



Valentin
de Boulogne

Beyond Caravaggio

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Annick Lemoine and Keith Christiansen

with contributions by Patrizia Cavazzini,
Jean-Pierre Cuzin, and Gianni Papi



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London

This catalogue is published in conjunction with “Valentin de Boulogne: Beyond Caravaggio,” on view at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from October 7, 2016, through January 16, 2017, and at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, from February 20 through May 22, 2017.

The exhibition is made possible by the Hata Stichting Foundation, the Placido Arango Fund, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Frank E. Richardson and Kimba M. Wood, and Alice Cary Brown and W. L. Lyons Brown.



It is supported by an Indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

The exhibition is organized by The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Musée du Louvre.

The catalogue is made possible by the Diane W. and James E. Burke Fund.

Published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Mark Polizzotti, Publisher and Editor in Chief
Gwen Roginsky, Associate Publisher and General Manager
of Publications

Peter Antony, Chief Production Manager
Michael Sittenfeld, Senior Managing Editor

Edited by Elizabeth L. Block with Hilary Becker and
Laura Jones Dooley

Designed by Miko McGinty and Rita Jules
Production by Peter Antony, Lauren Knighton, and
Megan Kincaid

Bibliography edited by Jayne Kuchna
Image acquisitions and permissions by Elizabeth De Mase
Translations from French by Jane Marie Todd
Translations from Italian by Frederika Randall

Photographs of works in the Metropolitan Museum's collection are by the Imaging Department, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, unless otherwise noted. Additional photography credits are on p. 276.

Typeset by Tina Henderson in Dante and P22 Stickley
Printed on Perigord, 150 gsm
Separations by Professional Graphics, Inc., Rockford, Illinois
Printed and bound by Verona Libri, Verona, Italy

Jacket illustrations: front, detail, *Samson*, 1631, cat. 49; back, detail, *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers*, ca. 1618–20, cat. 15
Frontispiece: detail, *Judith and Holofernes*, ca. 1627–29, cat. 47
Other illustrations: p. xii, detail, *Concert with a Bas-Relief*, ca. 1624–26, cat. 23; p. 16, detail, *David with the Head of Goliath*, ca. 1615–16, cat. 8; p. 28, detail, *Denial of Saint Peter*, ca. 1615–17, cat. 14; p. 42, *Allegory of Italy*, 1628–29, cat. 43; p. 56, detail, *Saint Matthew*, ca. 1624–26, cat. 28; p. 64, *Saint John the Evangelist*, ca. 1621–22, cat. 20; pp. 76–77, detail, *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple*, ca. 1618–22, cat. 17; p. 228, detail, *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian*, 1629–30, cat. 48

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First printing

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10028
metmuseum.org

Distributed by
Yale University Press, New Haven and London
yalebooks.com / art
yalebooks.co.uk

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Lemoine, Annick, author. | Christiansen, Keith, author. | Cavazzini, Patrizia, writer of added text. | Cuzin, Jean-Pierre, writer of added text. | Papi, Gianni, writer of added text. | Valentin, de Boulogne, 1591-1632. Paintings. Selections. | Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.), issuing body, host institution. | Musée du Louvre, host institution.

Title: Valentin de Boulogne : beyond Caravaggio / by Annick Lemoine and Keith Christiansen ; with contributions by Patrizia Cavazzini, Jean-Pierre Cuzin, and Gianni Papi.

Description: New York : The Metropolitan Museum of Art, [2016] | "This catalogue is published in conjunction with "Valentin de Boulogne: Beyond Caravaggio," on view at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from October 7, 2016, through January 16, 2017, and at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, from February 20 through May 22, 2017." | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016029384 | ISBN 9781588396020 (hardcover : alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Valentin, de Boulogne, 1591-1632--Exhibitions. | Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da, 1573-1610--Influence--Exhibitions.

Classification: LCC ND553.V3263 A4 2016 | DDC 759.4--dc23 LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016029384>

ISBN 978-1-58839-602-0

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Lenders to the Exhibition

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Paris, Musée du Louvre

Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, Cathedral of Saint John
the Baptist

Strasbourg, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Strasbourg,
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Florence, Museo della Venerabile Arciconfraternita
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New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art

VATICAN CITY

Vatican Museums

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Directors' Foreword

Why Valentin?

"Imagine," observed the great Italian scholar Roberto Longhi in 1935, "there does not yet exist a good study on Valentin, the most energetic and passionate of Caravaggio's naturalist followers. We wait for our French colleagues to assume the task, and they genially turn to us: too Caravaggesque." Almost four decades passed before Longhi's challenge was taken up by two brilliant French curators, Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin—the latter of whom is a contributor to this catalogue. Together they organized the landmark exhibition "I Caravaggeschi francesi," which opened in 1973 at the French Academy in Rome and then was displayed at the Grand Palais in Paris as "Valentin et les Caravaggesques français." Valentin was shown together with a broad selection of other French—or presumed French—painters who traveled to Rome to experience firsthand the revolution in painting that Caravaggio had set in motion. "In presenting twenty of his paintings," the organizers wrote, "this exhibition seeks to show that Valentin, 'the premier French naturalist' (Longhi), is a great painter; one of the greatest of the seventeenth century, the last whose name remains almost unknown to the public at large." Despite the appearance in 1989 of Marina Mojana's fine but far from exhaustive monograph on the artist (in Italian), and the increased presence of his works in major museums (not least in the United States), this wonderfully inventive painter and poet of melancholy continues to be less well known than he deserves—despite the fact that recent scholarship has only confirmed his stature as one of the preeminent figures of seventeenth-century painting.

Could his critical fortune be more different from that of his contemporary from Lorraine, Georges de La Tour, an artist whom scholarship retrieved from near oblivion in the early decades of the twentieth century? La Tour was the sensation of the groundbreaking exhibition "Les peintres de la réalité en France au XVII^e siècle," held at l'Orangerie in Paris in 1934. Since then he has been the subject of four monographic shows and of numerous books, essays, and articles. There is no question that a modernist taste formed by Seurat,

Cézanne, and Picasso of the 1920s—the moment of the *rappel à l'ordre* and *valori plastici* movements following World War I—responded to his tight, shallowly composed, elegantly abstracted, and hauntingly silent compositions in a way it no longer did to Valentin's more complex, naturalistic, and animated paintings. Where La Tour maintained a psychological distance between the viewer and the stilled forms of his pictorial fiction, Valentin sought to break it down and make the viewer a participant. But beyond the factor of the reigning formal values of twentieth-century taste, there was the question—alluded to by Longhi—of Valentin's "Frenchness." As Charles Sterling observed in the 1934 catalogue, "[Valentin's] lyricism and his vehemence belong profoundly to the Italian spirit and perhaps only a certain melancholy and the linear character found in his last period relate him to French art." By contrast, he found that "the art of G. de La Tour seems profoundly French." It is obvious that these two artists took very different approaches to painting and that the visions of the world their art conveys were opposed. But as Annick Lemoine and Jean-Pierre Cuzin remind us in their essays in this catalogue, Valentin was viewed in his own time as a Frenchman, his work was avidly sought by French collectors—not least by Cardinal Jules Mazarin and Louis XIV—and it remained a source of inspiration for French painters right through the nineteenth century. Surely this has more to say about his importance for the history of French painting than that he perpetuated some notion of a nationalist style.

The present exhibition intends to rectify the distorting effects of this legacy of modernist taste by reintroducing Valentin to a twenty-first-century public as the defining figure he is. This is a particularly appropriate moment to undertake such a reconsideration, for over the past two decades scholarship has transformed our understanding of the artistic life of Rome in the years following Caravaggio's flight from the city in the summer of 1606. The emergence of a vibrant art market gave artists a new means by which they could make a living and establish a career and reputation. This

transformation, which seems to prefigure aspects we associate with the bohemian life of nineteenth-century Paris, was crucial to artists like Valentin, who chose to associate himself with the rowdy confraternity of northern painters, the Bentvueghels (the “birds of a feather”) rather than the official Accademia di San Luca, with its vaunted training programs and theory about the dignity of art. This new world and the artists who inhabited it are addressed in Patrizia Cavazzini’s essay.

We also are now in possession of new information regarding the artists whose works were key to Valentin’s formation. During the past two decades we have learned the true identity of the mysterious Cecco del Caravaggio. As it turns out, he was from Lombardy, not France or Spain, as had sometimes been proposed, and he served Caravaggio as both model and, it would seem, lover. His knowledge of Caravaggio’s working methods was gained firsthand, and it was his paintings that were key to Valentin’s earliest efforts. Most important is the discovery that the author of a remarkable body of works that heretofore was ascribed to an anonymous painter sometimes thought to be French—perhaps even the young Valentin—are, instead, by the young Jusepe de Ribera. Recent archival discoveries document his arrival in Rome in late 1605 or 1606—when the young Spaniard was still a teenager and Caravaggio was possibly still at work in the city. Upon settling in the papal city and setting himself up with a dealer, Ribera became the most innovative Caravaggesque painter of the second decade of the century, moving beyond the legacy of Caravaggio to open a new chapter in the history of naturalistic painting, of which Valentin was the greatest and most original beneficiary. No one has contributed more to this process of identification than Gianni Papi, whose essay in this catalogue situates Valentin among his contemporaries.

Throughout the catalogue will be found new observations and an attempt to give greater coherence to an oeuvre with few firm points of reference. Additionally, in her introductory essay, Annick Lemoine lays the groundwork for a deeper understanding of the poetics that inform Valentin’s magnificent achievement, while Keith Christiansen, John Pope-Hennessy

Chairman of the Department of European Paintings at The Met, addresses the challenges posed by working directly from the model.

The origin of this exhibition can be traced back to a lunch during a conference in Nantes on the occasion of the 2008 exhibition “Simon Vouet: Les années italiennes.” It was then that Keith Christiansen, a passionate admirer of Valentin, proposed to his colleagues at the Musée du Louvre that the time had come to give this great artist his due with a monographic exhibition. Annick Lemoine, who was already planning to write a new monograph on the artist, was proposed as guest curator. Four years later the Metropolitan Museum and the Louvre agreed on a collaborative project, and during the past two and a half years Annick Lemoine, Sébastien Allard, and Keith Christiansen have worked tirelessly to realize what is as close to a defining exhibition as anyone is likely to see. That they have managed to assemble the pictures for the exhibition of which this catalogue is the record is owing to the many lenders who, like them, felt that such a project was not only overdue but also of the utmost importance. To them and to the team that has labored so hard to make this exhibition a reality, we are in debt.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the funders of this project whose unwavering commitment to The Met has strengthened the vitality of our exhibitions program. We thank the Hata Stichting Foundation, the Placido Arango Fund, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Frank E. Richardson and Kimba M. Wood, and Alice Cary Brown and W. L. Lyons Brown for their generosity. We gratefully acknowledge the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities for its support of this project in the form of an indemnity and the Diane W. and James E. Burke Fund for making this catalogue possible.

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President and Director
Musée du Louvre

Preface and Acknowledgments

November 13, 2015: Picked up a car at the train station at Chambéry, where we got directions to the highway for the hourlong drive to Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne. There, in the cathedral, we met Sophie Omère, the curator of historic monuments responsible for the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, and the parish priest. Both were incredibly welcoming. We had arrived by train the night before from Paris and woke to a beautiful day, with a clear, blue sky and the mountains, which rose steeply on both sides of the highway, occasionally dusted with snow. The Gothic church has a number of significant works of art, including highly original choir stalls and a lovely cloisters, but our destination was the sacristy, where Valentin de Boulogne's painting of Saint John the Baptist (cat. 21) had been taken down from its position high on a wall so that we could examine it properly. It was the last but one picture we had yet to consider for the exhibition, and neither of us was prepared for the impression it made, set on a blanket on the floor, propped against a freestanding sacristy cupboard. The figure of the young saint, looking no more than twelve or thirteen years old, seemed to occupy a space that was an extension of ours. His pose—at once natural and urgent—seemed to express his awareness of our presence: leaning forward, raising his left hand in a declamatory gesture, his gaze fixed on us, his mouth open in a silent address. How remarkable that this powerful painting, given to the church in 1733 by its canon, Claude Milleret, had escaped the scholarly literature before being identified by Pierre Rosenberg and subsequently published by Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée in 1977. The day before, one of us had been in the gallery in the Musée du Louvre where six splendid canvases by the artist are displayed—all but one from the royal collections. Among them is a picture showing the biblical heroine Susanna, her arms crossed over her breast pleading her innocence before the young judge Daniel (cat. 22). There could be no doubt: the same youth had posed for both pictures—once as the Old Testament judge and a second time as the young Saint John the Baptist preaching.

It was not the first time we had had the sensation of encountering a familiar face—someone from the past



whose features had been transmitted across the centuries by the artist's brush, albeit in the guise of a biblical character. The same had happened in the restoration studio at the Cleveland Museum of Art, where, the previous June, we had the privilege of studying a painting of Samson (cat. 49) that was being cleaned and restored for the exhibition. Painted for Pope Urban VIII's nephew, Cardinal Francesco Barberini, it is a magnificent work in which the Old Testament hero—shown seated, his head resting pensively on his right arm, an ass's jawbone placed next to him—is incongruously shown with a mustache and goatee. Clearly the picture incorporated a portrait. Once again the features seemed hauntingly familiar, for in a private collection in Rome we had, on separate occasions, encountered the same face in a picture that must be one of the artist's earliest (cat. 4) and thus was painted almost twenty years earlier. That being the case, the model could only be Valentin himself, of whom no

certain likeness exists. Like Caravaggio before him, Valentin had used a mirror to introduce a biographical subtext into an otherwise canonical subject.

In a groundbreaking essay written in 1943—at a time when the study of Caravaggio and his “followers” was still in its infancy—the great Italian art historian and critic Roberto Longhi observed that “Caravaggio found himself in the position of meditating on the possible recommencement of painting, from its beginnings, as ‘direct painting,’ which is to say, not mediated by style—not at all—but rather by the capacity to choose from myriad possibilities the most lacerating and, we might say, dramatic frame in a film. A frame, however, not haphazardly captured by a camera . . . but by the volition of the inner eye.” Valentin understood this new approach to painting better than any of his contemporaries, and he developed it in ways that redefined Caravaggesque painting. The new creative dynamic was between the artist, the model, and the subject or theme of the picture, and it took place in the studio as the artist stood before his canvas. Surely among the reasons Valentin’s paintings leave such an enduring impression is the way they register not primarily as projections of the artist’s imagination—though artistic invention is always and conspicuously present—but as potentially actual events. His characters have the fullness and complexity of people we encounter in our daily lives, burdened, however, with thoughts and concerns motivated by their own contingencies and with Valentin’s personal poetics. “Notice how, in comparison with Caravaggio, [Valentin] emphasizes and accentuates the subject, the fact, the romantic character, a mood of bohemian melancholy and moroseness,” wrote Longhi in another passage. Is there another painter of the period who surpasses his capacity to draw the viewer into the scene he portrays and to share the emotions of the protagonists?

As the foregoing remarks suggest, the organization of this exhibition has been a journey of discovery. And among the great privileges have been the opportunities to meet with curators, conservators, and private restorers to discuss the pictures in their care. Through X-radiography and infrared reflectography, we have gained an insight into how Valentin went about record-

ing the pose of a model as he plotted his composition, and this has underscored for us the fundamental novelty of the revolution Longhi identified. No less important has been the exchange we have enjoyed with scholars, musicians, and musicologists in the field. Some have spent literally hours with us exchanging ideas. Others have furnished us with information based on their own research. We gratefully acknowledge their contributions in these pages.

In working on the exhibition and catalogue we have been so fortunate as to have had the support and collaboration of Jean-Pierre Cuzin, whose work, together with that of Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée, laid the foundations for our understanding of Valentin in a groundbreaking exhibition held successively in Rome and Paris in 1973–74. Patrizia Cavazzini and Gianni Papi, dear friends and valued colleagues, have ensured that the catalogue addresses our current understanding of the period, which their research has transformed in different but complementary ways—not least in the discovery of the earliest certain notice of Valentin’s presence in Rome, made by Patrizia Cavazzini during the writing of the catalogue! It gave welcome support for our belief that Valentin’s first paintings dated earlier than anyone had heretofore dared to place them. Surely this signals how much work there remains to do, and we trust that the exhibition and catalogue will inspire a new generation of scholars to take up the task.

This exhibition traces its beginnings to 2008, but work began in earnest four years ago, when the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum committed to a collaborative project. For their support, the directors of those two institutions have earned not only our gratitude, but also that of the many visitors to whom Valentin’s work will come as a revelation. Many, we are confident, will wonder how it is possible that this great artist, whose reputation stood so high and whose work was so prized for three centuries, is not better known. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Sébastien Allard, chief curator of the Department of Paintings at the Louvre, who has worked tirelessly to ensure the success of this project. His dedication to it at all phases has been as great as our own.

We are also indebted to those foundations and individuals who have sponsored the cleaning and restoration of various works. We cite here David H. Mortimer, The Mary Harriman Foundation, along with Pierre Morin.

At the Metropolitan, we note, in particular, the invaluable work and support for the catalogue of Mark Polizzotti, Gwen Roginsky, Michael Sittenfeld, Peter Antony, Elizabeth L. Block, Jayne Kuchna, Hilary Becker, Laura Jones Dooley, Anne Rebecca Blood, Elizabeth De Mase, Lauren Knighton, Megan Kincaid, and book designers Miko McGinty and Rita Jules. During the writing of the catalogue Keith Christiansen had the great benefit of the research assistance and exchange of ideas of Jeffrey Fraiman. Visitors will appreciate the skills of Daniel Kershaw, the exhibition designer, lighting designers Clint Ross Collier and Richard Lichte, and Anna Rieger, who was responsible for the graphics. Chief registrar Aileen Chuk oversaw the complex program of loans, and Jennifer Russell, Linda Sylling, and Taylor Miller capably managed the myriad logistics of mounting the exhibition. It is a pleasure to acknowledge our colleagues Jayson Kerr Dobney, Pierre Terjanian, and Michael Gallagher for their collaboration.

At the Musée du Louvre, we thank Violaine Bouvet-Lanselle, Béatrice Brudnicki, Catherine Dupont, Aline François, Aude Gobet, Nicolas Milovanovic, Camille Palopoli, Pascal Périnel, Vincent Pomarède, Daniel Roger, and Sixtine de Saint-Léger.

Finally, we extend our gratitude to all those who have assisted us in facilitating loans, research, or answering our many questions: Peter Aufreiter, Maria Cristina Bandera, Grażyna Bastek, Preston Bautista, Ruediger Beck, Carole Blumenfeld, Mar Borobia, Countess Branicki, Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée, Marie Caillat, Francesca Cappelletti, Jennifer Celani, Luca Maria Cristini, Pierre Curie, Alexander Debono, Alessandro dei Priori, Thierry Depaulis, Miguel Falomir Faus,

Antonella Fenech-Kroke, Gabriele Finaldi, Giuliana Forti, Irene Fosi, Marc Fumaroli, Kenneth Gambin, Carmen Garrido, Davide Gasparotto, Claire Gérin-Pierre, Francesco Giannotti, Hilliard Goldfarb, Angela Groppi, Sabine Haag, Alexandra Hanzl, Axel Hémerly, Andreas Henning, Elisabeth Hipp, Michel Hochmann, Dominique Jacquot, Aleksandra Janiszewska, Larry Keith, Cory Korkow, Johann Kräftner, Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, Elodie Ledan, Jacques Leegenhoek, Leone Limentani, Jesse Locker, Rebecca Long, Bastien Lopez, Loredana Lorizzo, J. Patrice Marandel, Fabio Marcelli, Patrick Matthiesen, Federico Megna, Tommaso Megna, David A. Miller, Agnieszka Morawińska, Philippe Morel, Pierre Morin, Christopher Morrongiello, Arnold Nesselrath, Fausto Nicolai, Jan Nicolaisen, Lawrence W. Nicols, Peter Nisbet, Elke Oberthaler, Catherine O'Meara, Simo Orma, Jan Ortmann, Enrique Quintana, Antonio Paolucci, Anne Piéjus, Marco Pierini, Daniela Porro, Louise Rice, Pierre Rosenberg, Enrico Santini, Flaminia Gennari Santori, Béatrice Sarrazin, Béatrix Saule, Thierry Saumier, Dylan Sauerwald, Alessia Scazzuso, Jan Schmidt, Roberto Sgarbossa, Agata Sochon, Guillermo Solana, Marcia Steele, David Stone, Eve Straussman-Pflanzer, Christina Strunck, Mickaël Szanto, Cristina Terzaghi, Esther Theiler, Letizia Treves, Lauren Turner, Andrés Úbeda de los Cobos, Maria Rosaria Valazzi, Florent de Vernejoul, Nikita de Vernejoul, Muriel Vervat, Christian Volle, Moana Weil-Curiel, Odile Wendel, Stephan Weppelman, Ira Westergård, Humphrey Wine, Linda Witkowski, Dean Yoder, and Antoni Ziemia.

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Bowing to No One

Valentin's Ambitions

ANNICK LEMOINE

Rome, August 1632

It was during the heat of summer. Valentin, having gone out with his companions to enjoy himself and having smoked a lot (as was his habit) and drunk to excess, he felt as though he was burning up, so much so that he couldn't bear the heat. Returning to his house at night, he found himself at the Fontana del Babuino. Overcome by a great heat that worsened with every hour, he threw himself into the cold water, hoping to find a remedy. There he met his death, for the cold increased the fever even more, becoming so virulent that within a few days he was overcome by the chills of a merciless death. Therefore, we should not let ourselves be so dominated by our senses, which mostly trip us up and cause us to lose in a moment what we had achieved after many years. Had it not been for the pity and generosity of Cavaliere Cassiano dal Pozzo, there would have been nothing to provide for burial.¹

That is how Giovanni Baglione, author of *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti*, published in 1642, relates the tragic death of one of the greatest French painters. Valentin de Boulogne was only forty-one.

With Baglione's biography, the first devoted to Valentin, the tone was set and the artist's character fixed. Valentin, champion of the *maniera caravaggesca*, as Baglione was quick to point out, gets noted for his dissolute life, like the master whose follower he wished to be: Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571–1610), an immensely famous painter who was no less renowned for being “difficult”—provocative, haughty, irascible, with a tendency toward aggression, a “satiric man.”² If one is to believe Baglione, in choosing Caravaggio, Valentin did not simply “imitate [his] style”—painting from life—he also adopted the same excesses.³

The French painter's notoriously profligate behavior and the Caravaggesque legacy to which he laid claim throughout his life lie behind the myth of Valentin as a “bohemian artist.” That myth has been widely repeated and exploited down to our own time. It must be remembered that the painter of card games, concerts, and gypsy women, the regular at drinking parties, was also, at the end of his life, one of the most famous artists in Rome. It is true that he died in poverty, but also at the height of his renown. His celebrity was such that in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo's register of the dead, his reputation is carefully recorded: Valentin de Boulogne, “pictor famosus.”⁴ His friend the German painter and biographer Joachim von Sandrart (1606–1688) reported

that many prominent Roman personalities attended his funeral.⁵ In fact, from the late 1620s on, the Frenchman took pride of place among the privileged artists favored by the Barberini family, particularly by Pope Urban VIII's nephew Cardinal Francesco Barberini, one of the most powerful men in Rome. Valentin's other patrons included the most eminent art lovers within the pope's circle: the antiquarian Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588–1657), who financed Valentin's funeral; and the papal chamberlains (*camerieri segreti*) Cardinals Angelo Giori (1586–1662) and Ascanio Filomarino (1583–1666). Furthermore, the commission in 1629 for an altarpiece for Saint Peter's Basilica, *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian* (cat. 48)—Valentin's masterpiece that was immediately compared to Nicolas Poussin's *Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus* (fig. 69)—forever secured his distinction in the Eternal City.

Although by all accounts an uncommon painter and certainly a famous one, Valentin remains a difficult figure to grasp. The basic facts relating to his life are lacking. He never married, had no children, and remained on the margins of official institutions. Thus, there are no formal records with which to construct his biography. His oeuvre is not well documented (notices form a continuous chain only for the last five years of his life), and because of his early death, his corpus is small, consisting of some sixty paintings. All of which points to the great difficulties in reconstructing his life and work.

Recent advances in our knowledge of Caravaggio and some of his followers—most notably, Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652)—have led to a thorough reassessment of the dynamics that animated the Roman art scene after Caravaggio's departure in 1606.⁶ But Valentin's place has not been given enough consideration. The organizers of the present exhibition regard Valentin as one of the most original practitioners of *pittura dal naturale* (painting from life)—someone capable, together with Ribera and Bartolomeo Manfredi (1582–1622), of reinventing Caravaggio's legacy. To borrow Roberto Longhi's expression, Valentin introduced an “intelligent rupture” with Caravaggesque models.⁷ As in the art of the great Lombard master and of most of his adept followers, in Valentin's work we find scenes of fortune-telling, card playing, and concerts; strong contrasts of light and dark; and an overwhelming naturalism. But the French painter reformulated the *maniera caravaggesca* in an original vein.⁸ There are in his paintings a psychological acuity and a pervasive melancholy; suspended forms and

meanings; and the constant implication of the beholder. Each of his works proceeds from a poetics of sadness and invites the viewer to ponder the fragility of the human condition. His balance of masterful brushwork, acute naturalism, and psychological depth accounts for the success Valentin enjoyed with the Barberini and their circle, at a time when the Caravaggesque current had entered a phase of decline; many of the leading Caravaggisti (Ribera, Gerrit van Honthorst, Simon Vouet, Nicolas Régnier, and others) had left Rome or changed style. In that sense, Valentin is not only one of the best representatives of Roman naturalism, but also, as the Barberini clan recognized, he must be ranked alongside the greatest painters of the seventeenth century. Like Guido Reni (1575–1642) and Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598–1680), but in a different register, Valentin knew how to respond to the loftiest ambitions of art: *delectare, docere et movere*—to delight, to teach, and to move.⁹

From Coulommiers to Rome

For historians today, Valentin was “born” in Italy. The first paintings that can be attributed to him were done in Rome, and almost all the documents that provide information about his career are in Italian archives. Few records of his life in France remain, though rare notices in French archives contribute invaluable details.¹⁰ We know that Valentin was born on January 3, 1591, in the small town of Coulommiers, not far from Paris, in the heart of Brie. The son of a glass painter who was also named Valentin, he belonged to the artisan's milieu.¹¹ His brother Jean, ten years his junior, was also a painter, but he remained in Coulommiers. It is likely that Valentin first apprenticed with his father, but we know nothing about his career before his arrival in Rome, the obligatory destination for every ambitious painter just starting out.¹²

Rome, the *caput mundi*, the seat of the popes' triumphal power, and a vast construction site, was above all the European capital of the arts, where vestiges of the early Christians, masterpieces of antiquity and the Renaissance, and the works of the avant-garde were thrown together. The Eternal City offered a population unique in Europe, with droves of pilgrims, the arrivals and departures of prelates and ambassadors, and artists from everywhere, including, according to Giulio Mancini, those “many Frenchmen and Flemings who it is impossible to make sense of.”¹³

The discovery by Patrizia Cavazzini of a certain archival document now makes it possible to situate the first irrefutable trace of Valentin's presence in Rome, not to spring 1620 as has been done until now, but to May 1614,¹⁴ close to the arrivals of his contemporaries and compatriots Vouet and Nicolas Tournier (1590–1638), who came to Rome in 1613 and 1616 respectively.¹⁵ Unsurprisingly, the document indicates that Valentin was involved in a dispute with another countryman, Nicolas Noël (“Nicolaus Natalis Gallus”). The painter's identity, stated in precise terms, is beyond doubt: “Valentino del Bologna Gallo” (Valentin de Boulogne, French). This new reference point confirms the existence of a first phase of Valentin's painting as reconstituted here. The period takes on its full meaning within the realm of Caravaggesque inventions of the 1610s, and not the 1620s (see cats. 4–7). Moreover, the date of May 1614 lends support to the hypothesis of a somewhat earlier arrival, perhaps in 1609, based on a cluster of indications that merit reexamination.¹⁶ At issue are recently discovered archival notices from the parish registers of Rome that date from 1609, 1611, and 1615, and that might refer to one and the same person, a “Valentino,” regularly recorded in the vicinity of Campo Marzio and denoted either as an apprentice or a “French painter.”¹⁷ As it happens, “Valentin” is as rare a name in France as in Italy. During his lifetime, Valentin was designated in all the documents currently known to us by his given name, followed, in some cases, by the term “Bologni,” “Bolon,” or “Bologna.” Our Valentin might therefore be the “Valentino garzone pittore” on via Gregoriana, listed in the census of Easter 1609 together with the painter and architect Pietro Veri (ca. 1568–1611), to whom he was apprenticed. Veri, unheralded today, was a Mannerist painter who enjoyed a certain renown by virtue of his connections to the duke of Bracciano. He was active on a number of major building projects, especially San Giovanni in Laterano and Palazzo Firenze.¹⁸ Valentin was eighteen years old in 1609 and may still have been pursuing his apprenticeship, which in some cases could extend to the age of twenty-five.¹⁹ In the census of Easter 1611, the young “Valentino” is no longer listed as being with Veri—he had been replaced by another apprentice, Rinaldo da Correggio. But a “Valentino francese” is now found with the painter “Polidoro,” established not far from Veri's workshop in the parish of San Nicola dei Prefetti. Finally, in 1615, a “Valentino francese pittore” is registered not with a master but among the many occupants of an apartment on via di Ripetta.²⁰

At that date, Valentin was twenty-four and may well have set off on an independent career. As Cavazzini has shown, young foreigners often worked for long periods with established masters, moving from one workshop to another, before trying their luck on their own.²¹

The profile of the young Frenchman, “Valentino garzone” or “pittore,” present in various workshops in the 1610s and already involved in quarrels, does not conflict with the Valentin de Boulogne of the 1620s, now identified with regularity in the Roman archives. What emerges from the few faint echoes of the painter's life is the portrait of a man who long remained in a precarious financial situation. In addition, an unusual personality begins to take shape: that of someone who appears to have cultivated a taste for independence. Valentin seems to have remained voluntarily on the margins of the official circuits and institutions, and even of the French community. Furthermore, he does not seem to have made any effort to become part of Roman society, as he did not start a family, unlike his compatriots Vouet and Régnier, for example—two artists of the same generation who married Roman women.²² There is a suggestion of an atypical personality, whose profile somewhat recalls the topos of the solitary, melancholic genius.²³

It is probable that over an extended period Valentin, like Ribera, did daywork in the workshops of fellow artists or for art dealers.²⁴ When in 1620 he is identified with certainty in the parish registers of Rome, he is living in the parish of Santa Maria del Popolo on a side street adjacent to via del Babuino, together with other young artists from northern Europe: Gérard Douffet, from Liège (in 1620 and 1622), the Walloon Timoteo Oto, or Otto (1620 and 1622), and the mysterious Lorraine sculptor David de La Riche.²⁵ He was closest to de La Riche, as they lived together for more than six years, from 1620 to 1626, when the sculptor died. In 1626 the two artists are not only recorded as roommates but also as “associates and partners,” evidence of shared professional interests. Finally, we know from archival documents that the sculptor, who died in penury—it was Valentin who financed the funeral by selling the ragged clothing left by the deceased—lived with his friend in the particularly modest circumstances of a single room.²⁶ Among those who assisted Valentin in organizing the funeral was Tournier, who together with Douffet had been a roommate of de La Riche's in 1619 and whose works, also in a naturalist vein, suggest points of convergence with those of Valentin. Although he was likely close to Tournier, Valentin seems to have associated more readily with the artists

“from those [German and Dutch] nations than with his compatriots,” as Sandrart states and as the documents confirm.²⁷

Valentin must have been disinclined toward joining French circles and taking his place within the academic world, where many of his countrymen were to be found. There is no trace of Valentin among the twenty or so mostly French artists (including Poussin) who gathered at the home of Vouet in April 1624. At the time Vouet was in charge of foreign artists for the painters’ association, the Accademia di San Luca. When Vouet was elected to direct the Accademia a few months later, many Frenchmen joined the prestigious institution—but not Valentin. It was not until two years later, in autumn 1626, that he finally became involved in the activities of the Roman institution. As a “festarolo,” he, together with Poussin, was in charge of organizing the academy’s annual celebration in honor of its patron saint. But it is important to point out that this is the only evidence we have for his participation in the Accademia di San Luca.²⁸

In 1624, when many of his countrymen came to celebrate Vouet’s new position as head of the Accademia, Valentin was off in the taverns of Rome with the *bons vivants* of the famous Bentvueghels (“birds of a feather”) group to which he belonged.²⁹ The Bentvueghels (or Schildersbent), an artists’ association that remained on the fringes of official institutions, had been founded a short time earlier, about 1617–20, and was primarily frequented by Flemish and Dutch artists, the community with which Valentin was particularly close. It welcomed painters, engravers, sculptors, and gold workers, almost exclusively from the North. There Valentin met up with his roommates and friends Douffet and Sandrart, as well as others engaged in *pittura dal naturale*: Régnier, Honthorst (1592–1656), Wouter Crabeth (1594–1644), Dirck van Baburen (ca. 1593–1624), and Jean Ducamps (1600–1648). He would have rubbed shoulders with the most famous of the Bamboccianti, the northern genre painters active in Rome, Pieter van Laer (1599–1642) and his intimate circle, and also with Johann Liss (ca. 1595/1600–1631) and Cornelis van Poelenburch (1594/95–1667). The Bentvueghels, placed under the tutelary figure of Bacchus, god of intoxication, freedom, and artistic inspiration, did not merely offer a place for young artists to socialize; it also invited them to seek the fire of creation in Bacchic inebriation and excess.³⁰ Every novice Bentvueghel thus had to be initiated into the Bacchanalian rites. Induction ceremonies included an orgiastic banquet held at a

tavern in Rome, a baptism by wine, and the selection of a nickname, mythological or anecdotal and often inspired by the member’s physical appearance, social background, or behavior. Valentin’s nickname, “Amador” (lover boy), was, oddly enough, Spanish. It is not clear whether it designated a Don Juan, always on the lookout for new conquests in the taverns of Rome, or a sighing, melancholy suitor forever caught up in reveries.³¹

Beyond Caravaggio

The evidence leads us to believe that from an early moment, in the second decade of the seventeenth century, Valentin, like many artists active in Rome, followed the path opened by Caravaggio. His corpus—relatively small but coherent and with all works displaying an allegiance to the master—includes profane paintings (about a third of the output), most of them genre scenes pervaded by a musical theme.³² But the majority were religious works for private patrons, although there is a tendency to forget this. Valentin’s oeuvre and its development remain difficult to reconstitute. We do not know of any signed or dated canvas, or of any documented picture before 1624–26, the years during which the gallery in Palazzo Mattei was furnished with paintings, one of which was provided by Valentin (cat. 26). Only his last paintings, created for purchase or in response to known commissions (about fifteen of them), can be linked to a specific context and dated with certainty, to between 1627 and 1632, the final five years of his life. It is necessary, then, to reconstruct his oeuvre and stylistic development working backward.³³

Despite these difficulties, Valentin’s oeuvre—as Jean-Pierre Cuzin proposed more than forty years ago—can be divided into three principal periods, the boundaries of which remain porous and the constituents of which fluctuate.³⁴ The first period, dating from about 1614 to 1620/22 (the date of Manfredi’s death), comprises intense, often harsh works with sculptural figures, strongly influenced by Ribera and Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri; Italian, ca. 1588/89—after 1620).³⁵ From the outset, the painter was drawn to the curiosities of daily life, gambling, cardplayers, and palm readers inspired by Caravaggio’s famous prototypes and their further elaboration by Manfredi.³⁶ There followed a more personal phase, during which Valentin’s compositions became more complex. He produced a series of masterpieces, at times vehemently dramatic, at times tinged with a melancholic



Fig. 1. Valentin de Boulogne. *Concert with Three Figures*, ca. 1615. Oil on canvas, 36¾ x 50 in. (93.3 x 127 cm). Chatsworth Collection, Chatsworth. Chatsworth Settlement Trustees

coloring. His palette, neo-Venetian in spirit, became increasingly refined. He looked farther afield for ideas and was sometimes responsive to the lessons of the great Emilian masters Domenichino, Reni, and Guercino (the heirs of the Carracci), as well as to the inventions of Bernini, the young prodigy of sculpture. Then, finally, there is his period of fame, the documented years of 1627 to 1632, distinguished by the sophisticated and learned culture of the Barberini. Without ever abandoning his radical naturalism, Valentin experimented widely with different genres: landscapes, fables, political allegory, and altarpieces. He consistently demonstrated an adherence to *pittura dal naturale* that was total and uninterrupted—even after 1630, when the Caravaggesque current was on the wane.

It was probably in the 1610s that Valentin discovered Caravaggio's method of painting *dal naturale*—from the posed model—and the many interpretations of this practice proposed by his followers. Some scholars have emphasized the relationship between Valentin and Manfredi, whose role in the spread of Caravaggism and its reformulation in the years around 1620 is well

known.³⁷ Yet the exchanges between the two artists do not seem to have been as significant for Valentin at the beginning of his career. Although he was evidently inspired by the iconographies developed by Manfredi, themselves dependent on Caravaggio's prototypes—fortune-tellers, cardsharps, and so on—in the early years Valentin was less responsive to Manfredi's brand of naturalism, consisting, as Mancini records, of “greater subtlety, harmony, and gentleness.”³⁸ It was to the masterpieces of the strange Cecco del Caravaggio and, to an even greater degree, to those of Ribera that he responded. Longhi intuited this connection when he observed Valentin's early affinities with the then-anonymous “Master of the Judgment of Solomon” (see cat. 3), now identified with certainty as Ribera during his Roman period, a visionary painter who, from 1606 on, followed “the path of Caravaggio, but darker (*tento*) and more severe (*fiero*),” as Mancini rightly noted.³⁹

In fact, some of the earliest canvases painted by Valentin, the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew* (cat. 5), *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 7), *Concert with Three Figures* (fig. 1), and *Soldiers Playing Cards and Dice (The Cheats)*



Detail of cat. 7, *Crowning with Thorns*

(cat. 9), are marked by accentuated contrasts of dark and light and massive figures, sometimes tightly composed. The figures tend to be squat with expressions sometimes “verging on a grimace,”⁴⁰ and in that sense are similar to the caricatural figures of his northern contemporaries Honthorst and Baburen. The paint is thick (very different from that of Manfredi) and the outlines clearly defined, as in the work of Cecco del Caravaggio. To depict the martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew, Valentin insisted—as would Ribera—on showing the saint’s body in all its ugliness—a decrepit, aging body with flaccid skin, which the torturer is scrupulously cutting before our very eyes. In the *Crowning with Thorns*, Valentin plays on the contrasts between the rustic and violent appearance of the torturers and the elegance of Christ, lost in meditation on the Passion.⁴¹ No prettying-up, no veiling, no affectation, no digressions. Valentin set out to paint “the way it is,” from Christ’s humanity to the barbarism of his tormentors.

Valentin seems to have drawn on Ribera’s genius to give his compositions greater complexity. He

masterfully reinterpreted the prototypes created by the Spanish painter about 1610, adopting their principal characteristics: compositions animated with numerous figures; a table to anchor the composition; a horizontal, frontal arrangement dominated by figures; and an intense contrast of lights and darks.⁴² There is also a powerful naturalism that transforms history painting into a fable of everyday life, in the manner of Ribera’s *Denial of Saint Peter*, of about 1615 (cat. 3). Although borrowings from Caravaggio are always present in Valentin’s work, they are reconsidered through the prism of Ribera’s inventions. Such is the case with the figure seen from the back and seated on a stool in the foreground (cats. 10, 11), taken from Caravaggio’s *Calling of Saint Matthew* in the Contarelli Chapel. The treatment of the motif, however, relies on Ribera’s *Denial of Saint Peter*. Valentin places the figure in a pivotal position that allows him to articulate in a remarkably tight composition two scenes unfolding on either side (cats. 15, 25). Valentin also borrows from the Spaniard the device of an



Fig. 2. Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri; Italian, ca. 1588/89–after 1620). *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple*, ca. 1613–15. Oil on canvas, 50 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 68 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (128 x 173 cm). Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen du Berlin (inv. I.447)

inquisitive glance between a figure and the viewer (cat. 3). In *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers*, for example (cat. 15), the swindler on one side and the contemplative soldier on the other directly address the viewer: the first, to be a complicit witness to a theft; the second, to contemplate the perils of alcohol.

But Valentin, far from being merely an interpreter of Ribera, early on proposed a novel form of naturalism. Sandrart, who knew him well, was aware of the Frenchman's ambitions. He wrote that, Valentin did not intend to bow to any master: not Caravaggio, not Manfredi, and, one might add, not Ribera, either.⁴³ Hence the *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), one of Valentin's first masterpieces, probably dating to about 1615–17, offers a particularly personal reinterpretation of Ribera's model. In the French painter's work, the composition has been enriched by a novel theatrical dimension. As Michael Fried has pointed out, the multiplicity of active hands, painted from life and orchestrated by a vivid play of light and dark, determines a series of arrested moments, with the aim of engaging the viewer

and suggesting an unfolding narrative (see details, pp. 8, 28).⁴⁴ The scene is enlivened by an array of actions that animates the group of figures, generating a succession of episodes to be read across the picture. The Gospel is recounted *al naturale*, with a narrative exposition and a theatricality not found in Ribera.

In the same way, a comparison between Valentin's *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple*, painted shortly after 1620 (cat. 17), with works of the same subject done previously by Cecco del Caravaggio (fig. 2) and Manfredi (cat. 2), highlights Valentin's extraordinary capacity for innovation and invention. The specific theme of Christ driving out the merchants, like that of the violent martyrdoms—ambitious, multifigure compositions that Valentin began creating about 1620—confronted the artist with the difficult task of representing the action and drama with figures studied from life, *dal naturale*.⁴⁵ His composition, worthy of Veronese, is articulated around strong obliques accentuated by the violent opposition of dark and light (see details, pp. 76–77). A carefully structured arrangement stands in



Detail of cat. 14, *Denial of Saint Peter*

contrast to the seemingly arbitrary cropping, all the more effective in that it includes fallen figures viewed in strong foreshortening. The cropping thus emphasizes the violence of an unfolding event. This compositional technique became a constant in Valentin's paintings. Furthermore, the French painter exploits the dense figural arrangement and the overpowering effect of various expressions such as those worn by the wide-eyed figures in response to Christ's threatening attitude. All of these factors produce a sensation of panic—an unfolding drama. The same eloquence of gesture and expression animates the *Innocence of Susanna* (cat. 22) and the *Judgment of Solomon* (cat. 33). The expressive power of these compositions results from a meditation on Ribera and also on major Bolognese models, the Carracci (especially Ludovico), Reni, and above all Domenichino. Yet, for Valentin the pathos of the biblical story remains profoundly human, inhabited by each of the figures individually. Consider the *Last Supper* (cat. 26), in which the artist deploys the full range of passions, distributing them among the apostles surrounding Christ. This assembly of common men with chiseled faces and thick hands brings to life the diversity of emotions one after another.

The Art of Painting *dal naturale*

It should be clear that, as a fervent *naturalista*, Valentin incessantly inquired into the principal forces behind painting from life, whatever the subject treated or the context of the commission—whether genre scenes or allegorical paintings, devotional pictures or the altarpiece for Saint Peter's.⁴⁶ He made naturalism the first principle of his art. Rarely has a painter exploited with such intelligence the diverse modalities of *pittura dal naturale*. Mimetic excellence, references from everyday life, and an effort to jolt the beholder are all ingredients used by Valentin, whose subtle compositions produce an effect of verisimilitude of unprecedented force.

As a worthy heir to Caravaggio, Valentin exalts the tangibility of the figures and objects that for him are never pure fantasy but the result of careful observation. It is therefore possible to recognize from one canvas to another the presence of models studied from life with an acuity characteristic of the greatest portraitists.⁴⁷ A bearded, graying old man with an aquiline nose can be seen as the protagonist of tavern scenes (cat. 31) and in the roles of Saints Joseph and Matthew (cats. 27, 28).⁴⁸ At each occurrence, the viewer may recognize the figure as a contemporary portrait and in some cases may be able to identify the sitter, as was the case with the old Sicilian pilgrim Giovanni Molli, who inspired many of the saints in Orazio Gentileschi's pictures.⁴⁹ The naturalism of the faces corresponds to the material presence of the objects.⁵⁰ Consider the many musical instruments in Valentin's oeuvre. Recorder, drum, cornet, guitar, spinet, harp, chitarrone, viola da braccio, lute: all are painted *dal naturale*. The artist strives to replicate contemporary instruments, from the jingles (zils) on the tambourine in *A Musical Party* (cat. 31), to the nineteen pegs of the pegbox in the *Concert with a Bas-Relief* (cat. 23). The manner in which the musician ought to play is represented as precisely as the instrument itself.⁵¹ In fact, the types of instruments and the way they are performed are consistent with Roman practice in the years 1620–30.⁵² Captured *dal naturale*, with equal rigor, are the pegs on the lute, the dark circles under a weary eye, and the hand of the musician, positioned precisely and accurately on the harp strings (cat. 38).

Yet for Valentin, the aspiration to naturalism, far from being a mere imitation, entails an increased complexity of the image and its meaning. Against all expectations, the *dal naturale* effect becomes an essential driving force for the poetics of the image, the meaning

of which it deliberately blurs. Valentin plays on the ambiguity that results from the dialogue between past and present, historical subject and contemporary portrait, living presence and painted fiction. That is true of the *Saint John the Baptist* from about 1613–14 (cat. 4) and of the sumptuous *Samson* (cat. 49) painted in 1631, one year before his death. In both, the biblical figure comes to life before our eyes, even as we recognize in the appearance of Saint John the Baptist or the conqueror of the Philistines the traits of a contemporary staring out at us. Might it be the painter himself? The gaze and certain anachronistic details, such as Saint John the Baptist's mustache and little goatee, leave no room for doubt. Like Vouet and Bernini, Valentin seeks an ephemeral effect: he paints a true portrait of the saint or biblical hero captured in action and conveyed through a gesture or meditative expression.⁵³ The model is portrayed with such a compelling presence that it seems to actualize the biblical figure it personifies. The *dal naturale* process, here intentionally emphasized, allows him not so much to render the "historical real" as to make the "real historical," to borrow Pamela Askew's expression.⁵⁴

The *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), with its spectacular fragment of classical entablature at the center of the composition, conveys in and of itself all the complexity of Valentin's oeuvre (see detail, p. 28). Presented frontally, the antique fragment, which serves as a makeshift table, juts out with remarkable sharpness in the foreground of the composition. Its sculpted figures derive from precise, learned sources. The artist is addressing the scholarly art lover capable of recognizing the original models, in this case two prized ancient plaques, one representing a procession led by Hercules (fig. 57), the other the wedding of Peleus and Thetis (see cat. 23). Exemplars were located in Rome, at the Palazzo Farnese, and one of the two plaques is reproduced twice in the *Museo Cartaceo* of Cassiano dal Pozzo, an indication of the fame these antiquities enjoyed.⁵⁵

In Valentin's art, however, everything is only illusion. The learned citation that viewers believe they recognize is in fact only a reinvention. The motif is actually a montage of the two bas-reliefs that the painter has altered: the terracotta has become stone, and the low relief has metamorphosed into high relief. Finally, Valentin invents a new iconography, making a single piece—a sort of collage *à l'antique*—from two independent scenes, of which he shows only fragments: first, the procession led by Hercules; and second, the single figure of Juno, who presides over the wedding of Peleus and Thetis.⁵⁶ The artist has thus reinvented a famous

classical model without altering the effect of having copied it faithfully. As Valentin plays a learned game with the beholder, he reflects on the notion of verisimilitude, the true and the false, ultimately inviting a celebration of art *dal naturale*.

The Everyday as Elegy

Engaging in Caravaggio's *pittura dal naturale* also meant taking on the new subjects "from life" to which the Lombard painter gave pride of place and which all his acolytes repeatedly reinterpreted. Inspired by the theater of everyday life, the compositions reflected a fascination with society's lowlife, with its ignoble activities and heroes—thieving soldiers and corrupt gentlemen, gypsy women and swindlers, drinkers, and popular musicians. They echo literary themes that were much in vogue at the time, whether in the new, picaresque novel, Giovan Battista Marino's poetry, or in theater, especially the *commedia dell'arte*.⁵⁷

Taking the measure of the models provided by Caravaggio, Valentin, like so many others, illustrated the entire range of Caravaggesque genre scenes that had become almost traditional, from the simple *Laughing Peasant* to more complex compositions.⁵⁸ He increased the number of characters (as many as fourteen in the last of these scenes; cat. 50) and intermixed the themes of palm reading, gambling, concerts, brawls, fraud, theft, and drunkenness. But, as Giovan Pietro Bellori rightly noted in 1672, Valentin distinguished himself from his contemporaries by the importance he conferred on the repertoire as a whole.⁵⁹ For the French artist, this corpus represented a continuous experimental laboratory. Like no other painter, Valentin constantly explored the lessons these scenes offered and their multiple resonances—popular or cultivated, burlesque or grave—and imperceptibly combined the motifs of tavern life and the erudite language of allegory. His *bizarrie* of games, music, and gypsy women, as Bellori calls them,⁶⁰ gradually took on a mysterious melancholy. Valentin's personal vision becomes evident from one canvas to another, from moralizing *ludicrum* to refined delight to metaphysical meditation.⁶¹

In his first genre scenes, *pittura ridicole* painted in the late 1610s, Valentin plays on the dualism between burlesque entertainment and the moral precepts of Aristotle's comedic themes.⁶² Yet he always manages to transcend the triviality of anecdote. Sometimes the narration of dice or card games is tinged with a

disconcerting dramatic intensity in which the protagonists become dangerously absorbed, echoing the viewer's spellbound state in front of the canvas, as in *Soldiers Playing Cards and Dice (The Cheats)* (cat. 9).⁶³ Sometimes, on the contrary, the artist sets up amusing surprises. He takes the topos of the robber who is robbed and the theme of "the intrigue within the intrigue" to toy with the beholder. In *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers* (cat. 15), viewers, reduced to the level of accomplice by the thief's signal, are included among the scene's villains, thereby becoming victims of the painter. With irony, Valentin warns against the dangers of gambling and false prophecies, of alcohol and sensual temptations. But as a Bentvueghel in good standing, he entertains himself by combining empathy with denunciation, comedy with a moral lesson, making use of the whole range of allusive potential in painting from life.

In his second phase, about the years 1623 to 1625, when the erudite Maffeo Barberini became Pope Urban VIII, Valentin's scenes of daily life gradually become colored with "a sort of incurable sadness."⁶⁴ Although a similar orientation can be found in certain works by Manfredi, Tournier, and Régnier (figs. 11, 14), only Valentin ventures so far along that path.⁶⁵ His gypsy women, soldiers, drinkers, and musicians who gather together to imbibe and enjoy themselves do not seem cheerful or even driven by greed and trickery. Rather, they appear lost in thought, in the thrall of introspection. The tone is far removed from the comic triviality of the compositions of his Dutch and Flemish colleagues Baburen, Honthorst, Theodor Rombouts, Gerard Seghers, and even of Vouet.

The musical theme that runs throughout Valentin's oeuvre enriches the ambiguity of these intentionally complex scenes.⁶⁶ Valentin liked to blur boundaries, but without ever abandoning his compositional formulas and naturalistic repertoire. Therein lies the originality of his painting. As we have seen, he paints the musical instruments "from life," and the instrumental ensembles offer a faithful reflection of the musical practice of his time.⁶⁷ Yet Valentin also puts into play subtle deviations, combining common and rare instruments, popular performers with the presence of a score—the *sine qua non* of refined music. In the *Lute Player* (cat. 30), the painter has selected a seven-course lute, which is particularly complicated to play: the famous collector and music lover Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani (1564–1637) discusses its merits at length in his *Discorso sopra la musica* (1628).⁶⁸ The performer is presumed capable of deciphering the tablature that lies on the corner of the

table. The performer seems also to engage in a vocal technique recommended, for example, by Giovanni Camillo Maffei in 1562: he practices suitable elocution, "opening his lips in a natural fashion, as during a friendly conversation," in a more facile way than in earlier virtuoso styles.⁶⁹ Yet it is clear that this performer is not a gentleman music lover or professional musician such as might be found among the guests at the Palazzo Giustiniani. Rather, he is one of Valentin's *bravi*, dressed in a cuirass, feathered hat, breeches, and sleeves in exquisite colors. What is this young soldier singing with such sweet melancholy? Certainly it is the new music for "one voice accompanied by an instrument," as Giustiniani explains; no doubt one of the fashionable madrigals devoted to lovesickness, like the *Dolcissimo Sospiro* by Giulio Caccini (1551–1618) or a melancholic tune from the *Aminta Musicale*, set to music by Erasmo Marotta (1576–1641).⁷⁰ Behind the delicately poetic portrait, it would be tempting to see, if not an allusion to the "Amador" of the Bentvueghels, then at least a celebration of harmony more generally⁷¹ or an allegory of love and music. Indeed, music, instrumental or vocal, "incites the human soul to open itself to love," as Giustiniani reminds us.⁷²

In similar fashion, *Gathering in a Tavern (The Guileless Musician)* (cat. 24) comments almost imperceptibly on the vanity of worldly things and the lonely destiny of the individual. Music, as Giustiniani remarks, has the capacity to elicit varied and contrary feelings: tears or laughter, love or rage, and so on. Music is both a traditional symbol for harmony and a source of danger.⁷³ Although considered "a roaring-meg against melancholy, to rear and revive the languishing soul," as Robert Burton demonstrates in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), music also has the power to lull one into complacency, giving rise to dark thoughts that invade the vulnerable soul.⁷⁴

Valentin prefers playing with the association of music, drunkenness, and melancholy. For him, the intoxicating effects of alcohol and music seem less a source of joy than of disorientation and sadness. The overconsumption of wine, regularly evoked in his canvases and often associated with soldiers, can also lead to a loss of self-control. On occasion, it can result in a somber melancholy.⁷⁵ The sweet sadness that is omnipresent in Valentin's oeuvre is enhanced by a mesmerizing half-light, a restricted palette and muted colors, and the absorbed attitudes of the characters (cats. 38, 42).

The *Concert with a Bas-Relief* (cat. 23) is representative of this new orientation, depicting a "moment of

equilibrium” that he never surpassed—a moment when all these modalities come into play and the picture’s meaning is left open.⁷⁶ Unlike in the burlesque tavern scenes of his early works, the assembly that is depicted is here distinguished by what must seem to constitute a strange poetry. Popular musicians—a violinist, a guitarist, a lute player, adults and children, instrumentalists and vocalists—are united before our eyes for the duration of a concert (see detail, p. xii). But the image is more complex than it appears. Although the musical assembly is consistent with the practices of the time, the setting of the performance is, at the very least, unlikely. It is defined only by an ancient stone block carved with a bas-relief and strewn with the leftovers of a meal. The background of vine leaves and ivy is now, alas, nearly illegible. On closer inspection, however, one finds that the musicians are framed by two figures, a soldier and a servant. Recurrent in Caravaggesque tavern scenes, they subtly allude here to the notions of temperance and excess. In the foreground, the pensive soldier is probably diluting his wine, as is consistent with the traditional iconography of Temperance, while in the background the parched servant greedily quenches his thirst straight from the flask, evoking a traditional sign of excess, drunkenness, and surfeit.⁷⁷ They are the only nonmusicians in the scene, arranged facing each other, as it were, on either side of the concert, offering two contrasting profiles. Finally, in the midst of the musicians, a child is captured in the conventional pose of Melancholy, his head resting on his hand.

These veiled allegories are arranged around the ancient fragment with which there seems to be some sort of dialogue. Although at first sight the bas-relief appears incongruous in the context of the concert, it constitutes, as I have shown elsewhere (see cat. 23), the structuring element of the composition as well as its symbolic catalyst. Beyond its demarcating edge the young child is seen staring into space, surrounded by the figures of Temperance and Excess. The child, a symbol of innocence, is at the crossroads of vice and virtue, licit and illicit pleasures, excess and temperance.

The reference to antiquity contributes to the interpretive richness of the painting, possibly evoking an ironic play with its classical source, thereby making a traditional echo of both the splendor and the decadence of the Roman Empire.⁷⁸ But it also illustrates the condition of humanity subject to the inconstancy of fortune and the vanity of worldly glory.⁷⁹ In the *Concert with a Bas-Relief*, the reference to the ponderous weight of fortune, placed in the midst of a company of musi-

cians framed by Temperance and Excess, invites viewers yet again to meditate on the danger of the passions and the exercise of human will, on moderation and indulgence, harmony and disorder, and finally, on the fragility of human life.

The *bizarrie* of daily life reinvented by Valentin take the form of elegiac songs of a new kind. They lead the informed beholder to a melancholic reflection on the fleeting nature of time and the precariousness of all happiness, and make reference to a learned culture where a refined celebration of sensual pleasures coexists with the harmonious mastery of desires and passions.⁸⁰ Through the combination of intentionally veiled allegory and the principles of *pittura dal naturale*, that existential meditation becomes part of everyday life in an original manner. In the remarkably literary context of Urban VIII’s Rome, Valentin’s *Concert with a Bas-Relief* may therefore be understood as the counterpart, *dal naturale*, of Poussin’s *Arcadian Shepherds* (Musée du Louvre), painted some years later—about 1638—for Cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi, a member of the Barberini circle.

Glory and Death

Valentin emerged from anonymity in the late 1620s, only a few years before his sudden death. His participation, between 1624 and 1626, in the decoration of the gallery of the Palazzo Mattei di Giove at the request of Asdrubale Mattei, one of the most famous art lovers in Rome, appears to have played a determining role in his newfound fame (cat. 26).⁸¹ In the gallery, Valentin came face to face with some of the outstanding talent of the Roman art scene: Antiveduto Grammatica (1569–1626), Alessandro Turchi (1578–1649), Orazio Riminaldi (1593–1630), Giovanni Serodine (1594/1600–1630), and Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669). Beginning in 1627, Valentin’s documented purchases and commissions follow one after another (no fewer than thirteen paintings between 1627 and 1632). All are from members of the learned, refined, and famously Francophile “casa Barberini,” including the antiquarian Cassiano dal Pozzo, the jurist Giovanni Battista Mellini, Pope Urban VIII’s physician Giovanni Giacomo Baldini, his buffoon Raffaello Menicucci, his valet Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata, and also Cardinals Ascanio Filomarino and Angelo Giori, both *camerieri segreti*—all brought together, apparently, around the pope’s nephew Cardinal Francesco Barberini, from that moment the painter’s main patron. Thus, by 1627 at the latest, Valentin figured



Fig. 3. Valentin de Boulogne. *Saint John the Baptist*, ca. 1631. Oil on canvas, 53 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (135 x 100 cm). Collegio di Sant'Urbano, Apiro

among the protégés of one of the richest and most influential men in Rome, an active promoter of the arts, sciences, and learning.⁸²

Valentin's patrons sought him out for his capacity as a history painter and portraitist.⁸³ In his practice of portraiture, as in other genres, the artist seems to have wanted to push to the limit the sum of his experiments. This can be seen in his series of sacred figures—all of them *invenzioni*. Painted “from life,” they metamorphose into entirely original human heroes. Such is the case with Saint John the Baptist—the “voice of one crying in the wilderness” (*vox clamantis in deserto*). In the version acquired by Cardinal Angelo Giori (cat. 45), the young hermit seems someone familiar yet solemn, as though Valentin wanted to unite the nobility of a work by Reni and the truthfulness of one by Caravaggio. In the version painted for Giovanni Giacomo Baldini (fig. 3), Saint John the Baptist has the features of a gaunt and feverish boy painted from life but with a ghostly appearance and the eyes of a visionary. A tension of unprecedented force emerges from the combination of

the eloquent gesture of a preacher, which fills the canvas, and the ambiguity of his appearance.⁸⁴ In a similar vein, an unanticipated authority and a uncommon ambivalence distinguish Valentin's very young Judith (cat. 36) and his “modern” Samson, painted for Francesco Barberini in 1631 (cat. 49). Paradoxically, the famous biblical hero is depicted as a robust young man, more plebeian than noble in type. As already noted, the artist intentionally plays on the ambiguity between the portrait of a model and the rendering of a figure identifiable as the conqueror of the Philistines. The model has adopted a casual pose, resting on his elbow, his head supported by his hand, in the attitude of a melancholic. By substituting his attributes—replacing the jawbone and animal skin with a bottle and glass—and by removing the theatrical effect of the blood-red drapery that serves to idealize the model, the figure of Samson could be perfectly reemployed at the center of a gambling scene.⁸⁵ Whatever the prestige of the commission or the weight of the pictorial conventions, the artist remained faithful to the principles of *pittura dal naturale* and the artistic license Caravaggio had taught.

Valentin explored new ventures in his work. For example, he composed a landscape in the background of *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (fig. 4),⁸⁶ a fragment of nature “painted almost for its own sake” in a subtle monochrome of deep blue-grays that becomes the dramatic mirror for the exchange between the two characters.⁸⁷ The dialogue between nature and the human passions, the specific chromatic palette, and also the sober monumentality of the scene and its restrained pathos, seem to announce a new orientation—one that is attentive to Guercino's creation of a “sensitive” classicism. Valentin succeeds no less well in taking a page from the seventh canto of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, in which Erminia meets the shepherds (fig. 5).⁸⁸ It is the champion of the human soul who expresses himself here, the painter capable of conveying a variety of emotions “naturally,” whether the children's apprehension, the elders' mistrust, or the heroine's surprise. The artist even manages to suggest a barely perceptible change in these feelings: the protagonists seem at first to be watching one another, then gradually come to a mutual acceptance. Once again, the *affetti* are expressed by the intensity of the gazes and hand gestures as well as by the poetically colored atmosphere.

The literature on art will persistently celebrate Valentin for his gifts as an extraordinary colorist guided by a long meditation on the Venetian *ductus*; someone who, having reached maturity in the late 1620s, was the

equal of Reni, Guercino, and Pietro da Cortona.⁸⁹ Consider the phenomenal piece of crimson fabric that sets off Samson, its ineffable nuances shimmering in the light. About 1630, paint is laid on thinly, Valentin's brushwork becomes more rapid, his *cangianti* effects and use of transparent passages are more virtuoso, his chromatic harmonies more refined than in his early paintings. The effects of dusty roses and faded blue-grays, lilacs and pale greens unquestionably become his signature.

Everything was in place for Valentin to make his triumphal entrance on the brightly lit stage of the Rome of the Barberini. The introduction was orchestrated in two phases, occurring in quick succession, both at the instigation of Francesco Barberini. The first was the commission of a majestic *Allegory of Italy* (1628–29), and the second, an altarpiece for Saint Peter's (1629–30). The two masterpieces demonstrate once again the painter's ambitions and aspirations. With the *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43), Valentin delivered one of the most astonishing pictures of the seventeenth century. The time frame (the canvas was completed in March 1629, two months before the project for Saint Peter's), the unusually large format, and the ambition of the work suggest that it served as a kind of trial run before he took on the altarpiece.

The sumptuous allegory is distinguished by its monumentality and the sophistication of its iconographic program. It articulates a political discourse glorifying the action of Pope Urban VIII, inspired at once by Barberini symbols and by Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*.⁹⁰ The rhetoric of the image, however, grounded in the traditional tools of the genre (personification, codified poses and attributes), is subordinate to the visual dissonance produced by the use of a "naturalistic" representation for a grandiose allegory. Valentin thereby transforms an initial paradox—an allegory "from life"—into a creative wellspring. The most eloquent example of this paradox is the figure of the river god Tiberius (see detail, p. 42). Although his attributes are traditional and the pose is unquestionably inspired by the eponymous statues of antiquity, the role of the Tiber is played by an inappropriate actor, a recurrent figure in his oeuvre, thus shattering the illusion. As if by way of provocation, Valentin scrupulously transcribes the anatomical details, all incongruous with the allegorical status of the figure: the prominent knee, the swollen joints of the feet, the veins in the hands, and the hairy chest. The tangible presence of the human figure creates a discordance that is all the more effective in that it functions within an

ambitious allegory open to multiple interpretations, consistent with Barberini taste. A comparison with Vouet's *Allegory in Honor of Cardinal Francesco Barberini*, probably painted in 1625 (engraved by Johann Friedrich Greuter, fig. 66)⁹¹ and typical of the aesthetic in vogue at the time, gives a sense of the gap between the two works and the uniqueness of Valentin's invention, always fundamentally *dal naturale*. The radical choice—unexpected at that date, in that context, and on that scale—takes on the weight of a declaration of principles.

It was also as a free and ingenious *naturalista* that Valentin would respond to the most important commission of his career and the crowning achievement of his ascent: the altarpiece for Saint Peter's, the *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian* (cat. 48), for the chapel where the martyrs' relics were held.⁹² Apart from Vouet and Poussin, Valentin was the only foreigner of his day to have enjoyed such a mark of favor. His eagerly awaited altarpiece, installed in 1630, was a sensation, no doubt to the greater satisfaction of Francesco Barberini. It was immediately compared to the other French painting of a martyrdom he had commissioned for Saint Peter's, that of Saint Erasmus, signed the previous year by Poussin (see fig. 69). Sandart reports that the two altarpieces were the source of a major discussion. "Everyone was eager to see them," notes Valentin's German biographer, who was a witness to the excitement. And everyone evidently had an opinion about the merits and defects of one or the other of the masterpieces. Only "connoisseurs of art" could settle the question. Both artists were admitted to the pantheon of the most excellent painters, Poussin being praised for "the expression of the passions, the *affetti*, and invention," Valentin for "truth to nature, forcefulness, coloristic brilliance and harmony."⁹³ Emboldened by his patron's confidence (the *Allegory of Italy* had provided proof), Valentin chose to evoke a dramatic *storia* from the early church seen through the prism of "naturalistic truth." And he did this in the very heart of Saint Peter's, twenty years after Caravaggio's death. It was a stunning position to take at a time when the naturalist current was on the wane (its primary representatives, Cecco del Caravaggio, Ribera, Manfredi, and Régnier, had either died, left the capital, or moved in new directions); the search for the *beau idéal* now dominated aesthetics.

The result was a "grand work, but a bit mad," in the words of Cuzin. A dramatic and "edgy" tour de force wherein classical sources and erudite references stand side by side with a pileup of arms, legs, torsos, elbows, feet, hands, and faces (frightened or resigned), all



Fig. 4. Valentin de Boulogne. *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, ca. 1627. Oil on canvas, 56 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 78 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (144 x 199 cm). Private collection, Rome



Fig. 5. Valentin de Boulogne. *Erminia and the Shepherds*, ca. 1628. Oil on canvas, 53 x 73 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (134.6 x 185.6 cm). Alte Pinakothek, Munich

monumental and painted “from life” (see detail, p. 228).⁹⁴ The virtuoso foreshortenings and Berniniesque contortions stand in counterpoint to the explicit quotations from Caravaggio’s *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew* in San Luigi dei Francesi. The bodies are stacked high and deep, and the beholder’s eyes, dazzled by the gradations of blue-gray and ocher enlivened by dabs of vermilion, follow the extraordinarily mobile and dramatic play of light. Although Valentin officially pays homage to Caravaggio, he also reveals his Venetian affiliation and his meditation on Reni and Guercino (for example, Guercino’s *Burial of Saint Petronilla* of 1621, also for Saint Peter’s). As Marina Mojana points out, one seems to recognize in this altarpiece Valentin’s “spiritual testament,” addressed to his patron and visible to all.⁹⁵

The challenge had been taken up. After the achievement of Saint Peter’s, commissions continued to come in—whether for religious paintings, portraits, or the famous gypsy pictures (*zingare*) that never seem to have gone out of fashion.⁹⁶ The prices paid for these works, though they did not reach the dizzying heights of those commanded by Reni, prince of painters, were comparable to those ordinarily paid to the young artists in vogue in Rome, from Poussin to Pietro da Cortona.⁹⁷ Valentin’s sudden renown brought him a new affluence,

as attested by a change of lifestyle, also recorded in 1627. That year, Valentin no longer stayed in the company of roommates, fellow penniless artists or friends from the Bentvueghels: he now lived alone with a servant.⁹⁸ The final proof of Valentin’s preeminent place within the Barberini circle and among Rome’s small group of painting enthusiasts is none other than the Francophile Cassiano dal Pozzo who paid the costs of his funeral. Immediately after Valentin’s death, his works commanded exorbitant prices: “You can’t find any paintings by him,” wrote a compatriot in Rome, “or, if you do find them, you have to pay four times what they had cost.”⁹⁹

Throughout his life, Valentin remained faithful to his first loves and commitments—Caravaggio and *pittura dal naturale*—even at the very heart of Saint Peter’s, but also to one of the Bentvueghels’ mottoes: “Baccho, Tabacco e Venere,” *per fas et nefas* (right or wrong).¹⁰⁰ Indeed, it was in honoring Bacchus with his friends from the Bentvueghels that the enigmatic Valentin de Boulogne, the regular frequenter of taverns, now the intimate of princes, the “pittore d’ordine di Sua Eccellenza [Cardinal Francesco Barberini],” alias “Amador,” one of the “birds of a feather” turned “pictor famosus,” met his death.¹⁰¹ A legend was born.



Success and Failure in a Violent City

Bartolomeo Manfredi, Nicolas Tournier,
and Valentin de Boulogne

PATRIZIA CAVAZZINI

Seventeenth-century Rome was nothing if not dangerous. Every day or, better, every night, barbers and surgeons patched up a constant stream of injuries triggered by street fights.¹ Invectives and minor brawls could quickly escalate into vicious attacks, fomented by drunkenness and by the knives, daggers, and swords that many carried around. In theory a license was needed to bear a sword, but almost everybody carried one, with or without a license. Bearing firearms was a much more serious offense and therefore rarer.

Artists were far from immune to violent episodes, as is well known from Caravaggio's killing of Ranuccio Tomassoni in May 1606, but biographers might gloss over this kind of story. For example, the artist's biographer Lione Pascoli (1674–1744) reports at length about the young painter Giovan Francesco Lauri's death in 1635, and about his father Baldassarre's great grief over his loss.² He claims that Francesco died of natural causes, whereas the death record reveals that he was wounded in an incident investigated by the city's main criminal court.³ Some painters, such as the Carracci and their followers, led careful lives that never put them at risk, at least while in Rome. In Naples, however, Domenichino (1581–1641) feared that his rivals might poison him.⁴ Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669) and the

painters in his circle also took care to stay out of trouble. Other artists, especially Caravaggio's followers and in particular those from northern Europe, were often involved in brawls, sometimes with dire outcomes. They usually belonged to the Bentvueghels, an association of Dutch and Flemish artists and occasionally artists of other nationalities, who spent most of their evenings in drunken revelries.⁵ A link between personal behavior, style, and artistic subject matter did exist, as was recognized by the reforming archbishop of Milan and former protector of the Accademia di San Luca, Cardinal Federico Borromeo (1564–1631). In fact, he mentioned a painter whose mores were as filthy as his canvases, certainly in reference to Caravaggio.⁶ But the analogy cannot be taken too far: Agostino Tassi (1578–1644), constantly involved in criminal activities, mostly painted serene landscapes; Bernardino Cesari (1571–1622) consorted with bandits, even though he was influenced by the anodyne elegance of the works of his brother, the Cavalier d'Arpino (1568–1640).⁷

There is scant evidence that Valentin de Boulogne was directly implicated in any fight, but to a surprising degree he was surrounded by violence, especially in the mid- and late 1620s. According to the painter-biographer Joachim von Sandrart, Valentin much preferred the company of Dutchmen and Germans to that of his



Fig. 6. Cornelis Schut (Flemish, 1597–1655). *Adoration of the Magi*, ca. 1626. Oil on canvas, 125¼ x 85½ in. (318 x 217 cm). Church of the Trinity, Caen

countrymen, and he seems to have been a member of the Bentvueghels by 1624, adopting the nickname Amador (lover boy).⁸ He must have known the Flemish Caravaggesque painter Nicolas Régnier (ca. 1588–1667): in addition to being members of the Bentvueghels and French-speaking, they presumably moved in Bartolomeo Manfredi's (1582–1622) circle, as they both looked carefully at his work.⁹ A murky and long-lasting spiral of hostility possibly originated in Régnier's house, where in June 1621 three painters gathered: they were his assistant Paolo Signoretti, his student Tommaso Dovini, and Giovan Battista Greppi (ca. 1600–1647). In 1624 Greppi killed Signoretti, and in 1635 Dovini, out of professional rivalry, tried to murder Greppi.¹⁰

In 1625 one of Valentin's neighbors, the painter Giovanni di Ruggero Balen from Antwerp, was severely injured in a sword fight and presumably died of his wounds.¹¹ Revenge might have been behind this attack: a few years earlier Balen testified that a colleague had stolen books of drawings by David de Haen (1597–1622),

the Dutch Caravaggist who died while in the service of the sophisticated collector Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani (1564–1637).¹² But danger struck even closer to Valentin. In March 1626 his roommate, the sculptor David de La Riche (from Lorraine), was assaulted in via dei Greci, not far from their lodging in an alley off via Margutta. Badly wounded, he found shelter in the house of the sculptor Arcangelo Gonella. This was to no avail, however, as he died during the night.¹³ To pay for the funeral and saying of masses, Valentin had to sell the sculptor's clothes, including those he was wearing when he died. The painter Nicolas Tournier (1590–1638), who had lived with de La Riche in 1619, was present at the taking of the inventory—the only occasion on which he can be documented together with Valentin, even though in the eighteenth century Valentin was said to have been his teacher.¹⁴ Possibly scared by the murder, Tournier soon left Rome for France. Valentin, instead—on the cusp of success after more than a decade spent in Rome in relative obscurity—decided to stay, witnessing still more violence among his fellow artists.

In July 1627 Valentin's next-door neighbor, the painter Cornelis Schut from Antwerp (1597–1655), killed in a fight "his associate, the Flemish painter Giusto," possibly Joost Jasper Meilnck.¹⁵ The word *socius* (associate), the same as that employed in documents for Valentin and de La Riche, indicates common economic interests, and it would be useful to understand its exact meaning. In this case both artists worked for Vincenzo Giustiniani—Schut painted four large canvases for him, two of which are now in the church of the Trinity in Caen (fig. 6).¹⁶ While there is no certainty about the last name of the victim, he must have been the "Giusto fiammingo" who is mentioned in the Giustiniani inventory of 1638 as the author of the *Flight of the Naked Youth* (Rob Smeets Gallery, Geneva) and the *Death of Socrates*—the latter destroyed in 1945 (fig. 7).¹⁷ Found guilty, Schut was sentenced to life imprisonment on the galleys, and all his goods were confiscated. The sentence was then commuted to exile; soon after, the painter was forgiven and recovered his belongings through the intervention of the Accademia di San Luca.¹⁸ Surprisingly, the institution decided to intervene on Schut's behalf even though he was a member of the Bentvueghels. One wonders if Valentin played any role in this decision, as he was one of the few people who belonged to both organizations at this date. The academicians, who could name one prisoner per year to be released, occasionally used their privilege for artists

guilty of manslaughter; for example, in 1625 they had spared Greppi's life when he was sentenced for the slaying of Régnier's assistant. Greppi was exiled instead, and in 1626 he petitioned the governor of Rome for permission to return to the city, "because there is no other place where I can practice my profession as conveniently."¹⁹ A decade later his reputation was barely tainted. "He is somewhat weird . . . behaves well in the profession, I heard that once he killed a Paolo painter," asserted Francesco Lauri.²⁰ Evidently killing someone in a scuffle did not always have the dire results experienced by Caravaggio.

In October 1627 Leonaert Bramer (1596–1674), who was also a member of the Bentvueghels and lived on via di Ripetta toward Piazza del Popolo, not far from Valentin, assailed two companions after an evening spent in a tavern. Completely drunk, he could not put up with their teasing; another painter, who was only passing by, was injured and feared for his life when he tried to separate the combatants.²¹ The latter, often identified as Claude Lorraine (1604/5?–1682), was instead Nicolas Guillaume, who was also from Lorraine and was nicknamed "de la Fleur," after his specialty, still lifes of flowers.²² The minor argument almost turned deadly because all the participants were carrying swords. The very fact of being French could put one in danger in a city with a large Spanish population. Italians and Spaniards would provoke Frenchmen by shouting "oui, oui" at them, and general melees would follow. Two unknown painters, a Nicolò di Giovanni Gregorio from Lorraine and a Federico Scabir, also French, were involved in just such an episode near Piazza del Popolo in June 1627, again in close proximity to



Fig. 7. Justo Fiammingo (Flemish, d. 1627). *Death of Socrates*. Formerly Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin. Destroyed

Valentin's house;²³ Gregorio must have been at least an acquaintance of Valentin's, as he had lived with Tournier, de La Riche, and Gérard Douffet (1594–1660) in 1619.²⁴ According to the biographer Giovan Battista Passeri (1610–1679), Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), who certainly knew Valentin, had a similar experience shortly after his arrival in Rome; he was so frightened that he dressed in the Italian fashion from then on.²⁵ The flare-up of skirmishes, with tragic or at times only annoying consequences, might be one of the reasons why some foreign painters left Rome about 1626–28. As already mentioned, Tournier left, and so did Bramer (possibly to avoid prosecution), Régnier, Simon Vouet (1590–1649), Cornelis van Poelenburch (1594/95–1667), and Schut.

In the following years there seem to have been slightly fewer violent episodes involving painters—or at least fewer were reported to the authorities. Finally successful, Valentin can be documented in a totally different environment, mostly working for Cardinal Francesco Barberini (1597–1679) and the people in his circle from 1627 until Valentin's death in 1632. However, as can be seen from Schut's killing of a colleague during the time they both worked for Vincenzo Giustiniani, moving in exalted circles was not a guarantee of either safety or good behavior. Even while working for illustrious patrons, Valentin might still have consorted with the types of characters he painted in his many tavern scenes (cats. 10, 11). According to the painter Giovanni Baglione (1566–1644), it was Valentin's disorderly life that brought him to his grave.²⁶ Inebriated by wine and tobacco after an evening spent with friends, Valentin bathed in a fountain, became ill, and never recovered. While his presence in taverns is undocumented, that of his Dutch and Flemish neighbors, fellow members of the Bentvueghels, is richly recorded and places them in more amusing circumstances than the ones just discussed. For example, the painter Jean Ducamps from Cambrai (1600–1648), nicknamed "Golden Ass," played *riffa*, a forbidden dice game, in a barbershop located below a tavern.²⁷ He spent all his evenings there, among people of various professions and nationalities, "in order to pass the time and learn Italian well." When arrested in December 1625, all those around the table declared that they had been playing a lawful game requiring two dice, but they must have been lying, as three were required for *riffa* (see cat. 14).

In 1631 Ducamps was detained together with two companions for assaulting two other Flemish painters in a tavern, the Osteria del Moro.²⁸ They were completely



Fig. 8. Jean Ducamps (Flemish, 1600–1648). *Virtuous Love*, ca. 1627. Oil on canvas, 48 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 28 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (123 x 73.5 cm). Private collection

intoxicated, having spent the whole day drinking. The painters Gerard van Kuijl (1604–1673) and Steven van 't Hoff, both from Gorinchem, together with Pieter van Laer (1599–ca. 1642), took part in an elaborate ruse by which they tried to free Ducamps and the other assailants from prison, but their scam resulted in a longer incarceration for the culprits.²⁹ Surprisingly, van Laer, who had gained quick success with his paintings of everyday life, was called “oste” in the trial, meaning that he ran a tavern.³⁰ He was said to spend all his money on prostitutes and to have left Rome with the aim of reforming this behavior—though with scant results, as courtesans could be found just as easily in Amsterdam.³¹ The evidence that Valentin took part in similar incidents is only circumstantial: the physical proximity of these painters’ dwellings to his (Ducamps and van Laer always lived very close to him, and in 1631 and 1632 they were his next-door neighbors);³² Sandrart’s assertion that he was friendly with Dutch and German painters; his membership in the Bentvueghels, where van Laer and

Ducamps were associates; and Baglione’s account of his unruliness and the tale of his death. If Ducamps is the author of the painting *Virtuous Love* (fig. 8), then he must indeed have been in contact with Valentin, to whom the picture was once ascribed. Instead, it seems to have been painted in Rome by Ducamps for his colleague Bramer, who describes a very similar picture in a 1672 deposition.³³ Like Valentin, Ducamps painted allegories after live models without introducing even a minimum of idealization, so that here the youth’s dark stubble jarringly contrasts with his angel’s wings.³⁴

Paths to Success

If it is possible for us to catch vague glimpses of Valentin’s later years in Rome, at least through his friends, less is known about his arrival in the city. No parish record refers to him with any certainty before 1620 (see Chronology). As noted in the essay “Bowling to No One: Valentin’s Ambitions” by Annick Lemoine in this catalogue, a “Valentino francese pittore” documented in 1615 at an inn might well be Valentin, but given the extraordinary number of painters who made their way to Rome, such a reference is not definitive proof.³⁵ In the same year a “Monsù da Colombiera” (that is, perhaps from Coulommiers, Valentin’s hometown) and a “Monsù di balena” (maybe the Giovanni di Ruggero Balen severely wounded in 1625) lived together at an inn and received Easter communion from the pope. This citation, which does not specify the profession of the two individuals, has also been thought to be a reference to Valentin.³⁶ Sandrart implies that Valentin was in Rome, having little success, before Simon Vouet, who we know arrived in March 1613.³⁷ These indications that Valentin arrived in Rome much earlier than 1620 can be confirmed by a newly discovered document. In fact, on May 2, 1614, a Frenchman called Nicolas Natalis agreed to withdraw the suit presented against his compatriot “Valentino del Bologna” and to “concede peace to the same,” that is, to be reconciled with him.³⁸ The painter was not present at this event, and no further details are given in the document, but a reconciliation of this kind happened only after an act of verbal or physical aggression.³⁹ Evidently Valentin’s behavior was on par with that of his unruly neighbors.

More information has also recently surfaced about Tournier, who came from a Calvinist family and a Lutheran town, Montbéliard.⁴⁰ The Roman Inquisition was rather tolerant of Protestants who did not make



Fig. 9. Simon Vouet (French, 1590–1649). *Fortune-Teller*, 1617. Oil on canvas, 37³/₈ x 53¹/₈ in. (95 x 135 cm). Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (inv. 1041 [F.N. 450])

a show of their religion; still, they were considered heretics. Usually they hid their faith and tried to conform, often moving out of town when the parish census was taken before Easter, when proof of communion was required.⁴¹ Possibly to make matters easier for himself, Tournier converted to Catholicism, a rather unusual step for an artist, at least judging from surviving records. Documented in the parish records only in 1619, he must have arrived in Rome by 1616 at the latest.⁴² On January 5, 1617, “after being instructed in the faith,” he abjured his religion in front of Pope Paul V. Presumably for this reason, when he returned to France he remained only briefly in his native town and quickly moved to Catholic regions. In the office of the Roman Inquisition “Nicolas Tournier, son of Andrew from Montbeliard” can be observed making his profession of faith together with three other painters. None of Tournier’s companions left any other trace in Rome, and none of them was French. They were Federico Stinnamer from Augsburg, Rainaldo Tinde from Germany, and Daniel Pris or Preis

from the duchy of Württemberg-Montbéliard.⁴³ Pris was from the same region as Tournier; thus, presumably they had left home together.⁴⁴ All four painters were back in the office of the Inquisition in March, when they were forbidden to leave town and requested to appear every month—although no record of their doing so has been preserved. Pris and Tinde were allowed to leave Rome in the following months.⁴⁵

Sandart’s claim that Valentin became Vouet’s pupil is slightly disconcerting, as it is difficult to discern a close stylistic affinity between the two. Vouet did paint in a Caravaggesque fashion for many years in Rome (fig. 9), but Valentin looked more closely to Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652), Manfredi, and Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri; Italian, ca. 1588/89–after 1620).⁴⁶ Régnier and Tournier seem to have studied with Manfredi, but documentary evidence is lacking, and of these painters, only Valentin was said by Sandart to have “imitated Michelangelo da Caravaggio and his disciple Manfredi.”⁴⁷ Canvases attributed to Régnier



Fig. 10. Nicolas Tournier (French, 1590–1638). *Drinker*, ca. 1619–20. Oil on canvas, 51½ x 36⅝ in. (130 x 93 cm). Galleria Estense, Modena (inv. 15)

and Tournier by numerous modern scholars appear under the name Manfredi in early inventories, possibly because the master sold his assistants' pictures as his own (fig. 10).⁴⁸ According to Baglione, Manfredi “found it very hard to finish his works” and thus might have increased his output by having his students copy his compositions, as Tournier seems to have done (figs. 11, 12).⁴⁹ Manfredi lived in via Vittoria in 1615—very close to the cross street between via Condotti and via dei Greci, where Tournier is first recorded in 1619—moving to a different parish by 1617.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, the records for that parish, San Lorenzo in Lucina, are missing for the years 1616 to 1618, so it is impossible to say if in 1616 Tournier, or any other foreign Caravaggisti, lived a few houses away from Manfredi, or perhaps with him.

Even though the papal physician and art expert Giulio Mancini (1559–1630) refers to Manfredi's “noble countenance” and “his very good and reserved behavior,” documents show that he was repeatedly in debt, with an illegitimate child, involved in a long-term relationship with a courtesan, and responsible for a

vicious attack on a creditor.⁵¹ In his youth in Mantua he had been arrested for carrying daggers and swords.⁵² Thus, he would not have been out of place among Valentin's neighbors, and indeed Sandrart attributes his early death to his lifestyle, just as Baglione does for Valentin.⁵³ Manfredi, whose influence can be seen in the work of so many foreigners, changed assistants constantly, at least judging from his parish records, but none of the painters documented in his household made a name for himself.⁵⁴ He clearly had paying students: in the mid-1610s he was teaching a mason's son, at a cost of fifty scudi for two years of instruction.⁵⁵ Painters such as Valentin and Tournier, who came from families of artists, must have reached Rome with at least a minimum of competence; thus, they were unlikely to have had to pay a fee to a master.⁵⁶ They found themselves in a city in which their occupation was both competitive and unregulated. Demand for easel paintings had certainly increased in Rome in the first decades of the seventeenth century, but so many aspiring artists moved there from the rest of Italy and Europe that it was difficult to succeed. Painters went to Rome to further their education. They were also attracted by the lack of restrictions on their profession. Even in the quattrocento the painters' guild had never really tried to limit the number of practitioners in the field or to exclude outsiders; its transformation into an academy had further weakened its authority.⁵⁷ The academic statutes that required a license in order to practice had little effect in the real world, where, as long as he could make a living, a painter could easily establish himself without paying a substantial fee or having to demonstrate his competence.⁵⁸ By and large members of the Bentvueghels in the 1620s did not belong to the academy, nor did Tournier, while many Frenchmen, including Valentin, joined only in and after 1624, when Vouet became its head.⁵⁹

Although the Accademia di San Luca had among its founding goals the training of young painters, it is unclear how effective its instruction was in the first few decades of the seventeenth century, and in particular up until 1624, when Vouet reorganized the system of instruction.⁶⁰ Federico Zuccaro (1540/42–1609), the first head of the academy, hoped that youths of varying abilities would gather there every other Sunday in order to draw under the direction of respected artists. At best, such infrequent meetings would have complemented instruction received in a different fashion. In Rome the process of learning had become rather unstructured, as can be observed in the trial of the Cavalier d'Arpino for slashing his rival Cristoforo Roncalli (Pomarancio)



Fig. 11. Nicolas Tournier(?). *Drinkers*, ca. 1617. Oil on canvas, 50 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 75 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (129 x 192 cm). Musée de Tessé, Le Mans (inv. 365; LM 18.15)



Fig. 12. Bartolomeo Manfredi (Italian, 1582–1622). *Drinkers*, ca. 1619–20. Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 74 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (130 x 190 cm). Private collection

(1552–1626) in 1607.⁶¹ Aspiring painters could spend their time going around the city and drawing copies of famous frescoes, altarpieces, and statues. They would then show their efforts to a master to get suggestions and corrections, in exchange for minimal services, such as washing the bowls in which the colors were mixed. They could also attend private academies run by established masters, where various painters of different ages and abilities would gather to draw from a nude model. Here, too, their drawings would be criticized and corrected. Poussin attended Domenichino's academy in Piazza Scandeborg, and Claude perhaps went to Andrea Sacchi's (1599–ca. 1661) out of desperation because he had so much trouble drawing figures.⁶²

The much-repeated assertion that the academy forbade private sessions of drawing from the nude is incorrect: the institution, the authority of which was questionable in this period, prohibited its own students from organizing such gatherings without a license, not from attending them.⁶³ Admission to these meetings seems to have been rather casual, perhaps in exchange for a small fee, but certainly one did not need to have a strong affiliation with a master to take part—not even an affinity of style. For example, Dovini, who became a Caravaggesque painter, initially studied with the Mannerist Pier Francesco Alberti (1584–1638), and later with Régnier, Giovanni Lanfranco (1582–1647), and Angelo Caroselli (1585–1652).⁶⁴ Finally he attended sessions of drawing from the model in Sacchi's house, thereby spanning almost the whole spectrum of the stylistic currents available in Rome at the time. As many other aspiring painters did, Dovini changed master often because few were willing to teach, house, feed, and clothe apprentices on a permanent basis. In their biographies some painters appear to be self-taught, or to have studied with younger colleagues, or with masters whose style they do not reflect for this very reason. The possibility of receiving an unsystematic education is in sharp contrast with the quattrocento practice of studying for many years in one master's workshop. Required by the statutes of the Roman guild in 1478, loyalty to a single master had largely collapsed by the late cinquecento.⁶⁵ It was replaced by the hiring of workers by the day, a custom started by Perino del Vaga (1501–1547) to save money and avoid properly training apprentices who could turn into competitors.⁶⁶

As more and more signs of the trading of pictures in early seventeenth-century Rome come to light, there is a need to reconsider the different ways in which painters could establish themselves in the city. As

Francis Haskell described in his famous volume *Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque*, of 1963, most painters aspired to work on commission for powerful patrons, and many succeeded in doing so.⁶⁷ However, this strategy was not the only one available to them, and it was not always possible. Only the most successful painters could avoid any involvement with the market, while others, from the very beginning of the seicento, could work on commission for merchants, or could sell them paintings already completed, or could produce on their own initiative finished canvases or sketches destined for a wide clientele.⁶⁸ Artisans, merchants, professionals—such as physicians, notaries, and bank clerks—as well as prostitutes, all started decorating their houses with pictures, and sometimes what they bought overlapped with what wealthy collectors purchased.⁶⁹

A few painters were called to Rome by patrons and therefore never had to worry about making a living. For example, Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) was summoned by the Farnese, and Guercino (1591–1666) by the Ludovisi. Domenichino and Francesco Albani (1578–1660) went to Rome because Annibale was there, and they must have felt assured that he would provide work for them. Vouet also had little to worry about, since he went to Rome with a pension from the French court.⁷⁰ If one was not asked to go to Rome, the ideal was to find a patron who would offer protection, commissions, and perhaps a monthly wage as soon as possible. In addition to the compensation he obtained for his work, the Cavalier d'Arpino received a fixed salary from Pope Gregory XIII when he was extremely young. Later he was almost always enrolled in a cardinal's court, meaning that his basic living expenses were paid before he put a brush to canvas.⁷¹ Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini paid him about 150–200 scudi per year even when he was painting the hall (*sala*) in the Conservators' Palace on the Capitoline Hill. It is difficult to assess how many painters received this kind of salary as a sinecure. Probably not many, and if one's patron was the stingy Pandolfo Pucci, as in the case of Caravaggio, the problem of making a living was certainly not solved.⁷²

In an ideal career path, a patron would provide a public commission to a painter or recommend him for one. Because of the way prices were determined, this could be a crucial step; a successful altarpiece would increase one's reputation, while an altarpiece that was rejected because of incompetence resulted in a serious blow to one's career.⁷³ Often the compensation for a canvas would be established at the very end of a task, at

times by other painters or connoisseurs, according to how successful the work was assessed to be.⁷⁴ In this system reputation was vital, since high prices fed high prices. For example, in a civil trial of 1629 it was said that Spadarino (Giovanni Antonio Galli) (1585–1652) could indeed charge one hundred scudi for a small picture with five figures because he was universally famous, and in addition he was painting an altarpiece for St. Peter's.⁷⁵ Among Caravaggio's followers, Carlo Saraceni (1579–1620) from Venice followed a rather easy path to success. He arrived in Rome in 1602 or 1604, became a member of a Venetian cardinal's court, and quickly started to work for the most important families in the city.⁷⁶ The Farnese, the Altamps, and the Aldobrandini all had early paintings by him, probably already by 1605 or 1606.⁷⁷ Soon afterward, Saraceni was given the task of replacing Caravaggio's *Death of the Virgin* altarpiece in Santa Maria della Scala. Even though his first version of the picture was rejected for iconographic reasons, he was highly paid for the second.⁷⁸ From that moment onward he received an extraordinary number of public commissions, in Rome and outside Rome, as far away as Spain.

Examples of painters who achieved such a perfect career are numerous—for example, Gerrit van Honthorst (1592–1656) and de Haen—but even among them some worked for the market, too. Certainly Honthorst did, and one wonders about the destination of the many replicas that came out of Saraceni's shop.⁷⁹ Other painters were less lucky: even finding a steady position in the shop of an established painter had become difficult, since many had stopped relying on a system of faithful collaborators.⁸⁰ In 1592 one of the painters who worked by the day for Giovanni Guerra, who was responsible for so many fresco decorations in the city, claimed to be literally starving on this arrangement, which did not provide steady employment.⁸¹ If one did not paint in fresco, it was even more difficult to obtain a secure income.

Even painters now relatively well known could find themselves in a grueling situation. A biography of Francesco Furini (1604–1646), who also studied with Manfredi, shows him during his youth in Rome subsisting on stolen beets and lettuce together with the older Giovanni da San Giovanni (1592–1636).⁸² They used various strategies to survive, first trying to draw a daily stipend or a monthly salary from a dealer, painting whatever he requested, and later painting canvases of their own design in order to sell them to merchants. This second approach had the possibility of being more remunerative, but it was also riskier. One Sunday, forced

by hunger, Furini had to sell to a dealer a painting by Giovanni da San Giovanni for a single scudo. Many years later he said he would have been happy to buy it back for a hundred. Caravaggio seems to have used both strategies, presumably working for a daily fee for the painter-merchant Lorenzo Carli and selling finished canvases in Costantino Spada's shop.⁸³ Ribera became famous in Rome in this way, working for merchants for a daily wage, which in his case was considerable, five scudi.⁸⁴

When Antiveduto Grammatica (1569–1626) and his half brother Ventura Salimbeni (1568–before 1613) were young, they worked off and on for many years in the shop of the painter-merchant Giovan Battista Angelini. There they produced representations of saints, copies of miraculous images, and other paintings, all meant to sell at low prices.⁸⁵ Both Caravaggio and Antiveduto might have come to the attention, respectively, of Cardinals Francesco Maria del Monte and Alessandro Peretti Montalto through these shops, and indeed there was always a chance this would happen, as most collectors also bought canvases from dealers.⁸⁶ Less stunningly successful than Caravaggio, Antiveduto never truly stopped working for the market, or at least on spec, relying on barbers and painter-gilders as dealers or intermediaries until his death in 1626.⁸⁷ In 1616 he used his immediate neighbor in via Condotti, a barber called Pietro Antonio Dotti, whose activity as a dealer is confirmed by the fact that he housed a “Giorgio pittore” in 1615—the latter must have painted canvases that were then sold in the barbershop.⁸⁸ Dotti in 1619 was involved in litigation with another Caravaggist, Trophime Bigot (1579–1650), perhaps over business dealings.⁸⁹

In this area between via del Corso and via Margutta, where so many painters lived, in 1615 there dwelled also Crispino Tommasino from Lorraine, a member of the Compagnia di San Luca, the branch of the academy that enrolled nonacademic painters.⁹⁰ A painter-merchant whose dealings were on occasion less than straightforward, Tommasino owned many “beautiful and curious pictures” for sale, whose authors are not known. He evidently also sold works by Caravaggio's followers: for example, in June 1623 Régnier promised to paint four canvases of the Evangelists for him in exchange for twenty meters of silk valued at thirty-one scudi.⁹¹ It is remarkable that Régnier, at a date when he had presumably already entered the service of Vincenzo Giustiniani, was willing to paint single figures for less than eight scudi each.⁹² The contract mentions the possibility that at their completion the canvases would be valued even

less, in which case the painter would have to pay the difference in cash. One wonders how many other painters among Dotti's and Tommasino's neighbors employed merchants' services, and how many followers of Caravaggio used the market to a large extent.⁹³

Many professions were involved in the art trade. Some merchants sold from a shop that anyone could enter; others, usually more upscale, worked from their homes, where one needed an introduction to be admitted. Nonacademic painters, barbers, tailors, embroiderers, and innkeepers could all be heavily involved in the art market, and so could some members of the papal court. Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata, *valet de chambre* to Pope Urban VIII, traded many canvases by the young Poussin, was instrumental to Jean Lemaire's (ca. 1597–1659) career, and was also involved in Valentin's (see Chronology).⁹⁴ Indeed, the very absence, or scarcity, of traces left by some painters on the Roman scene might be an indication that they became known through the market. It is striking, for example, how little is known about Manfredi and many artists who were in contact with him, including Valentin and Tournier. Tournier is not mentioned by any biographer, and it is possible that his name surfaced only in Camillo Massimo Giustiniani's inventory of 1640. The nobleman owned a large Magdalene, a Saint Peter, and a Saint Cecilia by a "Torniello," who could be either Tournier or the Sieneese Niccolò Tornioli (1598–1651/52).⁹⁵ Though he spent at least ten years in Rome, Tournier did not make a name for himself and is unlikely to have worked often on commission for well-known patrons.⁹⁶

Manfredi was only slightly younger than Saraceni, and their time in Rome more or less coincided. If anything, Manfredi arrived sooner, possibly before 1600.⁹⁷ The differences in their careers are striking, though. He painted no frescoes and no altarpieces in Rome in the more than twenty years he spent there. If many of his canvases were in famous collections, it is hardly ever clear when and how they arrived there.⁹⁸ Some might have been bought rather than commissioned; others, such as the *Christ Appearing to His Mother* that belonged to Vincenzo Giustiniani, date from Manfredi's late years (Museo Ala Ponzone, Cremona).⁹⁹ An undated list of goods owned by the Aldobrandini, possibly started in 1606 but written over many years, does have "a story of Tobias" by Manfredi, but that entry follows an attribution of a still life to the "cavaglier Thomasso," a title that the painter Tommaso Salini (ca. 1575–1625) obtained only in 1622.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the picture was probably acquired by the Aldobrandini around the time of Manfredi's death.

It may have taken as many as fifteen years after Manfredi's arrival in Rome for him to be noticed. Mancini in 1613 defined him as "a youth of great expectation," but he was then over thirty, and thus not so young anymore.¹⁰¹ At this time Mancini gave Manfredi a task appropriate for a youth (*giovane*), as he was supposed to produce a version of a *Mars Punishing Cupid* by Caravaggio. Manfredi was paid a relatively low price, thirty-five scudi, including expenses, for the painting (Art Institute of Chicago). If he truly needed six months to paint it, as it appears from Mancini's letters, the fee comes to five scudi a month, less than what a painter paid by the day would make. In those six months Manfredi might have painted more pictures, and indeed in the same year he exhibited many at San Giovanni Decollato, where canvases were displayed as advertisement for future sales, perhaps an indication he was not relying on a steady income from patrons at that point.¹⁰² By 1615 Manfredi had attained a modicum of fame, but in the following years he still had various debts that he was refusing to pay—certainly not a sign of financial well-being.¹⁰³ If in 1614 he was begging Mancini for money, by 1617–18 his fortunes had turned.¹⁰⁴ His paintings were said to be worth more than those by Caravaggio, and Ferdinando II de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany bought some, supposedly for hundreds of scudi. But even in this case, there is no certainty that the acquisition was a commission, an arrangement that would have channeled the large amount to Manfredi himself—indeed at the beginning of 1619 the painter was still in debt.¹⁰⁵ The Medici did buy pictures on the open market; for example, they purchased some tavern scenes by Honthorst only after he left Rome in 1620, from an English painter-gilder.¹⁰⁶ Possibly, the grand duke paid above the going rate for Manfredi's work, since in 1621 paintings by him with three figures sold for fifty scudi, not hundreds.¹⁰⁷ These amounts pale in comparison to the sum of more than one hundred scudi per figure received by Guercino, not to mention the extravagant amounts requested and obtained by Guido Reni (1575–1642).¹⁰⁸

Like Manfredi, Valentin took a long time to become successful in Rome—and Sandrart confirms that the artist's beginnings were difficult. Until the early 1620s the painter must have been almost completely unknown, given that he is not mentioned by either Mancini or Vincenzo Giustiniani. In 1626 he seems to have still been poor, as he shared a single room with de La Riche, his "associate and partner," and was hard pressed to pay for de La Riche's funeral.¹⁰⁹ The earliest mention we

possess of a work by Valentin is the reference to a soldier's head valued at twenty scudi in Costanzo Patrizi's inventory of 1624.¹¹⁰ In addition to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino, Cardinal Angelo Giori, Cassiano dal Pozzo and his nephew Amedeo, the brothers Vincenzo and Benedetto Giustiniani, and the Mattei all had paintings by him, but, as in Manfredi's case, these were, on the whole, rather late pictures—for example, the *Last Supper* made for the Mattei is usually dated 1624–26 (cat. 26).¹¹¹ Cardinal Giovanni Battista Mellini at his death in 1627 owned an earlier work, the *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), but it is not known when and how he obtained it.¹¹² In any case, it was the only painting by Valentin in his inventory.

Thus, there would seem to have been a gap of more than ten years between Valentin's arrival in Rome and his becoming fully established in the Barberini's circle. During this period he might well have worked for merchants, and there are at least some indications that he did. In 1631 Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata sold a *Judgment of Solomon* by Valentin to Fabrizio Valguarnera, a notorious diamond thief who also dealt in pictures.¹¹³ The painting, possibly the one now in the Gallerie Nazionali di Arte Antica, Rome, must have been in Roccatagliata's stock for a few years, because it needed retouching (cat. 39). In fact, as in the case of Poussin, Roccatagliata might have helped to promote Valentin in the Barberini's circle. In 1627 the *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (fig. 4), now in a private collection in Rome, was paid for by Cardinal Giori to Valentin through Roccatagliata, a likely sign that he acted as an intermediary.¹¹⁴ In 1629 Giori bought from Roccatagliata, and not from Valentin himself, the *Saint John the Baptist* and the *Saint Jerome* now in the church of Santa Maria in Via in Camerino (cats. 45, 46).¹¹⁵ Thus, these were probably not commissions, and the year in which they were sold is not necessarily the year in which they were painted. Merchants could keep pictures for a long time before selling them, waiting for their value to increase once their author was better established. This is what Roccatagliata did with various early canvases by Poussin, painted about 1625–27 and sold in 1633. It is well known that Poussin's early years in Rome were difficult, and that he sold his canvases on the market for a few scudi, but Roccatagliata asked more than fifty for them.¹¹⁶

Another well-known picture merchant, Bartolomeo Barzi, who supplied wine to the Vatican and to Cardinal Francesco Barberini, still owned a *Saint Agatha* by Valentin at his death in 1644.¹¹⁷ Whether Valentin also traded works through him is impossible to say without further evidence. Poussin must have used more than one dealer, as the painter Agostino Tassi also sold youthful works by him and had copies and imitations made after them.¹¹⁸ Indeed, most merchants were involved in the production of copies of the originals they owned, and Roccatagliata certainly did so for canvases by Poussin; he was also selling copies after paintings by Vouet.¹¹⁹ Perhaps he was behind some of the many copies of paintings by Valentin that are still around today.

Among Valentin's acquaintances, another painter who might have used the art market to establish himself was Leonaert Bramer. In 1620, soon after Bramer arrived in Rome, Tassi was trying to sell paintings by a certain "Leonardo" for 400-to-500 scudi, an exorbitant amount, and while there is no proof this "Leonardo" was Bramer, the two were certainly in touch, as the *Shipwreck on a Rocky Coast* by Bramer (Hamburger Kunsthalle) is clearly derived from paintings of seastorms by Tassi.¹²⁰

As with most Caravaggesque painters, Valentin was not paid high fees for his canvases, even when working for a patron as eminent as Francesco Barberini. For example, he received only 113 scudi for the very large *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43) and 25 for the *Samson* (cat. 49).¹²¹ In the last six or seven years of his life he must have received steady remunerations, but still he left nothing at his death, so that Cardinal Barberini stepped in to pay for the expenses incurred during his illness, and Cassiano dal Pozzo did the same for his funeral.¹²² Did he spend too much in a life of debauchery, as Ribera certainly did, sharing beds and "three filthy courtesans" before he fled Rome, in part to avoid paying his debts?¹²³ The aforementioned painter-merchant Crispino Tommasino from Lorraine, completely unknown to modern scholars, must have employed better strategies than Valentin, for he accumulated a capital of 2,000 scudi.¹²⁴ Ironically, a few weeks after Valentin's funeral his paintings were in great demand: to buy them a customer would have had to pay "four times what they had cost."¹²⁵



Valentin and His Artistic Formation in Rome

GIANNI PAPI

When, in the summer of 1600, Caravaggio's two canvases depicting the Calling and Martyrdom of Saint Matthew (fig. 28) were installed on the lateral walls of the Contarelli Chapel in the church of San Luigi dei Francesi in Rome, they ignited a revolution that transformed the city's artistic horizons. Awarded major public commissions and much sought after by private collectors, Caravaggio became the most renowned painter working in the papal city—that is, until May 28, 1606, when he was forced to flee Rome after a violent altercation following a tennis match that resulted in the death of Ranuccio Tomassoni (the two men hated each other, and each had arrived with friends, prepared to settle scores).

Caravaggio's Revolution

At the heart of Caravaggio's art was his refusal to do any preparatory work that would compromise the direct relation between the model and the act of painting. He eliminated those preparatory drawings that, in the academic tradition, filtered and idealized the model for the transposition of the subject to canvas. For him, the physical presence of the model in the studio became the figurative basis of the work as well as the

source of inspiration in organizing the composition. Along with these two principles guiding Caravaggio and his followers came fresh pictorial techniques. They included a new and astonishing use of light, made to fall artificially from above on an often nude model in a room with walls darkened or even painted black, thereby lending a striking physicality to the figure as well as a wholly new sensuality.

Especially during the second decade of the 1600s, this manner of working achieved unparalleled success, and young artists traveled to Rome from all over Italy and Europe to learn it. What Caravaggio prescribed had nothing to do with the slow, progressive maturation process that required passing through phases of growth in diverse areas, from the most humble tasks to sketching from the model, reproducing architecture, mastering the art of the fresco, and learning the rules of composition, to painting heads, flowers, and fruit. Caravaggio himself had experienced this curriculum in the studio of the Cavalier d'Arpino (1568–1640), where he was employed painting flowers and fruit, eager to paint the human figure. His own method could be applied immediately. The artist merely had to be daring and stand before the model and paint him or her onto the canvas, relying entirely on color, his talent, and the expedient of a darkened room—the artifice that made the real seem more real.

Caravaggio's early biographers wrote of his success, and to read them is to participate in the sensational upheaval that took place in those few years. The critic Giovan Pietro Bellori (1613–1696), writing decades later but with the lingering memory of those times still vivid, evoked Caravaggio's revolution with dismay, fascinated in spite of himself.

The painters then in Rome were much taken by the novelty, and especially the young all raced to him [Caravaggio], celebrating him alone as the only true imitator of nature. And imitating his paintings as miracles, they competed among themselves, undressing their models and raising their lamps, not pausing to study and learn but each readily finding in the streets and piazzas his master and exemplar for copying nature. The ease of the method drew even more followers, until only the old painters steeped in practice were aghast at this novelty.¹

The Roman scene into which the Caravaggesque method and movement inscribed themselves with such potency involved many artists and tendencies. The papal physician and artists' biographer Giulio Mancini (1559–1630), writing at the end of the second decade of the seventeenth century, left a good description of the varied artistic currents of his time, which he divided into different groups, or schools.² The first was that of Caravaggio himself, whom he criticized for his obsessive insistence on the model and lack “of movement and expressivity and of grace.” The members of this school—all of whom (I am convinced) knew Caravaggio personally and learned his revolutionary method working and living at his side—included Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri, ca. 1588/89–after 1620), Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652), Bartolomeo Manfredi (1582–1622), and Giovanni Antonio Galli, known as Spadarino (1585–1652). What Mancini saw as lacking in the Caravaggesque school he found instead in that of the Carracci, which included the generation of Guido Reni (1575–1642), Domenichino (1581–1641), and Francesco Albani (1578–1660), whom he called the “living Carracci.” This school possessed “artistic intelligence, with grace and affective expression, decorum and composition for history painting,” knowing how to unite the manner of Raphael with Venetian naturalism. The third school was that of the Cavalier d'Arpino, whom Mancini considered very important and with whom, as we have noted, Caravaggio spent time in

his still obscure youthful years, before being taken under the protection of Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte. The fourth school comprised those who did not belong to the other three and worked “in their own, particular style, without following the footsteps of anyone else.” These included Cristoforo Roncalli, known as Pomarancio (ca. 1553–1626), Giovanni Baglione (1566–1644) (although Mancini seems to have forgotten his early adherence to a naturalistic style), Antonio Tempesta (1555–1630), and three artists usually considered by scholars as among the protagonists of the Caravaggesque movement: Orazio Gentileschi (1563–1639), his daughter, Artemisia (1593–after January 1654), and Antiveduto Grammatica (1569–1626).

Although these schools followed separate paths, there were also intersections and changes of route. During the century's fateful second decade, when Valentin de Boulogne arrived in Rome, much was going on. Besides the major works produced by the four protagonists of Caravaggio's school (to be discussed in greater detail below), sometime about 1612 there was the “conversion” to naturalism of the great Bartolomeo Cavarozzi (1587–1625), who had studied with Roncalli;³ the highly personal direction taken by Orazio Borgianni (1574–1616)—so important for Antiveduto Grammatica, Simon Vouet (1590–1649), and Giovanni Lanfranco (1582–1647), as well as for Giovanni Serodine (1594/1600–1630); the effect of the Caravaggesque whirlwind on Domenico Fiasella (1589–1669) and Antonio Pomarancio (1569/72–1629), although they were never fully drawn in; Giuseppe Vermiglio (ca. 1587–1636), with his insistent pursuit of Caravaggesque subject matter; and the arrival of the Veronese painters Alessandro Turchi (1578–1649) and Marcantonio Bassetti (1588–1630), who would follow the softer, brighter path of their Venetian contemporary Carlo Saraceni (1579–1620). The beginning of the second decade in Rome also witnessed the first works of Artemisia Gentileschi—already so intense in feeling—before she was forced to leave Rome in 1612, and the success of Antiveduto Grammatica, whose prestige (he became *principe* of the Accademia di San Luca) must have been important for the early works of Simon Vouet and Giovanni Francesco Guerrieri (1589–1657).

But the most striking feature of the years between roughly 1605 and 1620 was the arrival in Rome of scores of young artists, in great part from the North (France and Flanders), but also from Spain (as in the case of Ribera, who arrived very early, about 1605). The newcomers were determined to break into the scene, keen to learn Caravaggio's manner and become master

painters themselves, profiting from the favorable tide of taste that had created a demand and market for their works. Among them were protagonists of the new naturalism for whom the term “Caravaggesque” risks being too reductive, relegating them to the status of mere followers, whereas some were major figures in their own right. Gerrit van Honthorst (1592–1656), the greatest of the Dutch painters then, became renowned for his nocturnal scenes. At the height of his success, he abandoned Rome in the summer of 1620 to return to Utrecht, perhaps homesick or suffering from a festering depression brought on by his very success in an artistic environment as charged with nerve-racking competition as the one we know today. There were Dirck van Baburen (ca. 1593–1624) and his friend and assistant David de Haen (ca. 1597–1622), Theodor Rombouts (1597–1637), and Hendrick ter Brugghen (1588–1629), whose time in Rome between the first and second decades continues to be shrouded in uncertainty, even after the recovery of his *Denial of Saint Peter*, recently shown in Florence.⁴ Two Walloon artists (to be discussed more amply later) who arrived in Rome about 1615 were Gérard Douffët (1594–1660) and Jean Ducamps (1600–1648). And, to close this survey, there were the French painters Nicolas Tournier (1590–1639), Claude Vignon (1593–1670), Trophime Bigot (1579–1650), Nicolas Régnier (ca. 1588–1667), Simon Vouet, and—among them—a young man from Coulommiers, Valentin de Boulogne, who would become the greatest of all.

Valentin and Cecco del Caravaggio, Manfredi, and Ribera

The important exhibition “I Caravaggeschi francesi” that was held in Rome and Paris in 1973–74 included the work of several anonymous painters who, it was suggested, were French—a hypothesis that subsequent research has shown to have been mistaken.⁵ The most important of these figures were certainly Cecco del Caravaggio and the artist known as the Master of the Judgment of Solomon. Subsequently, their identities were established by the present writer. Thus, the painter known from early sources as Cecco del Caravaggio has been shown to be Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri, who was probably from Bergamo,⁶ and the paintings formerly attributed to the Master of the Judgment of Solomon can be seen to form the critical nucleus of the work done in Rome by the young Ribera.⁷ A clear intent of the exhibition was to make better known the role and the person of

Valentin (whose name, indeed, figured in the title of the Paris version of the show: “Valentin et les Caravaggesques français”). As the organizers stated: “by displaying some twenty of his paintings, this exhibition sets out to establish Valentin as a great painter, one of the greatest of the seicento, and the one whose name is still practically unknown to the larger public.”⁸ In the long biographical profile they dedicated to the artist and in the ample catalogue entries, Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin noted possible points of contact with Cecco and the Master of the Judgment of Solomon (whose work the great connoisseur Roberto Longhi had at one point tentatively proposed as possibly forming a particular phase of Valentin’s).⁹ In the more than forty years that have passed since that exhibition, Cecco del Caravaggio and Ribera have gained more definite artistic personalities as a result of their newly discovered identities.

In the case of Cecco, his marvelous *Resurrection* (Art Institute of Chicago)¹⁰ has acquired an important chronological reference point of 1619–20, when it was commissioned by Piero Guicciardini for his family’s chapel in the church of Santa Felicità in Florence; it was never delivered to the grand ducal city, probably because of the scandal Guicciardini feared it would provoke. With the price reduced by forty scudi, the picture was quickly sold by Guicciardini, most likely to Scipione Borghese, in whose collection it is documented in the mid-1620s. Various indications have confirmed that the very young Francesco (Cecco) was close to Caravaggio: the two shared quarters in 1605, and for a number of years Cecco was his companion as well as his model for several paintings, beginning with the *Amor Vincit Omnia*, commissioned by Vincenzo Giustiniani (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin). Most likely Cecco followed his friend to Naples in the autumn of 1606, after Caravaggio fled Rome and spent the summer at the Colonna estate at Paliano, south of the papal capital (see cat. 1).¹¹

The recovery of the early phase of Ribera has been even more eventful. It is now evident that Ribera was in fact the leading artistic figure in Rome in the second decade—the man to whom young painters from all over turned. How our knowledge of Ribera has grown since my initial article of 2002! The number of his works painted in the capital has now reached seventy, including some genuine masterpieces based on wholly new subjects that would be a reference point for an entire generation of painters devoted to a naturalist style.¹² Their importance emerges not only from their remarkable quality but also from their absolute precocity, for



Fig. 13. Jusepe de Ribera (Spanish, 1591–1652). *Saint John the Baptist at the Font*, 1609/10. Oil on canvas, 54¾ x 35⅜ in. (139 x 90 cm). Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv. GG 2367)

Ribera left Rome for Naples in May 1616, and thus all these paintings were produced earlier. Indeed, some must date before 1610, when Caravaggio was still alive: for example, the smaller of two series of apostles (an *Apostolado*), the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew* (private collection), and the *Saint John the Baptist at the Font* (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, brilliantly ascribed to the artist by Viviana Farina; fig. 13).¹³ The hypothesis I first advanced in 2006—that Ribera may have arrived in Rome as early as 1605¹⁴—has been confirmed by a recent documentary discovery.¹⁵ Also confirmed is the fact that his establishment as a painter took place entirely in Rome (in my view, working with Caravaggio), since in the relevant document Ribera clearly states that he had no prior artistic training. I hope that this new evidence will persuade those scholars who have remained skeptical that the young painter could have produced such a large body of work in such a brief

period, since previously the earliest document of his presence in Italy dated to 1611.

This sharper delineation of Ribera's stature and the chronological anchor of Cecco's presence in Rome—from 1613, at the latest, to 1620—make even clearer the importance of their relationship and influence on the young Valentin. Unfortunately, in contrast to what we now know about these two artists, there is little new information regarding Valentin's activity in the second decade, a period that has long remained a mystery. It was even uncertain that he was in Rome in those years, despite the fact that his presence has been assumed by every interested scholar. Fortunately, a new document demonstrates that "Valentino del Bologna" was already resident in Rome in May 1614 (see the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue). There is, additionally, information that emerged in 2011 and that relates to the presence of a "Monsù da Colombiera" on via di Ripetta during Easter 1615.¹⁶

In any event, even if we suppose that Valentin was already in Rome before March 1613 (according to the frequently unreliable Joachim von Sandrart),¹⁷ the indications are that the years before 1620 were a dark and difficult period, during which every effort to situate works of a certain quality and ambition must remain tentative. How does one explain the silence of Giulio Mancini in his *Considerazioni sulla pittura* or in his letters to his brother Deifebo, in which the names of Manfredi and Ribera frequently appear but not that of Valentin?¹⁸ Mancini's biographies were probably written between 1618 and 1620, and in them he gives a long profile of Ribera and a somewhat less extensive one of Manfredi. Cecco receives only one mention, but, importantly, it is together with Spadarino, Manfredi, and Ribera in a passage regarding the members of the school of Caravaggio.¹⁹ Nor is Valentin mentioned by Vincenzo Giustiniani in his *Discorso sopra la pittura*, perhaps written before 1618, while in Baglione's *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti*, published in 1642, the only pictures mentioned are those done for Cardinal Francesco Barberini in the later part of his career, from 1627 onward.²⁰ Even his inscription in the Bentvueghels in 1624 does not suggest a much earlier engagement in an active artistic environment, since the association of Netherlandish painters was founded in the preceding decade, about 1617–20.²¹ The impression, then, is of a painter who, at least until the early 1620s, had not gained the success necessary to attract the attention of important figures and that would allow him to participate in the art confraternities. That Mancini does not mention



Fig. 14. Bartolomeo Manfredi. *Dice Players*, ca. 1615. Oil on canvas, 49 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 72 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (126 x 184 cm). Private collection

him suggests that at the time he wrote, Valentin was just one of “the many Frenchmen and Flemings” who flocked to Rome seeking their fortune in the wake of Caravaggio’s revolution—a group Mancini found it impossible to make sense of.²²

Among the works that have come down to us and are rightly placed among Valentin’s earliest are the *Cardsharps* (cat. 6), the *Concert with Three Figures* in the Devonshire collection, Chatsworth (see fig. 1), the *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 7), and the *Fortune-Teller* (cat. 11). In my opinion, these should all be dated between 1615 and 1618, though any chronology must be hypothetical, for we lack documentary or stylistic proof. I would also add to this group, at an early moment, the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew* in the Gallerie dell’Accademia in Venice (cat. 5),²³ in which the torturer on the right is dressed identically (and is perhaps based on the same model) as the thug forcing the crown of thorns onto Christ’s head in the aforementioned *Crowning with Thorns*. The same model was probably also employed by Valentin for the torturer on the left in the *Martyrdom*, and perhaps for the pipe player in the foreground of the *Concert with Three Figures* in the Devonshire collection, Chatsworth.²⁴ All these works openly declare the

influence of Cecco and Ribera, the two poles on which Valentin based his artistic training in Rome.

Since his father was a painter, it is likely Valentin’s primary instruction took place in the family. Nevertheless, even in those works considered to be his first in Rome, there is no trace of any previous apprenticeship. As with so many other young painters who thronged to the capital, the signs of any earlier style seem to have been canceled in favor of an unconditional and enthusiastic adhesion to the novelties Rome had to offer following Caravaggio’s revolution and, to an even greater extent, following Ribera’s second round of innovations. It is my sense that in his early years Valentin was influenced more by Ribera and Cecco than by Manfredi, even though Manfredi is often considered the starting point for painters such as Tournier, Régnier, and indeed for Valentin. But while that influence is evident and quite significant in the case of Tournier and Régnier, to the extent that in the past mistaken attributions were made among them, in my view the influence of Manfredi on Valentin was less evident and remained secondary—more important from the point of view of iconography than of style. For I believe that Manfredi deserves credit for having created much-imitated proto-



Fig. 15. Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri, Italian, ca. 1588/89–after 1620). *Saint Lawrence*, ca. 1615. Oil on canvas, 56³/₈ x 37³/₈ in. (143 x 95 cm). Santa Maria in Vallicella, Stanze di San Filippo Neri, Rome

types of convivial scenes: works such as his *Concert* and the *Cardplayers*, which were probably painted in 1617–18 and acquired by Grand Duke Cosimo II de' Medici for his collection.²⁵ Manfredi also created other pivotal scenes, such as his *Dice Players* (fig. 14) and *Drinkers* (fig. 12), in which a Roman altar is used as a table—a detail that appears in similar compositions by Tournier and Valentin.²⁶ These are works that I believe were made in the last years of the second decade. Consequently, if we situate Valentin's earliest scenes, such as

the *Concert with Three Figures* and the *Fortune-Teller*, between 1615 and 1618, then the influence of Manfredi on Valentin—something always accepted, including by me—would become problematic. These reflections urge caution in assigning early dates to Valentin.

Even Manfredi was influenced by Ribera, whose work chronologically precedes that of the Mantuan painter. This is the case with his *Denial of Saint Peter* (Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig), which reflects Ribera's great prototypes in the Galleria



Fig. 16. Cecco del Caravaggio. *Mary Magdalene*, ca. 1615. Oil on canvas. Location unknown

Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Corsini in Rome (cat. 3) and the Certosa di San Martino in Naples. It is especially true of certain paintings of isolated figures that respond to the monumentality of the Spaniard's work, such as a series of paintings of Saint Jerome. Consider the *Saint Jerome* in the Koelliker collection in Milan, which is quite close to Ribera's images and unusual in Manfredi's oeuvre for the striking way the figure occupies the space of the canvas; and also the *Saint Jerome* in the Palazzo Corsini in Florence, in which the figure's pose, with his arm extended across the scene, might be imagined as forming a bridge between Caravaggio's treatment of the subject for Scipione Borghese (Galleria Borghese, Rome) and two versions of the theme by Valentin that date from the 1620s (cat. 46).²⁷ Manfredi's painting demonstrates clearly how the powerful example of the great Spaniard resulted in a new tension in the figure. Yet if Manfredi's convivial and gaming scenes can be seen to have exerted an undeniable influence on Valentin's iconographic choices, it is ever clearer that the stylistic language of the Frenchman resulted from an admirable fusion of elements derived from Cecco and Ribera, but always with a personal trait that is already recognizable in his earliest works. Over

the years this trait will mature, without much departing from those characteristics already visible in his first pictures. Valentin's paintings will become more atmospheric, their figures pervaded by an anxious melancholy, with hair as though dampened and with moistened skin, but with the morphology of the hands and drapery and the treatment of the faces nearly the same, only more touched by a preoccupied look or by the appearance of disheartened resignation.

In his earlier works the outlines are sharper, the folds of the drapery more defined, the lines of the faces more incisive, and the compositions shaped by a more vital and energetic tension. One senses in these paintings the energy that animates Cecco's figures, and we recognize certain of Cecco's typologies, personally adapted, as in the outlining of the fingers, with large, rounded fingernails, or the broad faces, with thick brown or black hair, each strand picked out separately. Consider Cecco's *Saint Lawrence* in the Chiesa Nuova in Rome (fig. 15), and the closeness of the physical resemblance and pictorial treatment to the figures in Valentin's early paintings is palpable. Thus, the young cheat in *Cardsharps* (cat. 6) seems to have sprung from the precisely outlined faces of Cecco's *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* from the Giustiniani collection (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; fig. 2) or the *Interior with a Young Man Holding a Recorder* (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), or the *Maker of Musical Instruments* (Apsley House, London). Even a female face, like that of the *Mary Magdalene* that I have recently added to Cecco's scant oeuvre, shows an evident relationship with the physiognomies of the Frenchman's figures (fig. 16). It is important to note that the relief on the sarcophagus that is used as a support recalls the ancient plaque with the *Wedding of Peleus and Thetis* (then in the Farnese Collection) that Valentin also introduced into some of his pictures, for example the *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14) or the *Concert with a Bas-Relief* (cat. 23).²⁸

That Ribera furnished inspiration and iconographic models for the entire Roman artistic community during the second and the beginning of the third decade of the seventeenth century is asserting itself as an established fact. A series of decisive works completely revolutionized the approaches to naturalism: the *Apostolado* (fig. 17) that belonged to Pedro Cosida, the Spanish king's trade representative in Rome; the masterful *Christ among the Doctors* owned by the Giustiniani (church of Saint Martin, Langres); the *Liberation of Saint Peter* (Galleria Borghese, Rome); the two versions of the *Denial of Saint Peter* (Certosa di San Martino, Naples, and Galleria



Fig. 17. Jusepe de Ribera. *Saint James*, ca. 1612. Oil on canvas, 49 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 38 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (126 x 98 cm). Private collection

Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Corsini, Rome, cat. 3); the *Raising of Lazarus*; and a series of single-figure paintings of unusual power, from the *Beggar* (Galleria Borghese, Rome) to the signed *Saint Jerome* (Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto)—a prototype for Manfredi's picture, discussed above—to the series showing the Five Senses, which were also owned by Cosida. Like so many others, Valentin fell under their spell, and in my view it

is precisely to their expressive and iconographic novelties that the young Frenchman was indebted for the tension and lively, rippling complexity of the compositions he most likely painted in the last years of the second decade.

With its early date, most likely between 1614 and 1615, Ribera's *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 3) offered a fundamental prototype that enjoyed a particular critical

fortune. It was probably this painting that opened the way and influenced all the revisitations of the theme by Manfredi, Honthorst, Tournier, Valentin, and the anonymous Master of the Incredulity of Saint Thomas (perhaps, as explained below, identifiable as Jean Ducamps), whose eponymous work is in the Palazzo Valentini, Rome. Beyond its subject, Ribera's beautiful *Denial*, the composition of which is resolved with a miraculous equilibrium in the distribution of the figures, offered artists a model for a horizontally composed scene of figures at a table, fusing the iconography of the Denial of Saint Peter with genre paintings of players of cards or dice. We already find this solution in the Certosa version of the theme, but the composition of the Corsini picture is better articulated, and it was evidently this picture that became a decisive force in Rome.

I am convinced that Ribera's *Denial of Saint Peter* was also the prototype for other, analogous images painted at the end of the second decade and during the third, such as those depicting a fortune-teller with cardplayers—a popular theme with, for example, Régnier and Valentin. In paintings such as Valentin's *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers* (cat. 15) and his *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), the turbulence of the composition, the masterful linking of the two groups of figures that make up the scene—the gypsy and the soldiers in the first and, in the second, Saint Peter and the handmaid and the soldiers playing dice—are clearly indebted to Ribera's *Denial*, with its novel and marvelously articulated arrangement of figures. In the *Fortune-Teller*, Valentin also borrows Ribera's idea of linking the two groups with a soldier seated on the viewer's side of the table at the center of the composition. In some of his female profiles—for example, in the *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* now in Perugia—Valentin also emulates Ribera's idea of basing their physiognomy on a Roman statue, as Ribera did with the servant girl in his *Denial*. To carry these analogies further, one may cite comparisons between the two artists' respective versions of the *Crowning with Thorns*, each a vertical composition with three figures arranged in corresponding positions.²⁹ Valentin's *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* (cat. 17) is influenced by the painting of the same subject by Cecco del Caravaggio, which belonged to the Giustiniani, and even more by the monumental tensions expressed by Ribera's *Christ among the Doctors*, which also belonged to the Giustiniani (church of Saint Martin, Langres), as well as another, recently discovered version of the subject, the restoration of which has confirmed its attribution and still earlier date. In the new version

(fig. 19), there is a fusion of the two groups, with a more experimental result that lacks the perfection of the Corsini *Denial of Saint Peter*.³⁰ Still, the dazzling impetuosity of the young genius is marvelous: someone constantly attempting to surpass himself and succeeding in doing so, as happens with the group of figures on the left, which careens out toward the viewer (Valentin will recall this effect in the right-hand section of his *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* [cat. 17]). I do not think I am wrong in recognizing in the figure in the left background, looking out at the viewer, with his short, dark hair and strongly marked, almost North African, features, a self-portrait of the very young Ribera. His features are also identical to the model for the young apostle *Saint James* (formerly Moroni collection), which I have previously proposed as a self-portrait of the young artist.³¹

Two Companions: Gérard Douffet and Jean Ducamps

The relationship of Valentin's work with that of Cecco and Ribera gains confirmation from his biography. It seems to me extremely significant that Valentin shared a house with Gérard Douffet from 1620 until 1622, when the Walloon painter returned to Liège. Just as important was the proximity of Jean Ducamps, whose house in via Margutta was close to that of Valentin.³² From what we can deduce from the paintings Douffet made after returning home—when his style would presumably have been largely similar to what it had been in Rome—his art displays a synthesis that has many points in common with Valentin's. The two artists are undeniably different, yet the components of their artistic language seem to be the same: physical proximity apparently corresponded to shared choices and passions on a professional plane. Significantly, among the factors that led Roberto Longhi to identify Gérard Douffet with the Master of the Judgment of Solomon were the similarities he saw in Douffet's work with that of his housemate Valentin (who had previously been considered a likely candidate as the anonymous master).³³ Thus, Longhi had already perceived the link without arriving at the right conclusion. In fact, in one of Douffet's most outstanding paintings, *Saint Helen and the Finding of the True Cross*, painted in 1624 (fig. 18)—just after his return to Liège—the influences of Ribera and Cecco are evident. The precise outlining of the broad features and the almost metallic definition of the drapery undoubtedly



Fig. 18. Gérard Douffet (Flemish, 1594–1660). *Saint Helen and the Finding of the True Cross*, 1624. Oil on canvas, 121 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 144 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (309 x 367 cm). Staatsgalerie Neuburg an der Donau (cat. 1719, no. 325)



Fig. 19. Jusepe de Ribera. *Christ among the Doctors*, ca. 1610–11. Oil on canvas, 55½ x 90½ in. (140 x 230 cm). Private collection

trace their descent to Cecco's example. It is not by chance that one of Douffet's works, a *Mary Magdalene* (Staatsgalerie, Augsburg), was once attributed to Cecco.³⁴ As for Ribera's influence, the entire left side of the composition, with all the turmoil of the figures around the Cross, attests to his inspiration. Note, in particular, the bearded man standing at the far left, his hand resting on a book. Or the elders in the center background, who seem to have walked out of one of the Spaniard's versions of *Christ among the Doctors*. The relationship with Ribera is just as evident, if not more so, in another work by Douffet, *Christ Appearing to Saint James*, in which the group of the saint and the three onlookers behind him provided Longhi's justification for identifying Douffet with the then Master of the Judgment of Solomon.³⁵

Considering the fact that Douffet shared a house with Valentin for at least two years, in 1620 and 1622, and that the relation between the two painters is visible in the early work of Valentin—particularly in the Chatsworth *Concert with Three Figures*, but also in the *Mocking of Christ*—we can only repeat what we have already noted concerning their common passion for

Cecco and for Ribera. At the same time, we may hazard a guess that the works in question by Valentin cannot date much before 1620, when the lives of the two painters overlap. Even a painting like *Susanna and the Elders*, which in 2013 I published as a work by the very young Valentin, shows, in addition to the influence of Ribera and Cecco, a strong affinity with the work of Douffet, thereby throwing additional light on a relationship between the housemates that extended beyond the personal to the stylistic.³⁶

As for Jean Ducamps, since 1997 I have argued that he could be the painter of an important group of pictures, now numbering more than forty, whose author I have christened the Master of the Incredulity of Saint Thomas, after a picture in the Palazzo Valentini, in Rome.³⁷ Many clues have made me consider the painter from Cambrai. There is the quality of the works, appropriate for someone who was supposed to have been a protagonist on the Roman artistic scene for two decades, from the end of the second decade to the end of the fourth, but by whom there are apparently no identifiable paintings. There is the affinity that Ducamps was supposed to have had with Cecco and that is found



Fig. 20. Jean Ducamps. *Deliverance of Saint Peter*, ca. 1625. Oil on canvas, 66⁷/₈ x 93³/₄ in. (170 x 238 cm). De Vito Foundation, Vaglia, Florence



Fig. 21. Jean Ducamps. *Denial of Saint Peter*, ca. 1624–27. Oil on canvas, 48¹/₂ x 64¹/₈ in. (123 x 163 cm). Pinacoteca del Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples

in the paintings assigned to the anonymous master.³⁸ There is the presence in the nucleus of works reconstructed around this master a beautiful *Deliverance of Saint Peter* (fig. 20) and the various series of apostles (fig. 22) that are recorded in Sandrart's life of Ducamps.³⁹ Finally, the physical proximity of Ducamps and Valentin between 1623 and 1628 can be considered additional evidence for the identification, since the works of the Master of the Incredulity of Saint Thomas display such a strong, basic affinity with those of Valentin that he could even be seen as Valentin's alter ego (also as Tournier's).⁴⁰ The rapport is apparent in works such as *Christ and the Adulteress* (location unknown), the above-mentioned *Deliverance of Saint Peter*, the two versions of the *Denial of Saint Peter* (Pinacoteca, Macerata, and Pinacoteca del Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples, fig. 21), the *Death of Hyacinth* (private collection), and the *Concert with Three Figures* (which surfaced in 2015, with the Turin dealer Benappi). Here again, and especially in his series of apostles, the master's stylistic qualities reveal a distinct debt to Cecco and Ribera. In bringing to a close these reflections on Valentin's artistic formation, it does not seem rash to conclude that the three painters—Valentin, Ducamps, and Douffet—all French-speaking and originating from the three not terribly distant cities of Coulommiers, Cambrai, and Liège, might have influenced one another, developing closely related styles that had as their common reference points the work of Cecco and Ribera.

There is, however, no doubt that Valentin's stature surpassed that of his French-speaking companions. Beginning with those works that can be dated to the second decade, the influences that have been discussed above can be seen to have served as the basis for the creation of a personal language such as is indicative of a great artistic personality. Valentin will create images that reveal a preoccupied yet noble state of mind—images elevated by the beauty of the models he chooses for the protagonists, their appearance pervaded by tortured contemplation, their gazes fixing the viewer, their attitude melancholic. The complicated constructions of the works testify to the artist's great anatomical mastery in portraying bodies without errors (as had been the case with Ribera and Cecco). Those bodies are

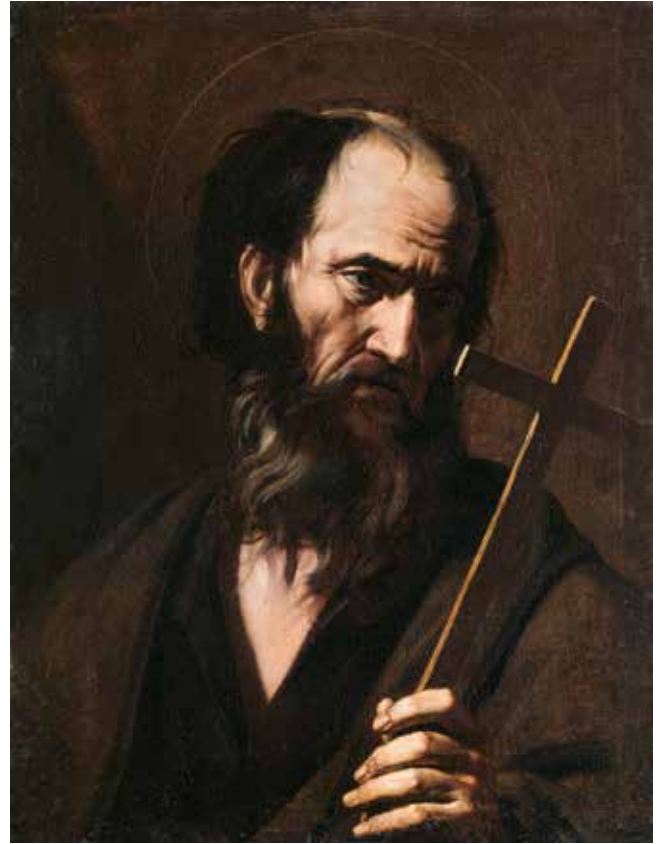


Fig. 22. Jean Ducamps. *Saint Philip*, ca. 1620–25. Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (65 x 50 cm). Private collection, Lugano

arranged in a commensurate space, with hands that truly grip, foreshortenings that are always precise, the expressive range of the lively physiognomies never banal. As with all great painters, Valentin creates a world—a sorrowful but virile humanity, stoic and fully aware of the difficulties of this world. No one laughs. No one abandons him- or herself to wanton pleasure. In this French painter's work, no one rejoices—quite unlike the slightly vulgar wink one finds in certain of Manfredi's faces. Even in scenes of gaming or of drinking, there is an evident uneasiness among the protagonists, a tension that increases from painting to painting, whereas in the earliest pictures (for example, the *Concert* in Chatsworth or the *Cardsharps* in Dresden) it was still possible to find traces of a disenchanting and absentminded desire for lighter depictions.



Painting from Life

Valentin and the Legacy of Caravaggio

KEITH CHRISTIANSEN

He holds that unless something is done and painted from life, it is a bagatelle, a child's work or a trifle, whatever the subject and whoever painted it, and that nothing is good or could be better than to follow Nature. For this reason, he will not make a single brushstroke without having the subject right in front of him, which he copies and paints."¹ This must be the most famous as well as the most polemical of Caravaggio's reputed statements about art. It is also the earliest to be recorded, having been transmitted to the painter-biographer Karel van Mander by his Dutch colleague Floris van Dijck, who was in Rome in 1600. That year Caravaggio's first great public commission, the two canvases depicting the Calling and Martyrdom of Saint Matthew for the Contarelli Chapel in San Luigi dei Francesi (fig. 28), was unveiled, opening a breach in the art world of seventeenth-century Rome. Later critics, from Caravaggio's illustrious patron Vincenzo Giustiniani² and the papal physician and connoisseur Giulio Mancini,³ to his two principal biographers, Giovanni Baglione⁴ and Giovan Pietro Bellori,⁵ were to record further pronouncements as well as anecdotes to underscore the merits and, even more consequentially, the limitations of what contemporaries viewed as the most radical innovation of Caravaggio: his practice of

painting directly from a posed model. This manner of working came to be defined as *dal naturale*, to distinguish it from simulating a naturalistic effect by other means, *al naturale*.⁶ That Caravaggio did, in fact, paint directly from models he posed in the room where he worked, especially in the earlier part of his career, and that this constituted a radical and fundamental break with tradition—one of enormous consequence for the history of art—cannot be doubted. But the statements he is purported to have made, implying that he always and only worked from posed models, should not be taken at face value for the simple reason that they were meant to be polemical: a direct attack on the idealist-critical hierarchies that had been the basis of Renaissance art since at least the time of Raphael and Michelangelo. It was Caravaggio's extraordinary popularity among an elite group of collectors and his momentous effect on a generation of young artists—many of them, like Valentin de Boulogne, from north of the Alps—that made him seem such a dangerous figure to those defending the dignity of painting and its status as a liberal art. Moreover, his example of working directly from life, thereby sidestepping the laborious process of compositional sketches, detailed studies, and a highly finished compositional cartoon—all part and parcel of the normal creative process—was accompanied by a lifestyle that

flouted the conventions of respectability and not infrequently put him at odds with the law. The biographies of the next generation of Caravaggesque painters easily give the impression that to be a follower of Caravaggio meant embracing a rowdy, bohemian lifestyle.⁷

The Caravaggesque movement was not long-lived. When Valentin de Boulogne died in 1632, following a night of tavern hopping, drinking, and smoking with his friends, he was the last great protagonist of Caravaggism in Rome. It was he, more than anyone else, who transformed the practice associated with the great Lombard painter in ways that take painting well beyond Caravaggio—whence the title for this exhibition catalogue—and in significant respects look ahead to the modernity of Courbet and nineteenth-century realism. One may, indeed, ask whether anyone prior to Courbet ever painted a more radical statement of realism than Valentin in the two hairy-chested, middle-aged men who posed as river gods for his great *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43). They contribute to the effect the work makes of a staged performance or tableau vivant involving real people. To an extent that goes beyond even what Caravaggio had imagined, Valentin discarded the idealizing premise considered essential to the fiction of myth and allegory in favor of representing an experienced event. And he achieved this with a technique that incorporated the process of painting into his aesthetic ends, thereby prefiguring what we have come to think of as a key aspect of modern painting.

Although the first wave of Caravaggism in Rome did not extend beyond the third decade of the seventeenth century, its impact had been so convulsive that in 1672, Bellori, the apologist for Annibale Carracci, Domenichino, and Nicolas Poussin, still found it useful to cite Caravaggio as an example of the artist gone astray. To him, the Caravaggesque movement represented more than a revolution in style. It was an attack on the social and artistic hierarchies that were the basis of civilized society, and the success of the movement was represented as the ignorant opinion of the masses (*il popolo*) prevailing over the informed taste of the connoisseur (*l'uomo intendente*).⁸ Bellori's comments remind us that what made the Caravaggesque movement such an important event in the history of European art was its rejection of the authority of established conventions and the example of classical antiquity, and its insistence, instead, on empirical observation and the painting of themes reflecting actual life. As the renowned Italian critic Roberto Longhi noted, "It was precisely the ethical attitude towards man, his history

and his myths that changed with Caravaggio."⁹ In the hands of his greatest followers—foremost among them, Valentin—even subjects derived from classical mythology or the Bible might acquire a disconcerting quality of actuality and existential urgency. Homer is no longer the dignified bearded poet of Roman statuary, but a poor street musician staring blankly into space while he sings his verses to the screeches of a violin.¹⁰ Midas leaves the realm of Ovidian fable to become an all-too-human person forced to confront the folly of his golden touch.¹¹ In a work such as Valentin's painting of Samson reflecting on his victorious slaying of one thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass (cat. 49), the biblical past is projected into the present. Indeed, the figure he represents, unquestionably of a real individual, is at the opposite pole from Guido Reni's emblem of heroism in his great canvas in the Pinacoteca in Bologna. Along with the psychological moment that he depicts, the work plays on the fiction of painting and myth as play-acting, much as Velázquez was later to do in his *Mars* (Museo del Prado, Madrid), which might best be described as a male model in the guise of the god Mars, holding a pose. In all of these cases, the model rather than some abstracting idea has become the central dynamic of creation.¹²

There was, of course, nothing novel about the practice of drawing from life. Ever since the fifteenth century, Florentine artists had posed workshop assistants (*garzoni*) and drawn from them, and over the course of the sixteenth century, whether in Florence, Bologna, or Rome, drawing from adult nude models (mostly male), who were paid for the purpose, became an established part of an artist's training. The modeling might take place in the official Accademia di San Luca or, more informally, in the studios of painters.¹³ Yet if in the fifteenth century the object was to study poses and to achieve a greater mastery over the depiction of the human figure, in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the goal was quite different. A young artist drew from life only after having spent time copying the drawings or prints after illustrious masters—especially Raphael and Michelangelo—and after drawing from plaster casts of ancient statues. As *principe* of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome, Federico Zuccaro envisaged a program in which students were instructed in the idea of *disegno* as a product of the imagination and learned the basics of drawing.¹⁴ First they copied the individual parts of the body, then the whole figure, working from chiaroscuro drawings by the great masters as well as sculpted figures or mannequins.



Fig. 23. Michiel Sweerts (Flemish, 1618–1664). *A Painter's Studio*, ca. 1646–50. Oil on canvas, 28 x 29½ in. (71 x 74 cm). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (inv. SK-A-1957)

Finally they tackled the matter of drawing from a posed nude model (what came to be known as academies).¹⁵ The Accademia's program was intended to instill in the student's mind paradigms of beauty so that when, at last, he did draw from the model, he would be able to bring what he saw with his eyes into line with the ideal of beauty that had been implanted in his imagination. Embedded in this process was the very notion of creativity: of painting as an intellectual activity, something that went beyond the mere imitation of nature. This higher skill was the imaginative act of revealing the Truth or perfection of nature that, according to Neoplatonic thought, informs the imperfect world of experience.

The practice of painting directly from the model is illustrated in a marvelous but, unfortunately, poorly preserved, work by Michiel Sweerts (fig. 23). Sweerts was one of the many northern artists in Rome at

mid-century but had as his principal patron the nephew of Pope Innocent X, Prince Camillo Pamphilj, in whose palace he held an academy for drawing from life. The picture shows a painter's studio on the ground floor of a building.¹⁶ To the right is a seemingly random pile of plaster casts of famous Roman statues (heads, limbs, torsos¹⁷) as well as a celebrated relief from a sarcophagus that appears in various concert scenes by some of Caravaggio's followers, including Valentin (cat. 23). At the back of the room an assistant is busy grinding colors on a table on which sits a cast of a famous Roman statue, the *Ludovisi Juno*. An *écorché* is on a pedestal and it is this that two young artists are drawing, learning anatomy, while at the back of the room the master can be seen at work on a canvas, painting directly from a posed model. He is observed by two amateurs, who discuss his progress with animated gestures. The model is illuminated from a single, high window, thus emulating



Fig. 24. Simone Peterzano (Italian, 1535–1599). Study for the Sibylla Persica in the Certosa di Garegnano, Milan, ca. 1578–80. Charcoal and white chalk on gray paper, 9½ x 7¼ in. (24 x 18.3 cm). Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni, Castello Sforzesco, Milan (inv. A 1717-517)



Fig. 25. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (Italian, 1571–1610). *Bacchino malato*, 1593. Oil on canvas, 26¾ x 20⅞ in. (67 x 53 cm). Galleria Borghese, Rome (inv. 534)

precisely the way we are told Caravaggio went about his practice. On the back wall hangs a finished painting, and as luck would have it the picture survives, by Sweerts, and shows a wrestling match—a lowlife scene in which the poses of the figures seem to have been loosely inspired by antique sculpture but painted from life. Caravaggio, too, often incorporated poses from canonical sources, whether derived from Roman sculpture or from Michelangelo, and then undercut their idealist style by painting them from life. Sweerts's picture has been associated with a possible pendant showing men playing cards on a barrel in the out-of-doors: in other words, the theme of gambling favored by the Caravaggisti. Taken together, the two pictures thus appear to constitute a visual defense of Caravaggesque practice at two generations' remove (the two pictures have been dated to about 1650).¹⁸

It must be remembered that Caravaggio himself had a rigorously traditional training in Milan under Simone Peterzano and that he had unquestionably

formed a mental repertory of poses from the exercise of copying from engravings.¹⁹ He also drew from posed models, for a number of studies by Peterzano testifies to the practice (fig. 24). Caravaggio clearly recalled one of them when, at an early date in Rome, he painted the so-called *Bacchino malato* (fig. 25), using himself as the model. It was in Milan, too, that he formed his notion of the potential of a radical, naturalistic style from the work of local Lombard painters, as exemplified by two astonishing, half-length nudes that Callisto Piazza frescoed in 1555 onto the piers of a chapel in San Maurizio (fig. 26)—a church in which Peterzano had also worked.²⁰ Caravaggio's innovation was to take the matter of working from life one step further by insisting on eliminating the intervening process of drawing, by which the raw data of observation was edited.

Our key testimony relating to the circumstances of painting from posed models is provided by one of Caravaggio's earliest emulators, Orazio Gentileschi,



Fig. 26. Callisto Piazza (Italian, ca. 1500–1561). Detail of a fresco, 1555. Monastero Maggiore di San Maurizio, Milan

who had a career as an uninspired late Mannerist painter before he was converted to working *dal naturale*. Gentileschi was a slow, meticulous painter and he required more than a month to complete a full-length composition of a Saint Jerome (fig. 27). We know this because the seventy-three-year-old pilgrim who modeled for his painting, of which two versions survive, testified at the rape trial of Artemisia Gentileschi in July 1612.²¹ He declared that during the forty days of Lent, “[the painter Signor Orazio Gentileschi used me] to portray a head similar to mine . . . and [also for] a full-length Saint Jerome he had me strip to the waist to make a Saint Jerome that resembled me.”²² The head study would have been done rapidly and was doubtless intended as part of Gentileschi’s workshop repertory. Head studies were, indeed, a common practice, especially with portraits, and they stand at the center of the tradition of painting *dal naturale*.²³ The *Saint Jerome*, on the other hand, entailed long hours of posing over a protracted period and aptly demonstrates the aesthetic limitations of working directly from the model. If we imagine away the rocky landscape setting and replace the rocks with a stool and boxes, it will be clear that Orazio must

have had the old pilgrim sit on a stool with his right foot on a low box, his left hand supported on a prop (perhaps, but not necessarily, the skull we see), and his right arm resting on still another support. Only in this way could the model be expected to hold his pose for hours at a time, sometimes breaking only for lunch, and then returning to it at intervals over the period of six weeks. The problem Gentileschi faced, and not altogether successfully, was how to convey the vital, inner character of the fourth-century ascetic rather than merely the outward aspect of the model posing for him.

A far more complicated situation faced Caravaggio—an incomparably greater genius—in his first large canvas with a complex dramatic subject in an elaborate interior setting, the *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew* for the French national church of San Luigi dei Francesi (fig. 28). Take, for example, the angel who extends a martyr’s palm to the prostrate, dying apostle. It is immediately evident that a young boy was posed on a table with his lower body and leg elevated on a box and his head and arm projecting over the edge. The sinuous pose had been carefully conceived to suggest movement, but as with Gentileschi’s *Saint Jerome*, it only calls attention to the means by which it was staged. The same is true of the other figures. We might imagine the composition as

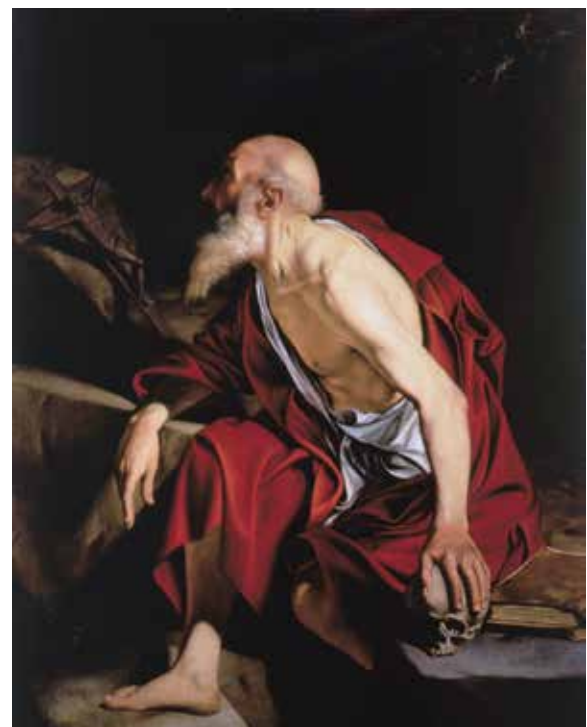


Fig. 27. Orazio Gentileschi (Italian, 1563–1639). *Saint Jerome*, 1610–11. Oil on canvas, 60¼ x 50¾ in. (153 x 128 cm). Museo Civico d’Arte Antica e Palazzo Madama, Turin (inv. 469)



Fig. 28. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew*, 1599–1600. Oil on canvas, 127¼ x 135 in. (323 x 343 cm). San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome

having begun with the positioning of the two models for Saint Matthew and his assailant as the compositional and dramatic fulcrum, and then expanded outward with other models who assumed the poses and gestures appropriate to their place and role. The gain in a quality of actuality—of the event seeming to take place before the viewer’s eyes—was enormous, and the result from this innovative practice of painting from individually posed models viewed under rigorously controlled lighting caused a sensation. But it came at a sacrifice, which had to do with an inevitable effect of frozen action and

the appearance of piecemeal construction.²⁴ It was just these defects that the training of the Accademia addressed by encouraging the artist to work through his compositions in elaborate preparatory drawings.

The lack of clarity in the spatial description of the setting caused a further problem. It is, indeed, impossible to map out the building in which Saint Matthew’s martyrdom takes place, giving the impression that the changes in elevation were dictated less by a desire to describe the particularities of the church than the dynamics of the figural component. X-radiographs of

the picture show that initially Caravaggio attempted a more conventional, perspectival staging of the scene, in conformity with the details of the contract as well as on the model of his Milanese teacher's work.²⁵ But he abandoned it, realizing, no doubt, that the strength of his style lay in the powerfully physical presence of his figures. This same spatial ambiguity became a characteristic of Caravaggesque painting in general and of Valentin's in particular.

What techniques did Caravaggio employ in composing his pictures? This question has engaged scholars for the last three decades, and from the technical evidence currently available, it appears that to record the placement and pose of a model on his canvas, Caravaggio used an evolving combination of incisions, brush drawings, and a vigorous blocking in of the forms in white (an *abbozzo*).²⁶ Precisely because scholarship has approached Caravaggio's techniques as though they were unique to him and without precedent, it is important to understand that the methods he developed were adapted from his training in Milan. What was novel was the end toward which he adapted and employed those techniques. The incisions, for example, which are found in great profusion in his Roman paintings and less consistently or extensively thereafter, derived from fresco painting. In that method, artists traced the composition of a full-scale cartoon onto the wall with a stylus or other sharp instrument, resulting in incised lines in the damp plaster. Occasionally, incisions were also used to transfer the design of a cartoon to a panel or canvas painting.²⁷

Caravaggio's innovation was to employ these incised lines not to transfer a cartoon, but to locate directly onto the canvas the key features of the model whose pose he was recording—the placement of an arm or leg or head. (We find an analogous method of locating features of a model, albeit in drawn lines rather than incised ones, on the canvas Vermeer depicts in his *Allegory of Painting*, in which the artist is shown working from a posed model [fig. 29].) Brush drawings were apparently used both to lay in the general design and to indicate with greater refinement the contours of figural or still-life elements. As X-radiography of his canvases reveals, he used a loaded brush to block in the forms, and the textured brushwork of this *abbozzo* can often be discerned with the naked eye. These techniques have been thoroughly documented in his first version of the *Conversion of Saint Paul* (fig. 30).²⁸

In reference to the second version of the *Conversion of Saint Paul*—the canvas that was installed in the Cerasi



Fig. 29. Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632–1675). Detail of *Allegory of Painting*, ca. 1666. Oil on canvas, 51½ x 43¼ in. (130 x 110 cm). Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv. GG 9128)

Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo—Bellori famously declared, “the which story is in fact without action.”²⁹ So strongly is our response to Caravaggio's Roman pictures conditioned by our familiarity with photography that it has become difficult to appreciate their stilled action as a shortcoming. Yet Caravaggio himself seems to have come to perceive it as such, and in his post-Roman pictures he consciously sought to move away from an overly strong dependence on posed figures. It was, however, left to the next generation of painters in Rome, building on the foundations of Caravaggesque practice, to create a *dal naturale* style without sacrificing the fluency of traditional painting and the ability to suggest an ongoing rather than frozen action—a quality of temporality.

Of the artists who participated in this venture, among them Bartolomeo Manfredi, Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri), and Giovanni Serodine, perhaps the two key figures were Jusepe de Ribera and Valentin. Bellori singled out the latter as the follower of Caravaggio who, “more than any other practitioner of naturalism (*naturalista*) made advances in the arrangement of the figures.”³⁰ A comparison of either of Valentin's two paintings of Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple (cats. 17, 40) with Caravaggio's *Martyrdom*



Fig. 30. (left): Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. *Conversion of Saint Paul*, 1600. Oil on wood, 93¼ x 74⅜ in. (237 x 189 cm). Odescalchi Collection, Rome. Detail showing preparatory incisions; (below): Detail with outlines indicating incisions (red) and underdrawing (blue)



of *Saint Matthew* makes the accomplishment of the great French painter immediately clear. The asymmetry of the composition, rigorously organized along repeating diagonals, and the use of emphatic gesture and active poses create the sense of an unfolding drama in which the viewer is implicated by the astonishingly bold cropping and audacious use of foreshortening. This notion of an interactive space is found as well in the virtually contemporary works of the young Gian Lorenzo Bernini, and it constitutes one of the most remarkable aspects of Valentin's art. At the same time, the narrative can be read with the same clarity as Domenichino's frescoed *Flagellation of Saint Andrew* at San Gregorio Magno, a work Bellori famously used as an example of how a mastery of action and gesture (*azzione e . . . gli affetti*) could make a picture universally accessible, even to an old, unlettered woman.³¹ The difference is that the figures in Valentin's painting seem taken from everyday reality—*dal naturale*. No other painter in Rome showed a comparable originality.

Due to the recent technical analysis of a few of Valentin's paintings, we are now in a position to suggest how he approached the bare canvas, plotting his composition, almost certainly with the use of models, but with a greater freedom of notation than Caravaggio's incisions permitted.³² As in the case of Caravaggio, we must allow for the possibility of some quickly penned compositional sketches. But it is quite clear that elaborate preparatory studies played no part in his painting (indicatively, as with Caravaggio, there are no drawings attributable to Valentin).

Infrared imaging reveals that for the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* (cat. 19), an ambitious composition that owes more than a little to Michelangelo's *Sacrifice of Noah* on the Sistine Ceiling, he recorded the position of the model who posed for him at the extreme right of the composition with bold strokes of the brush. Black paint delineates not only the position of his extended arm, but also those of his projecting leg and the bent leg hidden in the finished picture by the faggots he has bundled, as well as the placement of his buttock—something that was essential to describing the complicated pose and that presumes the presence of a model (fig. 31). Throughout the composition this sort of brush drawing used to locate features of the posed models can be observed, though at times the *abbozzo* seems little more than random strokes. Nowhere among the paintings examined is the process as revealing as in the vertical composition of the *Crowning with Thorns* in Munich (cat. 37). Once again, infrared imaging shows that

Valentin located the placement and pose of the various figures directly onto the ground of the canvas with brushstrokes in a black medium. The summary character of this boldly brushed-on "sketch" and the kinds of abbreviations employed—as in the head of Christ and the indication of his pectoral muscles—show absolutely no concern for the niceties of draftsmanship: the brush drawing was purely functional, like the incisions in Caravaggio's work. It was, however, a more efficient as well as spontaneous way of mapping out the composition. Once again, the elaborate pose of the figure of Christ strongly suggests that Valentin had before him a model, though when it came to painting the figure, *dal naturale*, he shifted the position of the head and made other adjustments. The same is true of the figure at the lower left, which Valentin seems originally to have indicated as a helmeted soldier looking diagonally into the composition. As painted, the soldier became a figure in contemporary dress with a plumed hat, his head seen almost in profile.

The changes one finds in the composition indicate the ways in which Valentin's creative process involved a constant dialogue between the initial compositional idea and the posed model that is at the center of his art and that accounts for the deeply felt humanity in his work that every critic has commented upon. In contrast to the brush drawing for the figure of Christ, the kneeling soldier in the background to the right has been rendered in the freestyle fashion of a caricature, indicating for certain that Valentin did not use a model. He needed only to convey an idea that would be supplemented by reference to a posed figure at a later stage. As for the soldier who presses the crown of thorns on Christ's head, initially he was differently placed and posed, as is best documented in the X-radiograph (fig. 64; indeed, in this case it is necessary to read the infrared image, the X-radiograph, and the finished picture together to understand the changes). The infrared image (fig. 63) clearly shows the brushed lines indicating where the artist first intended to position the figure's extended arm, but in painting, the model was re-posed and almost certainly done from life. (An aside: the X-radiograph also reveals that the *Crowning with Thorns* was painted over an abandoned portrait of a cardinal.) Even with the naked eye it is apparent that Valentin laid in the bent right arm of the standing soldier before he painted the drapery over it—something that is also found in the work of Caravaggio and that becomes a typical aspect of Valentin's practice. He clearly wanted to assure himself of the anatomical cohesion of his figures.



Fig. 31. Infrared image of the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* (cat. 19), detail showing the initial positioning of the features of the figure (in black paint)

The features found in the Prado *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* and the Munich *Crowning with Thorns* recur in other works that have been examined and can be assumed to constitute Valentin's normal working method. Indeed, where this boldly brushed compositional positioning is not seen with infrared imaging, it is probably owing to the medium Valentin chose and the absence of black carbon or to the impenetrability of the surface layers. As the technical examination of his multifigure compositions demonstrates, for Valentin painting was a process. He was always willing to make major changes in his compositions as well as to modify details. It is rare when the contour of a sleeve or the articulation of a finger or description of a still-life element has not been altered or refined in some way. The right-hand sleeve of the Metropolitan's *Lute Player* (cat. 30) provides a prime example, having initially been painted quite simply and then gone over with a welter of loose brushstrokes to create an animated effect. Similarly, in the sublimely staged *Judgment of Solomon* (cat. 33), the apron worn by the just mother was repainted so as to emphasize her impassioned entrance into the scene. One is tempted to draw an analogy between the contingency of his approach to painting and its evocation of a real-life situation (this is especially true in the *Judgment of Solomon*, in which the viewer is placed in the position of astonished onlooker at the moment of decision).

Valentin's constant search for the poses that will bring out the drama in his narratives is exemplified by the remarkable *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac* (cat. 44), a possibly unfinished work, the compromised condition of which makes it almost a palimpsest of Valentin's procedures, as he worked out the dynamics of the relationships among the three figures.³³ Was Isaac to be shown prone, lying on his back, or, as in the final version, kneeling submissively? How could the angel's impetuous intervention best be staged and the evidence that he was working from a statically posed model avoided? How might Abraham's hand grasping his son best communicate his conflicted emotions of astonishment and purpose? All of these considerations, which a more traditional artist would have worked out through a succession of drawings, was, instead, established by Valentin in his studio with models, whose poses he recorded with bold sweeps of his brush on the canvas (figs. 32, 33).

There are precedents for Valentin's method of brushing in the key features of his composition, and they occur in the paintings of Tintoretto and Jacopo Bassano.³⁴ It is possible, then, to suggest the artist who

may have introduced this typically Venetian technique to Roman painters: Marcantonio Bassetti. Bassetti arrived in Rome in 1614 and in 1616 wrote back to Palma Giovane in Venice that he had started an academy for working from life. There, he continued the practice he had learned in Venice of making sketches (*botte* or *bozzi/abbozzi*) from posed models, which Roman artists referred to as Venetian academies. Moreover, he wrote, this work was greatly admired for the way that "what one is drawing, one is also painting."³⁵ It is the intersection of the Caravaggesque practice of painting from the model, *dal naturale*, with Venetian pictorial traditions that increasingly distinguishes the work of Valentin. In the 1620s he employed a progressively more painterly style that clearly resonated with Velázquez when he visited Rome in 1629–30 and painted his *Forge of Vulcan*, a picture that, in its fluent naturalism, seems a direct response to the example of Valentin.³⁶

Caravaggesque painting created a new and essential dynamic between the artist and his model, who was no longer necessarily chosen because of the perfection of his or her physique—a figure whose features conformed to the paradigm of ancient sculpture—as was the case with the much admired model Andrea Sacchi employed.³⁷ Orazio Gentileschi chose the seventy-three-year-old pilgrim from Palermo because he looked the part of the fourth-century ascetic. Ribera famously sought out haggard old men with leathery skin to pose for his prophets and classical philosophers. And Manfredi sought out a young boy and quite ordinary-featured woman as models for his painting of Mars punishing Cupid.³⁸ Guido Reni also had an eye for models whose features might suit the protagonists of his paintings: he famously found a distinctive Slav on the banks of the Tiber and had him model so that he could draw, paint, and sculpt his facial features.³⁹ But Reni was drawn to the man's appearance because it reminded him of Roman statues of Seneca. Other artists studied the same model simply because his bald head and projecting ears were so memorable. He appears in the paintings of a number of Caravaggesque artists, including Ribera (cat. 3), Manfredi, Cecco del Caravaggio, and Orazio Borgianni.⁴⁰

Even a cursory glance at Valentin's paintings makes it obvious that he, too, had preferred models whom he employed on multiple occasions. Perhaps the most readily identifiable is the middle-aged man with his strong brow, slightly hooked nose, and well-built physique, who appears as a river god in the *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43), as the patriarch Abraham (cat. 44), the



Fig. 32. Infrared image of *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac* (cat. 44), detail showing the initial placements of the figure of Isaac



Fig. 33. Infrared image of *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac* (cat. 44), detail showing the initial brush drawing for the figures

Evangelist Saint Matthew (cat. 28), and as the old shepherd in *Erminia and the Shepherds* (see fig. 5) as well as the harpist in a gathering of musicians (cat. 38). These pictures all date within a few years of one another. Similarly, the youth who wears a plumed hat in the Dresden *Cardsharps* (cat. 6) reappears in a cluster of other early pictures (cats. 7, 8). Valentin seems to have used himself as the model for his early *Saint John the Baptist* (cat. 4) and then, years later, for the *Samson* (cat. 49) he painted for Cardinal Francesco Barberini as well as, possibly, *Saint John the Evangelist* (cat. 20). Did he intend an autobiographical subtext?

The recurrence of a familiar face in Valentin's paintings brings to mind a traveling troupe of actors who, in response to the demands of the director, take on different parts as required by the situation.⁴¹ But this recurring use of specific models also indicates the degree to which Valentin's paintings are deeply connected with the realities of life and can seem at times to transform his pictures into personal meditations, invariably tinged with melancholy, on those transient moments of pleasure and of tragedy.⁴² It is why, even today, his pictures resonate in a way that few others by his contemporaries do.



Valentin in the Grand Siècle

ANNICK LEMOINE

In the Grand Siècle, to belong to the camp of Caravaggio—the master who, according to Nicolas Poussin, had come into the world “to destroy painting”—meant no biographical adulation. Thus it was with Valentin de Boulogne. As anyone who has studied him knows, his very identity as a person remains mysterious. Nothing is known about his training in France or the particulars of his time in Rome before 1627, the year he appears as one of the privileged painters of Cardinal Francesco Barberini. His early death in 1632, at a time when few were invested in writing biographies of artists, and the restricted body of works that have come down to us are factors that make for a spare biography.¹ Valentin’s critical fortune has therefore been limited to predictable leitmotifs. He is characterized as a mere imitator of Caravaggio’s—someone who painted *dal naturale*; and was content to produce *bizarrie*—tavern scenes populated by gamblers, drunken soldiers, and greedy gypsy women. As for his personal life, like that of Caravaggio’s, it is seen as dissolute. Valentin frequented the slums of Rome and died after an evening of debauchery, as recounted by Giovanni Baglione in 1642.² These various aspects, described in the Italian and French art-critical literature of the seventeenth century, from Baglione to André Félibien, were repeated ad nauseum throughout the eighteenth-century literature.³

However, the reality is a good deal more ambiguous than it might appear at first glance. It is enough to look at the literature on art, the taste of connoisseurs, the purchases by the king of France and their display, the fluctuation of prices, and the diffusion of Valentin’s works through engravings to understand the paradox. Although ignored by early biographers, Valentin not only enjoyed true success among art enthusiasts, both Italian and French, but, by the last third of the seventeenth century, he seems to have occupied an official place in the artistic pantheon in France. In restoring the general outlines of Valentin’s critical fortunes, we will need to analyze that historiographical transformation—the naturalist of the slums of Rome who became one of the great masters of French art—and to reinstate the process, already under way by the 1640s, that saw in the painter of Coulommiers not a slavish follower of Caravaggio but, much more, one of the greatest colorists that France has ever known.

During his lifetime Valentin enjoyed tremendous success on the Italian peninsula. Although his early years in Rome are difficult to reconstruct, in 1627—five years before his death—information about him multiplies, and it points to success and recognition. Illustrious patrons sought out Valentin: not only Francesco Barberini, his principal supporter (cats. 43, 48, 49), but also

Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani, Cardinal Angelo Giori (cats. 18, 45, 46), and Carlo Emanuele I di Savoia. He was also admired by less famous collectors, such as Alessandro Ruffinelli, Cristina Duglioli Angelelli, and Fabrizio Valguarnera (cat. 50). Prestigious commissions followed one after another. Valentin painted portraits of Cardinal Barberini and of those belonging to his close circle: Cassiano dal Pozzo, Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino (see discussion in cat. 18), and the buffoon of Pope Urban VIII, Raffaello Menicucci (cat. 41). He also painted a series of large-scale history paintings, culminating in the sumptuous *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43), a true Caravaggesque trophy for Palazzo Barberini. His ascent was crowned in 1629 by the commission to paint an altarpiece for Saint Peter's, the *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian* (cat. 48)—the most prestigious honor an artist could receive. His death in no way extinguished his renown. Quite the opposite. As the painter Pierre Lemaire remarked in September 1632 to his friend the publisher and Paris art dealer François Langlois, the price of Valentin's paintings immediately quadrupled in the pontifical city upon the announcement of the artist's death.⁴

This success is not reflected in the literature of the period. Valentin is not mentioned in Giulio Mancini's *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, written about 1617–21, nor does he appear in the famous letter on painting, most likely dating from the same years, by Vincenzo Giustiniani, the great patron of Caravaggio and his northern followers.⁵ But his omission does not indicate a lack of interest in his work, nor can it be explained by chronological factors (after all, Valentin had already been in Rome for several years—perhaps since 1609, and certainly since 1614⁶). The explanation lies chiefly in his status as a *forestiere*, a foreigner. Moreover, Valentin is not the only foreign painter missing from these texts. An even more surprising omission is his illustrious compatriot Simon Vouet, who received a pension from the king of France and moved to Rome in 1613. Only Jusepe de Ribera escaped this omission. Not until 1642, with the publication of Giovanni Baglione's *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti*, did Valentin's name enter the artistic literature.⁷ Baglione noted Valentin's French origins, his *maniera caravaggesca*, and his artistic practice *dal naturale*; his celebrity among major art supporters, including Francesco Barberini; his principal paintings—the *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43), a *Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, and his large altarpiece for Saint Peter's—his tragic death in his prime (*nel fiore dell'operare*); and his funeral, financed by Cassiano dal Pozzo out of devotion for art. Although Baglione recognized Valentin's

accomplished style (*buona maniera*), the strong coloring of his paintings (*ben colorite*), and the strength of their brushwork (*tocche con fierezza*), he regretted that the painter had neglected the idealizing traits associated with *disegno*, a criticism that would gain wide acceptance.

From then on, Valentin's name is regularly cited in Italy and in France, but the passages are brief, the information repetitive (mention of the altarpiece at Saint Peter's and of Valentin's dissolute habits), and the condemnation recurrent.⁸ As Giovan Pietro Bellori summarized in his *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* (1672): "Valentin . . . came to Rome and followed the style of Caravaggio with a vigorous, dark style. More than any of the other naturalists, he excelled in the disposition of the figures and diligence in execution, although even he was inclined to those bizarre subjects of games, concerts, and gypsies."⁹ It is hardly surprising that Félibien—an admirer of Poussin—devoted only a few lines to this "follower of Caravaggio," largely repeating Bellori's criticism. "Was it not true," the historian to Louis XIV explained, "that had Valentin not taken Caravaggio as his master he would not have fallen into such a dark manner? [He] was no more judicious than his master [Caravaggio] in the choice of subjects, as can be seen in the paintings that are here [in Paris], which nevertheless can be regarded as the most beautiful he did."¹⁰ In the French literature on art, in fact, Valentin appears most often only as a digression in the life of either Caravaggio or Vouet, whose first steps in Rome he is said to have guided.¹¹

The situation was different in the art market and among collectors. From the outset, one constant emerges: throughout the seventeenth century, Valentin, a painter admired in Rome, had a persistent presence in major French collections. His works were found in the most splendid rooms of the homes of the most important art collectors, from Michel Particelli d'Emery, superintendent of finance, to Cardinal Jules Mazarin; from the duc de Liancourt to Everhard Jabach, and among the major dealers, from Etienne Estienne (called Perruchot) to Verani de Varennes. In these residences, Valentin appears alongside the most prestigious names: not only those of Annibale Carracci, Domenichino, Guido Reni, and Pietro da Cortona, but also Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Titian, and Veronese. In general, prices for his work were on par with those paid for paintings by the great masters—between 100 and 500 livres. But it is important to note that his works sometimes fetched larger sums than Caravaggio's and often

equaled those by the Bolognese painters and the great masters of Venetian painting who were so admired by French collectors.

Consider first the example of the collection of Claude Maugis, abbé de Saint-Ambroise, canon of the Sainte-Chapelle, and chaplain to Marie de' Medici.¹² Along with an unusual group of small pictures in *pietra dura*, Maugis's cabinet, constituted in the 1630s, contained more than eighty paintings, including works by Dürer, Perugino, Annibale Carracci, Rubens, Van Dyck, and, less expectedly, Valentin de Boulogne. Not only are the works by Valentin among the few in the inventory to be ascribed to a particular painter, but they are also among those with the highest values, together with paintings by Reni and Van Dyck and just after a very precious *Saint Sebastian* by Perugino, valued at 1,200 livres. Valentin's painting—its subject is not specified—is assessed at 400 livres, equal to a *Saint Sebastian* by Reni and more than a *Descent from the Cross* by Annibale Carracci (300 livres).

Valentin's paintings in the collection of Particelli d'Emery are accorded a similar status. On the financier's death in 1650, the *Four Ages of Man*, attributed to Valentin (probably the masterpiece in the National Gallery, London, cat. 34), was assessed at 200 livres. That figure may appear modest, but it is considerable when compared to other estimates. The average assessment for the one hundred or so paintings in the collection is barely more than 100 livres, with a record estimate, 500 livres, for the precious *Madonna with a Blue Diadem* attributed in the inventory to Raphael (Musée du Louvre).¹³ Two years later, in 1652, a painting by Valentin on the same subject, the *Four Ages of Man*, was listed at the residence of the financier Jacques Bordier with an estimated value twice that assigned to the painting at Particelli's two years earlier (400 livres in the postmortem inventory of Bordier's wife, Catherine Lybault). Eight years later, the Bordier painting was assessed at the substantial figure of 1,000 livres (1660 postmortem inventory of Bordier himself).¹⁴ It is probable that the work mentioned as being at Bordier's home and the one at Particelli's were in fact one and the same. Inherited in 1641 by Jacques Bordier from his brother-in-law Etienne Lybault,¹⁵ it might have been sold to Particelli before 1650, then returned to Bordier upon Particelli's death for reason of nonpayment, as was the case for several paintings from the collection of the superintendent of finance, including the *Four Ages of Man*.¹⁶ In my view, this increase in value by a factor of five between 1650 and 1660 is indicative less of the

vagaries of assessments typical of postmortem inventories in the early modern period than of the growing fascination for Valentin's work by lovers of painting during the time of Mazarin. In fact, this elevated price was not unique. In 1668, the duc de Liancourt sold one of Valentin's canvases for 900 livres, a significant sum given that, at the same moment, he sold three other paintings—Veronese's *Coronation of the Virgin*, a work by Giulio Romano, and an anonymous portrait—for 1,200 livres total. That is an average of 400 livres per canvas—less than half the price paid for Valentin's masterpiece.¹⁷ In other words, Valentin's works were among the most expensive on the Paris market—equal in value to the great masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance.

The collections of Cardinal Mazarin and the great banker-collector Everhard Jabach give us an opportunity to refine this analysis. In fact they suggest that Valentin was appreciated not primarily as a first-rate follower of Caravaggio, one of the principal *naturalista*, but more as a Lombard painter, a master of color and heir to Venetian painting that was so greatly appreciated by French collectors. Cardinal Mazarin's collection, which in 1661—the year he died and an inventory was drawn up—contained more than eight hundred items, reveals above all a taste for the Venetian masters of the sixteenth century as well as for contemporary Italian painting. One finds mixed together works by Jacopo Bassano, Titian, Tintoretto, Palma Vecchio, and their contemporaries, and then Andrea Sacchi, Pietro da Cortona, Reni, Guercino, and Caravaggio.¹⁸ The Italian school dominates at the expense of the French, which is represented largely by the major French painters active in Rome: Vouet, Poussin, Claude Lorrain, Nicolas Mignard, and Valentin. Favored among them are Vouet and especially Valentin, who is represented by eight canvases, ahead of Vouet (four paintings), Poussin (two canvases), and Gaspard Dughet (also two).¹⁹

The place occupied by Valentin in the Mazarin collection is especially remarkable in that few Caravaggesque paintings were included. Caravaggio is represented by a single work, Bartolomeo Manfredi by three paintings, and Orazio Gentileschi by two modest works of small dimensions. By contrast, listed under Valentin's name are eight important paintings, all, or almost all, now identifiable, including the famous *Judgment of Solomon* (cat. 33), the *Lute Player* (cat. 30), and the splendid portrait *Raffaello Menicucci* (cat. 41). The assessments of the paintings are commensurate with the fascination Mazarin seems to have had for the artist: four of the eight canvases by Valentin are within the



Fig. 34. Valentin de Boulogne. *Saint John the Evangelist*, ca. 1624–26. Oil on canvas, 47¼ x 57½ in. (120 x 146 cm). Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. MV 7277)

highest bracket, with appraisals of more than 1,000 livres, an extraordinary figure usually reserved for Italian works. Such is the case for his three large history paintings, with, in the lead, *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* (perhaps cat. 40), estimated at 1,200 livres, followed by a music party with multiple figures (cat. 42), appraised at 1,000 livres. The appraisal of the music party assumes particular significance when one considers the paintings listed before and after it: Vouet's *Lucretia* (the splendid canvas now in Prague) is appraised at 300 livres, and Titian's *Tarquin and Lucretia* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux) is assessed at 3,000 livres.²⁰

This exceptional regard for Valentin's art is found at the same time and in an equally striking manner with the collection of the great banker-collector Everhard

Jabach.²¹ About 1656, perhaps already with an eye toward the spectacular sale to the king, initiated in 1658, of about one hundred works from his collection, Jabach organized an ambitious undertaking to create painted and engraved copies of a select number of works in his possession.²² An exclusive group of thirteen was chosen to be reproduced by the best engravers active in Paris and published as large, luxurious plates; they were the most prestigious and important paintings owned by Jabach. Among the celebrated works chosen to attest to the quality of the collection was Valentin's *Innocence of Susanna* (cat. 22). Alongside Valentin appeared some of the most celebrated names, exclusively Italian. The works included masterpieces, many from the collection of Charles I, such as Titian's *Supper at Emmaus*, Perino



Fig. 35. Valentin de Boulogne. *Saint Luke*, ca. 1624–26. Oil on canvas, 47¼ x 57½ in. (120 x 146 cm). Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. MV 7273)

del Vaga's *Parnassus*, and Reni's four *Labors of Hercules*. Here again, Valentin did not merely have a place within the pantheon of the old masters; in this series, he also distinguished himself as the sole Frenchman between Titian and Reni.

Lastly, the royal collections as established under Jean-Baptiste Colbert's tenure as superintendent of finance further reflect Valentin's immense fame. Each of the two large Jabach sales to the crown (1661 and 1671) included, in addition to canvases by Titian, Veronese, Correggio, Leonardo da Vinci, Domenichino, and Reni, "his" Valentin. The *Innocence of Susanna* from the first Jabach sale entered the royal collections in 1662, while the *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* (cat. 36) came from the second sale, of 1671. When, in 1665, Charles Le Brun

was given the task of selecting for the king's cabinet a small group of paintings (twenty-seven in all) from the Mazarin collection, he chose—unsurprisingly—the most beautiful Italian Renaissance masterpieces the cardinal owned, including the famous *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* by Correggio, as well as contemporary Italian works by artists such as Pietro da Cortona. Significantly, he also chose a painting by Valentin, the *Judgment of Solomon* (cat. 33).

Similarly, the interest the king showed in the collection of François Oursel in 1670 may have been strongly motivated by the important series it contained of Valentin's *Four Evangelists* (cats. 28, 29; figs. 34, 35). These four masterpieces were included on a short list of eight paintings (by Reni, Caravaggio, and Valentin)

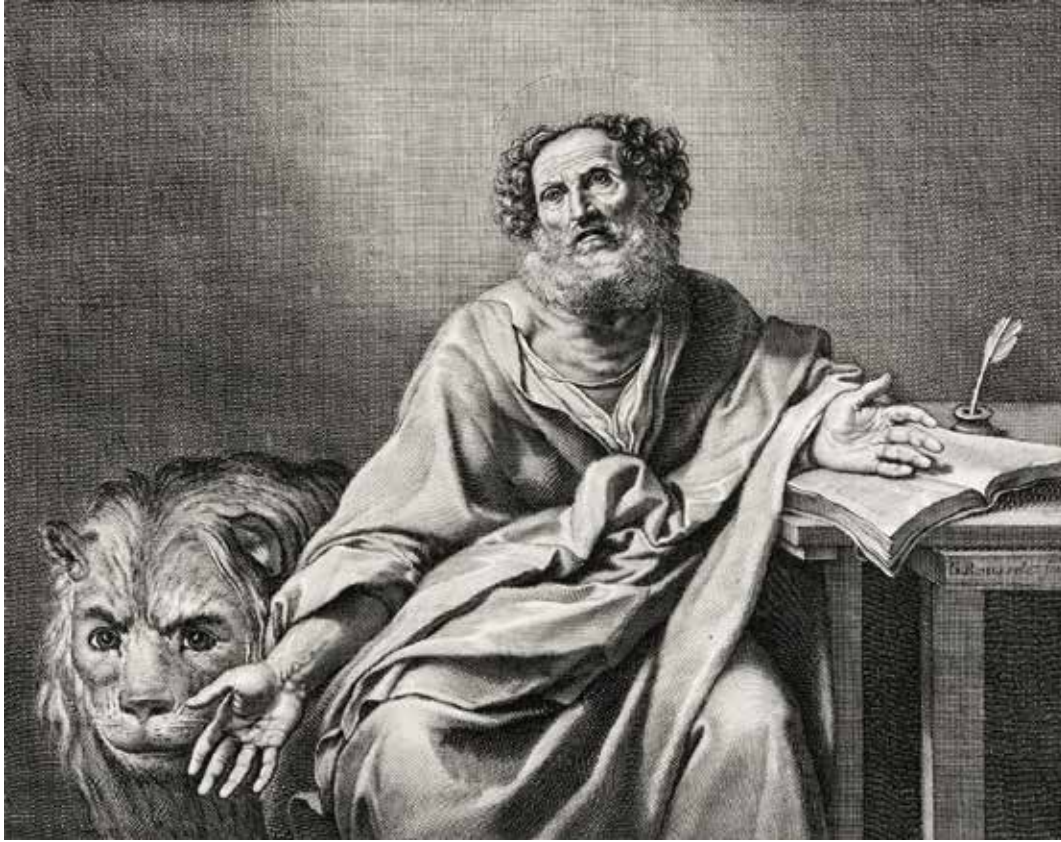


Fig. 36. Gilles Rousselet (French, 1614–1686), after Valentin de Boulogne. *Saint Mark the Evangelist*, ca. 1670. Engraving, plate 11½ x 12½ in. (28.2 x 31.6 cm), sheet 12½ x 13 in. (31.9 x 32.9 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Muriel and Philip Berman Gift, acquired from the John S. Phillips bequest of 1876 to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, with funds contributed by Muriel and Philip Berman, gifts (by exchange) of Lisa Norris Elkins, Bryant W. Langston, Samuel S. White 3rd and Vera White, with additional funds contributed by John Howard McFadden, Jr., Thomas Skelton Harrison, and the Philip H. and A.S.W. Rosenbach Foundation (1985-52-17667)

selected by the royal administration from the “Museo Orselliano.”²³ This hypothesis of the importance attached to the *Evangelists* seems borne out by the fact that they were also chosen (from 1671) to be part of the prestigious *Cabinet du Roi*, an extravagant series of thirty-eight engraved plates of masterpieces in the royal cabinet (figs. 36, 37). As Marianne Grivel has shown, this exercise in propaganda celebrated at once the luxury of the royal collection and the great models of painting, from the Italian masters to Poussin.²⁴ It included twenty-five plates devoted to Italian painting—the great masters of the Renaissance (Veronese, Titian, Raphael, and Correggio), as well as contemporary painters—those heroes of the *beau idéal* (Domenichino, Carracci, and Reni)—plus a single Van Dyck to represent the Flemish school. Finally, two artists only, both Romans

by adoption, were members of the French school: Poussin, “the glory of our nation,” and—an odd choice in this panorama of works done in the Grand Manner—Valentin, with the *Four Evangelists*.²⁵

It may be noted that the inclusion of Valentin’s *Evangelists* in the *Cabinet du Roi* can be compared felicitously to their contemporaneous exhibition, equally significant, alongside two other canvases by Valentin the *Tribute to Caesar* (still in situ) and, from 1695, the *Fortune-Teller* (see cat. 38)—at the very heart of the Château de Versailles, in the most important room, the “holy of holies,” the Salon du Roi, which in 1701 became the Chambre du Roi, where the ceremonial levée, dining, and retiring of the king took place on a daily basis. Once again, Valentin’s masterpieces were the sole representatives of the French



Fig. 37. Gilles Rousselet, after Valentin de Boulogne. *Saint Matthew the Evangelist*, ca. 1670. Engraving, plate 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (28.3 x 31.7 cm), sheet 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (47 x 33.7 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Muriel and Philip Berman Gift, acquired from the John S. Phillips bequest of 1876 to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, with funds contributed by Muriel and Philip Berman, gifts (by exchange) of Lisa Norris Elkins, Bryant W. Langston, Samuel S. White 3rd and Vera White, with additional funds contributed by John Howard McFadden, Jr., Thomas Skelton Harrison, and the Philip H. and A.S.W. Rosenbach Foundation (1985-52-17670)

school, hanging beside works by the great names of Italian painting, from Raphael to Domenichino.

It seems to me that the remarkable place granted to Valentin, if it indeed reflected the personal taste of Louis XIV, as Nicolas Milovanovic has proposed,²⁶ ought to be understood more generally as the affirmation of a fame that was now well established. Valentin was considered a painter equal to the great masters of color, Titian and Veronese. If Poussin was the “French Raphael” in the *Cabinet du Roi*, Valentin took his place less as a *naturalista* and emulator of Caravaggio than as the most sublime of the French “Venetians” and a champion of *colorito Lombardo*. It is from this standpoint

that we can interpret the placement accorded to Valentin by the abbé Dubos shortly thereafter, in 1719: he is celebrated alongside Eustache Le Sueur, Poussin, and Charles Le Brun as one of “the four best French painters of the last century.”²⁷

Sixty years later, in 1779, when Jacques Louis David arrived in Rome, he chose to copy a masterpiece of “color,” the quality that he felt was most lacking in French painting. He selected neither a Titian nor a Veronese, but Valentin’s splendid *Last Supper* (cat. 26), then in Palazzo Mattei. It is hardly surprising, then, that in 1839, the French critic Théophile Thoré opined that Valentin “went to become a Venetian and to die in Italy.”²⁸



Valentin

A French Painter

JEAN-PIERRE CUZIN

How could one not love Valentin? His paintings contain such sincerity, such emotion, such true humanity; they possess a rare combination of delicacy and savagery. They say a great deal about the world of youth: its feverish and fallow energy, its beauty that refuses to be gazed on or, in any case, commented on. Leave me alone, many of Valentin's models seem to say.

Very quickly, the paintings were identified with the man, through an evocation of a world awash in emotion. He was, wrote Jacques Thuillier in 1958, "a passionate painter" at a time when "gambling, tobacco, drinking, and the formidable Roman courtesans lay in wait for even the most upstanding individuals." Of his paintings, Thuillier said, "A sort of irremediable sadness possesses the living beings, and even the children seem to lift their big brown eyes to a dream denied." Or again, "In every man, [Valentin] wants to capture not the universal but the irreducible aspect that constitutes his mystery."¹ How could this be said any better?

The French view Valentin with great emotion. They have always loved this painter. Fickle France, under the sway of the fashions it creates and then rejects, has remained faithful to this artist, a provincial exile who died far from home, having fallen victim to Roman revelry. France found something bold in his life and, in his painting, something in harmony with its tradition.

And yet, what if this glorious image tends rather to block access to the painter's true dimensions? To make Valentin a wondrous outsider, a lost child faithful to Caravaggism to the end, a lovable bad boy unfit for society, is to lose sight of the painter. This romantic view may keep us from according Valentin his true place within his time and among his contemporaries, as well as from appreciating his role in the history of French painting.

Yes, I said French painting, not Caravaggism in general or painting in Rome, the characteristics usually applied to his art, and not without reason.

Valentin, a French painter? All his paintings are Roman and seem entirely beholden to the milieu of the Eternal City. By contrast, Nicolas Poussin had a whole career and a major body of work—which is being rediscovered year by year—that made him a painter of France, already master of a technique and a style before he settled in Rome. If, God forbid, he had left this world in 1624, no one would even ask the ritual question: Poussin, French painter or Roman painter?

If Valentin is French, it is not only because of the well-known—and very real—chauvinism that makes the French judge that such a great artist must be from France, in the same way they believe that Louise Bourgeois and Jean-Michel Basquiat belong to their country. It is also because he has always been considered

so: he was in his time “Monsù” (Monsieur) Valentin, and his paintings were collected early on by his compatriots and reproduced by French engravers. He was adopted by Cardinal Jules Mazarin, then by Louis XIV, and recognized by French painters as one of their own until the late nineteenth century.

Valentin is at present not nearly as popular as Georges de La Tour, who, since he was rediscovered a century ago, has somewhat stolen the spotlight. Nevertheless, the two painters, of equal merit in my view, are the greatest of Caravaggio’s heirs in French painting. They were nearly contemporaries, and neither was a Parisian artist: La Tour was from Lorraine and remained Lorrainian; Valentin, from Brie, chose to become a Roman. Nothing allows us to consider them together except their attachment to Caravaggio’s painting, its themes, its choice of compositions, and its approach to reality, living and lived. But although La Tour was an indirect Caravaggist, derivative of other derivative artists, Valentin was an intimate of Caravaggio or at least of his paintings. Their two worlds could not have differed more: La Tour was a good match for the sensibility of the twentieth century, which rediscovered him, Valentin for that of the nineteenth century, which never stopped loving him. Two ways of looking, two contrary visions of reality.

Valentin, always beloved, was the painter through whom the French gained access to Caravaggio, a genius so ill-suited to them. Caravaggio was brutal, ill-mannered, unseemly in his paintings and in his life. He rebelled against every school and every form of authority, a stranger to the good taste, kindness, and respect for decent society generally attributed to the French. Valentin gave that uncouth man’s painting an acceptable face, reserved and with a tasteful elegance.

It would be misleading to speak of Valentin’s early training in France, before his departure for Italy, even though we know that he belonged to a family of painters. Unlike Poussin, who arrived in Rome with a well-developed style and technique, as we have said, Valentin appears to have owed everything to what he found in Rome, where he was certainly present in 1614, and perhaps several years earlier.² The resemblances between the surviving canvases generally agreed to be his earliest and those of Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri) and Louis Finson, as well as of Hendrick ter Brugghen, with their dark, rather brutal realism, situate him far from the French painters. But French painting in those years cannot be easily defined and was subject to many hesitations, contradictions, and

frictions. It is not known how the young Simon Vouet painted when he arrived in Rome, probably in late 1613; and Joachim von Sandrart, usually well informed, says that Valentin, only slightly younger than Vouet, studied under him. It is therefore unrealistic to try to define what a French art might have been in that setting, though not impossible to grant a place to a French tradition of gesture and mime, as has been done for Vouet’s two *Fortune-Tellers* (one in the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, the other in Rome, fig. 9). That tradition finds, perhaps, an echo in paintings by Valentin such as the *Cardsharps* of Dresden (cat. 6) and the *Concert with Three Figures* (fig. 1).

The part played by Vouet and Poussin in the revival of a strong French painting nourished in Italy, taking sustenance from the soil, has been pointed out. Their roles, though contradictory, were ultimately complementary: Charles Le Brun would produce a skillful synthesis of them, oriented toward the ceremonial and the monumental. Valentin’s role was not comparable and lacked the same importance. That role must be reevaluated, however, given Valentin’s place in the genesis of a naturalistic vein of French painting, that of a calmer, conciliatory, restrained tenebrism, which helped determine a current until the end of the nineteenth century.

In the seventeenth century, as has been said often enough, Parisian painting was entirely exempt from dark and dramatic Caravaggism, retaining only the light and lively amplexness transmitted by Vouet and the romantic whimsy to which Claude Vignon remained faithful. It was only after the delicate Orazio Gentileschi came to the French capital that Laurent de La Hyre and the three Le Nain brothers, Antoine, Louis, and Mathieu, were able to bring to Parisian art a few inflections of a sincerely felt naturalism.³ Speaking of the Le Nains, Valentin’s influence on them is occasionally perceptible: for example, their *Denial of Saint Peter* (Musée du Louvre), in the brusqueness of the gestures and the intensity of the expressions, is perhaps reminiscent of Valentin’s *Tribute to Caesar* in Versailles; and the figures of the *Cardplayers* by the changeable and easily influenced Mathieu Le Nain (Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence) resemble, in their faces poised between astonishment and irritation, their looks of defiance, some of Valentin’s figures (fig. 38).

The situation looks different when one considers France as a whole. Valentin’s contemporary Nicolas Tournier chose to return to France, and his paintings evoke those of Valentin so often that some have posited a direct relationship between the two: the Toulouse art



Fig. 38. Mathieu Le Nain (French, 1607–1677). *Cardplayers*, ca. 1645–50. Oil on canvas, 24 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 29 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (63.3 x 76 cm). Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence (inv. 855.1.1)

theorist Bernard Dupuy du Grez wrote in 1699 that Tournier was Valentin's student. In the southwest of France beginning in 1625, Tournier developed an art not only of religious and public paintings but also of portraits, which, as had been the case in Rome, appear to be inspired directly by Valentin. And some art historians have not failed to make Tournier—so reserved, so austere, a simplifier drawn to geometry—one of the purest instances of a “French sensibility.” Furthermore, in Burgundy, a sober Caravaggism possibly beholden to Valentin can be seen in Philippe Quantin's works. Beautiful copies after Valentin, with subtle variants, done at the time in France show that his paintings were attracting interest (fig. 39).⁴

Paintings by Valentin were engraved soon after his death, their diffusion guaranteed. Parisian collectors owned some of his paintings: Mazarin himself kept a series of them and seems to have transmitted his



Fig. 39. French painter, mid-17th century, after Valentin de Boulogne. *Denial of Saint Peter*. Oil on copper, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (31 x 37.5 cm). Private collection

admiration for the master to his godson, Louis XIV. The six Valentins that the king asked to have installed in his bedroom, in the heart of Versailles, indicate how much he liked the artist and the status Valentin then enjoyed in the artistic pantheon, among the ranks of the great Italians. Was this not, in fact, a way for Louis XIV to affirm the place held by the French in the symphony of European art?⁵

And then what? Nothing seems more at odds with the French taste in painting in the eighteenth century, oriented toward the Venetians or Peter Paul Rubens, toward Rembrandt van Rijn as well, than Valentin's art. Nevertheless, the neo-Giorgionesque aspect that his paintings sometimes assume continued to charm, as attested by the anonymous painting in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Bordeaux, described by Michel Hoog (fig. 41), which seems to echo the *Four Ages of Man* in the National Gallery, London.⁶ This was a time when painters such as Jean-Baptiste Santerre, Alexis Grimou, and Jean Raoux were dealing in a pleasing way with themes in the Caravaggesque tradition, such as concerts or fortune-tellers. Between 1761 and 1765, while a pensionnaire at the French Academy in Rome,



Fig. 40. Jean Bernard Restout (French, 1732–1797), after Valentin de Boulogne. *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian*, 1761–65. Black crayon, on ivory laid paper, 15 x 11 in. (37.7 x 27.6 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Donald F. McClure (1972.941)



Fig. 41. French painter. *Four Ages of Man*, ca. 1730? Oil on canvas, 44½ x 57½ in. (112 x 146 cm). Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux (inv. Bx E 278; Bx M 6295)

Jean Bernard Restout (a contemporary of Jean Honoré Fragonard and the son of Jean Restout) left behind precise evidence of his interest in Valentin in the form of an attentive and intelligent drawing (Art Institute of Chicago) after the *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian* in Saint Peter's Basilica (fig. 40).⁷

The copy of Valentin's *Last Supper* painted by Jacques Louis David when he, too, was a pensionnaire of the king at the Palazzo Mancini, Rome (several years later, probably in the first half of 1779), has been lost. Joseph Marie Vien, the master of David, mentions it in a letter of June 16 (it "seems very good to me").⁸ David almost certainly decided on his own to copy that painting, one of Valentin's most static religious compositions, with its alignment of seated figures. David thus chose an orderly painting rather than a tumultuous one by the artist who elsewhere liked to introduce Roman bas-reliefs into his pictures.

The disappearance of this copy has prevented any inquiry into the role it may have played in the orientation and development of David's art. And yet, we need only look at the half-length *Philosopher*, inquisitive and intense, painted the same year, in 1779 (now at the Musée de Bayeux; fig. 42), or the central figure of *Saint Roch Interceding with the Virgin for the Plague-Stricken*, painted in 1780 for the lazaretto of Marseille and now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in that city: there we find a sober form of Caravaggism, attentive to the nuances of the expressions, the modeling of the draperies, the analysis of the hair and beards, very much in the lineage of Valentin. And does not the tormented, half-lit face of Judas in the foreground of Valentin's *Last Supper* already evoke Brutus in David's illustrious *Lictors Bring to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons* (1789, Musée du Louvre)?

Jean-Baptiste Regnault (1754–1829), another great painter of the time and slightly younger than David, produced a copy after Valentin, also during his time as a pensionnaire in Rome, after winning the Grand Prix. As Restout had done, Regnault chose the most significant work by the Coulommiers painter, the *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian*. His painting, now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dijon (fig. 43), is of an attentive and precise workmanship and renders a fine homage to its predecessor, but without any notable interpretation, except perhaps in the tendency toward smooth volumes characteristic of the young painter's art.

It should be noted that Regnault, almost the equal of David in this respect, would be one of the great heads of workshops in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. That may be one avenue by which Valentin's memory



Fig. 42. Jacques Louis David (French, 1748–1825). *The Philosopher*, 1779. Oil on canvas, 29½ x 25¼ in. (74 x 64 cm). Musée de Bayeux (inv. 9P)



Fig. 43. Jean-Baptiste Regnault (French, 1754–1829), after Valentin de Boulogne. *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian*, ca. 1778–80. Oil on canvas, 121¼ x 65 in. (308 x 165 cm). Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon (inv. CA 487)



Fig. 44. Georges Rouget (French, 1783–1869), after Valentin de Boulogne. *Two Figures from the Judgment of Solomon*, 1791. Red chalk and black chalk, heightened with white, 22 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (58 x 45 cm). Private collection, France

was transmitted, another being his paintings shown at the Muséum Central des Arts, which later became the Musée Napoléon. A drawing that survived by chance, by Georges Rouget (1783–1869), who would become David's student and collaborator, gives an idea of this type of fidelity (fig. 44). Done in early youth, when Rouget was in Etienne Barthélemy Garnier's workshop (1791), it is a very free copy of the *Judgment of Solomon*, showing the child the two women are fighting over.⁹ This is one more indication of the admiration that, even at the height of the Neoclassical age, artists could have for a painting pulsing with life and sensitive to the emotions.

But Valentin's genre paintings could also be seen as charming and picturesque, assembling beautiful costumes in a dreamlike evocation of the ages of life. Pierre Alexandre Wille (1748–1837) left behind several large drawings executed in meticulous detail—a spectacular example, dated 1801, is at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris—all friendly pastiches of the Caravaggesque concerts (fig. 45).



Fig. 45. Pierre Alexandre Wille (French, 1748–1837). *The Concert*, 1801. Pen and black ink, 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (36 x 51.4 cm). Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris (inv. PM2530)



Fig. 46. Pierre-Alphonse Fessard (French, 1798–1844). *Bust of Valentin de Boulogne*, 1822. Marble, 32½ x 29½ x 19¾ in. (82.5 x 75 x 50 cm). Musée Municipal, Melun (inv. LL317)

Throughout the nineteenth century, Valentin retained his status. The Louvre continued to display Mazarin's and Louis XIV's paintings. A marble bust, altogether fanciful but of a delicate nobility, carved in 1822 by the largely unknown Pierre-Alphonse Fessard (1798–1844), secured Valentin a place among his most illustrious compatriots (fig. 46).¹⁰ A little later, in 1843, Anatole Dauvergne, the painter's compatriot and biographer, produced a painted portrait, equally whimsical, this time in an endearing *Three Musketeers* spirit, of an arrogant Valentin ready to fight a duel (fig. 47).¹¹

A connection to Valentin can sometimes be found in the works of Théodore Géricault, a genius who fed on antiquity and Italianism and who had a keen interest in the Musée Napoléon. His quest for the most disturbing reality, whether in the lost looks of the so-called insane or in that of the *Little Boy* in the Musée de Tessé in Le Mans, is analogous. Géricault copied Leonello Spada at the Louvre, another way of gaining access to Caravaggio's world, with its explicitly rendered gestures and spectacular postures.¹² Géricault's bizarre and fantastical *Concert*, an early work, is not so remote from Valentin's art (fig. 48).¹³

In that way, a vein both Caravaggesque and Venetian can be discerned in the painting, so prolix

and diverse, of nineteenth-century France, a vein that includes Alexandre François Xavier Sigalon and Jules-Claude Ziegler, Lyon painters such as Joseph Guichard, and in some respects Thomas Couture or even the young Gustave Courbet. A little-studied painter such as Charles-Emile Jacque may point in the same direction (fig. 49). Valentin was not a stranger to that world, both naturalistic and tenebrist. Recall that under the Second Empire the Louvre's Salon Carré, a forum for masterpieces from every school, exhibited Valentin alongside Poussin, Philippe de Champaigne, and Jean Jouvenet to represent French painting, opposite the Italy of Raphael and Veronese, the Netherlands of Rembrandt, and the Spain of Murillo. That takes us to the vision of painters whose art was nourished in museums, such as Léon Bonnat or Jean-Paul Laurens, where dark naturalism is reconciled with the grand spectacle of history. Laurens, who looked at Valentin the same way he looked at Jusepe de Ribera, produced a sketch at the Louvre after the *Judgment of Solomon*, with a freedom of brushstrokes that demonstrates a real complicity (fig. 50).



Fig. 47. Anatole Dauvergne (French, 1812–1870). *Valentin de Boulogne*, 1843. Oil on canvas, 57½ x 44½ in. (145 x 113 cm). Musée Municipal, Coulommiers



Fig. 48. Théodore Géricault (French, 1791–1824). *The Concert*, ca. 1812. Oil on canvas, 29 x 36¼ in. (73.5 x 92 cm). Private collection

Let us try to look anew at Valentin's paintings. To whom is the artist beholden? Let us remember that he was a member, in Rome, of the Bentvueghels, the society of northern painters. In the early paintings that have survived, we must not overlook the relationship to ter Brugghen, especially in the *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 7), comparable to the similar subject painted by the Dutchman and now in Copenhagen. But the sense of space is different in the two paintings: ter Brugghen stacks up two-dimensional sections like a series of screens, a deliciously archaic choice; his figures do not move through the third dimension, as Valentin's do almost provocatively. Less striking are Valentin's connections to Gerrit van Honthorst, with his formal perfection, his rather cold and well-defined volumes, his sharp and distinct colors, and the coverage of the smooth paint. In Honthorst, the relations among the figures are clear, without nuance; they describe a situation, explain a story or anecdote.

In Valentin's earliest paintings, moreover, there are strong links—noted long ago—to Cecco del Caravaggio,

now identified as Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri: his sense for strong volumes, his aggressive naturalism. It is possible that Valentin interpreted one of Cecco del Caravaggio's masterpieces, *Cupid at the Fountain* (private collection). Is that sufficient evidence to infer an apprenticeship under him? Caution is required: that descriptive and harsh, almost violent, manner can also be found in a number of paintings of very uneven quality. It may have been fashionable in Rome for a few years, between about 1610 and 1615.

Furthermore, the similarities in the organization of the figures in Valentin's paintings and in those of the young Ribera (the former Master of the Judgment of Solomon) during his years in Rome have long been the object of analysis. Think again of Ribera's *Denial of Saint Peter* in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Corsini in Rome (cat. 3); the relationship is glaringly obvious, but it is not easy to assign precise dates and to affirm who preceded whom.

What is French in all that? Cecco del Caravaggio and the Master of the Judgment of Solomon have now

been identified: one of those presumed Frenchmen was a Lombard, the other from Valencia. Furthermore, Valentin had little to do with the circle of Carlo Saraceni, where the French seem to have been well received, and from which emerged Jean Leclerc, Guy François, and the marvelous Pensionante del Saraceni, whom some clever soul will certify was French. Apart from some themes in common, Valentin's ties to Vouet or Vignon were nonexistent. Those to his contemporary Nicolas Régnier, by contrast, were essential. But was that Maubeuge painter Flemish or French? A great deal could be said on the subject, but Régnier's training and works invite us to link him to the northerners. And it is precisely the connections between his paintings and those of Valentin that encourage us to link him to the French painters.

There is, first, the essential inspiration Valentin drew from Caravaggio's works. Drew directly, it goes without saying. The *Calling of Saint Matthew* in San Luigi dei Francesi, in Rome, is there, present, compelling, in the canvases of Valentin, who had no need of the derivations that Bartolomeo Manfredi or Ribera were able to extract from it. Valentin's tavern scenes and his versions of the *Denial of Saint Peter* constitute variations on a plastic theme and are all the result of a passionate analysis of Caravaggio's canvas.

Valentin's genius, or at least his enormous talent, lay in not falling into prettiness, the delightful, or the picturesque, and in offering pure patches of paint but without gratuitousness, all the while borrowing almost everything from Caravaggio. Apropos of Valentin's relation to Caravaggio, think of Anthony van Dyck—with due allowances made—who took everything from Rubens but managed through his personal genius to create a superb world of nonchalant elegance, the opposite in every way to the Rubensian universe. The difference, of course, is that Van Dyck learned directly from the Siegen-born master and collaborated with him. The solitary Caravaggio had already died on the beach of Porto Ercole when Valentin discovered Rome. And many an ambitious youth arrived in Rome about 1615, his only baggage three paintbrushes and a recommendation, each one to claim Caravaggio's inheritance and be the great painter of the future. The school of Caravaggio was what the artist left behind: his paintings. What could be taken from it? All European painting of the seventeenth century and beyond, or nearly so (I will not venture to analyze it here). Valentin understood Caravaggio better than most. But at the same time, more broadly, though he may have looked

like a rebel, an independent soul—as the romantic image required—he was actually the most cultivated of painters, the most attentive to the various innovative currents of his time, perhaps the most industrious: one can go slumming at night and still work during the day. In his paintings, he contradicted the stasis and austerity introduced by the greatest artists, Manfredi and Ribera, the first to be struck by Caravaggio. They almost completely rejected color, confining themselves to a quasi-monochrome of cold grays contrasted with ochers, browns, and olive-greens. Valentin emphasized subtle and animated forms more or less emerging from the shadows, figures whose gestures were brusque or possessed a supple balance. He employed variations on the primary colors—blue, red, and yellow—with shades of silver. A colorist, Valentin was certainly acquainted with the art of Venice. There is reason to wonder as well whether he did not appreciate some Neapolitan painters. Did he keep company with Massimo Stanzione, who was in Rome between 1617 and 1618? Note as well his affinities with the early art of Guido Reni, an extremely refined Caravaggism that rejects all excess: think of such canvases as *Susanna and the Elders* at the National Gallery, London, or the two versions of *Saint*

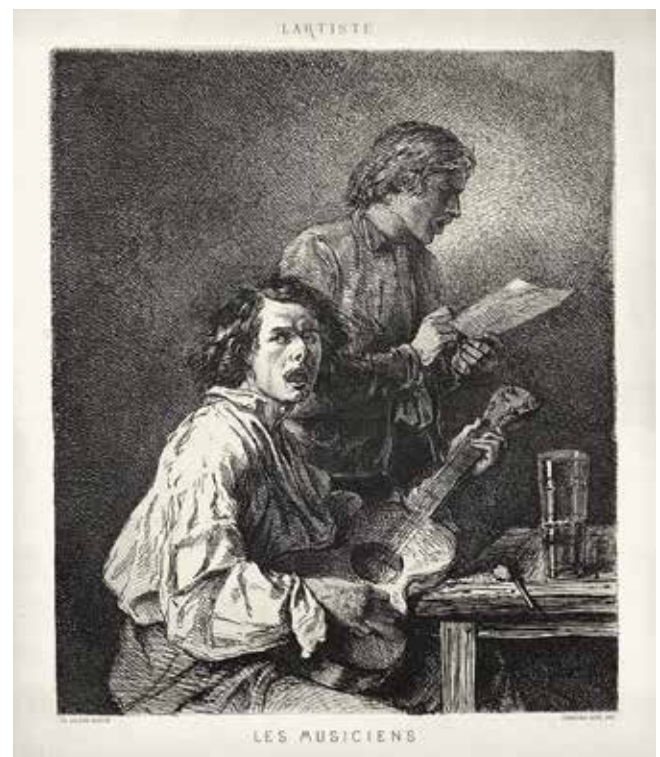


Fig. 49. Charles-Emile Jacque (French, 1813–1894). *Musicians*, 1845. Etching. Private collection, France



Fig. 50. Jean-Paul Laurens (1838–1921), after Valentin de Boulogne. *Judgment of Solomon*, ca. 1860? Oil on canvas, 7¼ x 9½ in. (18.5 x 24 cm). Private collection, Paris

John the Baptist Preaching (formerly Vitelli collection, Rome, and Eremitani, Padua).

Valentin did not invent a language. Like most of his contemporaries, he owed almost everything to Caravaggio. But in the 1620s and 1630s, he was strong enough to know how to assemble and synthesize the different possibilities offered painters of the time, by stepping back, transforming what was a direct, raw, almost frightening translation of the real into an exacting, elaborate, reflective painting. What Manfredi, Ribera, and Cecco del Caravaggio, with the means at their disposal and their different ways of looking, had learned to do with a sort of crudeness, Valentin would realize altogether differently, with no loss of intensity, immediacy, or realist presence, privileging a learned elegance, an admirable variety in the organization of forms, unusual colors, and nuances in the expressions of the figures.

Was that his French side? Probably so. Assimilate a great deal, take from everywhere, “filter,” the art historian André Chastel said. Such was the approach of French artists faced with contradictory imperatives.¹⁴

What is specific to Valentin is his highly original rendering of space and the evolution of it in his work. At first, his compositions were very compact. One has only to consider his short, weighty figures, or the contradictory space of the *Cardsharps* in Dresden (cat. 6): the right-hand player can only be situated behind the table for his body to be placed in that position, whereas the tabletop seems to extend beyond him on the left. The two protagonists seem to be pressed up against the picture plane in a strange articulation in which everything overlaps at the expense of spatial logic. The figures have squat proportions and large heads, like children. Everything contorts and deforms, including the cards on the table. It’s a rough, jumbled, hard world, analyzed by a loaded brush that leaves nothing blurred or indistinct.

Gradually, Valentin’s formulas become increasingly complex and learned, and everything becomes more relaxed and orderly, with space to breathe, in accordance with a process that could be analyzed. It would lead slowly to the *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian*, where the space is hollowed out, the figures move farther apart, the gestures become broader, and everything is more supple and soothing (cat. 48). Little by little, the modeling begins to vibrate, and the paint is applied more lightly, as if veils of colors were being superimposed one on top of another.

One of Valentin’s last paintings—and we know that his heart was not in his work when he made it—is not in the least moving. This is the large *A Musical Company with a Fortune-Teller*, now in the Liechtenstein Museum in Vienna (cat. 50). It is completely disorganized, treated like a frieze that could continue on, where the different themes the artist had dealt with throughout his life unfold: a canvas lacking in energy, with little conviction. The painting is evocative of the somewhat overcrowded, almost complicated, second version of Jean-Antoine Watteau’s *Embarkation for Cythera* in Berlin. Watteau, another artist who died young, tries to show a great deal and say too much in this painting; it leaves us similarly disappointed and frustrated. But Watteau would go on to paint the *Shop Sign of Gersaint* before he died. What Valentins come after the Liechtenstein Museum’s *Company*?

The Roman Valentin was truly a French painter, and not only because he was born in Coulommiers, not only because he remained “Monsù” until his death. We would have to agree on very general and always debatable notions of a French painting intent on the analysis of the human being, with sympathy but with respect, hence with distance—a moderate painting without extravagance.

The character of Valentin’s art, French or not, was perceived with discernment by Charles Sterling in 1939, not necessarily a time of nationalism but a moment when French art historians wanted at all costs to identify traits that clearly defined a national art. Whereas Paul Jamot, in his preface to the catalogue for the exhibition “Les peintres de la réalité en France au XVII^e siècle,” wrote that Valentin was “perhaps the only outstanding French painter about whom it could be said that in Italy he lost his French qualities” and that he was the “most Italian of our painters,”¹⁵ Sterling more subtly compared Tournier to Valentin: he described Tournier’s “taste for symmetry and the bas-relief group . . . taken from Valentin, for whom classical balance and the flatness of the composition may have been the principal French traits of an art awash in a baroque ambience.” Sterling saw Tournier, whom he believed without a doubt to have been Valentin’s student, as having “a spirit much more French than that of his teacher . . . a calm will to analyze . . . a very French quality as a master of line drawing.” Valentin, “in love with the low-class tenebrism of the taverns, a generous, powerful, and sure performer, was a much greater painter than Tournier. But [Tournier’s paintings bring] a personal view and a poetic instinct directed at life.”¹⁶ For Sterling, “French art” meant moderation, geometry, lively and discreet poetry. Let us acknowledge that French art is often

characterized by its taste for the portrait, belonging to that same tendency toward analysis of the individual. And Valentin, with his handful of utterly engaging portraits, certainly falls within that definition. It should be added that his art is both elegant and distant (a little self-satisfied?), and that is very French. André Chastel defined French painting as somewhat prosaic, as never having “too much heart or feeling,” a stranger to the “deeper layers of affectivity,” those, precisely, that Caravaggio attained.¹⁷

Valentin represents the extreme of what a French painter can achieve in terms of affectivity and, I repeat, without exaltation or violence. He brings to it a little energetic insanity, thanks to an exceptionally controlled form of verism, always in the service of exquisite painterly effects. He manages to translate—and how can one not concur with Jacques Thuillier’s rich analyses?—a profound passion for the human being, its poverty, its weaknesses, its hopes. Valentin’s beautiful soul thus belonged to a lesser vein of French painting, engaged, sometimes in protest, one that knew how to achieve lyricism within the most direct naturalism. His art is in the same tradition as David’s *Death of Marat* and Géricault’s *Raft of the Medusa*, against the dominant current of an admirably reasonable, sumptuously painted, simple, and calm art, that of Fouquet, Chardin, and Corot, that of Poussin, Ingres, and Cézanne. How can one fail to be reminded of the “great quarrel” of 1629, which, if we are to believe Sandart, occurred between art lovers contemplating the altar paintings of Poussin and of Valentin in Saint Peter’s in Rome?

That simplifies a great deal, but it accords Valentin his true place, that of a painter-poet with a generous spirit.



Catalogue



I. CECCO DEL CARAVAGGIO (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri, ca. 1588/89–after 1620)

Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian, ca. 1611–13

48 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 64 in. (124 x 162.5 cm)

Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw (inv. M. Ob 645)

New York only

A work of extraordinary invention and emotional impact, with figures arrayed across its surface as in a shallow sculptural relief but realized with an almost shocking realism, the *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* is a landmark of Caravaggesque painting in the second decade of the seventeenth century. Gianni Papi (2008, p. 53) has described it as “of subtle cruelty and ambiguous violence,” with the saint “lost in an obscure solitude.” Its tightly grouped composition, animated by strong contrasts of light and shadow, and the disturbing juxtaposition of victim and aggressor set against a black background of indeterminate depth derive from one of Caravaggio’s last easel paintings: the *Martyrdom of Saint Ursula* (Banca Intesa Collection, Naples), which he painted in Naples in April–May 1610, or the contemporary *Denial of Saint Peter* (Metropolitan Museum).

The picture’s grayish-silvery tonality and the almost balletic pose of the Saint Sebastian—shown bound to a tree, his chest, abdomen, and arms pierced by arrows while a soldier sadistically assesses the effects of his archery—have analogies in the work of the great Neapolitan follower of Caravaggio Giovanni Battista Caracciolo (known as Battistello). The bald-headed assistant is surely based on a specific model. He has similar but not identical features to a Slav Guido Reni found along the banks of the Tiber, who also posed for Jusepe de Ribera, Bartolomeo Manfredi, and Orazio Borgianni, and who reappears in Cecco del Caravaggio’s *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin). Another similar figure appears in the work of the anonymous Master of Pau and the Neapolitan Paolo Finoglio, which suggested to Papi that the picture may have been painted in Naples. However, precisely the same figure is found in Manfredi’s *Crowning with Thorns* in the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, which was unquestionably painted in Rome.

Prior to being recognized as the work of Cecco, the picture had a traditional attribution to Valentin de Boulogne that was changed to Manfredi in 1957 and then to the Neapolitan painter Paolo Finoglio (for the complicated attributional history, see Katarzyna

Murawska in *Trionfo barocco* 1990, p. 47). Yet the obsessive interest in details, such as the glove with an open flap hanging from the pointing finger of the soldier; the leather strap of his armor; the feathers of his fashionable hat; and the sheen on the metal and the textural description of the fabrics (especially the slashed sleeve), are entirely characteristic of Cecco. So too is the sharply characterized face of the assisting figure, wedged between the frame and the expiring saint (the canvas has probably been trimmed along the bottom edge). It would seem to be a portrait. In such hyperrealistic details, no less than in its clear dependence on posed models and its disturbing emotional detachment, are to be found features that provided Valentin de Boulogne with the creative catalyst for his early work following his arrival in Rome.

In the landmark exhibition on French Caravaggisti, held in Rome and Paris in 1973–74, Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1973, pp. 24–25, 122, 128) emphasized the affinities between the work of Cecco and the early paintings of Valentin. Cuzin (1975, p. 57) elaborated these ideas, which have been further developed by Papi (see his essay in this catalogue). At that time, Cecco’s real identity was unknown. Like others, Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin thought it possible that he was French. But in a series of contributions stretching back to 1992, Papi has established the identity of Cecco with the Lombard painter Francesco (hence Cecco) Boneri (or Buoneri).

As a youth, Cecco had modeled for Caravaggio—for example, as the insouciant figure of Cupid in the *Amor vincit omnia* (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) and, later, as the David in the *David and Goliath* (Galleria Borghese, Rome); he was reputed by contemporaries to have been the artist’s lover and, as his “garzone,” may have acted as an assistant. His Caravaggism thus came firsthand and his practice of painting *dal naturale* can be presumed to closely reflect that of Caravaggio. Papi has argued that he may have accompanied Caravaggio to Naples in 1606, where he could have painted this picture, but he is first securely documented at Bagnaia, north of Rome, in 1613, working with Agostino Tassi and, interestingly

All works in the catalogue section are oil on canvas.



enough, an *équipe* of French painters. It would have been in Rome that Valentin came to know him.

Was it Cecco who introduced him to the practice of painting directly from the model? Of course, Valentin did not look exclusively at Cecco, but it is Cecco's shadow that falls most strongly across Valentin's early work. In the early *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 7), the affinities with Cecco's paintings are readily apparent: the crowding of the figures, with one inserted into the lower left; the emphatically described details of costume; the brutish types of Christ's tormentors. Increasingly, however, Valentin, was more attracted to Manfredi (particularly for the genre themes of drinkers and musical parties) and, most profoundly, to Ribera. What Papi (2001, p. 18) has described as Cecco's "iconographic crudities and hyperrealism"—features employed for their raw shock value—had little to do with Valentin's more elevated sense of humanity and his increasingly melancholic view of life, for tenderness and reflection do not exist in Cecco's world.

With time, Cecco's art became progressively more exaggerated in its insistence on the materiality of the details, so that his compositions can seem to be collages of the individual sittings of his models, resulting in works

possessing "a truthfulness without air or atmosphere, so truthful and so naked as to appear metaphysical" (Papi 2001, p. 27). Always arresting, his paintings can have the appearance of nonconformist, polemical statements about the nature of Caravaggesque practice. His most ambitious composition—the *Resurrection* (Art Institute of Chicago)—was rejected by the man who commissioned it, Piero Guicciardini, the Medici's ambassador in Rome, perhaps because he saw how much it exceeded the limits of nonconformity and decorum.

Given the Neapolitan features of the picture, Papi has convincingly argued that it predates 1613. X-radiography reveals a head that appears to be Christ, possibly a first idea for a Flagellation, where there is now the figure of Saint Sebastian. KC

Provenance: A. Strzalecki, Warsaw (until 1948); Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw (from 1948)

Selected References: Białostocki and Walicki 1957, no. 170; Longhi 1964, p. 54; Bodart 1970a, p. 211; Brejon de Lavergnée 1973–75, p. 57; Marini 1979, p. 73; Nicolson 1979, p. 43; Nicolson 1989, pp. 91, 98; Katarzyna Murawska in *Trionfo barocco* 1990, pp. 46–47, no. 3; Papi 1992, pp. 10, 20–23; Papi 1996, pp. 130–31; Papi 2001, pp. 18–19, 112–13, no. 2; Giacometti and Porcini 2008, p. 41; Papi 2008, pp. 50, 53–55; Gianni Papi in Vodret 2012, p. 170, no. VI.13

2. BARTOLOMEO MANFREDI (1582–1622)

Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple, ca. 1616–17

63³/₄ x 96¹/₈ in. (162 x 244 cm)

Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie de Libourne (France) (inv. D.89.I.1)

New York only

Bartolomeo Manfredi of Mantua was not simply an imitator, he transformed himself into Caravaggio, and in painting it seemed that he observed the world with that artist's eyes. He employed the same means ("modi"), and strong darks, but with a certain finish and greater freshness, and he too succeeded in half-length figures, with which he used to compose histories. In the house of the Verospi in Rome there is a painting of Our Lord driving the merchants from the temple. Some of the heads are portrayed very lifelike, among [the figures] is one who for fear of losing his money holds his hand over it. (Bellori 1672 [1976 ed., p. 234])

Thus the high priest of classicism—the apologist for Annibale Carracci, Domenichino, and Nicolas

Poussin—describes Manfredi's achievement, using as an example the picture included in this exhibition, a subject Valentin also treated (cats. 17, 40). Giovan Pietro Bellori was not alone in singling out Manfredi as a sort of second, improved Caravaggio. In 1618, the connoisseur/physician/painters' biographer Giulio Mancini wrote to his brother in Siena that "Bartolomeo [Manfredi] . . . has such a reputation that he is esteemed more than Michelangelo [da Caravaggio]" (Maccherini 1999, p. 137, doc. no. 15). It is hardly surprising, then, that Manfredi should occupy such a prominent place in modern scholarship. Yet, although he was unquestionably important to the Caravaggesque movement and provided a model for a generation of artists, including Valentin, he was not the preeminent figure he was once



during restoration

made out to be: the creator of a “method” of painting—a *Manfrediana Methodus*. Gianni Papi (2013a, p. 14) has demonstrated that this much-repeated notion derives from the misleading Latin translation in Joachim von Sandrart’s 1675 biography of Gerard Seghers, in which the German word for style (*Manfredi Manier*) was rendered as method (*Manfrediana Methodus*). As a result, various exponents of the Caravaggesque practice of painting from life have been said to have embraced this *methodus* as opposed to merely emulating his style.

To properly appreciate the place Manfredi occupied in the history of Caravaggism requires an understanding of the qualities that attracted Mancini and, a half-century later, Bellori to his work: “greater subtlety, harmony, and gentleness” (*più fine, unione e dolcezza*) for Mancini (ca. 1617–21 [1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 251]); “finish” and “freshness” (*diligenza* and *freschezza*), in the words of Bellori (1672 [1976 ed., p. 234]). This adds up to a style that, while based on truth to life—“he imitated life with great truthfulness,” wrote Sandrart (1675, pt. 2, p. 190)—avoided the harsh contrasts of dark and light and those abrupt transitions that are a hallmark of Caravaggio’s mature style. With that greater sweetness and unity of color he sacrificed some of the heightened drama and sense of immediacy that are the great achievement of Caravaggio. In Manfredi’s influential paintings of gypsy fortune-tellers, musicians, and gamblers, the two- or three-figure scenes of Caravaggio’s early work—paintings done in a delicate style even Bellori admired—become engagingly animated, multifigure evocations of the *vie bohémienne* that collectors found irresistible. The brutal realism of Ribera’s paintings of beggars and apostles was not for Manfredi, though we can detect their impact in his characterization of the three merchants in the present picture. Indeed, Mancini states quite specifically that Manfredi’s approach to painting was “almost entirely contrary” to that of Ribera, to whom, interestingly, the physician-amateur dedicated one of his longest and most insightful biographies. Additionally, unlike Caravaggio, Ribera, and Valentin, Manfredi evidently avoided the outward trappings of a bohemian life: we are told that he had a noble bearing, dressed well, and was reserved but enjoyed good conversation. Many of the painters from the North, including Nicolas Tournier and Simon Vouet, were closely associated with Manfredi and began their careers emulating or producing versions of his commercially successful genre scenes (see figs. 9, 11, 12).

The fascination of *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple*—one of his most compelling pictures—lies in

the artist’s ambition to tackle a subject of intense dramatic potential. Manfredi took his cue from Caravaggio’s *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew*, adapting it to the demands of a gallery picture: a horizontal, three-quarter-length figure composition with the action reading from left to right. The space is cogently arranged in three planes: the bare-shouldered, repoussoir figure in the foreground (obviously derived from the two nudes that frame Caravaggio’s composition); the alignment of the three merchants, shown in a calculated crescendo of surprise at the assaulting figure of Christ, who, in a notably statuesque pose, elegantly raises a flail; and the two fleeing women, their forms blurred by a considered adjustment of lighting. Architecture is used to further underscore the division of sacred from secular figures, as well as to define the space: the figure looking back over his shoulder as he escapes through an opening is a quote from Caravaggio’s composition. It is a masterful achievement, blending an effect of Caravaggesque naturalism and lighting while choreographing fluid movement across the picture surface and incorporating the classical requisites of decorum, clarity of exposition, and “a certain finish.” To judge from the records relating to two further versions, one in the collection of the Duke of Savoy and the other belonging first to Cardinal Jules Mazarin and then to the French royal collections (see Papi 2013a, p. 171), the composition was widely—and justifiably—admired.

Although Manfredi probably arrived in Rome as a youth and may even have spent time with Caravaggio, he is first documented in Rome in 1607 (Randolfi 1992, p. 82), and only one painting can be dated with certainty—the *Mars Punishing Cupid* (Art Institute of Chicago), commissioned by Mancini in 1613 (Maccherini 1999, pp. 131–33). Consequently, it has proved difficult to establish a firm chronology. Nonetheless, there is a consensus that the Libourne painting dates to about 1616–17, and it must have provided the catalyst for Valentin’s treatment of the subject (cat. 17). Be that as it may, Valentin’s painting is of an altogether different order, at once a more complex and dynamic composition and far more compelling in its dramatic exposition and figural characterization. The difference between the two artists lies in Valentin’s understanding that Caravaggio’s art proposed a radical mode of creative thinking and not merely an innovative style. In 1935, Roberto Longhi observed that far more than a revolution in style, “it was precisely the ethical attitude towards man, his history and his myths that changed with Caravaggio” (Longhi 1935 [1972 ed., p. 15]). This radically

new ethics of painting, entailing an interpretation of a given theme or subject based on its human qualities, is what Valentin embraced, albeit with a very different response to his surroundings and what he perceived as the human condition.

Bellori saw Manfredi's picture in the Palazzo Verospi together with another work by the artist, a *Denial of Saint Peter* (for which see Maccherini 1999, pp. 134, 141, n. 62). We are told by Sandrart (1675, pt. 2, p. 190) that "Cardinal Verospi" owned a gypsy picture by Manfredi, and since Sandrart was in Rome between 1629 and 1635, the person in question would be Cardinal Fabrizio Verospi (1571–1639). Interestingly, in 1617 Francesco Albani frescoed a vault in the Verospi palace on via del Corso (Puglisi 1999, pp. 125–28); the family also possessed a notable collection

of antiquities. As was later to be the case with Valentin, Verospi belonged to the inner circle of the Barberini and was a close associate of the brother of Urban VIII, who raised Verospi to the cardinalcy in 1627. KC

Provenance: Cardinal Fabrizio Verospi, Palazzo Verospi, Rome (until 1639); Verospi collection, Rome; Braschi collection (until 1798); confiscated by French troops (1798) and deposited at Compiègne (1810); then to Libourne (1819); Convent of the Ursulines, Libourne (1820–37); sacristy of the church of Saint Jean, Libourne (1837–1987); Musée des Beaux-Arts, Libourne (from 1989)

Selected References: Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 234); Nicolson 1979, p. 70; Giuseppe Merlo in *Dopo Caravaggio* 1987, p. 64, no. 4; Nicolson 1989, p. 143; Maccherini 1999, p. 134; Hartje 2004, pp. 304–8; Ierrobino 2010, p. 200; Axel Hémerly in Hilaire and Hémerly 2012, p. 172, no. 30; Papi 2013a, pp. 171–72, no. 33

3. JUSEPE DE RIBERA (1591–1652)

Denial of Saint Peter, ca. 1615

64¹/₈ x 91³/₄ in. (163 x 233 cm)

Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Corsini, Rome (inv. 438)

New York only

The authorship of this extraordinary picture—a landmark in the history of Caravaggism—has only emerged in the last decade and a half. Interestingly for the critical history of Valentin, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was ascribed to him (Lanzi 1795–96, vol. 1, p. 487). However, in 1943, Roberto Longhi posited that the picture formed part of a group of highly original paintings by an artist he called the Master of the Judgment of Solomon, whose eponymous work is in the Galleria Borghese (Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80). That the artist was likely to be French was widely discussed (see Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 51–52) until, in a groundbreaking article of 2002, Gianni Papi pointed to the young Ribera, who over the past decade has emerged as the most radical and innovative Caravaggesque painter in Rome in the decade following Caravaggio's flight from the city in 1606, redefining the artistic terrain (see the essay by Gianni Papi in this catalogue).

Not surprisingly, the always perceptive Giulio Mancini (ca. 1617–21 [1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 249]) recognized Ribera's special status, declaring that the young artist was endowed by nature with a talent that had not

been seen in many years. Only recently (G. Porzio and D'Alessandro 2015) has it been established that he was no more than fifteen when he arrived in Rome, where he set up with a dealer, painting for a daily rate. The reconstruction of his early career, the contours of which are now fairly clear despite persistent debate concerning individual works, has radically altered our understanding of the history of Caravaggesque painting. Despite a lack of documentation, there is a consensus that the *Denial of Saint Peter* was painted in the years leading up to Ribera's definitive move from Rome to Naples in the summer of 1616. A work of astonishing innovation, it had a formative impact not only on Valentin, evident in his own *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), but on virtually every other Caravaggesque painter.

Ribera's point of departure was one of Caravaggio's last canvases, a *Denial of Saint Peter* (Metropolitan Museum), which at the time was owned by Guido Reni (Nicolaci and Gandolfi 2011). From that work, he derived the accusing woman pointing as she turns to address a bystander and Peter, who makes an exculpatory gesture. Ribera combined this reference with the grand scheme introduced by Caravaggio in his *Calling of Saint Matthew*



in San Luigi dei Francesi. As in that work, the scene is divided between a genre-like scene of soldiers playing dice and the sacred figure of Saint Peter accused by a woman of being a disciple of Christ. He has created a densely figured composition, bridging these two realms with a balding man who wears a comically small cap with a feather. Hovering over the dice game, this figure turns his head toward Saint Peter and, grimacing, points toward the apostle, his hand casting a metaphoric shadow of accusation on the white shawl of the woman. The confrontation has caught the attention of an armored soldier at the far left, who leans back and turns his head to better assess the situation. One of the seated players looks out at the viewer, while a companion seems lost in thought.

The scene has been staged as if by a masterful director, emphasizing the unfolding human drama, with each of the participants given an individual part. The bearded soldier, whose arm rests on the table to protect his winnings, thoughtfully appraises his next move. The scheming glance his competitor gives the viewer is surely that of a conspiring cheat. That the figures are shown playing dice alludes to the soldiers who will throw dice for Christ's cloak beneath the cross—an idea Valentin was to develop as an independent subject (fig. 56). But also, more generally, it is a comment on the fickleness of Fortune.

The balding spectator is a lowlife comic foil to the action and, as it turns out, was a favorite model of Ribera's. He appears in a number of other canvases: as Saint Bartholomew holding his flayed skin; a spectator in the *Judgment of Solomon*; the leering lecher in *Susanna and the Elders*, and as one of the rabbis in *Christ among the Pharisees* (for these pictures, see Spinosa 2008, nos. A9, A13, A22, A27). He appears as well in paintings by Cecco del Caravaggio, Bartolomeo Manfredi, and Orazio Borgianni and is almost certainly the Slav that Guido Reni is reported to have found along the banks of the Tiber ("lo schiavo del Ripa"), and of whom he made both sketches and a sculpted bust that became a workshop prop (Kurz 1942; Farina 2014, pp. 78–82). We know that Reni admired him because of his resemblance to an ancient sculpture thought to show the Stoic philosopher Seneca (now Musée du Louvre). But the

model—and not merely Reni's bust—became popular among the Caravaggisti because his distinctive features allowed for the kinds of physiognomic contrasts that enriched the narrative. Caravaggio himself had employed such figures, and his students sought to follow his example (see the *Toothpuller* in the Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, which this writer accepts as a late work by the Lombard master).

Ribera's masterful staging and sophistication made this picture a reference point for a generation of artists, and in particular for Valentin. He clearly studied the way Ribera used the geometric form of the table to structure the space, around which he grouped the figures, and the Caravaggesque focused light, employed both as a dramatic device, directing attention to the figure of Saint Peter, and to create a foreboding mood of compelling intensity. Mancini (ca. 1617–21 [1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 249]) tells us that Reni admired Ribera's strength of color and his manner of working with great resolve and directness: "darker and more vehement" than was the case with Caravaggio (*più tinto e più fiero*). The relationship between Reni and Ribera is one that has not received the attention it deserves (but see Farina 2014, pp. 72–97), but the sharing of models and access to Reni's inventory of paintings suggest a common ground between this great idealist painter of Bologna and the most aggressively realist one from Spain. It was an example that Valentin would follow with equally innovative results, especially in his mature paintings. KC

Provenance: Lorenzo Corsini (in 1730, elected Pope Clement XII), Rome (1723–30); his nephew Neri Maria Corsini, Palazzo Corsini, Rome (1750–70; inv. 1750, no. 199, as Valentin); Corsini Collection, Palazzo Corsini, Rome (1770–1883; inv. 1798, no. 202, as Valentin); Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Corsini, Rome (from 1883)
Selected References: Lanzi 1795–96, vol. 1, p. 487; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 56, 58, no. 13 (French ed., pp. 56, 58, no. 13); Magnanimiti 1980, p. 106; Papi 2002, pp. 22, 35, 37; Keith Christiansen in *Caravaggio: L'ultimo tempo* 2004, p. 142; Gianni Papi in *Caravaggio e l'Europa* 2005, p. 280, no. III.15; Papi 2005a, p. 50; Papi 2007, pp. 158–59, no. 42; Spinosa 2008, pp. 59, 327, no. A41; Borsellino 2010, p. 12; Papi in Milicua and Portús Pérez 2011, pp. 130, 132, no. 13; Papi 2011, p. 40; Papi in Vodret 2012, p. 254, no. IX.5; Farina 2014, pp. 79, 83; Kientz 2014, pp. 20, 33



4. Saint John the Baptist, ca. 1613–14

52 x 38⁵/₈ in. (132 x 98 cm)

Inscribed on scroll: [EC]CE [AGNUS DEI QUI] TOLLIS

Private collection

The precursor of Christ—“The voice of one crying in the wilderness” (Mark 1:3)—is shown “clothed with camel’s hair” (Mark 1:6) seated on a rock. With his right hand he points to the reed cross encircled with a scroll inscribed with the Latin verse that translates “Behold the Lamb of God . . . ,” while with his left he indicates a lamb, his traditional attribute. The picture, which has been cleaned for the present exhibition, was introduced into the literature on the occasion of the landmark exhibition “I Caravaggeschi francesi” held in 1973–74 at the Villa Medici, Rome, and the Grand Palais, Paris. Surprisingly, the case Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin made for its attribution to Valentin has not been universally accepted. Marina Mojana was undecided (suggesting, in any event, a far too mature date of about 1626), while Ferdinando Bologna and Stefano Causa ascribed it to the Neapolitan Onofrio Palumbo, following up on an idea first expressed by Benedict Nicolson.

Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin’s arguments (1973, p. 130) are convincing and, indeed, now seem irrefutable following the cleaning and restoration. Arguing for a precocious date of about 1615–18 (which is further anticipated here to about 1613–14), they noted that “the quivering modeling of the nude portions of the body, the morphology of the hands, the painting of the red drapery and fur, and above all the face, with its expression both savage and a bit sad, are those of the artist. The canvas cannot be other than a youthful work.” They also commented upon a certain affinity with Spanish painting, citing in particular the young Velázquez. This apparently casual comment has the virtue of reminding us of the confusion that continues to surround certain works ascribed alternatively to Spanish, French, or Italian painters and, in particular, to the Spaniard Pedro Nuñez del Valle and the Lombard Cecco del Caravaggio (see, most recently, Papi 2014b,

pp. 153–54, nn. 1, 3). For, as Gianni Papi lays out in this catalogue, it is above all the work of Cecco that provided Valentin with the catalyst for this early painting. Consider the description of the shoulder, with its prominent collarbone; the scrupulously particularized treatment of the hands, with the striking shadow cast by the index finger onto the palm; and the rounded folds of the drapery, so obviously copied from a piece of cloth the artist arranged on the posed model. These features are painted with an unembellished naturalism indicative of someone who had not yet evolved a personal sense of style but was emulating the most extreme protagonist of painting *dal naturale*—someone who had as a youth modeled for Caravaggio and then gone on to become a leading Caravaggesque painter in Rome. As a point of comparison one might cite Cecco’s *Interior with a Young Man Holding a Recorder* in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, with its aggressive, almost brutal, naturalism, its individual parts delineated by a sharp light, and the figure casting a surreptitious, sidelong glance at the viewer. Cecco’s emphatic description of still-life elements finds an analogy here in Saint John’s lamb—“an intrusion a bit brutal and naïve”—inserted into the lower corner of the composition. “The attitude seems that of a painter posing before a mirror,” observed Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin, adding, “it is very possible that we have here a unique and precious document, a self-portrait of Valentin.”

It would, indeed, be difficult to imagine any motive beyond that of portraiture for including on the ascetic Saint John’s face a clipped mustache and goatee fashionable in the early seventeenth century. What Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin seem not to have noticed is that the same face—sixteen to seventeen years older—reappears in the guise of the *Samson* that Valentin painted in 1630–31 for Francesco Barberini (cat. 49). The features of the two figures, whether the nose, with its rounded tip;



the brow that creates deep cavities for the eyes; or the sensuously full lips (not to mention the mustache and goatee), are wholly recognizable despite the filling out of the face that has occurred with the passage of time. To compare these two pictures is to measure the distance Valentin traveled from his first, somewhat tentative and naive attempt at painting *dal naturale*, employing himself as his model (much as Caravaggio had done in his early canvases), to a work incorporating a vastly more sophisticated sense of style and conveying a complex psychological as well as physical presence. In the *Saint John* Valentin has not yet freed himself from the act of observation, as he gazes into the mirror from which he takes his image, whereas in the *Samson* he has subsumed his own identity into that of the biblical hero, endowing the figure with an existential presence. Yet in the *Saint John the Baptist* there is already discernible what Annick

Lemoine (2012, p. 169) has characterized as “this paradox of ambiguity, clearly revealed, [that] connects the reality of the story represented and the experiences of worldly life.” This ambiguity, with its persistent exploration of the fluid relationship between art and life, is at the very center of Valentin’s creative process.

A technical note: the brushwork laying in the preliminary forms of the figure (the *abbozzo*)—found throughout Valentin’s work—is visible to the naked eye at the waist and hip and also, as a sweeping curve, below the collarbone. The pelt is painted over the red cloth and its upper edge over the body. KC

Provenance: art market, Florence (1950s); private collection

Selected References: Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 130, no. 37 (French ed., p. 132, no. 38); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 196, no. 72; Nicolson 1989, pp. 90, 206; Bologna 1991, p. 162; Causa 1993, pp. 24, 34, n. 16

5. Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew, ca. 1613–15

48 x 65½ in. (122 x 165.5 cm)

Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice (inv. 167)

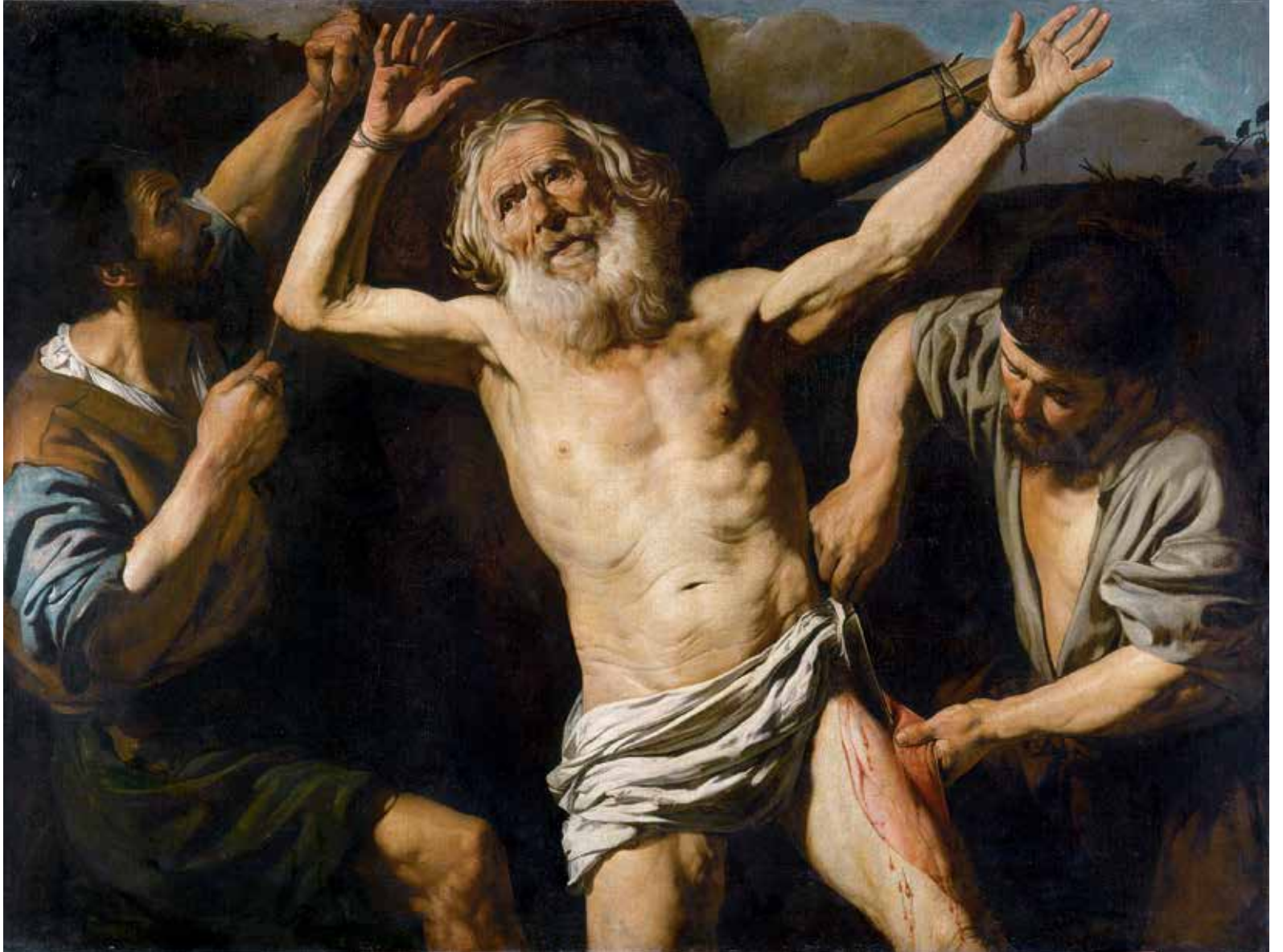
New York only

The Golden Legend recounts that the apostle Bartholomew traveled to India, where he performed miracles and converted King Polemius. Enraged, the king’s brother arrested him and had him flayed alive—or, according to other sources, crucified. Jacobus de Voragine, the author of the Golden Legend, resolves the contradiction by suggesting that before being flayed Bartholomew was crucified and then, ultimately, beheaded. Here, the tree to which Bartholomew is being bound may refer to his crucifixion. The subject was treated by numerous artists, in either full- or half-length compositions (see Pigler 1974, vol. 1, pp. 427–28). Jusepe de Ribera painted it repeatedly beginning as early as about 1610 (see Papi 2014c), and one wonders whether—like the flaying of Marsyas by Apollo (another theme famously treated by Ribera)—the subject was prized by collectors as much for its gratuitously grisly violence as for its graphic depiction of martyrdom, which was a central component of Counter-Reformation ideology. (On the taste for violence in Baroque painting, see Falomir Faus 2014.)

Given its subject matter, it is perhaps not surprising that after the picture entered the Gallerie dell’Accademia

in 1821 (as the work of Mattia Preti), it was ascribed to Ribera (see Keary 1894, p. 109). Roberto Longhi’s attribution of the picture to Valentin (1958, p. 62) now seems remarkably prescient and, once again, underscores the close relationship between the early work of Ribera and that of Valentin. Longhi’s attribution was hesitantly accepted by Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin in the groundbreaking exhibition they organized in Rome and Paris (1973–74), but it was rejected by Marina Mojana (1989, p. 182), who found the facture and violent lighting uncharacteristic of the artist. Gianni Papi (2005b, p. 108) also initially expressed doubts, but he has since (2009b, p. 224) fully accepted Longhi’s attribution, which this writer also considers convincing.

As Papi notes in this catalogue, the picture must be very early—more or less contemporary with the Dresden *Cardsharps* (cat. 6). Like that work, it is informed by Valentin’s close study of the work of Cecco del Caravaggio and Ribera—especially of the former, as Valentin could not yet aspire to the aggressively rapid brushwork that was a hallmark of Ribera’s work from the start (significantly, *prestezza* and *risolution* are the terms employed by Giulio Mancini to describe Ribera’s art;



Mancini ca. 1617–21 [1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 249]). We are reminded of the “hyperrealism” (Papi’s word) that characterizes the descriptive style of Cecco’s various paintings of musicians and musical instruments, in which the still-life details receive the same kind of obsessive attention as the peeled-back skin and creased stomach of Valentin’s *Saint Bartholomew* (Papi 2001, pp. 118–21, nos. 6, 7).

Perhaps even more significant would have been Cecco’s *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* (cat. 1), with its exploration of cruelty, and his *Saint Lawrence* (fig. 15), which Papi singled out for “the incredibly strong emotive intensity of the pose and gaze of the saint” (Papi 2001, pp. 24, 121–23, no. 8). He has dated these works between about 1612 and about 1615. Valentin’s picture was probably painted soon after, for there is every reason to think that upon his arrival in Rome he was keenly attentive to the most original Caravaggesque painters, and reacted to their work with all of the rapidity characteristic of young, talented artists encountering a vibrant, international environment for the first time. Why should he have been any slower in responding than so many other northern painters, Gerrit van Honthorst and Dirck van Baburen among them? The upper left portion of Baburen’s intensely Riberesque *Capture of Christ* (Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell’Arte Roberto Longhi, Florence), datable to about 1615 (Franits 2013, pp. 75–76, no. A1), offers comparison with Valentin’s canvas for the relationship of figures to landscape.

Interestingly, even at this early date Valentin cast his critical eye beyond the work of his own generation to Caravaggio himself—the *Crucifixion of Saint Peter* and the *Conversion of Saint Paul* in the Cerasi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo—and, even more interestingly, to Guido Reni’s altarpiece of the *Crucifixion of Saint Peter* for San Paolo alle Tre Fontane (Pinacoteca Vaticana). Reni’s picture was understood by contemporaries as a critique on Caravaggio’s painting of the same theme, and Giovan Pietro Bellori (1672 [1976 ed., pp. 496–97])

commented at length on its invention and superior treatment of action. Like Reni, Valentin distinguishes the two different tasks and expressions of Bartholomew’s torturers; in the one actively binding the apostle to the tree trunk, he was quite clearly inspired by Reni’s example. The planar arrangement of the composition, animated by the marvelously interlocked forms of the figures, is no less indicative of his preference for geometric patterns to lend clarity.

As Papi notes in his essay in this catalogue, the torturer who busily tends to his task with the concentration of a seasoned butcher at work on a carcass is the same model who presses the crown of thorns onto Christ’s head (cat. 7) and, probably, the figure who draws back in astonishment in the Thyssen-Bornemisza *David with the Head of Goliath* (cat. 8). These are, again, all works of the middle years of the second decade of the century. Yet because the surface and brilliant colors of the Accademia canvas seem so different from the other works, it needs to be noted that the meticulous manner in which past damages have been integrated has resulted in a uniform surface that compromises an effect of vibrancy and diminishes the impression of volume, depth, transparency, and delicacy. However, the underlying brushstrokes of the *abbozzo* visible in the parts of the loincloth in shadow and the minor pentimento in the collar of the executioner at left support the position that this is an original and not a copy of an important early work. The composition was engraved by D. Angeloni and G. Cabrini in 1829 (Moschini Marconi 1970, p. 177). KC

Provenance: Abate Parisi, Vicenza (until 1821); Galleria dell’Accademia, Venice (from 1821)

Selected References: Keary 1894, p. 109; Mayer 1923, p. 48; Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80; Longhi 1958, p. 62; Moschini Marconi 1970, p. 177, no. 415; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 253); Cuzin 1975, p. 58; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Wright 1985, p. 269; Mojana 1989, p. 182, no. 65; Nicolson 1989, p. 202; Papi 2005b, p. 108; Papi 2009b, p. 224

6. Cardsharps, ca. 1614–15

37¼ x 54 in. (94.5 x 137 cm)

Inscribed (upper right): *L.*

Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (inv. 408)

The *Cardsharps* of Dresden, along with *Concert with Three Figures* in Chatsworth (fig. 1) and the *Musicians and Drinkers* in a private collection, is one of the first genre scenes Valentin painted in Rome. No doubt this masterpiece must be situated at the dawn of his career, about 1615: the tight framing and robust, coarse figures, whose natural roughness can also be found in Jusepe de Ribera's protagonists and in the caricatural figures of his fellow artists—the Dutchmen Gerrit van Honthorst and Dirck van Baburen—are both markers of Valentin's early years. The attitudes are compact and concentrated, the volumes solid, with sharply defined contours in the manner of Cecco del Caravaggio. The paint is thick, the chiaroscuro stark and dense. Some details in and of themselves indicate an early date: for example, the white plume, given a spare treatment; the locks of hair, clearly distinct from one another; and the slashed red beret, a leitmotif of his early canvases.

With *Cardsharps*, Valentin, just making his start in Rome, inserted himself into the new iconographic tradition, drawing from the lowest and most common

aspects of everyday life to which Caravaggio had given pride of place. Caravaggio's gambling and palm-reading scenes rapidly became icons, echoing literary themes in vogue in the new Spanish picaresque novel and in the poetry of Giovan Battista Marino and his contemporaries, as well as in theater, particularly the commedia dell'arte. Painting and literature depicted the passions, vices, and aberrations of the underworld, associated with such censured practices as drunkenness and smoking tobacco, the pleasures of the flesh, and gambling. Cards, it should be remembered, appear among the attributes of Scandal in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1618 [1992 ed., p. 396]).

Valentin's composition, directly inspired by Caravaggio's *Cardsharps* (fig. 51), then in the famous Roman collection of Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte, attests to the enormous success that his depraved subjects and ignoble characters enjoyed in the 1610s and 1620s. Here they are doubly immoral: once again, the passion for gambling is combined with fraud. This is the first in a long series by Valentin of scenes of palm reading, theft, and popular concerts. Throughout his life, he would



Fig. 51. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. *Cardsharps*, ca. 1595. Oil on canvas, 37½ x 51⅝ in. (94.2 x 130.9 cm). Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth (AP 1987.06)



never stop painting the daily theater of human vicissitudes, producing inventions of a rare originality that have not yet been the object of detailed studies. Valentin would conceive only two compositions (within the corpus currently known) specifically devoted to the theme of gambling: this painting and another masterpiece from his youth, though slightly later, in which the artist juxtaposes a card game and a game of dice (cat. 9). In addition to these examples, there are the two versions of the *Denial of Saint Peter*, in which the biblical story is relegated to the background in favor of the dice players (cats. 14, 25).

As with Bartolomeo Manfredi's *Cardsharps*, formerly in the Fritz Rothmann collection, Valentin borrows from Caravaggio's model the dual theme of gambling and cheating and the three-protagonist composition: two players and an accomplice. Missing, by contrast, are the brilliant colors and illusionistic virtuosity found in the decorative details so characteristic of Caravaggio's inventiveness. Valentin makes a completely different choice. He proposes a dark (both literally and figuratively) interpretation. The scene is stripped of all ornament and explicitly situated in a tavern. Valentin emphasizes its somber and leaden atmosphere and the psychological tension emanating from it.

On the one hand, the overly naive player concentrates on his game in the hope of winning. He holds his cards in a tight bunch, discreetly separating them with his finger to examine them. On the other, the antagonists plot their dirty trick. The cardsharp, on the alert, with dark circles under his eyes, is preparing to play the card he conceals behind his back. The third protagonist—the accomplice—is relegated to the background shadows. Heretofore afforded little consideration, he deserves our attention. His attitude and dress are related less to the allegory of Winter (see, for example, Manfredi's *Allegory of the Four Seasons*, Dayton Art Institute), as some have said, than to the traditional figure of the schemer, already present in some Northern Renaissance gambling scenes. Camouflaged in a baggy brown coat and wearing a hat, he has the swarthy complexion of a gypsy; he examines the opponent's hand in order to reveal its contents to his associate. He remains ridiculous

nonetheless. His hands, one gripping the top of his rapier, the other indicating the number 3, seem oversized, while the strabismus (crossed eyes) from which he suffers ultimately obliterates the effectiveness of his suspicious behavior at the very moment we are considering him. That comical detail is the source of the scene's humor. It serves to ridicule the character and to indicate his true nature. To borrow the words of Jean Pagès, those who are *louche*, which is to say, "squinty-eyed," "are ordinarily depraved because their brain (the seat and instrument of reason) is deranged and defective in its constitution" (Pagès 1625, p. 305). The tavern where the intrigue plays out is equally *louche*—dark and somber, according to the meaning given that word in the seventeenth century (A. Oudin 1640, p. 309). This detail, then, sets the tone for the scene, both comic and sinister.

The artist brilliantly exploits all the devices that capture the beholder's attention and involve him in the scene: the close-up framing, the play of light and darkness, and the figure of the gambler captivated by his game (with whom it is possible for the viewer to identify), but also the arbitrarily elevated perspective of the table, which allows us to consider in detail the displayed cards, and even the deck of cards placed on the edge of the table, facing the observer, as if it were ours. To these traditional modalities should be added the ludicrous detail of strabismus. AL

Provenance: probably Emperor Leopold I of Habsburg (d. 1705; an "L" is inscribed on the canvas); Imperial Picture Gallery, Prague Castle (until 1749); acquired by Pietro Guarenti for Frederick Augustus II of Saxony, Dresden (1749–63); Frederick Christian of Saxony, Dresden (d. 1763); Frederick Augustus III, Dresden (1763–1827); Neues Königliches Museum (present Gemäldegalerie), Dresden (from 1855)

Selected References: *Galerie Royale de Dresde* 1753–57, vol. 2, no. 28 (as Caravaggio; engraving by Pieter Tanjé); Riedel and Wenzel 1765, p. 196, no. 147; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Kallab 1906–7, p. 282; Voss 1924, p. 454; Charles Sterling in *Peintres de la réalité* 1934, pp. 160–61, no. 114; Longhi 1958, pp. 61, 65; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pl. III; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 126, 128, no. 36 (French ed., pp. 128, 130, no. 37); Cuzin 1975, p. 57; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, pp. 18, 56, no. 3; Nicolson 1989, p. 205; Heres 1991, p. 115; Feigenbaum 1996, p. 158; Weber 2003; David Mandrella in Rosenberg 2005, p. 433, no. 152; Cuzin 2010, p. 37; Melasecchi 2010, p. 735; Edwards 2011, pp. 186–87; Papi 2013a, p. 48

7. Crowning with Thorns, ca. 1613–14

57⁵/₈ x 42 in. (146.4 x 106.5 cm)

Private collection

The *Crowning with Thorns* in a private collection, attributed to Valentin by Roberto Longhi in 1943, is one of the first paintings the artist made in Rome. The canvas, which dates to about 1614 at the latest, is an important reference for understanding Valentin's beginnings and sheds light on the astonishing diversity of his sources of inspiration. It is the first of four compositions that he devoted to this theme; three are extant (see cat. 37), and a fourth is known through an archival reference (see cat. 12). The hypothesis of a fifth, lost version, supposedly attested by three copies in Valentin's style, must be rejected. They probably constitute a copyist's montage of various motifs, not a new composition by Valentin (one of the copies, of superior quality, was attributed to Valentin by Marina Mojana in 1989, p. 78, no. 13; for the other two, see p. 210, nos. 83, 84).

The crowning with thorns followed Jesus' arrest and interrogation by the high priest Caiaphas. He was handed over to Pontius Pilate, led into the Praetorium by Roman soldiers, and dressed mockingly with the symbols of royalty—a scarlet robe, a crown of thorns, and a rod for a scepter. There the mob scorned him as “king of the Jews,” spitting in his face and striking him with the rod (Matt. 27:27–31, Mark 15:16–20, John 19:1–16). This episode from the Passion enjoyed a vogue in Rome at the dawn of the seicento, with depictions ranging from Rubens to Caravaggio, Cavalier d'Arpino to Orazio Gentileschi, and Lionello Spada to Carlo Saraceni. Bartolomeo Manfredi conceived no fewer than seven versions of the theme (Papi 2013a, p. 173). Everything indicates that Valentin was familiar with the two famous compositions that Caravaggio devoted to it—the first for Vincenzo Giustiniani (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) and the second for Prince Massimo Massimi (Cassa di Risparmio di Prato)—as well as with the many derivations by followers (Nicolson 1989, p. 43).

Like the second version of Caravaggio's *Crowning with Thorns* (Prato), which has a vertical format, Valentin compresses the episode into a constricted space to intensify the sense of violence inflicted on Christ. He goes further than Caravaggio's model in his extreme focus on the three monumental figures pushed to the foreground. The abrupt framing seems to force the massive figures to contort themselves to find room on

the canvas. The face of the soldier on the left, kneeling to mock Jesus, is pressed flat against that of his victim. He addresses his provocative greeting to Christ's nose. His sarcastic mocking and foul breath, blown into Jesus' face, are easily imagined. The complex composition, constructed on an intersection of strong diagonals that follow the twisting bodies, completely saturates the space. This technique, inherited from Mannerism, also coincides with Manfredi's contemporary experiments, for example, in *Mars Punishing Cupid*, of 1613 (Art Institute of Chicago).

Even in his early canvases Valentin broadened his horizons beyond Caravaggio and his emulators. In his *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew* (cat. 5), conceived at about the same time as this painting, for example, Valentin was inspired not only by Caravaggio and Jusepe de Ribera but also, as Keith Christiansen argues, by Guido Reni. Here, he borrows the strong contrapposto of his Christ from Titian's famous *Crowning with Thorns* (Musée du Louvre; then in Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan). Valentin might also have contemplated Saraceni's use of that dynamic in his *Crowning with Thorns*, painted on the vault of the Cappella Capranica in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome, about 1606 (Marco Pupillo in Aurigemma 2013a, pp. 231, 233, no. 31).

To express the brutality of the torture, the young artist turned to yet another model, Annibale Carracci. The gesture of the soldier who crushes the crown of thorns directly onto the head of Christ with his gloved hands—an act of remarkable violence—originated in a small etching of 1606 by Carracci (fig. 52) that gave rise to many proofs, counterproofs, and copies (Bohn 1996, pp. 264–72). Valentin adapts the torturer's violent attitude without abandoning its cruelty. Also dating to these years, 1613–15, is Gentileschi's very personal interpretation of the *Crowning with Thorns* (Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig), inspired by Caravaggio but also by Carracci, proof that Valentin and Gentileschi had common sources of inspiration in these years of intense emulation.

With both hands the tormentor in Valentin's painting forces the crown of thorns onto his victim's skull while staring almost menacingly at the observer. We witness Christ's nudity and powerlessly watch the violence he endures. This radicalism is abandoned in

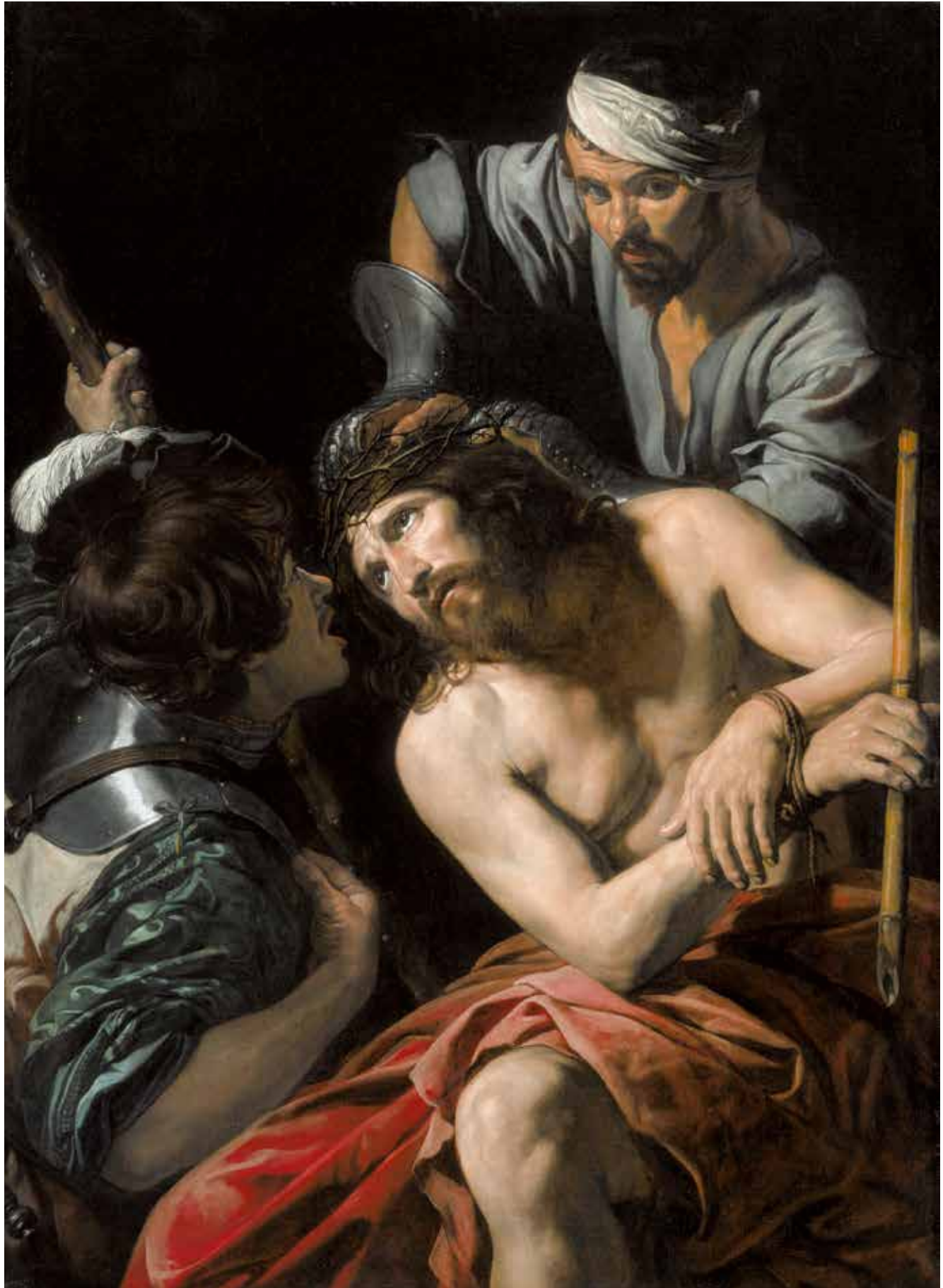




Fig. 52. Annibale Carracci (Italian, 1560–1609). *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, 1606. Etching, plate 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (18 x 13.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1918 (18.86)

Valentin's later versions (cat. 12). The tormentor's commanding physical presence makes the brutality and force with which he accosts us even more effective. Faithful to the essence of his art, Valentin reinterprets Carracci's invention in a version *dal naturale*: the torture is painted "from life," to borrow Giustiniani's (n.d. [1981 ed., p. 44]) expression. The model who incarnates Christ's torturer reappears in other works by Valentin.

Dressed in an identical gray shirt, as Gianni Papi mentions in this catalogue, he tortures Saint Bartholomew in the painting in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice (cat. 5); he also plays a pipe in the *Concert with Three Figures* in Chatsworth (fig. 1). The mocking soldier on the left appears next to David contemplating his victory over Goliath in another early painting that dates to about 1616–18 (cat. 8).

In accordance with a classic principle applied by Carracci in his engraving and found in Ribera (Papi 2011, p. 54, fig. 24), Valentin accentuates the confrontation between the victim and his tormentors through a formal and psychological play of contrasts between the profoundly human figure of Christ, deep in contemplation of the Passion, and the squat, vulgar, and brutal forms of his torturers. The chiaroscuro reiterates this opposition through the juxtaposition of shadows that seem gradually to eat away at the soldiers' faces with the intense light that models the Savior's naked body. In addition, the magnificent rose-red of Christ's mantle contrasts sharply with the dull, cool colors of the henchmen's clothing.

One final invention: the central place occupied by the Savior's face (similar in this respect to Gentileschi's composition). It is the formal heart of the image and the structural pivot around which the narration is deployed. Christ's expression suggests both the denouement of the Passion and the reason for this suffering. AL

Provenance: Collection Rainoldi, Milan (by 1943); private collection, Munich; Algranti & Co., Ltd., London (1989–96; sale, Sotheby's, New York, January 11, 1996, no. 118); A. Alfred Taubman, Detroit (1996–2015; on loan to the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1996–2002, 2005–15; sale, Sotheby's, New York, January 27, 2016, no. 20); private collection
 Selected References: Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Longhi 1960, pp. 58, 59; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 52, no. 1; Nicolson 1989, p. 202

8. David with the Head of Goliath, ca. 1615–16

39 x 52¾ in. (99 x 134 cm)

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (inv. 415 [1930.119])

Few pictures display with comparable cogency and disturbing effect Valentin's desire to activate not only the dramatic content within the fictive space of his pictures, but also—and perhaps even more dynamically—the space between the depicted subject and the viewer. Even Caravaggio, in his three depictions of David with the Head of Goliath, retained discrete pictorial spaces. He depicted the biblical hero—the Hebrew shepherd boy who courageously slayed the giant Philistine with his slingshot (I Samuel/17:20–54)—as a preadolescent, bent over, quietly gathering up Goliath's severed head (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid); as a youth contemplating, with an expression bordering on regret, the head—a self-portrait—that he holds in his extended hand (Galleria Borghese, Rome); and as the young victor, sword on his shoulder, displaying his trophy as he strides back to the Jewish camp (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). In each case, the psychological interest is between victor and victim—a pictorial mode Michael Fried (2010, pp. 69–96) has referred to as an absorptive state. This dynamic is also true in those depictions by artists emulating Caravaggio's style, in which David contemplates Goliath's head posed on a parapet, stone block, or column—among which may be cited examples by Guido Reni (Musée du Louvre), Giovanni Battista Caracciolo (Galleria Borghese, Rome), and Simon Vouet (Musei di Strada Nuova, Genoa). Reni's picture, in particular, is geared to a poetics of *contrapposto* encapsulated in a verse from Giovan Battista Marino's *La galeria* (1619 [1675 ed., p. 52]): “Ma s'io ben miro il vincitore, e'l vinto, / Più bello è il vivo, c'horrido l'estinto” (But if I closely observe the victor and the victim, the living is more beautiful than the dead is horrific).

By contrast, Valentin shows David leaning forward over his trophy, his gaze directed outward, into the viewer's space. He is flanked by two figures, one of whom, wearing a plumed hat, draws back in horror while the other, helmeted and holding a pike, also directs his gaze toward the viewer. David Ekserdjian (1988, p. 124) has plausibly suggested that one of the figures is the leader of the Israelite forces, Abner, who took David to Saul, and this would put the viewer in the position of the king receiving the young hero following his victory. Yet so far from being triumphant, David's expression

seems almost confrontational: in the words of Michel Hilaire (in Hilaire and Hémery 2012, p. 188), “as though vindicating his solitary combat to liberate his people and bring about the triumph of God and Virtue.”

The ambivalence of his expression is further suggested by the way, with one hand, he holds the sword with which he cut off the giant's head and, with the other, he seems almost tenderly to cradle his grisly trophy, which is shown with eyes closed and mouth open, cut off in the prime of life, Goliath's pooled blood meaningfully juxtaposed with the cord of David's slingshot. Interestingly, X-radiograph analysis (see Javier Bacariza Domínguez in Bacariza Domínguez and Nieto Fernández 2008, p. 128) indicates that Valentin had intended to show Goliath's forehead—and therefore the wound from the stone—but then decided to subordinate this gruesome detail by covering it with his hair. In so doing, he transformed Goliath's head from something horrific to a kind of meditation on death. Valentin has created a deeply disturbing image that has lost none of its power to elicit profoundly conflicted responses. It is this astonishingly complex, psychological aspect that gives his art its modernity and lies at the very heart of his creative thinking.

We recognize the figure in a plumed hat as the same model who tortures Christ in the *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 7), while the helmeted soldier reappears in the Dresden *Cardsharps* (cat. 6) and the Munich *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 12); both figures can be found, again, in the Indianapolis *Concert* (cat. 10). The painting was carried out with Valentin's habitual directness, posing models after laying in their placement and making adjustments and changes as he proceeded (see the analysis of Bacariza Domínguez cited above). There is a consensus that the picture is an early work of about 1620–22. We would propose placing it even earlier, about 1615–16, in line with our reconsideration of his first years in Rome.

That the picture—or a very good copy of it—belonged to Emmerich Joseph, duc de Dalberg (1773–1833), can be established on the basis of a line engraving in Thimothée Francillon's 1823 French edition of Luigi Lanzi's *Storia pittorica della Italia* (Lanzi 1823, p. 91). Francillon had advised the duke on many of his purchases. In the 1820 sale catalogue of Dalberg's collection,



the picture, described as showing “David, full of terror, presenting the head of Goliath, who he has vanquished, to the soldiers who surround him and look at him with surprise,” was reported to come from one of the outstanding galleries in Italy. Another work in the sale—an *Adoration of the Shepherds* by Francesco Solimena—is specified as having belonged to the Cambiaso collection in Genoa, where a *David* by Valentin is described by Carlo Giuseppe Ratti in 1780 (p. 266). The Cambiaso collection was housed in Palazzo Brignole and in 1808 Dalberg married the Genoese marchese Maria Teresa Brignole (see Tenner 1966, p. 62). Thus, in all likelihood the Thyssen picture was owned by Carlo Cambiaso and acquired by Dalberg at the time of his marriage. The Cambiaso collection was extremely distinguished: among the works were three by Orazio Gentileschi, including a *David and Goliath* (see Keith Christiansen in Christiansen

and Mann 2001, pp. 186–90). The copy of the Thyssen-Bornemisza picture in the Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne, was acquired in 1871. Another line engraving after the picture was made in Genoa in 1817 by Domenico del Pino. KC

Provenance: Carlo Cambiaso, Palazzo Brignole, Genoa (where described in 1780); Emmerich Joseph, duc de Dalberg, Paris (1808–20; sale, Paris, March 21, 1820, no. 96); private collection, England; Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, Lugano (by 1930); Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (from 1993)

Selected References: Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 142, no. 43); Cuzin 1975, p. 57; Ekserdjian 1988, p. 124, no. 50; Mojana 1989, pp. 26, 90, no. 19; Contini 2002, pp. 100–104; Bacariza Domínguez and Nieto Fernández 2008, pp. 107–41; Borobia Guerrero 2009, p. 465; Melasecchi 2010, p. 737; Michel Hilaire in Hilaire and Hémerly 2012, p. 188, no. 38; Fried 2016, pp. 45–46, 80, 106

9. Soldiers Playing Cards and Dice (*The Cheats*), ca. 1615

47⁵/₈ x 59⁷/₈ in. (121 x 152 cm)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Patrons' Permanent Fund (1998.104.1)

Soldiers *Playing Cards and Dice (The Cheats)*, which resurfaced in 1989, is among the most beautiful rediscoveries of the past thirty years. This is a major work, dating to Valentin's early days in Rome, about 1615. The French artist seems to have painted the specific theme of gambling only twice: first in the *Cardsharps* of Dresden (cat. 6), then in the present painting. Although, in my opinion, the Washington canvas was produced soon after the German painting, with which it shares stylistic characteristics, it attests to a more fully developed reflection. Valentin revisited both the composition and the meaning of the image, and within a few months' time, he delivered a new *invenzione*. Unlike the more concentrated version of Dresden, the Washington canvas multiplies the number of intrigues, actors, and games, featuring both cards and dice. The combination of these games of chance is the source of what was a then relatively rare iconography. Above all, Valentin abandoned the comical and caricatural dimension of *Cardsharps*, still reminiscent of Caravaggio's prototype, in favor of a more ambitious work, dominated by a new feeling of solitude and emptiness. This is no longer a picture in the vein of the *pittura ridicola* or the world of *commedia dell'arte*.

The depiction of human turpitude is now only grave and silent.

Valentin works on two registers. He recounts both the blindness of the players, prisoners to their passion, and the manipulation of the cheat. The gap between the two gives rise to the tension of the composition. In a compressed space, four players are arranged around a square table. They are divided into two pairs facing each other, the card players and the dice players, yet none are in conversation. Each figure is spatially and psychologically isolated. With the exception of the cheat, each is concentrating on his game, his head and eyelids lowered. This repeated negation of the gaze is a clever way of rendering the psychological absorption, or even trancelike state, of the players, caught in the trap of their passion.

The cheat is the only protagonist whose gaze can be discerned, the only one conversing as well, not with his adversary, but with an accomplice placed beyond and behind their prey. Both are soldiers: the cheat wears armor and a sword (identical to the one depicted in the Dresden painting), and his accomplice, concealed in a baggy brown coat consistent with the traditional typology of the schemer (see cat. 6 for a study of that





Fig. 53. Bartolomeo Manfredi. *Cardplayers*, ca. 1614–16. Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 75 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (130 x 191.5 cm). Formerly Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. Destroyed

type), has a helmet on his head. Both are allusions to the figure of the idle soldier who frequented Rome's taverns, one of the recurrent protagonists of lowlife. This notorious *bravo* is evoked in documentary sources and celebrated in popular literature (the picaresque novel) and theater (Feigenbaum 1996, p. 154; Langdon 2001, p. 44). Absent from Caravaggio's genre scenes, he will become a leitmotif in Valentin's depictions of the Roman underworld and in those by most of the *naturalisti*. He appears here among the players, as in Bartolomeo Manfredi's works (see fig. 53), and will resurface to liven up a drinking party (cat. 15), a palm-reading session, or an improvised concert (cat. 31). The introduction of this new character type and, even more, of a second game, dice as well as cards, enriches the evocation of a godforsaken world, where the vulnerable soul succumbs to vices and surrenders to the whims of chance, as the corrupt mercenary, here personified in the cheat, calls the shots. The cheat, for his part, is alert and eyeing his surroundings. He could even be the hero of the scene, like Guzmán de Alfarache, the famous picaresque protagonist, who frequented gambling dens and constantly vaunted his knavery: "O what deceit and wicked swindles I have perpetrated, I calculated and desired them all." As he explains, "In a world where life itself is a game of chance, the gambler is a hero" (Alemán 1639, p. 418).

The cheat, seated in the foreground and seen from the back, is the key to both the narrative and the composition: he articulates the two modes, in accordance with

an arrangement invented by Caravaggio in the famous *Calling of Saint Matthew* and brilliantly adopted by the young Jusepe de Ribera in Rome (cat. 3). Valentin demonstrates here that he has given a great deal of thought to these models. Like Ribera, the French artist seeks to suggest, albeit awkwardly, the idea of an action in progress. In a still somewhat stiff *mise-en-scène* orchestrated by the light, the repetition of the lowered eyelids and half-open mouths, along with the succession of active hands, guides the beholder's eyes from left to right, as if to show the unfolding of the two principal intrigues, from the brewing swindle to the denouement of the dice throw. The extraordinary figure on the right, arbitrarily cut off, closes the narration. That figure, with a reserved, poetic elegance, contrasts sharply with the other protagonists, massive and boorish, and seems to anticipate aspects of the painter's later work. Valentin reveals his talents as a colorist, attentive both to the play of light that makes the young man's sweaty profile glisten and to the refined chromatic combinations—here the creamy whites and parma violets, enlivened in contact with the jet blacks and an almost matte ash gray. The splendid satin sleeve, its folds in a constant state of metamorphosis, is treated like a still life, as Cecco del Caravaggio might have done, but with a fluidity characteristic of the Frenchman's brush.

In this painting, Valentin sketches out his first inquiries into the human soul and its disturbances. The extraordinary figure of the player, seemingly miles away, preoccupied with his internal world, conveys a reflection on introspection that no other artist would be able to paint with such acuity mingled with poetry. Not until a century later, with Jean Siméon Chardin's *Child with a Teetotum* (Musée du Louvre), would similar research into the human spirit once more be in evidence. AL

Provenance: Borros de Gamaçon, mayor of Périgeux (mid-1800s); private collection, near Bordeaux (until 1989; sale, Drouot Richelieu, Paris, December 11, 1989, no. 58, as "Les tricheurs"); Jacques Chevreux, Paris (1989–98); acquired through Eric Turquin, Paris, by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Selected References: Mojana 1989, p. 58, no. 3 bis; Nicolson 1989, p. 205; Philip Conisbee in *Art for the Nation* 2000, p. 24; Frances Gage in Conisbee 2009, pp. 414–19, no. 88; Damiano and Etheridge 2011, p. 317, no. 20; Edwards 2011, p. 194; Fried 2016, pp. 76–77





10. Concert, ca. 1615

47 x 62½ in. (119.4 x 158.7 cm)

Indianapolis Museum of Art, William A. Zumpfe Memorial Fund (56.162)

New York only

The attribution of this painting to Valentin was long debated because of its poor condition: it has suffered from severe abrasion and harsh restorations. In 1956, Roberto Longhi was the first to propose Valentin's name (Longhi in *Tableaux de maîtres anciens* 1956, no. 1), followed by Richard Spear in 1971. But at the pioneering exhibition "I Caravaggeschi francesi" (1973–74), Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin questioned the attribution; Pierre Rosenberg (1982a, p. 373) and Marina Mojana (1989, p. 190) also hesitated to affirm Valentin's authorship. Yet after his initial doubts, Cuzin (1987, p. 44; 1991, p. 455) ultimately saw it as "a fine original," despite its "poor state" of preservation.

For the present exhibition, Linda Witkowski at the Indianapolis Museum of Art undertook a major restoration that leaves the painting's autograph status in no doubt. Technical analyses have brought to light those characteristics of the French artist's technique that are found throughout his career. Like Caravaggio, Valentin painted with self-assurance, *alla prima*, directly on the canvas. With loose, quickly brushed black lines, he established the large masses and main contours (fig. 54) before painting the different parts of the bodies, which he then clothed (we can make out, for example, the outline of the arm beneath the red sleeve). Valentin's method of painting was additive, beginning with the background (the guitarist's right hand is painted over the yellow sleeve of his companion in the red beret; fig. 54). He often rethought, adapted, and corrected the volumes and movements as he worked. Infrared imaging reveals that the gypsy woman's face was located farther back before being shifted toward the guitarist's head (fig. 54). Likewise, the flutist's face was painted twice, initially lower down, then raised slightly (fig. 55). The artist hesitated and corrected as he moved toward an increasingly dense composition.

The young musician's face is the best-preserved part of the work, and Valentin's acuity of observation is admirable here: consider the creases, painted from life, that furrow the musician's forehead and accompany his pensive gaze, lost in reverie or attentive to the music. This first attempt to render a psychological dimension is all the more surprising in that it occurs in a jovial

gathering. The detail introduces a singular tone, combining amusement and melancholy, and thereby announcing Valentin's future interests. Introspection, already suggested by the lowered eyes of the entrapped player in the Dresden and Washington compositions (cats. 6, 9), is expressed here with open eyes—by a look.

The *Concert* in Indianapolis dates about 1615 and belongs to the first group of genre scenes painted by Valentin after his arrival in Rome. It can be situated after the *Concert with Three Figures* in Chatsworth (fig. 1), the *Cardsharps* in Dresden (cat. 6), and the *Soldiers Playing Cards and Dice (The Cheats)* (cat. 9), and before his first scenes of palm reading (cats. 11, 15). These canvases, which share a typology of sculptural figures with strong contours, a stark contrast of light and dark, and a tightly framed composition, reveal the artist's process of trial and error. From one work to the next, Valentin can be seen reworking the arrangement of the figures and the spatial construction. Here he opts for a dynamic composition: the figures, distributed around a fragment of an antique entablature serving as a table, are each represented in action, standing or seated. The block of stone, seen from slightly above, is not parallel to the picture plane, as in the other versions (cat. 14), but is placed obliquely, so as to create a greater sense of depth. The absence of symmetry and the arbitrary cropping, which cuts from view the stool on which the guitarist is seated as well as the actions of some of the figures (the man serving himself a drink, the gypsy woman pulling on a handkerchief, the faces turning to look), thereby create a sense of animation and of a moment held in suspense. Valentin was experimenting with formal solutions that he would later perfect, such as the unusual cropping and the almost physical presence of the antique block (Fried 2011, p. 109). The representation of action painted from life was a challenge that Valentin would pursue throughout his career. Here it is part of a method characteristic of the years 1610–20 and shared by other *naturalisti*: Bartolomeo Manfredi, Jusepe de Ribera, and Simon Vouet.

Through his genre scenes, Valentin investigated the novel theme of the underworld (on this subject, see his literary and theatrical sources of inspiration, cats. 6, 15), surpassing yet again the inventions of Caravaggio



Fig. 54. Infrared image of cat. 10, detail showing shifted location of the gypsy's face and underlying arm of the guitarist

(his *Fortune-Tellers* and *Cardsharps*; see cats. 11, 15, 38, and fig. 51 in cat. 6). Valentin's novelty lies both in the subject treated and in the creative process *dal naturale*. He combined multiple themes (music, merrymaking, drinking, theft) with characters employed individually in earlier compositions. His elaboration of a repertoire of stock characters appealed both to stereotypes and to observations of daily life. Here again are the pilfering soldiers summoned in *Soldiers Playing Cards and Dice*, along with the drinkers and musicians from *Concert with Three Figures* in Chatsworth: a guitarist and a recorder player improvising a duet, consistent with popular practices (see my essay "Bowing to No One: Valentin's Ambitions" in this catalogue). In addition, a single model, painted from life, plays the role of, by turns, a young flutist (in this case), a guitarist (fig. 1), and a card player (cat. 6), just as the bearded soldier pouring himself a drink reappears

in the *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers* of Toledo (cat. 15). Gestures are sometimes reused in almost identical fashion, as Witkowski has observed: the soldier's hand grasping the wine flask and the position of the flask itself, viewed from the same angle, recur in the *Fortune-Teller*. Is this a sign that the artist drew on a repertoire of pounced patterns or reused motif types?

One last figure, the only female, deserves attention: a gypsy, who makes her first appearance here in Valentin's known corpus. Called the *Egyptienne* in France and the *zingara* in Italy, she exerted great fascination (Langdon 2001; Stoichita 2014). Taken from Rome's tumultuous street life (Burke 1987), the *zingara* was one of the most popular protagonists at the dawn of the seicento, whether in literature (the picaresque novel), theater (the *commedia dell'arte*), or in painting (beginning with Caravaggio).



Fig. 55. Infrared image of cat. 10, detail showing shifted position of flutist's face

Immediately recognizable in Valentin's painting by her swarthy complexion and traditional attire—a white scarf over her hair, a shapeless blanket tied at the shoulder—the gypsy is always a suspect character, as shown by the entry “zingara” (followed by “zingaro”) in Adriano Politi's dictionary (1614, pp. 873–74): “Men and women . . . who roam the countryside stealing for a living, reputed by common knowledge to be duplicitous and crooked.” It is therefore she who perpetrates the theft. Beautiful and devious, with glass in hand, Valentin's *zingara* picks the pockets of her victim, the ingenuous guitarist, before our very eyes. He is doubly naive: first, because, in turning around, he invites the viewer to participate in a scene of which he ought

to be wary; and second, because he lets himself be robbed without suspecting a thing. Everything is arranged so that the beholder will be the sole witness to the larceny, making each viewer at once a powerless observer and an amused accomplice. AL

Provenance: Galerie Heim, Paris (by 1956); purchased from them by the John Herron Art Institute, now the Indianapolis Museum of Art
Selected References: Roberto Longhi in *Tableaux de maîtres anciens* 1956, no. 1; Valentiner 1956; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Coley 1960; Spear 1971, p. 183, no. 71; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 140, 244 (French ed., pp. 144, 252); de Mirimonde 1975, p. 163; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Rosenberg 1982a, p. 373, no. 10; Wright 1985, p. 268; Cuzin 1987, p. 44; Mojana 1989, p. 190, no. 69; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Cuzin 1991, p. 455



II. Fortune-Teller, ca. 1615–16

57³/₈ x 73⁷/₈ in. (145.7 x 187.6 cm)

Private collection, Switzerland

New York only

Although this picture is a relatively recent addition to Valentin's corpus, having come to light in 1985, the composition was known from two copies, one of which, in the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (KMSsp96), had been acquired for the royal collections prior to 1737. The condition of the present work is far from optimal, with extensive abrasion to the surface. However, a restoration undertaken for this exhibition now permits its qualities to be appreciated—especially after the removal of the false sky behind the figures, painted to disguise the worn appearance of the background. It was the sky that had troubled Marina Mojana in recognizing this version as autograph. The Copenhagen copy has a pendant—a copy of cat. 32—and this led Benedict Nicolson, followed by Mojana, to conjecture that the two compositions were conceived as pendants. Since, however, the two autograph pictures, the present one and the *Musicians and Soldiers* at Strasbourg (cat. 32), must date from significantly different moments in Valentin's career, the most that can be said is that they were possibly owned by the same collector. This suggestion seems even more likely as another set of copies of each painting came down as a pair (formerly owned by Alex Wengraf, London; see *Art Odyssey* 2001, pp. 227–30, 231, n. 6). The *Fortune-Teller* is the second work by Valentin that can be traced to a Genoese collection (see cat. 8), in this case to the Soprani (it was set into a plaster surround in their villa di Sestri Levante; Raffaele Soprani is one of our key sources on Genoese painting).

Were it not for its smaller size, the picture that would have made a fine pendant is the virtually contemporary *Concert* in Indianapolis (cat. 10), which is also a five-figure composition. The paradigm for pairing pictures of this sort is Bartolomeo Manfredi's two canvases—a *Cardplayers* and a *Concert*—acquired by the Grand Duke of Tuscany prior to October 1618 (formerly Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence; see Maccherini 1999, p. 134; Papi 2013a, pp. 18, 176–78, nos. 40, 41). Manfredi is, indeed, generally considered the principal popularizer of these scenes of merry-makers, fortune-tellers, and gamblers gathered in a dark, undefined ambient around a table or fragmentary classical cornice (see the essay by Gianni Papi in this catalogue). The question, however,

is whether the presumed priority of Manfredi is correct or whether, instead, we ought to consider a parallel development and persistent exchange of ideas and themes first introduced by Caravaggio. Caravaggio's independent compositions of fortune-tellers and cardsharps were all painted early in his career. They include two, or at most three, figures, emphasizing a moral conceit about gullibility and deception as well as the capacity of the new naturalistic style to deceive the viewer (see Cropper 1991). However, in the great *Calling of Saint Matthew* (San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome), he developed an even more influential model for this type of picture in his depiction of men gathered around the table of Saint Matthew counting money.

In the work of the next generation of Caravaggesque painters—above all in the paintings of Manfredi and of Valentin—the straightforward moral message of Caravaggio's early canvases becomes secondary to the broader theme of the rough-and-tumble world of bohemian life, realized in increasingly complex and richly allusive compositions. It is in the work of Valentin that we can most clearly document the transformation of these scenes of dice and card playing, music making, and fortune-telling from simple to complicated compositions. In the present painting, Valentin has moved well beyond his *Soldiers Playing Cards and Dice (The Cheats)* (cat. 9), with its relatively uncomplicated and somewhat static arrangement. He has also surpassed the more animated and spatially ambitious composition in Indianapolis (cat. 10), in which the “table” is set at a diagonal and the poses and activities of the figures are more varied. He has done so by introducing the back-viewed figure of the duped soldier having his fortune told—his anonymity suggesting the possibility of self-identification by the beholder—and by framing the scene with two figures who actively engage the viewer. The presumably unemployed soldier of fortune has had the bad luck (or poor judgment) to allow himself to be taken in by a band of hooligans. Seated at a table, a massive fragment of an ancient Roman door molding, he has his palm read by a gypsy. While one of the band of petty thieves offers him a glass of wine in a gesture of false hospitality, a handsome youth diverts him with music, his reflective but knowing glance making it clear to the

viewer what it is they are about. Opposite, a sinister-looking, mustached figure signals by his gesture and action—grasping a chicken in the gypsy’s robe—that the whole scene is a comedy of deception in which the soldier is the victim: he will, like the chicken, be plucked (*spennare il pollo*).

These were stock incidents of street theater and the commedia dell’arte, but Valentin presents them in a way that differentiates his work from that of Bartolomeo Manfredi or Simon Vouet (for the theme, see Langdon 2001). The figures are arranged along repeating diagonals, demonstrating a clear sense of spatial definition and an unerring sense of interval—such as one will find in Valentin’s more mature paintings. Similarly, the figure with a flask in one hand and a goblet of wine in the other suggests by his action a moment in an unfolding story that seems intended less to amuse the viewer than to inspire reflection. In these ways the picture forecasts the traits that will distinguish Valentin’s lowlife pictures from those of all his contemporaries. An approximate date can only be put forward tentatively, but working with the chronology proposed in this catalogue, the picture should date about 1615–16—at the point, that is, when Valentin’s interest in Manfredi is replaced by the dominant, overarching achievement of Jusepe de Ribera.

The model for the figure at the far right reappears as the servant in the *Return of the Prodigal Son* (cat. 13),

where he holds a cloak for the returning youth, and as a bystander at the far right in the *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), as well as the figure pouring wine in the Toledo *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers* (cat. 15). The youth playing a lute may well have been employed for the prodigal son himself as well as for the soldier at the far left in *Christ and the Adulteress* (cat. 16).

Regarding the picture’s autograph status: there are minor pentimenti throughout, as, for example, in the hand of the figure at the far right. The blue of the gypsy’s shawl was painted over the red lining, where her right hand points to the dupe’s hand. There are also traces of Valentin’s typical method of underdrawing with the brush in the gypsy’s scarf and the brown cloth over the left arm of the man offering wine. The picture had been altered to a rococo shape to fit in the plaster decoration of the Soprani villa. KC

Provenance: Marchese Rafaele Soprani, villa di Sestri Levante (until d. 1672); by descent (until 1985; sale, Casa di Riposo/Chioostro del Santuario di San Francesco di Paola, Genoa, March 3, 1985, as anonymous); Giorgio Balboni and Ettore Viancini, Geneva (1985); Patrick Matthiesen, London, 1989; private collection
Selected References: Mojana 1989, p. 192, no. 70; Nicolson 1989, p. 205; Stefania Macioce in Bini, Strinati, and Vodret 2000, pp. 202, 204, no. 43; *Art Odyssey* 2001, pp. 224–31, no. 25; Richard Beresford in *Caravaggio and His World* 2004, p. 202, no. 62

12. Crowning with Thorns, ca. 1616–17

68 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 94 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (173 x 241 cm)

Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen München-Alte Pinakothek, Munich (inv. 477)

Paris only

Of the three extant compositions that Valentin devoted to the theme of the Crowning with Thorns (see cats. 7, 37), this second version is by far the most ambitious; unfortunately, it is not known who commissioned it. The first version (ca. 1613–14), which predates the one considered here, and the last version, done much later (ca. 1627–28), are both vertical compositions with three or four figures closely surrounding the figure of Christ. This intermediate version, with its unusually large size, is radically distinct. It is the largest Caravaggesque *Crowning with Thorns* known—even more monumental than the composition by Bartolomeo Manfredi (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Le Mans)—and its astonishing scale is matched by the work’s theatrical force, which is unique in Valentin’s oeuvre.

The visual narrative closely adheres to the biblical text:

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. (Matt. 27: 27–31)

This Christ is abandoned, scorned, mocked, his “scarlet robe” highlighting his nudity. Valentin seems intent on depicting each distinct humiliation. One of the soldiers from the garrison sets the crown of thorns on his head, while another, the youngest, strikes him violently with a cane. Two other henchmen, kneeling at his feet, have come to salute him in mockery as “King of the Jews”: they remove their hats, bow before him, praise his triumph, and hold out a little reed cane to serve as a scepter. Still others comment on the parody with multiple signs and gestures.

The artist avails himself of the rhetoric of grand-scale history painting: hyper-expressive figures, codified gestures, and exaggerated action. The tight lips of the

torturer striking Jesus indicate the excessive effort he expends to perform his part. The near comic expression of the commentator, eyes wide and mouth agape, is accompanied by the traditional gesture of *demonstratio*, fist closed and thumb extended (in accordance with the repertoire of gestures in Bulwer 1644, pp. 77, 95). The soldier to the left of Christ is mimicking a tribute, both by his kneeling posture and by the gesture of his large open hand, making a sign of victory (*ibid.*, pp. 79, 90). That hand, illuminated from behind, creates a remarkable theatrical effect, borrowed directly from Caravaggio’s *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew* in San Luigi dei Francesi and the *Conversion of Saint Paul* in Santa Maria del Popolo. Only Christ is impassive, his expression full of restraint. He submits resignedly to the humiliations and torments, absorbed in meditation on the Passion and his sacrifice for the salvation of humankind.

The violent chiaroscuro orchestrates the overall turmoil of the scene, the better to highlight the luminous and immobile body of Jesus. Figures are packed into the foreground, center stage. Each of them, with the exception of the timeless Christ, seems frozen in the instant of his action. The painter plays subtly on that binary: Christ and the tormentors, immobility and agitation, his humility and their crude violence. Thirty years later, in *Christ and the Adulteress* (Musée du Louvre), Nicolas Poussin would use a similar play of contrasts to render, in a completely different register, the profound humanity of the sinful woman as a perfect antithesis to the blind ugliness of the men surrounding her, stones at the ready.

The *Crowning with Thorns* is surely among the great compositions of Valentin’s first phase (1609/1614–22). The familiar arrangement of a frieze in “high relief” is on view here, as are the articulations among distinct groups and the sculptural figures, inherited from Jusepe de Ribera (cat. 3) and characteristic of that period. They bring to mind the similar solutions Valentin developed at the same moment in *Christ and the Adulteress* (cat. 16) and the *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), in which an antique block is used as intermediary. The *Denial of Saint Peter*, it may be noted, has the same unusual dimensions as the painting in question here (the difference of a few centimeters is the result of later additions), which led



Roberto Longhi (in *Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* 1951, p. 97, no. 181) to suggest they might be pendants.

Even as he takes on the format of a large history painting, Valentin accentuates the effects “from life,” reemploying the features of his favorite models. The soldier with wide-open eyes, for example, is also found in *David with the Head of Goliath* (cat. 8) and in the *Denial of Saint Peter*. Valentin pauses to depict, one by one, the locks of hair falling loose against the cheek of the soldier who kneels to the left of Jesus, as well as the thinning hair on his scalp. With the same acuity of observation, he paints the crown with small thorns circling the head of Christ, and the gauntlet, typical of the era.

The “sharp graphics” of these details (Cuzin 1975, p. 57), the thick paint, and the harsh light that starkly models the volumes—specific to that first phase—attest close kinship to the art of Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri). Compare the gloves of Valentin’s tormentor with those of Cecco’s soldier, scrupulously pulling arrows out of Saint Sebastian’s body (cat. 1): the same meticulousness, the same sharp outlines, and a similar attention to the effects of light characterize them both. In this first large *storia sacra* by Valentin, then, Ribera and Cecco, the pair who profoundly marked his early days in Rome, are united.

The earliest certain mention of the picture (as a work by Caravaggio) is in the inventory of the collection of Baron Wiser, drawn up in Naples in 1713, where the dimensions—in Neapolitan *palmi*—are equivalent to 172 x 238 centimeters and thus acceptably close to the present picture (see Garas and Nyerges 2009, pp. 584, 588, 590). Because Baron Wiser is known to have

purchased a number of pictures from the Filomarino collection in Naples, it is worth noting that in 1627—in Rome—Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino (1583–1666) had acquired a *Crowning with Thorns* by Valentin that measured 8 *palmi*, which is equivalent to 179 centimeters in Roman *palmi* (see the discussion in cat. 37). In the 1685 inventory of the Filomarino collection, the picture is described as a pendant to *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac* (cat. 44) and of the same dimensions, 5 x 7 Neapolitan *palmi*, which is 132 x 185 centimeters (see Lorizzo 2006, pp. 34, III, II7, doc. 9, p. 144, n. 19). The picture was thus smaller as well as later in date than the one Baron Wiser owned. AL

Provenance: Baron Heinrich Franz Xavier Wiser of the Palatinate and Neuburg, Naples (by 1713–50?; inv. 1713, no. 4, as “La Coronazione di Christo con molti manigoldi mano di Michel Angelo . . . di palmi 6½ avvantaggiati d’altezza e palmi 9 avvantaggiati di lunghezza p. traverso”; Karl Philip (d. 1742) and/or Karl Theodor (d. 1799), Prince Electors Palatine and from 1777 Duke of Bavaria, Residence, Mannheim (1750?–99; inv. 1780, no. 120, as by “Bartholomaeus Manfredi”); his cousin Max Joseph, Duke of Zweibrücken and, from 1806, as Maximilian I, King of Bavaria, Munich (1799–d. 1825); Wittelsbach Collection, Munich (from 1825)

Selected References: *Pfälzische Merkwürdigkeiten* 1786, p. 22, no. 295; *Description . . . la Residence de Mannheim* 1794, no. 295; von Mannlich 1805, no. 783; Thienemann 1823, no. 748; Voss 1924, p. 454; *Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* 1951, p. 97, no. 180; Longhi 1958, p. 61; von Hohenzollern and Soehner 1972, p. 60, no. 477 (with bibliography); Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 64, no. 6; Nicolson 1989, p. 202; an der Heiden 1998, p. 556; Luis Nieto Fernández in Bacariza Domínguez and Nieto Fernández 2008, pp. 134, 140; Garas and Nyerges 2009, p. 590; Siefert 2009, p. 125

13. Return of the Prodigal Son, ca. 1615–16

59 x 70 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (150 x 178 cm)

Museo della Venerabile Arciconfraternita della Misericordia, Florence

The well-known parable told by Jesus of the prodigal son derives from Luke 15:11–32 and may be briefly encapsulated as follows: The younger of two sons demands his inheritance, squanders it through dissipated living, and then, repentant, returns for forgiveness to his father, who rejoices to see him, garbs him in rich clothes, and celebrates with lavish festivities, “For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” The parable was the subject of an elaborate interpretation by Saint Augustine (Sermon 112A). For its exemplary presentation of the concepts of contrition, forgiveness, and redemption, it became a popular subject in the seventeenth century, in music as well as in painting (for compositions for Filippo Neri’s Oratory, see Alaleona 1908, pp. 325–29, 334–44). Guercino treated the subject on four occasions, each time with a somewhat different emphasis (see Ebert-Schifferer 1992, pp. 83–87), sometimes opting for an almost genre-like approach, at other times treating the subject as a moral exemplum.

With his keen interest in the human dimension of his subjects, Valentin focuses on the moment of reunion. Dressed in rags, the prodigal son bows before his father, his face a study in bewilderment. The father—a patriarchal figure of enormous presence—gazes at his son with an expression of deep compassion and spreads his arms in a gesture of embrace. Two servants have already arrived with a rich red brocade doublet, while to the left is the reflective figure of the older brother, who, according to the parable, was disconcerted to see the return of his younger sibling so lavishly feted.

Valentin here experiments with several narrative devices that he will continue to develop throughout his career. The scene is staged as a drama in which the viewer is an active participant: not only do the two servants look out at the viewer, but also the pose and position of the back-viewed prodigal son effectively link the viewer’s space with the fictive space of the picture, divided at the back by a wall and open view of the sky, by which we understand that the prodigal son has journeyed from the countryside to his father’s house. The meticulous modeling of the son’s orange pants endows the figure with a quality of physical presence. It is clear that Valentin has studied carefully one of the assisting figures in Caravaggio’s *Crucifixion of Saint Peter*

in the Cerasi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo. In that work, Caravaggio, like Valentin does here, employed a back-viewed figure set diagonally to the picture plane to draw in the viewer. However, in a fashion that became a constant, Valentin crops the figure in a seemingly arbitrary way that further emphasizes the continuity of the fictive space with that of the viewer: the prodigal son becomes a surrogate for the viewer, thereby increasing the picture’s dramatic impact. On the right side of the composition can be found a sequence of forms—the pants of the prodigal, the green legging and extended hand of the servant, and the complex shape of the red doublet—that testifies to a newfound mastery.

It is difficult to understand the reservations occasionally voiced about the picture’s quality (for which, see Gianni Papi in Papi 2010a, p. 272). What is singular is the unusual emphasis on broadly painted surfaces, with white impastoed highlights. While certain features, such as the rendering of the curved fingers of the servant and the figure of the older brother (reminiscent of the cheat in the *Cardsharps*, cat. 6), recall representations by Bartolomeo Manfredi, it is to the work of the so-called Master of the Judgment of Solomon—that is, the young Jusepe de Ribera—that the painting is chiefly indebted, as astutely noted by Monica Bietti (in *Misericordia di Firenze* 1981, p. 282). Valentin has studied carefully both Ribera’s boldness of execution and the way the relationships among the figures animate the pictorial space and give dramatic moment to the story. These are traits he will develop further in the great *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14), which marks a further meditation on Ribera’s works. But in the *Return of the Prodigal Son*, Valentin perhaps first gives evidence of his gifts as a narrative artist.

Although dating Valentin’s early paintings is largely a matter of conjecture, the picture was surely painted prior to Ribera’s departure from Rome in May 1616. Indeed, as we now know that Ribera had been active in Rome since 1606 (see G. Porzio and D’Alessandro 2015), the careers of other Caravaggesque painters require renewed analysis. Valentin was surely among the most acute students of the Spaniard’s work. In fact, Bietti suggested that Valentin employed the same mustached young model for the servant displaying the doublet that we find at the far right of Ribera’s *Judgment of Solomon* (Galleria Borghese, Rome), and then again as the apostle





Fig. 56. Valentin de Boulogne (or copy after). *Soldiers Casting Dice for Christ's Robe*, ca. 1615–16. Oil on canvas, 68 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 92 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (175 x 235 cm). Private collection

Thomas in an *Apostolado* for Pedro Cosida, the agent of the Spanish King Philip III in Rome. Be that as it may, in that figure of Ribera's can be found similarities for Valentin's handling of the brush and the brilliant white highlights. Valentin's picture was perhaps a response to a work such as Ribera's *Christ among the Doctors* (church of Saint Martin, Langres), suggesting a date as precocious as about 1615–16.

It has not been commented upon but is worth noting that, virtually contemporary with this picture, Valentin painted another in which soldiers, seated around a table, throw dice for Christ's cloak, which is shown as a brilliant red garment spread out in the foreground (fig. 56). Were these two pictures possibly conceived as complementary? In the sermon noted above, Saint Augustine interprets the robe the prodigal

is given with the one "which Adam had lost by sinning. . . . Which is the hope of immortality in baptism." He then goes on to comment that a fatted calf be killed, "that is, for his son to be admitted to the table at which Christ who was slain is fed upon" (Hill 1992, p. 157). The subjects of the two pictures are not, therefore, without a possible thematic and theological relationship, though it is far from clear whether this was Valentin's intention and who would have been responsible for suggesting a connection other than a formal one.

The provenance of the *Prodigal Son* before 1873 remains uncertain, though there is a strong likelihood that, as Marina Mojana (1989, p. 70) suggested, it can be identified with a painting described in the 1635 inventory of the collection of Carlo Emanuele di Savoia in Turin: "615. Il figliol prodigo, cinque figure intere. Del Valentino, modern, Buono. A.p. 3 L. p. 4" (about 154 x 205 cm; see Baudi di Vesme 1897, p. 58). Roberto Longhi saw the picture when it was in the Sala collection, and his attribution of it to Valentin has, with some rare reservations, been universally accepted. The picture has been cleaned for the exhibition (my thanks to Muriel Vervat). KC

Provenance: Sebastiano Martini Bernardi, Florence (until 1873; inv. 1854: "Un quadro in tela rappresentante il figliol prodigo . . ."); Eugenio Bruschi, Florence (1873, through the dealer Tebaldo Baldi); his great-granddaughter, Nerina Bruschi-Sala, Florence, by whose husband, Umberto Sala, bequeathed to the Museo della Venerabile Arciconfraternita della Misericordia, Florence (1969)

Selected References: Longhi 1958, p. 61; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Monica Bietti in *Misericordia di Firenze* 1981, pp. 281–82, no. 95; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 70, no. 9; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Gianni Papi in Papi 2010a, p. 272, no. 77

14. Denial of Saint Peter, ca. 1615–17

67½ x 94⅞ in. (171.5 x 241 cm)

Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi, Florence

The picture, the subject of which depends on the Gospel of John 18:17–27 (but see also Matt. 26:69–75), is described in verse in Pietro Mellini's 1681 *Relazione delle Pitture migliori di Casa Melini* (see Mellini 1681 [2015 ed., fols. 2v–3r]):

In the atrium of Pilate, near a glowing fire,
Peter is pointed out by the Maidservant
As he tells the lie about not following his Master.

It was painted by Monsieur Valentin
And we see a boisterous group of soldiers
Playing with dice on a table.

(“Nell'atrio di Pilato al fuoco ardente
Pietro scoperto dall'Ancilla al dito
A cui seguire il suo Maestro ei mente

Da Monsiù Valentin fù colorito,
Ove presso a giocar sul desco ai dadi
Si mira di soldati un stuolo ardito”)

Pietro Mellini inherited the picture from his uncle together with other paintings that had been acquired by Giovanni Battista Mellini (1591–1627). A lawyer and dean of the university of Rome, Giovanni Battista by the time of his death had assembled a notable collection of 166 paintings that he divided between his residence in Piazza Navona, Rome, and a villa at Monte Mario (Nicolai 2012). No less a connoisseur than Giulio Mancini, in his *Viaggio per Roma per vedere le pitture*, noted the “many good modern pictures” to be seen in the *vigna dell'illustrissimo Mellini* (Mancini 1623–24 [1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 267]). Among the paintings Mellini had amassed was a conspicuous group of pictures by Caravaggesque artists. In addition to the Valentin, they included two works by Bartolomeo Manfredi—a painting of Saints Peter and Paul and another of David with the head of Goliath (see Nicolai 2012, p. 220; Nicolai 2010, p. 205).

Whether and at what point he acquired these pictures cannot be said, though Fausto Nicolai (2012, p. 223) has noted that Mellini possessed a notable collection of antiquities (see Santolini 2007). He further points out that Valentin's inclusion of an ancient architectural fragment on which the soldiers are playing an illicit game with three dice (see the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue) could suggest a commission.

Certainly, the fragment would have appealed to Giovanni Battista's antiquarian interests, especially as the figures on the fragment derive from two of three terracotta plaques that belonged to the Farnese (Musée du Louvre; Campana 1842, vol. 2, pls. LX–LXII; see Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997). Together, these plaques formed a frieze showing (1) the wedding of Peleus and his veiled bride Thetis (fig. 60); (2) Hercules bearing on his shoulder a bullock and an allegorical figure of Winter (fig. 57); and (3) allegorical figures of the remaining seasons. The plaque with Hercules and the figure of Winter was already much admired in the sixteenth century: drawings and engravings after it are known and it must have existed in various examples and casts (see Deswarte-Rosa 2006, pp. 17–19). Sodoma, for one, owned a terracotta version, described in the inventory drawn up after his death, and a plaster cast appears in Michiel Sweerts's *A Painter's Studio* (fig. 23), as part of a painter's workshop material. The plaque of Peleus and Thetis, from which Valentin has taken the third figure of his relief, was no less celebrated. It appears in Pietro Santi Bartoli's 1693 compendium, the *Admiranda Romanorum Antiquitatum*, with notes by Giovan Pietro Bellori, the great apologist



Fig. 57. *Hercules and the Allegory of Winter*. Roman, 1st century A.D. Terracotta, 23⅝ x 22 in. (60 x 56 cm). Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. CP 4170)

for Annibale Carracci and Nicolas Poussin, and drawings after it were created for Cassiano dal Pozzo's *Museo Cartaceo* (see Maria Grazia Marzi in *Idea del bello* 2000, vol. 2, p. 539, nos. 17, 18). What is notable is the appearance of figures from the Farnese plaques as reliefs on discarded architectural fragments in works as diverse as Orazio Borgianni's *Saint Charles Borromeo Adoring the Holy Trinity* (San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, Rome), Nicolas Tournier's *Denial of Saint Peter* (High Museum of Art, Atlanta), and Valentin's *Concert with a Bas-Relief* (cat. 23). In the case of Borgianni's altarpiece, their inclusion could be intended as a reference to paganism supplanted by the revelation of the Christian saint. But such an iconographic meaning seems less germane in the case of the other two canvases. Regarding Valentin's *Concert*, Annick Lemoine (in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, p. 269) has plausibly suggested an erudite, antiquarian allusion to the precariousness of human existence, subject to the vagaries of Fortune. However, we must consider whether Valentin here rejects, in a visually polemical fashion, the paradigm of Beauty offered by the idealist style of classical Greece and Rome. Instead, he favors the example of Nature and painting *dal naturale*—a visual assertion of Caravaggio's famous dismissal (recorded by Bellori) of the example of ancient art by declaring that Nature had provided him with sufficient models. At the very least, Valentin sets up a contrast between two different modes of narration, with his description of the biblical event shown as a contemporary drama unfolding before the viewer's eyes.

Valentin's model for his narrative treatment was unquestionably one of the masterpieces of Jusepe de Ribera, the *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 3), which in the eighteenth century was actually ascribed to Valentin (see Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 56–58; Papi 2002, pp. 37–38; Spinosa 2008, p. 327, no. A41; Gianni Papi in Spinosa 2011, pp. 148, 150). In that work Ribera signally transformed the compact, three-figure composition by Caravaggio in the Metropolitan Museum—well known in Rome shortly after its execution in 1609–10 (see Nicolai and Gandolfi 2011)—into a richly populated narrative juxtaposing a genre-like scene of soldiers gambling around a table with the principal action of the maid accusing Saint Peter. Building on Ribera's model, Valentin further enriches the human dimension of the story by introducing the triad of intervening soldier, accusing maid, and Peter, apprehended while attempting to remain inconspicuous by warming his hands over burning coals. An apparently chance recognition by a stranger has suddenly shifted the narrative in a different

direction, entrapping Peter. This impression of life as a rapidly and unpredictably evolving drama is further enhanced by the soldier throwing dice, with one die shown in mid-air and the other just about to hit the table. The incidental shadow cast by his hand has the effect of an ominous emblem of the fickleness of fortune; is a demonstration of Valentin's interest in the optics of cast shadows; and is, as well, a poignant reminder to the viewer that beneath the Cross soldiers will again cast lots for Christ's tunic—the subject of another, exactly contemporary and equally inventive picture (see Mojana 1989, p. 66, no. 7; fig. 56).

Although Valentin's composition retains some of the planar arrangement and the rugged-featured figures found in Ribera's canvas, there is a more episodic treatment in their grouping and a brilliant sense of interval. Given the close relationship to Ribera's work, Valentin's canvas may date as early as about 1615–17, and if this is so the painting would then assume a key role in the treatments of the theme by Manfredi and, especially, of Tournier. (For a discussion of Manfredi's *Denial of Saint Peter* in the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig, which dates from 1618, see Papi 2013a, pp. 175–76, no. 39; for Tournier, see Axel Hémerly in Hilaire and Hémerly 2012, p. 186). Longhi (1958, p. 65) reasonably noted that it was in this and closely related works that “Valentin succeeded in discovering a territory still unexplored in the realm of Caravaggesque ‘naturalism’: a complex truthfulness characterized by a mimetic approach that is both violent and affecting.” KC

Provenance: Giovanni Battista Mellini (until 1627; inv. 1627); his uncle Cardinal Giovanni Garzia Mellini, villa in Monte Mario, Rome (1627–29; inv. 1629, as “un quadro lungo dieci palmi incirca [about 223 cm] dove S. Pietro si scaldava”); Urbano Mellini III, Palazzo di Roma, Rome (1629–67; inv. 1667); his nephew Pietro Mellini, Palazzo del Rosario, Rome (1667–94; inv. 1680, as “San Pietro, che si scalda al foco, scoperto dall’Ancella, che stà ad una tavola assieme con cinque soldati, che giocano a dadi stà in tela di palmi dieci di larghezza, e sette d’altezza originale eccellentissimo di Monsù Valentino”); Cardinal Mario Mellini IV (inv. 1732, 1738); private collection, Milan (by 1943); Vittorio Fascione, Florence (by 1951; exhib. Milan 1951); Zecchini collection, Milan (by 1958); Roberto Longhi, Florence (acquired in the 1960s)

Selected References: Longhi 1943 (1999 ed., p. 50, n. 80); *Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* 1951, p. 97, no. 181; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pls. II, XVII; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 58, 244 (French ed., pp. 56, 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 58; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, pp. 19–20, 62, no. 5; Nicolson 1989, p. 203; Fagiolo dell’Arco 1997; Nicolai 2004, p. 462; Mina Gregori in *Caravaggio e l’Europa* 2005, p. 302, no. IV.8; Fernández-Santos Ortiz-Iribas 2008, p. 519; Gregori in Gregori, Bandera, and Banzato 2009, pp. 142, 144, no. 33; Gregori in Gregori 2010, p. 56, no. 19; Ierrobino 2010, p. 200; Nicolai 2010, p. 205; Nicolai 2012, pp. 221–23; Fried 2016, pp. 92, 96–97





15. Fortune-Teller with Soldiers, ca. 1618–20

58⁷/₈ x 93⁷/₈ in. (149.5 x 238.5 cm)

Toledo Museum of Art, Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment,
Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey (1981.53)

The *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers* is important in that it constitutes the culmination of research both formal and conceptual and brings to conclusion the series of paintings done between about 1614 and 1620, a short period that, in my opinion, was inaugurated by the *Cardsharps* of Dresden (cat. 6) and *Concert with Three Figures* in Chatsworth (fig. 1), during which Valentin experimented with genre scenes of Roman lowlife. The present painting is impressive, first, for its dimensions, which are larger than those works previously devoted to such mundane subjects (cats. 10, 11). The composition has become more complex while gaining in power and unity. Unlike those earlier paintings, where some struggling remains evident, Valentin manages here to articulate the multiple actions and numerous characters in a harmonious arrangement. The construction of space is subtly calculated, but the composition remains tight and dense. Hence the Roman architectural fragment that serves as a table, though it may at first appear to be shown frontally, actually is angled to create a quality of depth submerged in darkness. In front of that stone block, a soldier, seen from the back, defines two groups of figures, arranged to either side along two diagonals: on one side, the palm reader and her cohorts; on the other, the group of soldiers, one of whom offers his hand to be read. The different parts work together to produce a supple harmonious rhythm, with the figures fluidly articulated one with the other; the succession of different faces and gestures, illuminated by splashes of light, guide one's gaze. At either end, a character appeals directly to the beholder: look at us, he seems to say.

The clarity of the overall composition and the assemblage of the scenes and figures are once again related to the prototypes of Jusepe de Ribera and the inventions of Caravaggio. The pivotal figure, seated on a stool with his back to the viewer, is borrowed directly from Caravaggio's masterpiece the *Calling of Saint Matthew* in the Contarelli Chapel, a quotation that makes this parentage explicit. After several earlier attempts (cats. 10, 11), Valentin has now made this figure a tour de force, creating the impression that, placed in the very foreground, he projects beyond the picture field into the viewer's space, even though he also has a role in creating a sense of depth. The hand clutching the

stool projects into the viewer's space, while the other hand is placed in front of him on the stone block, so that the figure, seen from the back, spreads out along an oblique line. One can only admire the virtuoso foreshortening of each of the crimson sleeves, treated as autonomous entities. The lesson of Caravaggio and the interpretations of Ribera, pondered at length, are now assimilated and mastered: Valentin deploys them with as much assurance in a genre scene as in an episode from the Gospels, such as the *Denial of Saint Peter* (cat. 14).

Like his contemporaries Bartolomeo Manfredi and Simon Vouet, Valentin moved beyond the models provided by Caravaggio's fortune-tellers and cardsharps (on this subject, see cats. 6, 9, 10, 11), depicting the shady world of the Roman tavern and its vices. Several registers intermingle, related as much to the painter's daily life—that of the gambling dens he frequented, according to his biographers—as to the world of theater and its comic devices. Valentin is still working here with the repertoire of farce, but at the same time he explores the psychological reflections ultimately prompted by these tribulations. In this respect the painting constitutes both a culmination and a new phase. It shows how Valentin early on shared the inquiries and research of his fellow painters. The Toledo canvas stands midway between Manfredi's already melancholic *Fortune-Teller* in the Detroit Institute of Arts (alternatively dated between 1605 and 1610 or about 1615, or even 1619–22: see Hartje 2004, pp. 333–35; Papi 2013a, pp. 182–83, no. 47) and the burlesque *Fortune-Teller* of Vouet (fig. 9), the first version of which, painted for Cassiano dal Pozzo, is dated 1617—an invaluable fact when one realizes that, with rare exceptions, Caravaggesque paintings do not bear dates. Because of this chronological uncertainty, it is difficult to identify precisely the direction of the influences, echoes, and adaptations, but it is no longer possible, as Gianni Papi reminds us in his essay in this catalogue, to affirm without qualifications the precedence of Manfredi's inventions, as has been done in earlier historiography. No doubt the developments of the years 1610–20 must be understood as a succession of parallel inventions resulting from a continuous emulation on the part of artists marked by the audacity of Caravaggio: Manfredi, Vouet, and Gerrit van Honthorst, but also Valentin.

The principal scene in the Toledo painting, the palm-reading episode, is clearly related to the vogue for *zingaresche*, burlesque comedies centered on the figure of the gypsy woman, or *zingara*, which enjoyed a brilliant success in the Rome of the 1610s and 1620s (see cats. 10, 24, and Bonfait 2008). To this classic subject, Valentin, like his fellows, adds other topoi from contemporary comedy: the theme of the double theft, of the cheater cheated, and of the intrigue within the intrigue. The actors are stock characters from genre scenes: the idle soldier and the swaggering rogue, like Brighella, the commedia dell'arte knave and thief. Portrayed as a caricature, concealed in his baggy coat and wearing the familiar slashed red beret of Valentin's early canvases, he is stealing the gypsy woman's rooster while, with a finger to his mouth and looking directly at us, he enjoins us to keep quiet. The beholder, having become complicit by means of that ploy, is now one of the mischief makers, as well as a victim of the painter. Deceit and innocence are not always where one expects to find them. The artist deliberately introduces a role reversal between the fortune-teller, the object of the theft, and the little girl, no longer naive but already corrupt, who discreetly steals from the official thief. Or perhaps this precocious scoundrel is simply a young bohemian, identifiable by her cloak, knotted at the shoulder, and the detail of the portable grill that she carries in her woven basket—a sign of homelessness, of living on society's margins (Burke 1987).

Juxtaposed to these theatrical effects are features taken from reality—the *mise-en-scène*, the quality of immediacy of the figures, and the many details observed from life. Similarly, the burlesque coexists alongside the psychological description of the figures, whose introspective expressions invite a meditation on the pleasures of the senses, on fraud, even on the whims of fate. The singularity of Valentin's inventiveness in this first phase of his career lies precisely in the interaction between these two opposing models—theatrical and introspective, burlesque and contemplative—without undermining in the least the unity and harmony of the painting. AL

Provenance: Sir Robert Strange, Great Queen Street, London (until 1772; sale, Christie's, London, February 20–23, 1772, no. 115, as Caravaggio); Sir George Colebrook, London (1772–74; sale, Christie's, London, April 23, 1774, no. 43); Charles Manners, fourth duke of Rutland, Belvoir Castle, Derbyshire (1774–87); the Dukes of Rutland (1787–1926; sale, Christie's, London, April 16, 1926, no. 7; Blaker (1926–29); The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (1929–53; sale, Sotheby's, London, July 1, 1953, no. 157, as Valentin); private collection, Britain (1953–81); acquired through Colnaghi, London, by the Toledo Museum of Art

Selected References: Nichols 1795–1815, vol. 2, pt. 1 (1795), p. 71; Eller 1841, p. 256; Waagen 1854, vol. 3, p. 400; Longhi 1958, pp. 62–63; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 160 (French ed., p. 166); Cuzin 1977, pp. 30–31; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Rosenberg 1982a, pp. 325–26, no. 106; Wright 1985, p. 269; Cuzin 1987, p. 42; Jean-Pierre Cuzin in *Dopo Caravaggio* 1987, p. 122; Mojana 1989, p. 60, no. 4; Nicolson 1989, p. 205; Damiano and Etheridge 2011, p. 316, no. 16; Etheridge 2011, pp. 170–73; Fried 2011, pp. 107, 110–13, 115; Vodret 2011c, p. 90; Fried 2016, pp. 74, 81, 95

16. Christ and the Adulteress, ca. 1618–22

65³/₄ x 87¹/₈ in. (167 x 221.3 cm)

J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (83.PA.259)

The subject derives from John 8:3–11 and concerns a confrontation between Christ and the Pharisees, who present him with a woman accused of adultery. By Mosaic law she should be stoned. Asked his judgment, Christ “stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.” (In *Tractate* 33 on the Gospel of John, Saint Augustine explained, “For the law was written with the finger of God; but written on stone because of the hard-hearted. The Lord now wrote on the ground, because He was seeking fruit.”) When pressed further, Christ responded, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a

stone at her.’ And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one.” Finding himself alone with the woman, he asked where her accusers had gone, declared that he would not judge her, but instructed her to “go, and sin no more.”

The narrative had a strong visual tradition both north of the Alps (Cranach and Bruegel, for example) and south, especially in Venice, where there are examples by every major sixteenth-century painter from Titian to Tintoretto and Veronese. It was treated by Guercino about 1621 (Dulwich Picture Gallery), and also by Pietro da Cortona



for the decoration of the gallery in Palazzo Mattei, a project to which Valentin also contributed (cat. 26).

Guercino and Cortona depicted the confrontation between Christ and the Pharisees. By contrast, Valentin focused on the encounter between Christ and the woman. His approach combines simplicity with eloquence, and employs glance rather than gesture, lending psychological depth. Anchoring the composition is a soldier who, inclining forward, indicates the woman to Christ. His two companions—one, fully armed, reaching behind his back for his sword, the other standing somewhat apart—frame the left side of the composition. Each stares downward, toward Christ. They are balanced by three figures on the right whose attention is directed, again, at Christ and what he has written, which, significantly, we do not see, since the figures are cut off mid-calf. The Pharisee holds his spectacles to his eyes, intent on the enigmatic words Christ has traced out. According to Saint Ambrose they were a condemnation taken from Jer. 22:29–30: “O Earth, Earth, Write these men deposed”; see Ambrose’s Letter 25.4, in Walford 1881, p. 183). The figure directly behind Christ has the appearance and dress of an apostle, clearly astonished at the proceedings, while the other, who wears a fur cap, must be a spectator. Grouped in a semicircle conspicuously open at the front so as to implicate the viewer—a device Ribera had used in his *Resurrection of Lazarus* (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid)—these figures effectively set off Christ and the woman.

The theme thus focuses on the forgiveness of Christ. Caught in flagrante, the adulteress has been led to judgment with her hands bound and her head bowed in shame. Notably disheveled, she is shown with the bodice of her dress exposing her shoulders and cleavage. Christ, kneeling, looks up at her with grave compassion, his outstretched hand indicating an interrupted action—a favored device of Valentin’s. The biblical story is told in utterly human terms, without recourse to rhetorical gesture or dramatic flourish. Perhaps only in the expression and attitude of the Pharisee do we sense an element of caricature—a figure resembling a stock character of the commedia dell’arte (the charlatan doctor) and notably similar to the old man who greedily examines coins in Caravaggio’s *Calling of Saint Matthew*. The other figures are based on people Valentin knew or models he hired. The soldier at the extreme left looks out at the viewer, finger to nose, in the *Fortune-Teller* (cat. 11). The apostle is the same model who posed for the forgiving father in the *Return of the Prodigal Son* (cat. 13). And the Christ reappears in *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* (cat. 17).

As has been universally recognized (Longhi 1958, p. 65; Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Mojana 1989, p. 72), the picture belongs to that moment, about 1620–22, perhaps when Valentin gains his own, highly distinctive voice, moving beyond the influence of Cecco, Manfredi, and Ribera. As Roberto Longhi noted (1958, p. 65) when he published this picture, the artist’s first, formative phase was followed by a more personal one, “or, better, a real maturity, during which Valentin succeeded in discovering a territory still unexplored in the realm of Caravaggesque ‘naturalism’: a complex truthfulness characterized by a mimetic approach that is both violent and affecting.” His paintings will continue to gain in sophistication, psychological depth, subtlety of color, and sheer mastery with the brush, but the catalyst of his creative instinct, which is a persistent commitment to painting as an exploration of the realities of life—its transient pleasures and the frailties and vain diversions of humankind—is already in place and fully evident.

A picture of this subject appears in the 1714 post-mortem inventory of the collection of Filippo II Colonna, grand constable of the Kingdom of Naples, in his palace in Rome (“Un quadro in tela dj p.mi otto, e cinque rappresentante l’Adultera avantj al Salvatore originale dj Monsù Valentino con sua cornice negra, e filettj d’oro”; see Safarik 1996, pp. 130, 194, 274). Colonna also owned a painting of four musicians ascribed to Valentin and what is described as a copy of soldiers playing dice. The measurements given for the *Christ and the Adulteress* are five by eight *palmi*, which is equivalent to 112 x 179 centimeters. Although this is considerably smaller than the picture catalogued here, the same is true in other cases where the picture is identifiable. At a sale of paintings at Covent Garden, London, on March 26, 1756, which included the collection of the architect James Gibbs, there appeared under lot 4 “The Woman Taking in Adultery” by Valentin. KC

Provenance: Possibly Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna, Rome (by 1679–89; inv. 1679, no. 245; inv. 1689, no. 966); possibly Filippo II Colonna, Rome (1689–1714; inv. 1714, no. 374); private collection, Rome (by about 1958); private collection, possibly Galleria Levi, Milan (by 1964); private collection, Switzerland (late 1960s–1983); P&D Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., New York (1983); J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (from 1983)
Selected References: Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80; Longhi 1958, pp. 62, 65; Cinotti 1964, pp. 62–65, no. 23; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Rosenberg 1982b, p. 44; Fredericksen 1985, p. 265; Mojana 1989, p. 72, no. 10; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Hall 1992, p. 58; Serres 2003, p. 83; Cuzin 2010, p. 167; Melasecchi 2010, p. 735



17. Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple, ca. 1618–22

76⁷/₈ x 102³/₈ in. (195 x 260 cm)

Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (inv. 1261)

This is Valentin's most ambitious early composition, combining a large format, a rare subject rehabilitated by the Catholic reform (see Pigler 1974, vol. 1, pp. 332–35; Gabriele Finaldi in Davies 2003, p. 87), no fewer than twelve figures, and above all, a violent action. He set out to narrate the biblical drama from life (*dal naturale*). Jesus, having just arrived in Jerusalem, went to the temple and “cast out all them that sold and bought” there; “he had made a scourge of small cords” and “overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves.” “It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves” (Mat. 21:11–13 and John 2:14–16).

Valentin, and before him Cecco del Caravaggio (fig. 2; Papi 2001, pp. 115–17, no. 4) and Bartolomeo Manfredi (cat. 2), also treated the theme, each taking as their point of departure Caravaggio's *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew* (fig. 28), readapted to the imperatives of a painting for a private patron. Cecco conveyed the panic of the protagonists and the movement of the crowd without replicating a comparable effect of dramatic and climactic intensity. Manfredi produced a masterful interpretation, condensed and measured, its violence attenuated by a naturalism marked by “greater subtlety, harmony, and gentleness” (*più fine, unione e dolcezza*), in the words of Giulio Mancini (ca. 1617–21 [1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 251]).

Valentin goes further. Like Caravaggio, Valentin renders a moment of violence, endowing it with the illusion of contemporaneity and implicating the viewer, as though the biblical episode were unfolding before our eyes. But, as noted by Joachim von Sandrart (1675 [1925 ed., p. 256]), who knew the painter well, Valentin did not intend to bow to any master. In unprecedented fashion, he combined the example of Caravaggio and the great tradition of Venetian painting, while simultaneously meditating on the credo of the Carracci: to represent an action and the passions so that the image is immediately comprehensible (Bellori 1672 [1976 ed., p. 319]). Valentin thus made his mark as a major exponent and not merely an interpreter of the renewal of painting in early seventeenth-century Rome.

Like Caravaggio, Valentin frames his composition with realistically rendered figures who draw the viewer

into the scene. Their function is twofold. Knocked down and arbitrarily cropped, they are spectacularly foreshortened, as though embodiments of the unfolding violence. At the same time, through the cropping, Valentin expands the pictorial space so as to encompass the viewer. Moving beyond Caravaggio, his interests seem close to those that fascinated the young Gian Lorenzo Bernini (his *David* in the Galleria Borghese, Rome). As in the *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew*, the drama climaxes in a face-off, here between Christ—monumental and livid, brandishing his whip, ready to strike—and his victim, shown off-balance, leaning against the table while protecting his face with a raised arm. The confrontation, shifted to the left and based on a play of parallels and oppositions, is particularly effective. “Everything collapses and topples over” (Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 134 [French ed.]).

The French painter grounds his composition, worthy of Veronese, in an asymmetrical and highly dynamic structure: “The menacing Christ occupies by himself a large triangle of shadow while heads and legs are scattered about on the opposite side, in a grid pattern enlivened by large obliques” (Thuillier 1958, p. 33). To the techniques of the great tradition of Venetian painting, Valentin adds the rhetoric of grandiloquent gestures and exaggerated facial expressions—gaping mouths, wide-open eyes, spread hands—borrowed this time from Guido Reni or Domenichino. By contrast, the specifically Caravaggesque lighting enhances the drama and violence, individualizing the gestures and expressions of terror, while accentuating the obliques that run across the canvas and enliven the scene. Valentin also adds features of everyday reality to the drama to give it a specific temporality. There are details and effects drawn directly from the Bible: the doves, the overturned table, and the whip made of cords, but also the bright red crests of the roosters, the shadow cast by the basket on the young girl's head, and the crimson beret—one of the painter's favored accessories. The drama is thus made tangible and the biblical narrative proximate. Familiar models, such as the old man with the long beard, are used while poses and types are liberally quoted: from Michelangelo for the menacing gesture of Christ; Caravaggio for the child with gaping mouth and wide-open eyes (fig. 28); Caravaggio again for the



knocked-over merchant (*Conversion of Saint Paul*, Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome); Jusepe de Ribera, for the two old women who seem to be conversing in the background (*Judgment of Solomon*, Galleria Borghese, Rome); and Manfredi for the white cap of one of them (cat. 2).

In one final nod, in the center of the canvas, empty and dark, are faintly seen the heads of two observers of the drama being played out in front of them. They become mirrors for the viewer's gaze. Could the man staring out at the beholder be considered, as in Caravaggio, a self-portrait? The face is too fragmentary, too deliberately concealed in the half-light, for one to decide.

The work was unknown before the mid-nineteenth century, when it was in the Fesch collection in Rome, singled out for its "great boldness," "powerful color scheme," and "admirable" expressions (inv. 1841, no. 1863). Valentin treated the subject at least three times: in this first version, which can be understood as a manifesto of sorts; in a composition listed, it seems, in the royal Spanish collections of the Alcázar in 1666, together with a *Last Supper* and a *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* (see cat. 19); and in a third version, produced in the late 1620s (cat. 40). AL

Provenance: Cardinal Joseph Fesch, Palazzo Falconieri, quarta camera, Rome (d. 1839; postmortem inv. 1839, no. 14341: "Quadro in tela alto piedi sei, largo piedi otto rappresentante Gesù Cristo che discaccia i profanatori dal tempio di Valentin ritoccato scudi quattrocento 400," expertised); his estate (1839–45; inv. 1841, no. 1863: "Jésus Christ chassant les marchands du Temple; l'ensemble de cette belle scène est d'une grande hardiesse, et d'un puissant coloris: les expressions en sont admirables. Ce tableau est du Valentin"; sale, Rome, March 17–18, 1845, no. 438-1863; Galleria del Monte di Pietà, Rome (1845–95; sale, Monte di Pietà, Rome, 1857, no. 1261/1920: "Mosé Valentin. Gesù che discaccia li profani dal Tempio," unsold; sale, Monte di Pietà, Rome, 1875, no. 320/1920; unsold); purchased in 1895 for the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome

Selected References: *Galerie de feu S. E. le Cardinal Fesch 1844–45*, pt. 3 (1844), p. 85, no. 438-1863; Voss 1924, p. 455; *Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* 1951, p. 96, no. 178; Longhi 1958, p. 62; Thuillier 1958, pp. 30, 33; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 132, 134, no. 38 (French ed., pp. 134, 136, no. 39); Cuzin 1975, p. 58; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Luna 1980, pp. 4, 5, 8, n. 22; Wright 1985, p. 268; Cuzin 1987, p. 42; Mojana 1989, p. 68, no. 8; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Strinati and Vodret 1998, pp. 29–30; Rossella Vodret in Strinati and Vodret 1999, p. 122, no. 48; Vodret in Mochi Onori and Vodret 2008, pp. 170–71; Fried 2010, pp. 162, 163, 174; Melasecchi 2010, pp. 733–35; Fried 2016, pp. 101–3

18. Portrait of a Prelate, probably Angelo Giori, ca. 1620–23

50³/₈ x 37 in. (128 x 94 cm)

Private collection

Documents and inventories indicate that Valentin painted portraits of various members of the Barberini family and their entourage, including Cardinal Francesco Barberini; his secretary and great antiquarian Cassiano dal Pozzo; the papal buffoon Raffaello Menicucci (cat. 41); and Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino and his brother Scipione. That of Menicucci is the only certain survivor of this group, a circumstance that makes the attribution of the present portrait and the identification of its sitter of exceptional interest. Known as the Montrésor portrait, the picture was introduced into the literature only in 1991, by Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée. He proposed dating it to the period 1628–32—that is, contemporary with Valentin's documented portraits—and concluded, "it is not impossible that the prelate portrayed . . . also belonged to the clan of the papal family; nor is it difficult to

imagine this austere ecclesiastic as a connoisseur, lettered, erudite, and perhaps a patron" (p. 67). Brejon de Lavergnée's attribution and insightful characterization of the sitter are apt, but a more probable date would be about 1620–23, always taking into consideration the problems in attributing and dating portraits, where "resemblance" meant a variety of things. The point of comparison for the firm, almost sculptural modeling of the head and the rich buildup of paint is not with works of the late 1620s, such as the portrait of Raffaello Menicucci, but with the earlier moment of the *Fortune-Teller with Soldiers* in the Toledo Museum of Art (cat. 15). In that work comparisons can be found for the richly modeled head and hands—as, for example, in the soldier with a glass of wine—and the no less painterly treatment of details such as the vellum-bound book with the brilliant description of its hanging laces

(as in the costume of the young girl in the Toledo picture). If this earlier dating is correct, then the portrait assumes notable importance as an indicator of Valentin's emerging clientele.

What about the identity of the sitter? He is dressed in a purplish-aubergine colored robe with a thin collar: the dress of a papal prelate or papal chamberlain. He stands next to a table covered with a green cloth, on which he rests his right hand, and before a green curtain and a receding wall or niche. In his left hand he holds a book or, as Brejon de Lavergnée suggested, a missal. Valentin enlivens this conventional formula, notably employed in Rome by Scipione Pulzone in the 1580s and 1590s, by his emphasis on the sitter's psychological presence and his engagement with the viewer. The prelate directs his proud gaze toward the observer, raising his left eyebrow, his tight lips describing a firmness of character. The force with which he grasps his book, index finger inserted and thumb pressing down on the vellum cover, adds enormously to the characterization.

Loredana Lorizzo (2006, p. 10) proposed an identification of the sitter as Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino, who established himself as a major collector and by 1627 was a patron of Valentin as well as of Simon Vouet and Nicolas Poussin. In 1627 he commissioned from Valentin a *Saint Jerome* and a *Crowning with Thorns*; in 1632 a portrait of his brother Scipione; and in the 1685 inventory of his collection are listed a further four paintings ascribed to Valentin, including, under no. 64, "a portrait of Cardinal Filomarino when he was a prelate" ("Uno Ritratto di palmi 4, e 5 della B.A. del Cardinale Filamarino, quando era Prelato . . .": see Lorizzo 2001, pp. 405, 411; Lorizzo 2006, pp. 34–40, 110). With the election of Maffeo Barberini to the papacy as Urban VIII in 1623, Filomarino was made *cameriere segreto di spada* (papal chamberlain), and the presence of a sword in the picture might allude to this office. Closely allied with Francesco Barberini, whom he accompanied to Spain and France in 1625–26, in 1642 Filomarino moved to Naples to assume his post as archbishop. The problem with this otherwise intriguing identification is that the sitter bears little resemblance to the oval-faced cardinal with prominently curved nose seen in the engraved portraits by Albert Clouvet and Nicolas Perrey. Even less does it resemble the painted portrait by Francesco di Maria in the Palazzo Corsini, Florence. Moreover, if, as seems likely, Lorizzo is correct in thinking that the mosaic portraits of Ascanio and Scipione in the church of Santi Apostoli in Naples are based on Valentin's lost portraits, then the Montrésor picture cannot be the prototype,

since it is quite different from both the mosaic and from Perrey's engraving that clearly derives from the same pictorial source (though the design is reversed).

There is, however, another figure from the Barberini circle whose broad-faced features, wide forehead, and straight, broad nose closely resemble the sitter of the Montrésor portrait, and that is Angelo Giori (1586–1662). A student of Latin and Greek and of canon and civil law, he was appointed tutor of the young Francesco, Taddeo, and Antonio Barberini in 1606. In 1623 he was, like Filomarino, named papal chamberlain to Urban VIII, and in 1643 he was elected cardinal. He, too, became a patron of Valentin, purchasing a *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* in 1627 (fig. 4)—a work he gave to Francesco Barberini—and in 1629 he further acquired a *Saint John the Baptist* and a *Saint Jerome* (cats. 45, 46). He left those two works to the church of Santa Maria in Via, the rebuilding of which he financed in Camerino, where he had undertaken his first studies and to which he remained devoted (for Giori's life, see Feliciangeli 1917; Giordano 2000). That his judgment on artistic matters was highly respected we may glean not only from the 1669 inventory of his collection, with works by Andrea Sacchi, Poussin, Claude Lorrain, Giovanni Lanfranco, Pietro da Cortona, and Valentin, but also from the fact that he was placed in charge of Gian Lorenzo Bernini's tomb of Urban VIII, hosted the great sculptor in Camerino, and, according to his inventory, owned works from his hand. His appearance is known from the engraved portrait commemorating his cardinalship (fig. 58); a painted portrait commissioned from Sacchi (sold, Christie's, Rome, May 22, 1980, no. 216); a frescoed portrait in the church of Santa Maria in Via; and a sculpted bust. In each case his features coincide remarkably with those of Valentin's portrait, in which the sitter appears to be in his late thirties. The main impediment to identifying our sitter with Giori and seeing it as a work commissioned to commemorate his new position in 1623 is that in his youth he had lost the thumb, index finger, and part of the middle finger of his right hand in a hunting accident. In Valentin's portrait the right hand is prominently shown intact—but the same is the case in Sacchi's portrait of Giori. In other words, as kindly suggested to me by Fabio Marcelli, what may be at issue is a matter of decorum and the ability of the artist to repair what the accidents of Fortune had taken away. In other respects, the likeness is undeniable.

If the identification of the sitter and the suggested date of about 1620–23 are correct, then Angelo Giori emerges, together with Giovanni Battista Mellini (see



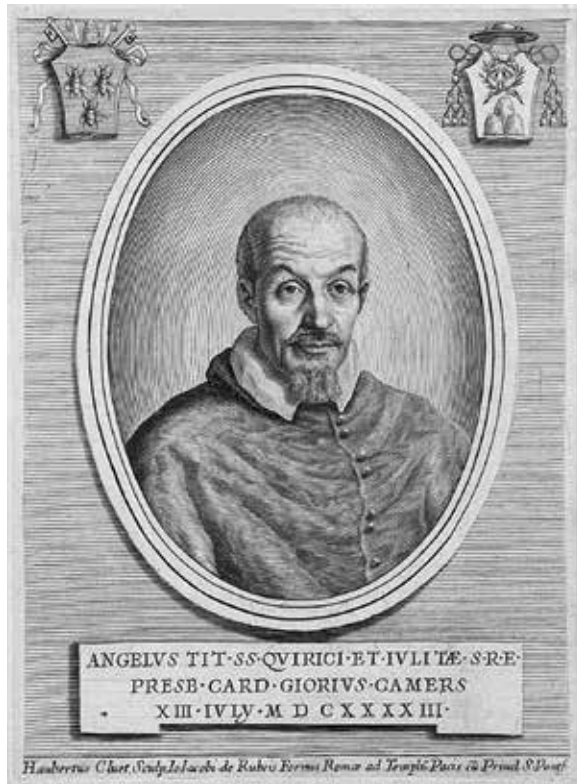


Fig. 58. Engraved by Albert Clouvet (Flemish, 1636–1679) after original portrait by Etienne Picart (French, 1632–1721). *Angelo Giori (Angelvs tit. SS. Qvirici et Ivlitae S.R.E. Presb. Card. Giorivs Camers: XIII Ivly MDCXXXIII)*. Engraving, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (20 x 15 cm). Published by Giovanni Giacomo de Rossi

cat. 14), as one of Valentin's earliest patrons and the possible means by which Valentin's work became more broadly known to the Barberini and to their Francophile circle. In this regard it is worth noting that Giori seems to have been an early collector of Poussin as well, if the *Venus Lamenting over Adonis* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen, is the work that appears in his inventory (see Pierre Rosenberg in Rosenberg and Prat 1994, pp. 154–55, no. 17). Might we identify Valentin's portrait with one that appears in the cardinal's postmortem 1669 inventory at number 59: "two large overdoors, one a portrait of Cardinal Giori with a black frame . . . , the other an Abundance by Guercino" ("doi grandi sopra porta uno il ritratto del S.r Card.le Giorio con cornice negra . . . , e l'altro l'Abbondanza del Guercino"); see Corradini 1977, p. 86)? What must be the same portrait reappears in a 1712 inventory of the Giori villa near Camerino called "la Maddalena": "Un quadro con ritratto del card. Giorio con cornice nera" (Feliciangeli 1917, p. 25). The portrait mentioned in this inventory should not be confused with one painted by Sacchi, which already appears in Cardinal Barberini's inventory of 1679 (Lavin 1975, p. 359, no. 170) and in which Cardinal Giori is described as "seated" (*a sedere*). The property of the Maddalena passed to the chaplains of Santa Maria in Via in 1739 and was sold to the Marchese Patrizio Savini in 1746; presumably sometime after that date the portrait, too, was sold. It then reappears in Cardinal Joseph Fesch's collection with an attribution to Caravaggio. The picture was cleaned and restored for the exhibition. KC

Provenance: Cardinal Joseph Fesch, Palazzo Falconieri, Rome (d. 1839; his sale, Rome, March 17–18, 1845, no. 1010–1444, as "Portrait d'un Ecclésiastique, style du Caravage"; Count Xavier Branicki, Château de Montrésor (1849–1879); by descent

Selected References: *Galerie de feu S. E. le Cardinal Fesch* 1844–45, pt. 4 (1845), p. 248, no. 1010–1444; Brejon de Lavergnée 1991; Lorizzo 2006, pp. 10, 35–40, 51, n. 22; Tomaso Montanari in Bacchi et al. 2009, p. 274; Ierrobino 2010, p. 204

19. Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence, ca. 1621–22

76¾ x 102¾ in. (195 x 261 cm)

Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (inv. 2346)

The picture is listed in 1666 in the royal collection at the Alcázar together with two others—all of the same size (2 x 3 *varas*; about 66 x 99 in.) and all, surprisingly, ascribed to Nicolas Poussin (though in the inventory of 1700 that attribution is qualified as “of the school of Caravaggio”). Of the three, the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* alone survived the disastrous fire of Christmas 1734 that destroyed so many of the great masterpieces that had been amassed by Philip IV. The other two canvases were probably also by Valentin and showed familiar themes: Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple and the Last Supper. Although it is curious that the authorship of the pictures should have gotten confused within four decades of their execution, the fact that Philip IV owned three canvases by Valentin is eloquent testimony to the high regard in which they were held; indeed, in the 1686 inventory, the three pictures were included on the short list of the most outstanding of the 1,547 paintings in the collection (Pérez Sánchez 1994, p. 183). When and by whom they were acquired is unknown, but probably in Rome by a Spanish ambassador or nobleman as a gift for the king or, alternatively—and most intriguingly—by Velázquez during his second Italian trip of 1648–52.

The subject of the surviving picture would unquestionably have resonated with Philip IV, for Saint Lawrence (ca. 225–258) was Spanish by birth and the patron saint of the great monastery and royal mausoleum of El Escorial, built by Philip’s grandfather. The saint had been one of the seven deacons of Rome during the brief papacy of Pope Sixtus II (257–58). Persecuted for refusing to sacrifice to the Roman gods, he gave the church’s wealth to the poor and following his many torments was martyred by being roasted on a grill at the orders of Emperor Valerian. With one hand raised, the saint addresses the emperor, possibly with the words found in the Golden Legend, “Learn, wretched man, that your coals are refreshing to me but will be an eternal punishment to you . . . you have me well done on one side, turn me over and eat” (da Voragine ca. 1260 [2012 ed., p. 451]). On the left, two men stoke the fire, while on the right two other figures bring a bundle of twigs and a basket of charcoal, pieces of which are shown in midair, falling—another of those details of suspended action that Valentin was so fond of employing to give

his narratives the character of a transitory moment arrested. To one side, an armed soldier beats back a crowd of onlookers, while on the other a cavalryman sits mounted on a splendid pinto. A hooded Roman priest stands behind the enthroned emperor.

Despite overall abrasion and damage—perhaps most compromising in the faces of the saint and the youth with the basket of charcoal—the picture retains a powerful narrative impact. How one would like to know whether it was Valentin’s idea to treat a subject as violent and filled with movement and commotion as Caravaggio’s *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew*, or whether it was his response to the request of a patron or dealer. In the latter case, who, at this still precocious date, might that person have been? As with Caravaggio, the artist has framed the scene with two vigorously posed, semi-nude figures—shown, however, full-length rather than cut off, and participating in the action rather than observing it with disturbing detachment. Again like Caravaggio, Valentin has anchored this active composition around a triangle defined by the elevated ruler, the two foreground figures, and Saint Lawrence. Both the forcibly restrained crowds on the left and the cavalryman on the right have been placed so as to reinforce this rigorous structure, while at the same time introducing a quality of actuality. Valentin has looked beyond the world of Caravaggesque painters and here would seem to be responding to Domenichino’s early masterpiece of the *Flagellation of Saint Andrew* in the oratory at San Gregorio Magno—widely admired for its narrative cogency—emulating the balance the Bolognese painter achieved between such observed details as the frightened child clinging to its mother and the activity around the saint, enhanced by a masterful use of gesture (*affetti*).

Valentin, however, was uninterested—and perhaps untutored—in creating a cogent and ample perspectival architectural stage: his is an undefined, compressed space barely adequate for the figures it contains. This close space is the direct result of his working out the composition directly on the canvas, without the advantage of a carefully plotted cartoon. Infrared imaging has revealed the manner in which the artist boldly indicated the placement and poses of the various figures with a loaded brush. For the figure on the left, bent over to tend the burning coals, Valentin may have, like so many



others before him, taken inspiration from Michelangelo's *Sacrifice of Noah* on the Sistine Ceiling and Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving of the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, based on a design by Raphael. For the kneeling figure on the right, however, he worked directly from a posed model, indicating with broad brushstrokes the placement of his rump and legs and then modifying the initial pose as he worked (fig. 31). The model who posed for the executioner, who has stripped Lawrence and positioned him on the grill, appears as well, wearing a red hat, in *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* (cat. 17).

It is worth drawing attention to the contrast between the seemingly unpremeditated pose Valentin gives his martyr and the formal one that Gian Lorenzo Bernini employed in his marble statue of about 1617, emblematic of spiritual release from earthly pain. Nonetheless, Valentin's aim to give Caravaggesque naturalism the fluency of classical style seems clear. Indeed, the expanded

ambition evident in the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* can be seen to set the stage for his great altarpiece for Saint Peter's (cat. 48), in which there is a complete break with the restrictively geometric compositional formulas that, since the Renaissance, had been used to create an aesthetic distance between the viewer and the event depicted. The *Martyrdom* may date about 1621–22. KC

Provenance: Royal Collection, Alcázar (by 1666; inv. 1666, as Nicolas Poussin, no. 301; inv. 1686, no. 750; inv. 1700, as school of Caravaggio; inv. 1734, as Guercino); Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (in the 19th century)

Selected References: Blanc 1862, p. 15; Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80; Bottineau 1958, p. 310; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pls. xiv, xv; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Pérez Sánchez 1973, no. 48; de Salas 1974 (2010 ed., p. 389); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Fernández Bayton 1975, p. 100; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Mojana 1989, pp. 25, 86, no. 17; Nicolson 1989, p. 203; Pérez Sánchez 1994, p. 183; Finaldi 2013, pp. 256–57; Gabriele Finaldi in Falomir Faus et al. 2014, p. 132

20. Saint John the Evangelist, ca. 1621–22

38¼ x 53 in. (97.3 x 134.5 cm)

Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
The William A. Whitaker Foundation Art Fund (63.4.1)
New York only

Traditionally considered the author of the Gospel of Saint John, the three Epistles, and the visionary book of Revelation, Christ's "beloved" apostle is here shown as a young man—his age when he witnessed the Crucifixion rather than the old exile on the island of Patmos—interrupted by the viewer while writing on the scroll unfurled across his left leg. On its irregular surface are the first verses of his gospel: "[In] principio erat Verbum . . ." ("In the beginning was the Word . . ."; see Hertzman 1971, p. 90). Alongside him is an open codex with writing in an elegant script (to signify the Epistles?) and perched next to him is his emblem, an eagle, whose wings are spread heraldically. Along the right edge, barely visible, is a vine branch, a reference to John 15:1: "I am the true vine . . ."

Some of the same elements are found in Valentin's depiction of the saint in two later series of the four Evangelists, one of which decorates a principal room in Versailles (see discussion in cat. 28). Although it has been thought that the Ackland painting might also have formed part of a series, there is no evidence for this and, in fact,

several features argue against it. There is the insistence on the portrait-like features of the Evangelist, including the signs of a mustache and the cleft chin; his full-face view (in the two Evangelist series, John looks heavenward, in a conventional representation of divine inspiration); and his intense gaze and parted lips, as though querying the viewer. As remarked by Pierre Rosenberg (1982a, p. 328), "The . . . canvas depicts a handsome youth with a serious and ardent expression, no doubt a barely disguised portrait of a young Roman."

Interestingly, the model is not immediately identifiable in other works by the artist, but there are certain similarities with the features we have identified as Valentin's own (cats. 4, 49). Whoever is portrayed, the result is a picture of remarkable, indeed "unforgettable" (Volpe 1972, p. 75), vividness: a figure of insistent psychological as well as physical presence. The suspended gesture of his right hand, quill in hand—a device Valentin was particularly fond of—is greatly enhanced by the shadow it casts on the open book, beautifully calculated in its fall across the curved surface of the page. The



shadow cast by the flap of his open tunic onto his chest has the same effect of increasing the quality of actuality or, in the critical language of the seventeenth century, the effect of truth (*il vero*). There is a no less effective contrast between the white paper of the scroll and yellowed parchment of the codex or the stray strands of hair. The impression is of a work painted with great directness: the changes made in the red drapery as he worked are visible to the naked eye.

With this picture, Valentin could certainly lay claim to being the greatest and most thoughtful heir to the legacy of Caravaggio; his only potential rival, Jusepe de Ribera, had moved to Naples in 1616. He surely had in mind such works as the striking *Saint John the Baptist* in the Galleria Nazionale di Palazzo Corsini, Rome, in which the forerunner of Christ is depicted as a real youth haunted by his sense of mission, with almost overwhelmingly disturbing effect. Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 59) thought

the Valentin picture about contemporary with the series of Evangelists in Versailles—about 1625—but we are inclined to agree with Richard Spear (1971, pp. 180–81) and Pierre Rosenberg (1982a, p. 328) that it is earlier and dates about 1621–22. Who might have commissioned such a work? The coat of arms on the wax seal affixed to the stretcher was once identified as that of the Colonna family, but this has proven to be incorrect (museum correspondence with Eduard Safarik in 1985). KC

Provenance: Paul Vogel-Brunner, Lucerne; Frederick Mont, New York (by 1962); Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (from 1963)

Selected References: Hertzman 1971, p. 90, no. 58; Spear 1971, pp. 180–81, no. 70; Borea 1972, pp. 159, 162; Volpe 1972, p. 75; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 136, 244 (French ed., pp. 138, 252); Brejon de Lavergnée 1974, pp. 51, 55, n. 55; Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Rosenberg 1982a, pp. 327–28, no. 108; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 82, no. 15; Nicolson 1989, p. 203; Allmendinger and Wood 2010, p. 21

21. Saint John the Baptist, ca. 1620–22

70 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 52 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (178 x 133 cm)

Inscribed at bottom of painting: *REVERENDUS CLAUDIUS MILLERET HUIJUSCE CATHEDRALIS CANONICUS PRIMARIUS HANC TABULAM RELIGIOSE DICAVIT ET OBIT DIE 1A APRILIS 1733*
Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist, Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne

The *Saint John the Baptist* in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne is without a doubt one of the most intense of Valentin's creations. Although rediscovered by Pierre Rosenberg following the pioneering exhibition "I Caravaggeschi francesi" of 1973–74, singled out in 1977 by Arnaud Brejon de Lavergnée, and published by Jean-Pierre Cuzin in 1991, it remains little known.

Valentin painted no fewer than four versions of Saint John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets, whose image proliferated in post-Tridentine Rome (Fumaroli 1994 [1998 ed., pp. 325–97]). This version is situated between the Roman example (cat. 4), a rough, first attempt in which the artist modeled himself as the saint, and the last version, with its deeply moving apparition of a ghostly figure (cat. 45). It is distinguished from the other compositions by its clear reflection of Caravaggio's influence, in particular, the imposing *Saint John the Baptist* (Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City), painted in 1604–5 for the banker Ottavio Costa. The Maurienne painting represents one of the first direct responses to Caravaggio's composi-

tion, along with that of Bartolomeo Cavarozzi (1617–19, Toledo Cathedral).

Saint John the Baptist, his chest and legs bare, his hips swathed in the traditional animal skin, is at once seated and in motion, ready to stand and walk. In his right hand he holds the cruciform staff; with the index finger of his left hand raised and his mouth half-open, he is "the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness" ("vox clamantis in deserto"), in accordance with the prophecy of Isaiah (40:3); that is, the one who announces and prepares the way for Jesus (Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:1–8).

Through his meditation on Caravaggio's painting Valentin at once revives that traditional iconography and takes it in a new direction. The Maurienne *Saint John* clearly borrows several precise motifs that suggest the artist had a direct knowledge of Caravaggio's masterpiece. Not only did Valentin choose a very young boy to represent the Baptist, but he also faithfully replicated certain features of the pose: the curve of the hand, which delicately holds the staff, and the unusual position of the legs, which Caravaggio himself had



borrowed from the *Ignudi* of Michelangelo and the Laocoön. In the same way, he seizes on the motif of the loose scarlet drapery, which dramatizes the figure's nudity. As in Caravaggio's work, the artful arrangement of the drapery suggests that it was arranged in the artist's studio and painted directly.

Valentin embraces a sense of immediacy. The saint's hope for humanity's redemption is not only theological, but identifiable in profoundly human terms. The artist paints an ardent Baptist, buoyed by his message of hope and salvation, the emotional power of which is in keeping with the expectations of the Council of Trent. His gesture is vehement, his gaze steady, his presence tangible—exalted by the implacable light that sculpts his emaciated body. The disquietude produced by Valentin's saint lies precisely in the juxtaposition of these paradoxical feelings: the psychological intensity that seems to animate his face, the force of his physical presence beckoning the beholder, and the fragility of the adolescent with his lanky body and feverish gaze. Painting from life, the artist did not diminish the traces of the sun that tanned the boy's neck.

With the acuity characteristic of his first works, Valentin depicts every detail, down to the shadow cast by the nipple, the light vibrating on the ridge of the nose, the barely glimpsed teeth. Smoothly, his brush assured, he paints the sophisticated pattern of folds in the drapery—rendered three-dimensional through the play of deep shadows—the lean body, modeled with fluidity, and the precarious balance of the pose. As the wear on the canvas has now revealed, he sketched the pose in rapidly while the model was before his eyes: two black strokes to indicate the placement of the right thigh, visible under the animal skin; a second for the navel; and a third, lighter line to mark the contour of the right shoulder.

Valentin's reply to Caravaggio's masterpiece seems to have enjoyed immediate success in Rome within the painter's intimate circle. Indeed, both Valentin's invention and the original model clearly inspired fellow painter Nicolas Régnier about 1622–23, when he produced his monumental *Saint John the Baptist*, destined for the collection of his illustrious patron Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani (fig. 59; Lemoine 2007, pp. 78–79). We do not know who commissioned Valentin's painting, or what its original destination might have been. But it highlights the role Valentin played in the development of *pittura dal naturale* following Caravaggio's departure: not as a mere follower but, on the contrary, as a major



Fig. 59. Nicolas Régnier (Flemish, ca. 1588–1667). *Saint John the Baptist*, ca. 1622–23. Oil on canvas, 101³/₈ x 77³/₈ in. (257.5 x 196.5 cm). Porcini Gallery, Naples

force active at an early date, able to reinvent Caravaggesque prototypes alongside Jusepe de Ribera and Bartolomeo Manfredi.

As the inscription at the bottom of the canvas indicates, Valentin's *Saint John the Baptist* was donated to the Cathedral of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne by Canon Claude Milleret in April 1733. In proof of the efficacy of its emotional power, of the many paintings devoted to the figure of the Baptist that adorned the cathedral, Valentin's was the one hung above the main entrance every June 24 to celebrate the feast day of the patron saint—a particularly important celebration also marked by the city and diocese of Maurienne (F. Truchet 1895). That practice, which lasted throughout the nineteenth century, explains the amount of wear on the painting. AL

Provenance: Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist, Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, France (from 1733, given by Canon Claude Milleret; classified as a "Monument historique" in 1978)

Selected References: F. Truchet 1895, p. 138; S. Truchet 1903, pp. 663–64; Brejon de Lavergnée 1973–75 (pub. 1977), p. 53; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Nicolson 1989, p. 202; Cuzin 1991, p. 456; Michel Hilaire in *Century of Splendour* 1993, p. 89, no. 17

22. Innocence of Susanna, ca. 1621–22

68⁷/₈ x 83¹/₈ in. (175 x 211 cm)

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (inv. 8245)

The subject of the picture derives from the apocryphal chapter of the book of Daniel that recounts how the virtuous Susanna fights off two lecherous elders while bathing; is falsely accused by them of having had a sexual encounter with a lover; and is brought before Daniel and vindicated. Valentin paints the climactic moment of the story (13:45–62). Seated on a marble throne on a raised dais, the boy Daniel, acting as judge, leans forward, pointing with his outstretched hand at one of the two elders, whose false witness was revealed when he unknowingly contradicted the account already given by his companion (Daniel had cleverly questioned them separately). The other elder, aware that their ploy to wreak revenge on Susanna has been ruined, reacts with a combination of astonishment and disbelief, his arms outstretched and his left hand hypnotically suspended in mid-air—freezing this moment of the narrative. An armed soldier grasps the entrapped elder to arrest him—they, not Susanna, will be stoned—while Susanna, her right hand over her heart, her left modestly clasping her cloak, directs her gaze at the viewer.

In his book on the use of gesture, the *Chirologia* (1644, pp. 88–89), John Bulwer notes that “to lay the Hand open to our heart, using a kinde of bowing gesture, is a garb wherein we affirm a thing, swear or call God to witness a truth . . . the testimony of our conscience.” This is in perfect conformity with Susanna’s plea to God, here addressed to the viewer: “you know that they have testified falsely against me. Here I am about to die, though I have done none of the things for which these men have condemned me.” Her two children, shown clinging to her, are clearly anxious about the proceedings: one casts a worried glance at the accusing elder while the other looks pleadingly out at the viewer. Depicted as an exemplum of modesty and innocence, Susanna’s statuesque serenity contrasts marvelously with the whirl of activity around her.

The story of the beautiful Susanna spied upon and then attacked by the two lecherous elders while bathing in her husband’s garden (Dan. 13:19–25) was enormously popular as a subject, for it combined a narrative ostensibly about female virtue with male voyeurism. In the early seventeenth century alone, the story was treated by almost every major painter, from Ludovico Carracci,

Domenichino, Guido Reni, and Guercino to Artemisia Gentileschi, Jusepe de Ribera, and Peter Paul Rubens (the poet Giovan Battista Marino claimed to own a depiction by Caravaggio). In Guercino’s earliest treatment (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid), one of the elders gestures to the viewer to be quiet, making clear the voyeuristic character of the painting. By contrast, the culminating episode of the story, in which Susanna’s innocence is revealed, was shown far less frequently. When depicted, it was usually as part of a narrative cycle rather than as an independent canvas (for a list of representations of both themes, see Pigler 1974, vol. 2, pp. 218–29). Aside from Baldassare Croce, who depicted the scene in his 1598–1600 fresco cycle in the church of Santa Susanna, Valentin was virtually alone among his Roman contemporaries in showing not the erotically charged moment when Susanna is attacked, but her vindication. As is so often the case with Valentin, we have no way of knowing what motivated his choice, which so notably shifted the story from one of dramatic moment and attempted sexual violence to one emphasizing a more psychologically complex interplay among the characters.

When it entered the collection of Louis XIV, the picture was considered the pendant to the *Judgment of Solomon* (cat. 33), which also treats a biblical scene of a youthful judge delivering justice to a wronged woman; in 1695, both were displayed in the Cabinet des Tableaux at Versailles. This association, if actual, would suggest that behind the choice of biblical subjects was a broader theme relating to wisdom and justice. The association of the two pictures has been accepted by, among others, Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 59) and Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée (1987, p. 125), despite the fact that they are not of the same date and were acquired for the crown from two different sources—*Susanna* from the banker-collector Everhard Jabach, and *Solomon* from Cardinal Jules Mazarin. Brejon de Lavergnée has suggested that they probably appeared together on the Paris art market about 1650 and were sold separately; Mazarin certainly owned his picture by 1653 but may have purchased it even earlier, in Rome, before 1645 (see Michel 1999, pp. 125–26). This putative association—which, it bears emphasizing, cannot be proven—implies that the two pictures were painted not on speculation for the market but for a patron of some



importance. But if this is so, who might that have been at this date? We have already noted another case of two pictures possibly conceived as pendant compositions (see cat. 13).

The story of Susanna and the elders had been the subject of liturgical plays, and in the fifteenth century it was painted on the fronts of marriage chests (see Baskins 1991). It also became the subject of oratorios, Giacomo Carissimi's *Oratorio di Daniele profeta* being the most famous early example. (The libretto was by Pompeo Colonna and it was performed during Lent of 1656 at the court of Queen Christina of Sweden in Rome.) It is not possible to say whether Valentin's depiction was influenced by popular drama or whether it is his staging of the story in realist terms—with the various roles played by seemingly identifiable individuals and his use of the drawn-back curtain that forms a baldachin over Daniel's throne—that reminds us of the world of theater. Valentin sets the scene with only the prop of the antique-style throne and double-stepped dais. By use of audacious cropping, he not only avoids the necessity of a perspectival pavement, but he also extends the pictorial space outward, into that of the viewer.

As in other paintings, Valentin reveals a keen interest in antiquarian details that must have appealed to the patrons he was later to establish in the circle of Cassiano dal Pozzo and the Barberini. Daniel's throne is decorated with a winged lion with ram's horns that derives from Raphael's reconstruction of the throne of Saint Gregory the Great in his fresco of the *Disputa* in the Vatican *Stanze* (the classical sources of which are discussed in Fehl 1973). Similarly, he wears sandals studied from a Roman statue such as the *Patrician Youth* (the young Nero) in the Borghese Collection (now in the Musée du Louvre). His garments, however, like those of the elders, combine contemporary costume with a toga-like cloak. The statuesque presentation of Susanna suggests that Valentin had also been studying Domenichino's fresco cycle of Saint Cecilia in San Luigi dei Francesi, in particular the scene of Saint Cecilia before the Judge. Giovan Pietro Bellori's comment (1672 [1976 ed., p. 328]) on that scene could be adapted to Valentin's: "In this story the painter showed the contrast of constancy with cruelty." The young model who posed for Daniel also posed for the contemporary *Saint John the Baptist* (cat. 21) and, together with one of the elders, may have also posed for *A Musical Party* (cat. 31).

As recognized by Roberto Longhi (1958, p. 65), the *Innocence of Susanna* occupies a position between those works documenting Valentin's formation and those

belonging to his maturity. Cuzin (1975, p. 59) has given the finest analysis, noting that by comparison with the (later) *Judgment of Solomon*, "the modeling is more sculptural and hard, the composition more fragmented, and the physical types of the figures are more like the pictures we would situate towards 1618–20." In the chronology proposed here, that would translate to about 1621–22 (Marina Mojana's date of about 1624–25 is surely too late; see Mojana 1989, pp. 27, 96).

On the one hand, the figure types for the two elders still strongly echo the work of Ribera—for example, his half-length depictions of Saints Peter and Paul. On the other, the fluency of the composition and the eloquent use of gesture as a means of expression (the *affetti*) would seem to indicate Valentin's keen awareness of the rising star of his compatriot Simon Vouet, whose first public commission in Rome, the *Birth of the Virgin* in San Francesco a Ripa, which was painted prior to 1621, seems especially relevant. Valentin's use of lighting is now less brutal, and he employs it to give greater animation to the figures rather than merely for dramatic effect. Another feature that distinguishes this moment is the arrangement of the figures—relief-like—in three successive layers. As with most of Valentin's paintings, the colors have darkened with time. Additionally, the robe of Daniel—possibly a smalt—has lost most of its bluish tint through deterioration. The composition was engraved by François Chauveau at the time of its sale to the crown, and by Boulanger and Etienne Gantrel ("Tableaux du Roy . . .," 1686, nos. 59 and 58 bis; see Brejon de Lavergnée 1987, p. 125). It already underwent a restoration by Godefroid in 1785–86 (for which see Engerand 1899, p. 198). KC

Provenance: Everhard Jabach (until 1662); Royal Collections (from 1662; Le Brun inv. 1683, no. 47); Versailles, Cabinet des Tableaux (by 1690; Paillet inv. 1690, no. 47; Paillet inv. 1695, no. 47; inv. 1709–10); Palais du Luxembourg (by 1750), Musée du Louvre (from 1785)
Selected References: Le Brun 1683, no. 47 (published in Brejon de Lavergnée 1987, p. 125); Paillet 1690, fol. 236v, no. 47; Paillet 1695, fol. 114v, no. 47; N. Bailly 1709–10 (published in Engerand 1899, pp. 198–99, no. 2); Villot 1855, pp. 376–77, no. 583; Blanc 1862, pp. 7, 15; Voss 1924 (1997 ed., p. 97); Longhi 1958, pp. 61, 65; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., ill. no. 1; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Compin and Roquebert 1986, p. 257; Mojana 1989, pp. 27, 96, no. 22; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Lemoine 2009–10, pp. 127–28; Melasecchi 2010, p. 737



23. Concert with a Bas-Relief, ca. 1624–26

68⅞ x 84¼ in. (173 x 214 cm)

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (inv. 8253)

This major work by Valentin was among the most important paintings in the collection of Cardinal Jules Mazarin and retained its fame from the seventeenth century on. Unlike his early scenes of games, fortune-tellers, and concerts (cats. 10, 11), with their burlesque, often sinister connotations, the *Concert with a Bas-Relief* is distinguished by its mysterious, poetic atmosphere. The painter delivers a personal vision of scenes from daily life in a way that encourages overlapping levels of interpretation: moralizing *ludicrum*, or amusement; refined delight; and metaphysical meditation. This new kind of concert, “a strange and philosophical hodgepodge,” as Charles Blanc (1862, p. 5) aptly wrote, is simultaneously a paean to harmony, a reflection on the omnipotence of fortune, and an invitation to meditate on the vanity of worldly things. The work opens a new path that Valentin would follow until his final gypsy piece, painted for the Sicilian nobleman Fabrizio Valguarnera in 1631, one year before his death (cat. 50).

Valentin blurs boundaries, cultivates ambiguity, and mingles popular and learned allusions seemingly at will, yet without abandoning his naturalistic repertoire. The characters, who have gathered for an improvised concert after eating and drinking, are naturally posed: the violinist, guitarist, lute player, and two singers, including a child, accompanied by an idle soldier and a thirsty boy, are individualized and dressed in everyday clothing. Their instruments and music playing, painted *dal naturale*, are consistent with Roman life in the 1620s and 1630s (see my essay “Bowling to No One: Valentin’s Ambitions” in this catalogue). The air is palpable, the physical materials are tactile, and the expressions strikingly realistic: the beholder’s gaze is arrested by the subtly glinting cuirass, the child’s youthful cheeks, the hats’ gossamer plumes, and the trousers creased at the knees. Every motif is replicated from life, the result of close observation. We believe in the young woman’s pensive gaze and in the lute player’s engrossed expression. But this realism coexists with a number of incongruities and strange details, rich with meaning. The image is more complex than it appears: “a sadness, a gravity, a silence, a torpor: and now the girl, the musician, the soldier, are no longer the indifferent figures of a common genre scene” (Bonnefoy 1970, p. 165). Although

the protagonists are supposedly sharing a festive moment, they seem oddly indifferent to one another. In the center of the musicians, the child stares into the void, setting the tone: with his face resting on his hand, he is captured in the conventional pose of the melancholic. The two figures not playing music, stock characters from Caravaggesque tavern scenes, are in fact references to the contrasting personifications of Temperance (the soldier is watering down the wine) and Excess (the boy quenches his thirst greedily, straight from the flask). Valentin plays subtly on these binary opposites: restraint versus excess, adult versus child, foreground versus background, and right profile versus left profile. Temperance and overindulgence, vice and virtue thus frame the musicians, suspended in a moment outside time. Must they choose between moderation and immoderation, a profusion of sensual pleasures and control over them—a recaptured freedom and harmony? One of the main subjects of the painting, music, is marked by ambiguity: a traditional symbol of harmony, music is also the source of a dangerous voluptuousness, the first step toward the vertiginous fall into melancholy (Clair 2005b). The musicians, as if spellbound by the magic of the sounds and rapt in thought, articulate that saturnine mood.

Another oddity, the antique stone block serving as a makeshift table, occupies the center of the composition, both structuring it and adding to its complexity of meaning. Strewn with the leftovers of a meal and a few ivy leaves, it provides the unlikely setting for the gathering. Perhaps its cubic shape, almost metaphysical in its geometry, symbolizes unchanging and eternal wisdom (de Bovelles 1510, fol. 118v). The cube’s projecting edge delimits two sharply contrasting zones, one luminous, the other immersed in shadow, as if through the play of chiaroscuro Valentin wished to suggest two possible paths: good and evil, vice and virtue. Flanked by the allegories of Excess and Temperance, the child, a figure of innocence, sits at the crossroads of the two paths.

The block of stone, bearing a relief and crumbling along its edge, is a classical relic, an echo of ancient Rome’s splendor and decadence. It is a conventional image for humanity subjected to the “stupefying and grievous inconstancy of fortune” (Bracciolini 1447–48 [1999 ed., p. 10]). Placed among a company seeking



sensual pleasures and framed by the two allegories, this evocation of the inexorable weight of fortune invites us to meditate on the danger of the passions and on the exercise of human will, on disorder and on the divine harmony toward which the wise must direct themselves.

Discernible on one face of the cube is a precisely painted, identifiable relief. Taken from a famous terracotta (fig. 60), an example of which was in the Farnese collection (Bellori 1693, pl. 57), this quotation from antiquity, intentionally fragmentary and hence comprehensible only to the happy few, seems to resonate with the concert theme. The original model depicts the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, though Valentin reveals only the gesture of *dextrarum junctio*, the ancient symbol for matrimonial union, which would here foster reflection on *concordia*, or harmony. Yet the relief perhaps also alludes to the elegiac feeling that emanates from the painting. Peleus's wedding to the sea goddess Thetis, who then bore Achilles, took place at the origin of the Trojan War, a terrible conflict for which Paris, carried away by his passions, was responsible.

In the *Concert with a Bas-Relief*, erudition, lyricism, and poetry have replaced the burlesque language of the early Valentin and of such contemporaries as Gerrit van Honthorst, Dirck van Baburen, and Simon Vouet. As reinvented here, the everyday, where music plays unceasingly, becomes an elegiac song of a new kind. With this unique masterpiece, painted in the mid-1620s, Valentin elaborated on an original formula that he adapted many times in his career (cats. 32, 42). He transcended the anecdotal to spur the informed beholder to reflect on the transience of time and the precariousness of the human condition. Through the union of *pittura dal naturale* and veiled allegory, this existential meditation is inscribed in the everyday world. Finished shortly after the papal accession of Urban VIII (1623), in the learned, refined Rome of the Barberini, molded by Poetry, the *Concert with a Bas-Relief*, ambitious to a degree accorded scant attention before now, could be understood as the mirror “from life” of Nicolas Poussin’s *Et in Arcadia Ego* (Musée du Louvre), painted years later for Cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi, a member of the Barberini circle. AL



Fig. 60. *Wedding of Peleus and Thetis*. Roman, 1st century A.D. Terracotta, 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 22 in. (60 x 56 cm). Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. CP 4172)

Provenance: Cardinal Jules Mazarin, Palais Mazarin, Paris (before 1653–d. 1661; inv. 1653, no. 273; inv. 1661, no. 1103, as “une Musique et Figures qui boivent, hault de cinq piedz poulces et large de sept piedz sept poulces [176 x 246 cm]”); perhaps Philippe Mancini, duc de Nevers, or Olimpia Mancini, comtesse de Soisson, wife of Prince Eugène Maurice de Savoie-Carignano (after 1661–1708); by descent; Victor Amadeo of Savoy, prince of Carignan (1733?–42); Louis XV (1742–74; Versailles, inv. 1760 in the fifth room of the Cabinet des Tableaux de la Surintendance des Bâtiments du Roi); Royal Collections, Versailles, Cabinet du Roi (Durameau inv. 1784); Muséum Central des Arts de la République, Palais du Louvre (from 1793)

Selected References: “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1653, no. 273 (published in *Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin* 1861, p. 324); “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1661, no. 1103 (published in de Cosnac 1885, p. 318); Dézallier d’Argenville 1762, vol. 4, p. 48; Landon 1832, p. 109, pl. 63; Villot 1855, p. 378, no. 587; Blanc 1862, pp. 5, 15; Voss 1924, p. 454; Charles Sterling in *Peintres de la réalité* 1934, pp. 159–60, no. 113; Longhi 1935 (1972 ed., p. 9); Longhi 1958, p. 61; Wethey 1964, p. 157; de Mirimonde 1965, p. 222; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pl. iv; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 154, 245 (French ed., pp. 158, 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 58; de Mirimonde 1975, pp. 163–65; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Wright 1985, p. 268; Compin and Roquebert 1986, p. 257; Mojana 1989, p. 100, no. 24; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Cantarel-Besson 1992, p. 124; Fagiolo dell’Arco 1997, pp. 182, 186; Michel 1999, pp. 387, 586–87 (with references to the Mazarin inventories); Lemoine 2003, pp. 59–60; Lemoine 2007, pp. 56–57; Castelluccio 2009, p. 36; Lemoine 2009, pp. 192–93; Fried 2011, pp. 109–11, 115; Gianfranceschi 2012, p. 245; Annick Lemoine in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, pp. 268–69, no. 56; Fried 2016, pp. 84–86, 94–95, 98–99, 101, 106

24. Gathering in a Tavern (The Guileless Musician), ca. 1625

37⁷/₈ x 52³/₈ in. (96 x 133 cm)

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (inv. 8255)

Dating from about 1625, this painting belongs to the “*bizzarrie* [*sic*] of games, music, and gypsies” that secured Valentin’s reputation (Bellori 1672, p. 216) and were a favorite subject from his early days. Valentin regularly reworked the themes, gradually turning from a burlesque treatment to one suggesting a meditation on human destiny. This painting revisits a composition from his first years in Rome, the *Concert of Indianapolis*, painted ten years earlier, about 1615 (cat. 10). Recognizable here is the same colorful group gathered around a Roman architectural fragment serving as a makeshift table. Some accessories and actors are identical—the naive musician, the thieving gypsy woman, and the *bravo* serving himself a drink. Yet now there is also a voluptuous courtesan—new to Valentin’s oeuvre. If the Indianapolis canvas attests to the painter’s initial experimentation, the Louvre composition marks a successful resolution. The arrangement of the figures is harmonious, the viewer’s eyes passing imperceptibly from one face and gesture to the next. In the same way, the artist has mastered the representation of space through the artifice of the ancient block. His fluid brushwork creates a unity missing from the early compositions and the self-assured execution is no less admirable: Valentin reveals an almost exhilarating skill in, for example, the astonishingly free treatment of the gypsy’s white sleeve. He also reinforces the figures’ sense of presence through the veracity of pose and costume. Here the flutist plays his instrument realistically—his is executing an E—whereas in the Indianapolis picture, he was depicted in an unlikely pose, with his elbows on the table.

Just as the composition’s simplicity is the result of calculated arrangement, so the iconography masks a more sophisticated narrative. Mirroring the life of the Roman tavern, the protagonists have gathered not only to enjoy themselves and to share sausage and a meat pie, three of them are plotting to prey on the young flute player. The scenario recounts the misadventures of this naïf, who allows himself to be distracted by music and manipulated by rascals. The gypsy woman approaches, glass of wine in hand; the swordsman pours from a flask, as though to join them; his pretty neighbor offers him a slice of sausage and follows with curiosity the intrigue being played out. Consistent with the

stereotype, the gypsy woman is a charmer. Although she seems pleasant and obliging, she wants only the naïf’s purse. This is the register of farce, with its stock characters—the light-fingered gypsy, the courtesan, the dishonest acolyte, and the sucker.

As in his first genre scenes (cats. 10, 11), Valentin alludes to popular comedies, with their humor and pithy morals. The heroine is often a gypsy woman, seductive but manipulative and deceitful. So it is with the famous *zingara*—“d disdainful,” “thieving,” “knavish”—depicted onstage between 1610 and 1623 by the famous Giovanni Briccio (1579–1645), playwright, musician, and painter (Mariti 1978, pp. CLXV–CLXX). Valentin’s painting, like the plays it echoes, provides a “comedic interlude,” in the period’s suggestive lexicon (*Thresor des trois langues* 1609, s.v. “farce”). It is a “diversion, a pastime,” as Briccio subtitled his comedy *La zingara sdegnosa* (1620). The elites were crazy about the genre. Every major collector, in fact—Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte, the Ludovisi family, the Giustiniani family, Cassiano dal Pozzo, and many others—owned a painting of a palm-reading or merrymaking scene and delighted in picaresque novels or burlesque comedies.

But Valentin’s *bizzarrie* differ from Briccio’s “diversions,” as well as from the salacious and burlesque interpretations of his fellow artists, particularly Gerrit van Honthorst and Simon Vouet. For Valentin, the farce becomes something more than a playful interlude. Through the psychological depth he confers on it; paradoxically, the theme takes a melancholic turn. The expression of feelings combines with meditative interiority, and collective diversion with the solitary destiny of being human. The naïf is mocked, but he is not the traditional ridiculous stereotype, as seen, for example, in Vouet’s paintings (fig. 9). His youth and romantic reveries, fueled by drink and music, lie behind his carelessness. The gypsy woman’s intentions are dishonest, but her face is grave. The mundane details, such as the courtesan’s bare arm, her elbow nonchalantly resting on the shoulder of her neighbor—obviously a regular—are relegated to the middle ground and enveloped in shadow. The painter’s primary interest is introspection, which seems suddenly to grip each figure. The denouement of the intrigue is necessarily sad for all the guests, both the dupe and the rogues.



The original interpretation of the underworld in this work, combined with the sureness of execution, argues for a date about 1625—in other words, slightly after the *Concert with a Bas-Relief* (cat. 23), in which the same model for the young *bravo* appears, but before the *Fortune-Teller* (cat. 38) and the *Judgment of Solomon* (cat. 33). AL

Provenance: private collection; Musée du Louvre (early 19th century)
Selected References: Villot 1855, p. 379, no. 589 (as Valentin); Blanc 1862, p. 15; Voss 1924, p. 455; *Artistes français en Italie* 1934, p. 50, no. 328; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Thuillier 1958, p. 30; de Mirimonde 1965, pp. 219–21; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., ill. no. 2; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 140, no. 42 (French ed., p. 144, no. 44); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Wright 1985, p. 268; Compin and Roquebert 1986, p. 257; Mojana 1989, p. 114, no. 31; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Axel Hémerly in *Nicolas Tournier* 2001, pp. 88, 90; Vodret and Strinati 2001, pp. 109, 111; Fried 2011, pp. 111–12; Celenza 2014, p. 95; Fried 2016, pp. 86, 92, 94, 95

25. Denial of Saint Peter, ca. 1623–25

46⁷/₈ x 67³/₄ in. (119 x 172 cm)

The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (inv. 1859, no. 3437)

Paris only

Valentin's *Denial of Saint Peter* has an illustrious provenance, having belonged to Count Heinrich Brühl, who, in addition to advising Augustus the Strong in the formation of his collection (now part of the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden), amassed for himself outstanding works of art. In 1769, they were sold by his heirs to Catherine the Great for the Hermitage (see Koch 2014, pp. 225–27). Engraved in the 1754 *Recueil d'estampes* of Brühl's collection, the picture was described eulogistically by F. K. Labensky in the *Description de la Galerie de l'Hermitage* (1805–9, vol. 2, pp. 19–21), who praised in particular the quality of expression: “that faculty of penetrating the most secret feelings, of subtly expressing on the face everything that is in the soul.”

Valentin's means of expression and, indeed, his manner of composing and staging the scene, differ significantly from his earlier treatment of the subject. In the earlier picture (cat. 14), the story is conceived as an unfolding drama, with a game of dice interrupted by the servant girl's recognition of Saint Peter as one of Christ's apostles (Matt. 26:69–72; Mark 14:66–70) and both the soldier on the left and a bystander at the extreme right reacting to her accusation. By contrast, in the later painting, a clear distinction is drawn between the three soldiers engrossed in their game of dice, on the one hand, and, on the other, the scene of recognition on the left. The subject has been conceived in exemplary terms, so as to underscore a moral distinction between spiritual blindness and revelation. Whereas in the earlier picture the gestures seem culled from everyday life, in the later painting they are demonstrative and conform perfectly to the *affetti*: formal gestures derived from rhetorical conventions that

encourage the reading of the picture as an emblematic pantomime. Conspicuous are the pointing finger of the servant girl and the raised hands of Saint Peter to express his denial. The viewer's anticipated response is represented by the youth who, placing his hand on the stool, rises in astonishment. The light, too, is more evenly distributed, the transitions from light to dark less abrupt.

That this shift toward an expressivity based on rhetorical gesture and broad contrasts should occur at this moment—about 1623–25 (the date usually assigned to the picture)—is not surprising, for the papacy of Gregory XV (1621–23) marks a particular moment in Rome dominated by his preference for Bolognese painters. In particular, close affinities can be found with the work of Guercino, who arrived in Rome in May 1621 at the invitation of the pope and assumed a preeminent position in the city. He was notably employed by the papal nephew Ludovico Ludovisi, for the decoration of his villa, as well as by Cardinals Orazio Lancellotti and Pietro Aldobrandini and Monsignor Costanzo Patrizi. Among Guercino's public commissions were a ceiling for the church of San Crisogono, an altarpiece for the church of the *convertite*, and the first of the prestigious altarpieces in the newly completed basilica of Saint Peter's (see Rice 1997, pp. 175–82, no. 1).

The formal character of Guercino's work in Rome when compared with his earlier, more dynamically conceived paintings has been much discussed, but crucial to us is the apparent impact his presence had on Valentin. In a brilliant essay of 1992, Sybille Ebert-Schifferer explicated the shift in style seen in Guercino's work during the 1620s, its cultural motivation and objectives.



What she describes by comparing two treatments of the story of the Prodigal Son—one done in 1619 (Kunst-historisches Museum, Vienna), the other about 1627–28 (Galleria Borghese, Rome)—could apply with equal validity to the two *Denials* of Valentin:

The pointing gesture [in the later work], derived from rhetoric, is a gesture of communication, and it, rather than the unified execution of an action . . . establishes the connection between the son and the servant. This active, extroverted moment can be “read.” . . . In contrast to the earlier version, in which light and shadow are diffused across the surface in an almost autonomous pattern and illuminate the significant areas as if by chance, here the light creates much larger unified surfaces. The painter also took care that the faces of the father and the servant should be recognizable. (Ebert-Schifferer 1992, pp. 84–85)

Valentin’s response to Guercino’s presence in Rome has not been much discussed, but there can be little question that, just as in other works (cats. 4, 21, 22) he had shown a keen interest in the examples of Guido Reni and Domenichino as a means of clarifying the narrative effectiveness of his paintings, so in this one he was fascinated by the genius of his contemporary from Cento, whose startlingly original *Burial of Saint Petronilla* (Capitoline Museums, Rome) was installed in Saint Peter’s in 1623. It was an encounter that, in effect,

furthered Valentin’s efforts to forge a Caravaggesque Grand Manner.

It would, however, be wrong to think that Valentin’s interest in the rhetoric of painting implied a retreat from his Caravaggesque roots and his commitment to painting from life. The model for Peter reappears in the same role and making the same gesture—this time signifying disbelief—in the *Last Supper* (cat. 26), and he then was reemployed for the Evangelist Mark (cat. 29). The servant reappears in the *Concert with Eight Figures* in the Louvre (cat. 42). Moreover, Valentin’s composition quite conspicuously depends—in reverse—on Caravaggio’s *Calling of Saint Matthew*. Indeed, so close is the relationship that his picture must in some sense be understood as a reaffirmation of an authentic Caravaggesque practice—over and beyond the example of Jusepe de Ribera (Papi 2013a, p. 49), Bartolomeo Manfredi, or Guercino. KC

Provenance: Count Heinrich Brühl, Dresden (1754–69); Catherine the Great, The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (1769–96; inv. 1773, no. 231; inv. 1793, no. 597); The Hermitage, Saint Petersburg (until 1930; inv. 1859, no. 3437); The Pushkin State Museum, Moscow (from 1930)
Selected References: Labensky 1805–9, vol. 2, pp. 19–21; Landon 1819, n.p.; Dussieux 1856, p. 95; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 84, no. 16; Nicolson 1989, p. 203; Kuznetsova and Sharnova 2001, pp. 40–41, no. 24; Victoria Markova in Vodret 2012, p. 324, no. xi.14; Papi 2013a, p. 49

26. Last Supper, 1625–26

54¾ x 90½ in. (139 x 230 cm)

Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (inv. 1362)

Painted—as has now been established (Cappelletti and Testa 1994)—to decorate the walls of the gallery of Palazzo Mattei di Giove, adjacent to the church of Santa Caterina dei Funari, the *Last Supper* assumes a key role in any attempt to reconstruct the career of Valentin. This is owing not only to its quality, but also to the fact that we know both the name of the patron, Asdrubale Mattei (1554–1638), and when it must have been painted, 1625–26. This is a year after Valentin joined the association of northern painters, the Bentvueghels, and a year before his first documented commission from Cardinal Francesco Barberini in 1627—an event that signaled his ascendancy in Rome

alongside his compatriots Simon Vouet and Nicolas Poussin. The picture thus marks Valentin’s definitive emergence from the shadowy world of the art market and his early years of undocumented obscurity (for possible earlier patrons, see cats. 14, 18).

Like his older brother Ciriaco (1542–1614), Asdrubale was a significant collector of antiquities and of paintings, with a wide-ranging taste reflected in the disparate painters he hired to decorate his palace designed by Carlo Maderno. They ranged from Gaspare Celio and Antonio Circignani to Francesco Albani, Giovanni Lanfranco, and the young Pietro da Cortona. His brother Ciriaco had been an important patron of Caravaggio,



commissioning in 1601–2 three masterpieces: the *Supper at Emmaus* (National Gallery, London), *Saint John the Baptist* (Pinacoteca Capitolina, Rome), and the *Taking of Christ* (National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin). Significantly, the latter was inherited by Asdrubale's son Paolo when Ciriaco's son and heir, Giovanni Battista, died in 1624—at precisely the time Asdrubale's attention turned to filling his newly constructed gallery with paintings.

Asdrubale's admiration for Caravaggio's picture is indicated by a copy he commissioned in 1626 (Cappelletti and Testa 1994, p. 102) and it seems to be reflected as well in the artists he chose to decorate the gallery, the vaults of which had been frescoed by Pietro da Cortona, between 1622 and 1624, with richly colored scenes from the life of Solomon that had established him as the rising star of the Baroque. It was at this point that Asdrubale's attention turned to paintings to adorn the walls. Key was a series of seven large canvases of the same size showing, with one exception, scenes from the life of Christ and the apostles. The components and arrangement are recorded in an inventory of 1631 (see Cappelletti 1992; Cappelletti and Testa 1994; *Caravaggio e la collezione Mattei* 1995). Two of these canvases were painted by Pietro da Cortona and are documented to 1624–26 and another pair, by Giovanni Serodine, are documented to 1625–26; in the latter year Asdrubale was able to declare, “at last one can say it is finished” (“finalmente la si po' dir finite”; Cappelletti 1995, p. 42). Although lacking the documented payments, it is clear that the *Last Supper* by Valentin and a *Sacrifice of Isaac* by Orazio Riminaldi were also painted at this time; the seventh canvas in the series, *Christ Disputing in the Temple* by Antiveduto Grammatica, was not commissioned but, rather, recycled from the paintings Asdrubale had inherited.

Cortona's are the weakest of the group, perhaps because he attempted to adjust the brilliant style of his ceiling frescoes to accord with the generally Caravaggesque style of the other pictures. By the same token, the canvases of Valentin, Riminaldi, and Serodine—to say nothing of the picture by Grammatica—give clear evidence that, by 1625, Caravaggism did not have a uniform face. It is by comparison with Serodine's dazzling, open brushwork and the patchy, animated light he employs to heighten the sense of dramatic moment, or Riminaldi's tendency toward a rhetorical gesturality, that we can appreciate the particular character of Valentin's approach: his unwavering commitment to working *dal naturale* and his no less rigorous insistence that the restrained gestures and expressions of his

figures convey a quality of truthfulness and express the human dimension of the subject.

Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1973, p. 144) have noted that the rigorous symmetry of the composition seems surprising, showing a “classicistic or, better, an archaistic preoccupation.” That Valentin's composition situates itself in a long-running Renaissance tradition is clear, but this was no more than a recognition of the canonical status of the subject. Even the two outsized apostles placed prominently on the viewer's side of the table, framing Christ, belong to a solution that extends from Albrecht Dürer through Livio Agresti (in the Oratorio del Gonfalone, Rome, of which Ciriaco Mattei had been a member) and beyond. As in those works, Valentin portrays the crucial moment when the apostles react to Christ's announcement: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake” (John 13:21–22). Attention is focused on the serene figure of Christ, who gazes past the apostles, his gesture—one hand on the table, palm out, and the other at his breast—indicating his impending betrayal and sacrifice. The reactions of the apostles, conveyed by their sorrowful faces as well as their gestures, are described with acute attention to variety as well as understated veracity.

The controlling artistic principle is that of contrasting complementarity. Thus, the apostle at the far right has both hands pointing inward, toward his breast—“Lord, is it I?”—while the balancing figure on the left clasps them together on his lap in a gesture of grief or sorrow (Bulwer 1644, pp. 28–29). Saint Peter raises his hands in an open gesture of disbelief, while his counterpart crosses one over the other, internalizing his profound sorrow. The figures in the foreground—larger in scale and cut off mid-thigh, leaving a void so as to bring the viewer into the picture—are shown from the back, offsetting the figures of Christ and the sleeping Saint John. Judas, “who one recognizes by the purse he holds and tries to hide behind himself, turning his head as though fearing the crime he has conceived might be read on his face” (*Galerie de feu S. E. le Cardinal Fesch* 1844–45, pt. 3 [1844], p. 86), is paired with an apostle who bends over to reach for a pitcher, Christ's words having evidently caught him off guard.

The viewer participates in an unfolding drama, but one that conspicuously avoids the explosive, attention-grabbing effects of Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus* (as a Mattei commission, Caravaggio's picture—then owned by Scipione Borghese—may have been on

Asdrubale's mind). The quality of expressive veracity has been achieved by artistic means that have much in common with what we have come to think of as French classicism and that justify Giovan Pietro Bellori's remark concerning Valentin's attention to the "disposition of the figures" (1672 [1976 ed., p. 236]). No less attention is devoted to the still-life details, which, having been painted over the completed tablecloth, have become somewhat transparent with time. The two glass beakers present a remarkable study of light passing through their rippled surface and casting mottled, colored reflections on the cloth.

The carefully equilibrated composition and grave, serious mood seem to have come as a revelation to the young Jacques Louis David. In 1779, during the time he spent in the French Academy in Rome (1775–80), he made a copy of the picture that, after being sent back to Paris, he recovered and kept in his studio, exhibiting it in 1824–25 (see Sérullaz 1989, p. 62; Schnapper 1989, p. 88). The picture thus inscribes itself deeply into the history of French painting. Commenting on its dramatic austerity, which he compared to that of the great playwright Pierre Corneille, Roberto Longhi (1958, p. 66) noted that "the artist seems almost to evoke the severity of [Frans] Pourbus's painting [of the Last Supper] in the Louvre." He might equally have drawn a comparison with Philippe de Champaigne's *Last Supper* painted for the church of Port-Royal des Champs (Musée du Louvre). Longhi saw in this classicizing vein a parallel with other French painters in Rome and an indication of one of the distinguishing features of Valentin's Caravaggism.

The models for the apostles were notably reemployed for the series of Evangelists now at Versailles (cats. 28, 29). The model for Saint John remained the same; that portrayed as Peter in the *Last Supper* (to the left of Christ) was reimagined as Mark in the Evangelist (he

reassumes his identity as Peter in the Pushkin *Denial of Saint Peter*, cat. 25); that for the apostle at the right end of the table posed for Saint Matthew (he was a preferred model of Valentin's and reappears in a number of paintings); and the apostle bent over to pick up a pitcher seems to be the same who modeled for Saint Luke. We find the model for Christ in the *Crowning with Thorns* in Munich (cat. 37) and the version of *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini (cat. 17), as well as, perhaps, for *King David with a Harp* (Montreal Museum of Fine Arts)—all works of more or less the same time period.

Valentin evidently painted another picture of the subject that was in the Spanish royal collections (see cat. 19). KC

Provenance: Asdrubale Mattei, Palazzo Mattei di Giove, Rome (1626–38; inv. 1631, no. 255, as "La Cena di Nro Sig.re del Valentino"); Palazzo Mattei, Rome (until 1808; inv. 1676, no. 69; inv. 1729, no. 62; inv. 1753, no. 163; inv. 1793, no. 72, as "Lanfranco o Monsieur Valentino—La Cena di Gesù Cristo cogli Apostoli"); Cardinal Joseph Fesch, Palazzo Falconieri, terza camera, Rome (1808–39; postmortem inv. 1839, no. 2148); his estate (1839–45; sale, Rome, March 17–18, 1845, no. 439–1801); Galleria del Monte di Pietà, Rome (until 1875; sale, Monte di Pietà, Rome, 1875, no. 1185, unsold; sale 1875, no. 966, unsold); purchased in 1895 for the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome
Selected References: Titi 1763, p. 89; von Ramdohr 1787, vol. 2, p. 260; *Galerie de feu S. E. le Cardinal Fesch 1844–45*, pt. 3 (1844), p. 86, no. 439–1801; Voss 1924, p. 455; *Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* 1951, p. 98, no. 183; Longhi 1958, pp. 62, 66; Hoog 1960, p. 273; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pl. XIII; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 144, 146, no. 44 (French ed., pp. 148, 150, no. 46); Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Rosenberg 1984, p. 825; Mojana 1989, p. 140, no. 44; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Cappelletti and Testa 1994, pp. 68–69, 85, 132–33, no. 29, p. 195; Cappelletti 1995, pp. 44, 50; Laura Testa in *Caravaggio e la collezione Mattei* 1995, p. 156, no. 18; Strinati and Vodret 1998, p. 30; Rossella Vodret in Strinati and Vodret 1999, p. 126, no. 50; Vodret in Mochi Onori and Vodret 2008, p. 171; Melasecchi 2010, p. 741; Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée in Vodret 2012, p. 338, no. XI.21; "Art Collection at Monte di Pietà" 2015; Fried 2016, pp. 101–3

27. Dream of Saint Joseph, ca. 1624–26

44⁷/₈ x 36¹/₄ in. (114 x 92 cm)

Private collection

This hauntingly poetic picture was introduced into the literature with a misidentification as Saint Peter in prison visited by an angel (Longhi 1958, p. 62). This is not surprising: a similar confusion surrounded the identification of Georges de La Tour's enigmatic picture of the dream of Saint Joseph in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes (Jean-Pierre Cuzin in Cuzin and Rosenberg 1997, pp. 214–15, no. 43) (fig. 61). In the case of Valentin's painting, cleaning prior to its exhibition in London in 1985 revealed a carpenter's adze (a tool used in smoothing or shaping wood) on the stone block next to the sleeping figure. Since Joseph was believed to be a carpenter, there can be no doubt that Valentin has painted the angel appearing to Saint Joseph in a dream.

Joseph had a vision of an angel in a dream on three occasions. First, when he discovered that his wife was pregnant: "behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:20). The second was following the Nativity and the infanticide of King Herod: "behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt" (Matt. 2:13). The third was after Herod's death, when it was safe to return from Egypt to Israel: "behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life" (Matt. 2:19–20). Any of these events is possible, though to judge from other paintings of the period, the second is the most likely.

Although Saint Joseph was venerated prior to the Council of Trent, his cult truly developed in the seventeenth century. Saints Teresa and Francis de Sales were ardent devotees, and the cult was strongly promoted by the Jesuits as well as by Pope Gregory XV, who in 1621 had the saint's feast day officially put in the General Roman Calendar (Mâle 1951, pp. 313–25). Yet, whereas there is a vast number of devotional pictures showing Joseph affectionately holding the Christ Child, and a significant number of altarpieces showing his death, his dream is less frequently painted (see Pigler 1974, vol. 1, pp. 241–42, 251–52).

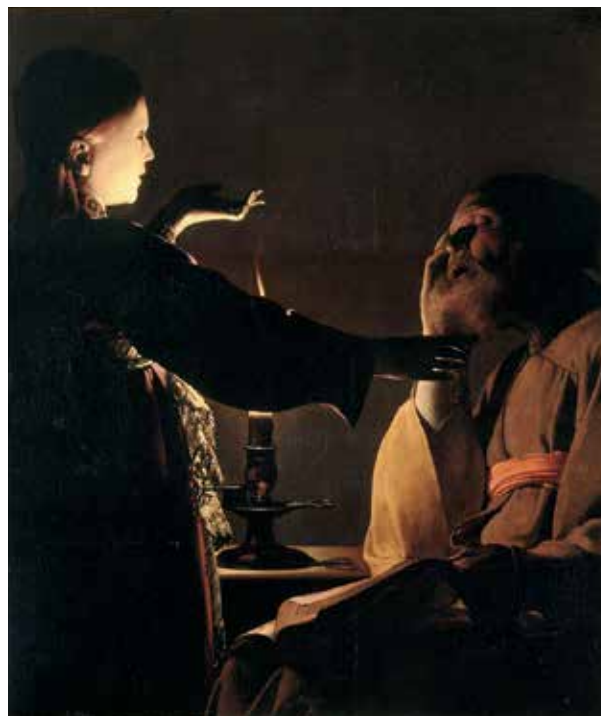
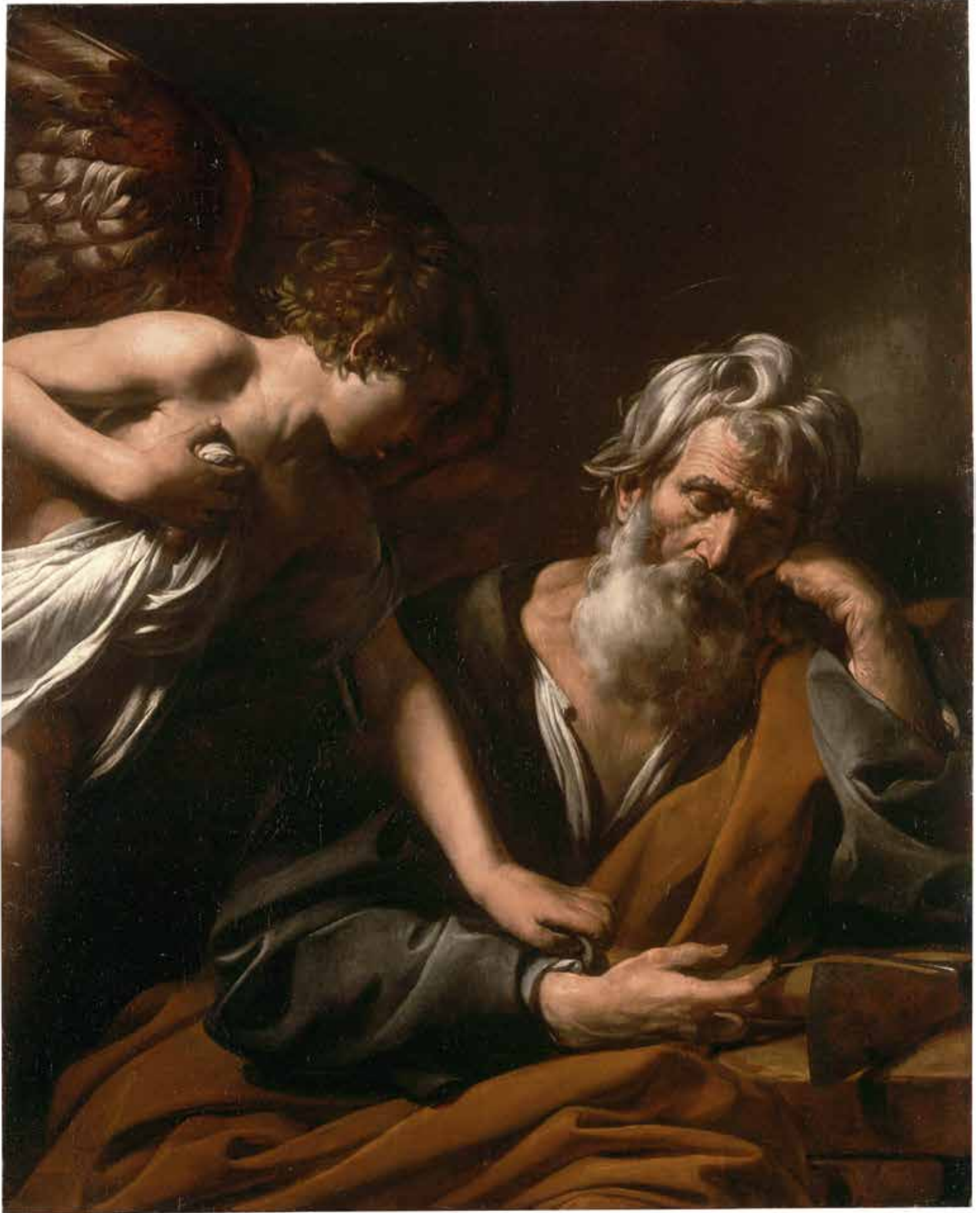


Fig. 61. Georges de La Tour (French, 1593–1653). *Dream of Saint Joseph*, ca. 1640. Oil on canvas, 36⁵/₈ x 31⁷/₈ in. (93 x 81 cm). Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes (inv. 642)

What makes Valentin's painting particularly affective is the tenderness with which the angel modestly gathers up his drapery with one hand, while with the other he gently grasps the hem of Joseph's sleeve, as though to wake him from heavy slumber. The suggestion of tactility was a crucial aspect of Caravaggesque naturalism and Valentin uses it to great effect here, as also in *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac* (cat. 44), where it is the firm grasp stopping Abraham's action. In the *Dream of Saint Joseph*, the angel's act of touching confers a physical, concrete dimension to what is described in the Bible as a vision or dream. Jacques Thuillier (1992, p. 190) reminds us that central to La Tour's depiction—and, by extension, to Valentin's—was the matter of Grace: "the heavenly apparition at the very moment when, incapable of rising to the truths of the Spirit, exhausted by the effort, man falls back in his torpor."

The same workshop prop of a hawk's or falcon's wings reappears in *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac*, and it seems possible that the model for the angel was reemployed as Isaac in that picture; he reappears as an angel in the



altarpiece for Saint Peter's as well (cat. 48). The model for Joseph posed repeatedly for Valentin—evidently over a period of years: as Saint Matthew in the series of Evangelists that now decorate the royal bedroom at Versailles (cat. 28), and for Joseph in a *Holy Family* (Galleria Spada, Rome). Although the picture has been dated by most scholars to about 1624–25 (Cuzin 1975, p. 59; *Around 1610* 1985, pp. 94–96; Mojana 1989, p. 102), it may actually be somewhat later. KC

Provenance: Puglisi-Calzavara collection, Rome (by 1958); private collection, England; private collection, Switzerland; Matthiesen Fine Arts, London (1979–91); private collection
Selected References: Longhi 1958, p. 62; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; *Around 1610* 1985, pp. 94–96, no. 27; Wright 1985, p. 269; Mojana 1989, p. 102, no. 25; Nicolson 1989, p. 203

28. Saint Matthew, ca. 1624–26

47¼ x 57½ in. (120 x 146 cm)

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. M.V. 7274)

29. Saint Mark, ca. 1624–26

47¼ x 57½ in. (120 x 146 cm)

Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. M.V. 7272)

Valentin de Boulogne painted isolated figures of saints on several occasions—John the Baptist (cats. 4, 45), Jerome (Galleria Sabauda, Turin), and John the Evangelist (cat. 20)—before undertaking, about 1624–26, the ambitious Four Evangelists series, which marked a turning point in his career. Two of the paintings, *Saint Matthew* and *Saint Mark*, are presented here, newly restored for the exhibition.

Although it is very likely that the series was the result of an important commission, nothing, unfortunately, is known about its genesis, its patron, or its original destination. It may be noted, however, that this theme was enjoying a revival in Rome at the time (Mâle 1951, pp. 338–39). In 1622, the Evangelists appeared triumphant on the spandrels of the cupola of Sant' Andrea della Valle, painted by Domenichino. About the same time, they were also the object of a *paragone* among artists, in the Palazzo Giustiniani, where Evangelists by the leading figures of the Emilian school—a Saint John by Domenichino (the Christie Estate Trust, Glyndebourne, the only painting in the group now known), a Saint Luke by Guido Reni, and a Saint Mark by Francesco Albani—were joined by a Saint Matthew by Nicolas Régnier, a fervent follower of Caravaggio and official painter for the famous collector the marquis Vincenzo Giustiniani (Lemoine 2007, p. 322, no. M. 14).

Even before Valentin and Régnier, other *naturalisti* had taken on the theme of the four Evangelists in the form of series: for example, Hendrick ter Brugghen painted his Four Evangelists (Historisch Museum, Deventer) upon his return to the Netherlands in 1621; and David de Haen produced his series in Rome, sometime before his death in 1622 (Catedral de San Salvador [La Seo], Zaragoza). De Haen's four paintings, in a strictly Caravaggesque spirit, are all "portraits" of Evangelists, cut off at the waist. Valentin's series is distinguished from these early models by its imposing dimensions, its horizontal format—unusual for the subject—and an original synthesis that combines the legacy of Caravaggio with the lessons of the Bolognese masters. Valentin here reached an unprecedented balance, akin to what he achieved in the *Concert with a Bas-Relief* in the Musée du Louvre (cat. 23) or the *Last Supper* at the Palazzo Mattei di Giove (cat. 26), which can be dated with certainty to 1625–26.

The painter scrupulously respects the traditional iconography of the Evangelists, associated with the tetramorph that appeared to the prophet Ezekiel: "Out of the midst of the fire. . . came the likeness of four living creatures. . . As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle"



28. *Saint Matthew*, before restoration



29. *Saint Mark*, during restoration

(Ezekiel 1:4–5, 10). “The first face, which is that of a man, designates Saint Matthew, who from the beginning of his Gospel represents Jesus Christ in his humanity, reporting his genealogy”; the second “designates Saint Mark, from which one hears, as it were, the voice of a lion roaring in the wilderness” (Lemaistre de Sacy 1717, vol. 3, art. 16, p. x). In the series as a whole, the horizontal format and airy composition allowed the painter to depict the specificity of each Evangelist’s task of writing. Matthew, for example, “called Levi and a tax collector by profession,” the first of all the Evangelists, is accompanied by a magnificent still life of books, from which a page covered with fine handwriting protrudes, to remind us that Matthew wrote “his Gospel in Hebrew in Judea, primarily for the Jews who had believed in Jesus Christ” (ibid.). As for Saint Mark, author of the second Gospel, he implores God and seeks inspiration, his mouth half-open, eyes raised to heaven, arms spread in a gesture full of eloquence. He is “the interpreter of the Apostle Saint Peter and first bishop of the church of Alexandria, who in truth did not see the Savior, but who reported in accordance with the truth of the events, rather than the natural order, what he had heard the Apostle his master say in his sermons” (ibid.).

For each of the Evangelists, Valentin adopts a majestic composition, with a “slow and solemn” rhythm (Mojana 1989, p. 104) that is new in his oeuvre. The monumental figures, seen in three-quarter profile, are skillfully articulated. In the case of Matthew, the still life of books and the angel frame the diagonal formed by the Evangelist’s body; in the case of Mark, the lion and the writing desk are placed at opposite ends of a diagonal that discreetly brings the composition to life.

These works manifest Valentin’s new ambition to introduce novelty into *pittura dal naturale*, drawing especially on the work of his Bolognese contemporaries, whose influence now dominated the Roman art scene. The halo of light illuminating Mark’s face from behind, the melodramatic rhetoric of the gestures, and the Evangelist’s inspired gaze are in fact worthy of a Reni or a Domenichino.

The composition of *Saint Matthew*, by contrast, is indebted to an invention of Caravaggio. The typology of the angel in action, placed next to the saint, and the arrangement of the hands are directly inspired by the first version of the Lombard painter’s *Saint Matthew and the Angel* (formerly in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin), one of the masterpieces of the Giustiniani collection, originally intended for the Contarelli Chapel. Even so, this is another instance where Valentin quotes

Caravaggio explicitly, only to immediately invent a new formula. He does not adopt the active dialogue between the saint and the angel but, on the contrary, plays on the opposition between the venerable old man, momentarily absorbed in an intense meditation, and the angel on the alert, as if waiting to resume the collaborative work of writing, one hand folding back a page of the register, the other grasping the drapery in which he is clothed.

In both *Matthew* and *Mark*, the novelty of Valentin’s composition resides in the calm, monumental rhythm of the layout and the striking naturalistic effects, executed with a freedom and assurance that seem to evoke the brush of Velázquez. Once again, there would seem to be a point of contact between the two painters—the head of the child with unruly curls or the craggy face of the old man who personifies Saint Matthew. He is inspired by one of Valentin’s favorite models, whose features also appear on other canvases from the same period, among others, the *Last Supper* (cat. 26) and *Dream of Saint Joseph* (cat. 27). Painted from life, both the old man and the child, Saint Matthew and the angel, exude psychological intensity.

In each of the compositions, but by different means, Valentin highlights the question of divine inspiration, incarnated *dal naturale*. This majestic series of the Four Evangelists, situated stylistically and iconographically between Caravaggio and Domenichino, seems to echo in the work of a single painter the illustrious Giustiniani Evangelists, in which the naturalism of a follower of Caravaggio, Régnier, hung side by side with the *beau idéal* realized by the emulators of the Carracci.

The current renown of the Four Evangelists at Versailles lies less in that remarkable tone—naturalistic and classical all at once—than in their location: since the reign of Louis XIV, they have been in the king’s chamber. Though nothing is known about how the series was received in Rome, it resurfaced on rue Vivienne in Paris in 1664, in the recently renovated mansion of the banker and art lover François Oursel (ca. 1605–1669), one of the remarkable curiosities of Paris (Weil-Curiel 2004). By the time of his death, the amateur Oursel, who worked for the famous Louis Phélypeaux, Seigneur de La Vrillière, one of the major collectors in the capital, had assembled more than sixty paintings of the highest quality: masterpieces of the Venetian school, particularly prized at the time, and also works by the eminent figures of contemporary Italian and French painting, from Caravaggio to Reni, Guercino to Nicolas Poussin, Claude Lorrain to Laurent de La Hyre. Valentin’s

inclusion within that “excellent” collection is important evidence of the reputation the painter enjoyed at the time, even before his works became part of the royal collection and officially came to occupy a privileged place in the pantheon of the arts (see my essay “Valentin in the Grand Siècle” in this catalogue).

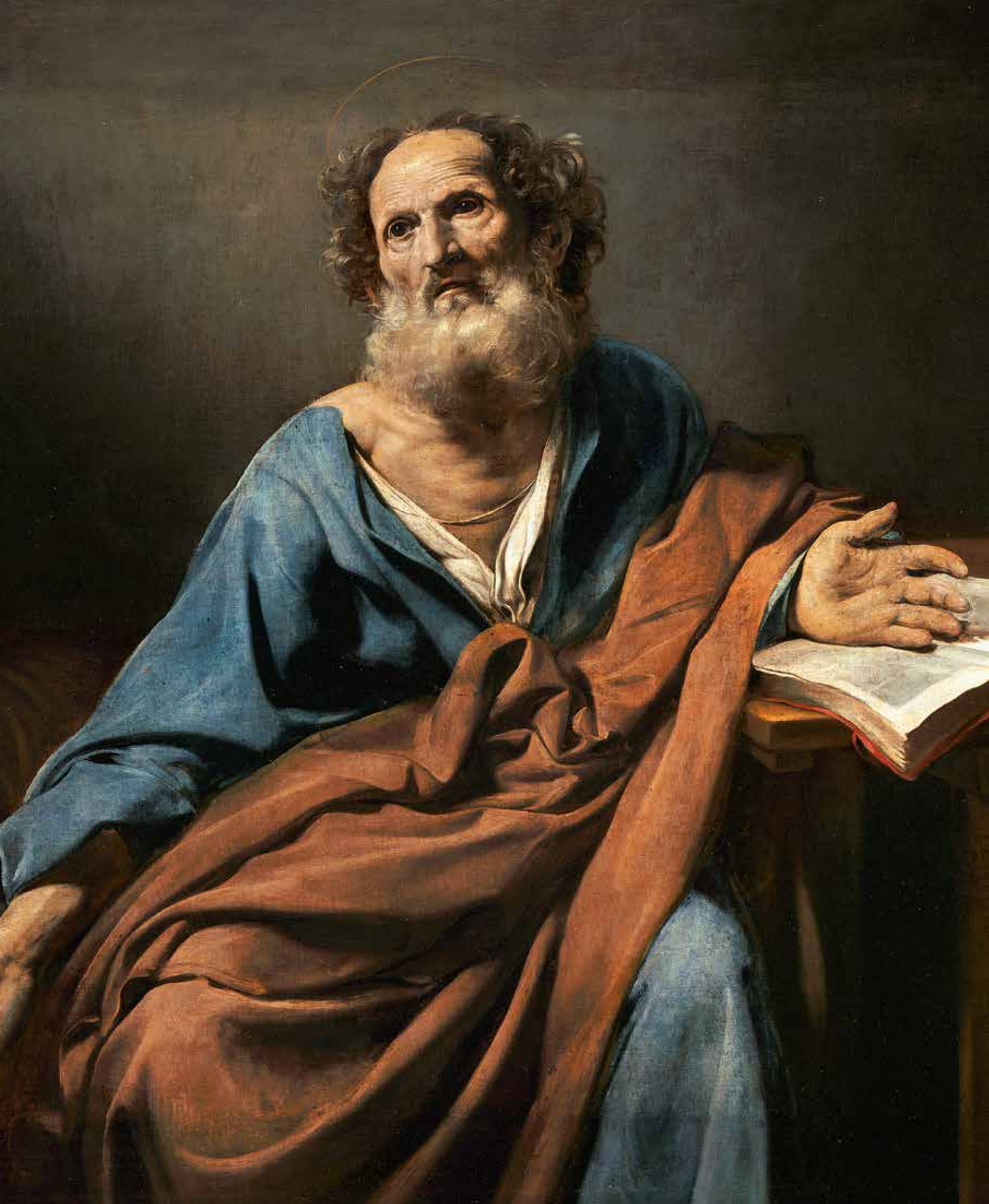
Selected in 1670 by the royal administration from among the jewels of the “Museo Orselliano,” with, notably, Caravaggio’s *Alof de Wignacourt and His Page* (Musée du Louvre), the Four Evangelists immediately achieved distinction in two respects. First, they comprised four of the thirty-eight masterpieces from the royal cabinet to be reproduced in a sumptuous series of engravings, the prestigious *Cabinet du Roi* (1671), the ambition of which, both pedagogical and propagandistic, is well known (Grivel 1985). Secondly, they were chosen, along with another of Valentin’s canvases, the *Tribute to Caesar* (still in situ), to decorate the most important room in the Château de Versailles, the Salon du Roi (it would become the Chambre du Roi in 1701), where the ceremonies of the king’s rising, dining, and retiring unfolded on a daily basis.

Valentin’s works were the sole representatives of the French school and accompanied those by the most famous masters of Italian painting at the time—Domenichino, Giovanni Lanfranco, Alessandro Turchi, and Bartolomeo Manfredi (actually represented by a copy by Nicolas Tournier)—as well as a *Saint John* attributed to Raphael. That privileged position, though it attests, in my view, to Valentin’s now-established fame, may also reflect Louis XIV’s personal taste, as Nicolas Milovanovic (2009) has pointed out. The addition in 1695 of a new canvas by Valentin, the famous *Fortune-Teller* (cat. 38), hung on the penthouse floor alongside the Evangelists

series and the *Tribute to Caesar*, lends support to that hypothesis. The series was copied twice in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Musées des Beaux-Arts, Dijon and Tour, Mojana 1989, p. 216, nos. 92–95, p. 217, nos. 96–99), in further testament to its importance, and Valentin himself produced a second Evangelists series, derived directly from the first (Mojana 1989, pp. 170–71, nos. 58, 59).

The *Four Evangelists*, eloquent symbols of Valentin’s fame during the Grand Siècle, a history that is now little known, continue to adorn the “holy of holies” of the Château de Versailles. AL

Provenance: François Oursel, Paris (before 1664–69; posthumous inventory of his wife, Catherine Galland, July 14, 1664: “quatre tableaux, où sont représentés les Quatre Evangélistes, du Vallentin, prisez ensemble 900 lts [livres]”); his children (1669–70); Louis XIV (acquired June 18, 1670, with six other pictures, including Caravaggio’s portrait *Alof de Wignacourt and His Page*), Royal Collections, Château de Versailles (Le Brun inv. 1683, nos. 333, 334; Paillet inv. 1690, nos. 333, 334; Paillet inv. 1695, nos. 333, 334, in the Petit Appartement du Roi; inv. 1709–10, nos. 7, 8, as overdoors in the Chambre du Roi); Château de Versailles
Selected References: Félibien 1677, paintings, p. 9, nos. xv, xvi; Le Brun 1683, nos. 333, 334 (published in Brejon de Lavergnée 1987, p. 346); Paillet 1690, fol. 266r, nos. 333, 334; Paillet 1695, fol. 115r, nos. 333, 334; Piganiol de La Force 1701, p. 120; N. Bailly 1709–10 (published in Engerand 1899, p. 200, nos. 7, 8); Piganiol de La Force 1717, vol. 1, p. 196; Piganiol de La Force 1730, vol. 1, p. 235; Dézallier d’Argenville 1762, vol. 4, p. 49; Piganiol de La Force 1764, vol. 1, p. 262; Landon 1832, pp. 102, 103, pls. 58, 59; Blanc 1862, pp. 13, 15, 16; Guiffrey 1881–1901, vol. 1 (1881), col. 479; Voss 1924, p. 455; Brière 1938, p. 214; Longhi 1958, p. 62; Hoog 1960, pp. 267–68; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pls. viii, ix; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 253); Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Wright 1985, p. 269; Mojana 1989, p. 104, no. 26, p. 106, no. 27; Nicolson 1989, p. 203; Cantarel-Besson 1992, pp. 111, 302, 309; Constans 1995, vol. 2, p. 875; Bajou 1998, p. 32; Meyer 2004, pp. 45, 150, 152; Weil-Curiel 2004, pp. 38, 43, 46; Milovanovic 2009, pp. 282, 286



30. Lute Player, ca. 1625–26

50½ x 39 in. (128.3 x 99.1 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Walter and Leonore Annenberg Acquisitions Endowment Fund; Director's Fund; Acquisitions Fund; James and Diane Burke and Mr. and Mrs. Mark Fisch Gifts; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 2008 (2008.459)

The Metropolitan's painting is unique in Valentin's production in showing an individual lute player, as though isolated from one of his multi-figure compositions. As in Valentin's paintings of music-making ensembles, the figure is a soldier of fortune and wears a steel gorget with his fancy clothes. In a number of inventories and sales catalogues he is described as "Spanish," and though the basis for this designation is mysterious, it is known that when, in 1624, Valentin joined the Bentvueghels, which consisted mostly of Dutch and Flemish painters (see Chronology), the artist took as his sobriquet "Amador" (loosely translated from Spanish as "lover boy"; but also an Italian word associated with lasciviousness). The subject of madrigals was invariably amatory and the association of music and love was commonplace in art.

This picture, which must date to the period 1625–26—contemporary, that is, with his *Last Supper* for the gallery in Palazzo Mattei di Giove (cat. 26)—may thus be in some sense self-referential. To judge from its illustrious provenance and the copies that are known, it enjoyed considerable fame. It is first listed in the celebrated collection of Cardinal Jules Mazarin, who owned eight works by the artist. Judging from the accuracy of all of Valentin's works with musical themes, he was acutely aware of professional musical practice and incorporated it into his paintings. We owe the following observations to the lutenist Christopher Morrongiello, whom I thank for generously sharing them.

The six-line stave in the oblong music book on the table indicates that the lutenist is reading not from mensural notation but from tablature, a visual form of notation that tells the lutenist where to put his fingers on the instrument. It is similar to the way that guitar tablature is used today: the numbers (or letters) tell the player what frets to stop with the left-hand fingers. The six lines represent the six courses (or pairs of strings) that were commonly used on the lute. The lower courses were indicated by ledger lines. That said, it is hard to determine if Valentin's lutenist is performing solo lute music or if he is accompanying himself singing. He is, however, clearly not improvising an accompaniment

or playing continuo from a single line (the bass line, for example) of mensural notation in a printed part book.

The way the lutenist is sitting with the bout or end clasp of the instrument near, or pressing against, the table edge is also noteworthy. The lute is a notoriously slippery instrument to hold and pressing it against the table edge would not only help support it but increase its volume and sonority. These observations lead one to wonder whether Valentin may have been a musician or lutenist as well as a painter. So many prominent artists of this time played the lute, and several of them depicted themselves playing on the instrument: the Carracci brothers, Artemisia Gentileschi, Jan Steen, and so on. Interestingly, there is a fantasie for bandora in the British Library (Add. Ms. 31392) dating from ca. 1605, that is attributed to a "Maister Valentine." It appears among several fantasies by the Italian lutenist Alfonso Ferrabosco from Bologna and the opening point of imitation is based on one of Ferrabosco's fantasies. Also, there are several pieces in a little-known Italian manuscript in Trent (Biblioteca Comunale, Ms. 1947, no. 5), dated 1610–30 and attributed to one "V. B." There are no known concordances for these pieces.

Whether the picture was known to Watteau when he painted his small canvas with Mezzetin and by Manet when he painted the *Spanish Singer* (both Metropolitan Museum) cannot be said with certainty but is possible. Certainly, in the nineteenth century Valentin's Caravaggesque realism was much admired. A copy of the picture has been in Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire, since at least 1688 (Brigstocke and Somerville 1995, p. 163); another was owned in 1694 by Ugo Accoramboni, Rome (see G. De Marchi 1987, p. 65); a version was sold at Christie's, London, June 8, 1804, no. 32, and the same or another version was sold at European Museum, London (May 26, 1806, no. 1642; December 29, 1806, no. 1642; and May 3, 1808, no. 224). There was a copy in a private collection, Brescia, in 1946 (see Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 156) and a copy was sold at Hôtel Drouot, Paris (April 4, 2007, no. 38, as by a follower of Valentin, 132 x 100 cm). KC



Provenance: Cardinal Jules Mazarin, Palais Mazarin, Paris (by 1653–d. 1661; inv. 1653, no. 280; inv. 1661, no. 1109); Palais Mazarin, Paris (until at least 1714; inv. 1699–1714); ?Nicolas Beaujon, Paris (until d. 1786; his sale, Remy and Julliot, Paris, April 25, 1787, no. 89); Pierre Rémy, Paris, from 1791; ?César-Louis-Marie Villemillot, Paris (until d. 1807; his sale, Paillet, Paris, May 25–29, 1807, no. 77, to Paule or Paillet); ?Alexandre-Joseph Paillet, Paris, from 1807; ?Ennio Quirino Visconti, Paris (until d. 1818); ?his son, Louis-Tullius-Joachim Visconti, Paris (1818–d. 1853); his daughter, Victorine Mathilde Visconti and her husband, Eugène marquis Dodun de Keroman (by 1864–her d. 1884); their daughter, Marie Sophie Dodun de Keroman and her husband, Ernest Frédéric van den Broek d’Obrenan (1884–her d. 1909); their son, Frantz John Eugène Ernest van den Broek d’Obrenan (1909–d. 1944); his son, Charles Ernest William Frantz van den Broek d’Obrenan (1944–d. 1956); private collection (1956–2008; sold to The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

31. A Musical Party, ca. 1625–26

44 x 57³/₄ in. (111.8 x 146.7 cm)

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of The Ahmanson Foundation (AC1998.58.1)

A convivial group of four male figures and one female—to judge from her elaborate costume she is a gypsy—gather around a fragment of Roman architecture and make music. The youngest—he is perhaps twelve years old, but in any case an adolescent—plays the violin; his companion, an extravagantly dressed soldier of fortune who must be in his twenties, plays the lute with intense concentration as he reads from a part book; behind the youth, a middle-aged man in armor empties his goblet of wine, casting a furtive glance at the oldest, white-bearded figure, who has momentarily put down his flagelot and, wearing a pensive expression, turns to observe his young colleague. These male figures are accompanied by the gypsy, who keeps tempo on a tambourine, an instrument associated with dance.

The picture brings together all the elements associated with Caravaggesque concert scenes, but without the conspicuous presence of food and with an unusual emphasis on the ages of the performers. When in the famous Orléans Collection, it was engraved simply as *La Musique*. Yet, as noted by Michela Gianfranceschi (2012, p. 247), the picture bears the suggestion of a symbolic language: “it could be interpreted as a depiction of the five senses or as the ages of Man.” Given the diverse ages of the four male figures, it is most likely an allegory of the Ages of Man, as in Valentin’s painting in the National Gallery, London (cat. 34). We know of

Selected References: “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1653, no. 280 (published in *Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin* 1861, p. 326); “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1661, no. 1109 (published in de Cosnac 1885, p. 319); Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 156, no. 47 (French ed., p. 162, no. 50); Cuzin 1975, p. 60; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, pp. 29, 124, no. 36; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Brigstocke and Somerville 1995, p. 163; Michel 1999, pp. 387, 409, n. 157, pp. 586–87; Cuzin 2010, pp. 101, 167; Keith Christiansen in “Recent Acquisitions” 2010, p. 30; Fried 2011, p. 119; Fried 2016, pp. 40–42, 106–7

another concert picture that was attributed to Valentin when it was in the Orléans Collection, in which the five senses were depicted (see Mojana 1989, p. 242, no. 151; Papi 1998a), so an allegorical concert scene is perfectly plausible. The presence of the young gypsy keeping tempo adds a further element. (Dylan Sauerwald has kindly suggested that the music could be a violin sonata, with the tambourine added for the dance sections.) This, then, would be a kind of Caravaggesque equivalent to Nicolas Poussin’s celebrated allegory *Dance to the Music of Time* (Wallace Collection, London), which was painted for a member of the Barberini circle, Cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi, whose taste for literary conceits is evident in the opera libretti he wrote.

Valentin eschews the kind of elaborate, literary program that lies at the heart of Poussin’s art. Rather, he suggests, in the guise of a tavern concert, the cycle of life and the passage of time, and he personifies each of life’s phases, from the enraptured playing of Youth to the wanton action of Middle Age and the resigned disengagement that is an aspect of Old Age. Whereas in the later canvas in London each figure holds an attribute appropriate to the age he personifies (see Wine 2001, p. 394), here, in what must be one of Valentin’s most beautiful concert pictures, allegorical meaning is suggested through a characterization of living models rather than signified.



The related composition in Strasbourg (cat. 32) includes again the figure of the gypsy girl, her pose varied somewhat, but eliminates the allegorical allusion to the Ages of Man. The Los Angeles picture was widely admired: Marina Mojana (1989, pp. 218–20, nos. 100–105) illustrates six copies; Gianfranceschi (2012, p. 248) identifies a related drawing she tentatively ascribes to Valentin. KC

Provenance: Louis Jacques Aimé Théodore de Dreux, Marquis de Nacré (until 1719); by gift to Philippe, duc d'Orléans and Regent of France, Palais Royal, Paris (d. 1723); by descent to Louis Philippe, called Philippe-Égalité, Palais Royal, Paris (1724–91; sale, 1791); Edouard de Walkiers, Brussels (1791); his cousin François Louis Josef de Laborde-Méréville, Paris and London (1791–92); Jeremias Harman, London (1793–98); Michael Bryan, on behalf of a syndicate that included the Duke of Bridgewater, Frederick Howard, fifth Earl of Carlisle, and Granville Leveson-Gower, first Marquis Stafford (until 1798; sale, Bryan

Galleries, London, December 26, 1798, no. 83); Francis Egerton, third Duke of Bridgewater, Bridgewater House, London (1798–1803); his nephew George Granville Leveson-Gower, first Duke of Sutherland (1803–33); Francis Egerton, first Earl of Ellesmere (1833–62); Francis Charles Granville Egerton, third Earl of Ellesmere (1862–1914); by descent to John Sutherland Egerton, fifth Earl of Ellesmere and sixth Duke of Sutherland, Bridgewater House, London (1944–46; sale, Christie's, London, October 18, 1946, no. 162); Wildenstein & Co., New York (1946–98); Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Selected References: Dubois de Saint-Gelais 1727, pp. 481–82; Waagen 1837–39, vol. 1 (1837), p. 334; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Costello 1950, p. 251, n. 8; Longhi 1958, p. 61; “Notable Works of Art” 1960, pl. ix; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, pp. 28, 116, no. 32; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Michel Hilaire in *Century of Splendour* 1993, p. 91; Wine 2001, p. 393; Gianfranceschi 2012, pp. 247–49; J. Patrice Marandel in Hilaire and Hémery 2012, p. 192, no. 40; Fried 2016, p. 86

32. Musicians and Soldiers, ca. 1625–27

61 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (155 x 200 cm)

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Strasbourg, Musées de Strasbourg (inv. MBA 1280)

This disparate group, immersed in deep shadow, assembles the usual protagonists of Valentin de Boulogne's works: musicians (here a tambourinist, a violinist, and a recorder player) accompanied by two soldiers in armor. The musicians are playing popular music as the soldiers quench their thirst. Repeating the formula of the *Concert with a Bas-Relief* in the Musée du Louvre (cat. 23), all are artificially arranged around an antique relic, a block of stone, here adorned with an egg-and-dart frieze and serving as a makeshift table. The leftovers of a meal are carefully laid out. A cut pie holds pride of place in the middle of the antique socle, and a knife extends slightly beyond its edge.

In this meticulously composed *mise-en-scène*, the painter shows figures from daily life such as the young female musician and the soldier emptying his glass, who both reappear in similar poses in *A Musical Party* (cat. 31). A virtuoso colorist, Valentin plays masterfully with the effects of light on the materials: note the shadow of the female musician's fingers, the gleaming reflections along the cuirass, and how the transparency of the glasses reveals their spherical shape and the coppery tint of the wine.

The motif of the pensive soldier, who seems to be considering his empty glass, through the reflective,

transparent surface of which we see his facial features, suggests several possible readings. It can be seen not only as a technical achievement but also as a distant echo of Annibale Carracci's *Boy Drinking* (Cleveland Museum of Art), known through several copies. That kinship might also suggest that this work is a meditation on the powers of wine, a source not only of harmful inebriation but also of creative intoxication, as suggested by the Bacchic myth. Valentin was intimately familiar with this myth, celebrating it in the *Bentvueghels*, the notorious association of northern artists in Rome, placed under the auspices of Bacchus (see my essay “Bowling to No One: Valentin's Ambitions” in this catalogue). The motif could be interpreted, last, as an allegory of sight. The scene implicitly invokes the senses and the danger in succumbing to one's passions. Drinking wine and listening to music are virtuous pleasures, but they can form dishonorable appetites if practiced to excess. Music, for example, is “a roaring-meg against melancholy, to rear and revive the languishing soul” (Burton 1621 [1862 ed., vol. 2, p. 227]), but it can also induce complacency and overwhelm the senses with a perilous voluptuousness, thereby inviting dark thoughts to invade the vulnerable soul. That seems to be the case for the protagonists of the Strasbourg concert, particularly



before restoration

the unusual figure of the violinist, apparently captivated by the music or profoundly absorbed in a mysterious sadness. In a moralizing interpretation, the overconsumption of wine, dramatized here by the two soldiers, leads to a loss of self-control; it can also bring on melancholy, a mood that seems omnipresent here. The oppressive darkness, the limited palette and muted shades, and the engrossed attitudes of the characters, each seemingly a stranger to the others, shape the image of a human theater that is disturbing, to say the least.

Note the power of the antique block. The structuring center of the composition, it seems to leap off the canvas and enter the space of the observer, reinforcing the quasi-tangible effect of the scene. Equally intense in the center is the young female musician's stare. Her face, in shadow and light, sizes up the beholder. With her Medusa's gaze and the rhythm of her drum, she

calls the tune. She seems at once to be interrupting the languorous torpor that has taken over the scene and to be accompanying it with her instrument. Breaching the scene, she subtly plays the role of admonisher, showing the way in and calling on us to witness this mesmerizing sadness, the better to fascinate us.

The painting was cleaned for the exhibition. AL

Provenance: Doumet-Adanson family, Musée de Balaine, Villeneuve-sur-Allier (their sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, December 7–8, 1923, no. 154); Georges Aubry, until 1931; sold to museum; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Strasbourg (from 1931)

Selected References: Voss 1924, p. 455; Haug and Riff 1932, p. 169; Longhi 1958, p. 62; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 253); Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Cuzin 1987, p. 46; Mojana 1989, p. 120, no. 34; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Iris Wenderholm in Clair 2005a, p. 270, no. 149; Annick Lemoine in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, p. 270, no. 57; Fried 2016, pp. 85–86

33. Judgment of Solomon, ca. 1624–25

69¼ x 82⅝ in. (176 x 210 cm)

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (inv. 8246)

The subject is taken from the Old Testament book of I Kings (3:16–28) and is the first demonstration of the young Solomon’s celebrated wisdom, which God granted him in a dream: “Behold . . . I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee” (I Kings 3:12). The case involved two prostitutes. Each had a child, but the baby of one had died during the night and both women claimed the one still living; the two women shared the same house, and their children were born just three days apart, complicating the identification. Lacking any evidence beyond their conflicting pleas, Solomon commanded that the living child be divided with a sword: “give half to the one and half to the other.” The rightful mother was revealed when she exclaimed: “O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it.” Like most other artists who treated this canonical subject, Valentin shows the scene at its climactic moment, with the young Solomon (“I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in” [3:7]) on an elevated throne, in front of which lies the dead child, with one arm hanging limp in the fashion of a Pietà. Solomon’s right hand is outstretched toward the soldier he has ordered to divide the living, notably frightened, infant, who is being passed up—apparently without objection—by the false claimant while, on the opposite side, the true mother gazes imploringly at the king, her hands on her breast in a pleading gesture. Two elders look on, “for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.”

What distinguishes Valentin’s composition, an invention of the highest order—and one he repeated with variations (cat. 39)—is the quality of suspended moment he achieves, employing a carefully contrived composition that incorporates meaningful contrasts of pose, gesture, and expression to heighten the dramatic impact. Most notable is the false mother, her kneeling position and undone dress—doubtless to display her milk-filled breast—contrasted with the profile of the true mother, whose pose, tussled hair, and the agitated folds of her apron suggest a combination of impetuosity and desperation. Does the king’s gesture signify his command to divide the child? Or is it a stopping order? The latter is suggested by the meaningful glances the king exchanges with his henchman,

who is portrayed at precisely the moment of the shifting dynamic. We recognize in these features Valentin’s desire to engage the viewer in a manner consonant with the poetics found in the virtually contemporary sculptures of Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s *Pluto and Proserpina* and *Apollo and Daphne*, created in the first half of the 1620s for Scipione Borghese.

The way in which Valentin has, in a second moment, repainted the apron of the true mother to emphasize her bold movement presents an intriguing analogy with Bernini’s use of drapery in the *Daphne* (the paint has become transparent, making the change visible to the naked eye). That Valentin may have been responding to the assertive genius of Bernini has not been explored in the literature but is worth considering: after all, between 1620 and 1625 he was living with the Lorraine sculptor David de La Riche (about whom, unfortunately, we know little: see Chronology and the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue). Moreover, Bernini and Valentin shared a common interest in the paintings of Guercino, who worked in Rome between 1621 and 1623. Indeed, what Tomaso Montanari (2007, p. 23) has written about Bernini’s appreciation of Guercino applies with equal validity to Valentin at this moment: “Gian Lorenzo [Bernini] had already shown his understanding of the neo-Venetian paintings that Rubens had left in Rome. Now, in the work of Guercino, he was able to sense that the quality of movement, instability, and warm atmospheric vibration among the figures approached effects similar to those he himself sought to impose on his marbles.” This new poetics was part and parcel of an emerging Baroque aesthetic that is found, for example, in Giovanni Lanfranco’s frescoes in the Sacchetti Chapel of San Giovanni dei Fiorentini (1623–24). It would increasingly inform the paintings of Valentin and would, indeed, prove crucial to Velázquez during his first Italian trip (1629–30). These features alone would place Valentin’s *Judgment of Solomon* in the years around 1624–25, which is when both Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 59) and Marina Mojana (1989, p. 142) also date it.

The subject of Solomon’s judgment was enormously popular (see Pigler 1974, vol. 1, pp. 162–67); among the Caravaggisti it was treated about 1609–10 by Jusepe de Ribera (Galleria Borghese, Rome) and about 1625–26 by Nicolas Tournier (Kunstsammlungen des Grafs

Schönborn, Pommersfelden). However, whereas Ribera's composition, which develops the scene laterally with full-length figures, is unrelated to Valentin's, that of Tournier (see Alex Hémerly in *Nicolas Tournier* 2001, p. 169) cannot have been conceived without his example. Where Valentin's differs from either is in its rigorously centralized composition, for which he seems to have taken inspiration from Raphael's design for the same subject in the Vatican *Logge*—among the fifty-two scenes after Raphael etched by Orazio Borgianni in 1615. Solomon sits on an elevated throne located in the center of the composition, the dead infant laid out before him, the two mothers disposed to either side—one seen from the back, the other in profile—and the soldier with sword on one side balanced by a group of onlookers on the other. However, Valentin dispenses with the broad, architectural stage, compressing the figures and implicating the viewer within the space of the drama. In the studied contrasts of pose and expressive gesture—the *affetti*—the composition marks a decisive move toward the creation of what might be thought of as a Caravaggesque classicism. The composition possesses the narrative clarity of a work by Annibale Carracci, Domenichino, or, indeed, Nicolas Poussin (with whom Valentin would be associated in September 1626 for the festivities of the Accademia di San Luca) without compromising his commitment to painting *dal naturale*. Although Solomon's throne has the appearance of an imaginative re-creation of an ancient throne or faldstool, the scene is staged in contemporary dress.

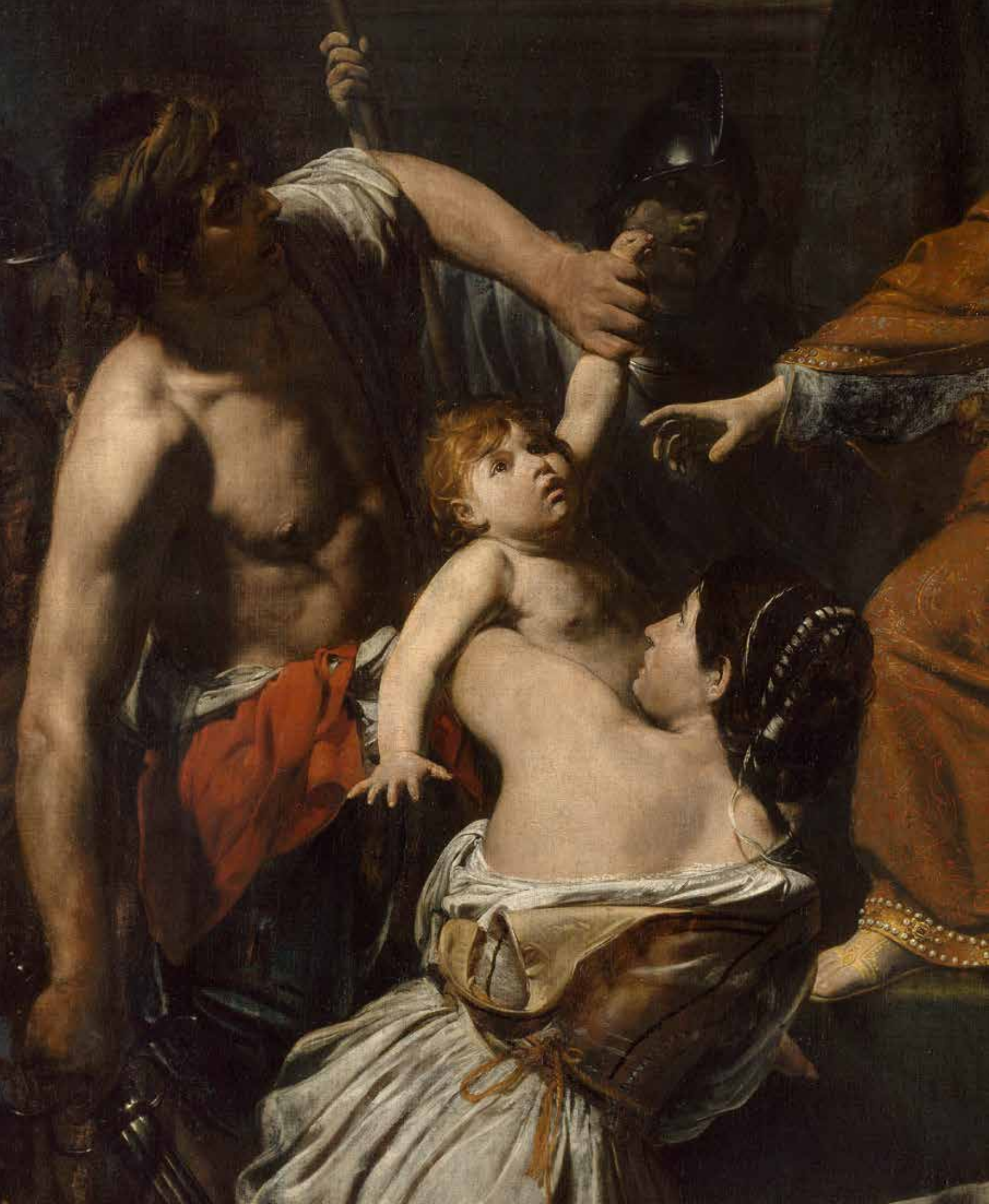
When the picture entered the collection of Louis XIV it was considered a pendant to the *Innocence of Susanna* (cat. 22), despite the fact that the two works were acquired from different collections and were painted at different moments. We know nothing certain about the provenance of either work prior to the 1650s, although in 1631 the Sicilian diamond thief and picture dealer

Fabrizio Valguarnera obtained *un giudizio di Salomone* by Valentin (see Chronology). Whether this is the picture in the Louvre or that in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini (cat. 39) cannot be said, but it is possible, as outlined by Patrick Michel (1999, pp. 125–26), that the Louvre version was acquired in Rome for Cardinal Jules Mazarin prior to 1645. Axel Hémerly (in *Nicolas Tournier* 2001, p. 169) has argued that Tournier clearly knew both the *Innocence of Susanna* and the *Judgment of Solomon*, and this suggests that the two pictures may, after all, have been owned by a collector-patron who wanted complementary paintings celebrating figures of the Old Testament associated with wisdom and justice—someone presumably like Giovanni Battista Mellini and Angelo Giori, both of whom were schooled in canon and civil law, connected with the Barberini circle, and admirers of Valentin (see cats. 14, 18).

Upon its entry into the national collections at the Louvre, the picture was, like the *Innocence of Susanna*, restored by Godefroid (for an account, see Engerand 1899, p. 198). KC

Provenance: Cardinal Jules Mazarin, Palais Mazarin, Paris (possibly by 1645–d. 1661; inv. 1653, no. 265; inv. 1661, no. 1095); Royal Collections (from 1665; Le Brun inv. 1683, no. 134); Versailles, Cabinet des Tableaux (by 1690; Paillet inv. 1690, no. 134; Paillet inv. 1695, no. 134; inv. 1709–10); Palais du Luxembourg (by 1750); Musée du Louvre (from 1785)
Selected References: Le Brun 1683, no. 134 (published in Brejon de Lavergnée 1987, p. 193); Paillet 1690, fol. 245r, no. 134; Paillet 1695, fol. 114v, no. 134; N. Bailly 1709–10 (published in Engerand 1899, pp. 198–99, no. 1); Villot 1855, p. 377, no. 584; Blanc 1862, pp. 9–10, 15; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., ill. no. 3; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Laclotte and Cuzin 1982, p. 29; Wright 1985, p. 268; Compin and Roquebert 1986, p. 257; Mojana 1989, pp. 30–31, 142, no. 45; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Strinati and Vodret 1998, p. 30; Michel 1999, pp. 125–26, 316, 586; Axel Hémerly in *Nicolas Tournier* 2001, p. 169; Penent 2001, p. 121; Rossella Vodret in Mochi Onori and Vodret 2008, p. 171; Lemoine 2009–10, pp. 127–28





34. Four Ages of Man, ca. 1627–29

37⁷/₈ x 52³/₄ in. (96 x 134 cm)

The National Gallery, London (inv. NG 4919)

Four figures—a pensive child, a young lute player, a soldier with eyes half-closed, and an old drinker, flask and glass in hand—are gathered around an antique stone block serving as a makeshift table. The tones are muted and the atmosphere stifling and sad. We recognize here Valentin's familiar protagonists and an echo of the world of taverns, which he evokes in his scenes of concerts and fortune-tellers. Even so, this assembly is novel. Allegorical reference is often present in Valentin's oeuvre, but understated (cats. 23, 31). Here it is forcefully expressed. Since the seventeenth century, in fact, the work has been described not as a scene from daily life but as the "Four Ages of Man." As well as representing a fortuitous gathering of Valentin's familiar figures, the painting captures the four ages of man—childhood, youth, maturity, and old age—in accordance with the four phases of the cycle of human life defined by Pythagoras.

Such forthright allegory may seem surprising, since Valentin had typically cloaked his learned references with the poetic veil of "painting from life" so convincingly that the body of his work has long been understood as a mere representation of the everyday. The allegorical density of this masterpiece, which must be dated about 1627–29, is the result of an evolution in Valentin's mode of painting under the pontificate of Urban VIII (cats. 23, 31, 38, 42) entailing a semantic condensation, produced by superimposing and mixing erudite references in each of the four figures. Consistent with Pythagoras's system, the four ages are linked to the four seasons, just as the four seasons are dependent on the four elements, themselves associated with the four humors. All these interconnections prove the perfect orderliness of the world. As Cesare Ripa notes, the partitioning into four ages, assimilated to the seasons and the elements, corresponds to the division privileged since antiquity by the philosophers and poets (Ripa 1645, pp. 184–85).

Valentin links each figure to one or several references, which correspond precisely to each age he represents, following the Pythagorean system, though without any discernible pattern. The man in fur is not only a depiction of old age, he also represents the season of winter; the soldier is an image of virile manhood, but his attitude, head resting on his hand, is also the stock expression for the melancholic tempera-

ment. The young man, who plays a madrigal on his lute, is an evocation of romantic desire, characteristic of the ardent humor of youth, and the child, holding in his left hand the open door of what appears to be a birdcage (see below), an evocation of flight, is an allegory of air.

Valentin gives each figure a mood, a sadness, a psychological interiority, that invites the viewer to meditate on the vanity of this world and the brevity of life. He multiplies the iconographic attributes to evoke the vain appetites stirred by human passions. The soldier, with his laurel wreath, cuirass, imperial scarf, and notebook of fortification drawings—a memory of his past conquests—is an image of power, but his lowered face, his melancholic attitude, and the dog-eared pages of the book suggest that all glory is vain. Similarly, the old man, in the age of decline and decrepitude, with sadness in his weary eyes, does not manage to curb his miserliness—attested by the coins amassed in front of him—or his desire for inebriation (for a new youth), represented by the flask of wine and the glass he holds. At the heart of the composition is man, subject to the vicissitudes of Fortune and forever prisoner to his passions.

The prominent object held by the child seems to be a key to understanding the composition. But identifying it is problematic. A birdcage for some (de Mirimonde 1975, pp. 43–44; Wine 2001, p. 394), simply a trap for others (Olivier Bonfait in Bonfait 1994, p. 201), the motif



Fig. 62. Anonymous. *Perch'io stesso mi strinsi*. From Daniël Heinsius, "Ambacht van Cupido," in *Nederduytsche poemata* (Amsterdam, 1616), p. 91, no. 46

appears to be both at once. An allegory of air, the element associated with childhood, it seems to me that the bird trap must also be understood as an emblem illustrating the celebrated lines of Petrarch: “why I cage myself in” (“perch’io stesso mi strinsi,” *Canzoniere*, poem 266), an evocation of the omnipotence of love that keeps men in chains (Berra 2012, pp. 50–51). The child, figure of purity, is still in the age of innocence, but, very soon, love’s desire will come to lodge in his heart, like a bird caught in its cage (see fig. 62). The young man with the gentle eyes celebrates that desire in song, to the accompaniment of the lute. Might it be a portrait of Valentin, known to the Bentvueghels by the nickname “Amador” (lover boy)?

The picture—the poetry of melancholy rendered in paint—has the coloring of the lines from Ovid: “Our own bodies also go through a ceaseless round of change, nor what we have been or are today shall we be tomorrow. [...] O Time, thou great devourer, and thou, envious Age, together you destroy all things; and, slowly gnawing with your teeth, you finally consume all things in lingering death! [...] Nothing retains its own form; but Nature, the great renewer, ever makes up forms from other forms. Be sure there’s nothing perishes in the whole universe; it does but vary and renew its form. What we call birth is but a beginning to be other than what one was before; and death is but cessation of a former state” (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15:214–15, 234–36, 252–58; English trans., Ovid 1984, vol. 2, pp. 381–83). AL

Provenance: Etienne Lybault, Paris (until 1641; his will of April 1, 1641, “tableau des Quatre Ages de Valentin”); his brother-in-law Jacques Bordier (1641); possibly sold by him to Michel Particelli, seigneur d’Emery, Paris (1650; his posthumous inventory of August 1, 1650: “tableau de Valentin representant les quatre âges de l’homme,” valued at 200 livres); possibly returned, as unpaid for, to Jacques Bordier, Paris (1650?–60; inventory upon the death of his wife, Catherine Lybault, December 30, 1652, as in the “cabinet dudit sieur Bordier,” valued at 400 livres: “Un tableau du Valentin de quatre âges de l’homme”; his posthumous inventory, October 2, 1660, valued at 1,000 livres by Pierre Mignard); Dussé (perhaps Louis Bernin, marquis d’Ussé, seigneur de Valentiné, or his son Louis Bernin-de-Valentiné, marquis d’Ussé, seigneur de Valentiné [1660?–before 1724]); Philippe, duc d’Orleans and Regent of France, Palais Royal, Paris (d. 1723; inv. 1724, no. 142 or 144); by descent to Louis Philippe, called Philippe-Égalité, Palais Royal, Paris (1724–91; sale 1791); Edouard de Walkiers, Brussels (1791); his cousin François Louis Josef de Laborde-Méréville, Paris and London (1791–92); Jeremias Harman, London (1793–98); Michael Bryan, on behalf of a syndicate that included the Duke of Bridgewater, Frederick Howard, fifth earl of Carlisle, and Granville Leveson-Gower, first marquess of Stafford (until 1798; sale, Bryan Galleries, London, December 26, 1798, no. 72); John Julius Angerstein, Weeting Hall, London (1798–1823); his heirs (1823–97; sale by the trustees of William Angerstein, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, December 24, 1897, no. 36, as Titian); Beadel; Marcus Samuel, first viscount Bearsted, Kent, Maidstone, The Mote (1897–1927, as Caravaggio); Walter Horace Samuel, second viscount Bearsted, London collection (1927–38, as Valentin); National Gallery, London (from 1938)

Selected References: Dubois de Saint-Gelais 1727, p. 48; Dézallier d’Argenville 1762, vol. 4, p. 48; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Hoog 1960, p. 277; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., pp. 160, 162, no. 49); Cuzin 1975, p. 60; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Mignot 1985; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mardrus 1988, pp. 102, 103, n. 40; Mojana 1989, p. 122, no. 35; Nicolson 1989, p. 200; Olivier Bonfait in Bonfait 1994, pp. 196–203; Langdon 2001, p. 60; Wine 2001, pp. 390–96; Szanto 2011, p. 251, no. 19 (inv. 1650); de La Moureyre 2013; Fried 2016, pp. 99–100



35. Moses, ca. 1625–27

51⁵/₈ x 40³/₄ in. (131 x 103.5 cm)

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv. 163)

Moses is shown displaying the two stone tablets on which God inscribed the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai (Exod. 24:12–18; 31:18; 34:1–29; Deut. 9:9–29; 10:1–5). In his right hand, he holds the rod with which he divided the waters of the Red Sea and brought water from the rock in the wilderness (Exod. 14:16–21; 17:5–6). The rays emanating from his head refer to the passage “Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone . . .” (Exod. 34:29). This detail represents a correction to the horns famously represented by Michelangelo because of Saint Jerome’s rendition in the Vulgate of the Hebrew *qeren*, which can mean “horns” or “rays of light” (see Mellinkoff 1970). Valentin was evidently provided with the text of the commandments written out in Hebrew, which, however, he copied imperfectly. One senses here the presence of someone from the Barberini circle, perhaps Angelo Giori or, as suggested to me by Fabio Marcelli, the Jesuit Giovanni Battista Ferrari, who taught Hebrew at the Collegio Romano and was an intimate of Cardinal Francesco Barberini and of Cassiano dal Pozzo (see Ceresa 1996). The Old Testament prophet points to the fourth commandment: “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain” (Exod. 20:7; see Avshalom Hodik in Prohaska and Swoboda 2010, p. 299).

In conceiving this imposing figure, boldly positioned on the canvas, with the folds of his drapery articulating the underlying forms and his projecting bare knee asserting his physical presence, Valentin would seem to have taken his inspiration from Michelangelo’s famous statue in San Pietro in Vincoli (see the exemplary entry by Gudrun Swoboda in Prohaska and Swoboda 2010, p. 300). At the same time, his conception of the prophet is diametrically opposed to Michelangelo’s, in which Giorgio Vasari rightly noted the “expression of a true saint and most awesome prince” (Vasari 1568 [1966–87 ed., vol. 6, p. 28]). Valentin imagines Moses not as a heroic, awe-inspiring figure (*terribilissimo* is the word Vasari used), but as the virile yet all-too-human, careworn servant of Yahweh. This particular model is readily recognized in other works: he posed as the River Arno in the *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43), as the old man in the *Four Ages of Man* (cat. 34), as the shepherd in the *Erminia and the Shepherds* (fig. 5), as Joseph in the *Holy Family* (Galleria Spada, Rome), and as the player of the viola

da gamba in the late concert scene (cat. 50). Here he is dressed *all’antica*. Over his blue tunic he wears a cloak—a Roman *lacerno* or *paludamentum*. The border is decorated with a running meander pattern and the ends are fastened at the shoulder with a jeweled fibula.

Moses thus belongs to that mature phase of Valentin’s art when his commitment to painting *dal naturale* was increasingly informed by the antiquarian interests of the Barberini circle—most especially of Cassiano dal Pozzo—and a desire to endow Caravaggism with the elevated stature associated with the legacy of Raphael-esque classicism. Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 60) has referred to the resulting style as a highly cultivated Caravaggism (“un caravagisme fort cultivé”) and Vincenzo Giustiniani, in his discourse on painting, described it as the most perfect and difficult way of painting: combining the artifice of style (*maniera*) with the example of nature ever before the artist’s eyes (Giustiniani n.d. [1981 ed., p. 44]).

The figure is realized in that fluid manner characteristic of Valentin’s mature work. For example, the right hand was repositioned or readjusted three times, with the various contours especially visible along the thumb. The knee, too, was altered (see the analysis by Ina Slama and x-radiographs in Prohaska and Swoboda 2010, pp. 295–98). A work like this must have left a strong impression on Velázquez during his stay in Rome.

The question remains: for whom might this impressive work have been painted? The first mention of it is as part of a group of eighteen pictures that Nicolas Régnier, acting in his capacity as a dealer in Venice, offered for sale in 1637 to James Hamilton through Hamilton’s brother-in-law Basil, Viscount Feilding, ambassador in Venice for Charles I (see Shakeshaft 1986; Lemoine 2007, pp. 345–47). When and how Régnier—who unquestionably knew Valentin during his years in Rome (1617?–25)—acquired the picture cannot be said. Some pictures he seems to have brought with him from Rome; others he procured through his Roman contacts (Borean and Cecchini 2002, p. 205). In any case, by 1637, paintings by Valentin were much sought after and it was the quality of this picture that recommended it to Hamilton as well as, subsequently, to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in Brussels. Swoboda (in Prohaska and Swoboda 2010, p. 301) has noted that Philippe de Champagne may



well have studied the picture in Brussels in 1655: certainly his depiction of the Old Testament prophet (Musée de Picardie, Amiens) seems directly inspired by Valentin's masterpiece. KC

Provenance: Nicolas Régnier, Venice (1626–37); James, third Marquis Hamilton, Wallingford House, London (1637–49; inv. 1638, no. 226); Kaiser Frederick III, Brussels (until 1651); Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, Brussels and Vienna (by 1651–62; inv. 1659); Habsburg collections, Vienna (1662–1809); Paris (1809–15); Habsburg collections, Vienna; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (from 1891)

36. Judith with the Head of Holofernes, ca. 1626–27

38¼ x 29⅞ in. (97 x 74 cm)

Musée des Augustins, Toulouse (inv. 2004.I.76)

What with its illustrious provenance, having been sold in 1671 by the great German banker and collector Everard Jabach to Louis XIV and chosen to decorate two different rooms at Versailles, the picture has always been recognized as one of Valentin's most beautiful single-figure compositions. It was one of only four works by Valentin included in the landmark exhibition "Les peintres de la réalité en France au XVII^e siècle," held at l'Orangerie, Paris, in 1934. The subject is the heroine of the apocryphal book of Judith, which recounts how, when the Jewish city of Bethulia was on the verge of surrendering to the overwhelming forces of the Assyrian troops under the leadership of Holofernes, the virtuous widow Judith proposed to go to his tent herself, richly adorned and perfumed and accompanied only by her servant. Struck by her beauty, courage, and wisdom, Holofernes invited her to dine with him in his tent and proceeded to drink himself into a stupor. Judith seized the occasion and, using Holofernes's own sword (here, a riding sword of the late sixteenth century), cut off his head and carried it back to Bethulia, rallying the Hebrew forces.

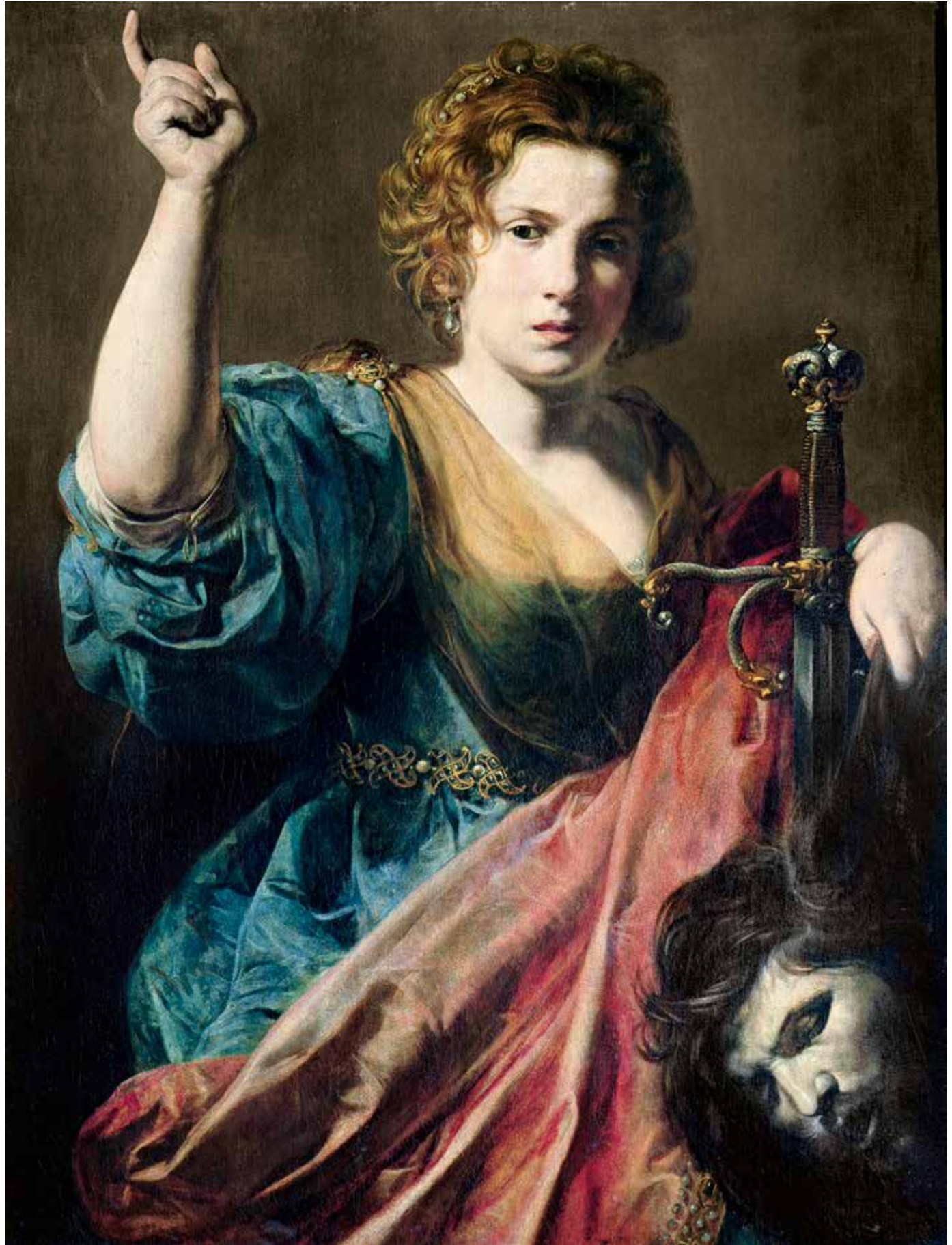
As with the story of David and Goliath, the subject enjoyed enormous popularity and was represented variously as a violent narrative (see cat. 47), an allegory of love—with the beloved holding the trophy of her enamored male victim—and an emblem of female strength and virtue. Together with such biblical heroines as Esther, Susanna, and Jael, as well as various females of classical antiquity—but also women of more ambivalent character such as Salome and Delilah—

Selected References: Blanc 1862, p. 15; Voss 1924 (1997 ed., p. 97); Longhi 1958, p. 62; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 253); Cuzin 1975, p. 60; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 269; Mojana 1989, p. 130, no. 39; Nicolson 1989, p. 200; Lemoine 2007, pp. 175–76, 345–47; Ina Slama, Avshalom Hodik, and Gudrun Swoboda in Prohaska and Swoboda 2010, pp. 295–301; Fried 2016, pp. 44–45, 106

Judith enjoyed a special status as a powerful woman—a *femme forte*.

The nature and place of women in society became the subject of intellectual debate in seventeenth-century Europe—for example, in Venice after 1630 in the Accademia degli Incogniti (see Lemoine 2007, pp. 137–52; Locker 2015, pp. 68–99) and in France under the regency of Anne d'Autriche. In 1647, the Jesuit Pierre Le Moyne published *La galerie des femmes fortes* in her honor and Simon Vouet decorated a room in the Palais Royal with "the deeds of illustrious women" (for an overview of the theme in France, see Pérez and Saunier 2009; see also Zimmermann 1995). Whether there might have been a similar context in Rome is less clear, but during the 1620s the theme of *femmes illustres* or *fortes* was particularly popular in the circle of the painter Simon Vouet, which included his wife Virginia da Vezzo, Charles Mellin, and Claude Mellan. Mellan created a series of engravings after paintings by Vouet, Virginia da Vezzo, and himself dedicated to precisely this theme (see Ficacci 1989, pp. 192, 218, 246). Moreover, it was at this time that Vouet made a portrait of the greatest living female painter, Artemisia Gentileschi, for Cassiano dal Pozzo, who was to become a key figure in the life of Valentin. When Valentin's depiction is compared to those of his French contemporaries, there really can be no doubt that he has chosen to emphasize Judith as an exemplary *femme forte* and not merely a powerful woman who seduced and then killed her male adversary.

Sumptuously dressed in blue brocade, her belt and headband adorned with pearls, she faces the viewer,



whom she addresses with the boldness of the biblical heroine: “Behold the head of Holofernes, the chief captain of the army of Assur . . . and the Lord hath smitten him by the hand of a woman” (Judith 13:15). The significance of her raised right hand—which Valentin initially laid in to the left of its present placement—is explicated by John Bulwer in his *Chirologia* (1644, p. 50): “To lift up the right hand to Heaven, is the naturall forme and ceremony of an oath, used by those who call God to witnesse, and would adjure, confirme, or assure by the obligation of an oath.” Together with Judith’s confrontational pose, this rhetorical gesture distinguishes Valentin’s representation from those of virtually all of his contemporaries. She is very much the triumphant heroine who, during her song of thanksgiving following the defeat of the Assyrians, declares yet again: “But the Almighty Lord hath disappointed them by the hand of a woman” (Judith 16:6). Indeed, the verse would be a suitable caption for the picture and is not dissimilar to the moralizing verses Mellan put below the images he engraved.

The style of Valentin’s painting—characterized by Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 59) as “that sonorous and brilliant manner, engagingly lyrical” (“cette manière sonore et brillante, volontiers lyrique”)—owes much to the example of Vouet, not only for the beauty of the model, her face framed by luxuriant locks of hair, but for the animated patterns of light and shadow, typical of Vouet’s work of the mid-to-late 1620s—and crucial, as well, to Artemisia’s great canvas of *Judith and Holofernes* (Detroit Institute of Arts). This is hardly surprising, for upon his return to Rome from Genoa in 1623, Vouet assumed a dominant position in the city. The moment in Vouet’s career that seems most relevant for Valentin is anchored by his decoration of the Alaleone chapel in

San Lorenzo in Lucina (1623–24). But in many respects the closest analogy—for the combination of format and the lyrically elegant artifice of the pose—is with Vouet’s painting sometimes identified as Saint Theodore (Musée du Louvre), which may date as late as 1627 (see Adeline Collange and Dominique Jacquot in *Vouet* 2008, p. 170, no. 53). It is worth noting that in 1623, Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino—a future patron of Valentin (1627)—commissioned from Vouet a series of fifteen pictures of the apostles, Christ, the Virgin, and Saint John the Baptist, and there can be little doubt that Valentin must have watched Vouet’s rising star with interest. Two years after Vouet was elected *principe* of the Accademia di San Luca (October 1624), Valentin also joined and, together with Nicolas Poussin, was put in charge of the annual festivities in honor of Saint Luke. Taken together, these circumstances strongly argue for dating the *Judith* to about 1626–27 and seeing it as Valentin’s response to the kind of imagery promoted by Vouet (as suggested by Axel Hémerly in Hilaire and Hémerly 2012, p. 190). KC

Provenance: Everard Jabach (until 1671); Royal Collections (from 1671; Le Brun inv. 1683, no. 278); Versailles, Cabinet aux Trois Portiques (by 1690; Paillet inv. 1690, no. 278; Paillet inv. 1695, no. 278) and Cabinet des Tableaux (by 1709–10; inv. 1709–10); Palais du Luxembourg (by 1750), Musée du Louvre (by 1785–1812); Musée des Augustins, Toulouse (from 1812)

Selected References: Le Brun 1683, no. 278 (published in Brejon de Lavergnée 1987, pp. 308–9); Paillet 1690, fol. 260r, no. 278; Paillet 1695, fol. 114v, no. 278; N. Bailly 1709–10 (published in Engerand 1899, p. 199, no. 4); Landon 1832, pp. 97–98, pl. 54; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Voss 1924 (1997 ed., p. 97); Charles Sterling in *Peintres de la réalité* 1934, p. 162, no. 116; Longhi 1958, p. 62; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pl. 1; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 142, no. 43 (French ed., p. 146, no. 45); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 269; Mojana 1989, p. 164, no. 55; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Michel Hilaire in *Century of Splendour* 1993, p. 92, no. 19; Axel Hémerly in Hilaire and Hémerly 2012, p. 190, no. 39

37. Crowning with Thorns, ca. 1627–28

52 x 38 in. (132 x 96.3 cm)

Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen München-Alte Pinakothek, Munich (inv. 188)

A decade or so after painting his first two versions of the *Crowning with Thorns* (cats. 7, 12), Valentin returned to the subject and created a masterpiece. This late version, by far the most moving of the three, is the one most directly inspired by Caravaggio, and more specifically, by the first composition painted for Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani about 1603–4 (see cat. 7). Valentin's precise understanding of Caravaggio's model suggests that he examined the original with his own eyes, a likely possibility given Valentin's ties to Giustiniani, for whom he painted the *Holy Family with Saint John* in the Galleria Spada and the imposing *Flight into Egypt*, which adorned the horse groomers' room in the Palazzo Giustiniani (the painting, now lost, is known through an engraving; Mojana 1989, p. 242, no. 152).

Valentin's principal actors are familiar: the figure of the henchman reappears, kneeling at the feet of Jesus, ushering the viewer into the scene. Infrared imaging (fig. 63) has shown that he was originally depicted from behind, a radical posture closer to Caravaggio's invention, to emphasize his role as spectator. But Valentin's attention is focused primarily on the figure of Christ, who occupies the same central position in Caravaggio's work. He precisely replicates the pose—with its particular combination of elegance, abandon, and despair—through which Caravaggio conveyed the abasement of Jesus: chest tilting at an angle, head falling forward, eyes riveted to the ground. As did other artists inspired by this painting (Orazio Gentileschi, Dirck van Baburen, Bartolomeo Manfredi), Valentin faithfully replicated the pure design of the nape of the neck, which is underscored by a black line. A sign of vulnerability and submission, as Sybille Ebert-Schifferer (2009, pp. 67, 166) has noted, the illuminated nape emphasizes the extreme humility of the Savior, who has come to redeem humanity from original sin. Defenseless and weary, Jesus submits to his tormentors. Valentin incites a feeling of empathy, consistent with the expectations of the post-Tridentine church, through his naturalistic treatment of Christ. He paints the dark circles under his eyes and his several days of beard growth, uses light to model Christ's body and make his skin palpably real, and brings the humiliation of Christ to life before our very eyes.

On the basis of this profoundly human image, Valentin develops his own tremendously melancholic interpretation of the scene. There is no dramatic violence, no sharp shadows, no scarlet reds, no staging of torture as with Caravaggio; rather, we see henchmen immersed in darkness, a silent night illuminated by a shimmering light. And through the gray-blue tones, Jesus' tragic meditation resonates throughout the canvas. Valentin rejects all spectacular effects to foreground the psychological intensity of the figure of Christ. A painter of the human soul and an eloquent colorist, he makes tangible the Savior's mild resignation and his profound introspection with the lyricism of his palette.

The picture's force of persuasion, its extraordinary range of colors, and its poetic resonance, as well as its vibrant brushstrokes and fluid application of paint and effects of transparency, belong to the masterpieces at the end of Valentin's career. In *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac* (cat. 44), the lessons of Caravaggio are transformed with the same maturity and creative freedom as in this painting. As a result, a date of about 1627–28 for the *Crowning with Thorns*, a few years prior to *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac*, seems more convincing than 1624, the year proposed by Marina Mojana (1989, p. 88), which would have the painting predate even the creation of the *Last Supper* for Palazzo Mattei di Giove (cat. 26). The later date is congruent with the analysis of Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 60), according to whom the Munich painting's "spirit of elegant conciliation is very close to that of the Martyrdom of Saint Processus" (cat. 48), which dates to 1629–30.

It is tempting to associate the Munich *Crowning with Thorns* with the unknown "quadro . . . con sue figure della coronatione di spine di Nostro Signore" by "Monsù Valentino Pittore," completed in the summer of 1627 for an intimate of the Barberini clan, Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino, a refined art lover and fervent patron of Valentin at the end of his career (see Chronology for July 27, 1627; Lorizzo 2006, pp. 34, 117). But the entry in the accounts recording payment for the painting, though imprecise about the iconography, indicates a very large picture (8 *palmi*; 178.4 cm), which rules out the present painting. Conversely, this dimension corresponds fairly well with the other Munich *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 12). However, that picture cannot possibly



Fig. 63. Infrared image of the *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 37), showing initial positioning of the figures carried out in black paint



have been painted at such a late date. The existence of a fourth version, bought or paid for by Filomarino in 1627, though proof of the importance of the theme within Valentin's oeuvre, does not solve the riddle of the Munich painting.

Beneath the *Crowning with Thorns*, a first composition, a half-length portrait of a cardinal (fig. 64), has recently been discovered by means of X-radiography (Siefert 2009, p. 126; and the essay by Keith Christiansen in this catalogue). It confirms the painting's late date and its connections with the Barberini circle. The very accomplished and perfectly legible composition, in fact, depicts the features of a man with a long face, small, incisive eyes, and a broad forehead. His mustache and goatee uncannily resemble those of the pope's nephew, Cardinal Francesco Barberini, Valentin's principal patron beginning in 1627. It was for him that Valentin painted his two greatest masterpieces, the *Allegory of Italy* and the *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian* altarpiece in Saint Peter's (cats. 43, 48), which forever established the artist's renown in the Eternal City. As might be expected, Valentin executed several portraits of his protector; one of them, now lost, but specifically mentioned in the Barberini archives in 1628, represented the cardinal painted *al naturale*, holding a handkerchief, as in the Munich sketch (see Chronology for June 21, 1628).

Although the first version of the half-length portrait of the cardinal, sketched out on the Munich canvas, may not have given full satisfaction, the extremely personal *Crowning with Thorns*, with its inimitable palette, was well suited to memorialize Valentin into the mid-eighteenth century. When the work was inventoried in 1748 at the Munich Residenz, it was correctly attributed to the painter of Coulommiers, rather than being listed under the generic name "Caravaggio," as was usually the case at that time (see Ramm 2009, p. 394). AL

Provenance: Abel-Jean Vignier, marquis d'Hauterive, Paris (until 1700; post mortem inv. 1700, no. 29, "Une autre Tableau dans la chapelle representant notre Seigneur avec des boureaux du Valentin . . ."); possibly Maximilian Emmanuel of Bavaria (until 1726); Charles VII of Wittelsbach, Holy Roman Emperor, Residenz, Munich (possibly by 1726–45); Wittelsbach Collection, Residenz, Munich (1745–81; inv. 1748, no. 104, as "Valantin. Le Couroument de n're Seigneur avec autres



Fig. 64. X-radiograph of cat. 37 showing a portrait, probably of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, beneath the surface of the *Crowning with Thorns*

figures, en demie figure"; inv. 1761, no. 109; inv. 1770, no. 135); Hofgartengalerie, Munich (1781–1836; inv. 1822, no. 479); Pinakothek, Munich (1836–1923); Schleissheim Palace (1923–28); Alte Pinakothek, Munich (from 1928)

Selected References: Rittershausen 1787, pp. 35–36; Thienemann 1823, no. 379; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Voss 1924, p. 455; *Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* 1951, p. 97, no. 182; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Thuillier 1958, p. 29; Longhi 1960, p. 59; von Hohenzollern and Soehner 1972, pp. 61–62, no. 188 (with bibliography); Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 60; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 88, no. 18; Nicolson 1989, p. 202; an der Heiden 1998, p. 556; David Mandrella in Rosenberg 2005, pp. 434–35, no. 154; Ramm 2009, pp. 394, 538, 552, 563, no. 121; Siefert 2009, p. 126; Fried 2010, p. 91; Lanoë and Lefeuve 2011, pp. 302, 305

38. Fortune-Teller, ca. 1626–28

49¼ x 69 in. (125 x 175 cm)

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (inv. 8254)

The *Fortune-Teller* in the Louvre is undoubtedly one of Valentin de Boulogne's most famous paintings. Its prestigious provenance, from the collection of Louis XIV, and its profound poetry and virtuosity of execution have contributed to that fame. The beautiful gypsy woman, heroine of a number of Valentin's paintings (cats. 15, 24), plays her principal role here, reading the lines on a client's hand to predict the future. Her bronze complexion and her costume are reminders that she is "Egyptian," a *zingara* (see cat. 24), and the deep shadows marking her face seem to convey the occult powers she possesses. As is only right, the exotic *zingara* is being paid for her predictions. Her client is fascinated: his mouth half-open, he stares at her hand, which delicately holds his index finger. It is not altogether clear whether his fixed expression indicates a fear of discovering his future or the arousal he feels from the sensual pressure of her alluring hand. The artist depicts the moment when destiny and desire seem to be in play, when reason flies out the window and the senses awaken. The unfurled, majestic white feather on the young man's hat represents sensual temptations: feathers, according to Cesare Ripa (1603, pp. 448–49), are attributes of frivolity, voluptuousness, and love, since, like a panache waving in the wind, such emotions are easily roused and transformed.

The young dandy, spellbound by the mysterious palm reader (manipulative and thieving by tradition), is in danger. He is abandoning himself to a practice expressly condemned by the Church as a "mortal sin" for those who commit it and a "scandalous act" for those who witness it. Only from the perspective of something conducted "out of curiosity or for a laugh" is the offense mitigated, as the *Manual de confessores y penitentes* explains (de Azpilcueta 1553 [1569 ed.], p. 80, no. 31). Unlike his contemporaries, Valentin gives an original face to that dangerous curiosity, a popular subject in his time, both at the theater and in painting (see cat. 24): no longer burlesque and ridiculous, the scene is now grave and melancholic.

Valentin juxtaposes the talents of the dangerous palm reader with the powers of music, which also has the capacity to divert one's attention and cast a spell over the mind (Clair 2005b, p. 244). Next to the gypsy woman and the young man is another couple, this one

mismatched—a singer, young and graceful, accompanying herself on the guitar, and an old and haggard harpist. They are improvising a melody; its subject, we may easily imagine, is love, its tone languorous. The presence of the guitar, which was particularly popular in Rome in the 1620s, is to be expected in an evocation of lowlife; the harp, conversely, is a more unusual motif and calls for an explanation. As Albert Pomme de Mirimonde (1975, p. 164) has noted, gypsies were considered skillful harpists (de L'Estoile 1610–11 [1960 ed., p. 536]). Playing the harp, according to the definition of the learned Pierre Trichet, signified theft: "Metaphorically, to play the harp is taken to mean stealing" (Trichet ca. 1640 [1978 ed., p. 145]).

And, in fact, a theft is under way at the opposite side of the composition—not at the expense, as one might expect, of the elegant young man but rather at that of the Egyptian beauty. A woman who lives off the credulity of others is precisely the one being duped here. Valentin reuses the popular theme of the blind seer and of the robber robbed, a theme he had already experimented with in a composition painted during his early days in Rome (cat. 15). This time, however, the comic scene of the deceiver deceived is secondary, relegated to the shadows. Only the hand, brightly lit, rummaging through the gypsy woman's satchel and appropriating the day's earnings, reveals the figure of the schemer, hidden in the dark. Valentin chose a different mood, no longer playful but somber. The two figures of a fortune-teller and a young man, monumental and grave—waiting in suspense for the tricks of fate—set the tone for the scene. A pensive young boy, his head resting on his hand, as would be consistent with the traditional image of Melancholy, appears in the empty space between the protagonists (the space of their two hands). The saturnine atmosphere is contagious. Each character seems lost in thought, isolated in a personal psychological introspection. An "irreparable sadness" takes hold of the scene (Thuillier 1958, p. 30). Valentin transcends the anecdotal, inviting the beholder to meditate on the fleetingness of time, the illusions of the senses, and the precariousness of the human condition. This masterpiece, painted toward the end of his career, but before 1630, constitutes the successful realization of research that he had pursued from his earliest canvases

and that gradually reached maturity (cats. 10, 11). It shows how, like Bartolomeo Manfredi, Gerrit van Honthorst, Simon Vouet (fig. 9), and Nicolas Régnier, Valentin broke new ground, with an original invention of the face-to-face encounter between the fortune-teller and her defenseless client, made famous by Caravaggio (fig. 51). But Valentin has metamorphosed the parodic *zingara* of his fellow painters into a figure of rare beauty with a noble bearing and serious expression; he has turned the comic genre of the *zingaresca* into an elegiac song of a new kind.

This canvas, with its unusual interpretation, is important for another reason: it is emblematic of Valentin's critical fortunes during the Grand Siècle. The *Fortune-Teller* became part of the royal collections at an undetermined date (but before 1683, when it is first mentioned); and, with five other major pictures by Valentin, it was among the eleven masterpieces that, under Louis XIV, adorned the "holy of holies" of the Château de Versailles, the sumptuous Salon du Roi. Not only did Valentin rub shoulders with artists held in high regard at the time, such as Domenichino, but he also dominated the decor by the number of paintings displayed and was the sole representative of the French school. That privileged position, which probably reveals the king's personal taste, as Nicolas Milovanovic (2009) has noted, also gave official sanction to his now well-established fame (see my essay "Valentin in the Grand Siècle" in this catalogue). The sublime *Fortune-Teller*, solemn and melancholic, the only profane canvas among the six "elect" paintings by Valentin, occupied a place apart, alongside the *Four Evangelists* (cats. 28, 29) and the *Tribute to Caesar* (Château de Versailles, Chamber du Roi). It was taken down in 1701, when the salon became the king's chamber, but only because a sculpture, *France Watching over the King's Sleep*, now held pride of place over the royal bed. Fifty years later, in 1750, when the first public museum was inaugurated in the Palais du Luxembourg, four of Valentin's canvases were

included among the ninety-six carefully selected masterpieces from the royal collection. The French painter vied with the biggest names: Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, Titian and Veronese, Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony van Dyck, as well as Nicolas Poussin, "glory of the French nation" (André Félibien). Once again, the *Fortune-Teller* represented Valentin's art, in the same capacity as his large history paintings (*Innocence of Susanna*, *Judgment of Solomon*, and *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, cats. 22, 33, and 36). Consistent with the eclecticism, now rather surprising, that presided over the exhibition of paintings at the Luxembourg, the beautiful Egyptian was flanked by a *Bacchanal* by Poussin and a *Tobit and the Angel* by Rembrandt van Rijn (J. Bailly 1750, pp. 16–17, no. 30). AL

Provenance: collection of Louis XIV (before 1683; Le Brun inv. 1683, no. 335, as Valentin); Versailles, Salon du Roi (by 1690–1701; Paillet inv. 1690, no. 335; Paillet inv. 1695, no. 335, in the petit appartement du roi); Château de Meudon, residence of Le Grand Dauphin (Bailly inv. 1706); Versailles, Cabinet des Tableaux (inv. 1709–10); Versailles, Chambre du Roi; Louvre, Galerie d'Apollon (1745); Versailles, Salon de Mars (1787–94; Durameau inv. 1787 and 1794); Musée du Louvre (from 1814)

Selected References: Le Brun 1683, no. 335 (published in Brejon de Lavergnée 1987, p. 347); Paillet 1690, fol. 266r, no. 335; Paillet 1695, fol. 115r, no. 335; Piganiol de La Force 1701, p. 121; N. Bailly 1709–10 (published in Engerand 1899, p. 201, no. 10); Piganiol de La Force 1717, vol. 1, p. 197; Piganiol de La Force 1730, vol. 1, p. 236; Dézallier d'Argenville 1745–52, vol. 2 (1745), p. 261; Piganiol de La Force 1764, vol. 1, p. 262; Villot 1855, p. 379, no. 588; Blanc 1862, pp. 10, 15; Voss 1924, p. 455; Longhi 1935 (1972 ed., p. 9); *Caravaggio e dei Caravaggeschi* 1951, pp. 96–97, no. 179; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Thuillier 1958, p. 27; Hoog 1960, pp. 267, 273; Weigert 1961, p. 321 (engraving by Ganière); de Mirimonde 1965, pp. 219, 221; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pl. vii; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 158, 160, no. 48 (French ed., pp. 164, 166, no. 51); Cuzin 1975, p. 60; de Mirimonde 1975, p. 163; Constans 1976, pp. 159, 169; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Constans 1980, p. 169; Wright 1985, p. 268; Compin and Roquebert 1986, p. 257; Jean-Pierre Cuzin in *Dopo Caravaggio* 1987, p. 122, no. 27; Mojana 1989, p. 146, no. 47; Nicolson 1989, p. 205; Feigenbaum 1996, pp. 170, 172; Hartje 2004, p. 205; Milovanovic 2009, pp. 282, 286; Fried 2011, pp. 102–5; Fried 2016, pp. 73–74, 81, 84, 92, 103, 106





39. Judgment of Solomon, ca. 1627–30

68½ x 83⅞ in. (174 x 213 cm)

Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (inv. 2377)

The picture is a variant of the great painting in the Louvre (cat. 33) and thus offers a rare opportunity to observe Valentin rethinking a composition that was, quite obviously, admired. Its condition is less than ideal and this, perhaps, is the reason that Roberto Longhi (1958, p. 63) considered it to be a “copy of an original that was a bit different from that in the Louvre” (an opinion curiously misrepresented in Mojana 1989, p. 168). By contrast, Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1973, p. 245) considered it autograph, Cuzin (1975, p. 59) arguing that that it was chronologically close to but still later than the Louvre canvas, which he dated about 1625. He pointed to passages such as the marvelously represented dead child as proof that the picture was, indeed, autograph and not a copy. Marina Mojana (1989, p. 168), too, accepted the work as autograph, as have all subsequent scholars. This is the first time the picture will be seen with the Louvre version, allowing a unique occasion to consider their relationship. The primary questions relate to its date—did it precede the Louvre picture, as Antonio Santangelo (1955) and Rossella Vodret (in Strinati and Vodret 1999, p. 124) suggest, or follow it, as was the view of Cuzin, Mojana, and others?—as well as its history, the motivation for the kinds of changes between it and the Louvre version, and the artist’s possible use of a template in initially laying out one or the other. Unfortunately, a thorough technical examination has not been undertaken, so the last matter remains speculative.

Crucial to understanding its possible early history is a series of documents relating to the Sicilian nobleman and art lover Fabrizio Valguarnera. Having fallen on bad times and linked up with an acquaintance who was a thief in Madrid, he used his knowledge of art to acquire paintings as a means to laundering stolen jewels. He obtained both originals and copies from leading art dealers and painters. Arrested in Rome, where he arrived from Spain in the fall of 1630, he was put on trial in the summer of 1631 together with some of the painters from whom he had commissioned works, including Nicolas Poussin, Giovanni Lanfranco, Alessandro Turchi, and Valentin. The background of Valguarnera, his involvement in the thriving business of buying and selling works of art, and transcripts of the trial were published by Jane Costello (1950). It emerges from the

testimony that in late spring 1631 he purchased from Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata (1596–1652), who traded in paintings, “Un’giuditio di Salomone di mano di Valentino, con la sua Cornice dorata”—that is, a Judgment of Solomon by Valentin in a gold frame (ibid., p. 278). The picture is listed in an inventory of the paintings in Valguarnera’s house that was drawn up on July 12, 1631, and it was cited again by Valguarnera when he testified on July 21 (ibid., p. 273), together with a second work by the artist (cat. 50). From Valentin’s testimony on July 30, we learn that, without much enthusiasm, Valentin had agreed to paint for Valguarnera a large gypsy picture (a *zingara*) and then had also retouched or freshened up (*ritoccata*) a Judgment of Solomon (ibid., pp. 278–79)—obviously the same picture Valguarnera had previously acquired from Roccatagliata. For this Valentin was paid a mere six scudi, so the work he did was not extensive. The picture must have been painted some time before, since it was already in a gold frame and therefore finished. We hear of an exactly similar case with a picture by Lanfranco that Valguarnera acquired from another picture dealer and took to the artist to have it “ritoccato” (ibid., p. 274). The trial came to an end when Valguarnera died in prison on January 2, 1632.

Putting this testimony together, we can reconstruct the following scenario. During Lent, Valguarnera commissioned from Valentin a large painting with gypsies, soldiers, women, and musicians—the *zingara* now in Liechtenstein (cat. 50). Valentin completed it by Easter (April 20). At the same time, Valentin also retouched in some fashion the picture of the Judgment of Solomon that Valguarnera had purchased from Roccatagliata. Whether this was the painting now in the Louvre rather than the one in Palazzo Barberini remains uncertain. Although in the Louvre painting there are areas that show the artist reconsidering details where he sought to create a quality of movement, such as the dress and the apron of the true mother (see cat. 33), this is a common trait of Valentin’s working process and is unlikely to represent a freshening up or retouching.

On balance, then, the Barberini picture seems to be the more probable candidate for Valguarnera’s picture, not least because of its inferior quality vis-à-vis the Louvre canvas. It also seems to be the later of the two versions, sharing some of the clarity of structure and

interest in sculptural effects found in the great altarpiece for Saint Peter's (cat. 48), suggesting a date in the late 1620s.

In this work, Valentin moves from his interest in portraying a dynamic, unfolding drama to a concern with giving exemplary expression to an emblematic moral dilemma through the use of contrasting poses and gestures. Solomon's contrapposto—magnificently sculptural in conception—emphasizes his conflict. He sits diagonally, and the space that opens up around him gains emotional depth by the deeply expressive dark voids that accent, for example, his outstretched arm, or the opposing gestures of the mother and the horrified old man behind her. The diagonal—so conspicuous in the Louvre version—remains a favorite organizing device but seems less dynamic. The light penetrates the shadows, giving a more broadly chiaroscuro effect. The true mother, no longer rushing in and dropping to her knees but firmly stationary, makes her eloquent plea, her body angled toward the viewer. Her sculptural pose is meaningfully contrasted with that of the false mother—the figure most closely similar to her counterpart in the Louvre version. She hands up the living child to the executioner, who, head lowered, seems strangely pensive and resigned.

It was Longhi's view (1958, pp. 65–66) that in his last works Valentin subordinated his naturalism and moved toward an “eloquence more in line with the religious

and even allegorical themes.” Valentin followed what Longhi termed “the path of ‘culture’”—which is to say that the artist was increasingly open to the eloquence of such classically based painters as Andrea Sacchi and Poussin. Pierre Rosenberg (1982a, p. 330) noted a similar tendency. The raised hand of the old, bald man standing behind the true mother is a brilliant example of Valentin's increased interest in expression through gesture (the *affetti*), resulting in a kind of “dramatic austerity” that, in the Saint Peter's altarpiece, Longhi compared to the dramas of Pierre Corneille. Yet, no less than in the Louvre version, Valentin remains committed to the human drama—something played out on the tragic stage of real life. And as always with this extraordinary artist, we seem to know these people. They are individuals, not types, and they carry on their faces the consternation of conflicted lives. We recognize in the true mother the same model who, in the Louvre's *Fortune-Teller* (cat. 38), plays a guitar, while the youth resting his head on his hand in that picture takes up the role of Solomon. KC

Provenance: Marchese Giulio Ricci Paracciani, Rome (until 1955);

Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome

Selected References: Santangelo 1955; Longhi 1958, p. 63; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, pp. 33, 168, no. 57; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Ilaria Sgarbozza in Coliva 1999, p. 80, no. 6; Rossella Vodret in Strinati and Vodret 1999, p. 124, no. 49

40. Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple, ca. 1627–29

75⁵/₈ x 105 in. (192 x 266.5 cm)

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (inv. 1214)

Paris only

This is a less well-known variant of the painting in Palazzo Barberini (cat. 17). Although Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 58) hesitated about the chronology of the two versions, there is no longer any doubt that the Roman canvas came first (ca. 1618–22) and the Russian version second, dating from about 1627–29, as Marina Mojana (1989, p. 138) proposed, followed by Cuzin (1991, p. 456). The picture throws light on the artist's stylistic evolution between the beginning and the end of his career. Nonetheless, it is difficult to assign a precise date since, as so often, we know nothing about the context of its creation.

Valentin never repeats himself stroke for stroke, but he does not refrain from returning to the same subject: for example, he treated the Crowning with Thorns no fewer than four times (see cats. 7, 12, 37). Occasionally he adapts not only the same theme but also the same core composition, as with the two versions of the Judgment of Solomon (cats. 33, 39). Unlike in these examples, a number of similarities can be identified in the two depictions of Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple, presented here together for the first time: an identical format, the same number of figures (twelve), and the same ambition, namely, to represent an ongoing drama. One might



even wonder whether the person who commissioned the Russian canvas requested a replica of the impressive Roman composition, and whether the painter—refusing to make a copy himself or to let another make one—provided an original reinterpretation.

The impetuosity of the first version, which brings the beholder as close as possible to the scene, was followed by a more sophisticated choreography of the drama, which replaced the immediate clamor of the violence with tragedy, suggested by the lyricism of the colors and the variety of *affetti*. Valentin remains as faithful to the biblical text as in the first version (Matt. 21:11–13, and John 2:14–16; see cat. 17). He reproduces just as scrupulously the singularity of the scene—Christ’s rage and the terrified reaction of the crowd—and reuses the same details reported by the Evangelists: the dove vendors, the overturned tables and seats, Christ’s whip made of cords. Although Valentin repeats the principal features of the original composition—its dynamic construction, which is unusual in his oeuvre; the arbitrary cropping; the accumulation of figures; the force of the gestures and expressions; and the prominence given to Christ—each of these elements is revised and adapted in light of a new aesthetic specific to the end of his career. The strangeness of the *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* at the State Hermitage Museum results from this unexpected conjunction between a naturalistic formula invented in the early 1620s and Valentin’s new aspirations, forged in contact with the court of the Barberini and its new stars: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Andrea Sacchi, and Pietro da Cortona.

The figure of Christ is inverted and moved to the other side of the composition. His menacing attitude, right hand brandished over his head, like Michelangelo’s justice-wielding Christ in the *Last Judgment*, is metamorphosed here into a more mannered *serpentina* shape, a sign that the painter pondered anew ideals of beauty—“bellezza scelta”—at the dawn of the 1630s (Longhi 1958, p. 65). Jesus, notably off-balance in the Roman painting, arranged along an oblique that traverses the composition from one corner to the other, is here in motion along a vertical axis. That adaptation is characteristic of all the transformations the artist introduced into the second version.

The effect of falling or toppling over, spectacular in the first composition, is now attenuated. For example, the series of parallel (and no longer crossing) obliques that drives the scene is counterbalanced by two monumental Doric column bases, which span the background

and serve to ground the composition. They delineate subtle spaces in which Christ is inscribed on one side and the piled-up crowd on the other. That device, new for Valentin, is somewhat evocative of a schema already in place in Pietro da Cortona’s *Christ and the Adulteress* (private collection), which Valentin would have been able to admire at the Galleria Mattei. Recall that, along with the Tuscan painter, the French artist was one of the young talents chosen to submit a masterpiece between 1624 and 1626 to adorn the walls of the prestigious gallery (cat. 26).

Valentin did not abandon the striking foreshortening and arbitrary framing that mark the earlier picture, but he condensed the effect and did not repeat it twice. He homes in on Christ’s principal victim, the old man who has fallen at his feet, knocked backward, arms and legs spread. This is an explicit quotation from Caravaggio’s *Conversion of Saint Paul* in Santa Maria del Popolo. In counterpoint, in the opposite corner, the figure of the kneeling young man, leaning against a stool for support, refers not to an invention of the Lombard master but to classical statuary (it is also found in almost identical form in the Saint Peter’s altarpiece, cat. 48). Standing out in the central empty space of which Valentin was so fond is an open hand, summing up the fright elicited by Christ’s wrath. It is a replacement for the succession of panic-stricken faces in the first composition. The artist now develops a hierarchy of effects, privileging the legibility of the narrative over the immediacy of the vision.

The congested space of the earlier painting is replaced by a more open *mise-en-scène* pervaded by a vibrant atmosphere. Monumentalized by the majestic architectural backdrop, the space gains depth from the gradual diminution in the scale of the figures, in keeping with a technique that, though classical, is rare in Valentin’s oeuvre. The sculptural figures of the first version, with their sharp outlines accentuated by a high-contrast *chiaroscuro*, now dissolve in a more diffuse lighting, where the invading shadows are punctuated by multiple splashes of light. No longer are the faces seemingly overexposed. Nor are there any loud and brilliant blues or vermilions; on the contrary, profiles disappear into the shadows and diluted colors play on the superimposition of shades and iridescent effects. The dusty rose, striated drapery of Christ’s clothing (the only antique-styled costume in the painting) in and of itself, distinguishes Valentin in these last years. AL

Provenance: possibly Cardinal Jules Mazarin, Palais Mazarin, Paris (by 1653–d. 1661; inv. 1653, no. 267; inv. 1661, no. 1097: “Un autre fait par Valentin, sur thuille, représentant Nostre-Seigneur qui chasse les marchandz du Temple, grand au naturel, hault de cinq piedz trois poulices et large de cinq piedz six poulices [171 x 179 cm]”); possibly Palais Mazarin, Paris (until at least 1714; inv. 1699–1714); Pierre Crozat, Paris (between 1714 and 1729–40; inv. 1740, no. 446); Louis Antoine Crozat, baron de Thiers (1740–72, as “. . . Notre-Seigneur chassant les Marchands du Temple, grand Tableau, par le Valentin: sur toile, de 5 pieds 6 pouces de haut, sur 8 pieds de large [192 x 258 cm]”); sale, Somov, 1772, no. 1448; Catherine II of Russia

Selected References: “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1653, no. 267 (published in *Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin* 1861, p. 324); “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1661, no. 1097 (published in de Cosnac 1885, p. 318); *Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet de M. Crozat 1755*, pp. 21–22; *Catalogue des tableaux . . . du Palais Impérial de Saint-Pétersbourg* 1774, no. 778; Blanc 1862, p. 15; Réau 1928, p. 219, no. 356; Stuffmann 1968, p. 111, no. 446; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 134, 244 (French ed., pp. 136, 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 58; Vsevolozhskaia and Linnik 1975, pls. 34–38; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 138, no. 43; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Cuzin 1991, p. 456; Vsevolozhskaia and Linnik 1993, pls. 43–46; Michel 1999, pp. 315, 387, 409, 586

41. Raffaello Menicucci, ca. 1627–28

31½ x 25⅝ in. (80 x 65.1 cm)

Indianapolis Museum of Art, Delavan Smith Fund (57.72)

Raffaello Menicucci (ca. 1563–1637) came from a prominent family in the town of Monte San Savino, in the Valdichiana of Tuscany, east of Siena, where between 1617 and 1618 he held the political office of Gonfaloniere. A singular personality—to say the least—he was consumed with a desire for fame and to that end took the title of count and, in 1618, for 800 scudi, purchased from the commune of San Savino the fortress that was a symbol of local power (his son sold it two years after his father’s death). It is this fortress-tower that is drawn on the sheet of paper Menicucci holds in Valentin’s portrait, inscribed, “Menicucci / Rocca del Conte” (Menicucci, fortress of the count). Already in 1608, and again in 1613, Menicucci’s father applied to have Raffaello declared “a furiously prodigious lunatic and dissipater of his livelihood.” Yet, as his contemporary biographer (for which, see below) noted, “his madness—if one can call madness what was simulated for profit—was above all due to his immoderate desire to propagate his fame and name over the entire globe.” And, in fact, Menicucci had abilities that were not lost on the Grand Duke of Tuscany or on the papal court of Urban VIII.

Not surprisingly, Menicucci was obsessed with portraiture as a means of self-promotion. In Rome, where he became the buffoon of Pope Urban VIII (Mariette 1851–60, vol. 3 [1856], p. 329), his likeness was engraved by Ottavio Leoni in 1625 (fig. 65); a few years later his features were again drawn and engraved by Claude Mellan (the drawing is in the Teylers Museum, Haarlem, inv. C30; for the engraving, see

Ficacci 1989, pp. 214–15). Both engravings are captioned in Latin, translating to: “Raffaello Menicucci, famous throughout the world.” Additionally, there are two painted portraits: one bust-length (Koelliker collection, Milan; for the disputed attribution to Valentin, see Gregori 2008, pp. 8–9; Tomaso Montanari in Bacchi et al. 2009, p. 274) and the picture catalogued here, where Menicucci is shown half-length, seated in a chair, addressing the viewer, to whom he displays the drawing of his fortress. It represents an astonishingly vivid approach to portraiture that differs markedly from the formal presentation of Angelo Giori (cat. 18) and ultimately derives from Caravaggio, in a painting of about 1596–97 depicting Maffeo Barberini (later Pope Urban VIII) seated in a chair behind a table, his reading interrupted by the viewer, toward whom he turns (see Christiansen 2014).

Depictions of a sitter as though captured in an informal moment or activity, seeming to address the viewer and possibly displaying an object or making a demonstrative gesture, are among the salient inventions of the seventeenth century (see Petrucci 2008, vol. 1, pp. 150–68). One thinks, for example, of Simon Vouet’s portrait of Artemisia Gentileschi (private collection) in which the artist, gazing directly at the viewer, proudly displays the materials of her profession. Valentin portrayed Cardinal Francesco Barberini in a lost picture (see discussion in cat. 18), and he surely knew Caravaggio’s portrait of Maffeo, as well as Vouet’s of Artemisia, which was owned by Cassiano dal Pozzo (whom Valentin portrayed in another lost work). Still, the



Fig. 65. Ottavio Leoni (Italian, 1578–1630). *Raffaello Menicucci*, 1625. Engraving, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of W. G. Russell Allen, 1941 (1941.8.14)

Menicucci takes the notion of a “portrait of address” one step further, showing the sitter at close range, leaning forward “in an interlocutory and colloquial attitude” (Petrucci 2008, vol. 1, p. 156) in order to display his drawing, which, with his emphatic gesture and self-important yet ingratiating expression, he offers as testimony to his claim to elevated social status.

Fortunately, we are able to judge Valentin’s ability to capture the extravagant character of his sitter by comparing it with the vivid, if caustic, description by the cultured poet and philologist Giovanni Vittorio Rossi (also known as Giano Nicio Eritreo, 1577–1647) in his compilation of three hundred biographical sketches, the *Pinacotheca Imaginum Illustrium* . . . (1643–48).

He was of a stature closer to medium than to tall, fairly corpulent, with a large head and full face, repugnant appearance, dark skinned, and of a scurrilous, if not wholly despicable, character. He could produce verses extemporaneously, pronounce witty sayings, inspire hilarity, play the part of a not gross parasite.

But in preserving and increasing the patrimony of his family, whether through astuteness or through zeal, he unquestionably surpassed many of his time in ability and shrewdness.”

Rossi goes on to note Menicucci’s insistence on being addressed as count and to have precedence, whether on the street or in gatherings with his friends. He tells a number of anecdotes underscoring the extravagance of Menicucci’s antics, and then sums up: “In reality, he who in life wished to be considered not one of the many but someone distinguished by fame and by name, in the end, having died at home, he exited with the many and not with the senators or knights or wealthy, but with the commoners or workers or unpropertied persons.” (For an Italian translation of Rossi’s Latin text as well as the biographical information cited in this entry, see Giulietti and Gravano-Bardelli 2008.)

We owe the identification of the sitter as Raffaello Menicucci to Erich Schleier (1965, pp. 79–83); previously, the subject was thought to be the architect Giovanni Battista Menicucci. Schleier attributed the picture to Giovanni Lanfranco, and Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 54) identified the picture with a work listed in Cardinal Jules Mazarin’s postmortem inventory: “1270. Another by Valentin, on canvas, showing Conte Mevicurcio [*sic*], buffoon, head bare, dressed in black, with a paper in hand.” The work has been dated variously: to about 1625—contemporary, that is, with Ottavio Leoni’s engraving—or about 1627–28. Portraits are notoriously difficult to date because of the presiding factor of “resemblance,” but it would seem likely that Menicucci came into contact with Valentin through the Barberini circle, and this would suggest a date closer to 1627–28 (Cardinal Francesco Barberini returned from his legation to Spain in October 1626). Moreover, Esther Theiler (forthcoming) has generously shared her important, unpublished study of the picture in which, among much new material, she quotes from an unpublished 1628 discourse of Menicucci’s at the Barberini court—the first certain, dated reference to his presence in Rome. Clovis Whitfield (2001, p. 162) has suggested that Mazarin may have known Menicucci during the 1630s, when he lived in the Palazzo Bentivoglio (the present-day Palazzo Pallavicini-Rospigliosi) on the Quirinal Hill. If this is so, he could have purchased the portrait after Menicucci’s death, for given the character of the sitter, there can be no question who commissioned it. KC



Provenance: probably Raffaello Menicucci, Rome (d. 1637); Cardinal Jules Mazarin, Palais Mazarin, Paris (after 1637–d. 1661; inv. 1661, no. 1270); Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna (by 1937); Benedict Nicolson, London; The Arcade Gallery, London (by 1955–56); The John Herron Art Institute, now Indianapolis Museum of Art (from 1956)
Selected References: “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1661, no. 1270 (published in de Cosnac 1885, p. 342); Schleier 1965; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 244 (French ed., p. 252); Cuzin 1975,

pp. 53–54; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Rosenberg 1982a, p. 373, no. 9; Ficacci 1989, p. 215; Mojana 1989, p. 126, no. 37; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Brejon de Lavergnée 1991, p. 67; Michel 1999, pp. 216, 387, 408, n. 159; Eitel-Porter, Saxton, and Treves 2001, p. 385, no. 55; Whitfield 2001, pp. 159, 162, no. 55; Gudrun Swoboda in *Caravaggio e l'Europa* 2005, p. 308, no. iv.10; Giulietti and Gravano-Bardelli 2008; Gregori 2008, pp. 6–8; Petrucci 2008, vol. 1, p. 156; Tomaso Montanari in Bacchi et al. 2009, pp. 274–76, no. 16; Theiler forthcoming

42. Concert with Eight Figures, ca. 1628–30

69 x 85½ in. (175 x 216 cm)

Musée du Louvre, Paris, Département des Peintures (inv. 8252)

The theme of music occupies a special place in Valentin's art. It is present from his first canvases (cat. 10) and is interspersed throughout his oeuvre, up to his last compositions (cat. 50). Like no other, Valentin constantly elaborated its multiple resonances. As an evocation of love, harmony, or melancholy, music serves to enrich the meaning of his paintings. He employed two principal modalities: either by introducing musicians into a scene from everyday life or by developing the theme of the concert. He regularly revisited that theme, from his first concert with three figures (fig. 1) to this ambitious *Concert with Eight Figures*.

Valentin was interested in the variety of musical instruments, from the flagelot and tambourine, which enliven a drinking party, to the lute. Indeed, his works provide a virtual inventory of the instruments then in vogue, and the faithful representation of them and the way the performers play attest to a precise knowledge of the practices of the time. This and, more generally, the importance constantly granted the musical theme make one wonder whether Valentin was not himself an accomplished musician, as were some of his fellow painters. For example, Dirck van Baburen, one of his companions in the Bentvueghels, is known to have mastered the flagelot, the violin, and the lute (Franits 2013).

The *Concert with Eight Figures*, which must date from about 1628–30, captures the quintessential quality of Valentin's approach but is a unicum both in its format and in its unusual subject matter: the only full-fledged concert where every figure is a musician; no drinker or

gypsy distracts the performers. The composition is distinguished by the number of musicians and the variety of instruments represented (Lallement 1997, p. 210): a spinet, viola, chitarrone, bass violin, and a cornet. As usual, not only are the instruments studied, but they are accurately played. Thus, one performer has the mouthpiece of his cornet in the corner of his mouth and plays with cheeks strained and fingers positioned. Placed in the right foreground, that cornet seems to open the composition, as though the artist wanted to convey the sparkling tone of the instrument, resembling “the brilliance of a ray of sun that pierces the shadow,” to borrow the words of Marin Mersenne (1636–37, vol. 2, p. 274). It is precisely with respect to the cornet, a particularly popular instrument at the time, that Vincenzo Giustiniani (for whom Valentin worked) mentions one of the concerts he held at his palace: the sound of that cornet, which a certain “Cavaliere Luigi” played *miracolosamente*, delighted the audience (about 1628; Giustiniani n.d. [1981 ed., p. 34]). The instrumental inflection, like the presence of very young singers, is consistent with the taste for youthful voices and corresponds to Roman practices in the 1620s–30s (de Mirimonde 1965, p. 222; Anne Piéjus, oral communication).

The musical ensemble is diverse, arranged not around the fragment of an ancient relic, but a table adorned with an Anatolian carpet. They echo the customs of the elite rather than the world of taverns and popular gatherings. One thinks of the events described by Giustiniani in his *Discorso sopra la musica*, where the guests devoted themselves to music, “performed without the participation of paid musicians,





among gentlemen who took great delight” (Giustiniani n.d. [about 1628], [1981 ed., p. 18]). There is little doubt that this is a concert painted “from life” but at the same time reinvented. The protagonists are drawn from Valentin’s world, and the mingling of social classes is realistic. Observe the cornet player, wearing the inevitable plumed hat. He reappears, having his fortune told, in the *Fortune-Teller* (cat. 38); or consider the sinister figures, typical of the painter, immersed in shadow in the background of the painting. Another detail merits attention: the imposing and incongruous soldier in the foreground, seen from the back. He wears a cuirass and a sword and stands out because of the brightness of his vermilion sleeves. The painter plays on the contrast between his hidden face and the glint of light striking his armor, which makes him impossible to forget. His positioning, though reminiscent of Caravaggio’s invention in the *Calling of Saint Matthew* (San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome), accentuates the mystery of the painting. This soldier-musician becomes an unlikely presence in a concert: he seems to close off the scene, excluding the observer, yet at the same time is our surrogate. In counterpoint is the face of the young singer, hands conscientiously crossed, hair ruffled, mouth wide open—a motif that is Valentin’s alone.

The singularity of this work also resides in the representation of a concert “in progress”: all the musicians are playing, and all concentrate on their performance, driven by the same enthusiasm, pervaded by the musical harmony arising from their common action. Valentin seems to want to convey a reflection of the world’s harmony, of which even war, embodied in the soldier, is a part. Captivated by the music, he too becomes an interpreter of *Concordia*. In view of that assortment of men communing in music, one cannot fail to recall the epistle of Marin Mersenne, placed

at the beginning of his *Harmonie universelle*, in which he identifies the Divine as the driving force of musical harmony, marked by cadence and tempo: “One can call the divine spirit that moves all things the maestro and conductor of this music, and of this great concert of all creatures walking in pace, and who will end with the same cadence” (Mersenne 1636–37, vol. 2, epistle, n.p.). AL

Provenance: Cardinal Jules Mazarin, Palais Mazarin, Paris (before 1653–d. 1661; inv. 1653, no. 268; inv. 1661, no. 1098: “un autre fait par le dict Vallentin, représentant une Muse, figure au naturel, peint sur toile, hault de cinq piedz cinq poulces et large de six piedz six poulces [176 x 211 cm]”; valued at 1,000 livres); Palais Mazarin, Paris (1661–1714, inv. 1699–1714) and probably by descent, Olimpia Mancini, comtesse de Soissons, niece of Mazarin and wife of Prince Eugène Maurice de Savoie-Carignan (after 1661–1708); by descent, Victor Amadeo of Savoy, prince of Carignan (after 1708?–41); acquired before his posthumous sale for Louis XV in 1742 (chosen by Hyacinthe Rigaud and purchased for the king by Noël Araignon, esquire, the queen’s valet; appraised at 12,000 livres with the *Concert with a Bas-relief* in the Musée du Louvre; cat. 23); Cabinet des Tableaux de la Surintendance, Versailles, in 1760, 1784 (east wall of the second room), 1788, 1794; transferred to the Louvre in 1797; exhibited at the museum in 1799

Selected References: “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1653, no. 268 (published in *Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin* 1861, p. 324); “Inventaire . . . du cardinal Mazarin” 1661, no. 1098 (published in de Cosnac 1885, p. 318); Dézallier d’Argenville 1745–52, vol. 2 (1745), p. 261; Landon 1832, p. 108, pl. 62; Villot 1855, p. 378, no. 586; Blanc 1862, pp. 11–12, 15; Engerand 1900, p. 539; Voss 1924, p. 454; Longhi 1958, p. 61; de Mirimonde 1965, pp. 220–22; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pls. v, vi; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 152, 154, no. 46 (French ed., pp. 156, 158, no. 48); de Mirimonde 1975, pp. 164–65; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Compin and Roquebert 1986, p. 257; Jean-Pierre Cuzin in *Dopo Caravaggio* 1987, p. 120, no. 26; Mojana 1989, p. 148, no. 48; Nicolson 1989, p. 204; Cantarel-Besson 1992, pp. 108, 112, 124; Lallement 1997, p. 210; Michel 1999, pp. 337, 387, 586–87; Hartje 2004, pp. 206, 234–36; Yoshida-Takeda and Lebrun-Jouve 2004, p. 197; Castelluccio 2009, pp. 41–42; Fried 2016, pp. 103–5

43. Allegory of Italy, 1628–29

131½ x 96½ in. (333 x 245 cm)

Villa Lante al Gianicolo, Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, Rome

The *Allegory of Italy* is one of a series of pictures painted for the pope's nephew Cardinal Francesco Barberini, Valentin's chief patron (see Chronology). Together with the altarpiece for Saint Peter's (cat. 48), it is the most important commission of the artist's career. Begun in summer 1628, it is mentioned on April 20, 1629, in Palazzo Barberini; when Cardinal Francesco was named vice chancellor of the church in 1632, it was transferred to the Palazzo della Cancelleria, installed in a central position with a frame decorated in the corners with bees, the symbol of the Barberini family (see Lavin 1975, inventories 1649 and 1679).

Unique in Valentin's oeuvre, the canvas is distinguished by its monumental format and ambitious iconography, and also by its political import. A young woman, painted *dal naturale*, holds in her right hand a jousting lance while her left rests atop a large shield. Her crown, breastplate, and ample red drapery indicate her omnipotence. Wheat and fruit at her feet signify abundance, while the two middle-aged men assume the pose of river gods accompanied by a lion and two plump boys playing next to a she-wolf. Although the painting has inspired various interpretations, on August 9, 1628, upon the first payment, it is called, simply, a "Story of Italy" ("historia d'Italia"), while an inventory entry on April 20, 1629, describes it with unusual precision as "Italy, who holds in her hand a lance and the coat of arms of the vacant seat [of the Holy See] and under her feet various fruits, with two old men who denote the Tiber and Arno rivers and two children and a lion and a wolf" ("L'Italia, che tiene in mano una lancia, e l'arme della sede vacante, e sotto i piedi diversi frutti, con due vecchioni, che denotano li fiumi Tevere, e Arno, e due puttini, et un Leone, et una lupa"). The 1649 Barberini inventory merely calls it "Rome triumphs" ("Roma trionfa"). The river gods have been variously understood as representations of the Tiber and the Arno—as indicated in the 1629 inventory—or as images of the Tiber and its tributary, the Teverone (Baglione 1642, p. 337). For Rosanna Barbiellini Amidei (1989), the shield is adorned with the arms of the Gonfaloniere of the Church, whereas Karen Serres (2011) interprets them as a pontifical emblem specific to Urban VIII. Barbiellini Amidei maintains that the female figure is an allegory of

Italy, while Serres sees it as a combination of Italy and Rome. Serres further suggests an allusion to the province of Friuli (the crenellated tower and spear) and a possible reference to the fortification policies of Urban VIII. It should be noted, however, that according to Cesare Ripa as well as classical sources, the crenellated crown is first of all a specific attribute of Italy, though Valentin endows his allegory with an entirely Roman character.

As Serres (2011, p. 161) has noted, the composition, with its powerful central figure inspired by the goddess Minerva (*Dea Minevra*) flanked by two river gods, recalls the fountain in Piazza del Campidoglio. The martial attributes (breastplate, spear, and shield) are ordinarily associated with the image of Sacred Rome (Ripa 1645, p. 318), and the she-wolf with Romulus and Remus refers to the city's mythic foundation. These features adorn the personification of Italy with the finery of Romanitas.

The identification of the arms on the shield is critical to the allegory. Whoever drew up the 1629 inventory believed that the arms were recognizably those of the vacant Holy See—the *sede vacante*—which consist of the crossed keys of Saint Peter surmounted by the umbrella, or *umbraculum*. The presence of the tiara in the upper part of the shield and the historical context—Urban VIII being pope—prevent us from accepting that proposal. Nor can the Gonfaloniere hypothesis be valid (Barbiellini Amidei 1989, p. 148). In the first place, Francesco Barberini was never a Gonfaloniere, a position held by his uncle Carlo Barberini. In the second, the presence of such arms would be difficult to justify, given the allegory's political import.

In fact, the arms on a red ground are those of the banner of the Roman Catholic apostolic church, to which the tiara has been added, to merge the church's banner (the crossed keys with *umbraculum*) with the pontifical arms (the crossed keys surmounted by the tiara). The unusual combination has rightly been linked to an illustrated plate dedicated to Pope Urban VIII in Alfonso Chacón's *Vitae et Res Gestae Summorum Pontificum Romanorum*, published in 1630 under the aegis of Francesco Barberini. There, the *umbraculum* and crossed keys specific to the pontifical arms are crowned not with the tiara but with an effigy of the pope himself (Barbiellini Amidei 1989, p. 148, fig. 17; Serres 2011, p. 157, fig. 6).



Italy therefore holds the shield of the Church of Rome, denoting that the omnipotence of Italy—its strength and unity, its wealth and abundance—stems from the church’s protection. The many Roman elements, beginning with the reference to the goddess Minerva, are intended to reaffirm the centrality of Rome in the construction of Italian territory. But *Italy*, guarantor of peace under the aegis of the Church, also belongs to a historical moment: the meeting of Rome and Florence (the Tiber and the Arno; the she-wolf and the lion, symbol of Florence) with the accession of the Florentine Maffeo Barberini to the pontifical throne on September 19, 1623. It should also be noted that the head of *Italia* is illuminated by a halo traced by an anthropomorphic sun, a traditional emblem of the papal family (Serres 2011, p. 158). Victorious Italy is, as it were, surrounded by a nimbus of Barberinian light.

Valentin’s allegory not only represents the triumph of a sacred Italy, whose heart is Roman, but alludes as well to the goddess Minerva, armed but bringing peace and plenty, whose soul is none other than that of Urban VIII. The reaffirmation of Italian unity and the pope’s temporal power assumes its full meaning once placed in its political context: the threat of a possible geopolitical imbalance and a fragmentation of the territories of northern Italy, raised by the War of the Mantuan Succession (1628–31), in which France and the Habsburgs fought for the control of the territories of the dukes of Mantua and Montferrat.

During these years, a series of sophisticated allegories was produced for the Barberini, such as the *Allegory in Honor of Cardinal Francesco Barberini* by Simon Vouet (see fig. 66) and culminating with Andrea Sacchi’s *Divine Wisdom* and Pietro da Cortona’s *Divine Providence* frescoed on ceilings in Palazzo Barberini. Within this context Valentin’s *Allegory of Italy* is groundbreaking. Although traditional allegorical codes, the science of heraldry, and Barberini symbolism are employed, they are painted “from life.” The rhetoric of the image, however learned it may be, remains subordinate to a dissonant *dal naturale* depiction, and beneath the personifications, the identity of the models is plainly visible. Jacques Thuillier, who rediscovered the canvas in 1958, discerned behind the personification of Italy “a little neighbor girl who agreed to put on that disguise for a moment”; and, behind the Tiber and the Arno, “shaggy” and “hairy” “old mountain men with long bony legs” (Thuillier 1958, pp. 32–33).

Valentin juxtaposes acute observation from life with classical references. The “old mountain man” who posed



Fig. 66. Johann Friedrich Greuter (German, ca. 1590/93–1662) from a drawing by Simon Vouet (French, 1590–1649). *Allegory in Honor of Cardinal Francesco Barberini*, probably 1625. Engraving. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Cabinet des Estampes (inv. DA-7 FOL, fol. 60)

for the Tiber is one of his favorite models (cats. 35, 44). Though his pose derives from the famous statues of antiquity, Valentin strives to replicate every anatomical detail from life, from the swollen veins of the hand to the hairy chest. These details impress the viewer even before he or she takes in the attributes of the personification, which appear as so many theatrical props. A splendid trophy of painting “from life,” the *Allegory of Italy* is undoubtedly one of the last glorious feats of Roman naturalism, before the subversive light of Caravaggio was snuffed out with Valentin’s death in 1632. AL

Provenance: Cardinal Francesco Barberini, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (1629–32; inv. 1626–31, no. 396; inv. 1631–36, no. 396); Francesco Barberini, Palazzo della Cancelleria, Rome (1632–79; inv. 1649, no. 802; inv. 1679, no. 27); by inheritance, Prince Maffeo Barberini, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (1679–85; postmortem inv. 1686, no. 44); the Barberini Collection, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (1685–1812); by inheritance, Maffeo Barberini Colonna di Sciarra, Palazzo Colonna, Rome (1812–49; inv. 1818, no. 106); Colonna di Sciarra, Palazzo Colonna, Rome (1849–99; sale, Galleria Sangiorgi, Palazzo Borghese, Rome, March 22–28, 1899, no. 178; Wolfgang Helbig, Villa Lante, Rome (1899–1915); his heirs, Villa Lante, Rome (1915–50); acquired in 1950 with Villa Lante by the Institutum Romanum Finlandiae

Selected References: Baglione 1642, p. 337; Blanc 1862, pp. 5–6, 15; Orbaan 1920, p. 506; Longhi 1958, pp. 62, 65–66; Thuillier 1958, pp. 28, 32; Ivanoff 1966, pl. xvi; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 168, 170, no. 52 (French ed., pp. 174, 176, no. 55); Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. nos. 343, 344, p. 92, no. 396 (inv. 1626–31), p. 111, no. 396 (inv. 1631–36), p. 247, no. 802 (inv. 1649), p. 354, no. 27 (inv. 1679), p. 396, no. 44 (inv. 1686); Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Rosanna Barbiellini Amidei in Fagiolo and Madonna 1984, pp. 422–23, no. x.20; Wright 1985, p. 269; Barbiellini Amidei 1989; Mojana 1989, p. 150, no. 49; Nicolson 1989, p. 200; Serres 2011; Lemoine 2012, pp. 166–69; Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée in Vodret 2012, p. 346, no. XII.1





44. Abraham Sacrificing Isaac, ca. 1629–32

58¾ x 73¼ in. (149.2 x 186.1 cm)

The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Gift of Lord Strathcona and family (1927.446)

New York only

As recounted in the Old Testament book of Genesis (22), Abraham's arm is stopped by an angel just as he is about to carry out God's command to sacrifice his son Isaac, who submissively kneels on the altar. Turning to address the patriarch, the angel points to a lamb that God now wishes to be substituted, since Abraham has proven his unquestioning faith. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. . . . Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." (Heb. 11:17–19).

Both because of its theological implications—Isaac interpreted as a type for Jesus—and because of its compelling human drama, the story was enormously popular from the Middle Ages on and provided the subject for a celebrated picture by Caravaggio in the Barberini collection that Valentin surely knew. In 1977, Renato Ruotolo proposed that the Montreal picture was painted for Ascanio Filomarino, who belonged to the inner circle of Urban VIII and who, in 1627, as the majordomo of Francesco Barberini, made payments to Valentin from the cardinal as well as himself, for commissions including *Saint Jerome* (possibly the picture in the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, which, following cleaning, seems of the requisite date and dimensions; fig. 67) and a painting of the *Crowning with Thorns* (see *Chronology and Lorizzo 2006*, pp. 34, 110–11). In 1641, Filomarino was made archbishop of Naples and a 1685 inventory of his collection, installed in the Palazzo Spaccanapoli, lists seven works by the artist, including what must be the Montreal picture and its pendant, the *Crowning with Thorns* (now lost): "Two paintings of 7 by 5 palmi (about 185.1 x 132 cm) one of the *Sacrifice of Abraham [of Isaac]*, and the other a *Crowning of Our Lord* [. . .] by Monsù Valentino" (see *Lorizzo 2006*, p. 111; note that the apparent difference in the dimensions of the *Crowning with Thorns* in the 1627 payment and the Filomarino inventory stems from the difference between the Roman and Neapolitan *palmi*). The two subjects would have been viewed as theologically related, but they need not have been painted simultaneously, as these were years of intense activity for the

artist. Filomarino also owned works by Simon Vouet and Nicolas Poussin, clearly sharing the Barberini's Francophile sympathies (see *Lorizzo 2006*).

From the time of its rediscovery in 1967 in the storerooms of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (Carter 1968), the picture has been understood as a late work by the artist. Following its cleaning and technical examination in 2013, Hilliard Goldfarb (2015) made the case that what had previously been interpreted as severe abrasion is in part the result of the picture having been left unfinished at Valentin's death. And, in fact, parts of the composition—the "sky" below the angel (fig. 33); the action of the nonexistent left hand of Abraham; the treatment of the drapery of the angel's torso—were not resolved. But the lack of finish need not imply that this was his last picture; it could have been begun a few years earlier and set aside while the artist worked on the great Barberini commissions, which included the altarpiece for Saint Peter's (cat. 48).

Goldfarb gives a good account of the radical compositional changes made during the course of painting, which I have had the opportunity to further discuss with him and the conservators, whom I wish to thank. These changes underscore that the Caravaggesque dynamic of creativity that Valentin embraced resulted from the painter's staging a scene with living models rather than working out the composition in a series of preliminary drawings. In the case of the angel, for example, a boy was posed kneeling on a platform or table, leaning forward. As a matter of balance, his left leg—like his right—was positioned under his body, and this can be seen in the infrared image. He was nude, and his genitals were summarily indicated. To achieve the effect of suspended flight, Valentin then freely drew with the brush repeated contours for the repositioned leg. And to give the figure further plausibility, he employed the studio prop of the wings of a hawk or falcon (from the cardinal's aviary, or do they reflect the natural science interests of Cassiano dal Pozzo? See cat. 27).

It is the persistent presence in the studio of actual models—and Valentin's manner of recording their varied poses directly on the canvas—that surely accounts for the extraordinary effect he achieves of an unfolding human drama. As noted by Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée

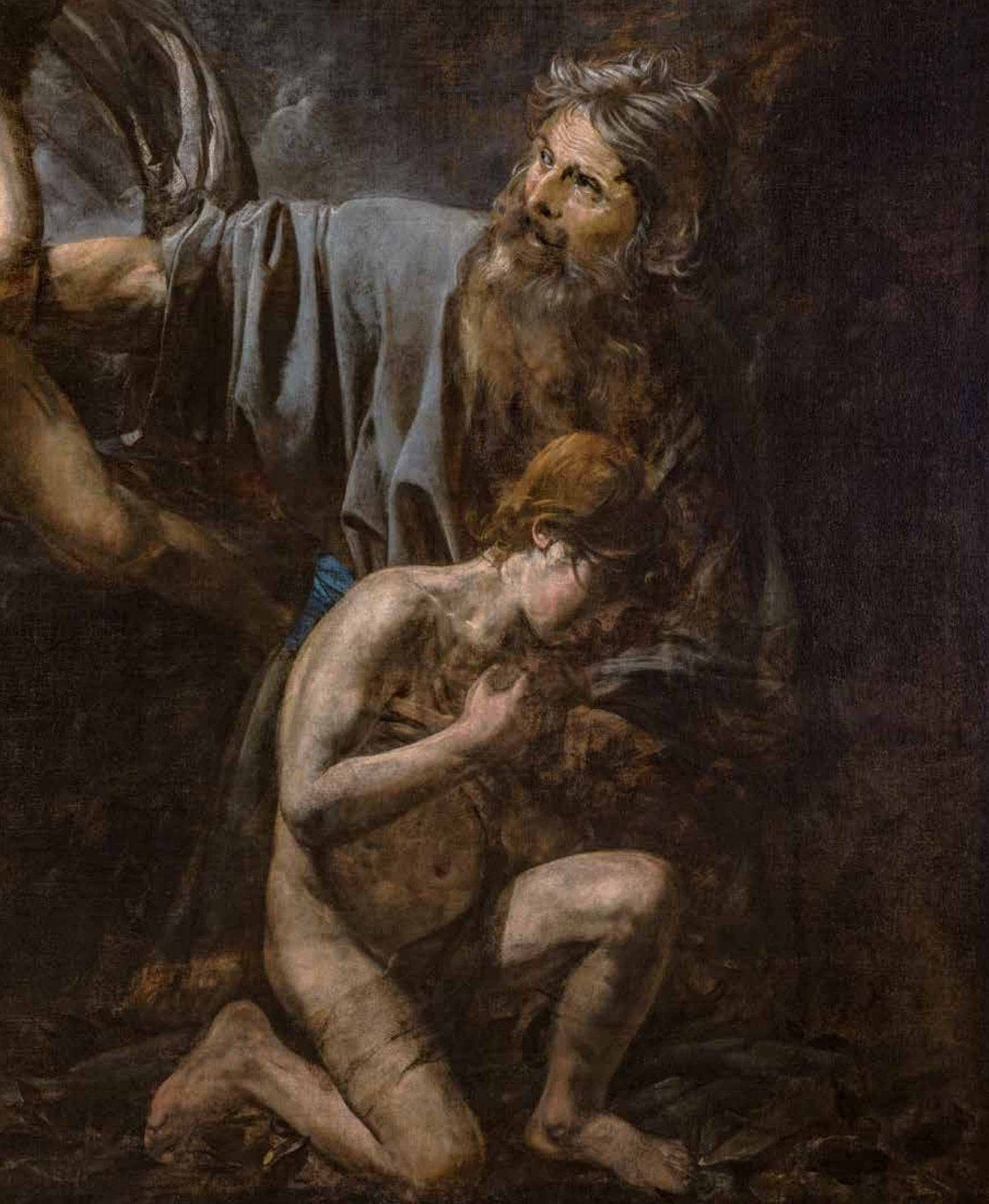




Fig. 67. Valentin de Boulogne. *Saint Jerome*, 1627–28. Oil on canvas, 52½ x 38¾ in. (133.4 cm x 97.5 cm). Davis Museum at Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass., Anonymous gift (1955.16)

and Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1973, p. 174), “Valentin reveals himself more ‘populist’ [than Caravaggio], at once violent and tender: the angel, with his savage appearance, resembles a hooligan of the Trastevere, compared to which Caravaggio’s angels seem elegant and well behaved. . . . No grimace, no cry: the face of the child about to be sacrificed rests in shadow. All that counts is the arm that stops the irremediable gesture and that unforgettable exchange of glances between the startled man and the urchin-saviour.”

In its unfinished and (admittedly) compromised state, the picture presents a virtual palimpsest of Valentin’s approach to composition. In Abraham’s face can be seen Valentin’s typical notational way of indicating with black the placement of eyes, nose, and mouth, as well as the back of the head. As noted by Goldfarb, X-radiograph and infrared analysis reveals that Valentin’s

first idea for Isaac’s pose, evidently inspired by Caravaggio’s canvas, was quickly discarded in favor of one closely related to a work by Orazio Riminaldi for Asdrubale Mattei—part of a cycle to which Valentin had also contributed a picture (cat. 26). Isaac was shown prone on the altar block, the pose of his body indicated with broadly brushed-in contours (fig. 32). The poses of Abraham and the angel underwent less radical but nonetheless significant changes as Valentin sought the most expressively powerful effect. The final solution, with Isaac kneeling, emphasizes his vulnerability, and—as pointed out by Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin—seems to look ahead to Rembrandt’s great etching of 1655.

Valentin has been particularly keen to emphasize the angel’s precipitous arrival, avoiding that stilled quality that many critics—from Giulio Mancini to Giovan Pietro Bellori—had seen as a shortcoming of Caravaggio’s art and a defect of working directly on the canvas from posed models. As observed elsewhere in this catalogue, Valentin has moved beyond Caravaggio, achieving an effect of an ongoing drama—*un’azione*—for which the closest analogy is with the sculpture of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, another artist favored by the Barberini. That said, the piece of trailing drapery that forms a broad arc behind the angel’s head and left wing has a distinctly classicizing appearance.

The model for Abraham is easily recognized as the same one Valentin employed for the Tiber in his *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43) and for the musician playing the viola da gamba in the Liechtenstein *A Musical Company with a Fortune-Teller* (cat. 50). KC

Provenance: Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino, Palazzo Spaccanapoli, Naples (d. 1666); his nephew, Alfonso Filomarino Duca della Torre, Palazzo Spaccanapoli (inv. 1685, no. 100, as “Sacrificio d’Abramo [. . .] di Monsù Valentino”); the Filomarino della Torre, Palazzo Spaccanapoli (until 1799; inv. 1700); D. Douglas, Quebec; Owen Murphy, MPP, Quebec City; Sir Donald Smith, first Baron Strathcona, Montreal (d. 1914; bequeathed to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in 1927)
 Selected References: Carter 1968, p. 4; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 172, 174, no. 53 (French ed., pp. 178, 180, no. 56); Cuzin 1975, p. 60; Ruotolo 1977, pp. 74, 75, n. 30, p. 81; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 176, no. 63; Nicolson 1989, p. 200; Lorizzo 2001, p. 405, n. 20; Lorizzo 2006, pp. 35, 51, n. 17, pp. 111, 144, n. 19; Goldfarb 2015

45. Saint John the Baptist, ca. 1628–29

51¼ x 35¼ in. (130 x 90 cm)

46. Saint Jerome, ca. 1628–29

50¾ x 35⅞ in. (128 x 91 cm)

Santa Maria in Via, Camerino

Virtually unknown to the literature before 1973, when they were published by Luigi Dania (1973) and Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin (in *Restauri nelle Marche* 1973, pp. 478, 480, no. 122), these two paintings are now among the best documented works by Valentin. (Recognized by Federico Zeri in the sacristy of Santa Maria in Via, they were noted in the 1962 Touring Club Italiano guidebook to the region of the Marche.) They were purchased by Angelo Giori (1586–1662) on April 26, 1629, for thirty-two scudi (Ierrobino 2010, pp. 201, 206, n. 44), a reasonable but not exceptional sum. However, rather than commissioned by Giori—a member of the inner circle of the Barberini family (see cat. 18)—they were purchased from Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata, who, in addition to having been employed by Scipione Borghese and then by Pope Urban VIII (as *valet de chambre*), also dealt in works of art (see Cavazzini 2013, and her essay in this catalogue). Roccatagliata's documented transactions provide fascinating insight into the Roman art market; they are crucial to understanding how artists such as Valentin could gain a footing and, eventually, establish a reputation.

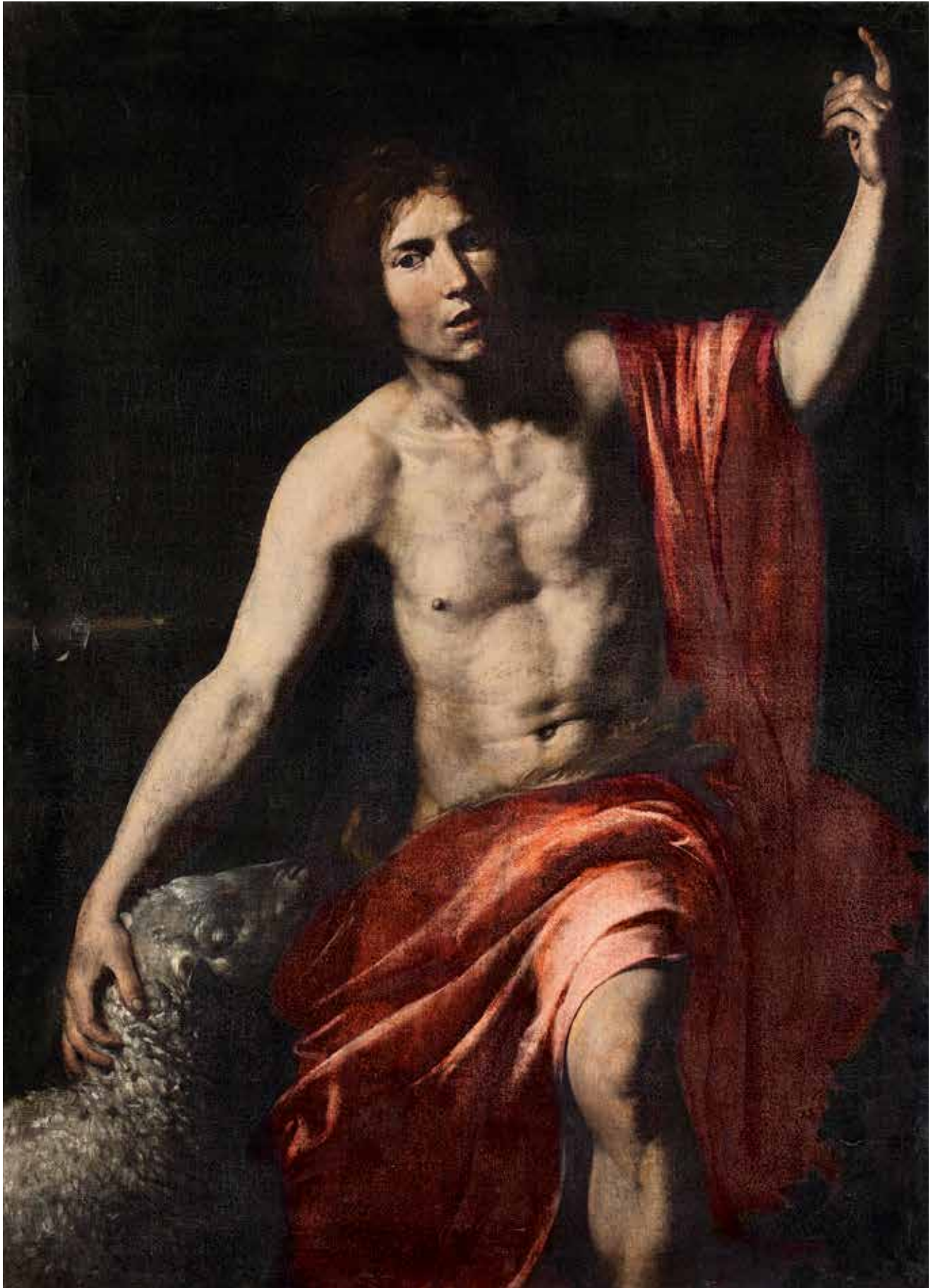
Roccatagliata maintained a remarkable inventory that included significant paintings by the young Nicolas Poussin, as well as pictures by Paul Bril, Caravaggio, Manfredi, Antonio Tempesta, and Valentin. He also dealt in copies. He was closely associated with Cassiano dal Pozzo, the secretary of Cardinal Francesco Barberini; on Roccatagliata's death in 1652, Cassiano's brother Carlo Antonio was his heir. Roccatagliata also had dealings with others involved in the art trade, including the diamond thief Fabrizio Valguarnera (see cat. 50). Roccatagliata sometimes acted as an intermediary in the commissioning of works of art, as when, in October 1627, Giori purchased through him a *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* that he subsequently gave to the Barberini (fig. 4; Ierrobino 2010, p. 206, n. 50).

In the case of the two pictures catalogued here, Giori was buying from Roccatagliata's inventory. This

explains the character of the two paintings, both of which treat popular subjects suitable as either gallery or devotional pictures: John the Baptist as a youth preaching in the wilderness and Saint Jerome as an ascetic with a book and crucifix. They were painted on the standardized *tela d'imperatore* and were already framed. In principle, they could have been painted at any time prior to April 1629—Roccatagliata is known to have purchased works from artists and kept them until their value increased. But on grounds of style alone they must have been recent productions and, prior to the discovery of Giori's payment, were universally dated to the period 1628–30. Giori was a discriminating patron and owned works by Andrea Sacchi, Poussin, Claude Lorrain, and Gian Lorenzo Bernini. He displayed these in his Roman residence on the Salita Sant'Onofrio on the Gianicolo (see the inventory of 1669; Corradini 1977, pp. 84–90).

In this catalogue, it is suggested that he had commissioned his portrait from Valentin some years earlier (cat. 18), but as a member of the papal court he must have known Roccatagliata well and turned to him both to negotiate a commission from the artist and to purchase these two works for his collection. Following the 1654 consecration of the church of Santa Maria in Via, the reconstruction of which he had funded (designed by Sacchi), he included the two canvases in his bequest, intending that one should hang above the door leading from the sacristy into the tribune, and the other over the door from the tribune into the oratory of the confraternity, affixed to the wall with nails so that they could not be moved (codicil to his will of 1658 added on June 29, 1659; see Corradini 1977, p. 94). These precautions surely suggest a special esteem. Upon his death, Giori was buried in the tomb he had prepared in the church.

As in the earlier canvas in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne (cat. 21), Saint John is shown as the *vox clamantis*, “the voice of one crying in the wilderness / Make straight the way of the Lord” (John 1:23), his mouth open, addressing the viewer. Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin (1973, p. 162) noted the possible influence of



45. *Saint John the Baptist*

Guido Reni and also the much-copied composition of Raphael. There is nothing improbable in this. However, in contradistinction to both of these models, the youth is shown close to the picture plane, and he addresses the viewer in a more intimate and informal fashion, while scratching the neck of the lamb—the *agnus dei*, or lamb of God. The gesture of his left hand is also less emphatic or rhetorical than in the earlier picture at Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne. The handsome model seems to be the same as seen between the gypsy and the man whose palm she is reading in the Louvre *Fortune-Teller* (cat. 38).

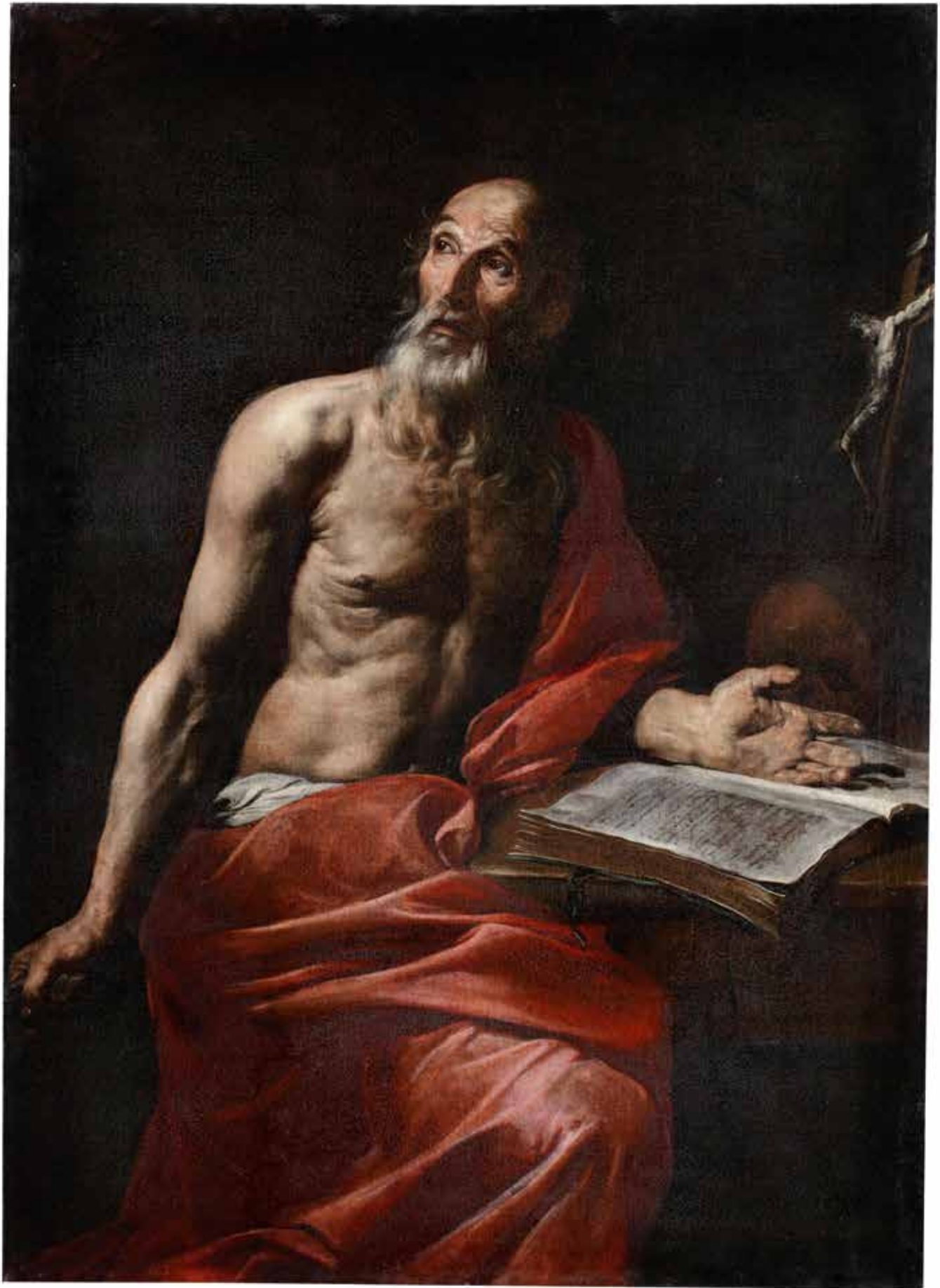
Saint Jerome offers the studied contrast of an old ascetic who, with his hand resting on the pages of his book, turns his head, gazing heavenward. This sort of contrapposto pose was standard and had, for example, been employed by Caravaggio in his altarpiece showing the inspiration of Saint Matthew in San Luigi dei Francesi. As there, the expression of Jerome suggests he is responding to an unseen voice or, more likely, the trumpet blast of the Last Judgment—a common post-Tridentine theme. Jusepe de Ribera had famously treated this iconography, not least in two etchings of the 1620s (Andrea Bayer in Pérez Sánchez and Spinosa 1992, pp. 176–78, no. 74).

The notion of paintings lacking only a voice or being a kind of silent poetry was commonplace—a trope of

Renaissance critical language. This does not make it any less pertinent here. Indeed, in a poem inspired by a painting of the penitent Saint Jerome by Luca Cambiaso, Giovan Battista Marino wrote, “The ear would hear / the beating with a stone [against the saint’s chest], and the sound of his voice, / if there were not the murmur / of the nearby stream [in the picture]” (*La galleria*; see Marino 1619 [1675 ed., p. 63]). All of Valentin’s concert pictures imply sound, and his attention to specific combinations of instruments must have been suggestive to his viewers in ways that are lost to us today. In the case of the two pictures catalogued here, we have to do with pendant compositions offering contrasts of youth and old age and of sounds—one human, the other divine—that are implied but heard only in the imagination of the viewer. KC

Provenance: Cardinal Angelo Giori, Rome (1629–62; codicil to will of 1658); Santa Maria in Via, Camerino (from 1662)

Selected References: Dania 1973; Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin in *Restauri nelle Marche* 1973, pp. 478, 480, no. 122; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 162, 164, nos. 49, 50 (French ed., pp. 168, 170, nos. 52, 53); Cuzin 1975, pp. 55, 60; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, pp. 160, 162, nos. 53, 54; Nicolson 1989, p. 202; Ierrobino 2010, pp. 201–2; Agnese Vastano in Sgarbi and Papetti 2010, pp. 282–83, nos. 75, 76



46. *Saint Jerome*

47. Judith and Holofernes, ca. 1627–29

41⁷/₈ x 55¹/₂ in. (106.5 x 141 cm)

National Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta

A striking work, one of the masterpieces of Valentin, at once cruel and delicate: the very young Judith, delightfully childlike but sullen and determined, completes the act of killing with tranquility, without even the movement of repulsion that Caravaggio gave her” (Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 150). The picture by Caravaggio that Arnould Brejon de Lavergnée and Jean-Pierre Cuzin had in mind is the *Judith and Holofernes* painted about 1600 for the banker Ottavio Costa (fig. 68)—a work that, following its reemergence in 1951, caused something of a sensation. Both Caravaggio’s and Valentin’s paintings take as their literary point of departure chapter 13 of the apocryphal book of Judith, which recounts how, following festivities in their encampment below the Jewish city of Bethulia, the Philistine general Holofernes—in a drunken stupor—has been left in his tent with the beautiful Jewish widow, who, unbeknownst to him, has presented herself under false pretenses in order to kill the enemy of her people.

Then she came to the pillar of the bed, which was at Holofernes’ head, and took down his fauchion [sword] from thence, and approached to his bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said, Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this day. And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and she took away



Fig. 68. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. *Judith and Holofernes*, ca. 1600. Oil on canvas, 57¹/₈ x 76⁷/₈ in. (145 x 195 cm). Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (inv. 2533)

his head from him. And tumbled his body down from the bed, and pulled down the canopy from the pillars; and anon after she went forth, and gave Holofernes his head to her maid; and she put it in her bag of meat. (13:6-10)

As noted in the entry for *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* (cat. 36), the biblical heroine enjoyed enormous popularity as a paradigm of virtue and strength of purpose: what became known in France as a *femme forte* and, in Italian literary circles, as a *donna forte ed intrepide*. In the first decades of the seventeenth century, both in literature and in theater, there was a particular fascination for drama involving extreme contrasts of character, heightened emotion, and violent situations. The narrative moment described so graphically in the Apocrypha became a favored subject for painters, from Caravaggio to Elsheimer and Rubens, and from Bartolomeo Manfredi to Artemisia Gentileschi and Johann Liss (see Pigler 1974, vol. 1, pp. 191–97).

Like Caravaggio and Rubens (and notably unlike Artemisia), Valentin draws a striking contrast between the young and beautiful Judith and her maid Abbra, except that he imagines Judith as barely twenty, understanding that such rash courage was more likely characteristic of a young person, and gives her features that are not conventionally beautiful. Unlike either Caravaggio or Rubens, he avoided the expedient of caricature or exaggeration and does not turn Abbra into a Leonardesque stereotype of an old crone. Nor was he interested in the erotic subtext that informs their paintings. Unlike Artemisia, in her two celebrated depictions of the story in Naples and in Florence, Valentin does not opt for a sensational bloodbath—the kind that played on the poetics of conceitful oppositions, of which Giovan Battista Marino was the supreme master. In one poem, for example, Marino declared that Judith had killed Holofernes twice: first with the love her beauty inspired and then with the sword she wielded. In another, he made a play between Holofernes’s bed (*il letto osceno*), befouled by his love for Judith, and its cleansing with his blood (see Christiansen 2004, pp. 115–16). The one sensational feature Valentin insists on is the position of Holofernes on his bed, so that Judith’s fist and his head seem about to invade the viewer’s space.



Comparing Valentin's painting with those of his contemporaries, one is impressed not only by his faithfulness to the text, but also by his commitment to describing the scene *al naturale*—that is, not as a moralizing tale with archetypal characters or as an exercise in sensationalism, but as a horrifyingly plausible event involving real people. In so doing, he moves Caravaggism beyond the poetic conceits that dominated the aesthetics of so much seventeenth-century art, including that of Caravaggio (see Cropper 1991). The power of his picture derives from his keen insight into the human drama embedded within the biblical narrative: the determination of the young Judith, driven by a sense of divine mission; the shock of Holofernes, as he is awakened from his drunken sleep, his eyes fixed in terror on his young killer, his mouth forming a silent scream of pain and surprise; and the old Jewish servant, who even as she opens the meat bag for Holofernes's head, casts a furtive glance at his naked body, perhaps wondering how far her mistress had to go to get her victim into this vulnerable position.

The scene is brilliantly staged, and by comparison even Caravaggio's magnificent composition—without parallel as a naturalistic statement when it was painted—seems contrived and artificial: contrived in its shallow, relief-like composition; artificial in its reliance on repeating shapes to achieve compositional coherence. Valentin's proposes a more radical kind of compositional unity: one based purely on the dynamics of the dramatic moment. Moreover, for Valentin, the darkness of Holofernes's tent is more than a Caravaggesque device. It becomes a metaphor for death, mercilessly pierced by a shaft of light that gives tangible form to Holofernes's desperate gesture of protest against the darkness that is about to engulf him.

At the heart of the difficulty in dating Valentin's paintings is what Roberto Longhi (1943, p. 6), in the

case of Caravaggio, identified as the inappropriateness of applying a system of evaluation based on stylistic analysis to a manner of painting “so conspicuously lacking in schemas, precisely because, for the first time [what was involved was] ‘direct painting,’ immediate; ‘the secretary of nature.’” In other words, the creative dynamics of Caravaggesque painting involved the identification by the artist of the psychological and dramatic factors inherent in the subject as the primary determinants of style. That the *Judith and Holofernes* has proved difficult to date is due to the uniqueness of its subject within the artist's oeuvre. When it was exhibited in Rome in 1973, Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin dated the picture to about 1626. Cuzin later vacillated between an earlier and a later date, while Marina Mojana opted for one about 1624, comparing the picture to *Christ and the Adulteress* (cat. 16). It is my impression that, both in emotional tenor and in psychological characterization, the affinity is with Valentin's works after about 1625, and in particular with the altarpiece in Saint Peter's. The model for Judith may be the same who appears as Erminia among the shepherds (fig. 5)—a very different work, but one involving a similar independence from set formulas and schemas (alas, its fragility made it impossible to borrow). The picture was cleaned in 2006–7. KC

Provenance: private collection, Rome (until 1926); The National Museum, Malta (1926–74); National Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta (from 1974)

Selected References: Bonello 1929; Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Lucie-Smith 1972, p. 228; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 148, 150, no. 45 (French ed., pp. 152, 154, no. 47); Cuzin 1975, p. 60; Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Wright 1985, p. 268; Garrard 1989, p. 72; Mojana 1989, pp. 26, 92, no. 20; Nicolson 1989, p. 201; Espinosa Rodríguez 1990, p. 55, no. 56

48. Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian, 1629–30

118 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 75 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (302 x 192 cm)

Vatican Museums, Vatican City

Together with his *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43), the *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian* is Valentin's most important and ambitious commission. In it he shows what Roberto Longhi (1943, p. 33) brilliantly described as "a constant mental independence that allowed him, already in 1629, to succeed where Caravaggio himself had not in 1605, to proudly plant the old Caravaggesque banner on an altar of Saint Peter's." The commission, on May 9, 1629, was at the instance of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, who had also intervened to propose Nicolas Poussin for the altarpiece of the *Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus* (fig. 69). It was almost certainly occasioned by the cardinal's satisfaction with the *Allegory*, which Valentin had completed that March. The altarpiece was installed in 1630 and for it the artist was paid 350 scudi, disbursed in installments between June 1629 and April 1630 (Rice 1997, pp. 233–38, with related documents). Previously (May 25, 1627), the commission had been assigned to Francesco Albani, whose refined Carraccesque classicism represented a safe but bland and unimaginative choice. Cardinal Francesco Barberini was surely aware of Valentin's talent for dramatically staged religious narratives and haunting concert scenes, but the *Allegory* must have convinced him that the artist was up to the challenge of this prestigious project—Simon Vouet and Poussin are the only other non-Italians to have received commissions in the basilica—and would produce a work of compelling originality.

Moreover, Poussin's altarpiece of the *Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus*, which was to adorn the altar to the left of that of Saints Processus and Martinian, was finished by September 1629. Francesco must have realized that he was presented with the opportunity to juxtapose a work by the rising star of a genuinely antiquarian classicism with another by the greatest Caravaggesque painter—a replay, it might be thought, of the famous confrontation of Annibale Carracci with Caravaggio in the Cerasi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo. That both painters were French must have provided yet a further stimulus to the Francophile Barberini. Unquestionably, the cardinal anticipated from Valentin a response to Poussin's work, and we know from Joachim von Sandrart's biography of Poussin (1675, pt. 2, pp. 367–69) that he was not disappointed,



Fig. 69. Nicolas Poussin (French, 1594–1665). *Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus*, 1629. Oil on canvas, 126 x 73 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (320 x 186 cm). Vatican Pinacoteca

for following the installation of the altarpiece in April 1630, there was among *conoscenti* and artists a heated discussion about the merits of each.

The history of the chapel; the transfer of the saints' relics from the nave of the early Christian basilica to its central position in the north transept and its rededication in 1605; the negotiations leading up to the commission to Valentin; and the hagiographic sources on which the depiction is based have been summarized in exemplary fashion by Louise Rice (1997, pp. 232–38, no. 11) and also discussed by Wiebke Windorf (2006, pp. 132–41, 190–98). Here, it will be sufficient to note that the venerated saints' relics were translated from a church on the Via Aurelia to Saint Peter's by Pope Pascal I (817–24) and housed in one of the seven privileged altars in the basilica.



Fig. 70. View of the transept of Saint Peter's with mosaic reproduction of Valentin's altarpiece

According to the sixth-century *Acts* of the two saints, edited about 1480 by the Florentine humanist Bonino Mombrozio and accepted as authentic by the eminent Oratorian Cardinal Cesare Baronio, Processus and Martinian were wardens of the Mamertine prison when Saints Peter and Paul were taken captive. Converted by the apostles' preaching and miracles, they were baptized by Peter with water that sprang miraculously for the occasion from the Tarpeian rock in the prison. The two converts then urged the apostles to flee Rome. Having reached the Appian Way, Peter had a vision of Christ and returned to the city to be crucified. When the soldiers' commander Paulinus heard of the conversion of his two wardens, he had them arrested, urging them to abandon Christ and worship a golden statue of Jupiter. They refused, and were put on the rack to be tortured and beaten. A Christian woman, Lucina, encouraged them in their new faith (she would later bury their remains). During the ordeal, Paulinus was divinely punished for his actions by being struck blind in one eye; he died three days later. Nero then had the two former Roman soldiers decapitated. "We have now taken service in the army of heaven," Martinian had declared to Paulinus.

Considering the complexity of the story, Valentin was surely provided with a carefully articulated program, and there is good reason to think that Angelo Giori was behind it. He played a key role in Urban VIII's projects and was notably involved with the schemes for the neighboring altars decorated by Poussin and Angelo Caroselli (Rice 1997, pp. 100–102, 226, 239, 304–5, doc. no. 16; Rice 2015). Giori was also a fervent patron of Valentin: he was portrayed by the artist (cat. 18) and, a month before Valentin received the commission for Saint Peter's, he purchased two pictures by him (see cats. 45, 46).

From the text he was furnished, Valentin managed to create a densely powerful composition, organized along a strong diagonal that defines a shallow but palpable and dynamic space that puts the viewer/worshipper in close proximity to the event (for a detailed analysis of Valentin's use of space, color, and light, see Windorf 2006, pp. 142–59). The two martyrs are laid out on the rack head to foot—a detail apparently derived from an engraving by Antonio Tempesta that appeared in Antonio Gallonio's *Historia delle Sante Vergini Romane*, published in 1591 (Rice 1997, p. 234). One torturer strains to turn the wheel and exert greater tension while another, bent over, heats an iron rod, and a third, standing in an elegantly dynamic pose, prepares to land a blow. The taut abdomen, arched rib cage, and wildly staring eyes of his victim give a vivid reality to the scene. A seated Roman soldier, battle-ax in hand, gazes in a disturbingly detached fashion at a modestly garbed woman—Lucina—being taunted by another soldier. At least two other spectators, one watching open-mouthed, can be seen.

That he portrays these unsympathetic soldiers alongside their former comrades Processus and Martinian says much about Valentin's understanding of human nature. Perhaps only at this point does the viewer notice the old man seated in an elevated position, bent over, his toga wrapped around him, cupping his hand over his right eye—Paulinus—and the feet of the idol of Jupiter (this detail is seen more clearly in Jean Restout's drawing after the altarpiece, fig. 40; see Rosenberg 1984, p. 825, n. 7). Into this masterfully choreographed scene of brutality, a youthful angel intrudes, holding the martyr's palm of victory and virtually tumbling out of the heavens, the very awkwardness of his pose suggesting impetuosity and conveying a sense of urgency. Rice (1997, p. 235) has noted that he lacks the grace of the ephebe in Caravaggio's *Martyrdom of Saint Matthew*. Very much to the point, Valentin rejected the mannered artifice of Caravaggio's angel as inappropriate—a concession to





bellezza that was very much part of the artistic culture of the 1590s but that must have seemed anachronistic in the 1620s. For its figural density, its episodic approach to narration, and the sense of violent tragedy, the only real comparison is with Caravaggio's equally complex and physically compelling *Seven Acts of Mercy* (Pinacoteca Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples), raising the question of whether Valentin may have traveled to Naples and seen that picture.

The debate that Sandrart informs us took place between the merits of Poussin's *Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus* and Valentin's altarpiece reminds us how aware contemporaries were of stylistic differences. Poussin was admired for his command of expressivity and the representation of the passions, as well as his inventive capacity, while Valentin excelled in the naturalism of his figures and the strength and harmony of his color. The discussion was articulated employing the critical categories then current, which must now seem inadequate for a proper appreciation of the different positions they represented. To us, Poussin's altarpiece is far more colorful, in the literal sense, than Valentin's, and his means of expression, with its emphasis on gesture (*affetti*), rhetorical. But it is important to understand that to seventeenth-century viewers the use of gesture as a mode of expression had the sanction of the great Roman writers Cicero and Quintilian, while *colore* (Sandrart's *Colorist*) was not about brightness of color but was understood to be an adjunct to naturalism, and is so described by Filippo Baldinucci in his *Vocabolario* (1681, p. 37).

It is therefore crucial to understand that, in this work, Valentin sought to move beyond the perceived critical boundaries of naturalism—what Jean-Pierre Cuzin (1975, p. 60) has called “a highly cultivated brand of Caravaggism.” Valentin shows his awareness of the expectations of a great history painter by including—unusual for him—the orthogonal divisions of the stone pavement, calculated along a diagonal with the vanishing area to the left. This was surely in direct response to Poussin's handling of space. The same perspective determines the angle from which the viewer sees the rack on which the saints are laid out. There is the magnificent Roman base for the statue of Jupiter, and, as a pagan counterpart of martyrdom, the artist introduced a Roman relief of the figure of Hercules carrying a sacrificial bullock that he had employed elsewhere (see Rice 1997, pp. 234–35; and cat. 23). Although in keeping with

Caravaggesque practice—plebeian, bare, dirty feet have their place—Valentin eschews mere lowlife naturalism.

Longhi (1958, pp. 65–66) came to think that Valentin compromised his Caravaggesque naturalism to attain an “eloquence more in line with the religious and even allegorical themes” and that the “banner” he imagined Valentin planting in Saint Peter's was only in part Caravaggesque. In the veiled Lucina—obviously based on a Roman sculpture—he discerned a dramatic austerity almost Corneille-like. To a degree he was right. There can be no question that the dynamic pose of the back-viewed tormentor, with his baton in one hand and the sword in its hilt, ultimately derives from the famous *Borghese Warrior* (now in the Musée du Louvre) and, more immediately, from an engraving after Raphael's *Judgment of Solomon* on the vault of the Vatican *Stanze*, underscoring Valentin's desire to give Caravaggesque naturalism the authority of classical art. (Domenichino had employed a similar figure in his fresco in the oratory at San Gregorio Magno.) The figure bent over, heating a rod, is also based on a classical model (Rice 1997, p. 235). No less notably, Valentin has made a point of addressing the aesthetic concerns of variety, foreshortening, and action—all key to moving beyond the perceived limitations of painting from a model.

Yet, however much he looked to classical and Raphaellesque precedent, his position vis-à-vis Poussin is striking. By comparison to Valentin's composition, Poussin's makes the impression of a great *invenzione*—a piece of grand, marvelously articulated fiction, with the heads and gestures of the imagined figures orchestrated to communicate the pivotal moment of the drama, or *istoria*. But whereas Poussin allows no contemporary costumes, insisting on the Aristotelean unities of time and place, Valentin prefers contrasts: the togas of Lucina and Paulinus establish the historical period, while the costumes of the others register the event as a potentially present occurrence. They are figures that combine artifice with compelling realism. He has aspired to—and achieved—a Caravaggesque interpretation of classicism, and in this lies his legacy for French painting.

There are the signs throughout of exactly the kinds of shifts in the contours of the figures that characterize Valentin's paintings, which are very much works in progress rather than resolved compositions. This can be seen, for example, in the figure blowing on coals in the fingers on his knee. The left hand on the crank has also been shifted. Throughout, the contours are adjusted. KC

Provenance: Saint Peter's, Rome (1630–1730, when substituted by a mosaic copy); Pontifical Apartments, The Vatican (1730–90); Galleria dei Quadri, The Vatican (1790–97); Musée Napoléon, Paris (1797–1815); Pinacoteca Vaticana (from 1815)

Selected References: Baglione 1642, p. 337; Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 236); von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 367; Baldinucci 1681–1728 (1845–47 ed., vol. 3 [1846], p. 691); Landon 1832, pp. 104–5, pl. 60; Blanc 1862, pp. 6, 15; Voss 1924 (1997 ed., p. 97); Longhi 1943, p. 33; Mâle 1951, pp. 133–35; Longhi

1958, pp. 63, 66; Ivanoff 1966, n.p., pls. x, xi; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 123, 245 (French ed., pp. 125, 253); Cuzin 1975, pp. 59–60; Nicolson 1979, p. 105; Rosenberg 1984, pp. 825, 827, 830, n. 7; Wright 1985, p. 269; Mojana 1989, pp. 33, 152–54, no. 50; Nicolson 1989, p. 203; Rice 1997, pp. 232–38, no. 11; Deimling 1998, p. 473; Windorf 2006, pp. 132–98; Melasecchi 2010, p. 740; Sible de Blaauw in de Blaauw and Moormann 2015, pp. 221–22, no. 73

49. *Samson*, 1631

53³/₈ x 40¹/₂ in. (135.6 x 102.8 cm)

The Cleveland Museum of Art, Mr. and Mrs. William H. Marlatt Fund (1972.50)

Samson has always seemed the most humanly flawed of Old Testament heroes. Endowed with extraordinary strength, the source of which was in his uncut hair, he had a weakness for beautiful Philistine women at a time when the Hebrews were under Philistine subjugation. Each betrayed him, setting into motion acts of extreme revenge that, paradoxically, transformed Samson from the pathetic victim of a lover's guile into an inspired fighter for his people. His all-too-human flaws have fascinated poets and composers from Richard Crashaw and Milton to Handel and Saint-Saëns.

Valentin shows the hero contemplating the aftermath of a particularly complicated story. His betrothed had disclosed to her countrymen the answer to a riddle that Samson had made up as part of a wager. It concerned honey he had found in the carcass of a lion he had killed with his bare hands. This caused him to lose his wager and set in motion a sequence of vengeful events that led to the death of his betrothed (meanwhile promised to another) and Samson's single-handed slaying of one thousand of her countrymen with the jawbone of an ass (Judges 14–15).

The picture can be dated with unusual precision, for on December 30, 1630, the artist was paid thirty scudi "to prepare the canvas and colors for making a Samson" for Cardinal Francesco Barberini, while the following July he was paid the residual twenty-five scudi for its completion (Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. no. 345). The picture was painted to form a pendant to another Old Testament biblical hero, David with the head of Goliath (see Mojana 1989, p. 128, no. 38), that Valentin had carried out for Cardinal Francesco four years earlier, in 1627—an example of how pictures that were viewed as pendants were actually part

of an evolving process. In 1633, the two pictures—the same size and in matching walnut frames embellished with gold—were sent to decorate the cardinal's quarters in the Palazzo della Cancelleria (Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. no. 346). *Samson* can then be followed through subsequent Barberini inventories, though by 1631, perhaps through a mental slip, it was ascribed first to Nicolas Poussin and then, after being corrected, to Angelo Caroselli.

The reattribution to Poussin is all the more surprising as *Samson* is unquestionably one of Valentin's masterpieces, astonishing in its presentation of the hero not as some fictional strong man but as a real person, captured in an uncommon moment of reflection following the death of his betrothed and his massacre of the Philistines. With his head resting on his hand, his laurels lying beside him, and his distant gaze, he cannot help but recall emblematic figures of melancholy, underscoring the unusual mood. The artist has depicted the jawbone of an ass with the kind of scientific accuracy that would have earned the approval of the members of the Accademia dei Lincei, to which Francesco, like his secretary Cassiano dal Pozzo, belonged.

That this representation of Samson had particular resonance for the Barberini is clear from a series of details. Samson's elbow rests on the pelt of the lion that he killed bare-handed and in which he later discovered that bees had made a hive and produced honey. Bees were an emblem of the Barberini and they can be seen buzzing around the lion's pelt (they were also a subject of study at the Accademia dei Lincei; see Freedberg 2002, pp. 151–78). The hero wears a Roman-style, presumably leather cuirass attached at the shoulder by a clasp formed, again, by two golden bees. And, finally, the pose of the figure carries echoes of the great *Belvedere Torso* in the



Vatican (fig. 71), one of the most admired fragments of antiquity (the relationship to the *Belvedere Torso* seems even stronger when we realize that the figure was first painted bare-chested, without the cuirass). These references would have been completely in line with the artistic and antiquarian interests of the Barberini.

At the same time, the model for the biblical hero is clearly a real individual. But not, we can say with confidence, a hired model. Rather, the model was almost certainly the artist himself. We need only compare the face with that of the early *Saint John the Baptist* (cat. 4) to recognize the same well-defined, broad brow, the characteristic nose, sensual lips, and mustache and goatee. With the *Saint John* there is the presumption that Valentin used himself as a model in part out of convenience and expediency. This is not the case here. Cardinal Francesco must have approved this inclusion, which not only gave the picture a special resonance but suggests a particular esteem for the artist, whose *Allegory of Italy* (cat. 43) and altarpiece for Saint Peter's (cat. 48) had put him at the very center of the Roman art scene.

Here, it must have seemed, was a work that could rival on its own terms the Giustiniani's celebrated painting by Caravaggio of his young companion, model, and lover, Cecco del Caravaggio, in the guise of an insouciant Cupid presiding over the emblems of high culture. As with the *Samson*, that work had undercut the fiction of history painting through the representation of a recognizable person. It was a dynamic that must have been widely appreciated, to judge from the report of a visitor to the Giustiniani collection at mid-century (see Papi 2001, pp. 10–11). We might well wonder whether the melancholic mood in Valentin's picture was not understood by Cardinal Francesco as an autobiographical characterization. Humphrey Wine (2001, p. 395) has suggested that the same figure appears as the lute player in the *Four Ages of Man* (cat. 34).

In no other work is Valentin so evidently attentive to the legacy of Venetian painting, with a brilliance of color and fluid brushwork found also in Poussin's work of this date. It was this moment of Valentin's production that was so important to Velázquez during his time in Rome, though he had left for Spain before the picture was completed. The painting surely discredits any notion that in his last pictures Valentin had entered a phase of disengagement (this much-repeated idea derives from his understandable reluctance to paint a large medley of a kind of picture he had moved beyond: a gypsy-concert for Fabrizio Valguarnera [see cat. 50].



Fig. 71. *Belvedere Torso*. Roman, 2nd century A.D., after a Greek original. Marble, H. 62 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (159 cm). Museo Pio-Clementino, Vatican (cat. 1192)

Once again, Valentin rethinks a conventional subject and offers an image that resonates on multiple levels. Perhaps the closest analogy for this depiction of the biblical hero lost in meditation occurs in Milton's dramatic poem *Samson Agonistes* (lms. 19–22), in which the poet imagines the Hebrew hero reflecting on his blinded state (Milton, of course, also was blind) following his affair with his lover, Delilah: "From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm / Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone / But rush upon me thronging, and present / Times past, what once I was, and what am now." Milton may actually have seen Valentin's painting during his visit to Rome in 1639, when he attended an opera in Palazzo Barberini.

In 2015, the picture was sensitively cleaned, much enhancing its astonishing qualities. A reading of the infrared image—for which I thank Marcia Steele—has revealed in the head Valentin's typically bold brush drawing, which is complemented by, in the right hand, a more delicate and continuous contour underdrawing—not to be confused with the sharpening on the surface of the contours around the fingers in shadow. The underdrawing, which is very fine, describes the back of the hand, the knuckles, and little finger, the position of which was slightly altered and broadened. Were these drawings for positioning the various details before Valentin posed himself before a mirror? The head was initially placed more to the left, and the left shoulder and right arm were also positioned lower and to the left. Remarkably, the torso was originally painted nude, with the cuirass painted over it in costly ultramarine. KC

Provenance: Cardinal Francesco Barberini, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (1631–33; inv. 1626–31, no. 482, as Nicolas Poussin; inv. 1631–36, no. 482); Francesco Barberini, Palazzo della Cancelleria, Rome (1633–79; inv. 1649, no. 676, as Valentin); the Barberini Collection, Palazzo Barberini, Rome (1679–1812); by inheritance, Maffeo Barberini Colonna di Sciarra, Palazzo Colonna, Rome (1812–49); Colonna di Sciarra, Palazzo Colonna, Rome (1849–99; sale, Galleria Sangiorgi, Palazzo Borghese, Rome, March 22–28, 1899, no. 363, as Angelo Caroselli); Eduardo Almagia, Rome (1899–1921); by descent to his grandson Eduardo Almagia (until 1972); The Cleveland Museum of Art

Selected References: von Ramdohr 1787, vol. 2, p. 285; Spear 1971, p. 184, no. 72; Spear 1972, p. 32, no. 14; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 88, 123, 126, 168, 244 (French ed., pp. 90, 125, 128, 174, 252); Cuzin 1975, p. 59; Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. nos. 345, 346, p. 98, no. 482 (inv. 1626–31), p. 114, no. 482 (inv. 1631–36), p. 242, no. 676 (inv. 1649); Nicolson 1979, p. 104; Rosenberg 1982a, pp. 329–30, no. 110; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 166, no. 56; Nicolson 1989, p. 200; Wine 2001, p. 395; Fried 2010, p. 175; Melasecchi 2010, p. 741; Fried 2011, pp. 118–19; Fried 2016, pp. 42–44, 80, 106–7, 187

50. A Musical Company with a Fortune-Teller, 1631

74³/₄ x 104³/₈ in. (190 x 265 cm)

Liechtenstein, The Princely Collections, Vaduz and Vienna
New York only

This is, by a considerable margin, the largest, most complex, and also the latest of all of Valentin's scenes of music making, gambling, and fortune-telling (what contemporaries referred to as a *zingara*, or gypsy-piece). Yet most modern critics have found its ambitious but episodic composition both disconnected and perplexing and have felt ambivalent about its success. Thus: "We have to do with a painting done on commission . . . in which the painter, a bit halfheartedly . . . brings together a somewhat heterogeneous crowd of musicians, drinkers, soldiers, and bohemians that constitute a veritable summary of his usual profane themes. . . . Valentin is usually more somber and does not so disperse the centers of interest" (Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 178). Or: "Because of its atomization of gestures and attitudes and its extensive recourse to commonplace narrative situations, the Liechtenstein painting is a courageous, honest, and even provocative manifesto, the ne plus ultra of pictorial comedy as inaugurated by Caravaggio and developed by his followers, and therefore a bold declaration of creative exhaustion without nuances or pretensions, justifications or hesitations" (Pericolo 2011, p. 557).

Remarkably, this puzzling picture is the one concert-gypsy scene that can be documented in detail. The man who commissioned it was a Sicilian nobleman-turned-diamond thief, Fabrizio Valguarnera: a self-confessed art lover who used his expertise to trade his stolen goods for works of art (see Costello 1950). Arrested by the Roman police on Saturday, July 12, 1631, he was imprisoned and put on trial. The testimony of the various

picture merchants and artists with whom he had dealings—among the painters were Giovanni Lanfranco, Alessandro Turchi, and Nicolas Poussin—offers a unique insight into the art world of Rome, in which paintings were valuable assets as well as indicators of cultural sophistication. From Valentin's testimony, which took place on July 30, it emerges that Valguarnera had approached the artist in the street some months earlier and asked him to make "a large painting with people, in which would appear a gypsy, soldiers and other women playing musical instruments. And because I did not feel like working, I deferred, and finally, the following Lent, he came to my house one day and begged me again to make this painting, and I decided to make it and demanded one hundred scudi, and he, finding that too much, finally settled on eighty scudi, and thus I prepared the canvas and began to work, which I finished and delivered for Pentecost, since he daily urged me to finish it . . ." (Costello 1950, p. 278). Valentin insisted on payment in cash, unlike Lanfranco, who received, in addition to cash, a small diamond and ultramarine for his work.

The Tuesday after Pentecost, Valentin's painting was exhibited publicly at an annual celebration held at the church of Santa Maria di Costantinopoli together with eleven other pictures by or after outstanding painters, including Guercino's magnificent *Death of Dido* (Galleria Spada, Rome) and Poussin's *Plague of Ashod* (Musée du Louvre). The festival exhibition was the obvious reason for the pressure Valguarnera exerted on Valentin to finish the work by Pentecost,

and it points out the esteem for Valentin's work. In the inventory of paintings in Valguarnera's possession that was drawn up by officials on July 12, we find the picture described simply as "another big [picture] of a gypsy scene" ("una Zingara"; see Costello 1950, p. 272).

A possible complication for identifying the Liechtenstein picture with the one Valguarnera commissioned is posed by the description of the work written forty years later by the German painter-biographer Joachim von Sandrart, who knew Valentin and who painted one of the works displayed at Santa Maria di Costantinopoli. He records Valentin's painting as representing "the Five Senses in a room at a table in the form of a friendly party. Some eat and drink, others play chess, checkers, and cards; some examine coins, enjoy the smell of flowers, blow on flutes, and strum lutes. Finally, some beat one another and argue" (von Sandrart 1675, *Lebenslauf und Kunst-Werke*, p. 10; English trans., Pericolo 2011, p. 541). The discrepancies between Sandrart's description and the picture that has come down to us have been much discussed in the literature and are best resolved by admitting that when he wrote these lines—more than forty years after the fact—his memory had conflated a number of pictures and perhaps interpolated some incidents characteristic of more conventional images of the senses. His faulty memory is indicated by the fact that he does not mention the presence of a gypsy, which, to judge both from Valentin's testimony and from the Valguarnera inventory, was a principal feature of the composition.

That said, Sandrart was not alone in thinking that the picture had as a subtext the Five Senses, for in 1696 we find the painting—then in the collection of William III of Orange—again described as showing the Five Senses ("een stuck van Valentin, de vijf sinnen"; see Drossaers and Lunsingh Scheurleer 1974, p. 481). Thereafter, this is the title by which it was known (though when it was sold in 1713 it was attributed to Bartolomeo Manfredi). What is clear, then, is that for many contemporaries, the picture appeared to be more than a mixed company of musicians, soldiers, and a gypsy fortune-teller involved in unrelated activities—including the brawl among three figures in the upper right.

At the left are four musicians gathered around a table covered with an Anatolian carpet. Dylan Sauerwald has kindly noted for me that "there is a bass violin, a theorbo (or chitarrone), a virginal, and what appears to be a tenor violin on the far left, and as many as three people are singing. This is a madrigal with two or three

voices, rather than the traditional five, something characteristic of a late book of Frescobaldi or Monteverdi, or the work of a young, forward-looking composer." This musical company is suggestive of a chamber ensemble rather than the haphazard music of the tavern or streets.

Music as an emblem of harmony would seem to be the theme, and this idea is supported by the fighting figures at the opposite side of the composition, who clearly signify discord. From the outset, then, we must be dealing with an allegory rather than a simple musical scene; the compositional disconnectedness that critics have lamented is the key to its emblematic meaning(s). The changes of site within the picture—from the carpeted table of a palace interior to the stone fragment of a street scene—underscore the need to read it in a more open way, attending to the shifts and contrasts. Those anachronistic juxtapositions that have troubled modern viewers were apparently understood by the *conoscenti* of the seventeenth century as visual cues.

Immediately next to the musical party gathered around the elegantly dressed woman, a soldier of fortune has his palm read by a gypsy accompanied by her daughter, who, we know from other gypsy pictures, has the task of fleecing the customer (she carries a basket with a brazier, just as her counterpart does in the early painting in Toledo; cat. 15). Seen between these two figures is a well-dressed youth, his head resting pensively on his arm, lost in thought. No less incongruously, next to him is another soldier of fortune pouring himself a glass of wine. At the very least, Valentin's composition seems to embrace the spectrum of society of seventeenth-century Rome—both high and low. What about the reading of the picture as showing the Five Senses?

It is not difficult to understand the musicians as embodying both harmony and the delights of the sense of hearing. Equally, the man pouring himself a glass of wine is easily identified with the sense of taste. Sight would be signified by the dreamy gaze of the youth, while the gypsy fortune-teller reading a palm could equally stand in for touch—as, indeed, could the brawlers. And smell? This would seem to be suggested by the dog who has poked his head into the scene, sniffing—a unique presence in Valentin's paintings. That these are not the common signifiers for the Five Senses is perhaps less important than the fact that seventeenth-century viewers evidently read them as such.

Throughout his career, Valentin preferred oblique to direct statements of a theme: a poetic approach that





invited the viewer to infer meaning. But in this work he attempted something more: to invite multiple, emblematic meanings that in juxtaposing various classes of people had, as well, social implications. This—or so it seems to this writer—constitutes the uniqueness of the Liechtenstein painting. If it lacks the unity and focus of the great *Concert with Eight Figures* in the Louvre (cat. 42) of only a few years earlier, this is because it aspires to something else. It is true that Valentin seems from his testimony to have undertaken the commission from Valguarnera reluctantly. Is this surprising? After all, by 1631 he had acquired a reputation as a painter of serious subjects and had behind him the success of his altarpiece in Saint Peter's (cat. 48)—another work in which we find an episodic approach to the subject.

Thus, if at first glance the picture may seem to be a mere recycling of earlier motifs—a kind of medley of his greatest hits—this is to misunderstand what Valentin is doing. For behind the aesthetic and compositional defects (if that is what they are), there lies an ambition that was doubtless fired by Valentin's knowledge that his picture would be shown alongside works by the most prominent painters of the day. He was asked to paint something on a large scale of a kind he had treated before, and his response was a novel attempt at a Caravaggesque allegory.

We might wonder whether, beyond the ostensible allegorical subject or theme of the senses, the various

activities he depicts were conceived as a meditation on life itself: its pleasures, amorous adventures—could anyone doubt that the young soldier of fortune is enamored of the gypsy?—its unpredictability, the brawls that fill the police records of Rome, and those fleeting moments of reflection and sense of loss. The mood of melancholy that pervades the picture is singular to Valentin, and it gives this crowded, unsettling, and even perplexing picture its particular poignancy. Little did he guess that it would possibly also be his artistic testament. KC

Provenance: Fabrizio Valguarnera, Rome (1631–32); William III of Orange-Nassau, Honslaersdijck, and, from 1696, Het Loo, Appeldorn (before 1696–1702; inv. 1713, no. 836, as Valentin; sale, Amsterdam, July 26, 1713, no. 13, but withdrawn); acquired through Jan Joost van Cossiau by Lothar Franz von Schönborn, Schloss Weißenstein, Pommersfelden (1713–29, as the *Five Senses* by Manfredi); the counts von Schönborn, Schloss Weißenstein, Pommersfelden (1729–2003); Liechtenstein, The Princely Collections, Vaduz and Vienna (from 2003)
Selected References: von Sandrart 1675, *Lebenslauf und Kunst-Werke*, p. 10; Bys 1719, no. 80 (1997 ed., p. 31); *Beschreibung des Fürstreflichen Gemähd- und Bilder-Schatzes* 1746, no. 48; von Frimmel 1894, pp. 116–17, no. 339; Longhi 1922 (pub. 1950 [1961 ed., p. 482]); Costello 1950, p. 264; Longhi 1958, p. 61; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 176, 178, no. 54 (French ed., pp. 182, 184, no. 57); Drossaers and Lunsingh Scheurleer 1974, pp. 481, 677; Cuzin 1975, pp. 59, 61, n. 26; Nicolson 1979, p. 106; Wright 1985, p. 268; Mojana 1989, p. 178, no. 64; Nicolson 1989, p. 205; Jonckheere 2004–5, pp. 173, 195; Gudrun Swoboda in *Caravaggio e l'Europa* 2005, p. 310, no. IV.11; Pericolo 2011, pp. 539–58



Chronology of the Life and Work of Valentin de Boulogne

Annick Lemoine

1591–1609?/14

Birth and Training in Coulommiers

Valentin de Boulogne was born in Coulommiers, in the heart of Brie, 60 kilometers east of Paris, on January 3, 1591 (and not 1594, as his death certificate says; see below, 1632). He was the son of Valentin de Boulogne and Jeanne de Monthyon. His godparents were Florentin de Jouy and Simon Gorlidot, and Claude, daughter of Pierre Bourgeois. Valentin was the eldest of four children, three boys and a girl. His sister, Marie, was born in 1599; his brother Jean, also a painter, in 1601, and his brother Jacques in 1603 (Dauvergne 1879, p. 206). Born into the milieu of artisans and small business owners, Valentin probably trained with his father, a painter and glazier, who died in 1618. It is not known when he left Coulommiers, or where he may have stayed prior to his arrival in Rome, including whether, perhaps, he could have spent time in Paris or Fontainebleau. Nor is there any information about the route he took to Italy.

DOC.: JANUARY 3, 1591

“Valentinus, filius Valentini de Boulongne et Johannaе ejus uxoris [Jeanne de Monthyon, as indicated on the birth certificates of her other children], fuit baptisatus, Patrini Florentinus de Jouy et Simon Roman Gordilot et matrina vero Claudia, filia Petri Bourgeois.” (Archives Départementales de Seine-et-Marne, Coulommiers, parish registers, Saint-Denys parish, Baptisms, unpaginated; Dauvergne 1879, p. 206; de Swarte 1899, p. 78)

1609?/1614–32

Roman Career

Arrival in Rome and Early Career

Patrizia Cavazzini’s discovery of an archival document mentioning a “Valentino del Bologna” allows us now to push back to May 1614 (from spring 1620) the first certain notice of Valentin’s presence in Rome (see the essay by

Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue). This new point of reference is decisive, inasmuch as it confirms the hypothesis of his early arrival in Rome—by 1614, and perhaps as early as 1609. This is in line with his compatriots Simon Vouet and Nicolas Tournier, who arrived in the Eternal City in 1613 and 1616, respectively (Solinas 1992; see the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue). It also aligns both with stylistic considerations (see cats. 4, 6 and my essay “Bowling to No One: Valentin’s Ambitions” in this catalogue) and with a cluster of indications that merit discussion here. In addition to this new document of 1614, there are archival notices dating from 1609, 1611, and 1615, in the *Stati di Anime*—the parish registers of Rome—that could possibly all refer to the same person and be linked to Valentin de Boulogne. Each indicates the presence of a certain “Valentino,” as unusual a name in Italy as it is in France and the one by which the painter was systematically known throughout his life. These documents place him around Campo Marzio, the neighborhood with the greatest concentration of artists. He is sometimes described as French, sometimes as an apprentice or painter. Unfortunately, the information furnished by Joachim von Sandrart (1675 [1925 ed., p. 256]) is of limited use and can lead to confusion, as he clearly says that Valentin arrived in Rome before Simon Vouet, and then contradicts himself by stating that Vouet’s move to Rome coincided with the accession of Urban VIII to the pontificate, which is to say, the summer of 1623, ten years after Vouet’s actual arrival in 1613. The evidence that Valentin’s stay in Rome began with certainty in the mid-1610s and possibly earlier allows us to better understand the painter’s first phase and his debt to Cecco del Caravaggio (Francesco Boneri, or Buoneri; Italian, ca. 1588/89–after 1620) and especially to Jusepe de Ribera (active in Rome between 1606 and 1616). Valentin’s first works thus attest to a near-immediate response to these masters’ inventions rather than to a meditation on them after a delay of several years.

FIRST POSSIBLE REFERENCE TO VALENTIN: SPRING 1609
A “Valentino garzone pittore” is listed at the home of the Florentine painter Pietro Veri, Sant’Andrea delle Fratte parish, via Gregoriana. The detail of the street appears in the records for prior and subsequent years (Archivio Storico del Vicariato di Roma [hereafter ASVR], Sant’Andrea delle Fratte, Stati di Anime, 1609, fol. 140r; Vodret 2011a, p. 70; Vodret 2011b, p. 519). At that date, Valentin was eighteen years old and might still have been in training (Pomponi 2011, p. 133). Pietro Veri, listed consistently as residing on via Gregoriana from 1598 to 1611, regularly employed an assistant: by turns, a Marco, a Vincenzo, Cherubino Puliti da Montefiascone, Rinaldo da Correggio, and “Valentino garzone pittore.”

SECOND POSSIBLE REFERENCE: SPRING 1611
Rinaldo da Correggio has replaced “Valentino garzone pittore” in Pietro Veri’s studio. A “Valentino francese” is now listed with the painter Polidoro, at San Nicola dei Prefetti parish, near the Mausoleum of Augustus (ASVR, San Nicola dei Prefetti, Stati di Anime, 1611, fol. 54r; Bousquet 1978, p. 107).

FIRST CERTAIN REFERENCE: MAY 2, 1614
A complaint lodged and then withdrawn by a Frenchman, “Nicolas Natalis” (Nicolas Noël), against the Frenchman Valentin de Boulogne (“Valentino del Bologna Gallo”) constitutes our first certain proof of the painter’s presence in Rome (see the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue for the transcription of the document).

THIRD POSSIBLE REFERENCE: SPRING 1615
A year later, a “Valentino francese pittore” is listed among the many residents of an apartment on via di Ripetta, in the parish of San Lorenzo in Lucina (ASVR, San Lorenzo in Lucina, Stati di Anime, 1615, fol. 82r; Vodret 2011a, p. 71; Vodret 2011b, p. 519). Once again, the correlation between the unusual given name, the occupation of painter, and his French nationality allows a possible identification with Valentin de Boulogne.

Another hypothesis has also been put forward: a “Monsù da Colombiera” is listed the same year at the inn of Stefano Crivelli, on via Ferratina (now Frattina) in the parish of San Lorenzo in Lucina. “Colombiera” could be a reference to Valentin’s native city of Coulommiers, which Sandrart, in his life of the Brie painter, cites as “Colombe” (von Sandrart 1675 [1925 ed., p. 256]). However, the artist was consistently referred to by his given name, sometimes followed by “Bologna,” “Bologni,” or “Bolon,” never by his native city. Furthermore, Monsieur

de “Colombiera” is listed with no mention of his profession and alongside other foreign travelers such as a “Monsù di balena,” mentioned after him and accompanied by a servant (ASVR, San Lorenzo in Lucina, Stati di Anime, 1615, fol. 44r; Danesi Squarzina 2006, p. 251, n. 42; Ierrobino 2010, pp. 199, 204, nn. 2, 3).

1620–26: A Community of Northern Artists

From 1620 until his death in 1632, Valentin de Boulogne is listed by name in the parish of Santa Maria del Popolo, in a narrow street leading from via del Babuino to via Margutta (with the exception of 1621 and 1629, when his name has not been found in the parish registers, which are incomplete for those years). His French nationality, his name, and his occupation as painter are now regularly cited. He appears either as “Valentino Bologni francese” (in 1620) or “Bolon” (in 1621), or “Valentino de Bologna” (in 1626).

By 1620, he was closely associated with the community of northerners. He lodged with the Liège painter Gérard Douffet (in 1620 and 1622), with another Walloon, Timoteo Oto, or Otto (in 1620 and 1622), and with the Lorraine sculptor David de La Riche (in 1620, 1622, 1624, and 1625). He seems to have been closest to de La Riche: they lodged together from 1620 to 1626, the year of the sculptor’s death. In 1626, the two artists are cited not only as roommates but as “associates and partners” (on the death of de La Riche, see Archivio di Stato di Roma [hereafter ASR], Trenta Notai Capitolini [hereafter TNC], uff. 19, March 18, 1626, fols. 490–95; Lorizzo 2010a, p. 375, n. 3; Cavazzini 2011b, pp. 145, 149, n. 47; and the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue). This description might indicate a shared commission by the painter and the sculptor, such as the decoration of a chapel. Upon the sculptor’s death, Valentin arranged for his companion’s funeral and, lacking the necessary resources, was forced to sell the deceased’s clothing to cover the costs. In the document he is described as the associate and roommate of the deceased David (“Valentini de Bonomia Galli pictoris dicti quondam David socii e cubicularii in detta camera”). The document relating to the sale gives insight into Valentin’s artistic circle, which included the painter Nicolas Tournier, who is known to have resided with de La Riche and Douffet in 1619. From this information we may conclude that in 1626 Valentin was still living under extraordinarily modest circumstances: a single room shared with the penniless sculptor David de La Riche.

Valentin and his northern colleagues are also recorded in the Stati di Anime:

Spring 1620, in the parish of Santa Maria del Popolo (“Vicolo attaccato al Babuino / A mano destra verso Margutta”) the following painters are listed: Gerardo Dolfè fiamengo, David Lariche lorinese, Valentino Bologni francese, Timoteo Vallone (ASVR, Santa Maria del Popolo, Stati di Anime, 1620, fol. 7r; Bousquet 1978, p. 106; Bousquet 1980, pp. 214–15; Vodret 2011b, p. 519)

February 1622, in the parish of Santa Maria del Popolo (“Vicolo attaccato al Babuino A mano destra per andare a Strada Margutta”) the same list of painters reappears, with the note that they all received communion: Timoteo oto Fiamengo, Gerardo Do Fetto Fiamengo, Valentino Bolon Francese, David Lariche Lorinese (ASVR, Santa Maria del Popolo, Stati di Anime, 1622, fol. 7r; Bousquet 1978, p. 106; Bousquet 1980, pp. 214–15; Vodret 2011b, p. 519)

Spring 1624, in the parish of Santa Maria del Popolo (“Vicolo attaccato al Babuino / A mano destra per a.dare a strada Margutta”) we again find: David di Lorena scultore, Valentino Pittore francese (ASVR, Santa Maria del Popolo, Stati di Anime, 1624, fol. 17r; Bousquet 1978, p. 108; Bousquet 1980, pp. 214–15; Vodret 2011b, p. 519)

For the other notices of Valentin, see ASVR, Santa Maria del Popolo, Stati di Anime, 1623, unnumbered fol., 1625, fol. 15v, 1626, fol. 11r; Bousquet 1978, pp. 107–8; Bousquet 1980, pp. 214–15; Vodret 2011b, p. 519.

Social and Professional Relationships

From the early 1620s the first evidence of the painter’s insertion into a social and professional community, once again dominated by his northern network and French connections.

1624: he joins the Bentvueghels. Since he lived with artists from Flanders and Lorraine from 1620 to 1625, it is not surprising that Valentin should appear in 1624 among the young company of the Bentvueghels, an association of northern artists founded in Rome about 1617–20. There Valentin would have met with his companions from via Margutta, such as Gérard Douffet, and, a few years later, his friend Joachim von Sandrart. As was customary, an evocative nickname was bestowed on Valentin: “Amador” (lover boy) (Hoogewerff 1952, p. 145).

September 29, 1626: *festarolo* for the Accademia di San Luca. Valentin achieved recognition within an art institution when he joined the famous Accademia di

San Luca two years after his illustrious compatriot Simon Vouet became its president. Valentin performed the duties of *festarolo*, organizing the academy’s annual celebration on October 18 in honor of its patron saint. He shared that responsibility with another Frenchman, Nicolas Poussin. Valentin is mentioned on September 29 during a session that attracted various French artists, including Jean and Jacques Lhomme, Claude Mellan, Trophime Bigot, and Ricard Bissonet (ASR, TNC, uff. 15, vol. 109, September 29, 1626, fols. 501, 514; de La Blanchardière 1972, pp. 86, 93).

Valentin’s First Admirers

February 27, 1624: a *Soldier’s Head* by Valentin (“Un altro ritratto d’una testa d’un soldato mano di Valentino”) is cited in the inventory of Costanzo Patrizi, papal treasurer (“Tesoriere pontificio della Camera Apostolica”), among two hundred paintings—including a *Supper at Emmaus* by Caravaggio—left to his heir Francesco Patrizi (ASR, TNC, uff. 2, vol. 92, February 27, 1624, fol. 382v; Giammaria 2009, p. 414). At the time, the canvas, appraised at 20 scudi, adorned the gallery in Palazzo Patrizi-Costaguti on Piazza Mattei, with its ceiling frescoes by Domenichino and Guercino. This is the first known mention of a work by the painter.

1624–26: between these dates Valentin painted a monumental *Last Supper* (cat. 26) for Asdrubale Mattei as part of a project to decorate the gallery of Palazzo Mattei di Giove that involved various renowned artists, including Pietro da Cortona and Giovanni Serodine. The canvas is cited in an inventory drawn up in 1631 (“La Cena di Nro Sig.re del Valentino”; Recanati, Archivio Antici Mattei, mazzo 90, fol. 95v; Cappelletti and Testa 1994, pp. 68–69, 132–33, no. 29, p. 195, no. 255).

1627–32: Glory Days

The mystery shrouding the life of Valentin ends in early 1627, five years before his death, when he received a series of identifiable commissions from eminent personalities of the Barberini circle, foremost among them his principal patron, Cardinal Francesco Barberini, the nephew of Pope Urban VIII. Upon Valentin’s death in 1632, he is cited as the cardinal’s “painter in ordinary” (see below, October 30, 1632). His rising fortunes culminated in two remarkable commissions at the instigation of the cardinal-nephew: an *Allegory of Italy* for the family palace (1628–29; cat. 43) and, the following year, an altarpiece for Saint Peter’s, *Martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian* (cat. 48).

As a sign of his new affluence, in 1627 Valentin hired a servant, who is specifically listed at his residence, still located in the parish of Santa Maria del Popolo, between via del Babuino and via Margutta. Valentin no longer shared lodgings; he was now accompanied only by his servant: Giovanni, in 1627, 1628, and 1630; a Frenchman named Hervé (“Ervè”), in 1629; and Carlo, in 1632 (ASVR, Santa Maria del Popolo, Stati di Anime, 1627, fol. 11v, 1628, fol. 16r, 1629, fol. 17r, 1630, fol. 19v, 1631, unnumbered, residence no. 182, 1632, unnumbered, residence no. 183; Bousquet 1978, p. 109; Bousquet 1980, pp. 214–15; Vodret 2011b, p. 519).

A Proliferation of Commissions

1627

May 27, 1627: Ascanio Filomarino paid 15 scudi to “Monsù Valentino Francese Pittore” for a depiction of Saint Jerome (*ritratto di un S. Girolamo*) listed in the Filomarino inventory of 1685, and probably identifiable with a painting now in the Davis Museum, Wellesley College (fig. 67) (ASR, Monte di Pietà, Libro Mastro, no. 52, 1627, fol. 847; Loricchio 2006, pp. 34, 117, doc. no. 9).

June 1627: Ascanio Filomarino, then Cardinal Francesco Barberini’s *maestro di camera* (chamberlain), paid 15 scudi for a *David* by Valentin. The painting, showing David with the head of Goliath (sale, Sotheby’s, New York, May 26, 2016, no. 64), is cited in January 1633 in the cardinal’s inventory, among the works in Palazzo della Cancelleria (“Un quadro di David che tiene la testa del Gigante Golia opera di Monsù Valentin”; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana [hereafter BAV], Archivio Barberini, Mastro di Casa, 1626–31, fol. 21v, and Alfabeto di Entrate et Uscite della Guardarobba, 1632–35, fol. 60v; Lavin 1975, pp. 42, 43, doc. nos. 342, 346).

July 27, 1627: Ascanio Filomarino, *maestro di camera* to Francesco Barberini before being made cardinal, made a final payment of 5 scudi to Valentin for a *Crowning with Thorns*, measuring 8 *palmi* (about 178.7 cm). It is subsequently listed in the Filomarino inventory of 1685 (ASR, Monte di Pietà, Libro Mastro, no. 52, 1627, fol. 847; Loricchio 2006, pp. 34, 117, doc. no. 9).

August 1627: Cassiano dal Pozzo, in the presence of Ascanio Filomarino, paid Valentin 18 scudi for a picture he was painting for Cardinal Francesco Barberini (BAV, Archivio Barberini, Mastro di Casa, 1626–31, fol. 27v; Lavin 1975, p. 42, doc. no. 342; Loricchio 2006, p. 51, n. 12).

August 11, 1627: a *Denial of Saint Peter*, identifiable with cat. 14, is listed in the inventory of the art lover Giovanni Battista Mellini, bequeathed upon his death to his uncle Cardinal Giovanni Garzia. The painting is recorded in his villa in Monte Mario (the “sala di sopra della fabrica nova”; ASR, TNC, uff. 31, vol. 118, August 11, 1627, fol. 787; Nicolai 2012, p. 222, n. 19, p. 233). It could have been either acquired or commissioned directly from the painter by Mellini.

October 24, 1627: Cardinal Angelo Giori paid 25 scudi to the dealer Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata, who acted as middleman, for a *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* by “Monsù Valentino Pittore” (“una samaritana fatta per servitio di detto Monsignore”; ASR, Monte di Pietà, Libro Mastro, no. 52, 1627, fol. 1197; Ierrobino 2010, pp. 202, 206, n. 50). This is possibly the *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* in a private collection (fig. 4), in which case Giori, as a close member of the Barberini circle, would have given the painting to the Barberini family in gratitude for the distinctions received.

November 20, 1627–September 14, 1628: the Barberini ledgers indicate a series of payments for a total of 100 scudi to Valentin for a *Beheading of John the Baptist* (“un quadro della decollatione di San Giovanbattà in figure grandi fatto per n’ro serv.o . . . [Cardinal Francesco Barberini]”; BAV, Archivio Barberini, Libro Mastro A, 1623–29, fols. 189, 192, and Computisteria Barberini, Giornale, 1624–28, fols. 183r–v, kindly pointed out by Patrizia Cavazzini; Lavin 1975, p. 42, doc. no. 341; Cacciaglia 2014, doc. no. 45). In the inventory of the collection of Francesco Barberini compiled between 1626 and 1631, the work is described in Palazzo Barberini in an addition compiled in March 1629 as a large work measuring 12 $\frac{1}{3}$ x 12 *palmi* (about 275 x 268 cm) with lifesize figures illustrating the beheading of Saint John the Baptist (“Un quadro grande alto p.mi 12 $\frac{1}{3}$ e large p.mi 12; senza cornice, con San Gio Batta quando li tagliano la testa, con diverse figure al naturale, e prigionie, che stanno a vedere, fatto p Roviano da Monsù Valentino”; BAV, Archivio Barberini, inventory of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, 1626–31, fol. 94r; Orbaan 1920, p. 505; Lavin 1975, p. 92, no. 395). The painting, now lost, seems to have been for the city of Roviano, the property of the Barberinis, no doubt to decorate the church of San Giovanni Battista Decollato. In 1642, however, Giovanni Baglione states that it was to be seen in Palazzo della Cancelleria in Rome’s Campo dei Fiori, where Cardinal Francesco Barberini lived (Baglione 1642,

p. 337). The canvas might also be identifiable with one described in the Sciarra collection in Rome in 1854; in 1812 Maffeo Barberini Colonna di Sciarra was assigned various Barberini pictures (de Chennevières 1894).

1628

June 21, 1628: Valentin received a payment of 20 scudi from the Barberini treasury for a portrait (“un ritratto fatto da lui al natural per n’ro servito”; BAV, Archivio Barberini, Libro Mastro A, 1623–29, fol. 211; Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. no. 343; see also BAV, Archivio Barberini, Libro di Ricordi della Guardaroba C, 1633–35; Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. no. 347). Undoubtedly it is the portrait of Cardinal Francesco Barberini mentioned in an inventory of December 1631 (“un quadro, con il ritratto del l’Eminentissimo signor cardinal padrone—già fatto da monsù Valentino—che tiene un fazzoletto in mano”) and described more precisely in the circa 1680 inventory of the property of Prince Maffeo Barberini as showing the cardinal seated in a red chair with a book of prayers in one hand, a handkerchief in the other, and a crucifix on a table, measuring about 223 x 134 cm (“un Ritratto del S.re Card.l Barberini a Sedere ad una Sedia Rossa con un Offitiolo ad una mano e dall’altra il fazzoletto con un Crocefisso Sopra il Tavolino alto p.mi 10 e largo 6 Incirca”; BAV, Archivio Barberini, inventory of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, 1631–36, fol. 67, and inventory of Prince Maffeo Barberini, after 1672, sec. R, p. 10; Lavin 1975, p. 115, no. 499, and p. 383, no. 497). This portrait can be linked to a blocked-in portrait of Cardinal Barberini visible in X-radiographs beneath the *Crowning with Thorns* now in Munich (cat. 37).

August 31, 1628–March 30, 1629: Valentin received 113 scudi for an imposing *Allegory of Italy*, commissioned by Cardinal Francesco Barberini (cat. 43). Several payments followed between August 1628 and March 1629, through the intermediary of Bartolomeo Passerini and Marcello Sacchetti. The work is recorded the following month, on April 20, 1629, in the inventory of the cardinal’s paintings in Palazzo Barberini. Most likely, the picture was taken by the cardinal to the Palazzo della Cancelleria when he became papal vice chancellor in 1632. In 1649, it is listed in the gallery of Palazzo della Cancelleria (BAV, Archivio Barberini, Libro Mastro A, 1623–29, fols. 192, 211, and inventory of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, 1626–31, fol. 94r; Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. nos. 343, 344, and p. 92, no. 396).

1629

April 26, 1629: Cardinal Angelo Giori acquired a *Saint John the Baptist* and a *Saint Jerome* (cats. 45, 46) from Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata for 32 scudi (ASR, Monte di Pietà, Libro Mastro, no. 55, 1629, fol. 212; Ierrobino 2010, pp. 201, 206, n. 44). Cardinal Giori, who was from the Marches, desired to have these two works for the church of Santa Maria in Via, built on his orders in Camerino, where he would be buried (Corradini 1977, p. 94).

May 9, 1629: Through Cardinal Francesco Barberini, “Valentino de Bononia Pictori” received a prestigious commission for an altarpiece in Saint Peter’s, first entrusted to Francesco Albani, representing the martyrdom of Saints Processus and Martinian. Intended to decorate the altar of the chapel “in contro al Choro,” where the relics of the saints were kept (cat. 48; Rice 1997, pp. 148, 302), the painting was completed the same year and installed in 1630. In all, Valentin was paid the substantial sum of 350 scudi, disbursed in installments between June 1629 and April 1630 (Rice 1997, pp. 232–38, no. 11, pp. 310–11, doc. no. 22, P. 2168–71).

1630

December 1630–July 1631: Valentin was paid an initial sum to paint a *Samson* for Cardinal Francesco Barberini (cat. 49). The balance was delivered in July 1631 (25 scudi, plus 5 scudi for the canvas and paints; BAV, Archivio Barberini, Mastro di Casa, 1626–31, fol. 136v, and Giustificazione, 1501–1750, no. 1508; Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. no. 345). The canvas is cited in the cardinal’s inventory, compiled in January 1633, as a pendant to the *David* painted by Valentin three years earlier, in 1627 (see above). In 1633 the two paintings were sent to Palazzo della Cancelleria (BAV, Archivio Barberini, Alfabetta di Entrate et Uscite della Guardarobba, 1632–35, fol. 60v; Lavin 1975, p. 43, doc. no. 346).

1631

July 30, 1631: Valentin’s deposition in a legal action against the Sicilian nobleman Fabrizio Valguarnera, who was accused of having purchased a number of paintings with stolen diamonds, including two by Valentin. The painter, described as “Valentinus Bologna fli. Quondam Valentini Gallus,” declared he was a painter who had lived on “strada Margutta” for several years, and he signed his deposition “Valentino de Bologna.” He related that he received from the noble Sicilian a commission for a large painting with several

figures, including a gypsy woman, soldiers, and female musicians (“con gente, dove intervenissero una Zingara, soldati et altre donne che sonassero instrumenti”) (cat. 50). After at first declining the commission, in early February he agreed, finishing the canvas in less than four months, in time for Pentecost (“Pasqua rosata”). He was paid 80 scudi, not in precious stones but in coins (he had initially asked for 100 scudi). Valguarnera testified on July 21 that in early May 1631, he had acquired from “Monsù Valentino Pittore,” a large “gypsy picture” (“un quadro grande d’una Zingara”) for 100 scudi total (and not 80 scudi), paid in cash (ASR, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Processi, July 1631, vol. 265 bis, fols. 1158r [statement of Valguarnera], 1180r [statement of Valentin]; Costello 1950, pp. 272–79).

Valguarnera’s statement indicates that, along with a *King Midas* by Poussin and a copy of a Bacchanale, he acquired from Giovanni Stefano Roccatagliata a *Judgment of Solomon* by Valentin (“un giudizio di Salomone di mano di Valentino”). This painting can be identified as the composition that Valentin declared he had retouched for 6 scudi at the Sicilian’s request. The paintings were at Roccatagliata’s residence in via Ferratina (now Frattina), not far from Valentin’s home (ASR, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Processi, July 1631, vol. 265 bis, fols. 1158r, 1175; Costello 1950, pp. 272–79; Ierrobino 2010, p. 207, n. 72). Fabrizio Valguarnera died on January 2, 1632, during the course of the trial.

1632

July 7, 1632: “Valentino da Bologna pittore francese” received 10 scudi from Ascanio Filomarino for painting a portrait of his brother Scipione (ASR, Monte di Pietà, Libro Mastro, no. 61, 1632, fol. 76; Lorizzo 2006, pp. 34, 120, doc. no. 14, p. 143, n. 1). In addition to the two documented paintings (see above, 1627), the inventory of Filomarino’s property, compiled in 1685, lists five other paintings by Valentin, including a *Sacrifice of Isaac* (7 x 5 palmi; probably cat. 44) (Lorizzo 2001, p. 405 and n. 20).

Tragic End

August 1632: Valentin died an agonizing death at the age of forty-one, as recorded in the parish register of Santa Maria del Popolo on the twentieth of the month. His funeral was held at the church of Santa Maria del Popolo.

The (erroneous) indication of his age, thirty-eight years, has been the source of confusion regarding the date of his birth, recorded as 1594, three years later than his actual birth date (see above, 1591). He is referred to as a famous painter:

MENSIS AUGUSTI 1632

Anno et mense ut supra die vero 20 sepultus fuit in nostras ecclesia Monsu Valentinus gallus e Bollognia ex provincia Brie, Pictor famosus etatis sue annorum 38 habuit omnia sacramenta habitabat in via Margutta. (ASVR, Santa Maria del Popolo, Liber Mortuorum, V; Longhi 1958, p. 59)

Giovanni Baglione (1642, p. 338) and Joachim von Sandrart (1675 [1925 ed., p. 256]), both of whom knew the artist, narrated the circumstances of Valentin’s death. According to Baglione, Valentin’s tumultuous life and abuse of alcohol and tobacco led to his demise: after returning from a raucous party one summer night, Valentin “threw” himself into the Fontana del Babuino. “There he met his death,” having contracted a “fever . . . so virulent that within a few days he was overcome by the chills of a merciless death.” Sandrart describes in much more neutral terms the “violent fever” that took the painter’s life in less than a week, after he cooled himself in the ice-cold water of a fountain “during the extreme heat of the month of August.” Sandrart makes no mention of his fellow artist’s debauchery but rather emphasizes the “friends and loved ones” he called to his bedside to bid farewell.

Although famous (“pictor famosus”), Valentin, according to Baglione, did not leave behind sufficient funds for his funeral. The biographer adds that in an act of “devotion and courtly manners” the illustrious Cassiano dal Pozzo—whose portrait Valentin had painted (in 1689 it is cited in the collection of Queen Christina of Sweden [Campori 1870, p. 363])—saw to the costs. Sandrart mentions a “splendid funeral” attended by “almost all the most remarkable people.” A payment recorded in the Barberini ledger and dated October 30, 1632, confirms and complements the accounts given by Baglione and Sandrart. It mentions the painter’s illness and reveals that Cassiano dal Pozzo was not the only art lover to honor the painter at the time of his death. Cardinal Francesco Barberini also paid some of the costs for the dying man’s care. Even more important, the document identifies Valentin as the cardinal’s painter in ordinary (“pittore d’ordine di Sua Eccellenza”)

October 30, 1632: Francesco Barberini reimbursed Giovanni Battista Fatio 12.5 scudi for the costs occasioned by the treatment and death of “Monseigneur Valentin. Pittore d’ord.e di S. E.” (BAV, Archivio Barberini, Computisteria, vol. 64, fol. 55; Mazzetti di Pietralata 2007, pp. 408, 410, n. 49).

September 15, 1632: A letter written in Rome by the painter Pierre Lemaire (1612–1688) to the editor and

dealer François Langlois (1588–1647) remarked upon the sudden death of Valentin, his renown, and on the craze for his works that immediately followed: “We have lost Monseigneur Valentin; he died about two weeks or a month ago. You can’t find any paintings by him, or, if you do find them, you have to pay four times what they had cost; time will do the same with the others” (Mariette 1851–60, vol. 5 [1859], p. 358).

Notes to the Essays

Bowing to No One: Valentin's Ambitions

For their generous advice, I thank Patrizia Cavazzini, Keith Christiansen, Antonella Fenech Kroke, Anne Piéjus, Daniel Roger, and Mickaël Szanto.

1. Baglione 1642, p. 338: "Era nella stagione calda della state, e Valentinò andato co' suoi compagni a diporto in un luogo, & havendo preso gran tabacco (si come era suo costume) e co[n] quelli soverchiamente bevendo vino, s'infiammò di modo, che non poteva vivere del grand'ardore, che egli se[n]tiva. Ritornando a casa di notte, ritrovossi frà via alla Fonte del Babbuino, e trapotato dal grand'incendio, che co'l moto ogni hora cresceva, gettossi dentro a quell'acqua fredda, e pensando d'acquistarvi ristoro, vi trovò la morte: il freddo maggiormente riconcentrò il calore, e gli accese una febre sì maligna, che in pochi di fu estinto dal gelo del la micidiale morte. Però non dobbiamo così agevolmente lasciarsi trapotare dal senso, che per lo più ci precipita; e ci fà perdere in un punto quello, che appena per tratto di molti anni acquistato habbiamo. Se non era la pietà, e la cortesia del Signor Cavaliere Cassiano dal Pozzo, non v'era da dargli sepoltura."
2. "Fatto con quella sua maniera Caravaggiesca, molto vivace, dal naturale formato." *Ibid.*, p. 337. See also van Mander 1604, fol. 191; Baglione 1642, p. 138.
3. Baglione 1642, p. 337.
4. See the Chronology in this catalogue for a transcription of the document.
5. Von Sandrart 1675 (1925 ed., p. 256).
6. See the essay by Gianni Papi in this catalogue.
7. Longhi 1943, p. 33.
8. It is important to note that it was à propos of Valentin that Baglione (1642, p. 337) invented and made use of the emblematic expression "maniera Caravaggiesca."
9. On this notion, see especially de Blaauw et al. 1998.
10. For all subsequent biographical details about the painter and the references relating to them, see the Chronology in this catalogue.
11. On the activities of the painter-glaziers in France at the turn of the seventeenth century, see Leproux 1988.
12. His father died in 1618, at which time the twenty-seven-year-old Valentin was already in Italy. The date of his departure from France and his itinerary preceding his arrival in Rome are not known. He may have headed first for destinations closer to home, such as Paris, the capital; Fontainebleau, the center for major decoration projects; or Troyes, the hub of image production in France in the early seventeenth century.
13. "non li si puol dar regola." Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 97).
14. See the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue for the transcription of the document.
15. For Vouet, see Solinas 1992; for Tournier, see the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue. Axel Hémerly (2001, pp. 20–23) even proposes the date of 1610 for Tournier's arrival in Rome.
16. As Cavazzini has indicated, Sandrart's statement (1675, pt. 2, p. 367) is misleading: though he reports that Valentin was in Rome even before Vouet, he erroneously makes Vouet's move to Rome coincide with the pontifical enthronement of Maffeo Barberini (Pope Urban VIII) (1623). By then, the painter had been in Rome for ten years (since 1613).
17. Bousquet 1978, p. 107 (for the indication of 1611); for the others, Vodret 2011b, p. 519, and Vodret 2011a, p. 70; see also the Chronology in this catalogue.
18. On Veri, see Sickel 2003; Guerrieri Borsoi 2007; Daniele 2015.
19. On the status of *garzone* in the Roman workshops, see Pomponi 2011, p. 133.
20. For a consideration of the more fragile hypothesis of "Monsù da Colombiera," registered at the inn of Stefano Crivelli in 1615, see Danesi Squarzina 2006 and Ierrobino 2010, summarized in the Chronology in this catalogue.
21. See the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue.
22. Vouet married in 1626 (Jacquot 2008, p. 96); Régnier married in 1623 (Lemoine 2007, pp. 81–82).
23. R. Wittkower and M. Wittkower 1963.
24. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 249).
25. See the Chronology in this catalogue. Douffet, after apprenticing with the Liège painter Jean Taulier (ca. 1612–14), then most likely in the workshop of Peter Paul Rubens, moved to Rome. Unfortunately, nothing is known about his stay there, apart from his affiliation with the Bentvueghels, his documented presence in that city between 1620 and 1622, and his departure in 1624 in the company of his compatriots Michel Houbar and Tilmant Woot (perhaps the Walloon Timoteo Oto, or Otto, mentioned with Douffet in 1620; see Papi 2001, p. 46; Lorizzo 2010a).
26. On the circumstances of de La Riche's death, see Lorizzo 2010a, p. 375, n. 3; Cavazzini 2011b, pp. 145, 148–49, n. 47. A native of Nancy, the sculptor David de La Riche remains little known. In Rome, however, he had connections with the major collectors of the time, including dealings with Cardinal Scipione Borghese in regard to the restoration of antique sculptures in February 1620 (Kalveram 1995, p. 231). According to Danesi Squarzina (2000, p. 748, n. 13), he might be the "David francese" mentioned and praised by Vincenzo Giustiniani in his *Discorso sopra la scultura* (Giustiniani n.d. [1981 ed., pp. 71, 72]). Documents relating to his death reveal that he counted among his close friends, in addition to Valentin, the sculptor Arcangelo Gonella (de La Riche was the godfather of Gonella's daughter Marta).
27. Von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 367.
28. No other mention of the painter has been found in the detailed registers of the Academy. De La Blanchardière 1972, pp. 86, 93, and subsequent bibliography (see the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue); Jacquot 2008, pp. 94–95.
29. Hoogewerff 1952, p. 145 (unusually, and unfortunately, Hoogewerff does not cite his sources regarding Valentin).
30. On the Bentvueghels, see in particular Hoogewerff 1952; Janssens 2001; Verberne 2001; Lemoine 2014, pp. 34–39.

31. On the expression “Amador,” to be translated as “lover boy,” see especially C. Oudin 1607 (1660 ed., p. 46).
32. As is the case with most of the Caravaggesque painters, it appears that no drawings can be attributed to Valentin (see Gianfranceschi 2012, pp. 248–50, for a hypothesis). Technical analyses of his works show that he constantly reworked his compositions directly on the canvas, proof that he made limited use of drawing (on this point, see the essay by Keith Christiansen in this catalogue).
33. This position is taken by turns in Longhi 1958; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, pp. 124–28 (French ed.); Cuzin 1975; Mojana 1989.
34. Cuzin 1975. As early as 1958, Longhi proposed a chronology divided into three periods.
35. The lengthier stay in Rome allows us to distribute Valentin’s works over a longer period of time and thus to better make sense of the painter’s first phase, the most complex, understood not as beginning in 1620 and not as a function of the northern milieu alone, but at least by 1614. According to that hypothesis, Valentin would have reacted immediately, and not after a delay, to the upheavals introduced by Ribera (before 1616) and Manfredi in particular (before 1622).
36. As they are called by Bellori (1672, p. 216): “era anch’egli [come Caravaggio] inclinato à bizzarrie di giuochi, suoni, e zingarate.”
37. See in particular the important exhibition devoted to the subject, “Dopo Caravaggio: Bartolomeo Manfredi e la Manfrediana Methodus,” held in Santa Maria della Pietà, Cremona, in 1988, and Cuzin’s analysis à propos of Valentin (in *Dopo Caravaggio* 1987, pp. 119–22), and cat. 2 in the present catalogue.
38. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 251).
39. Longhi 1958, p. 64; Papi 2002. See also Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 249).
40. Cuzin 1975, p. 57.
41. Compare, for example, Ribera’s *Crowning with Thorns*, dating to about 1616 (location unknown), in Papi 2002, p. 37, fig. 20.
42. Papi 2012b, p. 41 (French ed.).
43. In the words of Sandrart (1675, pt. 2, p. 367): “He imitated Michelangelo da Caravaggio and his disciple Manfredi so much that he strove to bow to no one.”
44. Fried 2010, p. 171.
45. In reality, this was a response to the criticisms made of Caravaggio. On this point, see the essay by Keith Christiansen in this catalogue.
46. See the essay by Keith Christiansen in this catalogue.
47. At the end of his life, Valentin was sought out as a portraitist by the most important Roman art lovers, from Cardinal Francesco Barberini to Cassiano dal Pozzo. See the only two portraits preserved (cats. 18, 41) and the inventory notations cited in the Chronology in this catalogue.
48. Among other examples, consider the faces of the two torturers of Christ in the *Crowning with Thorns* (cat. 7), which can also be found in *David with the Head of Goliath* (cat. 8) and among the crowd witnessing Christ driving out the merchants (cat. 17); or the portrait of the dark-haired young man that Valentin uses for Saint John the Baptist preaching in the desert (cat. 4) and, at about the same time, Daniel judging Susanna’s innocence (cat. 22).
49. Christiansen 2003.
50. See Serres 2003, pp. 82–83, for an analysis of the red slashed hat that recurs repeatedly in Valentin’s first paintings and seems to serve as a marker for his early period.
51. Perhaps Valentin was himself an accomplished musician, like Dirck van Baburen, who played the flute, violin, and lute. See Franits 2013.
52. I thank Anne Piéjus for her assistance and invaluable advice in the interpretation of Valentin’s musical iconography.
53. In the portraits by Vouet and of Bernini, the pursuit of a “living resemblance” or a “speaking resemblance” is established. See Harris 1992; Boudon-Machuel 2004.
54. Askew 1996.
55. Bellori 1693, pl. 57; Wethey 1964; Sénéchal 1996; Fagiolo dell’Arco 1997; and, more generally, on the use of antiquities in the Caravaggesque painters, see Lemoine 2003, pp. 58–63. See also cats. 14, 23.
56. Fagiolo dell’Arco 1997, p. 181.
57. For a more general view of the taste for lowlife in literature and theater, see especially Camporesi 1973; Burke 1987; and, more specifically on its pictorial interpretations, the excellent surveys of Feigenbaum 1996 and Langdon 2001, and, more recently, Edwards 2011 and Etheridge 2011.
58. On the key role played by Manfredi in Caravaggism, see Hartje 2004 and Papi 2013a; on the Roman phenomenon and its various protagonists, see also Lemoine 2014, pp. 28–33. *Laughing Peasant* is mentioned in the inventory of Cardinal Flavio Chigi’s *guardaroba*, drawn up on May 1, 1692, Palazzo a Piazza SS. Apostoli, Rome: “Un Quadro Tela dà Testa . . . con un Ritratto d’un Contadino, che ride di Monsù Valentino” (Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Fondo Chigi, 1805, fol. 58, no. 256; reprinted in the Chigi Inventory, item 148, Getty Provenance Index Database, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.)
59. Bellori 1672, p. 216.
60. See note 36 above.
61. Lemoine 2009.
62. See especially Paleotti 1582 (1961 ed., pp. 385, 395–96) or Summo 1600, p. 9; see also the summaries of Wind 1991, pp. xiii–xxvi; F. Porzio 1998, pp. 18–19.
63. On captive attention or the “excessive” mode of embodied subjectivity, see Fried 2011, pp. 114–15, 117.
64. Thuillier 1958, p. 30.
65. See, most recently, Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, pp. 262–71.
66. Although the musical theme corresponded to a craze in the first decades of the seventeenth century, it assumed unusual importance, heretofore unexplored, in Valentin’s works. Valentin develops this theme in various forms: from the *Lute Player* (cat. 30), to the almost systematic presence of musicians in his scenes of palmistry, games, or drinking parties, to the reinvented popular concerts. On Caravaggio’s legacy and the musical iconography in early seventeenth-century Rome, see especially Christiansen 1990; Trinchieri Camiz 1991; Trinchieri Camiz 1994; Vodret and Strinati 2001; Macioce 2000; Macioce and De Pascale 2012; Celenza 2014.
67. On musical practices in Rome at the turn of the seicento, see especially Giron-Panel and Goulet 2012; Piéjus 2013.
68. Giustiniani n.d. (1981 ed., p. 34) and, on that treatise, MacClintock 1961. In Rome, the greatest lovers of painting were also the most active patrons of music: for example, Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani, a collector of Valentin’s work, and also Girolamo Mattei and Cardinals Francesco Maria del Monte and Alessandro Peretti Montalto.
69. Maffei 1562; see also Celenza 2014, pp. 94, 101, n. 7. On the Caravaggesque model of the singer accompanying himself on the lute, see the pioneering article of Trinchieri Camiz 1988.
70. Giustiniani n.d. (1981 ed., p. 21); Caccini 1601; Marotta 1600.
71. On the topos of harmony incarnated by Music, see especially Ripa’s definition of the allegory of Music (Ripa 1618 [1992 ed., p. 307]): “This shows that music is a singular solace for the troubled soul, and that all

the harmony of real music is based and founded upon the harmony of the heavens as understood by the Pythagoreans.”

72. Giustiniani n.d. (1981 ed., p. 29).
73. *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.
74. Burton 1621 (1862 ed., vol. 2, p. 227). Giustiniani also revisits that commonplace (Giustiniani n.d. [1981 ed., p. 28]).
75. See Clair 2005a, chap. 4, pp. 202–315, and, specifically, p. 270, no. 149 (entry by Iris Wenderholm).
76. Cuzin 1975, p. 58.
77. Raux 1993; Morel 2014, pp. 29–39.
78. Fagiolo dell’Arco 1997; Lemoine 2003, pp. 58–63.
79. On this topos, see especially Bracciolini 1447–48 (1999 ed., p. 10); Forero-Mendoza 2002, pp. 65–67; Buttay-Jutier 2008.
80. Cropper 1991.
81. On the Mattei, see Cappelletti and Testa 1994; *Caravaggio e la collezione Mattei* 1995.
82. Merola 1964.
83. See the Chronology in this catalogue for the portraits by Valentin that have been inventoried thus far.
84. That tension could attest to the debates sparked at the time by the cult of Saint John the Baptist; see Fumaroli 1994 (1998 ed., pp. 378–97). On Valentin’s painting, see Mojana 1989, p. 174, no. 62.
85. Lemoine 2012.
86. The attribution to Valentin, which Keith Christiansen and I have confirmed, was first put forward by Federico Zeri (1954). Mojana (1989, p. 200, no. 74) classifies the work among the doubtful attributions. Nevertheless, the painting can reasonably be linked to the one painted for Cardinal Giori and given to the Barberini (see Chronology).
87. Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 172 (French ed.).
88. Mojana 1989, p. 144.
89. See my essay “Valentin in the Grand Siècle” in this catalogue.
90. See cat. 43 and the decisive studies of Barbiellini Amidei 1989; Serres 2011.
91. Crelly 1992, pp. 185–86.
92. Rice 1997, pp. 232–38, no. 11, pp. 310–11, doc. no. 22. See the Chronology in this catalogue.
93. Von Sandrart 1675 pt. 2, p. 367.
94. Cuzin 1975, p. 60.
95. Mojana 1989, p. 154.
96. As attested by the commission Valentin received in 1631 from the Sicilian nobleman Fabrizio Valguarnera, who took care to spell out the iconography he wanted to have painted: “a large painting with a Gypsy Woman” (see cat. 50 and Chronology for July 30, 1631). It was among a series of commissions given the same year to several painters active in Rome, those most in vogue at the time: Giovanni Lanfranco, Pietro da Cortona, Andrea Sacchi, and Poussin. This indicates the place Valentin occupied at that time on the Roman art scene.
97. See especially the Valguarnera commissions (see the Chronology in this catalogue for 1631).
98. See the Chronology in this catalogue for 1627–32: Glory Days.
99. Mariette 1851–60, vol. 5 (1859), p. 358.
100. On the mottoes of the Bentvueghels, see especially Gert Jan van der Sman in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, p. 166.
101. See the Chronology in this catalogue for October 30, 1632.

Success and Failure in a Violent City: Bartolomeo Manfredi, Nicolas Tournier, and Valentin de Boulogne

1. Nussdorfer 2013.
2. Pascoli 1730–36 (1992 ed., pp. 521–31). See also Balducci 1681–1728 (1845–47 ed., vol. 4 [1846], pp. 529–30).
3. Hoogewerff 1942, p. 197. Giovan Francesco Lauri’s death record reveals that he died in via Frattina as a consequence of a wound, after receiving the Last Sacrament. The criminal court investigated the matter, and he was buried in the parish of San Lorenzo in Lucina. Archivio Storico del Vicariato di Roma, San Lorenzo in Lucina, Registro dei Morti, August 25, 1637, fol. 90: “Gio. Fran.co Ag.o figliolo di Baltassarro Lauro, Fiamengo pittore e di Lena sua moglie, di età anni 25 in circa morì nella comunione della S. Madre Ecclesia nella strada Fratina, vicino al Gambero di una ferita, doppo di haver ricevuto il sacramento della confessione e l’oglio santo e la raccomandazione dell’anima dal padre Isidoro Parisio curato e fatta la recognitione della corte di ordine di Monsignor Ill.mo governatore di Roma fu sepolto in San Lorenzo in Lucina, sua parochia a di 25 detto.”
4. Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 356).
5. Horn 2000, pp. 251–66; Verberne 2001; Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, pp. 145–67.
6. Agosti 1997, p. 180, n. 13; Bologna 2006, pp. 396–400.
7. For Tassi, see Cavazzini 2008a; for Bernardino Cesari, Röttgen 2002, pp. 27–30, 522–31.
8. Von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 367; see also Hoogewerff 1952, pp. 21, 145. Hoogewerff does not offer proof of his claim that Valentin belonged to the Bentvueghels, but he was a careful scholar and seems to have had precise information. See Gert Jan van der Sman in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, p. 153.
9. Lemoine 2007, pp. 29–32; Susanne Bavarez in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, p. 156. See Verberne 2001, pp. 29–30, for Régner and the Bentvueghels. See also Lemoine 2003.
10. Curti 2003, pp. 142–44, 151–54, nn. 32, 41; Vannugli 2003; Lemoine 2007, p. 32.
11. Balen lived in via Laurina, Valentin in an alley between via Margutta and via del Babuino; Vodret 2011b, p. 519, doc. no. 2130. Balen is the “Giovanni Ruggieri fiammingo pittore,” in Vodret 2011b, p. 386, doc. no. 1273, who is no longer listed in 1626; see also Hoogewerff 1952, p. 48. Balen was injured on September 22, 1625, “below the navel with a sword with the greatest danger for his life” (“sotto l’ombelico da spada con massimo pericolo della vita”); see Bertolotti 1880, p. 100.
12. Bertolotti 1880, pp. 98–99.
13. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Trenta Notai Capitolini, uff. 19, March 18, 1626, fols. 490–95. The documents have been discussed in Lorizzo 2010a, p. 375, n. 3; Cavazzini 2011b, pp. 145, 148–49, n. 47. See also Vodret 2011b, pp. 272–73, doc. no. 462, for de La Riche’s parish records and death notice. He was the godfather of Gonella’s daughter Marta.
14. Mojana 1989, p. 7; Hémery 2001, p. 23.
15. Wilmers 1996, pp. 15–16, 256, nn. 65, 67; Hoogewerff 1942, p. 274; Bousquet 1978, p. 108. See Bertolotti 1880, pp. 110–11, from Archivio di Stato di Roma, Miscellanea Artisti, b. 4, no. 351. See also Archivio di Stato di Roma, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Registrazioni d’Atti, b. 212, fol. 44, September 16, 1627; fol. 57, September 22, 1627; fol. 110, October 10, 1627; fol. 115v, October 12, 1627.

See Vodret 2011b, p. 268, doc. no. 427, and p. 405, doc. no. 1392, for the parish records. A better sense of the proximity of Schut’s and

Valentin's dwellings is given by the original documents; see Archivio Storico del Vicariato di Roma, Santa Maria del Popolo, Stati di Anime, 1624, fol. 17; 1625, fol. 15r; 1626, fol. 11. The two painters lived in the same alley off via Margutta, on the top floor of houses belonging to the same owner—called Cona—that were either contiguous or separated at most by another house; see van der Sman in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, p. 153. Danesi Squarzina 2003, vol. 1, p. 335, identifies “Giusto fiammingo” with Josse de Pape, but in all likelihood he was Joost Jasper Meilnck; see Bertolotti 1880, p. 110; “Meilnck” 2006. It seems unlikely that Giusto Fiammingo should be identified with Jean Ducamps, as proposed in A. G. De Marchi 2000. For a review of the possible identities of “Giusto fiammingo,” see Papi 2014a, pp. 66–67, n. 24.

16. Wilmers 1996, pp. 66–67, no. A4, pp. 70–72, no. A9; Lemoine 2003, p. 55, n. 1; Pierguidi 2011, p. 230.

17. For the paintings by “Giusto fiammingo,” see Lorizzo 2009; Terzaghi 2009, pp. 13–18; Cappelletti 2010; Papi 2014a. For the Giustiniani inventory, see Danesi Squarzina 2003, vol. 1, pp. 311–12, no. 124, pp. 334–35, no. 158.

18. The Accademia seems to have intervened twice on Schut's behalf, first to spare him the galleys and then the exile. The painter left Rome for Florence, where he was working for the court in 1628, and by 1631 he was back in Antwerp. See Wilmers 1996, p. 16. The Cornelis Schut who appears in the Stati di Anime from 1630 to 1636 and died in Rome in 1636 is a different painter.

On October 2, 1627, Schut had been sentenced to life imprisonment on the galleys and the confiscation of his goods for having killed in a fight his associate the painter Giusto, also from Flanders. Even though there were no heirs or relatives of the victim who could grant him forgiveness, Schut was freed through the intervention of the Accademia di San Luca on October 10. By court order the matter could not be further addressed. On October 12 he recovered his goods that had been seized by the court. See Archivio di Stato di Roma, Trenta Notai Capitolini, uff. 4, October 10, 1627, fol. 385, where “Cornelis painter from Antwerp son of the deceased Wilhelm” (“Cornelis fil. q. Guglielmi Schut Pictor de Anversa”) nominates Tommaso Leonardo from Fano as his legal representative to recover his money and goods. For the forgiving of Schut's sentence (*condonatio*) of October 10, 1627, see Archivio di Stato di Roma, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Registrazioni d'Atti, b. 212, fol. 110: “Pro d. Cornelio Schetto de Anversa pictore in urbe eri hac curia Ill. mo et rev. mo D. Alma Urbis gub. in quae processatus et dineg. sub die 2 mensis octobris presentis cond. eri poenam perpetuam triremini et confiscationis omnium suorum bonorum per homicidium per ipsum in rixa perpetratum in personam q. luxti pariter pictoris Flandri eius socii. . . . Stante cautione in actis prestita scutorum quadraginta de se representando stateque quod in urbe non adsit heredis seu consanguinei dicti occisi qui pacem concedere possent nec non servatum per d. Cornelio exilio ab urbe et distractu et a loco seu locis ubi inhabitans heredis d. ocisi J. B. Pregrettu se constitus in carceris Tor Nonae. . . . Ven. Accademia et societati pictorum in ecclesia s. Lucae de Urbe ad dictos carcere iuxta eorum solitum morem et consuetudinem exemptus et liberatus fuit. Perpetuum silentium imponit. . . .” The same day, through a proxy, Schut donated thirty scudi to the academy; see Archivio dell'Accademia di San Luca, vol. 42A, fol. 1, October 10, 1627: “si ebbe dal procuratore del signor Cornelio pittore scudi 30 di ellemosina per la sua liberazione.” See Missirini 1823, p. 81, for the Accademia's privilege to free one prisoner per year beginning in 1606.

19. Curti 2003, p. 151, n. 61. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Miscellanea artisti, b. 2, fasc. 111, and Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Memoriali, b. 97, for the dates.

20. See Cavazzini 2008c, p. 172, n. 35.

21. Bertolotti 1880, p. 96; Hoogewerff 1952, pp. 53–54. See Cavazzini 2014b, pp. 60, 66, n. 55, for a more detailed description of the episode.

22. For Nicolas de la Fleur, see Thuillier 1982.

23. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Investigazioni, b. 459, fol. 94, June 1, 1627, and fol. 114, June 16, 1627. Bertolotti 1886, p. 99, cites the document but he confuses the people involved and the details of the story. For a similar case of aggression against Frenchmen in April 1627, see Cavazzini 2014b, p. 62.

24. Vodret 2011b, p. 450, doc. no. 1723.

25. Passeri 1670–75 (1995 ed., p. 324).

26. Baglione 1642, p. 338. See von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 367, for a slightly different version of Valentin's death.

27. See Cavazzini 2014b, p. 60, for more details.

28. Bertolotti 1880, pp. 116–23; Hoogewerff 1932, p. 212; Cavazzini 2014b, pp. 60–61.

29. For van Kuijl, see Sluijter 1977. Van 't Hoff was called Stefano Uberti or Stefano de Cortes in Italian; see Bertolotti 1880, p. 120; Hoogewerff 1952, p. 81.

30. Cavazzini 2014b, p. 61.

31. Passeri 1670–75 (1995 ed., p. 74).

32. Bousquet 1978, p. 107; Bonfait 2003, pp. 66, 74. Archivio Storico del Vicariato di Roma, Santa Maria del Popolo, Stati di Anime, 1631, fol. 7, unit 180, for Ducamps and van Laer and unit 182 for Valentin, and 1632, fol. 7, units 180 and 183. These houses were multistoried dwellings where all the painters occupied the unit on the top floor. Unit 180 is likely to be the same one where Schut had lived; see note 15 above. Before 1630 van Laer lived with van 't Hoff and Ducamps with van Kuijl, all close to Valentin, at most a couple of houses apart.

33. Montias 1983; Mojana 1989, p. 198, no. 73; Terzaghi 2009, pp. 18–19; Cappelletti 2010, pp. 437, 439. Gianni Papi does not believe Ducamps is the author of this picture; see Papi 2014a. His main contributions on this topic are listed in his note 4. See also A. De Marchi 2000. The painting for Bramer has at times been identified with a similar one in Riga, which is too small to correspond to the “canvas of imperial size” mentioned by Bramer.

34. See the essay by Keith Christiansen in this catalogue for the subject of painting from the model.

35. See Vodret 2011a, pp. 69–70, and the Chronology in this catalogue for a review of the citations that might refer to Valentin in the Stati di Anime from 1609 to 1620.

36. Danesi Squarzina 2006, pp. 250–51, n. 42; Ierrobino 2010, p. 199.

37. Von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 367. For the date of Vouet's arrival in Rome, see Solinas 1992.

38. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Registrazioni d'Atti, b. 171, fol. 69: “Friday, May 2, 1614. Peace accord in favor of the Frenchman Valentin de Boulogne against the court. The Frenchman Nicolas Natalis agrees to the cancellation of the case he brought against the said Julian [sic; but clearly a mistake for Valentin] and concedes peace to the same—whose absence is permitted—through me, the notary. . . .” (“Die Veneris 2 Maii 1614. Pax. Pro Valentino del Bologna Gallo contra fiscum. Nicolaus Natalis Gallus consensit cassationi querele per ipsum porrecte contra dictum Julianum [sic] eidemque, licet absentis, pacem dedit mi[hi] notario. . . .”). It seems likely that the Nicolas Natalis in the document had the French name Nicolas Noël and would have been related to Giacomo (Jacques) Noël,

- who is documented in the 1620s in Rome and was in touch with Vouet and Poussin. See Vodret 2011b, p. 335, doc. no. 913.
39. For example, see Cavazzini 2014b, p. 61.
40. For Tournier's religion, see Jouffroy and Fauré 2003, pp. 155–56; Vertova 2003, p. 92.
41. Fosi 2011, pp. 9–11.
42. Hémery 2015, p. 7. See Hémery 2001, pp. 22–23, for the hypothesis that Tournier arrived in Rome in 1610.
43. I am much indebted to Irene Fosi and Angela Groppi for their help with the following documents. The first indicates that Federico Stinamer, Nicolas, son of Andrea Tournier from Montbéliard, Rainaldo Tinde from Denmark, and Daniel Pris, all living in Rome after having received instruction in the Catholic faith, renounce their religion. Archivio per la Dottrina della Fede, Sant'Offizio, Decreta 1617, Feria 5, January 5, 1617, fol. 17: "Federico Stinami, Nicolai filium Andream Tornieri da Montebliardo Bisent. diocesi, Rainaldo Thain de Danimarca, Danilis Prei ex [dantisco prussi?] Officio relatis constitutis facta die 29 30 decembris et auditis notis DD consultorum previa instrutionem in fides cattolica omnes abiurant de formali et Federicus, Rainaldus ac Daniel ac Nicolaus d. habitent per urbem." The four painters were ordered not to leave the city and to present themselves before the Inquisition every month. See Feria 2, March 20, 1617, fol. 113: "Federico Stenamer Augustana diocesi, Nicolaus Tornieri de Montebelliardo in Burgundia, Rainaldo Timde Danimarca, Daniel Preus de Wartenberg pictores ac ordinatum ut habilitentur per urbem sub cautionem iuratoria de non discendendo et singulis mensibus comparvant in sancto offitio, facto prius verbo cum santissimo Andreas de Pettini not." In the index of the volume, Preus is called Pris or Preis.
44. On the duchy of Württemberg-Montbéliard, see Jouffroy and Fauré 2003, p. 158.
45. Archivio per la Dottrina della Fede, Sant'Offizio, Decreta 1617, Feria 4, May 10, 1617, fol. 176, and Feria 4, August 1, 1617, fol. 311. See also note 43 above.
46. Loriggio 2010a, p. 371. See also the essays by Annick Lemoine ("Bowling to No One: Valentin's Ambitions") and Gianni Papi in this catalogue.
47. Von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 367.
48. For the *David* in the Galleria Spada, Rome, documented as Manfredi but usually attributed to Régnier, see Lemoine 2007, p. 214, no. 5. For the two *Drinkers* in the Galleria Estense in Modena, inventoried as Manfredi and often attributed to Tournier, see Axel Hémery in *Nicolas Tournier* 2001, pp. 82–85, nos. 2, 3. See Hémery 2003, p. 17, for a review of scholarly opinions on the matter.
49. Baglione 1642, p. 159; Hémery in *Nicolas Tournier* 2001, pp. 80–82, no. 1. But see Papi in Cappelletti and Lemoine 2014, p. 172, and Hémery 2015, p. 7, for the hypothesis that Tournier is not the author of the painting in Le Mans.
50. Vodret 2011b, p. 450, doc. no. 1723.
51. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 251). The son was fourteen in 1621; Vodret 2011b, p. 244, doc. no. 279. See Cavazzini 2014b, pp. 62, 64, for a summary of the evidence.
52. Tellini Perina 1989, p. 46.
53. Von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 190.
54. Vodret 2011a, p. 42; Vodret 2011b, p. 244, doc. no. 279.
55. Manfredi sued the mason Luca Arcangelo for the payment of fifty scudi owed to him for the instruction he provided to Luca's son Tommaso for two years. Manfredi also requested repayment of eight more scudi he spent when Tommaso was ill in his house. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Galla Placidia, Tribunale Civile del Senatore, Registros d'Atti, b. 2841, fol. 478, October 12, 1616: "Pro Bartholomeo Manfredo pres. Contram D. Lucam Arcangelum de Saravezio muratorem . . . citans ad solvendum scuta 50 m occasione mercedes ex quo docuit artem picturae Thomae adversarium filio per spatium duorum annorum, nec non solvens alia scuta octo ex quo fecit curare eund. Thomas domi in stantia propriis sumptibus per spatium quindecim dierum egrotans in lecto et pro medeciniis eius Thome necessariis." 56. Cavazzini 2009–10, p. 83.
57. See van Mander 1604 (1994–99 ed., vol. 1 [1994], p. 265, fol. 251v) for the absence of guild regulations in Rome. See Salvagni 2012, p. 24, for a discussion of the statutes of 1478. For the transformation of the guild into an academy, see Salvagni 2008, p. 43.
58. Thuillier 1987, pp. 321–25; Cavazzini 2008c, pp. 46–47; Cavazzini 2011c, pp. 89–90.
59. Thuillier 1960, pp. 77–79; de La Blanchardière 1972, p. 85; Lafranconi 2002; Lafranconi 2004; Salvagni 2009.
60. For various opinions on teaching in the academy, see Roccasecca 2009, pp. 123–59 (pp. 141–42 for Vouet); Cavazzini 2009–10, pp. 81–82; George 2011; Lukehart 2015.
61. For the lack of consistency in apprenticeships, see Lukehart 2007; Williams 2007; Marciari 2009, pp. 201–2. For what follows, see Cavazzini 2008c, pp. 49–80; Cavazzini 2009–10.
62. Vodret 2011b, pp. 285–86, doc. no. 524, for Domenichino's house. The transcription "Piazza Scavolia" should be read as Piazza Scandeborg. See also Passeri 1670–75 (1995 ed., p. 326); von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 332. See Cavazzini 2011a, p. 48, for Claude and Sacchi.
63. Archivio dell'Accademia di San Luca, statuti 1607, fol. 22, and statuti 1617, fol. 17v.
64. Curti 2003, pp. 142–46.
65. Salvagni 2012, p. 24. The statutes of 1478 forbade students from changing masters without written permission.
66. Armenini 1587 (1988 ed., p. 26). See also note 61 above. See Spear 2010, pp. 44–47, for the compensations of day workers.
67. Haskell 1963.
68. For the market at the beginning of the seventeenth century, see Costello 1950; Spezzaferro 2002; Cavazzini 2008c, pp. 119–52; Nicolai 2008, pp. 157–209. For the later part of the century, see Loriggio 2003a; Loriggio 2003b; Loriggio 2010b.
69. Cavazzini 2014a.
70. Thuillier 1990, p. 95.
71. Cavazzini 2014c, pp. 31–32, 33.
72. See Sickel 2011 for Pandolfo Pucci.
73. Van Mander 1604 (1994–99 ed., vol. 1 [1994], p. 342, fol. 271v); Sohm 2010, p. 29; Spear 2014, pp. 199–200.
74. Cavazzini 2010b, pp. 13–14. For prices of paintings in Rome, see Spear 2010, pp. 52–110.
75. Cavazzini 2008b, pp. 87–91.
76. In August 1612, at the trial for the rape of Artemisia Gentileschi, Saraceni stated: "I have known Orazio Gentileschi since I came to Rome eight or ten years ago" ("Io conosco il detto Horatio Gentileschi da che son venuto a Roma, che saranno otto o dieci anni"). Archivio di Stato di Roma, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Processi, sec. xvii, b. 104, fol. 411. The idea that he arrived much sooner comes from the ages given in parish records, which in this respect are often unreliable; see Martinelli 1959; Aurigemma 2013c, p. 3. For Saraceni's role of cupbearer (*coppiere*) in Cardinal Lorenzo Priuli's court, see Aurigemma 2013b, p. 83.
77. Alessandra Rullo in Aurigemma 2013a, p. 185; see Aurigemma 2013c, pp. 9–13, for the Farnese landscapes. For the Altemps, see Spezzaferro

- 2002, pp. 36–37; Nicolai 2008, p. 231; Aurigemma 2012, p. 231. One of the paintings owned by the Altemps was perhaps the *Venus and Mars* in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid, which is certainly an early picture. For the Aldobrandini pictures, see Cappelletti 1998; Testa 1998; Laura Testa in Aurigemma 2013a, pp. 192–94, no. 15. However, the date of the Aldobrandini list of goods (*nota di beni*) that includes paintings by Saraceni cannot be determined; see note 100 below.
78. Michele Nicolaci in Aurigemma 2013a, pp. 210–16, nos. 23, 24.
79. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 258); Lorizzo 2015.
80. Marciari 2009, pp. 201–2. See also notes 60 and 65 above.
81. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Galla Placidia, Tribunale Civile del Senatore, b. 2289, October 20, 1592. The painter Benedetto Ghelfo had worked for Giovanni Guerra in the vigna Pinelli on Monte Mario.
82. Barsanti 1974, p. 81; Maffei 2007, pp. 23–24. See also Balducci 1681–1728 (1845–47 ed., vol. 4 [1846], pp. 229–30, 630).
83. Curti 2011a; Curti 2011b.
84. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, pp. 249–50).
85. Bertolotti 1876.
86. Nicolai 2008, pp. 157–92.
87. Cavazzini 2008b, pp. 74–76.
88. Archivio Storico del Vicariato di Roma, San Lorenzo in Lucina, Stati di Anime, 1615, fol. 31v. See Cesarini 2011 for barbers and the art trade.
89. Cavazzini 2008c, p. 139, for Dotti and Bigot. See Prohaska 2010 for a summary of the evidence on Bigot; see also Papi 1998b. However, Bigot was not the author of the paintings in Santa Maria in Aquiro; see Amendola 2012. He returned to Rome not in 1620, as usually stated, but by 1616 at the latest and probably earlier; see Cavazzini 2014b, p. 66, n. 15.
90. Vodret 2011b, p. 269, doc. no. 441. Crispino Tommasino moved to Sant’Andrea delle Fratte in 1619. For his dealings, see Cavazzini 2008c, p. 127.
91. Cavazzini 2010a, pp. 259–60, 266, n. 15. For a broader view of the relationships between the fabric and the art trades, see Lorizzo 2014.
92. Lemoine 2007, pp. 61–79.
93. For the painter Prospero Orsi’s role in the sale of Caravaggesque pictures, see Spezzaferro 2002, pp. 28–32; Cavazzini 2012, pp. 438–39.
94. Fumagalli 1994; Pierguidi 2012; Cavazzini 2013. For Poussin and the market, see Standring 2009.
95. Danesi Squarzina 2003, vol. 3, pp. 181–86.
96. Lemoine 2003, p. 55.
97. Papi 2013a, p. 12.
98. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 251); Baglione 1642, p. 159; Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 234); von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 190. See Morselli 1993 for Balthasar Coymans, who owned various pictures by Manfredi. Even though Mancini claims that many paintings by Manfredi were in Vincenzo Giustiniani’s collection, only two were listed in his inventory of 1638.
99. Papi 2013a, pp. 15, 191–92, no. 60.
100. Cappelletti 1998, pp. 345–46. That the “cavaglier Thomasso” was indeed Salini is strongly suggested by the subject of the still life of “a jug and a broken bowl.” He certainly painted similar canvases; see Pegazzano 1997. I thank Francesca Cappelletti for discussing the inventory with me. She does not believe the inventory could have been started in 1606. See Vicioso 2014, p. 27, for the date of Salini’s knighthood.
101. Mancini’s letters on Manfredi have been published and discussed in Maccherini 1999. See also Papi 2013a, pp. 16–17, 20.
102. Maccherini 1999, p. 134.
103. Randolfi 1992, p. 91; Hartje 2004, p. 394; Cavazzini 2014b, pp. 59, 62.
104. Maccherini 1999, pp. 136–37, doc. no. 12; Aurigemma 2007, p. 235, n. 7; Papi in Papi 2010a, p. 214.
105. See Maccherini 1999, p. 137, doc. no. 15. Mancini writes, “a painting by him [Manfredi] has been sold to our lord his Most Serene Highness for many hundreds of scudi” (“è stato venduto un quadro di suo a Sua Altezza Serenissima, nostro padrone, molte centinaia di scudi”). See also Papi in Papi 2010a, p. 182; Papi 2013a, p. 18.
- In the following document, Giacomo Chiappi from Siena mandates Geronimo Gualdo to obtain all the money and goods owed to him by the painter Bartolomeo Manfredi from Mantua: “Procura D. Jacobus Chiappus filius q. Mariani Chiappi Senensis fecit constituitque procuratorem suum D. Hieronimum Gualdum . . . ad exigendum, recipiendum . . . omnes et quascumquorum pecuniarum rerum et bonorum summas qualitatis et quantitates sibi debiti a D. Bartholomeo Manfredi pictore Mantovano absente.” See Archivio di Stato di Roma, Notai AC 2001, January 22, 1619.
106. Hoogewerff 1926, pp. 286–87; Papi 1999, p. 14; Papi in Papi 2015b, p. 164, no. 19.
107. Papi 2013a, p. 17.
108. Spear 1994; Bonfait 2002; Spear 2014.
109. See note 13 above.
110. Giammaria 2009, p. 414, no. 0054.
111. See the Chronology in this catalogue. See cat. 18 for a possible early portrait of Cardinal Giori. See also Lorizzo 2001; Lorizzo 2006, pp. 34–40.
112. Nicolai 2008, pp. 206–7; Nicolai 2012, pp. 221–22.
113. Costello 1950, pp. 272–79.
114. Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 166, no. 51; Ierrobino 2010, p. 206, n. 50.
115. The document is cited in Ierrobino 2010, p. 206, n. 44. For the paintings, see Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 162, no. 49, p. 164, no. 50.
116. Cavazzini 2013, p. 813.
117. Giammaria 2009, p. 108, no. 0109. Barzi was not treasurer (*camerarius*) of the Apostolic Palace, he was “canevarius,” that is, provider of wine. The date of December 29, 1645, uses the Roman year, which starts on December 26, and therefore corresponds to 1644.
118. Cavazzini 2002, p. 408.
119. See note 94 above. For the market of copies in general, see Cavazzini 2010a.
120. Jane ten Brink Goldsmith et al. in Goldsmith et al. 1994, p. 98, no. 14; Plomp and Goldsmith 1994, p. 52. See also Archivio di Stato di Roma, Tribunale Criminale del Governatore di Roma, Processi, sec. xvii, b. 162, April 1620, fol. 765v, Domiziano Pasqualone’s deposition in a trial against Agostino Tassi: “I have known Agostino [Tassi] for many years, and I have defended him in court; however, we are no longer friends. The reason is that one morning Agostino asked me to buy canvases by a certain Leonardo for 400–500 scudi, and I answered I did not have enough money to do so” (“Sono molti anni che conosco il d. Agostino con occasione di averlo difeso in alcune sue cause, et è stato mio amico sebbene da alcuno tempo in qua non mi è amico ma inimico e la causa per la quale ho lasciato la sua conoscenza è stato che una mattina il d. Agostino mi ricercò ch’io comprassi 400 o 500 scudi di quadri di un tal Leonardo et io gli risposi che non havevo denari da fare questa spesa”).
121. See the Chronology in this catalogue. See also Spear 2014, p. 203, for a discussion of Valentin’s prices.
122. Baglione 1642, p. 338; Mazzetti di Pietralata 2007, pp. 408, 410, n. 49.
123. See Maccherini 1997, pp. 78–79.
124. Cavazzini 2008c, pp. 36, 176, n. 121.
125. See the letter from Pierre Lemaire to François Langlois, dated September 15, 1632, in Mariette 1851–60, vol. 5 (1859), p. 358, and the Chronology in this catalogue.

Valentin and His Artistic Formation in Rome

1. Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., pp. 217–18).
2. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, pp. 108–11).
3. See Papi 2015a.
4. See Gianni Papi in Papi 2015b, p. 134.
5. Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973.
6. Papi 1991; Papi 1992, pp. 7–26; Papi 2001, pp. 7–18.
7. Papi 2002; for the subsequent reconstruction of Ribera's corpus of works painted in Rome, see, for example, Papi 2007; Papi 2011.
8. Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 126.
9. See Longhi 1943, p. 58, n. 80.
10. Papi 1991.
11. Papi 2001, pp. 16–21.
12. My own monograph on Ribera's Roman production (Papi 2007) already included fifty-three catalogue entries.
13. For the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew*, see Papi 2014c. For *Saint John the Baptist at the Well*, presently in storage at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, and attributed to Pedro Orrente, see Farina 2014, pp. 40–41, 223, n. 72. I have viewed the work, and despite the fact that it needs restoration and is not in an ideal condition for legibility, I feel confident in Farina's intuition and would date the work quite early, possibly in the first decade of the seventeenth century, near in time to the smaller-format *Apostolado* and the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew*.
14. Papi 2006, pp. 18–20; see also, for example, Papi 2007, pp. 12–13, in which the hypothesis is spelled out in detail; Papi 2011, pp. 37–38; Papi 2012a, pp. 408–9. Kientz (2014, pp. 24–25) concurred with the suggestion that Ribera went to Rome early.
15. G. Porzio and D'Alessandro 2015.
16. Vodret 2011a, pp. 71, 100, n. 441; Vodret 2011b, p. 519; and the Chronology in this catalogue.
17. Von Sandrart 1675, pt. 2, p. 367. As Patrizia Cavazzini affirms in her essay in this catalogue, Sandrart cannot be considered very reliable when he maintains that Valentin arrived in Rome before Vouet (who arrived on March 10, 1613; see Solinas 1992). In Sandrart's life of Vouet, he also states the latter went to Rome under the reign of Pope Urban VIII, that is, after 1623. Sandrart's statement (1675 [1925 ed., p. 170]) that Gerard Seghers followed "the manner of Manfredi" is also difficult to credit. From what we know of Seghers today, it would be difficult to place him among the followers of Manfredi (see Papi 2015a, pp. 77–83). Note also that Sandrart considered Seghers the sole follower of the Manfredi manner.
18. Selected excerpts from the correspondence between the Mancini brothers were published in Maccherini 1997 and Maccherini 1999.
19. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 108).
20. Giustiniani n.d. (1981 ed., pp. 41–45); Baglione 1642, pp. 337–38.
21. Hoogewerff 1952, pp. 21, 145.
22. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, p. 97).
23. The painting was attributed to Valentin by Longhi 1958, p. 62, and included in the artist's catalogue by Brejon de Lavergnée and Cuzin 1973, p. 245; Cuzin (1975 [2010 ed., p. 90]) expressed some doubts about the identification and suggested that if the painter was Valentin, it dated to about 1620. Nicolson (1979) does not mention the work. Given that Mojana (1989, p. 182) considered the attribution dubious, it was not until Papi (2009b, p. 224) that the painting was reconsidered as certainly belonging to Valentin's oeuvre in his early phase.
24. Contrary to Annick Lemoine and Keith Christiansen, who view the picture as the work of an anonymous northern painter, I continue to think that the *Saint Paul* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Rouen was made by Valentin in this period. See Papi 2007, pp. 30, 42, n. 93, p. 197, fig. 32; Papi 2009a.
25. Maccherini 1999, pp. 133–34.
26. On the Manfredi works cited, see Papi 2013a.
27. Another version sold at Hôtel Drouot, Paris, on June 26, 1989; see Mojana 1989, p. 112.
28. *Mary Magdalene* was recognized as a work by Cecco del Caravaggio in Papi 2010c; the current location of the painting is unknown and its existence is attested only by a photograph in the Fototeca Briganti in Siena, classified among Anonymous Caravaggesques. Another important example of the link between Cecco and Valentin is the *John the Baptist at the Font* in the Pizzi collection, a painting that both Jean-Pierre Cuzin and Arnauld Brejon de Lavergnée attributed to Valentin and which I (Papi 2001, pp. 123–24) have attributed to Cecco. (See also Cuzin 1991 [2010 ed.], in which Cuzin confirmed his conviction that the painting was by Valentin; also, Brejon de Lavergnée in *Collezione Pizzi* 1998, p. 38). The work was recently shown with an attribution to Cecco at an exhibition of the Pizzi collection at San Marino (see Filippo Maria Ferro in Donati 2011, p. 52).
29. The Ribera painting is known only from a photograph in the file devoted to the Master of the Judgment of Solomon at the Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi in Florence; see Papi 2007, p. 149. This Valentin version is cat. 6.
30. The *Christ among the Doctors* from a private collection (oil on canvas, 140 x 230 cm) appeared at auction at Sotheby's, London (July 5, 2012, no. 237), with a mention of Ribera endorsed by Nicola Spinosa. At the time it was difficult to express an opinion because of the condition of the work. It was identified as by Ribera, painted in 1613–14—that is, after the Giustiniani version—in Farina 2014, pp. 39, 54. Kientz (2014, pp. 34–35) instead identified it as "entourage of Jusepe de Ribera" and dated it 1615–16. The restoration, which I followed closely, has given legibility to the painting, and what emerged is a powerful composition made with a brashness and rapidity typical of the early Ribera. I would therefore propose it was painted in 1610–11, about the time of the *Judgment of Solomon* in the Galleria Borghese, with which it shares certain chromatic features. The many evident pentimenti, visible to the naked eye because the surface of the picture is worn, point to the typical method of the Spanish painter, who attacked the canvas directly and would arrange the various figures as he went along, modifying them as needed.
31. See Papi 2007, pp. 143–44.
32. On the dwellings inhabited by painters cited here, see the *Censimenti Pasquali* recently examined and published in Vodret 2011b.
33. Longhi 1926 (1967 ed., p. 274). In a separate note to this edition Longhi wrote: "Today the array of paintings of the Master of the Judgment of Solomon has been substantially enlarged and I would be inclined to identify him as the young Gérard Douffet, who also shared a studio with Valentin."
34. In Papi 2001, pp. 46–47, I attributed the work to Douffet; for the relationship between Ribera and Douffet, see also Papi 2007, pp. 33–34.
35. The painting is in the Schleissheim New Palace.
36. Papi 2013a, pp. 53, 299, fig. 111. The painting (private collection, oil on canvas, 48.6 x 66 cm) has unusual dimensions for Valentin. The figures are small, and although the work displays rapid and fluid brushstrokes (perhaps following a preparatory sketch), there are pieces of very fine finish, such as the still life in the foreground. Lemoine and Christiansen do not accept this attribution.
37. Papi 1997; among the series of articles reconstructing the master's corpus, see, for example, Papi 2003; Papi 2005b, pp. 79–99; Papi 2009a, pp. 380–84; Papi 2013b, pp. 73–77.

38. In the catalogues for the sale in Paris in 1812 of the many paintings from the Giustiniani collection, Cecco's *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* was attributed to Ducamps (see Delaroché 1812, no. 35; Landon 1812, p. 21, fig. 7). In 1970, Leonard Slatkes believed that the once mysterious Cecco was surely Jean Ducamps (Slatkes's opinion was expressed at a conference at the University of Utrecht and reported in Bodart 1970b, vol. 1, p. 93); he continued to maintain his conviction in 1992, although the previous year I had identified Cecco del Caravaggio as Boneri, or Buoneri.

39. See von Sandrart 1675 (1925 ed., p. 186).

40. See Vodret 2011b, p. 369.

Painting from Life: Valentin and the Legacy of Caravaggio

1. Van Mander 1604, fol. 191r. I thank Stijn Alsteens, curator, Drawing and Prints department at the Metropolitan Museum, for kindly supplying me with a more fluid translation of van Mander's text than the one usually quoted from Friedlaender 1955. Alsteens explained that the keywords in the second sentence translate literally as "without sitting directly next to life," which is here rendered as "without having the subject right in front of him." This is remarkably close to what Bellori (1672 [1976 ed., pp. 229–30]) attested: "He professed that he was so obedient to the model that he made not a single brushstroke that he said was not his but nature's."

2. In his *Discorso sopra la pittura*, Giustiniani (n.d. [1981 ed., pp. 41–45]), the most ardent collector of Caravaggio's pictures, outlines a twelve-tiered hierarchy of painting based on the distinction between learned skills and the involvement of the imagination. His schema also reminds us that the cultivated collectors of Caravaggio's work saw more in his pictures than mere realism—whatever Caravaggio may have declared to the contrary. Just above the rank of making copies of other paintings, an act requiring diligence and practice, Giustiniani places drawing from an object ("copying that which is presented to the eye"), and then, in the fourth grade, the making of portraits ("portraying particular people well, and especially so that the heads show likeness"). Then comes the copying of flowers and *cose minute*. His use of the word *ritrarre* in this instance is significant, as is the fact that together with the act of "portraying" he emphasizes the importance of composition (*disegno vario*) and the treatment of light. In this context he introduces Caravaggio's iconoclastic remark that the painting of a vase of flowers involved as much labor (*manifattura*) as portraying a figure ("and what effect is done in order to accomplish the varied composition of the many positions of the little objects, and the various lights. For it is very difficult to unite these two circumstances and conditions if one does not adequately possess this method of painting. And above all it requires great patience. Caravaggio said that it required as much labor to paint a good picture of flowers as of figures"). Thus, here as elsewhere, Giustiniani distinguishes two key parts to painting: one relating to a learned skill, the other more properly to the imagination, or *ingegno*, of the artist. His comments remind us not only of the subtext of Caravaggio's inclusion of a vase of flowers in his subject pictures—the *Portrait of Maffeo Barberini* in the Palazzo Corsini, Florence (see Christiansen 2014), and the *Lute Player* in the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg—but also of the importance his example had for the history of Italian still-life painting.

We then take a leap before we arrive at the eleventh and second-to-the-highest category in which, as with van Mander,

Giustiniani praises the act of painting from life ("dipignere con avere gli oggetti naturali d'avanti"). Like van Mander, he adds the caveat that, of course, an artist needs to possess *disegno* and know how to select the best and most beautiful ("Be forewarned however that it is not enough to make a simple portrayal; but it is necessary that the work be done with good drawing, with good, proportionate contours and good and apposite coloring, which depends on the practice of knowing how to manipulate the colors, and an almost natural instinct and grace that is granted to few; and above all the knowledge of placing the highlights appropriate to the color of each part. . . ."). Finally, there is the twelfth and highest category, which combines the virtues of working from the model with the possession of a personal style, or *maniera* ("the union of the tenth with the eleventh modes already noted, that is, to paint with style and with the example before you of the model [*con l'esempio avanti del naturale*], as the excellent painters of the first class known to the world paint; and in our times Caravaggio, the Caracci [*sic*], Guido Reni and others"). Giustiniani leaves plenty of leeway for individual proclivities, noting that some painters emphasize *maniera* over *naturale*, and some the reverse. But in no case is painting from the model understood as raw or straightforward. Artifice is always involved and that artifice is seen in the handling of color and light and composition/*disegno*.

3. Mancini (ca. 1617–21 [1956–57 ed., vol. 1, pp. 108, 225–26]) makes astute comments about the practical limitations of Caravaggio's dependence on posed models. Still, his own partiality for Annibale Carracci and a classically based, idealist style of painting did not blind him to the genius of Caravaggio, whose *Death of the Virgin* he made a valiant attempt to acquire for himself. See Maccherini 1997, pp. 76–78, 81–82; Loire 2006, p. 60.

4. Baglione (1642, pp. 136–37) relates that Caravaggio's earliest pictures were half-length compositions for which the artist used himself as a model, reflected in a mirror. He then goes on to remark, not without a note of disparagement, that the fame of Caravaggio's paintings in the Contarelli Chapel was due in part to his use of models ("per avere alcune pitture del naturale"). He continues to comment on, for example, the figure of Cupid in *Amor Vincit Omnia* (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) having been "dal naturale ritratto." The expression leaves absolutely no question that what Baglione found most significant in this work was that a model had been not simply employed for a pose but had been portrayed—*ritratto*. We know, in fact, that part of the fascination of this and some other works by Caravaggio was the knowledge of who the model was, as reported by Richard Symonds. See Papi 2001, pp. 10–11.

It is often stated that Baglione's biography of Caravaggio was intentionally vindictive. But although there is no questioning his personal dislike of the artist, his comments align very well with a particular critical point of view that derived not only from the naturalist agenda of Caravaggio and of his nonconformist lifestyle, but also from the consequences of his example on a younger generation of artists. Thus, in his concluding remarks, he notes that had Caravaggio not died so young, "art would have profited greatly from his manner of painting from life [*colorire del naturale*], although," he adds, in a vein that will be repeated by Bellori, "in representing things he did not have much judgment in selecting the good and rejecting the bad. Nonetheless he gained great reputation and his canvases were more expensive than the history paintings of others, such is the effect of popular opinion, which looks with the ear rather than the eye."

5. Bellori (1672 [1976 ed., pp. 211–36]) casts his biography of Caravaggio around the notion of *praxis* (the craft or mechanical side of painting), shown as an allegorical figure in the heading. He gives a number of

anecdotes about Caravaggio's dismissal of the great works of the past, most famously in preferring a gypsy fortune-teller to the works of Phidias and Glycon. Although he was clearly using Caravaggio's life in an exemplary fashion to argue his own critical position, it is evident that he understood the importance of the artist and his contribution.

6. It is worth noting here that Filippo Baldinucci, in his *Vocabolario* of 1681, pp. 105–6, applied a variety of meanings to the term *naturale*. According to him, the term might be used to describe the model who poses; the act of posing so as to be depicted; the act of working from the model or from nature (*dal naturale*); and the intention of simulating the appearance of what is observed (*al naturale*). It is a combination of the latter two meanings—working from the model in order to closely simulate what is observed—that applies to the practice Caravaggio is reported to have embraced. “Naturale: Chiamano i pittori quel l’Uomo, che ignudo o vestito, sta fermo, per esser ritratto; chiamano anche modello, propriamente però colui, che per tale effetto è pagato dal pubblico dell’Accademia del Disegno. E lo star fermo di colui per tale effetto d’esser ritratto, dicono stare al naturale. E fatto dal naturale; per esempio uomo, albero, mano, aria, &c. fatta al naturale, vale rappresentato in disegno, in pittura, o in scultura, con aver tenuto il modello, o naturale, per ricavarlo. E fatto al naturale vale rappresentato in disegno, pittura, o scultura, simigliante assai alla natura della cosa rappresentata.”

7. Papi (2012b, pp. 19–23 [2014 ed., pp. 108–13]) gives an excellent synopsis of the character of Caravaggio's innovations and its impact on the next generation of painters. He rightly places at the center of this activity the young Jusepe de Ribera, whose juvenilia he was the first to identify. See also the acute observations in Lemoine 2012.

8. See, for example, Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 22): “Where the ordinary person relies entirely on the sense of the eye, he praises things done from life, because that’s the way he is accustomed to seeing them done and he appreciates the beautiful color but not the beautiful forms, which he doesn’t understand. . . .” (“Là dove il popolo riferisce il tutto al senso dell’occhio, loda le cose dipinte dal naturale, perché è solito vederne di sí fatte, apprezza li belli colori, e non le belle forme che non intende. . . .”) Giovanni Battista Agucchi, the great admirer and friend of Domenichino, had said much the same thing: “. . . le cose dipinte e imitate dal naturale piacciono al popolo, perché egli è solito di vederne di sí fatte e l’imitazione di quel che a pieno conosce li diletta”; Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 22, n. 5). Roberto Longhi (1943 [1999 ed., p. 6]) brilliantly remarked on the fact that “in the modern age in Italy, [critical judgment remained] the prerogative of the academic and aulic tradition and erudition, from Bellori to [Luigi] Lanzi to Cicognara,” and was thus fervently opposed to the new “scuola libera.” He went on to note that Baglione and Bellori, finding themselves unable to remain silent about such a comprehensive revolution, “sought to oppose aspects of it as unworthy of a history.”

9. Longhi 1935 (1972 ed., p. 15): “Era proprio l’atteggiamento etico di fronte all’uomo, alla sua storia, ai suoi miti che era cambiato con il Caravaggio.”

10. The picture, by Nicolas Régnier, is in the Bildergalerie of Sanssouci; see Lemoine 2007, pp. 71–72, 232–33, no. 29.

11. At the time of writing, the painting, by Bartolomeo Manfredi, is on loan to the Metropolitan Museum. See Papi 2013a, p. 26, no. 22.

12. This dynamic—a play between present and past; model and the role he or she enacts—needs to be distinguished from the sophisticated literary culture that informs Florentine naturalism, which I explored in the work of Artemisia Gentileschi; see Christiansen 2004. For provocative discussions of the range of dynamics between painters and their models, see Cropper 1996; Eaker 2015.

13. For the tradition among Florentine seicento painters, see Brooks 2009. For Rome, see Cavazzini 2008c, pp. 70–80. Andrea Sacchi maintained an open studio for drawing nude male models.

14. See Dempsey 2009 for a clarifying discussion on the history and importance of the concept of *disegno* and its place in the Accademia di San Luca under Zuccaro.

15. See Roccasecca 2009, pp. 124–32.

16. See Guido Jansen in Jansen and Sutton 2002, pp. 97–99, no. vii.

17. Among the identifiable fragments are the head of Niobe (extreme right foreground) and an old woman from a statue in the Capitoline Museums, Rome. See *ibid.*, p. 97.

18. The contrast Sweerts sets up between accumulating casts after fragments of classical sculpture and working from life, as well as mastering anatomy, suggests a variety of possible readings, but throughout his work the emphasis is on nature as the primary source of inspiration. This is again the theme of a picture—possibly a copy of a lost original—in the Rau Foundation that shows an artist’s studio with a pile of casts, a figure grinding pigments, and the artist busy at his easel painting from life a woman embroidering (see Jansen and Sutton 2002, p. 112, with bibliography). Sweerts also painted a drawing academy in which young, aspiring artists study from a posed nude male model. That picture probably reflects Sweerts’s own academy that he established in Brussels in 1656 following his return from Italy; Jansen in Jansen and Sutton 2002, pp. 133–35, no. xix. During his early years in Rome, Sweerts painted two works showing, in one (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam), an artist in the countryside surrounded by peasants while he draws from Bernini’s *Neptune*, which is seen against Roman ruins, and in the other (formerly Chigi collection, Rome) an artist in the countryside drawing from life, with a contrast established by the incongruous presence of an elaborate fountain. I suggest that in these works the opposition is between the ideality of classically based art and the reality of the world in which the artist works, and this seems borne out by his extraordinary country treatment of a *Plague in an Ancient City* (Los Angeles County Museum of Art). Concerning this picture, Roberto Longhi (1934 [1968 ed., pp. 178–79]) memorably observed that in basing poses on famous works of antiquity, Sweerts wished to “assert the historical roots even of ‘genre painting.’ And yet, because of his love of fidelity to nature, which is always now and therefore anti-historic, the artist cloaks his casts with real skin and real light, indifferent to the transposition, the motive of which derives from the model itself.”

19. I have touched upon Caravaggio’s use of engraving in Christiansen 1996.

20. See Bora 1989, p. 255. Bora discusses the importance for this phase of Callisto’s work of the example of Moretto da Brescia and Giovanni Gerolamo Savoldo, both of whom also worked in Milan. It is the latter two whom Longhi, quite rightly, placed at the center of his famous 1928–29 essay on Caravaggio’s precursors.

21. For the two versions, see Christiansen 2003.

22. See Keith Christiansen in Christiansen and Mann 2001, p. 94; see also Cavazzini 2001, pp. 435–36.

23. The importance of head studies, taken from life, is demonstrated by a series of portrait heads by Lucas Cranach the Elder that are painted in oil on paper and scattered in various museums. The manner in which he blocked in the forms in black was to hold true for artists down to almost the present. The tradition was no less vibrant in Italy, and especially among those artists who stand at the center of the reform of painting based on a return to nature, from Federico Barocci

to Santi di Tito and the Carracci. See, additionally, the observations in Eaker 2015.

24. Bellori (1672 [1976 ed., p. 220]) wrote: “The composition and movements, however, are not adequate for the story” (“Il componimento e li moti però non sono sufficienti all’istoria”). Mancini famously wrote of the manner promoted by Caravaggio: “This school . . . is closely tied to nature, which is always before their eyes as they work. It succeeds well with one figure alone, but in narrative compositions [*compositione dell’historia*] and in the interpretation of feelings [*esplicar affetto*], which are based on imagination and not direct observation of the thing, mere copying does not seem to me to be satisfactory, since it is impossible to put in one room a multitude of people acting out the story, with that light coming in from a single window, having to laugh or cry or pretending to walk while having to stay still in order to be copied. As a result, the features, though they look forceful, lack movement, expression, and grace.” Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed., vol. 1, pp. 108–9). Here it is important to note those three qualities that were thought essential to great painting.

25. I am referring here to Simone Peterzano’s *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* in the Monastero Maggiore di San Maurizio. The Milanese, rather than the Brescian, roots of Caravaggio’s style still seem to me underrated.

26. The various approaches to understanding the technical issues were laid out in the contributions in Gregori 1996. There have been an increasing number of studies on individual pictures, including Falcucci 2006; Falcucci 2008; *Annonciation du Caravage* 2010; Bellucci, Frosinini, and Pezzati 2010; Prohaska and Swoboda 2010, pp. 61–98; Bellucci, Frosinini, and Pezzati 2011; Cardinali and De Ruggieri 2011; and the contributions by various authors in the section “Il restauro e la diagnostica” in Pacelli and Forgione 2012, pp. 110–97. I am omitting the hypotheses relating to Caravaggio’s alleged use of mirrors to project the image of his models onto the canvas—an idea first promoted by David Hockney and, in my opinion, based on a complete misunderstanding of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century artistic practice.

27. I reviewed some examples of this practice many years ago, in Christiansen 1986; further examples can now be added to the short list I gave there, but none alters the observations made. It is also clear that other Caravaggesque painters also occasionally employed incisions—though evidently in an extremely limited way.

28. See Falcucci 2008, pp. 74–93; Falcucci 2012, p. 35.

29. Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 222). It is my impression that the changes Caravaggio made to his interpretation of Paul’s conversion, from a dramatic action in the first version following standard iconographic models, to an inactive one in the second, with no figure of Christ intervening but, instead, a heavenly ray of light, likely had to do with a specifically Augustinian insistence that Saint Paul’s vision was experienced “not according to the flesh but according to the spirit,” and was an inner vision. See, for example, Augustine’s sermon (143) on John 16:7–11 (Hill 1992, pp. 426–27). In another sermon (66.7), on Luke 24:36, Saint Augustine comments that Paul “was blinded, but in the body only, that he might be enlightened in heart” (Schaff 2016). The church of Santa Maria del Popolo was, of course, an Augustinian foundation. What we have, then, is an example not unlike that pertaining to the *Death of the Virgin*, that points to doctrinal reasons for the rejection of Caravaggio’s altarpieces. Perhaps not surprisingly, critics of his art, such as Mancini, Baglione, and Bellori, ascribed the rejections to objections of style and decorum rather than doctrinal concerns of special interest to the orders of the churches for which the altarpieces were commissioned. I treated the history of the *Death of*

the Virgin and its replacements some years ago, in Christiansen 1992—an article that seems to have escaped much of the subsequent literature, where the same stories originating with Mancini and Baglione are rehearsed. John Marciari (in Kanter and Marciari 2010, p. 144) independently covers some of the same points I made, but without awareness of my article. For a discussion of the iconography of the Louvre painting, see Loire 2006, pp. 60–61.

30. Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 236): “S’avanzò più d’ogn’altro naturalista nella disposizione delle figure, ed usò diligenza nel suo dipingere. . . .” The term “diligenza,” which Bellori also used to distinguish Manfredi’s style from that of Caravaggio—“con qualche diligenza e freschezza maggiore”—can only be applied in a limited sense to Valentin’s art and has little to do with the strongly Venetian/painterly quality of his mature paintings. Bellori’s remarks about Ribera all have to do with the realism of his art (“tirato dal genio del Caravaggio”). See Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., pp. 234, 235). His characterization of the artist as a painter of half-length figures is a standard way of noting the limitations of Caravaggesque practice. Of course, the fact that Ribera later became an archenemy of Domenichino strongly colored Bellori’s appreciation of him. Throughout this essay, I take as a given that the tendency of so much scholarship to place Manfredi and his so-called “methodus” at the center of our understanding of the Caravaggesque movement requires serious revision. Papi (2013a, pp. 9, 14, 38, n. 33) has repeatedly called attention to the historical distortion resulting from an uncritical use of the term “methodus,” which in the 1683 Latin translation of Sandrart’s *Teutsche Academie* replaced the unexceptional German “manier” and meant merely the manner, or style, of Manfredi.

31. Bellori 1672 (1976 ed., p. 319).

32. I thank Elisabeth Hipp, Marcia Steele, David Miller, Fiona Beckett, Andrés Úbeda de los Cobos, Hilliard Goldfarb, Elke Oberthaler, and my colleagues Michael Gallagher and Evan Read in the Department of Paintings Conservation at the Metropolitan Museum for discussing with me the technical findings of the pictures.

33. See Goldfarb 2015.

34. For a discussion of Bassano’s procedures, see Bayer, Gallagher, and Centeno 2013, pp. 90–97. The Metropolitan’s *modello* by Tintoretto for his large canvas of Doge Alvise Mocenigo presented to the Redeemer (10.206) has passages of drawing with the brush that, again, offer a fascinating, if more elegant, prelude to Valentin’s abbreviated manner of recording poses.

35. Bottari and Ticozzi 1822, pp. 484–86. Bassetti recounts that he has followed the advice of Palma and begun an academy, “drawing the poses with brush and colors which these people refer to as an academy in the Venetian style, and they are very pleased to see a forceful sketch; greatly satisfied in seeing that what one is drawing, one is also painting” (“disegnando le attitudini con li pennelli e colori che questa gente la chiama un’accademia alla veneziana, e essi mostrano gran soddisfazione di veder qualche botta risoluta; ammirando grandemente il veder che quanto si disegna, si dipinge ancora”).

36. In his 1914 study of Orazio Borgianni, Longhi (1961 ed., p. 113) brilliantly identified brushwork (*la pennellata*) as the means by which painters gave lyrical unity to all parts of a composition.

37. Sacchi maintained in his studio an open “accademia del nudo” for the purposes of drawing from nude models, one of whom, il Caporal Leone, was much admired for the perfection of his physique and the lively poses he struck. On this practice, see Cavazzini 2008c, pp. 70–80.

38. Manfredi included in the price of the picture the cost of hiring a boy and woman to model for Cupid and Venus; see Maccherini 1999, p. 136, doc. no. 10, fol. 104v.

39. Carlo Cesare Malvasia (1678 [1841 ed., vol. 2, pp. 57, 59]) gives a useful account of Guido Reni's use of models, sometimes choosing them for their resemblance to famous ancient statues, sometimes for a beautiful aspect, and at other times for their singular appearance. The terracotta bust, of which bronze casts were made and became popular studio props, is in Palazzo Venezia, Rome; Reni's painted head study in Palazzo Spada, Rome, shows the head turned upward, viewed from an angle, and thus is conceived as a study in expression—a *tête d'expression*, or *aria di testa*. This head was used by Reni many years after he had made the original study—which must have been about 1610—for a priest in the *Circumcision* in the church of San Martino, Siena. He became known as Reni's Seneca, in reference to the famous statue then identified as showing the Roman stoic philosopher. In this case, then, nature and an ideal coincide in a way that stands at the opposite pole from *dal naturale*.

40. The same model appears in at least four pictures by the young Ribera, including the figure of Saint Bartholomew from the *Apostolado* he painted for the Spaniard Pedro Cosida; see Papi in Milicua and Portús Pérez 2011, p. 110. He is found as well in Manfredi's *Crowning with Thorns* in Florence and Cecco del Caravaggio's *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin. Borgianni painted a head study of the figure together with one of another model (location unknown), underscoring the importance head studies played in obtaining a naturalistic effect in his work. The fact that all of these artists made studies of this model clearly places Reni's "discovery" of him on the banks of the Tiber about 1610.

41. See the comments regarding Caravaggio and theater in Papi 2010b.

42. As long ago as 1935, Roberto Longhi (1935 [1972 ed., p. 9]), commented on the Gallic character of Valentin: "Notice how, in comparison with Caravaggio, [Valentin] emphasizes and accentuates the subject, the fact, the romantic character, a mood of bohemian melancholy and moroseness."

Valentin in the Grand Siècle

1. See my essay "Bowling to No One: Valentin's Ambitions" in this catalogue.

2. Baglione 1642, p. 338.

3. For some of the most famous passages, see, in addition to Baglione, Giovan Pietro Bellori (1672, p. 216) and Joachim von Sandrart (1675, pt. 2, p. 367).

4. See the Chronology in this catalogue.

5. Mancini ca. 1617–21 (1956–57 ed.); Giustiniani, *Discorso sopra la pittura* (Giustiniani n.d. [1981 ed., pp. 41–45]).

6. See the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini and the Chronology in this catalogue.

7. Baglione 1642, pp. 337–38.

8. Bellori 1672, p. 216; Baldinucci 1681–1728 (1974–75 ed., vol. 3, p. 691, and vol. 6, p. 203).

9. Bellori 1672, p. 216. "Valentino . . . venne à Roma, e seguìto lo stile del Caravaggio con maniera vigorosa, e tinta. S'avanzò più d'ogn'altro naturalista nella dispositione delle figure, & usò diligenza nel suo dipingere; sebene era anch'egli inclinato à bizzarrie di giuochi, suoni, e zingarate."

10. Félibien 1725, vol. 2, fourth conversation, p. 289, and vol. 3, sixth conversation, p. 290. In addition to the few lines he devoted to Valentin, Félibien mentioned the painter of Coulommiers in his "Vie de Poussin" and in that of Vouet, an artist who may have followed "Valentin's manner" in his early days (Félibien 1725, vol. 3, seventh conversation, p. 402).

11. For example, Charles Perrault (1696–1700 [1701 ed., p. 206]) mentioned Valentin only in reference to the biography of Vouet: "[Vouet's] first manner took after Valentin." Roger de Piles invoked Valentin, along with Bartolomeo Manfredi, among the many painters who followed Caravaggio's manner. Valentin also reappears in the "Vie de Vouet." See de Piles 1699, pp. 340, 466.

12. Schnapper 1994, p. 135.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 171–73; Szanto 2011. In addition to the *Four Ages of Man*, the Particelli d'Emery collection contained a copy of a music party painting by Valentin that would later belong to the collection of Particelli's son-in-law, Louis Phélypeaux de La Vrillière.

14. Mignot 1985.

15. The presence of the painting in the Etienne Lybault collection and its bequest upon his death to his brother-in-law Jacques Bordier in 1641 were recently discovered by Françoise de La Moureyre (2013). See also the painting's provenance, reconstituted in cat. 34.

16. For this type of procedure, see Szanto 2011.

17. Schnapper 1994, pp. 159–64.

18. Michel 1999.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 387–88.

20. The eight Valentin canvases collected by Mazarin are: the *Judgment of Solomon* (cat. 33); a *Samson and Delilah* (already in the 1653 collection; inv. 1661, no. 1094, assessed at 1,000 livres); a *Christ Driving the Merchants from the Temple* (perhaps cat. 40); two music party paintings with several figures (nos. 1098 and 1103; 1,000 livres and 400 livres, respectively; perhaps cats. 42 and 23); a *Seated Soldier Playing the Lute* (cat. 30); a *Saint Agnes* (no. 1006, 200 livres), and the portrait *Raffaello Menicucci* (cat. 41). See Michel 1999, pp. 387, 409–10, nn. 152–59, pp. 586, 594.

21. Schnapper 1994, pp. 267–82.

22. Szanto 2008, vol. 1, pp. 311–18.

23. Weil-Curiel 2004.

24. Grivel 1985. Sumptuous prints sold separately, on large or small vellum sheets, were also gathered into a collection beginning in 1677, with a description by André Félibien accompanying the plates.

25. Valentin's presence appears all the more remarkable in that the *Cabinet du Roi* was likely put together by the king's historians, in particular André Félibien, who is known to have had little regard for Caravaggio and his followers. The inclusion of the four Valentins in the *Cabinet du Roi*, since it cannot be easily explained in terms of its creators' intentions, could be an expression of Louis XIV's own will, a hypothesis suggested, perhaps, by the display in the Chambre du Roi in Versailles of the *Four Evangelists* (see cats. 28, 29).

26. Milovanovic 2009.

27. Dubos 1719 (1733 ed., vol. 2, pp. 26–27).

28. Delécluze 1855, p. 113; Thoré 1839, p. 6.

Valentin: A French Painter

1. Thuillier 1958, pp. 27–30.

2. See the essay by Patrizia Cavazzini in this catalogue and the Chronology.

3. See my analysis in Cuzin 2001, pp. 210–11 (2010 ed., in French, pp. 44–46).

4. For example, a small copy on copper of the *Denial of Saint Peter* (fig. 21), which seems very Parisian and mid-century (sale, Boisgirard-Antonini, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, December 4, 2015, no. 1).

5. On the success of Valentin's canvases, see Lemoine 2009–10, pp. 125–29.

6. Hoog 1960, pp. 277, 278. More even than by Valentin, the canvas in Bordeaux is inspired by Gerard van Kuijl (1604–1673), a Dutch

Caravaggesque painter whose composition for a painting of the ages of man it emulates (present location unknown; sale, Sotheby's, London, July 3, 1977, no. 87; Nicolson 1989, p. 131, pl. 1368). See also a beautiful and close copy, almost certainly of the eighteenth century, of the Louvre's *Fortune-Teller* (sale, Morlaix, February 29–March 1, 2016, no. 323, as "French school, eighteenth century," 96 x 131 cm).

7. This sheet, from the collections of Philippe de Chennevières, Louis Deglatigny, and Georges Grimmer, was donated by Donald F. McClure to the Art Institute of Chicago in 1972 (see fig. 7). It was published in Rosenberg 1984, pp. 829, 830, n. 7.

8. De Montaignon and Guiffrey 1887–1912, vol. 13 (1904), p. 444.

9. Pougetoux 1995, p. 162.

10. See Anne-Claire Lussiez in *Face à face* 1998, p. 142.

11. Figure 47 is inscribed at upper left: 1591–1634; at lower left: *Anatole Dauvergne 1843*. The painter is holding a portfolio, with a recognizable

detail, inverted and in red chalk, from the *Fortune-Teller* now in Toledo (cat. 15; in Belvoir Castle at the time). Where did Dauvergne find this document? The canvas does not seem to have been reattributed to Valentin by Gustave Waagen until 1854.

12. The autograph of this copy, sometimes attributed to Hippolyte Poterlet (1803–1835), is a matter of controversy. See Grunhech 1978, pp. 86–87, no. 3.

13. Sale, Ader-Picard-Tajan, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, April 9, 1990, no. 131, color ill.

14. Chastel 1993, pp. 63–65.

15. Jamot 1934, p. xxii.

16. Sterling 1939, pp. 171–74 (quotation on pp. 173–74).

17. Chastel 1993, p. 135.

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ISBN 978-1-58839-602-0



9 781588 396020

PRINTED IN ITALY