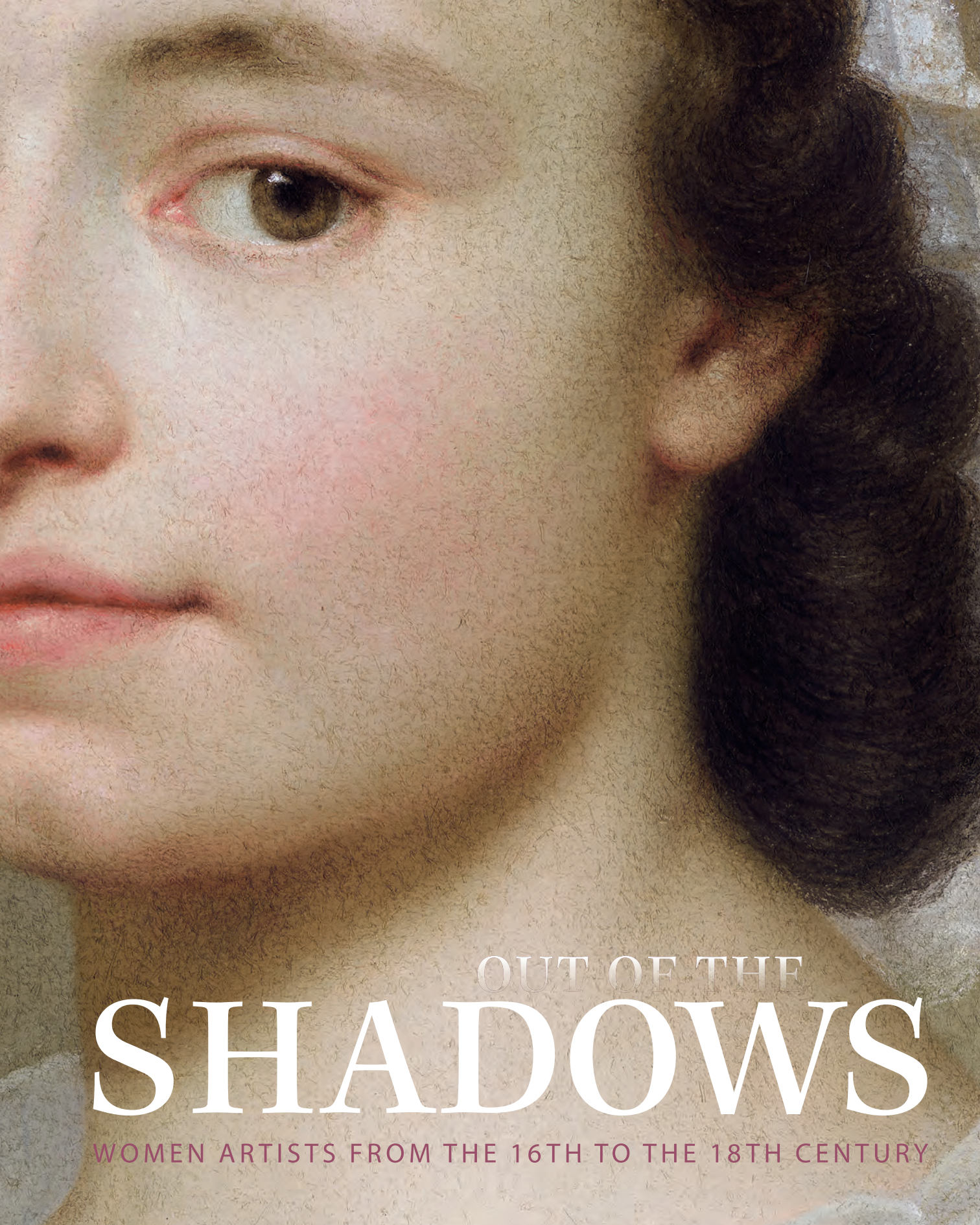

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

WOMEN ARTISTS FROM THE 16TH TO THE 18TH CENTURY

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EDITED BY
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SANDSTEIN

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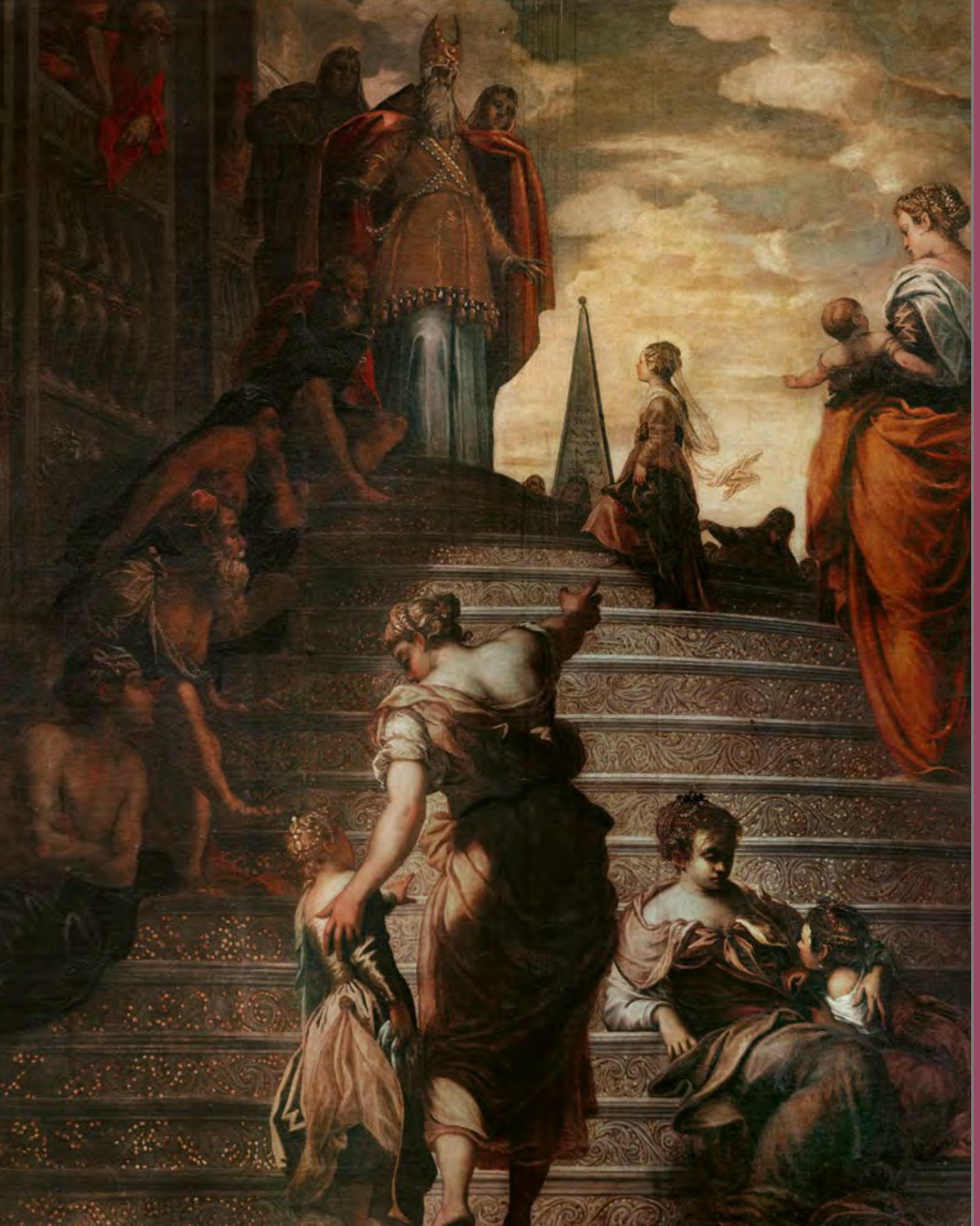


MARIETTA ROBUSTI

La Tintoretta

IRIS YVONNE WAGNER

Art historians tend to have little to say about Marietta Robusti, daughter of the celebrated Venetian painter Jacopo Robusti, known as Tintoretto (1518 – 1594). What they almost invariably cite as a contemporary source is the art-theoretical work *Il Riposo* by Raffaello Borghini (1537 – 1588), which includes a short section on Marietta.[1] In addition to the near-obligatory praise of the artist's beauty and her musical and artistic talent, the author also mentions a portrait of Jacopo Strada (1507 – 1588), antiquary to Emperor Maximilian II, and the artist herself, which the emperor was said to treasure as something of a rarity by placing it in his chamber. Borghini went on to say that although King Philip II of Spain, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, and the Habsburg emperor had all wanted to attract this outstanding artist to their courts, her father would not allow it. According to Borghini, Marietta was about 28 years old and a painter, but, in the absence of any further information about her oeuvre, he preferred not to continue writing about her. In his *Maraviglie dell'arte*, her later biographer Carlo Ridolfi (1594 – 1658) had little more to report than Borghini, on whom he drew heavily.[2] He added that Tintoretto had taught his daughter to paint and draw and took her everywhere he went, for which purpose she would dress like a boy. According to Ridolfi, she was a good portraitist who had created numerous portraits of Venetian noblemen, among them one of Marco de' Vescovi (with a long beard) and his son (*figliuolo*) Pietro. We also learn that Marietta was given in marriage to the goldsmith Marco Augusta and went on to produce many portraits of her husband's friends, most of which are lost. She died in 1590 at the age of 30 and was buried in the church of Madonna dell'Orto. The dearth of sources containing any further or even divergent information about the artist means that art historians remain as divided over the dates of her life as they are over her oeuvre – if indeed one can speak of it as such.

THE ILLEGITIMATE DAUGHTER

A later but important reference, which the biographies do not mention, is found in the *Genealogia della Casa Tintoretto* of 1682.[3] There it is claimed that Marietta was the daughter of Jacopo and a German woman whom the artist had loved very much. He is said to have immortalised mother and daughter in a painting of a woman holding a girl's hand for the church of the Madonna dell'Orto.[4] Although the source is viewed with some scepticism by scholars, the reference to this painting does deserve attention. For Madonna dell'Orto was not only the parish church of the Cannaregio district in Venice, to which Tintoretto moved in 1547, it was also a church for which he was to execute several works. In 1551 he signed a contract to produce a painting of the *Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple* for the two organ shutters of the church.[5] He appears not to have completed it until 1556, for it was in that year that he received the final payment.[6] Around 1560, he produced two further large-format works, the *Worship of the Golden Calf* and the *Last Judgement*. Between the end of 1559 and the beginning of 1560, Jacopo married

◄ Detail from fig. 1

Fig. 1

JACOPO ROBUSTI, CALLED TINTORETTO

The Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple, 1551 – 1556
Oil on canvas, 429 × 480 cm,
Venice, Madonna dell'Orto

Faustina de' Vescovi (also known as Episcopi), who came from a distinguished Venetian family. This marriage produced many children, of whom Domenico (b. 1560), Marco (b. 1562), as well as Gierolima, Zuan Battista, Lucrezia, Ottavia, Laura, Altura (also known as Ottavia), and Perina reached adulthood. Jacopo also trained his sons Domenico and Marco as artists, and both worked with Marietta in their father's workshop. Marietta thus seems to have been born out of wedlock. This could explain why her date of birth is unknown. The literature yields references to 1550,[7] 1552,[8] 1554,[9] 1556,[10] and 1560.[11] Several clues suggest the earlier dates as the more likely. One is the aforementioned painting in Madonna dell'Orto, in which, according to the *Genealogia*, Tintoretto had included a portrait of his daughter with her mother (fig. 1). Either of the two prominent women at the bottom of the ornate flight of steps could be considered here – one reclining, back turned

to the miraculous scene, with her left arm wrapped around the prone figure of a girl nestling against and looking up at her, the other seen from behind, ascending the stairs with a girl to her left. The stature and proportions of the two girls in the picture suggest that they are four or five years old. Since the painting was completed by 1556 at the latest, Marietta, if she was indeed the model, would have to have been born no later than 1552.[12] If Tintoretto prepared the figure studies earlier or completed the work in 1553, as suggested by Pallucchini and Rossi, an even earlier date of birth would be conceivable.[13] As shall be explained later, the year of Marietta's birth is relevant to the question of authorship of works from Tintoretto's studio.

Attributions to Marietta are also problematic because she adopted her father's style, as did her brother Domenico, to whom neither Borghini nor Ridolfi dedicated a biography.[14] Successful workshops such as Tintoretto's sought to ensure that their entire output was executed in the master's signature style. There was no incentive for family members who worked with him to cultivate an individual manner, let alone sign the works they produced.[15] Despite this, drawing on the scant biographical information, there have been attempts to attribute works to Marietta on the basis of stylistic characteristics or a signature.[16] After all, she was active in Tintoretto's workshop for some 20 years and must have produced or collaborated on a substantial number of paintings.

Fig. 2

MARIETTA ROBUSTI

Study of a Bust of Vitellius (verso)
c. 1564, charcoal, heightened in white on blue paper, 390 × 280 mm, private collection

Cat. 22
Pseudo-Vitellius (cast of a marble head in Genoa)
Plaster, h.: 37 cm, w.: 25 cm, d.: 28.5 cm, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Skulpturensammlung bis 1800, inv. no. ASN 1987

SIGNED WORKS

So far, there are two works attributed to Marietta on the basis of a signature. The first is a drawing on a sheet that was sold at auction at Christie's in 2021.[17] On the verso is a male head seen from below, executed in black and white chalk, with the inscription "Questa testa/ si è di ma[no] de/ madona Marietta" (fig. 2). The contours of the head and the salient passages of the face are captured in black chalk. The handling of the lines is loose and shows a confident but not yet fully professional hand. A few touches in white chalk invest the head with a sculptural quality. The young artist dispensed with hatching and any further definition of the area around the eyes, the nose, and the mouth, contenting herself instead with capturing the most characteristic elements in just a few lines. The conspicuous inscription across the lower part of the sheet can be read as evidence of her self-assurance or – if we subscribe to the argument that it was written by Tintoretto – of her father's pride.[18] The model for Marietta's early drawing was a cast of a Roman marble head from the time of Hadrian in the Grimani Collection (cat. 22). Believed to be a portrait of the Emperor Vitellius, the third of the four emperors who ruled in AD 69, the head was discovered in Rome in 1505 during excavations sponsored by the Venetian cardinal Domenico Grimani and displayed in the Sala delle Teste in the Doge's Palace in Venice between 1525 and 1593, where privileged artists could study it and make plaster casts from it.[19] Tintoretto had one such cast in his workshop. It is mentioned in the will of his son Domenico, drawn up in 1630.[20] Some 25 drawings of or after this plaster cast from Tintoretto's workshop have come down to us. They testify to its importance as a workshop prop used to train young artists and as a model, which Tintoretto himself drew repeatedly and incorporated into his compositions (fig. 3).[21]

The second signed work, whose attribution to Marietta is contested, is the double portrait of an elderly gentleman with a long beard and a boy (fig. 4).[22] Drawing on Ridolfi's assertion that the artist had painted a portrait of Marco de' Vescovi with a long beard and his *figliuolo*, Erika Tietze-Conrat, writing in the early 20th century, considered this painting, now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, to be a work by Marietta Robusti.[23] However, it is not clear from Ridolfi's text whether he was referring to a double portrait or two separate likenesses. A signature can be made out in the lower left of the composition on the side of the chair: a "65", an "M", and a "3", which, however, can also be read as a stylised "R".[24] Today, the painting, dated 1565, is attributed to Jacopo Robusti, although Tietze-Conrat's suggestion to read the initials "M" and "R" for Marietta Robusti would appear to make sense – especially if it is indeed the family portrait of the de' Vescovi mentioned by Ridolfi that remained in their house, not least because, as father of Faustina, Marco de' Vescovi was Tintoretto's father-in-law.[25] However, if we were to maintain that Marietta was born around 1554, then we would also have to be willing to accept this accomplished painting as the work of an eleven-year-old

Fig. 3

JACOPO ROBUSTI, CALLED TINTORETTO

Study of a Bust of Vitellius (recto), 1533–1594, charcoal, heightened in white on blue paper, 304 × 207 mm
London, British Museum, museum number 1885,0509.1658

and the drawing (fig. 2) of a ten-year-old. If, however, we set her date of birth to around 1551, the attribution to Marietta becomes more feasible. On the left side of the painting, we see an old man with grey hair and beard sitting on a folding armchair.[26] His upper body is bent slightly forward, and his arms rest on the sides of the chair. While his wrinkled face, grey hair, and pensive, unfocused gaze are rendered in keenly observed detail and fine brushstrokes, the execution of his hands seems less accomplished in comparison. The black skullcap seems to have been an afterthought, and we can see the forehead shimmering through the thin layer of black paint. The boy standing to the right of the old man gazes at us inquisitively. He has a lighter complexion, brown eyes, short brown hair and is shown wearing a fur-trimmed coat and a high-necked reddish-brown doublet over a frilled white shirt. Here the execution is more virtuosic. The boy's face and direct gaze seem alive, and it looks as if this figure has been executed or reworked by a different hand. The overall palette is dark; the focus is on the two faces which, positioned at the same level, emblematise old age and the bloom of youth. Following Tietze-Conrat and Rearick, who describes this painting as too tentative for Tintoretto, the author of this essay is also inclined to recognise it as an early work by Marietta's hand, possibly with some assistance from her father.[27]

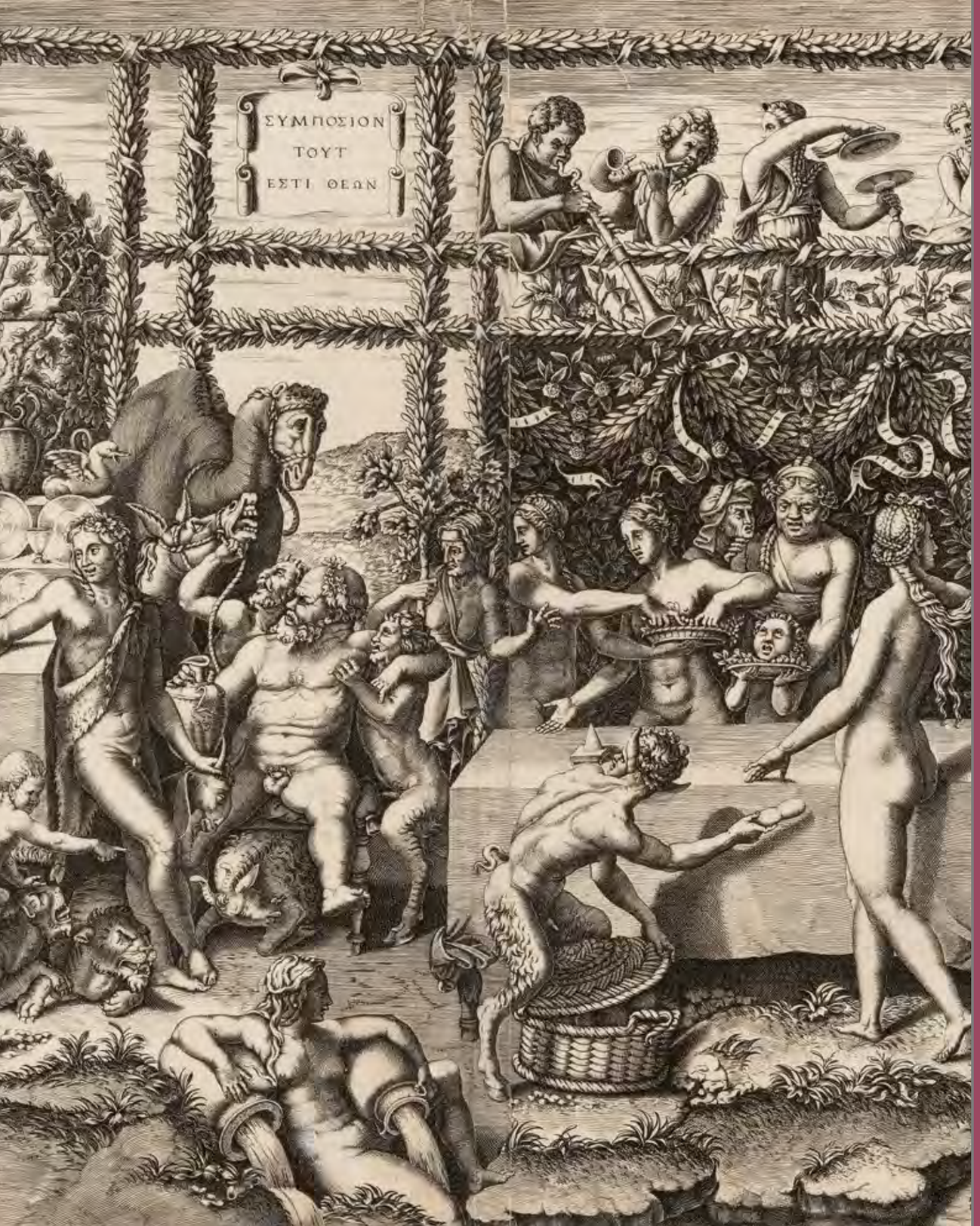
THE DRESDEN DOUBLE PORTRAIT

Among the paintings attributed to Marietta is a double portrait acquired in 1749 as the work of Jacopo Tintoretto (cat. 1) from the Imperial Gallery in Prague Castle for the collection of Augustus III, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony. An elderly gentleman, dressed in black, with brown hair and a long beard is shown sitting in a wooden folding armchair. A second, clearly younger person with a lighter complexion and blond hair, equally dressed in black, turns towards the seated figure from the right side of the composition. As the chair is turned slightly to the left, the older gentleman grips the armrest with his left hand to turn his upper body towards his interlocutor, whose right hand seems to be directing his attention at something outside the picture space. Painted primarily in shades of ochre, brown, and black, the picture is covered with a coat of yellowed varnish. The dark clothing of the two figures, relieved only by their white collars and a mere hint of their frilled shirt cuffs, seems to merge with the brown background. The only distinctive elements to emerge from the crepuscular darkness of the composition are the faces and hands of the sitters. The left hand of the standing figure close to the right edge of the picture seems somewhat out of place; it is barely defined and looks as if it had been added as an afterthought. Overall, the composition seems unbalanced, as if the picture has been cropped on the right. Formally, it shares parallels with the double portrait in Vienna discussed above. Here, too, an elderly gentleman is shown seated on the left and accompanied by a much younger person standing on the right. In the Viennese picture, the execution of the old man's hands is summary and anatomically

Fig. 4

JACOPO ROBUSTI, CALLED TINTORETTO

Old Man and Boy, c. 1565
Oil on canvas, 103 × 83 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 37



“DIANA MANTUANA INCIDIT”

The Engraver Diana Scultori

LARISSA MOHR

DIANA MANTUANA'S INSCRIPTIONS

Over the centuries, Diana Scultori (1547–1612) was known by many different names. That this should be so says much about the mechanisms of art historiography and historical artistic practice: Because of an erroneous assumption by the biographer Giorgio Vasari (1511–1674) about Diana's kinship with the engraver Giorgio Ghisi (1520–1582), she was referred to as Diana Ghisi in the 18th century.[1] She did not acquire the surname by which she is known today until more recently, in derivation from her father's self-designation as Giovanni Battista Scultori (1503–1575), which was applied to her as a kind of patronym. Although that name correctly reflects the family connections, it is still not entirely fitting, because, unlike her father, whose output consisted not only of prints but also of three-dimensional works in stucco and papier-mâché,[2] Diana Scultori was active purely as an engraver. The profession-derived surname of "Scultori" proves to be even more of a misnomer when we take a closer look at the much-discussed inscriptions of her engravings. She was the first female engraver to sign her works and add extensive dedications to the prints. The signatures range from "Diana",[3] "Diana Filia" (for "daughter", for example, when reinterpreting her father's works in graphic form), "Diana Mantuano" or "Diana Mantovana" after her native city of Mantua, to "Diana Mantuana Civis Volaterana", in reference to Volterra, where she was granted honorary citizenship after her marriage to Francesco Capriani (1535–1594), a native of Volterra.[4] Not once did she use the name Diana Scultori, by which we know her today. In her signatures, she was obviously concerned with signalling her connections to the court of Mantua, to her father or husband, and to the hometown of the latter.[5] These connections were essential for Diana as an artist. To use them to her professional advantage, to spin them into commissions and the art of self-promotion were lessons that she would have first learned from her father at an early age. In the 1520s, Giovanni Battista worked in the Palazzo Te under Giulio Romano (1492–1546), a former pupil of and assistant to Raphael (1483–1520).[6] Although Giovanni Battista was thus involved in projects for the Gonzaga court in Mantua, he was not a court artist in the narrower sense of the term; he was not a member of a princely household, nor in receipt of a regular stipend.[7] Instead, Diana's father constantly had to solicit new patrons and commissions. His own prints were not so much a source of income for him as a "courtly currency" for obtaining commissions.[8]

Diana, who was in Rome from 1575, also employed this strategy.[9] The architectural engraving of a volute of a Composite capital (fig. 1) is emblematic of such an approach. Her image of the richly ornamented volute is striking for the amount of space and level of intricacy afforded to an architectural detail, and she complements it with an inscription in italics. This inscription bears a dedication to those who study architecture and names

◄ Detail from cat. 11

Fig. 1

DIANA SCULTORI

Volute of a Composite Capital, 1576
Engraving, 303 × 440 mm,
Rome, Biblioteca Alessandrina,
inv. no. Rari 293/38

the architect who had made a drawing of the ancient capital: her husband Francesco Capriani, known as Francesco da Volterra. In the most thorough study of Diana Scultori published to date, Evelyn Lincoln observed: "Diana's print differed quite a bit from the model-bookish profiles of the classical orders previously in circulation"[10] – which is all the more remarkable, given that the study is, after all, dedicated to those who study architecture. Instead, it seems to be about establishing a reputation for her new Roman household and publicising Francesco's skill as an architect, an enterprise that tied in with her own artistic aspirations, which are evident in the intricacy and ornamentation of the engraving.

Thus, the signatures and inscriptions provide not only information about the artist's origin and relationships but also about the use and function of the prints.[11] Moreover, signing their prints allowed engravers to take credit for their work that otherwise might go unrecognised – which routinely happened to Diana's father when working as part of a larger workshop.[12] Keenly aware of this risk, Diana signed her prints. Her business acumen is also evident in her decision to request a papal privilege to protect

"her sole right to profit from the distribution of her prints for a period of ten years and to market them as her own invention and property."[13] The privilege, granted on 5 June 1575, mentions five prints – two of which, *Christ and the Adulteress* and *Feast of the Gods*, are shown in the exhibition – and safeguarded them against unauthorised reproduction by others.[14] The added legitimation bestowed upon her by the privilege of Pope Gregory XIII (reg. 1572–1585) found its way into her inscriptions from this point onwards.

Diana occasionally took a playful approach to the design of her inscriptions, using capital block letters for her signature and an elaborate cursive script for the dedications, which testify to exceptional skill – especially when we consider that all inscriptions have to be engraved into the plate in reverse.[15] Lettering frequently appears not only along the lower edge of the engraving in the shape of inscriptions or dedications set in neatly justified blocks; we also find signatures and inscriptions integrated into the pictorial space, for example on tablets suspended from a branch or carved into the beams or entablature of an architectural structure. Thus, Diana not only paid special attention to the content and careful wording of her inscriptions, but also to their formal execution. In this way, she ensured that they became an integral part of the composition.

Cat. 12

DIANA SCULTORI

Two Children Attached by Their Backs, 1577
Engraving, diam. 195 mm (plate), 273 × 270 mm (sheet), Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. no. A 109372

Fig. 2

GIULIO ROMANO AND WORKSHOP

Ceiling of the Camerino degli Uccelli, 1536
Fresco, Mantua, Palazzo Ducale

THE TWIN TONDO

Nowhere is this playful handling of inscriptions more evident than in a tondo with twins (cat. 12).[16] Two children, bound together back-to-back, are set in an undifferentiated pictorial space, which, in the state of the engraving shown here, is lightly stippled to create a sense of depth.[17] Looking at the print from the angle it is presented here, we see, on the right, the name of the draughtsman, Raffaellino da Reggio (1550–1578) who had provided Diana with a drawing of Giulio Romano's fresco for her print, the engraver's signature on the left, and a dedication at the top and bottom.[18] But if we want to read these four blocks of text, we have to rotate the print. This rotation promptly makes us doubt our initial assumption that the two children are joined at the back. Indeed, by the time we have completed a 90-degree turn, we now find ourselves convinced that they are in fact lying belly-to-belly. This effect had already baffled viewers of Giulio Romano's original composition on the ceiling of the Camerino degli Uccelli in the ducal palace in Mantua, where the way the frescoed twins (fig. 2) are connected seemed to change depending on where the viewer was standing. Diana's engraving invites interaction: by rotating the tondo, viewers may come to discern the inscription in full, but by doing so they forfeit any solid grasp of the physical relationship of the two children.

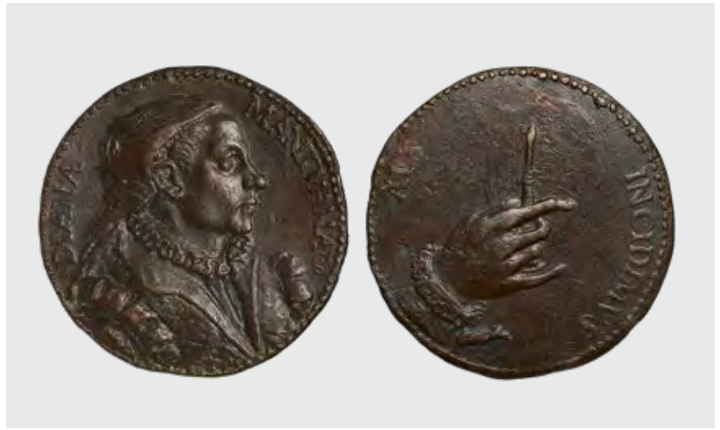


Fig. 3

T. R. (UNKNOWN)

Medal with portrait of Diana Scultori (obverse) and her hand holding a burin, engraving a figure of the Virgin and Child (reverse), 16th c.
Bronze medal, diam. 40 mm, London, British Museum, inv. no. G3,IP.688

"COSA MARAVIGLIOSA"

The two children – sometimes associated with the Christ Child because of the goldfinch and the ointment jar – are often seen as conjoined twins. In a recent essay, Maria F. Maurer describes Diana's choice of Giulio Romano's motif, its adaptation and transformation into something uniquely her own as proof of her "procreative capacities".[19] At the same time, Maurer draws a parallel between the shape-shifting motif of the twin tondo and the status ascribed to Diana as an engraver in the 16th century as a "marvel".[20] This perceived marvelousness goes back to the second edition of Giorgio Vasari's *Vite*, in which he mentioned Giovanni Battista Scultori and his daughter Diana in the biography of Il Garofalo (1481–1559).[21] Vasari described Diana, probably the only female artist in the *Vite* whom he had actually met in person, as "cosa più maravigliosa" and her activity as an engraver as "cosa maravigliosa", a thing to marvel at.[22] Diana's personality and work thus received the same qualitative judgement, in line with the general assessment of women artists as something not so much wonderful as wondrous, in that they deviated from the norm.[23] Picking up on this, Maurer sees Diana's twins (cat. 12) as a play on this characterisation and concludes: "By positioning herself and her prints as wonders and monsters, Diana turns Vasari's backhanded praise to her advantage. She acknowledges her unusual situation, while also positioning herself as someone who endlessly reproduces *cose maravigliose*."[24]

A medal with Diana's portrait (fig. 3) can be seen as a counterpoint to this reading of the engraver as a "marvel". It shows on the obverse a portrait of the artist in profile and on the reverse her hand holding the burin while engraving an image of the Madonna into a printing plate. The medal was created alongside that of her husband Francesco, which likewise shows the professional tools of his calling as an architect on the reverse. In their identical representational formula, the medals create the impression of Diana's and Francesco's equal status in their respective professions.[25] This equality also finds expression in the fact that Diana's coin is free of any reference to her father or husband, as convention would have required. The depiction of Diana wearing a "matronly veil" supports Gill Perry's argument that "images of the matron-artist could successfully rebuff the 'beautiful freak' reading".[26] Nevertheless, the image of the Virgin and Christ Child on the reverse of the medal is a tried-and-tested rhetorical device to absolve Diana of even the slightest hint of unseemliness or hubris. Other women artists, among them Sofonisba Anguissola (c. 1532–1625), also resorted to this device,[27] probably in the hope that the viewer would perceive them as being as humble as the Virgin Mary.

As Linda Nochlin noted in her seminal essay "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?", almost all women artists were "either daughters of artists or had [...] a close personal relationship with a stronger or dominant male artistic personality."[28] While this was sometimes also true of male artists who were sons of established artists, until the 19th century it almost invariably applied to female artists – as was no less the case with Diana. She would have been denied an education in an academic setting (the academy itself then a new and unestablished institution).[29] This made the interplay of multiple other factors all the more important: Mantua as a place of learning and as an early hub of the art of printmaking, which flourished under the aegis of Mantegna and Pollaiuolo and was also central to the prestige of the Gonzagas;[30] her apprenticeship with her father; the symbiotic relationship with her husband and the astute intertwining of their two professions; her knowledge of Roman taste, reflected in her choice of motifs; the carefully worded dedications that attest to her understanding of her target audience; the possible support of her brother Adamo (c. 1530–1585) as a printer and publisher in Rome;[31] and the availability of drawn models.

THE FEAST OF THE GODS

Essential to Diana's reception as an artist were Vasari and her proximity to Giulio Romano and the court of Mantua, and indeed she used many of Giulio's models for her engravings: The sheer size of the print with scenes from the Sala di Psiche (cat. 11) gives an idea of the striking effect of the frescoed room in the Palazzo Te in Mantua.[32] To view the print in its present state, we have to "open" it like a double door – its large size could only be achieved by using three sheets printed from three separate plates. Opening the print almost invariably conjures up the association of entering a room. What we see, however, is not an exact reproduction of one of the walls of the Sala di Psiche, but a fusion of fragments from the *Banchetto degli Dei* (south wall, fig. 4), the *Banchetto rusticus* (east wall, fig. 5), and *The Bath of Venus and Mars* from *Amori e Miti degli Dei* (north wall, fig. 6). On closer

PASTEL PAINTING IN DRESDEN

From Rosalba Carriera to Theresa Concordia Mengs

ANNA SEXTON

Fig. 1

ANTON RAPHAEL MENGS

Frederick Augustus II, Elector of Saxony, and, as Augustus III, King of Poland, 1745, pastel on paper, 55.5 × 42 cm
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Gal.-Nr. P 173

◄ Fig. 2

ROSALBA CARRIERA

A Black-Haired Lady with Fine Golden Necklace
Pastel on paper, 29.5 × 26 cm
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Gal.-Nr. P 105

Venice was an essential stop on the Grand Tour for any good travelling cavalier, including for the Crown Prince of Saxony Frederick Augustus II (1696–1763), known later as Augustus III, King of Poland (fig. 1). Like his father, Augustus the Strong, the crown prince had a special interest in art, and especially the art of Venice. He therefore sojourned in the island city multiple times during his Grand Tour, most notably in February 1712 and later in 1713. Aside from experiencing the art of the great Venetian masters such as Tintoretto, Titian, and Veronese, Frederick Augustus also met Venice's contemporary superstar, someone who was bringing the formerly derided techniques of miniature and pastel painting to the forefront of the art market: Rosalba Carriera (1673–1757).

Hailing from an obscure background, Rosalba Carriera managed not only to make a name for herself but also establish miniature and pastel painting as credible art forms desired by the European nobility and haute bourgeoisie. This was especially the case in Dresden, where her numerous works formed the basis of the royal *Pastellkabinett*, the first-ever collection of pastels open to the public and a testament to Augustus III's great love of the medium. It can thus be argued that the pastel mania of the elector-king, and, by extension, of the Dresden court, was rooted in appreciation of Carriera's works, which in turn made it possible for other artists of the court to find success by also working in this technique. Such was the case with Theresa Concordia Mengs (1725–1806), who began her career as a *Kabinettmalerin* at the court of Augustus III and went on to become a very accomplished miniature painter in Rome.

ROSALBA CARRIERA AND THE ELEVATION OF MINIATURE AND PASTEL PAINTING TO HIGH ART

Born on 12 January 1673 to a lacemaker mother and lawyer father,[1] Rosalba did not have a direct connection to the art world like many other women artists of her time. Not much is known about her early years, meaning that it is also unknown whether Rosalba taught herself to paint or trained under an artist. In any case, Rosalba concentrated on miniatures at the onset of her artistic career, which began around 1695.[2] She achieved success in a relatively short time, as the intimate and occasionally erotic depictions of small figures catered perfectly to the Rococo taste for refined and delicate objects. Being in Venice also put Rosalba at a great advantage: with the great numbers of travellers in the city on their Grand Tour, the fact that she offered a product that was easy and quick to produce and transport meant that she was very in-demand.[3]

In 1705, she was accepted into the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. It is interesting to note that at this time, Carriera was not yet known for her pastels. She only turned to this technique around 1703, but it took some time before she began to use pastels exclusively. Although its use in drawing can be traced back to the 15th century, pastel became incredibly popular in the 18th century. The medium's delicate blending of colours ("painting", including with a brush) and characteristically light shading reflected the elegant Rococo taste of the day and the general ideal of beauty of courtly society (fig. 2). Like miniature painting, pastel painting proved to be a field that was quite easy for a woman to break into, as both disciplines were considered "feminine" and not nearly as academic as history or religious painting. Furthermore, since pastels were, like miniatures, also easy to produce and send, they made the ideal memento for any wealthy traveller's trip to the lagoon city. Thus, a visit to Carriera's Venetian studio to sit for a portrait became an obligatory part of any noble's visit to Venice.[4]

THE "KABINETT DER ROSALBA": THE GROWING PRESENCE OF PASTEL PAINTING IN DRESDEN

Although Augustus the Strong had begun Dresden's pastel collection, it was his son who really developed it, with the majority of his pastel acquisitions being works by Carriera. After his initial visit to Venice while still crown prince, Augustus III returned many times after assuming the throne as King of Poland, and Rosalba Carriera regularly sent her pastels to Dresden. The 1728 inventory of the Royal Collections numbers 157 works by Rosalba Carriera, and today the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister houses around 73 of her pastels.[5]

The idea of putting the Royal Collections on public display was formulated in 1745/46 and realised with the opening of the Gemäldegalerie (fig. 3) in 1748. Although the painting collection was impressive in itself, it was the *Pastellkabinett* that intrigued many visitors, as it was the first time that pastels were displayed for public rather than private appreciation.[6] The scope of the pastel collection was truly a testament to the king's personal taste and admiration for the medium, which only increased thanks to his frequent patronage of Rosalba's workshop. The cabinet was aptly dubbed the "Kabinett der Rosalba" despite there being works by other artists in it, including those of Jean-Étienne Liotard and Maurice Quentin de la Tour.[7]

Fig. 3

CHRISTIAN GOTTLOB HAMMER

The Old Gemäldegalerie (Johanneum, Electoral Mews) in Dresden, from: Rittners Dresden mit seinen Prachtgebäuden c. 1810
c. 1810, etching, 202 × 259 mm (plate)
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. no. A 131531

Thus, the Saxon-Polish court's enthusiasm for pastel painting and the growing presence of Rosalba's pastels in Dresden contributed to the spread of this practice among artists in Dresden, especially those belonging to the court. Indeed, some artists even became court painters based largely on their talent in the pastel medium, as was the case for the Mengs family.

THERESA CONCORDIA MENGS: MINIATURIST AND PASTEL PAINTER AT THE DRESDEN COURT

Although principally known as a miniature copyist, Theresa Concordia von Maron (née Mengs) began her career as a pastel painter. Born in 1725 and raised in Dresden, Theresa and her siblings Anton Raphael and Juliane Charlotte were trained by their father, the court painter Ismael Mengs (1688–1764). Being a professional enamel painter and miniaturist, Ismael taught his children these techniques with the intention of having them – or rather his daughters – develop a career in miniature painting. For Theresa, his goal was indeed realised: she later became renowned for her miniature copies of works by Italian masters. However, her early career was characterised by her skilful and precise pastel paintings. Since her father was unfamiliar with the medium, Theresa and her siblings likely learned French pastel techniques from Marie Catherine and Marie Maximilienne de Silvestre, the wife and daughter of Dresden court painter Louis de Silvestre, or from the Dresden court painter David Müller.[8]

Theresa was appointed, along with her brother and sister, as *Kabinettmalerin* to the Saxon-Polish court in October 1745, after her brother's talent was "discovered" by Italian singer Domenico Annibali.[9] After seeing the young boy's pastel portrait of the singer (fig. 4) as well as a pastel of Augustus III himself, the elector-king appointed the Mengs children as *Kabinettmaler*. Anton Raphael received an annual pension of 600 thalers, while Theresa and Juliane received 300 thalers each.[10] It was thus her brother's pastel portrait of Annibali that began Theresa's career, and the Mengs children's acceptance into the court was largely possible thanks to Augustus III's special love for pastel painting.[11]

Although Theresa Concordia Mengs was likely trained in the French style of pastel by court painters in Dresden, her Dresden portraits still reflect certain nuances that can also be found in Rosalba Carriera's own works, as shown in the portrait of her sister in the Dresden Gemäldegalerie (cat. 8). When working with pastels, Mengs utilised a more subdued colour palette, similar to that of Carriera. The result for both artists are portraits that exude the lightness and beauty of Rococo elegance. However, like her brother, Mengs tended to blend her pastels and use more precise strokes, resulting in a portrait that resembles an oil painting, giving a touch more realism to her pastels than is seen in Carriera's works.

CATALOGUE

1

MARIETTA ROBUSTI
(VENICE c. 1551–1590 VENICE)

Self-Portrait with Jacopo Strada (1507–1588)

c. 1567/68

Oil on canvas
99.5 × 121 cm

Provenance: Acquired 1749 from Imperial Gallery in Prague Castle; from 1945 to 1955 in USSR (Moscow); Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Gal.-Nr. 270

Literature: Borghini 1584, pp. 558 f.; inv. Prague 1662, fol. 16v, no. 214; inv. Prague 1718, no. 214; inv. Prague 1737, no. 292; inv. Dresden 1747 – 1750, 36r, no. 310; cat. Dresden 1765, G.I. no. 187; cat. Dresden 2007, vol. 1, p. 216; cat. Dresden 2006/07, vol. 2, p. 538; Bull 2009, pp. 680 f.

This double portrait shows an elderly gentleman seated in a wooden chair. He turns towards a younger person, who leans towards him, pointing with their right hand at something outside the picture space. The yellowed varnish diminishes our appreciation of the sophisticated handling of the figures. The black garments merge with the dark background, so that only the hands and faces are bathed in light. In the Dresden inventory of 1747 – 1750, this painting is attributed to "Giacomo" (Jacopo) Robusti, known as Tintoretto, and described accordingly: "Quadro in tela, con due ritratti vestiti di nero, uno Vecchio, e l'altro giovane, più di mezze figure al naturale, Opera delle megliori, fù della Galleria di Praga."

Duncan Bull has identified the standing figure as Marietta Robusti, the once famous daughter of Jacopo Tintoretto, who – according to her later biographer Carlo Ridolfi – dressed as a boy in order to accompany her father. Relying upon Raffaello Borghini, her first biographer, who reports that Marietta executed a portrait of Jacopo Strada which incorporated her own likeness, Bull concluded that Borghini must be referring to the present double portrait of Jacopo Strada and Marietta Robusti, formerly in the collection of Emperor Maximilian II. The debate about whether Borghini was describing a double portrait or instead two individual portraits – "[…] fece il ritratto di Iacopo Strada Antiquario dell'Imperador Massimiliano secondo, & e il ritratto di lei stessa, i quali, come cosa rara, sua Maestà gli tenne in camera sua […]" – remains unsettled by the gallery entry of 1765: here as well, the description fails to make it clear whether the reference is to a double portrait on a single canvas or instead to two separate ones. Notwithstanding, the work's Prague provenance, along with the biographical remarks, argue in favour of Bull's thesis. Recently, his argument acquired additional weight through an X-radiographic examination.[1] In the X-ray image, the figure standing on the right is clearly female. This discovery is consistent with the entry on the painting in the Prague inventory of 1662: "*214 Tintoretto origl. / Ein Contrafect eines / Manns, unndt eines / Weibs Bildts* […and of a woman]."

The double portrait of Jacopo Strada and Marietta Robusti probably dates from circa 1567/68, when the imperial antiquarian was staying in Venice and Mantua on assignment from the Duke of Bavaria. Self-portraits have long been regarded as statements of self-reflection. The costume and the surroundings through which an artist chooses to stage him or herself – whether at work, playing music (fig. 1, p. 28), or in the guise of some mythological or historical figure – tell the viewer much about his or her ambitions, pretensions, and self-image, as well as about the artistic vocation itself. Besides individual portraits, we routinely find double portraits: images of friendship (one of the best-known being by Raphael[2]) or of couples, for example Rubens and Isabella Brant.[3] What makes this double portrait so special is that the artist depicts herself in the company of the highly influential antiquarian to the Habsburg emperor. In doing so, she refers explicitly to Titian's earlier *Portrait of Jacopo Strada*,[4] and depicts herself as a woman with emphatic self-confidence. But the portrait was not necessarily commissioned by Strada. Perhaps he was simply a useful connection or intermediary who offered his assistance in establishing contacts at the imperial court. Evidently, the attempt was successful: this extraordinary double portrait of the artist with the antiquarian was cherished by Maximilian II as a rare thing (*cosa rara*) in his private chambers. | IRIS YVONNE WAGNER

1 See essay by Iris Yvonne Wagner in this volume, pp. 20 f.
2 Raphael, *Self-Portrait with a Friend*, 1518 – 1520, oil on canvas, 99 × 83 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. A14.
3 Peter Paul Rubens, *The Honeysuckle Bower* (or *Rubens and Isabella Brant*), c. 1609/10, canvas transferred to panel, 178 × 136.5 cm, Munich, Alte Pinakothek, inv. no. 334.
4 See essay by Iris Yvonne Wagner in this volume, pp. 16 f.

2

LAVINIA FONTANA (BOLOGNA 1552–1614 ROME)

The Holy Family

c. 1575

Oil on beechwood panel
39.5 × 32 cm
Inscription: signed bottom right:
"[LAV]INIA PROS[P]ERI FONTANÆ"

Provenance: Acquired 1749 from Imperial Gallery in Prague Castle; from 1945 to 1955 in USSR (Moscow); Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Gal.-Nr. 270

Literature: Borghini 1584, pp. 558 f.; inv. Prague 1662, fol. 16v, no. 214; inv. Prague 1718, no. 214; inv. Prague 1737, no. 292; inv. Dresden 1747 – 1750, fol. 36r, no. 310; cat. Dresden 1765, G.I. no. 187; cat. Dresden 2007, vol. 1, p. 216; cat. Dresden 2006/07, vol. 2, p. 538; Bull 2009, pp. 680 f.

This panel is considered one of the earliest surviving works by Lavinia Fontana. Trained by her father, the Bolognese painter Prospero Fontana, she initially created small-format devotional pictures that were mainly used for contemplation in the private sphere. In the absence of male heirs, Lavinia Fontana took over her father's workshop when he fell ill. She ranks as the first female artist of the early modern period in Europe to work independently, in charge of her own studio.[1] In 1577, on the occasion of her engagement to Gian Paolo Zappi from Imola, whom she married in the same year, she painted her formal self-portrait at the clavichord (fig. 1, p. 28).[2] Her husband supported her in her business endeavours – and from the mid-1580s onwards, she advanced to become a highly sought-after portraitist of the Bolognese nobility.

Fontana's devotional panel features the traditional motif of the Holy Family in an atypical composition that reveals the artist's creative spirit. Joseph is depicted from behind in lost profile. Standing on a stone platform, he enters the pictorial space comprising the Virgin with the Infant Christ on her lap, John the Baptist as a child, and his mother Elizabeth. Despite the proximity of the figures to each other, a strong sense of depth is created from the left foreground to the background at the right. The artist achieves this depth through accents in perspective provided by the floor pattern and the architectural column, for instance, as well as the interplay between light and dark areas. As the rearmost figure, the clearly older Elizabeth is placed in the darker background, while the group of the young Mother of God with the two children is emphasised by the influx of light at the front. As a repoussoir figure, Joseph leads us from the real world into that of the picture. With him, we simultaneously cross the boundary of our (worldly) experience and enter the religious sphere. Joseph wears a white robe, which symbolises a connection to the divine, thus guiding us to a transcendent experience.

The artist adds an intimate and human dimension to the salvific message of this scene. This early painting by Fontana already displays characteristics of her mature work: the graceful painterly expression of emotional, familial motifs that speak directly to the viewer. The two children embrace each other, the Christ Child smiling gently as the Virgin holds him lovingly in her arms. Such gestures, motions, and actions, which resemble typical behaviour of children and mothers, reinforce the credibility of the depiction. This work thus meets the requirements of the Counter-Reformation movement from the mid-16th century onwards, which significantly shaped artistic production. The decisions of the Council of Trent were a theological confrontation and reaction of the Catholic Church to the Protestant movement, which influenced the treatment of religious painting, as religious themes were to be rendered clearly, legibly, and appropriately in order to guide the faithful. Accordingly, pagan motifs were to be separated from Christian motifs – a rejection of antiquity and the classical pictorial language of the Renaissance, which was trained on the themes of antiquity. Such a rejection nevertheless led to new achievements: sensual and emotional painting that appeals to the feelings of the faithful. Fontana does not use a strict triangular composition, which was often deployed in the Renaissance when depicting a constellation of religious figures, but distributes the figures in the pictorial space according to the rule of proportion of the golden ratio. In this way, the artist succeeds in ordering and stabilising the composition, despite the diagonal structure of the work towards the back. The painterly quality of *The Holy Family* can best be appreciated in the accomplished execution of the figures.

| IRIS YVONNE WAGNER

1 See essay by Aoife Brady in this volume, pp. 25 – 41.
2 See King, 1995, p. 392.

5

MARIA VAN OOSTERWIJCK (NOOTDORP 1630–1693 UITDAM)

Flowers and Shells

c. 1685

Oil on canvas
72 × 56 cm
Signed lower right:
"MARIA VAN OOSTERWYCK"

Provenance: Acquired 1740 from Gerhard Morel, probably in Antwerp; inv. "before 1741", fol. 166v, 2503; cat. Dresden 1765, G.E. 773; Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Gal.-Nr. 1334

Literature: Gammelbo 1960, no. 176; exh. cat. Dresden 1983, p. 142, no. 117, fig. 79; Gerson 1983 p. 239; exh. cat. Osaka/Tokyo/Sydney 1990, p. 221; Gemar-Koeltzsch 1995, vol. 3, no. 298/4; cat. Dresden 2007, p. 393.

In 1740, when the elector-king Augustus III arranged the purchase of two paintings by Maria van Oosterwijck for his collection, he was by no means the first Saxon monarch to show his appreciation for the extraordinary quality of still life painting by this Dutch artist. More than 50 years earlier, the Elector John George III, who had stayed in the Hague in 1688 on a diplomatic mission, purchased three works by Oosterwijck for his art collection.[1] By her mid-thirties, the young specialist in flower pieces and smaller-format breakfast pieces (*Banketjestukken*) had achieved European-wide celebrity. Her list of notable clients included Cosimo de' Medici and Emperor Leopold I, and later Louis XIV, the Polish king Johann III Sobieski, and naturally the stadtholders of the Low Countries.

Maria was the daughter of a pastor, and grew up in a familial milieu that included a number of painters, theologians, and scholars. She seems to have operated her first studio in her grandfather's home in Delft before relocating to Leiden, and later to Utrecht. During the five years she resided in that town, the works of Jan Davidsz. de Heem – then chief among Utrecht's still life painters – had a profound influence on her style. Finally, she settled in Amsterdam, where she was joined in an artistic as well as close private friendship with the painter Willem van Aelst, who was also her immediate neighbour. Maria van Oosterwijck rejected repeated advances from her fellow artist (her exact contemporary in age), remaining unmarried until the end of her life. Her works themselves – only slightly more than 40 paintings have survived – provide unmistakable evidence of their close artistic association.

The paintings of both De Heem and Van Aelst left their mark on Maria van Oosterwijck's oeuvre, firstly in the selection of motifs and compositional arrangements of her splendid bouquets of flowers and *Pronkstillevens* – ornate or elaborate still lifes – and secondly in her basic stylistic approach. Works like the still life *Flowers and Shells* and a closely related flower still life now in Copenhagen[2] display an approach to storytelling and lighting whose origins are traceable to De Heem. At the same time, Maria van Oosterwijck's flower bouquets seem more delicate, elegant, and decorative, owing to her skilful arrangement of showy, small-petalled yet voluminous flowers and grass blades, as well as her more effective handling of light. Characteristic of her bouquets is a combination of splendid cultivated flowers like sunflower, hibiscus, and carnation with herbs and grasses found growing in the wild. The striped canary grass that hangs downward from the vase, for example, is a trademark of her flower arrangements. Frequently encountered in her bouquets as well is the sunflower, turned slightly to one side, as the crowning element of the arrangement. Still present in the second half of the 17th century, evidently, was an awareness of its symbolism. As the flower that followed the sun in the course of the day, it stood metaphorically for followers of Christ who remained devout throughout the day. This interpretation is already found in 16th and 17th century emblem literature,[3] and seems to have been widely known. Rather than referring to an emblem book in this image, however, Maria van Oosterwijck – the daughter of a preacher who was characterised by contemporaries as modest and deeply pious – instead orients herself on a New Testament verse (John 8:12): "I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." | UTA NEIDHARDT

1 Gerson 1983, p. 239. John George (Johann Georg) III acquired "twee bloemenpotten en een feston". Their present whereabouts are unknown.
2 *Bouquet of Flowers in a Glass Vase*, signed and dated "MARIA VAN OOSTERWYCK", 1658, oil on canvas, 101 × 77.5 cm, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, inv. no. SP. 542.
3 See Segal 1990, p. 221.

10 b

ANGELICA KAUFFMAN
(CHUR 1741–1807 ROME)

Portrait of a Woman as a Sibyl

c. 1781/82

Oil on canvas
91 × 72.5 cm

Provenance: Purchased 1782; Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Gal.-Nr. 2181

Literature: Dassdorf 1782, p. 466; cat. Dresden 1806, Äussere Galerie, p. 118, no. 310, as "Eine Sibylle Comea"; cat. Dresden 1887, p. 679, no. 2181, with incorrect identification of a signature.

The *Portrait of a Woman as a Sibyl* (possibly a pendant to *Portrait of a Woman as a Vestal Virgin*) also accommodates the demand for classicising ideal portraits. Inspired by depictions of sibyls by artists like Guercino and Anton Raphael Mengs, these mythical prophetesses – receivers and conveyers of divine knowledge – find an echo in Kauffman's oeuvre. With the Cumaean Sibyl, Kauffman presents the viewer with the best-known of the ten seers. According to tradition, she was in possession of nine books of prophecies, which she offered for sale to the tyrannical Roman King Lucius Tarquinius Superbus. When he rejected her offer, she burned three of the texts, offering him the surviving six. Rejected again, she consigned three further volumes to the fire. Only now did Tarquinius relent, acquiring the last three volumes at the full price. Henceforth, they were venerated in Rome as relics of the utmost sanctity.

Kauffman presents the young sibyl seated in semi-profile from the knees upward. A blue cloak has been thrown over her pale robe, girded with a piece of green cloth with golden threads. Her pinned-up hair, held in place with a braid, is partially covered by a green headscarf that has been folded to form a turban. Her right hand touches her cheek in a melancholic gesture, while her pensive gaze is directed forward beyond the picture space, and seems to graze the viewer gently. She rests her right arm on a parapet, upon which she has unrolled a scroll – her attribute, held in her left hand. Her identity is revealed by the clearly legible word "Sybilla" – joined by a few Greek letters that do not form a word. It remains uncertain, however, precisely which moment of the legend Kauffman meant to illustrate here. It seems almost certain, though, that this history painting conceals a portrait of an as yet unidentified lady. The third painting by Kauffman in Dresden, the *Portrait of a Woman as a Vestal Virgin* (fig. 3, p. 81), has even been identified as a self-portrait of the artist. | ROLAND ENKE

Prints and Drawings

DIANA SCULTORI (MANTUA 1547–1612 ROME)

11

Scenes from the Sala di Psiche, Palazzo Te, Mantua, South and west wall: *Banquet Preparations and Feast*, north wall: *The Bath of Venus and Mars*

1575

Engraving on three copperplates
371 × 1111 mm (combined dimensions, platemark trimmed)
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, A 104830

Provenance: Core holdings, acquired before 1858

11

12

Two Children Attached by Their Backs

1577

Engraving, 195 mm (diam. plate), 273 × 270 mm (sheet)
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, A 109372

Provenance: Core holdings, acquired before 1858

12

13

Christ and the Adulteress

1633 (1st edition 1575)

Engraving
423 × 580 mm (sheet, platemark trimmed)
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, A 92039

Provenance: Core holdings, acquired before 1858

13

ELISABETTA SIRANI (BOLOGNA 1638–1665 BOLOGNA)

14

The Holy Family with Elizabeth and Infant John the Baptist

3rd quarter 17th c.

Etching
293 × 216 mm (sheet, trimmed, platemark not visible)
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, A 104349

Inscribed on plate, bottom right: "Siranis In."; recto: in pencil (?) bottom right: "Elis. S. fecit"

Provenance: Core holdings, acquired before 1858

14

15

The Rest on the Flight into Egypt

3rd quarter 17th c.

Etching
162 × 175 mm (image); 166 × 182 mm (sheet, platemark not visible)
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, A 104347

Inscribed on plate: bottom right: "Siranis In: [Elisabet …]"
Provenance: Core holdings, acquired before 1858

15

16

The Rest on the Flight into Egypt

3rd quarter 17th c.

Etching
161 × 176 mm (image); 166 × 182 mm (sheet, platemark not visible)
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, A 104348

Inscribed on plate, bottom left: "Siranis In: […]"
Provenance: Core holdings, acquired before 1858

16

Staatliche
Kunstsammlungen
Dresden

This exhibition sees the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister turn its attention to women artists long overshadowed by the male Old Masters of the 16th to 18th century. Proportionally, they are in the minority and unlike their male colleagues they remain far from household names. Very few talented women had the good fortune to grow up in a working artistic environment, where institutional and social barriers could be sidestepped or at least partly overcome. This catalogue presents women painters and printmakers of the modern era, with exhibits selected from the collections of the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister and Kupferstich-Kabinett. The five essays explore the work of these extraordinary artists, including Marietta Robusti, Lavinia Fontana, Diana Scultori, and Angelica Kauffman.

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