terrace with the panorama of the gulf

behind her (Porzio 2011, p. 116).
The choice of the terrace as the point of view for the painting was certainly not random, being attributable to the patron's desire to remember the Neapolitan landscape precisely as he saw it from his rooms. Indeed, we know that during his stay in Naples, Nicholas I was the guest of Ferdinand II of Bourbon in the state apartments at the Royal Palace, which open onto the terrace with the roof garden (Del Pozzo 1857, p. 508). What is more, the painting transmits a marked record of the visit by the presence of the six frigates bearing the Russian flag. They did not belong to the Tsarist fleet but to the Bourbon fleet and recall the welcome extended to the Tsar at his arrival from Palermo: on 6 December, travelling on his steam frigate Bessarabia without a naval escort, he reached Naples and was welcomed at the harbour by King Ferdinand. At that moment, "the crews of the royal ships anchored there saluted, running the Russian flag up their masts", and when the royal carriages proceeded to the palace, "as they passed, the aforementioned Royal Ships, played the Russian anthem". Unless the ships' presence alludes to an exercise that took place on 10 December, but in the harbour and not offshore, involving six Neapolitan frigates in the presence of the King and Tsar (*Giornale del Regno,* 9 December 1845, p. 1075, and 11 December, p. 1081).

Renato Ruotolo

14. Gonzalvo Carelli

Naples 1819-1900

View of the Gulf of Naples from the Royal Gardens of Portici

1846

Oil of canvas, 108 × 198 mm

Inscriptions: signed, right front on rock: "Gonzalvo / Napoli"; on the back, painted on the lining: "Gonzalvo Carelli / Napoli 1841"

Provenance: St. Petersburg, Imperial Winter Palace; 1920-28 Hermitage Museum, depositary; private collections

The view is painted from the eastern part of the gulf, on the nether slopes of Vesuvius. Portrayed in the lower part is uneven terrain, with protruding rocks, cut through with small valleys and declivities as the land drops towards the sea. The vegetation is typical of the Vesuvian zone, scrub dominated by pines and oaks, dotted with the occasional prickly pear and agave, with clearings that, beyond the lower line of trees, push on to the sea. Near the oak forest enclosing the composition on the right are four huntsmen – one on horseback – with four dogs, a donkey laden with hunting equipment and two more horses. A fawn and three pheasants lie on the ground. From the left, on the path, two more huntsmen on horseback with dogs and two assistants are approaching. Along the coast, or rather, on the ridge overlooking the sea, almost in the centre we see a square tower and pier beneath, and looking to the right, a convent and two groups of houses. The gulf of Naples, dotted with sailing boats, is defined by the coastal arc of the city of Naples, overlooked by the hill of Vomero with Castel S. Elmo and Certosa di S. Martino, and concluded with the point of Pizzofalcone to which the Castel dell'Ovo bridge is attached. Behind is the high Camaldoli hill, beyond which you can see the hills of the Campi Flegrei stretching out to sea to the elevation of Capo Miseno, followed by the islands of Procida and Ischia enclosing the gulf's expanse.

The veduta described corresponds to the view from Portici, although some topographical elements are a little changed to suit the demands of portrayal. The foreground also matches the further end of Portici, towards Resina (now Herculaneum), known today, as in the eighteenth century, with the toponym Granatello, due to the presence in the olden days of a large number of pomegranate trees. The woody area where the figures have been hunting seems to have been in the lower wood of the royal park of the Palace of Portici, where the kings of Naples hunted animals of feather and fur, reared in a pheasantry and enclosures. A hypothesis supported by the presence of a fawn and three pheasants. Various other aspects confirm the identification of the place, and some elements, although modified, still occupy the same position and carry out the same functions as those present in the painting. For example, clearly evident is the pier at the port, still active, commissioned by Ferdinand IV in 1774, and on the right the eighteenth century Convent of S. Pasquale, whose modern façade still dominates the coast of Granatello. Whereas the Fort of Granatello, whose square tower is sticking out to the left of the pier, no longer exists, having been demolished in 1873. It was erected in the sixteenth century on the Capo del Fico to defend the territory then further fortified with a ravelin in 1738-40 (Formicola 2011, p. 25, passim). It caught the attention of vedutisti such as Lusieri and Della Gatta, also appearing in some prints. Another prestigious building, the eighteenth century Villa d'Elboef, now in very poor condition, seems to me to be visible to the right of S. Pasquale, closer to the sea. When Carelli painted the view, the topography was rougher than it is today and there was a greater difference in height between the sea and the plateau formed from Vesuvian lava that hid the railway, which from 1839 almost reached the port and follows the same route today.

This painting was part of a series

commissioned by Tsar Nicholas I from Carelli and other Neapolitan artists. Between 1845 and 1846, the sovereign made a long diplomatic tour of various Italian and European capitals. As far as Palermo he was accompanied by the Tsarina, who for reasons of health, needed to spend time in milder climates. The imperial family and court reached Sicily on 23 October 1845, remaining there until the following March, while on 5 December, the Tsar travelled on to Naples to take up his diplomatic tour again (Lefevre 1959, III, pp. 417-433; Palermo 2007). In less than a week at the Bourbon capital, he managed to participate in a couple of parades and visit several military establishments, the symbolic cultural spots such as Pompeii and the National Archaeological Museum, and modern industrial Naples, such as the locomotive factory, the Opificio di Pietrarsa, and the naval dockyards at Castellammare, as well as the royal palaces at Portici and Caserta, castles and monuments, such as Certosa di S. Martino (Del Pozzo 1857, pp. 507-508). Despite such frenetic activity, he also managed to get an idea of the Neapolitan artistic production of the time, however, it is hard to say, given the available time, whether he visited ateliers, as he did on the Roman sojourn, or whether it was by means of a small exhibition arranged for him at the Royal Palace of Naples, where he was staying as a guest (Karčeva in Palermo 2007, p. 15), or perhaps by following pointers from someone like Ambassador Potocki who was in contact with many local painters. The Tsar's purchases were for the most part of landscape painting, targeting the best and most noted artists of the genre: Smargiassi, Vervloet, Carelli and Giacinto Gigante (Karčeva in Palermo 2007, pp. 15-16). This last, thanks to the good offices of Potocki, carried out two large paintings for the Tsar and was sent to the Tsarina in Sicily to make paintings of certain landscapes on the island (Ortolani 1970, pp. 208- 209).

The youngest of the landscapists contacted by the Tsar was Gonzalvo Carelli, born in 1818 but already well established: he had trained with his father Raffaele and improved his watercolour technique with William Leicht, and by the 1830s he had received his first plaudits at Bourbon exhibitions, so much so that at the 1837 exhibition the king brought two of his views. From the start, Carelli could count on exalted patrons, among others the Duke of Terranova, who in 1837 awarded him a bursary to go to Rome, where he remained until 1840, frequenting the artists from the French Academy in particular. After a brief return to Naples, in 1841 he left for Paris, where he stayed three years, developing his technical knowledge and his relationships with various French landscape artists (Martorelli 2002, pp. 15-16), exhibiting at the Salons and enjoying the patronage of the court of Louis Philippe.

By 1845 Carelli, thanks to his ample experiences, had reached artistic maturity and could count on high placed support and buyers, from the courts of Naples and France, to English lords and Neapolitan aristocrats (Napier 1855. Ed. cons. 1956, pp. 86-88; Martorelli 1991, II, p. 740). Excellent reasons to include him in the list of maestros fit to work for the Tsar. A source that seemed to know him well, Lord Napier, recalls that once he returned from Paris, he took part "in the Russian Emperor's patronage, for whom he made a veduta of Naples from the Park of Portici and a fine panorama from the Convent of the Camaldoli" (Napier 1855. Ed. cons. 1956, p. 88). We can't tell whether these are the two paintings by Carelli listed in the Neapolitan archives, indeed the only two views he carried out for the Tsar, which were exported in March 1847 and March 1849, are not described (AS-MANN, CABBAA, XX B 1-4.14 e IX D 3-2.11). However, we are certain that he sent at least five paintings to Russia, three of which were delivered to Tsarina Alexandra (РГИА [Russian State Historical Archive], ф. 1338, оп. 4, д. 37, ff. 17/18). Among these, the "View of the Gulf of Naples from the Royal Garden of Portici" should be the painting in question here, and the work inventoried in 1856 as n° 367 among the assets of the deceased Nicholas I, as "View of the Gulf of Naples, 28½ by 48". This work, sharing inventory number and measurements, was catalogued around 1894 by Baron Lieven and described as "Gonsalvo Carelli, View of the Gulf of Naples with Huntsmen, 1846, 29 by 47⅝" (Архив ГЭ [Hermitage Archive], ф. 1, оп.

6, лит. А. Дело 42-А, л. 50). Baron Lieven is clearly describing our painting, adding the date 1846.
In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the veduta was located in a drawing room at the Winter Palace, St. Petersburg, as shown in documents and a watercolour by Eduard Heu, portraying the interior of a room at the imperial residence (1872; St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, inv. OP-14419): reproduced, hung to the sides of a fireplace with mirror, the *View of the Gulf of Naples from the Terrace of the Royal Palace*, by Smargiassi (see cat. no. 13, pp. 46-51), and this *View of the Gulf of Naples from the Royal Gardens of Portici*, by Carelli. After the fall of the monarchy, the canvas was moved to the Hermitage depository and in 1928, declared of little historical interest and sold.
View from Portici was signed by Carelli only as Gonzalvo, while on the back there is an inscription with both forename and surname and the date 1841, contrasting with the date of 1846 noted down by Lieven. It seems that the work underwent restoration in the early twentieth century. On the occasion it was re-lined, and on the new canvas, now hard to remove, the author's details and the date would have been re-written, so there may have been an error in copying, the six being substituted by a one. My opinion is that the correct date is 1846 and that the baron obtained it from the original inscription on the back of the first canvas. Moreover, there is no evidence that Nicholas I commissioned works before 1845, even from artists more famous than Carelli.
Some of the Tsar's Neapolitan experiences are fundamental to understanding the iconographic novelties of one of the paintings requested to Smargiassi. It is also possible that the choice of point of view of this veduta by Carelli, not entirely new, was motivated by a visit to the Royal Palace at Portici made by the sovereign on 11 December 1845 (Giornale del Regno 12 December 1845, p. 1088). In this work the artist shows his ability to compose large surfaces and to meet the taste of the most courtly and sophisticated clientele. In such a case he cannot put across a reality pervaded by emotions, according to the best dictates of Pitloo and the Posillipo painters, but has to create a fine composition, with the natural elements disposed in a scenographic manner, not necessarily following their true disposition. A work carried out in the studio, with the help of notes taken from life: so the oaks and pines are located at the sides as scenic wings, the rock and agave are typical elements from Gonzalvo's repertoire, and even the portrayal of the arch of the gulf is somewhat forced in order to bring out certain points. Animating the scenery are animals and huntsmen, well rendered as always with Carelli. Paintings of this genre are typical of those years and convey the classical taste, inspired by Claude or Poussin, developed through knowledge of the French landscape artists.

Renato Ruotolo

15. Ettore Ferrari

Rome 1845-1929

Cum Spartaco Pugnavit

1877

Terracotta, h. 36 cm

Monogrammed and dated: "EF 1877"

Provenance: Rome, Ettore Ferrari's studio; Rome, Bruno Mantura collection

Bibliography: Mantura 1974, 7-8, pp. 41-50; Guidoni 1988, pp. 19-109.

Ferrari was soon to debut in large public sculpture: initially with the monuments for Romania of the poet *Heliade Radulescu* (1877) and *Ovid* (1879), then for Venice, from 1880, with the *Equestrian Monument to Victor Emanuel II*. There subsequently followed numerous works dedicated to Garibaldi and the figures of the Risorgimento. While two masterpieces, *Giordano Bruno* in Campo dei Fiori (1887) and the *Monument to Giuseppe Mazzini* located on the Aventine (1902-1911), which would emblematically clarify his vocation for monumental sculpture in its formal meanings, as articulated plastic synthesis of volumes and chromatic contrasts, and in the political monuments, able to trigger strong ideological reactions from the public of the time.

1. Ettore Ferrari, *Cum Spartaco Pugnavit*, 1880, plaster, Exhibited at Esposizione Nazionale di Belle Arti, Turin

Meanwhile, over the course of the 1870s, Ferrari also tried to transfer onto the figurative level Mazzinian and Republican militancy, which, after adhering to the failed insurrectional attempt of 1867 against the papal regime, would see him involved in dual public collaboration, as city councillor and deputy, as well as masonic, in the quality of Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Italy. Thus revision of the Mazzinian artistic theories suggested, besides enthusiastic romantic literary themes, the restoration of historical subjects with a view to civil sculpture, forming a new revolutionary iconography to put in place new formulas that could combine modern realism with the baroque tradition of Bernini. The results are the series of terracotta studies and large scale figures including the figures of *Brutus*, founder of the Roman Republic, *Stefano Porcari*, the humanist who tried to stir up the Roman people against the Church to re-establish the ancient republic, of *The Suicide of Jacopo Ortis*, dedicated to the sacrifice of the self to escape tyranny, as well as the figure of Mazzini himself, which was exhibited in Naples in 1877 and in Paris the following year.

In 1877 the series also included the subject of Spartacus, architect of history's first social revolution and previously protagonist of Denis Foyatier's heroic statue, carried out in Rome in 1830 and in turn giving a nod to Canova's *Creugas and Demoxenos* (Rome, Vatican), and the work of Vincenzo Vela,

immediately recognised as a call to anti-Austrian arms on the eve of the fateful '48 (Ligornetto, Museo Vela). In reference to some pencil studies probably dating back to 1867-68 and mentioned by Bruno Mantura, Ferrari again investigated the theme of the vanquished, portraying the ferocious Roman repression in the two sketches *Cum Spartaco Pugnavit*. The study presented here, with the crucified slave, and another from a private collection with the figure tied to the cross, thus constitute a sort of lay Via Crucis, as Mantura suggests.

In the sketch put forward here, the pale, defenceless beauty of the female figure is moving, lamented by her friend, like a mourner at the foot of the cross. The emphasis of pathos of this expressive figure, alongside the crude realism dictated by the inert weight of the composition, defined a strong political and social manifesto against exploitation, servitude and despotism. A manifesto that was at the same time also artistic, neo-baroque in virtuosity of execution, in the potent contrast of full and empty and in its three-dimensional composition, providing multiple points of view.

Three years later, presenting the large-scale model of the group at the Esposizione Nazionale di Torino (Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna), the artist may have softened the subversive effect entrusted to pathos, relying on the strong realism of the magnificent male nude of the gladiator to put across the invitation to political action. His character was well understood by the press of the time: "Ferrari has remained faithful to the belief, recently tackled by Bonghi, according to which the revolt led by Spartacus, rather than a political fact, was considered a question of a humanitarian nature, like the revolt against the principle of slavery and against the use of gladiatorial combat. According to this belief, Spartacus and his followers assume a sacred character, becoming so many martyrs of the feeling for human dignity that rebels against the horrors and degradation of slavery" (*Esposizione di Torino* 1880, p. 321). And despite the accusations of plagiarism of the group by Louis-Ernest Barrias, *Le Serment de Spartacus*, made in Rome in 1871 (Paris, Tuileries), provoking a vast polemic taken up by the press of the period, the group won the award for first prize for sculpture and also saw its success confirmed at the London exhibition of 1888.

Stefano Grandesso

16. Giulio Bargellini

Florence 1869-Rome 1936

Reclining Male Nude (study for *Return of the Shipwrecked*?)

ca. 1894

Oil on canvas, 49.2 × 33.6 cm
Signed bottom right: "Giulio Bargellini"
Provenance: Rome, private collection

After training with Augusto Burchi, with whom the artist learned the bases of architectonic decoration in the tradition of the Italian Renaissance Revival style, reflected in a panel of grotesques that recently appeared in the market (Asta Cambi, no. 677, November 2021), Giulio Bargellini, despite his precocious age, began a more fruitful collaboration with Francesco Vinea, at least as regards stylistic maturation. Vinea was an elegant painter in the tradition of Meissonier, who would provide Bargellini with a more structured iconographic background.

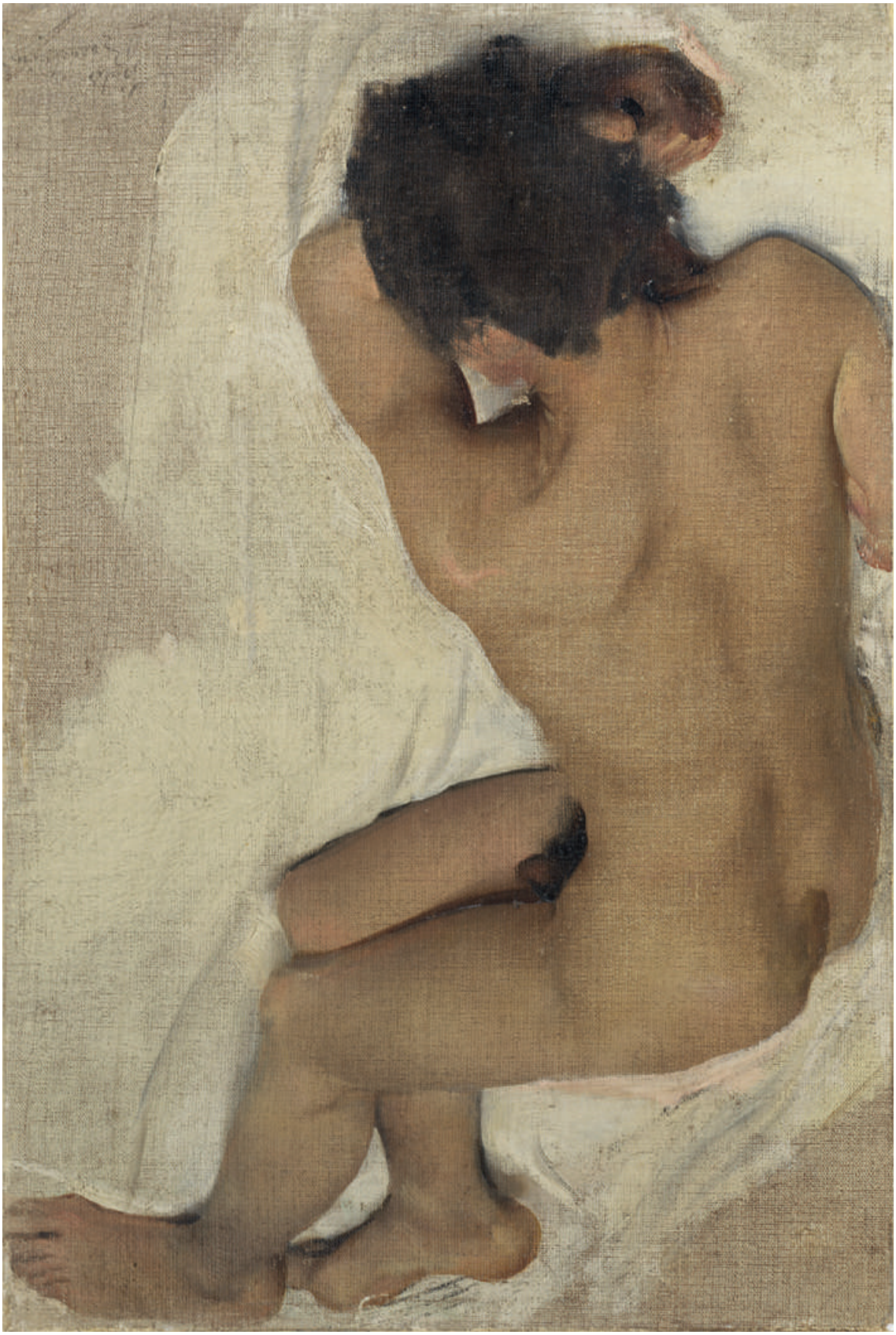
He would also introduce him to the Florentine dealer Giovanni Hautmann, for whom Bargellini frescoed the facade of his gallery (later destroyed). Hautmann had close links to the English market and commissioned a series of works to the young artist destined for Anglo-Saxon collectors, prevalently inspired by the works of Alma Tadema, but also of religious subjects (today mainly dispersed, but testified by a series of photographs now in the Alinari Archives in Florence) and directing suggestions and taste in a decisive manner.

With the series *Idylls,* Bargellini, at least iconographically, came close to the preferred neo-Greek, themes of Alma-Tadema – visions that reflected Victorian high society interests in lovers, spats, and precious artifacts –, studied and admired probably during his stay with his Maestro Vinea. However, he kept his distance from the Anglo-Dutch artist's adorned technique, preferring use of the more opaque and earthy tones that would become his personal stylistic signature. In his more mature works he arrived at an "unfinished" style, in which we can discern traces of charcoal and other media variously combined, as well as areas of canvas intentionally left bare, and an apparently hurried style characterised by crucial perspective glimpses, causing him to be stigmatized by the critics of the time, above all for colouring defined "deaf" (on the artist see: *La pittura storica* 1976, pp. 19, 32; *Roma 1911*, pp. 158-159; Spadini 1982; *Opere inedite di Giulio Bargellini* 1982; Gentilini 1989, pp. 154-167; *L'artista studente* 2002, pp. 42-46, 74-75).

It was through his collaboration with Hautmann that Bargellini met his younger colleague Galileo Chini, with whom he worked on the decoration of Palazzo Budini Gattai and who recalled the meeting thus: "[…] when I introduced myself to Giulio I felt something I can't explain, quite simply our eyes met and there was an understanding! […] When we went out Bargellini was very open and we became friends; he asked me so many things, I found him extremely well educated and was amazed by how much he knew. From that time I felt he represented a lot for me!" (*Il Tarlo* 1998, p. 32).

Alongside the works of neo-Greek taste presented at the Concorso del Pensionato Artistico and with which he won an award (*Pygmalion and Eburnea*, 1897) Bargellini autonomously cultivated a figurative art of a symbolist stamp of clearly central European derivation, upheld by means of cuttings from German newspapers and magazines. For example, from these years comes the painting *The Angel of Life* (1897-1900), almost his own version of the famous *Der Wächter des Paradieses (The Guardian of Paradise)* by Franz von Stuck (1889), although the symbolist component would find its peak in the decorative cycle carried out by Bargellini at Villa Targioni Peragallo in Calenzano (Florence, 1905-1910), in which a complex esoteric iconography appears, whose doctrines the artist had been nurturing for years.

For each theme Bargellini took on, he made dozens of preliminary studies, hundreds of drawings recorded in the pages of large



sketchbooks, in which he minutely studied different points of view, perspectives, angles and framings. He used the same methodology, although in a reduced form, for the canvas too, there are numerous known variants for each subject.
Although we cannot identify the subject with absolute certainty, it is likely that the painting in question – a male nude reclining with face hidden – relates to the cycle of paintings on the theme *Return of the Shipwrecked* with which the artist participated in 1894 in the Pensionato Artistico Nazionale competition, and where he obtained an honourable mention. Period photographs record at least two variants of the painting and numerous oil studies made before the definitive drafting, which previous literature all assigns to the collections of the National Art Gallery of Sydney, but which at a first scrutiny of the museum catalogue is inexistent.

Similar pictorial rendering from the period supports the attribution of the shipwrecked theme, as it was characterised by a dry texture with veiled colour: "Bargellini worked with little colour in order to make the painting become transparent […]" (*Il Tarlo* 1998, p. 34).
The iconography of the figure lying prone and abandoned reflects the artist's pessimistic personal vision. He is quite evidently showing, as he does in other works (for example *The Abyss*, 1902, lost) the concept of the fall and desperation typical of European symbolist contemporary production, revealing that attitude of the epoch defined as "Uranist" in which the artist shows particular attention to the male nude.
This work is archived in the artist's general catalogue with inventory number 5-2022.1.

Francesco Parisi

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