Collaborative Painting Between Minds and Hands:
Art Criticism, Connoisseurship, and Artistic Sodality
in Early Modern Italy

by

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Abstract
The intention of this dissertation is to open up collaborative pictures to meaningful analysis by accessing the perspectives of early modern viewers. The Italian primary sources from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries yield a surprising amount of material indicating both common and changing habits of thought when viewers looked at multiple authorial hands working on an artistic project. It will be argued in the course of this dissertation that critics of the seventeenth century were particularly attentive to the practical conditions of collaboration as the embodiment of theory. At the heart of this broad discourse was a trope extolling painters for working with what appeared to be one hand, a figurative and adaptable expression combining the notion of the united corpo and the manifold meanings of the artist’s mano. Hardly insistent on uniformity or anonymity, writers generally believed that collaboration actualized the ideals of a range of social, cultural, theoretical, and cosmological models in which variously formed types of unity were thought to be fostered by the mutual support of the artists’ minds or souls. Further theories arose in response to Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo’s hypothesis in 1590 that the greatest painting would combine the most highly regarded old masters, each contributing their particular talents towards the whole. Presented with this ideal involving inimitable hands and minds, Francesco Scannelli, Carlo Cesare Malvasia, and Marco Boschini each reflected on the practical conditions and possibilities of
such a scenario. Collectors and connoisseurs, meanwhile, often discerned multiple hands in a single picture, leading to dubious attributions of collaborative authorship, particularly when the social circumstances supporting the collaboration were thought to be projected in the subject matter. The connoisseur’s fanciful tendency could even be exploited by the art market, a phenomenon that is especially observable in a group of half-length figures that was purportedly made by Giorgione, Sebastiano del Piombo, and Titian. Finally, a case study of the Venetian painters Palma Giovane and Aliense, whose families were bonded in marriage on the eve of a series of joint projects, tests the implications of those values in criticism, theory, and connoisseurship when collaboration was put into social practice.
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INTRODUCTION
The Concept of Collaboration: Contexts, Distinctions, and a Historiography

Some readers will be surprised at how little formal analysis and connoisseurship there is in a dissertation about collaborative painting. After all, in order to see how multiple hands were stitched together, is it not necessary to first pull apart the seams? This is a fair question and one that was equally compelling to early modern critics, as we will see. To understand what might be accomplished from a strictly connoisseurial and formal approach – and what it might lose sight of – let us briefly turn this question into an exercise by comparing two pendant paintings: Palma Giovane’s Visitation (Fig. 117) and Aliense’s The Birth of the Virgin (Fig. 116). Both paintings are situated in the apse of the cathedral of Salò where the two established painters were given the joint task of decorating the choir between 1602 and 1605.¹ If we try to reconstruct the artists’ responses to each other in these two pictures, there are several similarities worthy of comment. For one, the chiaroscuro tonalism in each, punctuated with bright pitches from a shared colour palette, suggests a certain coordination. In the Visitation, we might further delineate Palma’s typical style in the modeling of balding heads and bare shoulders. This warm, fleshy luminescence was derived with some exaggeration from Titian, who was Palma’s primary artistic model during his early career in Venice. We might argue that Aliense, who was not known for such luminescence, tried to match this quality in the Birth of the Virgin, particularly in the figure of Joachim on the right. When it came to the compositions, each painter followed the same formula based on ascending diagonal movements, guided by the twisting bodies of the attendant figures. These figures were common in both painters’ oeuvres and were modeled on the graphic practices of Tintoretto, who had himself developed his characteristic figures by studying Michelangelo’s prints and casts.

Despite these conjunctions in tone, colour, and composition, we might alternatively privilege the differences between the two works. Palma was more attentive to the monumentality of the figures in his narrative, keeping a low viewpoint and flattening the depth of the picture to emphasize the narrative moment at the very centre of the composition. Aliense’s smaller figures and higher point of view, in contrast, allowed the architectural

¹ This collaborative pairing will form the basis of the final chapter of this dissertation. See Chapter 4.
setting to take on greater monumentality in accordance with his early tutelage under Paolo Veronese. This staging created a theatrical backdrop for the baby Mary who would be unassuming were it not for her glowing illumination.

It would be reasonable to extend this comparative method to the other works in the space as well, and to expand the boundaries of our analysis to include techniques, materials, and iconography. We might ultimately assume after a brief formalist reading like this that the patrons, perhaps with the help of a learned advisor, were responsible for coordinating Palma and Aliense, and for making sure there was a certain unity in style and subject. We might also believe that the patrons gave them license, or even encouraged them, to compete against each other and set themselves apart. All of this would appear to be a fair assessment, were it not for the documents related to the negotiations over the contract, which reveal that Aliense was included in the project only on Palma’s insistence, and with personal assurances of their complete cooperation: “it goes without saying that without his partnership I would not have wanted the assignment, nor could I have accepted it … In short I intend to be present in everything that he will devise and work on, and I will be content to continue the works designed by him or even started.”

Without a doubt, connoisseurship and formal analysis told us a great deal about the evolution of the project and helped us see how the ensemble came together in a variety of ways. Yet it seems inevitable with such an approach that the creative process appears, when all is said and done, mundane and mechanistic, because the pictures were taken apart without understanding the internal forces that made them work.

Palma’s surprising clarification about his intention to work with Aliense as collaborator is significant. But why? What are we to make of this procedural detail? What did it mean in the broader cultural context to have two artists willingly and deferentially bring their skills together like this? This study taps into the voices of early modern viewers in an attempt to recapture their perspectives on subjectivity and agency between multiple collaborative hands.

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2 For the letter from Palma insisting on Aliense’s involvement, see Marcello Riccioni, *Una riforma nella pittura Bresciana del Seicento: Palma il Giovane: la decorazione del coro nel Duomo di Salò* (Roccafranca, 2008), 47 n.14: “Il Signor Antonio Aliense si parte con mastro Piero vostro portalettere insieme con un giovine, anzi uomo atto a far ogni sorte de fatiche così d’ornamenti, (...) credo che benissimo le avrà inteso dall’Illustissimo Vostro, che io voglio per compagno detto Aliense, et lo avevo eletto sino al principio che mi fu fatto motto di detta opera, (...) basta dirli che senza la compagnia sua non avrei voluto tal incarico, ne potuto accetirlo, e le ne faccia giudizio della mia risoluzione, insomma tengo ad esser presente in tutto quello che lui tratterà et opererà, et mi contenterò a continuare le opere da lui disegnate ovvero principiate.” For a transcript of the signed contract, see Monica Ibsen, *Il Duomo di Salò* (Salò, 1999), 189-191.
As it turns out, the primary sources from Italy between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries, including biographies, treatises, dialogues, guidebooks, and letters, are replete with commentaries on pictures and programs made by several independent painters in joint authorship. In many of these descriptive comments, the viewer not only took into account the circumstances that made it possible for two or more artists to reach an accord with each other, but in the act of describing this accord, the viewer also considered the whole creative process between the mind and the hand. Such comments, therefore, should help us to recover the significance ascribed to collaboration in and of itself at this time, and it should afford us the opportunity to take stock of the social dimensions of invention more broadly during the early modern period.

‘Collaboration’: Defining our Terms

The art historical discipline still seems unsure how to deploy the word ‘collaboration’ with analytical weight, although recent changes in attitude have been welcome (see below). Since the poststructuralist turn, collaboration has served as an anodyne portmanteau covering all of the manifold conditions and environmental influences acting on the artist’s aesthetic and material output without committing either to a total eclipse of authorial intention, or to a defense of agency.\(^3\) When I refer to collaboration, I am using the word as a short hand for the joint enterprises of independent painters who were willingly and actively working together in Italy from the late fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

For Elizabeth Honig, who is one of the few scholars to try to crystalize the concept for the early modern period, the essential characteristic of collaboration was equality: “What is constant is the equal care devoted to each part, the equal expertise of those who execute them, and their equal claim to attention in the final product.”\(^4\) It might be too restrictive to expect equality in all these aspects, however equality is to be measured, but the crux of the idea, that contributors were of an equal professional status, can help us to further frame

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\(^3\) See the wide-ranging essays in Wendy Stedman Sheard and John T. Paoletti, eds., *Collaboration in Italian Renaissance Art* (New Haven, 1978), the unifying theme of which was broadly classified as “patterns of group functioning”; and the essays in Silvia Bigliazzi and Sharon Wood, eds., *Collaboration in the Arts from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Aldershot, 2006). Heather Anne Hirschfeld, writing about literary collaboration in the Renaissance, has aptly referred to this ever-expanding inclusiveness of authorship, as a “loose construction of the term collaboration.” See Heather Anne Hirschfeld, “Early Modern Collaboration and Theories of Authorship,” *PMLA* 116, 3 (2001): 614.

collaborative independence. Though not necessarily of equal reputation, those collaborators that will be discussed in this dissertation had a different social dynamic than the more subservient relationship between an assistant and a master, a point which will be refined momentarily. Since Honig was exclusively focused on a genre of collaborative painting made for the art market in seventeenth-century Antwerp, she further enclosed her definition around single portable works that were strictly divided up between painters who specialized in different subject matter. There will be occasions to discuss single works and specializations, but I have also included large decorative programs that were devised and executed by several artists working at the same time and with the expectation that they work together in some form of unity. Such large projects will only be included, however, when a critic thought the multiplicity of hands was relevant, and in turn believed each hand was subject to equal attention. It should be further noted that perceptions of what constituted unity in these enterprises evolved over time, as cultural values shifted between the role of the artists’ skillful hands and the artists’ inventive minds.\(^5\)

When dealing with an increasingly nebulous concept like collaboration, etymology can be an especially instructive signpost. The verb *collaborare* (to work together), derived from the Latin, does not actually appear in the Italian lexicon, or in the English lexicon for that matter, until the nineteenth century and I have yet to come across a recurring equivalent in the early modern period. Nevertheless, the term’s original semantic field anticipates the descriptive comments of early modern writers. The first appearance of the verb in Latin dates back to the early third century when Tertullian, in *De paenitentia*, created it for an exposition on public confession in the church.\(^6\) It behooves every member of the community, the Church Father sermonized, to publicly humiliate themselves in the process of expunging their sins. This public cleansing, he said, is best done in the presence of clerics,

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5 In another article on Rubens and Brueghel, Honig was more resolute that collaborators had to be firm in their independence after providing a similar definition: “In true collaboration, no one idea is determinant and no unified author can be isolated. In true collaboration the work does not speak with a single voice. Rather, the beholder is made witness to a dialogue between two minds and two brushes, each of which responds in the process of painting to the challenges of the other.” Honig, “Paradise Regained: Rubens, Jan Brueghel, and the Sociability of Visual Thought,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 55, 1 (2004): 271-272. This comment about the doubling of minds and brushes is apropos in the context of their paintings, but we will see that there were different points of view in early modern theory on just what was doubled, on what was integrated, and thus on what was a ‘true’ collaboration.

6 *Dizionario etimologico italiano*, ed. Carlo Battisti and Giovanni Alessio (Florence, 1975), 1010-1011.
…where there is common hope, fear, joy, grief, suffering (*communis spes metus gaudium dolor passio*), because there is a common Spirit from a common Lord and Father (*communis spiritus de communi domino et patre*). Why do you think these brothers to be anything other than yourself? Why flee from the partners of your own mischances, as from such as will derisively cheer them? The body cannot feel gladness at the trouble of any one member, it must necessarily join with one consent in the grief, and collaborate (*conlaboret*) for the remedy.\(^7\)

Aside from the context of suffering and the application to salvific practices, *conlaboret* is not dissimilar to today’s basic understanding of the verb ‘to collaborate.’ Collaboration, for Tertullian, required a willingness of all members to participate as equals and work together towards a common goal. Early modern descriptions of collaborative partnerships also incorporated the metaphorical and spiritual language. Painters who worked together, as we will see, were said to share their efforts and unite as one metaphorical body, bonded by one spirit, much as Tertullian had said of the Christian community. As a noun, *conlaboratio* had a different meaning in Frankish and Carolingian administration than Tertullian’s verb. Nevertheless, this alternative meaning conveys notions that we will again encounter in descriptions of early modern partnerships. ‘Collaboration,’ in the medieval context, referred not to shared labour but to the sharing of profits and acquisitions earned from the harvest on monastic property, or from a marriage.\(^8\) Likewise for early modern viewers, collaborative partnerships entailed the sharing of profits, or at least the sharing of credit in a measure that could not be determinately apportioned.

**Collaboration Between Theory and Practice – Thinking and Making**

One of the recurring themes in the chapters that follow is the relationship between the mind and the hand in the creative process, and how that relationship was altered or sustained when another mind and hand was added into the mix. I feel obliged to state that this topic on collaboration recasts the notion of the individual genius, that classic melancholic figure whose frenzied inspiration and idiosyncratic view of the world were thought to be activated

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\(^7\) Adapted from Tertullian, *The Writings of Quintus Sept. Flor. Tertullianus*, trans. Rev. S. Thelwall (Edinburgh, 1869), 274-275. For the Latin, see Tertullian, *De paenitentia*, X, 4-5.

\(^8\) See Charles du Fresne Du Cange, et al., *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, vol. 2 (Niort, 1883-87), col. 508a-b.
in quiet solitude and intellectual contemplation. But to say that collaboration recasts the notion of genius, does not mean that the notion needs to be overturned. There is no denying that the solitary genius, however rarefied, was a real character-type in the early modern period, emblematized programmatically by Dürer’s *Melancholia I* and Raphael’s ‘Michelangelo’ in the *School of Athens*. There is, likewise, little need to call the myth into question by demonstrating the realities of artistic practice. That great artists, including Michelangelo, did not labour or invent in total isolation from their environment has been sufficiently established by social historical approaches. This project will explore the opinions of early modern critics to see how, if at all, they were able to reconcile what the modern observer now treats as a disjunction between theory and practice.

The relationship between theory and practice – between intellectual definitions about what art is or does, and the physical and material conditions of how art is made – has been a moving target in the art historical discipline. The question that is usually put to this relationship is the extent to which artists were familiar with theory and whether or not their practice should be interpreted based on texts. This question has been especially contentious in studies on ‘eclectic imitation’ and on the individual works of the three Carracci at the end of the sixteenth century. The debate arises from seventeenth-century texts that celebrated the Carracci as the harbingers of an esoteric theory. This theory averred that the Carracci and their followers had privileged access to the Idea, a universal form from which all natural objects were thought to originate. Using their respective intellects, Annibale, his brother Agostino, and his cousin Ludovico, were each said to be able to synthesize the metaphysical preoccupations of the mannerists and the straightforward mimesis of the naturalists into a

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12 Giovanni Pietro Bellori presented this theory of the Idea, a concept that originated in antiquity, in a lecture to the Accademia di San Luca in 1664. The lecture was then published as an introduction to Bellori’s artist biographies; see Bellori, *Le vite de’ pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* (Rome, 1672), 3-13.
normative aesthetic of the *perfetta idea*.

Whether the Carracci, who established their own academy in the 1580s, were consciously pursuing reform within a theoretical system of so-called ‘Classical idealism,’ or more simply returning art to an objective imitation of nature has not been fully settled. But either way, the debate has run its course with most support falling, at this point, towards the position taken by Charles Dempsey and Elizabeth Cropper, among others. Their point is not that the Carracci were fully cognizant of all the details that theory ascribed to their works, but that they were nevertheless painting from life, from antiques, and from different regional masters with a deliberate developmental procedure in mind. These scholars have also shifted attention away from theoretical passages dealing with the esoteric nature of art, and have instead paid closer attention to descriptions dealing with the working methods of artists. The Carracci’s approach to artistic education, and the theory that responded to it, was not about reform and theoretical rules as such, but about, as Cropper succinctly put it, “the habit of thinking about what one is doing.”

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then, might more properly be posed as to what extent practice informed theory, or to what extent they informed each other reciprocally.

As this study will show, writers were especially attentive at this time not just to their own lofty postulations about art in collaboration, but also to the practical conditions and the social circumstances that were believed to engender the agreement between several imaginative minds and unique hands. While the Carracci were improving the intellectual procedures with which the individual could attend to painting using disparate visual sources, they were also collaborating in new ways. Especially in the frescoes in the Palazzo Magnani of 1592, critics were delighted to see faint traces of the three painters’ hands intruding into each other’s spaces. These critics then tried to respond to the challenge of disentangling the negotiated process out of which these pictures were realized. At this time in 1590, the artist and theorist Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo envisioned two ideal paintings as imaginary collaborations, one between Michelangelo and Titian representing Adam, and the other between Raphael and Correggio representing Eve. Lomazzo’s hypothetical model, which was intended as an analogy to eclectic imitation, nevertheless led seventeenth-century writers to compare and adapt its ideal potential to what they saw as the practical realities of collaboration. The discourse of the period further accounts for the sudden appearance of a series of suspicious collaborative paintings in seventeenth-century inventories. These paintings, comprised of three figures, were attributed to three famous old masters working side by side. The only example of these inventoried works to have survived bears three distinct styles, which, in the seventeenth century, were purported to belong to Giorgione, Sebastiano del Piombo, and Titian. Though these artists worked together closely in one studio in the first decade of the sixteenth century, this painting is actually a pastiche from the early seventeenth century. The visible difference between styles in this painting does not correspond with the indistinguishability that typically accompanied their hands in combination; however, the differences do correspond to generalized descriptions of their techniques in their biographies. Paintings like this, it will be argued, would have been ideally suited to the activities of the gallery where technical details were scrutinized for variances

18 See Chapter 1.5.
19 Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, Idea del tempio della pittura (Milan, 1590), 60.
20 See Chapter 2.
according to the character of the suspected maker.\textsuperscript{21} Meanwhile, in the spirit of academic sodality, Venetian artists like Palma and Aliense were dismantling the boundaries of the workshop space to the point that colleagues became friends, family members, and collaborators. In contrast to the positive reforms of the Carracci, however, the replicative results of this close-knit artistic community has come to represent the decline of an influential Venetian Renaissance tradition.\textsuperscript{22}

**Collaboration and Workshop Spaces**

Bound up with the issue of theory and practice is the omnipresent workshop. Further account, therefore, must be made for the distinction between the expansive operations of the workshop and of collaboration. The artistic arrangements at the centre of this study were functionally similar to a workshop, but were notionally and even semiotically different. In the views of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century patrons and critics, collaborative arrangements between independent artists stood apart from the norms of the workshop precisely because of the minds involved.\textsuperscript{23} It is an outdated cliché to suggest that the greater emphasis placed on the artist’s humanistic education liberated the painter from workshop traditions, when in truth the workshop remained an active centre of administration and production throughout the period.\textsuperscript{24} But there are reasons to see new lines being drawn between the mental and manual spheres of the artist’s space. This mental separation was instantiated in the Renaissance invention of the artist’s *studio*, which was simultaneously a private room of contemplation

\textsuperscript{21} See Chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{22} See Chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{23} For a concise explanation of the various members and their roles in the early modern workshop, see Gabriele Bleeke-Byrne, “The Education of the Painter in the Workshop,” in *Children of Mercury: The Education of Artists in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Providence, RI, 1984), 28-39
\textsuperscript{24} To cite just one example, the production side of the equation of artistic invention rarely if ever emerges from the sources of Panofsky’s inquiry into the philosophical history of the Idea; the only time Panofsky mentioned the workshop was to perpetuate the notion that the Renaissance artist had to have been liberated from such a menial space in order for the lofty theories about the artist’s relationship to the world to be advanced. See Panofsky, *Idea*, 50: “Now this double demand, to face reality directly – imitating and nevertheless improving upon it – would have been impossible to fulfill during this epoch if the expressly rejected workshop tradition, which, as it were, spared the artist the necessity of finding his own terms for dealing with nature, had not been replaced by something completely different which made this ‘coming to terms with nature’ possible. The artist was rather like someone driven out of a confined, but protected, residential area into a vast and still uncharted countryside, and there arose, and was bound to arise, that discipline that today is customarily called art theory. In many respects it was built upon antique foundations, but on the whole it is specifically modern. It differs from the earlier literature of art by no longer answering the question ‘how to do it?’ but the quite different and thoroughly unmedieval question ‘what abilities and, above all, what kind of knowledge enable the artist to confront nature with confidence whenever he is required to do so?’”
set apart from the distractions of the bottega proper, and a performative space inscribed with
the artist’s professional persona as a genius. Biographical anecdotes about the secretive
master, keeping drawings and other resources hidden away from purloining assistants, further
enlivened the myth of the contemplative genius at odds with the mundane world of the shop
and with the assistants he supposedly hoped to keep servile. By the early seventeenth
century, at least in Genoa, workshop organization was further stratified between activities of
leisurely thinking and laborious making. Among the members of the workshop, there were,
in addition to apprentices under contract, apprentices sponsored by their fathers of elevated
stations. The traditional pupils were still expected to perform menial tasks such as grinding
pigments and carrying buckets of water, while these new distinguished pupils were exempt
from these chores so that they might concentrate on training their mind and hand.

On the other hand, a number of large workshops were so cooperative in nature that they
distorted these simple hierarchical divisions along mental and physical lines. It is with this
kind of permissive workshop, with its distribution and expansion of responsibilities, that
collaboration seems to find its greatest affinity. But there are more issues to consider here
than the extensive involvement of another qualitative hand in the intervening stages of
production. Titian, Rubens, Guido Reni, and Bernini, all of whom were as celebrated for the
visible skill of their hands as much as for their intellectual designs, oversaw large teams that
were granted a certain degree of creative freedom. The public, then as now, was aware of this
fact, leading to the development of classificatory systems to measure the degree of the
master’s involvement in the planning and execution of a work. More than anyone,

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25 See the collection of essays in Michael Cole and Mary Pardo, eds., Inventions of the Studio: Renaissance to
Romanticism (Chapel Hill, 2005).
(2002): 469-490; Anthony Hughes, “From the Cave to the Stithy: Artists’ Studios and Intellectual Property in
27 Peter M. Lukehart, “Delineating the Genoese Studio: Giovani accartati or sotto padre?,” in The Artist’s
28 On Titian’s workshop, see Giorgio Tagliaferro and Bernard Aikema, Le botteghe di Tiziano (Florence, 2009).
For an alternative overview of the problem of authorship, and a nuanced breakdown of the master’s claim to
intellectual property, with a special focus on Rubens’ large workshop, see Hughes, “From the Cave to the
Stithy,” 34-48; and Jeffrey Muller, “Measures of Authenticity: The Detection of Copies in the Early Literature
on Connoisseurship,” in Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions, ed. Kathleen
Preciado (Washington, 1989), 141-149. On Guido Reni and the market value of his hand, see Richard Spear,
And on Bernini’s distribution of work, see Jennifer Montagu, “Bernini Sculptures Not by Bernini,” in
Gianlorenzo Bernini: New Aspects of his Art and Thought, ed. Irving Lavin (University Park, PA, 1985), 25-
61.
Raphael’s ability to coordinate his variously skilled assistants by involving them in the planning of compositions was remarkably collaborative according to modern standards. But despite public knowledge of a substratum of contributors, Raphael’s authorship somehow remained intact, not because of his initial design, as some would argue, but because of his manner of invention, which combines the concept in his mind, the skill of his hand, and the graceful coordination of other hands that followed his brand and style. Raphael, when all was said and done, was the one who had to think about how the image would ultimately be made. In fact, Raphael’s managerial style and harmonizing effect on his assistants were heralded by Vasari as signs of his gentility and courtly manners.

Perhaps the clearest way to understand the difference between collaboration and workshop production is to take Rubens’ word for it, as uttered in his negotiations with Sir Dudley Carlton to acquire a collection of antiques in exchange for his own paintings. To assuage his trading partner’s concerns about inevitable workshop copies, Rubens compiled a list of the paintings on offer. He detailed what works were complete originals and what works were copies, which he assured his English Lord were always retouched by his own hand at the end. The Prometheus Bound (Fig. 1.34), however, was described differently, since Rubens had to acknowledge the hand of another outside his supervision: “Original by

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30 Magne Malmanger has provided an interesting discussion about the importance of disegno, as the design of an idea, in the Renaissance. But he leans perhaps too heavily against the significance of execution in the eyes of contemporaries; see Malmanger, “Rise and Fall of the Designer,” in Imitation, Representation, and Printing in the Italian Renaissance, ed. Roy Eriksen and Magne Malmanger (Pisa and Rome, 2009), 233-245.

31 The members of Raphael’s shop were well known to his patrons and to his public, and yet this was not troubling because Raphael’s managerial style made him the model of a proper master. This will be discussed further in Chapter 1.4; see Vasari, Lives of the Artists, trans. George Bull, vol. 1 (London, 1987), 321-322: “And among his [Raphael’s] exceptional gifts I must acknowledge one of great value that fills me with amazement; namely, that heaven gave him the power to bring about in our profession a phenomenon completely alien to our character as painters. What happened was that craftsmen who worked with Raphael began to live in a state of natural harmony and agreement. (This was true not only of artists of ordinary talent but also of those who made some pretense to be great men, and painting produces any number of those.) At the sight of Raphael, all their bad humour died away, and every base and unworthy thought left their minds. This harmony was never greater than while Raphael was alive; and this state of affairs came about because the artists were won over by his accomplishments and his courteous behaviour, and above all by the loving-kindness of his nature Raphael was so gentle and so charitable that even animals loved him, not to speak of men.” On the theme of Raphael’s gracious and courtly character in Vasari, see Patricia Lee Rubin, Giorgio Vasari: Art and History (New Haven, 1995), 372-379.
my hand and the eagle done by Frans Snyders.”

Workshop assistants, even the most skilled, were subordinate to Rubens’ creative and qualitative oversight and were thus integrated under a single identity. This particular painting was an original composition devised by Rubens’ mind and hand. But Frans Snyders, because he had an independent authority, skill, and style, was entitled to be named separately with credit of his own for the “original” work that he did. We might say that collaborations were not just expansions of the workshop – the space of the body – they were also seen, perhaps more so, as expansions of the studio – the space of the mind. Indeed, by the seventeenth century, the most celebrated collaborations were characterized metaphorically as an integrated monadic body with an expanded dyadic mind.

**Early Modern Terms for Rivalry and Collaboration**

While collaboration still struggles to take root in our understanding of early modern artistic thought, the significance of competition in the practice and theory of early modern Italy has been discussed extensively, drawing from both the material and the textual evidence. In contrast to collaboration, rivalry excites interpretations of the artist’s individual actions in pursuit of a higher reputation and status. According to Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, episodes of rivalry formed part of the biographical tropes that helped to explain the psychology of the creative artist. Artistic contests were woven into artists’ biographies, Kris and Kurz argued, because they placed artists in the same space and time, implying a psychological link between the art work and the creator. Criticism of a rival’s work, they believed, was equated

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33 For a thoughtful discussion of collaboration as an expansion of the workshop in function and in its place in the city of Florence during the fifteenth century, see Anabel Thomas, “The Workshop as the Space of Collaborative Artistic Production,” in *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, ed. Roger J. Crum and John T. Paoletti (Cambridge, 2006), 415-430.


35 If new scientific theories are correct, cooperative patterns may have been as operative in evolutionary survival as individual ‘fitness’; see Martin A. Nowak, “Why We Help,” *Scientific American* 307 (2012): 34-39.
with criticism of the person, and in the more hostile cases, iconoclastic violence against another’s work was a sublimated manifestation of a desire to commit violence against the person. The two art historians, who helped change the field’s approach to the anecdote in art biography, concluded from such stories that “the heightened passion with which he [the artist] encounters his rivals results from his striving to insure the uniqueness of his achievement.”

Though cooperative artistic creation, as opposed to competition, is the central object of the present analysis, I too am interested in the way writers on art were psychologically invested in the social exchanges between painters, and also in the value these writers placed on objects as signifiers of a previously shared moment in time and space between two artists.

To be clear, I am not so misguided as to think that a study on collaboration will supplant the importance of rivalry in Renaissance and Baroque studies. As it happens, I do not believe the one excludes the other. The act of comparing and contrasting two rivals, whether in the same art or in different arts, has been given theoretical weight by the dialogical genre known as the paragone. But should we assume that the act of looking at art through competing hands was always at cross-purposes to the act of looking at art through collaborative hands? Although the first ultimately sets the participants apart according to merit, and the second ultimately evaluates the merit of uniting different parts, both rivalry and collaboration require that participants stand together, that is, that they provide both a basis for comparison and a basis for distinction. In fact, according to the semantics in the art writing of early modern Italy, competition and coordination are not so easily disambiguated.

Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist: A Historical Experiment (New Haven and London, 1979), 120-123. This is an important interpretation that should be read against Michel Foucault’s argument that the name of the author is a function of discourse, a means of ordering accepted characteristics, and not a stand-in for the physical being tout de suite; see Foucault, “What is an Author?,” [1969] in The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology, ed. Donald Preziosi (Oxford, 1998), 299-314.

Psychology plays a complicated role in collaboration. The work on the psychology of collaboration by linguist Vera John-Steiner, though concentrated on modern creative personalities, provided me with an ideal introduction to these complexities; see John-Steiner, Creative Collaboration (Oxford and New York, 2000), esp. 6: “Although my original interests focused on the intellectual dynamics of joint efforts, additional themes emerged as I interviewed dozens of working partners and members of small collaborative groups. As the stories unfolded, they revealed themes of connection, fusion, transformation, conflict, and separation, which animate joint connections. Collaboration thrives on diversity of perspectives and on constructive dialogues between individuals negotiating their differences while creating their shared voice and vision.” These very themes, as we will see, emerge from the art literature of the early modern period.

Leatrice Mendelsohn, Paragoni: Benedetto Varchi’s Due lezziioni and Cinquecento Art Theory (Ann Arbor, 1982); Rudolf Preimesberger, Paragons and paragone: Van Eyck, Raphael, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Bernini (Los Angeles, 2011); and Goffen, Renaissance Rivals, 25-66.
To see to what extent this is so, we need to look no further than Giovanni Pietro Bellori in his *Vite de’pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* (1672). In his discussion of the famous *Last Communion of St. Jerome* by Agostino Carracci, Bellori addressed a common feeling that the other Carracci, Ludovico and Annibale, had a hand in its creation. In the recently translated edition of Bellori’s *Lives of the Modern Painters*, the passage reads, “Some would have it that all three Carracci collaborated on this work, for it was painted at the time when they were working together and Annibale had not yet come to Rome.” While the translation of “collaborated” is accurate in the spirit of the passage’s meaning, the actual word used by Bellori is *concorrerso*. Concorrere had, as it still does, a polysemic usage. As defined in the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (1691), it could mean ‘to come together’ (andare insieme or convenire), or it could mean ‘to compete’ (competere or gareggiare). Bellori’s meaning, nevertheless, seems clear within its context – concorrere more literally being translated as ‘to contribute’ or ‘to concur’ – but it is a word that, in its various forms in art literature, was most often applied to rivalry or competition. For example, Bellori applied the latter meaning to the rivalry between Domenichino and Guido Reni in the Oratorio di Sant’Andrea, where he described their showdown as a duel and a combat.

Bellori had a body of cooperative terminology to choose from, like consultare or aiutare, words he used elsewhere. So why did he employ a verb with a double meaning for the context of the Carracci? Perhaps consultare and aiutare were too passive or too

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41 *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (Florence, 1724), 283. Indeed, even the etymology of competition (competere) had the same dual meaning depending on its context. For the definition of competere see the *Vocabolario*, 277. The conflated vocabulary of collaboration and contest was adopted by English speakers, such as Sir Henry Wotton in his letter to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury in March 1608, on the dispatch of several pictures, including “a figure (I take it) of Prometheus devoured by the eagle donn by Giacobo Palma in concurrence with Titiano whch for the emulation betweene two paynters (both of no smale name) I dare almost saye to be worthy of a corner in one of youre Ldp’s galleries” (emphasis mine); quoted by Robert Hill, “Art and Patronage: Sir Henry Wotton and the Venetian Embassy 1604-1624,” in *Double Agents: Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Marika Keblusek and Badeloch Noldus (Leiden and Boston, 2011), 27-58. The painting is now in the Royal Collection in the United Kingdom.
43 Bellori, *Vite*, 311 (Life of Domenico Zampieri): “Circa li medesimi tempi dipingendo Francesco Albano l’altro vicino palazzo del Marchese Asdrubale Mattei, vi chiamò il Lanfranco, e l Domenichino, il quale l’aiutò ne gli ornamenti, e vi dipinse la volta d’un camerino con l’istoria di Giacobbe rivolto à Rachele, la quale si vede bellissima in profilo con la verga pastorale sopra il gregge, che beve alla fonte.”
hierarchical and did not suggest the dynamics that he wanted. The two meanings of *concorrere* – to come together and to compete – may not have been mutually exclusive in his mind either. A shop of corporate masters, Bellori intimated, operates best by cooperative contest, like the ideal competitions described by Paolo Pino and by Vasari. According to these artist-writers, amicable artists, out of personal and civic virtue, declare the victor amongst themselves rather than through an external judge. The Carracci academies in Bologna, the Accademia dei Desiderosi and later the Accademia degli Incamminati, espoused this competitive spirit between students, holding competitions for drawings with prizes awarded. In the competitive dynamic of collaboration, the winner claimed authority, as was the case it would seem in the *Last Communion of St. Jerome*, where Agostino was given full credit by the other contributors: “And though he listened to their advice, this should not diminish the glory accorded to this master, as the same brothers agreed that it was his alone.” Bellori seems to assume that a total collaboration on the St. Jerome altarpiece would make Agostino’s fame vulnerable, and so he conflated collaboration with competition, insisting in the end on the acclamation of a single author.

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44 Paolo Pino, “Paolo Pino’s ‘Dialogo di pittura’: A Translation with Commentary,” trans. Mary Pardo, (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1984), 379: “All competing artists are honest and declare the winner amongst themselves, but our painter who will be excellent, shall draw all to seek him out and commission him of their own accord, except when a rival painter should attempt to overthrow him. In such a case as this, I would have him engage in the duel of contest with each [painter] making a work on condition that the most perfect be acknowledged – as Jacopo Palma once did with Titian over the painting of Saint Peter Martyr here in Venice – and thus defend, preserve and magnify his good name, which is a legitimate thing in heaven and on earth. But may God keep him from blindfolded judges eyes or those with itchy palms.” How at odds this ideal conduct seems compared to an earlier passage, in which the visiting painter accuses his fellow speaker of trying to scare him away from Venice so as not to take his commissions and his profit: see Pino, “Pino’s ‘Dialogo’,” 344-345. See Vasari on the competition for the baptistery doors of Florence, in the Life of Ghiberti extolling the virtues of friendship in competition and working in the interests of the public, discussed by James Clifton, “Vasari on Competition,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 27, 1 (1996): 30-34.


46 Bellori, *Vite* (Life of Agostino Carracci), 109: “E se bene si può intendere del consiglio loro, non si deve però diminuire punto la gloria à questo maestro, mentre gli stessi fratelli l’accconsentirono à lui solo.”

47 Francesco Scannelli also claimed that the three Carracci had collaborated on the *Last Communion of St. Jerome* and, like Bellori, said that the three most excellent masters ‘concurred together’ (*unitamente concorressero*) on the work; see Scannelli, *Il microcosmo della pittura* (Cesena, 1657), 341: “... e dalla parte destra la celeberrima Tavola della Communione di S. Girolamo, ed i soggetti dipinti sono più tosto maggiori del vivo, e di suprema bellezza, alla di cui straordinaria formazione è fama, che unitamente concorressero gli tre eccelentissimi Maestri coll’opera, e ponderato consiglio, ed in tal guisa formassero una Tavola di tanta, e di tale eccellenza, la quale viene stimata fra le più singolari, che Agostino, ed anco gli altri habbiano dipinto, essendo in fatti una delle più esquisite operationi, che a nostri giorni si conservi per la vista de virtuosi di questa Professione.” For more on Scannelli’s view of collaboration, see Chapter 2.3 of this dissertation.
It was nothing new to have competitors paint in the same space with hopes that each would be motivated to produce the best work in a reasonable time frame. One of the most striking features of Rona Goffen’s formal analysis in her book *Renaissance Rivals* is the repeated convergence between competitors’ styles and techniques as they try to outdo each other on the same terms. Rivalry entails a great deal of emulation (the terms are near synonyms), whereby the personal strengths of each opponent present correctives to the others’ personal weaknesses. Vasari witnessed firsthand the benefits of such emulative integration between his assistants in the refectory of San Michele in Bosco in Bologna:

The laying in of the panels being finished, work was begun on the frieze, in which Cristofano [Gherardi] had a companion, although he was to have executed it all by himself; for there came from Camaldoli to Bologna the cousin of Vasari, Stefano Veltroni of Monte Sansovino, who had laid in the panel-picture of the Deposition, and the two executed that work together, and so well, that it proved a marvel. Cristofano painted grotesques so well, that there was nothing better to be seen, but he did not give them that particular finish that would have made them perfect; and Stefano, on the contrary, was wanting in resolution and grace, for the reason that his brush-strokes did not fix his subjects in their places at one sweep, but, since he was very patient, in the end, although he endured greater labour, he used to execute his grotesques with more neatness and delicacy. Labouring in competition (*Lavorando…a concorrenza*), then, at the work of this frieze, these two took such pains, both the one and the other, that Cristofano learned to finish from Stefano, and Stefano learned from Cristofano to be more resolute and to work like a master.

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48 See Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*.
Again, we have a problem in translation. Gaston du C. de Vere here translated *concorrenza* as competition, but this phrase could also be translated as, ‘labouring in concurrence’, a surprising approximation of the Latin compound, *conlaborare*, to labour together. The point, in any case, is that the results of painters consciously trying to match and outdo each other in such propinquity could lead to a great deal of synthesis. On occasion, the terms of a contract stipulated that a painting should resemble and conform to another painting, but also that it should strive to surpass it as well. We can conclude from this that rivalry, with its potential for resemblance by means of mutual correctives, was not in all cases antithetical to the meeting of minds that collaboration ostensibly required.

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Grottesche con piu diligenza, e finezza. Lavorando dunque costo a concorrenza l’opera di questo fregio, tanto faticarono l’uno, e l’altro, che Christofano imparò a finire da Stefano; e Stefano imparo da lui a essere piu fine, e lavorare da maestro.” This passage is worth reading alongside David Cast’s explanation of Vasari’s *pratica*, which encompassed social interaction and practical knowledge, not skill and material; see Cast, “Vasari on the Practical,” in *Vasari’s Florence: Artists and Literati at the Medicean Court*, ed. Philip Jacks (Cambridge, 1998), 70-80. On the project at San Michele in Bosco, see Paola Barocchi, *Vasari pittore* (Milan, 1964), 15-19.

51 Consider the example of Sebastiano del Piombo and Raphael. See Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, 227-264. Costanza Barbieri also describes the exchanges of forms, techniques, and tenebrous styles over the course of their rivalry; see Barbieri, “The Competition between Raphael and Michelangelo and Sebastiano’s Role in it,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia Hall (Cambridge, 2005), 152-164. Another epitome of this trajectory is John Shearman’s account of Mannerism as an outgrowth of this “new kind” of competition, after which expressively personal styles became the norm, rather than the exception; see Shearman, *Mannerism* (Harmondsworth, 1967), 39-48.

52 On the contract for Luca Signorelli with the Fabbrica of the of the Duomo in Orvieto (1499), see Michelle O’Malley, “Late Fifteenth- and Early Sixteenth-Century Painting Contracts and the Stipulated Use of the Painter’s Hand,” in *With and Without the Medici: Studies in Tuscan Art and Patronage 1434-1530*, ed. E. Marchand and A. Wright (Aldershot, 1998), 158. This is discussed also in Martin Kemp, *Behind the Picture: Art and Evidence in the Italian Renaissance* (New Haven, 1997), 37. E. H. Gombrich commented on these contractual stipulations of similarity, *simile* or pattern, in the baptistery doors in Florence and how these demands served as spurs to progress through competition for Ghiberti; see Gombrich, *Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (London, 1971), 4-5.

53 Of course rivals could also take the opposite approach and try to contrast in absolute terms the style of their opponent. As Annibale is reported to have said about Caravaggio’s revolutionary style: “‘Did it seem to you that this was something new? I tell you that all those fellows with the never-before-seen manner that they themselves invented will always have the same reception when they appear and will have no less praise. I know,’ he added, ‘another way to make a big splash, in fact to beat and humiliate that fellow; I would like to counterpose to that bright color one that is totally soft. Does he use a slanting, sharply delimited light? I would like it open and direct. Does he cover up the difficult parts of art in nighttime shadows? I, by the bright light of noon, would like to reveal the most learned and erudite of my studies. Everything he sees in nature, he puts it all down, instead of skimming off what is good and what is better. I would like to choose the most perfect of the parts and modify them a bit, thus giving to the figures the nobility and harmony that is lacking in the original.’” See Carlo Cesare Malvasia, *Life of Guido Reni*, trans. Catherine Enggass and Robert Enggass (University Park, Pa., 1980), 43-44.
Collaborative Authorship in the Scholarship of the Twentieth Century

With an historical approach that focuses on the voices of early modern art critics, connoisseurs, and occasionally artists themselves, I hope to redress a recurring modern *a priori* assumption that collaboration entailed an assimilation that was contrary to the tenets of individualism, however loosely defined. Closely aligned with notions of the individual, questions about collaboration as a concept have been bound up with lingering preconceptions about genius, autonomy, and modernity. A few select passages from some of art history’s foremost scholars will help to show the vigor of these pervasive codes through much of the twentieth century. Their remarks on collaboration tended to be tangential to other arguments, but in such candid asides, we catch a glimpse of the common assumptions operating in the field at a given time.

The combination of Florentine drawing and Venetian painting in the artistic exchange between Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo was for a long time fraught with value judgments, especially because it implicitly bore the weight of regional identities. In looking to Michelangelo as a partner, so Bernard Berenson believed, Sebastiano had not lost his identity like eclectic painters from later in the period, but he had still made his identity walk a tightrope.\(^{54}\) Sebastiano, in Berenson’s eyes, was “striving [in his drawings] to come as close as he could to Michelangelo without ceasing to be Sebastiano.” One senses Berenson’s strong attachment to the power of the free artistic spirit troubling his connoisseurial analysis of what he equivocally determines to be a successful exchange of ideas between minds of unequal inventive capacities:

> It thus appears that Sebastiano del Piombo was the author of many of the sketches, and not only of sketches, but of some of the most attractive and

\(^{54}\) Bernard Berenson, *The Venetian Painters of the Renaissance* (New York, 1897), 50-51: “Venice, however, suffered little from Eclecticism, perhaps because a strong sense of individuality was late in getting there … The one Venetian who became an Eclectic, remained in spite of it a great painter. Sebastiano del Piombo fell under the influence of Michelangelo, but while this influence was pernicious in most cases, the hand that had learned to paint … never wholly lost its command of colour and tone.” Johannes Wilde saw the anxiety of influence in all of Michelangelo’s collaborators; see Wilde, “Cartonetti by Michelangelo,” *The Burlington Magazine* 101, 680 (1959): 374: “Sebastiano Veneziano nearly succumbed in his efforts to absorb the standards which collaboration imposed on him; Pontormo underwent a severe crisis and changed his style radically; Daniele da Volterra gave up painting altogether and became a sculptor. Venusti, a much lesser artist than any of these three, kept to the modest path along which he could walk safely and from which he felt no temptation to wander.” Max J. Friedländer used similar language to refer to the specialized collaborations from Antwerp, “which,” he said, “often took excessive forms in the seventeenth century.” He believed that these collaborations “implied a dubious division of labor, a pernicious specialization”; see Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, trans. Heinz Norden, vol. 7 (New York, 1967-76), 25.
impressive of the designs [partly] still attributed to Michelangelo. And yet I feel as if the great master becomes the greater, lightened of the responsibility for these drawings, and the lesser does not grow much the less because of them. Sebastiano’s notorious dilatoriness, the incredible worry it cost him to bring a picture to completion are due, I doubt not, to the pathetic effort made, with what an approach to success these studies witness – an effort needing every time to be renewed – to change himself from a happy-go-lucky, jolly Venetian, dashing on his paint and leaving drawing to the care of Providence, into a highly intellectual creator of form in action. If an artist ever came near to losing himself in one greater than himself, and yet remaining admirable, it is Sebastiano.  

Looking at the same body of works, Rodolfo Pallucchini, an Italian connoisseur from a tradition of socio-historical art criticism, drew a drastically different conclusion about Sebastiano’s character and his ability to work with someone of Michelangelo’s stature: “Certainly, michelangiolismo captures and interrupts the language of Sebastiano, but such an overwhelming imposition could not have been successful, if the Venetian lacked an affinity, a sympathy of plastic taste towards these forms.” Sympathy of personality, to Pallucchini’s mind, helps breed a sympathy of hands.

In *Annibale Carracci and the Beginnings of Baroque Style* (1977), Charles Dempsey improved our understanding of ‘eclecticism’ as both a practice and theory developed by the Carracci, and put to rest the idea that eclecticism is the sign of a weak-willed artist without a strong identity. Yet he was uncomfortable interpreting Lomazzo’s hypothetical proposition that two ideal paintings would be made by Michelangelo and Titian, and by Raphael and Correggio. Lomazzo had intended the idea to be a model for imitation, but Domenichino, one of the Carracci’s followers, criticized Lomazzo in a letter that was documented by Bellori in 1672. Dempsey thus felt the need to put distance between eclectic imitation and

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56 Rodolfo Pallucchini, *Sebastiano del Piombo* (Milan, 1944), 45: “Certo, il michelangiolismo afferra e sconvolge il linguaggio di Sebastiano: ma tale soverchiane imposizione non poteva attuarsi, se fosse mancata una affinità, una simpatia del gusto plastico del veneziano verso quelle forme.” For more on Pallucchini’s place in the Italian tradition of art history, which was closely tied to the ideas of the Vienna School, see Giuseppina Dal Canton, “Art Criticism,” in *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies*, ed. Gaetana Marrone and Paolo Puppa, vol. 1 (New York, 2007), 98-103, esp. 99.

57 Domenichino’s critical letter of Lomazzo was originally published by Bellori, who provided no interpretative context for its contents, in *Vite*, 359: “Mi pare ancora che dica il Lomazzo che un huomo disegnato al naturale, non sarebbe conosciuto per il solo disegno; ma ben si con l’aggiunta del colore simile, e questo è ancor falso; poiche Apelle col solo carbone disegnò il ritratto di colui, che l’haveva introdotto al convito, e fu subito riconosciuto, con istupore dal Rè Toloemo, e tanta basta alla scoltura, che non hà colore alcuno. Dice ancora
collaboration, dismissing Lomazzo and his ideal paintings since they would not have been coordinated by a single mind:

Art is not made by a committee, and Domenichino’s observation that it is an error in first principles to suggest that a perfect painting could be made by four artists is very well taken. One imagines Michelangelo on the left, Raphael on the right, furiously drawing away, while Titian and Correggio sit grinding their colors, waiting to fill in the contours. The result would be a grotesque oddity, and grotesque precisely because the whole would not be governed by the judgment of a single sovereign intellect expressing its own idea in its own particular style. ⁵⁸

The idea that imitation could work like collaboration was a challenge for Dempsey, who was trying to resuscitate Carracci eclecticism as an intellectually inflected exercise. Ignoring the fact that the Carracci themselves were consummate collaborators, Dempsey deemed collaboration to be a grotesquery, because he thought of it strictly as a manual and material practice without any room for conversation, invention, or theory, and thus as an undignified scenario for great artists. Because Domenichino’s criticism had been used by scholars to support their view that Lomazzo had been the voice of Mannerism, and because Lomazzo’s proposition had become associated with the imitative practices of the Carracci, Dempsey decided to uphold the principle of artistic autonomy by cutting loose Lomazzo’s metaphor as if it was a literal model that could not have had a bearing on practice.

Robert Klein, in his commentary to Lomazzo’s Idea del tempio, proffered an entirely different interpretation of Domenichino’s criticism of the model: “The idea of collaboration, which seemed so ridiculous to Domenichino, was nothing at all terrifying. Pontormo and … Sebastiano del Piombo expertly painted the cartoons of Michelangelo …” ⁵⁹ The same image that Dempsey conjured as a grotesque oddity – self-confident artists toiling away side-by-side in a workshop, waiting their turns – was seen by Klein in equally material terms – just paint and cartoons – but with far more innocuous consequences. The contrasting judgments on the same passage speak to the assumptions that linger in the background when scholars are confronted by multiple hands from early modern Italy.

⁵⁸ Charles Dempsey, Annibale Carracci and the Beginnings of Baroque Style (Glückstadt, 1977), 65.
⁵⁹ See Robert Klein’s comments to Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, Idea del Tempio, ed. Robert Klein (Florence, 1974), 560: “L’idée de la collaboration, qui parut si ridicule au Dominiquin, n’avait alors rien d’effrayant; Pontormo et … Sebastiano del Piombo avaient bien coloré des cartons de Michelange…”
Collaboration has also been associated with primitive societies and with periods of artistic decline, those moments of exhaustion in the headlong advance towards modernity. Noticing prominent distinctions between ornament and architecture on Michelangelo’s Porta Pia, for example, James Ackerman asked:

Why is it that the Renaissance, which cultivated both architecture and sculpture with such distinction produced no monuments in which the two arts joined as successfully as in the Parthenon and Chartres Cathedral? Probably because the Renaissance emphasis on individuality destroyed the gift of anonymity which in primitive, and occasionally in sophisticated societies promotes the collaboration of large teams of gifted artisans without sacrifice of quality.  

Although Ackerman implies in this incidental remark an appreciation of collaboration on its own terms, viz as a gift making the unity between the arts possible, he nevertheless resorted to a commonly held opinion about the Medieval period as decidedly unmodern to help explain the idiosyncratic combination of architecture and sculpture in Michelangelo’s portal. Cooperative artistic projects require anonymity, a hallmark of ‘primitivism,’ and is, according to Ackerman, only a rare exception in ‘sophisticated’ cultures.

Collaborative anonymity as supposedly seen in similar styles has often been interpreted as a byproduct of academic training and of norms imposed on artists by powerful institutions like the state or the Church. The impact of powerful patrons on an artist’s individual style is complex, running deep in the veins of the history of art, and I can only call attention to certain salient instances related to our topic. The perception of a repetitive, dehumanized style following the death of Michelangelo, has long been linked to Medici absolutism and a rigidly organized Accademia del Disegno in sixteenth-century Florence. The implication of a view like this reached its extreme recently, when it was argued that Vasari’s Lives of the Artists participated in a concerted strategy in the academy to implement an institutionalized, uniform style – deemed ‘art without an author’ – under Duke Cosimo, so that large teams

61 For an interesting revision to the idea of medieval anonymity compared to the Renaissance, including a brief commentary on the signatures of the collaborators Fra Bartolomeo and Mariotto Albertinelli, see the discussion by Heinrich Klotz, “Formen der Anonymität und des Individualismus in der Kunst des Mittelalters und der Renaissance,” Gesta 15, 1/2 (1976): 303-312. Klotz argued that the change in artistic self-identification was really based on the changing attitudes toward Pauline ideas of humility and boastfulness.
62 Nikolaus Pevsner, Academies of Art, Past and Present (Cambridge, 1940), 54-55.
could be effectively deployed in service to the Medici State. At this time as well, the Council of Trent was issuing edicts requiring greater oversight of religious art. Accordingly, the uninspired and didactic clarity of painting leading up to the founding of the Roman Accademia di San Luca, has been attributed to the tightening controls by a Church in reform. The notion of a Jesuit Style has been discussed mostly in relation to architecture,

63 It seems to me to go too far to say, as Marco Ruffini has, that either Vasari or Borghini, or both together had a vision of a depersonalized modern academic artist and that the aim was to establish a collective identity that could be deployed on large-scale state projects with the assurance of absolute stylistic uniformity. Ruffini argued that the development of Vasari’s Lives, especially the biographies of artists living after Michelangelo, was conceptually related to the development of the Accademia del Disegno, which was established in 1563. He claimed that Borghini and Vasari had an academic ideal based on rules and routines, which were designed to limit personal development. But Ruffini assumed that the goal of the Academy was absolute artistic uniformity, which he never adequately demonstrated, and that this goal was prioritized over personal identity. The actual curriculum and practices of the academy, let alone how they relate to this collective ideal, were not amply enough demonstrated by Ruffini before he developed his interpretations of the Lives based on them. See Ruffini, Art Without an Author: Vasari’s Lives and Michelangelo’s Death (Fordham University Press: New York, 2011). This type of argument derives from a general understanding that collective identity in art comes at the cost of individual identity; but this need not be so absolute as I hope to continue to demonstrate. A more thoughtful consideration of the Accademia di Disegno is provided by Karen-edis Barzman, who acknowledges that, despite the oversight of the state, there was no intention of subordinating individual style; see Barzman, The Florentine Academy and the Early Modern State: The Discipline of Disegno (Cambridge and New York, 2000). See also Fredrika H. Jacobs, “Vasari’s Bronzino: The Paradigmatic Academician,” in Reading Vasari, ed. Anne B. Barriault, et al. (London, 2005), 101-115, esp. 106-7, where she discusses the means by which an artist could distinguish himself in the academy while adhering to its rules and principles. The exhibition in the Morgan Library and Museum in New York, curated by Annamaria Petrioli Tofani, also offered a more nuanced view of collaboration in Vasari’s milieu, Michelangelo, Vasari, and Their Contemporaries: Drawings From the Uffizi: The Role of Disegno in the Sixteenth-Century Decoration of Palazzo Vecchio, exh. cat. (New York, 2008). The exhibition took the view that drawings were used for the preliminary coordination of themes, and that a greater coherence was initially achieved before more flexibility was extended to painters in succeeding rooms, which suggests ongoing negotiation and a progressive confidence in the group. Ruffini was also walking a fine line between Renaissance notions of authorship and modern attempts to demystify Vasari’s own authorship of the Lives, according to the contentious bibliographic work of Wolfgang Kallab, Charles Hope, and Thomas Frangenberg, who regard Vasari’s name as a mere author function under which is grouped the combined contributions of historians in Vasari’s circle. See Wolfgang Kallab, Vasaristudien, ed. Julius von Schlosser (Vienna, 1908). Charles Hope, “Can You Trust Vasari?,” The New York Review of Books (October 5, 1995): 10-13; idem, “Le Vite Vasariane: Un esempio di autore multiplo,” in L’autore multiplo, ed. Anna Santoni (Pisa, 2005), 59-74; and more recently, idem, “Vasari’s Vite as a Collaborative Project,” in The Ashgate Research Companion to Giorgio Vasari, ed. David Cast (Aldershot, 2014), 11-22. Thomas Frangenberg, “Bartoli, Giambullari and the Prefaces to Vasari’s Lives (1550),” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 60 (2007): 244-258.

64 For an overview of the debate about the “Tridentine Style,” either as a monolithic category of sacred art in the second half of the century, in which religious episodes were represented in static space outside of time, or as a category of regional styles, variously determined by local religious expressions and networks, including the contact between bishop Gabriele Paleotti and the Carracci, see Paolo Prodi, who leans towards the second position, in the introduction to Gabriele Paleotti, Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images, trans. William McCuaig (Los Angeles, 2012), 26-31.

65 Although sanitized of some of the value judgments (rightly or wrongly) of the preceding quotations, there is a lingering idea that the Counter Reformation, led by the Church and even the pope, regulated style; see the introduction by Maurizio Calvesi to Alessandro Zuccari, I pittori di Sisto V (Rome, 1992), 7: “L’ambizione di creare una cultura figurativa organica, o di imporre una lingua unitaria, irradiate da un maestro ‘carismatico’ scritturato con tutta la sua bottega, apparteneva alla tramontate ideologie del Rinascimento. Sisto V, nel suo
but the term has been used for painting and sculpture as well. As a synonym for the style of Baroque art, which was regarded for much of the nineteenth century as fundamentally insincere and as an instrument for the Counter Reformation Church, Jesuitenstil has been a contentious art historical concept based on the idea that the Jesuits had a centralized structure to oversee the projects. Similar trajectories have been proposed to explain the seeming homogeneity of art at the end of the Venetian Renaissance, when the republic became even more isolated and entrenched in its own ‘myth’, ironically during its disputes with the papacy.

Tacit preconceptions about collaboration and related concepts of artistic submission are folded together in many of the passages discussed above. First, collaboration is looked at

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66 For an important turning point in this debate, see Rudolf Wittkower, “Problems of the Theme,” in Baroque Art: The Jesuit Contribution, ed. Rudolf Wittkower (New York, 1972), 1-14. Although Wittkower argued that the Jesuits were not preoccupied with style and that artists like Rubens and Bernini could not have been cast under their spell, he still perpetuated conventions of individual style versus institutional styles: “When the [Jesuits] could, they sent priest-artists wherever needed, and this had obvious, although perhaps not premeditated, consequences. It is hardly necessary to mention that an architect or painter propagates his own style relative to the degree of intensity emanating from his work. The greater the artist, the more personal is his manner, and as a rule, the greater is the impact that he makes.” See also Francis Haskell, “The Role of Patrons: Baroque Style Changes,” in ibid., 51-62. For an overview of the derided Jesuitenstil and its correlation to the Baroque style, explained primarily as a critical position taken by Protestants, see Gauvin Alexander Bailey, “‘Le style jésuite n’existe pas’: Jesuit Culture and the Visual Arts,” in The Jesuits: Culture, Sciences, and the Arts 1540-1773, ed. John O’Malley, et al. (Toronto, 1999), 38-89, esp. 39-44. An alternative overview of the concept of the Jesuit Style, seen as an overpowering force on the individual, has been provided by Evonne Levy, who situated the polemic in the context of a rising nationalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whereby the palpable presence of Jesuit churches symbolized the presence of a foreign pope and a conflict of loyalties; see Evonne Levy, “The Internationalist Jesuit Style, Evil Twin to National Styles,” in Spirit, Style, and Story: A Festschrift for Jesuit Historian John W. Padberg on the Occasion of his 75th Birthday, ed. Thomas M. Lucas (Chicago, 2002), 181-202. See also, Levy, Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque (Berkeley and London, 2004), 15-41.

67 This will be discussed further in Chapter 4. An example of the problematic relationship between politics and art that is often associated with Venice can be seen in the words of the formidable Patricia Fortini Brown: “The cycle in the Sala offered an incomparable opportunity to compare the narrative skills of a century of Venice’s leading artists and to appraise the characteristically Venetian search for balance between the quest for individual glory and collaboration toward a common goal.” See Brown, “Where the Money Flows: Art Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Venice,” in Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Vencie, exh. cat. ed. Frederick Ilchmann (Boston, 2009), 45.
primarily as a mechanical process divorced from the subjective power of the artist’s mind, which typically signifies its symbiotic relationship with the hand through individual style. Second, the concern that a rift is created between the hand and the subjective mind in collaboration is either allayed as a practical reality of the art industry, or is magnified by the thought that this rift could be filled in by a powerful, or unsophisticated, corporate identity. What I hope to show is that rarely did early modern critics, those same critics who valorize autonomous artistic creativity, castigate a closely unified painting or set of paintings as an unsophisticated constraint on individual freedom. They were not always satisfied explaining away multiple hands as an exigency of artistic practice either, even when it came to large projects needing to be done quickly. Their experience of paintings made by multiple hands was far from one dimensional, and until we tease out some of these other dimensions, we will not fully comprehend the sociability of artistic practice and invention.

Recent Scholarship on Collaboration

Since the last third of the twentieth century, the primacy and autonomy of the author has been sufficiently challenged in the visual, the literary, and the performing arts by bringing to light the various attendants and contributors involved in artistic production, including patronage systems, the intellectual input of learned advisors, the labour of workshop

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assistants,⁷⁰ the technical savvy of industry specialists,⁷¹ the revisions of publishers and editors,⁷² and even more theoretically the intertextual networks of the reader,⁷³ among other social restraints and conditions. To be sure, this expanded domain of authorship has given more fulsome shape to the nature of creativity and has qualified the solitary individual that has emblematized the mythical Romantic genius. New Historicism and other schools of social history from the last two decades of the twentieth century have also provided an alternative understanding of what it meant to be an early modern ‘individual,’ or what constituted the ‘self,’ in the early modern period.⁷⁴ Framed by relationships, the individual is now commonly regarded as having been shaped by, or having given shape to, his or her social environments and groups according to power structures, discourse, behavior, or the

⁶⁹ For an early argument on the importance of a patron’s retinue, such as that around Lorenzo de’ Medici, see Melissa Meriam Bullard, “Heroes and their Workshops: Medici Patronage and the Problem of Shared Agency,” Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies 24 (1994), 179-198.

⁷⁰ See footnotes above in discussion of workshop.

⁷¹ Producers, sound engineers, and other figures of the music industry have been given a presence in musicology. For a thoughtful consideration of this authorial problem in music, see Keith Negus and Michael Pickering, “Rethinking Creative Genius,” Popular Music 23, 2 (2004): 198-203; and idem, Creativity, Communication, and Culture Value (London, 2004).


⁷³ The poststructuralist Julia Kristeva developed the influential notion of the intertext and intertextuality, which sees all texts in an undetermined and unfixed net of cross readings depending on the writer and the reader; see Kristeva, Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art (New York, 1980). Kristeva’s essay, first published in 1966 was closely followed in 1967 by the equally influential essay by Roland Barthes; see Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in Image, Music, Text, trans. Stephen Heath (New York, 1978), 142-148. For more on the ‘author’ in discourse, see the post-modern explanation by Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?,” 299-314.

body itself. Against this backdrop, collaboration has become much less threatening to the domain of art history than it once was, though perhaps, as was mentioned earlier, in service of postmodern ideas that have often enervated its force.

Rather than further the dismantling of artistic autonomy according to modern and postmodern terms of inquiry, this study will assay historical notions of authorship. Much recent scholarship on collaboration is now assessing the artistic, social, and economic realities of artists who were mutually willing to combine their hands and minds. The pace has picked up particularly in the last decade as scholars have put the findings of connoisseurship, technical analysis, and archival research to good use. There has been a concerted effort, for example, to re-evaluate the roles of Michelangelo’s collaborators, like Sebastiano del Piombo and Daniele da Volterra, who were provided with drawings and cartoons, and who were often described as friends. Coming on the heels of ever-expanding studies on Vasari as a man and

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75 Two studies in particular resonated with the ensuing discussion of collaboration as a negotiation between bodies and minds. Both Natalie Zemon Davis and John Jeffries Martin have highlighted a variety of self-reflective accounts from the Renaissance whereby identity is activated in the shifting and permeable boundaries between the internal and external self. See Natalie Zemon Davis, “Boundaries and the Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France,” in Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought, ed. Thomas C. Heller, Morton Sosna, and David E. Wellbery (Stanford, 1986), 53-63; and John Jeffries Martin, Myths of Renaissance Individualism (Basingstoke, 2004). Davis’ earlier account of the widely publicized proceedings against the imposter Martin Guerre revealed how psychic, bodily, familial, vocational, confessional, and even genetic identities could be adaptable, and also contestable, all because of a basic physical resemblance between two men, an incident that can help frame the angst surrounding stylistic resemblance; see Davis, The Return of Martin Guerre (Cambridge and London, 1983). In contrast to Protestant regions of Europe, Sandra Cavallo has found that in Catholic Turin, there was not a hierarchy between physicians and surgeons treating the internal and external health of the body separately; instead, she argued, there was an expansive, horizontal network of attendants, who she termed artisans of the body, responsible for the maintenance of all aspects of the body; see Cavallo, Artisans of the Body in Early Modern Italy: Identities, Families, and Masculinities (Manchester, 2007). Other studies, concentrating on the flesh itself, have demonstrated that the skin and the somatic spaces of corporeality were often considered coterminous with the spirit in the Early Modern period, especially in anatomical studies; see Elizabeth D. Harvey, “The Portal of Touch,” The American Historical Review 116, 2 (2011): 385-400; idem, “The Touching Organ: Allegory, Anatomy, and the Renaissance Skin Envelope,” in The Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia, 2003), 81-102; and Emily L. King, “Spirited Flesh: The Animation and Hybridization of Flesh in the Early Modern Imaginary,” Postmedieval 4.4 (2013): 479-490.

a writer, there has also been a greater interest in his prodigious projects that required large retinues of intimate collaborators, not just assistants. In the 1990s, a series of studies by Alessandro Zucchi, Steven Ostrow, and Rhoda Eitel-Porter appeared on the business-like organization of painters under the supervision of Cesare Nebbia and Giovanni Guerra in the Sistine Chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, among their other collaborative projects during the pontificate of Sixtus V. As an addenda to these important monographs and essays, John Marciari has shown that, leading up to these Sistine projects, friendship was the cornerstone for artistic exchange between such collaborating painters as Girolamo Muziano,

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Taddeo Zuccaro, and Giovanni Guerra. Finally, the Carracci have provided scholars like Gail Feigenbaum, Clare Robertson, and Samuel Vitali an avenue to reconsider the means and methods of collaborative unity.

A good deal of the current attention to collaboration is still nevertheless focused on attribution, often with the effect of disaggregating what is supposed to be, in some sense, a unified work. Studies have also been limited to isolated episodes in time and place, so that what is traditional and what is new in each case cannot be adequately evaluated. It should be said, nevertheless, that the sum of these recent studies, and more could be mentioned, demonstrates that multiple authorship was much less exceptional in early modern Italian painting than heretofore assumed, even leaving the problematic issue of the workshop aside. At least one recurring theme to emerge from these fragmented case studies is the role of friendship in collaboration. An important consequence of a theme like this is that it places the impetus for collaboration more squarely in the hearts of the artists, rather than at the end

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81 One very recent exception is the important dissertation by Marsha Libina, Sebastiano del Piombo and his Collaboration with Michelangelo: Distance and Proximity to the Divine in Catholic Reformation Rome, (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2015), in which the working relationship between Michelangelo and Sebastiano is placed in – and differentiated from – the context of similar collaborations that preceded it.

82 In surveying the entirety of the project to decorate the Royal Basilica of the Escorial under the patronage of Philip II, Rosemarie Mulcahy compared the styles and iconography of a plethora of independent painters from Spain and Italy who were involved on the high altarpiece, including Federico Zuccaro and Pellegrino Tibaldi; see Mulcahy, The Decoration of the Royal Basilica of El Escorial (Cambridge and New York, 1994). See also Alessandro Zuccari, “Federico Zuccari e l’Escorial,” in Federico Zuccari. Le idee, gli scritti, ed. Bonita Cleri (Milan, 1997), 21-44. Although Vasari was made an unnecessary straw man for criticizing Pontormo and diminishing Bronzino, Elizabeth Pilliod’s work on the complicated integration of style developed between Pontormo and his pupil Bronzino, who emerged quickly as a prodigious master, is an example of what can be done by looking at the mutable division between professional and domestic lives of painters; see Pilliod, “The Earliest Collaborations of Pontormo and Bronzino: The Certosa, the Cappone Chapel, and the Dead Christ with the Virgin and Magdalen,” in The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop, ed. Andrew Ladis and Carolyn Wood (Athens, Ga., 1995), 134-164; and idem, Pontormo, Bronzino, and Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine Art (New Haven, 2001).
of a patron’s stick. In reading the breadth of this material, one would be right to wonder whether the correspondence between friendship and collaboration was simply pragmatic, or whether it was also rooted in an ideology that addressed certain theoretical concerns. Not wanting to take the utility of friendship in collaboration for granted, this study will examine the interconnected cultural meanings that led a painter to join hands with another, and how contemporary viewers made sense of these motivations in terms of authorship, individuality, and collectivity.

In this regard, the most insightful work on collaboration has been done on Northern painting, as in the richly conceptualized exhibition on the friendship and working practices of Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder, curated by Anne T. Woollett and Ariane van Suchtelen in 2006, and even more so in a pair of essays by Elizabeth Honig, whose definition of collaboration was discussed earlier. In an article from 1995, and adapted to a chapter in a larger monograph in 1998, Honig made important arguments about why collaborative paintings were particularly popular on the art market in seventeenth-century Antwerp. She pointed out that the collection of identifiable hands in a single collaboration contributed to the mandates of the collector, who was supposed to display a range of diverse objects and dazzle the viewer with an encyclopedic knowledge. In a separate article in

83 We have already seen this in the example of Palma and Aliense, discussed above. For an early, but problematic willingness to collaborate, see the letter by Domenico Veneziano to Piero de Medici in 1438, in which the artist solicited the commission to paint the altarpiece for the Dominican convent of San Marco. The painter suggested a confluence of interests in multiple hands: “And if the work were so large that Cosimo [Piero’s father] decided to give it to several masters, or else more to one than to another, I beg you as far as a servant may beg a master that you may be pleased to enlist your strength favorably and helpfully to me in arranging that I have some little part of it.” Of course, this stated willingness to paint with others could be read as part of the rhetoric of servitude above all else. See Carol M. Richardson, Kim Woods, Michael W. Franklin, eds., “Domenico Veneziano looks for work in Florence,” in Renaissance Art Reconsidered: An Anthology of Primary Sources (Oxford, 2007), 161. Linda Wolk-Simon also suggested that a compagnia of artists, including Perino del Vaga, Polidoro da Caravaggio, and Giovanni da Udine may have been formed as a ‘survival strategy’ during the pontificate of Clement VII, a period when there were fewer and more hotly contested commissions; see Wolk-Simon, “Competition, Collaboration, and Specialization,” 263. Vasari’s differing accounts of the competition between Ghiberti and Brunelleschi helped him to give shape to the friendship between Donatello and Brunelleschi; see the discussion by James Clifton, “Vasari on Competition,” The Sixteenth Century Journal 27, 1 (1996): 30-34.

84 Even Anne Woollett remarked, in her otherwise compelling account of the partnership between Brueghel and Rubens and the tradition of collaborative painting in the North, there “is very little documentary material to tell us how collaborative paintings were perceived by early viewers or patrons.” The best way to assess the status of collaboration in the period, she concluded, was to look at inventories. See Woollett and van Suchtelen, eds., Rubens and Brueghel, 34. I cannot speak to the primary sources for the Low Countries; but this study will show a good deal of critical response from the Italian sources.

2005, she considered the cultural and sociological conditions that led to the unique flowering of collaboration between artists of such a high reputation as Rubens and Brueghel. In this essay, Honig traced the origins of this flowering to the artistic tours of Flemish painters in Italy at the end of the sixteenth century where they honed their skills in diverse specializations, and where they first started to come together for cooperative ventures, sometimes even working at great distances from each other. She also related a prevalence of amiable collaboration to a culture that valued friendship in moments when different minds were brought together in civil conversation. It goes without saying that Honig’s work has been invaluable for my own. Still, her interpretations have tended to insist too strongly that there was no collaborative tradition in Italy. While collaborative painting did gain an exceptional status in the Low Countries, some of the cultural values she ascribed to collaboration in Antwerp were anticipated in the descriptions of multiple hands in Italy.

Prolific conversations have also been taking place in other disciplines, especially among English scholars, analyzing the cooperative playwriting from the Elizabethan and Stuart periods. In the commendatory poems and critical reactions to such playwrights as Beaumont and Fletcher, Middleton and Rowley, and Shakespeare, among others, scholars like Heather Anne Hirschfeld, Suzanne Gossett, Jeffrey Masten, and Jeffrey Knapp, have observed, drawing on the discourses of competition, friendship, gender, and the body, similar attitudes towards joint enterprises that will be discussed here. Though there is not always a perfect symmetry between our material and between our conclusions, their work has been helpful for thinking about emerging notions of authorship. In addition, it has been profitable to read recent assessments of genres in which there was a public, and sometimes disputed, acknowledgement of authorship between specialists in different media, as in printmaking, theatre production, and opera.

The Structure of the Study

The chapters that follow have been organized to advance the content from broad theoretical concerns of collaboration to increasingly more practical applications in collaboration. Chapter 1 will survey the changing discourse of collaboration from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century. By no means did collaborative works evoke an extraordinary response as an everyday concern, and consequently a descriptive vocabulary did not develop with the same sophistication as it did for style, for example. But whether with a foreknowledge or a sudden perception of multiple hands, there was a recurring expression for extolling collaborators as if they worked with one hand alone. The expression appears often enough to trace a slowly evolving discourse of artistic collaboration that has hitherto gone unexamined. This introductory chapter will, furthermore, bring together different writers who tried variously to adapt this saying to the shifting privileges in art theory that were proffered either on the painter’s skillful hand or on his intellective mind.

Following on the discussion in the first chapter about critics’ perceptions of real works spawning theoretical explanations of collaboration, Chapter 2 will examine a discourse that proceeded from the two imaginary collaborative paintings of Adam and Eve that Lomazzo proposed: Adam drawn by Michelangelo and coloured by Titian, and Eve designed by Raphael and painted by Correggio. Although this theoretical collaboration was meant to be a model of imitation when it was initially proposed by Lomazzo, his respondents had widely opposing views on how such a model might be actualized in real-life situations. While Francesco Scannelli thought the model impossible in practice, he was nevertheless compelled to outline only those rare conditions under which collaboration can work without creating disunity. Carlo Cesare Malvasia, in contrast, saw a symmetry between imitation and collaboration. Lomazzo’s model, he believed, was achieved by the Carracci both in eclectic imitation and in the coordination of their collaborative brushes. Marco Boschini, meanwhile, claimed to know of a wholly Venetian equivalent to the ideal painting and assessed the four visible styles according to the tangible and intangible values of a collector.


89 Philip Sohm, Style in the Art Theory of Early Modern Italy (Cambridge, 2001).
In Chapter 3, our investigation will switch direction to look more closely at collecting. The centerpiece of this section will be a contentious painting in the Detroit Institute of Art bearing an inscription on the back that links each of three figures in the composition to the hands of Giorgione and his two most talented followers, Sebastiano del Piombo and Titian. Though some scholars have argued that this inscription explains the conspicuously different styles for each of the half-length figures in the painting, it will be my contention that this painting was an imagining of collaboration and that it was made some time around the year 1600. At this time, such a demonstration piece would have appealed to the proclivities of connoisseurship prevalent in its infancy, and would have provided for the civilizing conversation in the picture galleries proliferating throughout Europe. In particular, by making practice so visible, the painting seems to exploit the dilettante connoisseur on two fronts: On one front is the temptation to make attributions based on descriptions of styles in books rather than from experience, and on the other front is the inclination to read the artist’s identity in the subject matter, which in this case is suggestive of the bonds of love uniting the painters together.

Finally, Chapter 4 will examine the real-life example of a collaborative alliance between Palma Giovane and Antonio Vassilacchi, known as Aliense. It has often gone unnoticed that Palma’s daughter was married to Aliense’s brother in 1600, just prior to a series of shared commissions across the Veneto. This marriage, and the collaboration that accompanied it, is symptomatic of an artistic community that was blurring the boundaries between their professional, social, and domestic spheres. It further explains the so-called monotonous style that typifies what has been called the crisis of the Venetian Renaissance tradition. This case study on Palma and Aliense will focus, moreover, on the degree to which the motivations underpinning their joint ventures might reflect the cultural values attached to the common expression of the collaborative hand discussed in the preceding chapters. In that sense, this concluding chapter will test out the concept of collaboration as it was expressed by the critical voices of the period, and will demonstrate some of the potential of this concept as an art historical tool.
CHAPTER 1
“One Hand Alone”:
Cognitive Style and Typologies of Unity
From the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century

Often in reading the descriptions of early modern viewers, one would think that collaborative projects were rather uncomplicated either as a visual experience, or as an act of production.\(^1\) It was not uncommon for art writers to inventory the discrete contributions of multiple painters in a single space without demonstrating concern for how they are reconstituted into a whole. Each participant, in these texts, is compartmentalized into a stage of execution (invention, drawing, or execution), a painting in a series, a section of a painting, or a special genre embedded in a broader subject. This phenomenon is not insignificant. Individuating hands in this fashion is one of the traditional means of artistic appreciation, not to mention of connoisseurship, an avocation that emerged in the period under study. Attributions of this sort provide a sense of order, of organizing knowledge, and aid a predisposition to connect names to forms. There will be opportunities to examine this phenomenon further, but in the meantime, the object of inquiry in this chapter is a commonly used expression that, on first impression, opposes the tendency towards individuation, when in fact it should be viewed as complementary.

This critical expression emphasized the virtue of multiple hands brought together harmoniously as if working in a single hand. The origin, as far as I have been able to trace, lies with Bartolomeo Fazio in *De viris illustribus* (1456). Because of what he called the ‘indescribable’ bronze doors in the baptistery in Florence (Fig. 1.1), Fazio included the sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti in his catalogue of illustrious men. For the same doors, he also included Ghiberti’s son Vittorio. “No less esteemed,” Fazio declared, “is his son Vittorio, whose hand (manus), as well as his art (ars), are known to have endeavored on the same doors for John the Baptist. Indeed, their works are so well suited to each other that they seem

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\(^1\) Examples of individuation in collaborative painting will be discussed at various points throughout the dissertation. We see the importance of individuation tactfully expressed in the opera industry by the librettist Milcetti writing to the composer Don Pietro Molinari in 1660: “Since distance does not allow me to be around to see to the needs of my drama, I am happy that Your Lordship will insert the songs [canzonette] that you describe. I beg you to mark them in the margins with a star or with double commas, as is the custom. I say this because I do not like to dress what is mine in others' ornaments; thus I will be extremely glad if the difference is clear.” See Ellen Rosand, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice: The Creation of a Genre* (Berkeley, 1991), 206. As Rosand has demonstrated, the *libretto* was a site of a great deal of individuation between the contributions of the composer, the singer, and the librettist himself; see ibid., 199-221.
to have been made by one and the same hand (*ut unius et eiusdem manu facta*). Given the example, the discourse first emerged in relation to the output of a workshop, and yet, according to Fazio, Vittorio was no mere labouring assistant, because he matched his father in the skill of his hand and in his technical knowledge – in his *manus* and in his *ars*. Lorenzo had recently died in 1455, but for the preceding decade the Ghiberti workshop had been expanding its identity to include both father and son. Their ‘one hand’ meant there was a continuity of quality despite the change of authority. Fazio’s metaphor of a single hand shared by two or more artists of equal talent and status became a trope that lasted until at least the end of the seventeenth century. Carlo Cesare Malvasia, for example, adopted the same expression in the *Felsina pittrice* (1678) in an attempt to capture the special accord between the *quadratura* specialist Agostino Mitelli and the figure painter Angelo Michele Colonna (Fig.1.2). As Malvasia put it, they “worked, the one and the other, with that usual marvelous uniform consonance (*concerto*), which seems to be of one hand alone.”

The intention of this chapter is to provide a preliminary overview of this critical discourse on collaboration from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century and, as a secondary consideration, to read the discourse next to artistic practice in some of the most illustrative examples. In contrast to what we might initially infer from the longevity of the expression of the single hand, and we will see several more examples at different intervals between Fazio in 1456 and Malvasia in 1678, it should not be interpreted as monovalent, nor too literally as an endorsement of pictorial homogeneity *tout court*. Although the notion of the

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3 Vittorio was a prominent contributor in his father’s workshop, especially in the production of the *Gates of Paradise*, completed in 1452. The 1453 commission for the frame of the East doors of the baptistery was given to both Lorenzo and Vittorio, but it was largely designed and executed by Vittorio, which explains its significant departure in style and iconography from the other sets of doors. See Amy R. Bloch, “Baptism and the Frame of the South Door of the Baptistery, Florence,” *Sculpture Journal* 18, 1 (2009): 24-37; and Arnold Victor Coonin, “Vittorio Ghiberti and the Frame of the South Door of the Baptistery, Florence,” *Sculpture Journal* 18, 1 (2009): 38-51.

4 Carlo Cesare Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice: vite de pittori bolognese*, vol. 2 (Bologna, 1678), 402: “il Colonna a chiamare in aiuto il Metelli, e l’Metelli ben volontieri andasse a servirlo, operandovi l’uno e l’altro con quel solito maraviglioso uniforme concerto, che sembra di una mano sola, e per si compita opera si vagheggia, e si ammira.”

5 The confusion between unity and uniformity has played out in modern scholarship. D. Stephen Pepper, for example, has called the collaborative project headed by Guido Reni in the Annunciation Chapel in the Quirinal
collaborative single hand sounds inimical to individual identity, two fundamental concepts cohered in the idiom to give it a richer application: the concept of a unified corpus or corpo (body), and the broadly defined mano of the master artist. The elasticity of each of these two conjoined concepts must be clearly understood before the evolution of the idea of the single hand can be analyzed in more detail.

The figurative oneness of the collaborative hand conveyed a similar idea as the united corpus or corpo. Because human anatomy was regarded as the ultimate microcosm, as the most complex measure of the harmony subtending the diversity created by God, the body (corpo) was a recurring metaphor for various kinds of unity, whether it be, as Seneca outlined, a physical vessel for a single soul, a composite of conjoined parts, or a nominal category for separate bodies acting in common interest, as in a nation or school. The corpo’s semantic field was broad enough to be applied to disparate spheres of everyday life, including cosmology, politics, and trade. In art theory, the united body was frequently used as a metaphor for the balancing and ordering of different artistic elements, especially as it regarded the constitution of the ideal painter in possession of talents normally spread out among several artists. This could be variously expressed. Raphael’s father Giovanni Santi,
for example, championed Mantegna as a “united body” of all the best aspects of art. In another example more suggestive of the possibilities of collaboration, the Venetian painter and writer Paolo Pino imagined the ideal painter as a combination of Michelangelo and Titian, provided they were together in one body (fussero un corpo solo).

Like the body of artistic excellence, then, the expression of the single hand was really meant to suggest that the coming together of collaborators’ hands made them something better as a united whole than what they were separately. There is an inherent paradox here. On one level, the concept gives the impression of a complete and seamless integration of parts, but on another level, the viewer must be aware of those inherent parts in order to appreciate the oneness of the whole. On a similar point related to this paradox, we will consider another trope in the critical discourse. First considered by Pliny in the first century, the equilibrium of talents joined in unity made it difficult, if not impossible, to allocate credit to one artist alone, or to all in different proportions. As much as any contest or rivalry, we will see, the aphoristic single hand of a collaboration could invite the viewer to make a comparison between the contributors, but ultimately the project had to resist conclusive rankings. To suggest otherwise could, and on the rare occasion did, create an imbalance in the delicate harmony supporting the wonder of the collaborative hand.

But what exactly about the hand was thought to be united like the notional corpo? The artist’s mano, which was metaphorically enclosed by the single hand in collaboration, had diverse associations in the early modern period. Contracts, for example, often stipulated that a painting be undertaken in the master’s ‘own hand’ (propria manu in the Latin, or sua mano in the Italian). This clause was initially a guarantee of quality based on the master’s authority.

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8 Giovanni Santi, La vita e le gesta di Federico di Montefeltro duca d’Urbino: poema in terza rima (Codice Vat. Ottob. Lat. 1305), ed. Luigi Michelini Tocci (Vatican City, 1985), XXII, 668-70. As translated in Martin Kemp, “‘Equal Excellences’: Lomazzo and the Explanation of Individual Style in the Visual Arts,” Renaissance Studies 1 (1987): 9: “For all the several aspects of this art/ He posseses the full united body/ More than all men in Italy or other part./ One finds sometimes indeed that some great men/ Excel in one alone.../ ...What many a high intellect/ Has demonstrated in most excellent painting/ Shines out in him with all its terms perfect.”

9 Paolo Pino, Dialogo di pittura, ed. Susanna Falabella (Rome, 2000), 122: “...se Tiziano, e Michiel Angelo fussero un corpo solo, over al disegno di Michiel Angelo aggiointovi il colore di Tiziano, se gli potrebbe dir lo dio della pittura, si come parimenti sono anco dei propri, e chi tiene altra openione è eretico fetidissimo.”
and supervision more than it was a prohibition against the hands of assistants. In the fifteenth century, as investments in art turned from the value of materials to the value of pictorial skill, contracts began to be drawn up with clearer definitions about what the artist’s ‘own hand’ entailed. Patrons could insist that the design be made by the master and that his physical hand intervene at least in the most important areas like the faces – to what extent was sometimes determined by the fee. In addition to the contractual mano, the artist’s hand was a metonym for individual style, often referred to using the etymologically related term, maniera. As a medium for the artist’s vision (ingenium), the hand’s idiosyncratic habits were thought to reflect the motions of the sub-rational fields of the mind (fantasia, cervello), leading to the popular aphorism that every painter paints himself (ogni dipintore dipinge se). Although the intellectual potential of painting and sculpture came to define the ‘Artist’ in theory, the celebrity of artists like Leonardo, Dürer, Raphael, and Michelangelo, in combination with the emergence of connoisseurship in the late sixteenth century, made the touch of the authorial hand highly valuable as the original and inimitable physical link to that artist’s inspired vision (ingenium; ingegno). In light of the multivalent mano – inclusive of


12 On the difference between the Neoplatonic sense of ‘ogni dipintore dipinge se,’ where style is a general reflection of the inner mind and soul of the painter, and Leonardo’s more empirical, and cautionary adaptation of it, see Martin Kemp, “‘Ogni dipintore dipinge se’: A Neoplatonic Echo in Leonardo’s Art Theory?,” Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance. Essays in Honour of Paul Oskar Kristeller, ed. C. Clough, (New York, 1976), 311-323. Philip Sohm has given a good overview of the “physiognomic fallacy” in both the Renaissance and modern scholarship; see Sohm, Style in the Art Theory of Early Modern Italy (Cambridge, 2001), 67-70. The proposition was an obstacle for female artists, whose gender was generally assigned submissive and unsophisticated social roles due to a conventional prejudice about their character. Mary D. Garrard provided an excellent outline of the obstacles facing female artists with the example of Sofonisba Anguissola, even if her interpretations of Sofonisba’s paintings are more difficult to prove; see Garrard, “Here’s Looking at Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist,” Renaissance Quarterly 47, 3 (1994): 556-622.

13 In John Shearman’s convincing discussion of the Mannerist period, this preoccupation with style, or stylish style, as he put it, extended to the whole of artistic culture; see Shearman, Mannerism (Harmondsworth, 1967).
design and authority, technical skill, physical intervention, individual style, and originality in thought and touch – its potential combination into one body was assessed according to different visual criteria, and was thought to be possible only under special circumstances.

The essential premise of the discussion here is that the unifying oneness that was perceived between collaborative hands, without there being a compromise to their constituent identities, was tied to “cognitive style.” According to Michael Baxandall, who famously coined the term, cognitive style is that habit of perception that a viewer brings to a picture in discriminating pictorial skill and style. This analytical perception is particularized to each viewer’s experience and perceptive abilities, but it is also contingent on a ready access to descriptive words and to suitable models of categorization. Baxandall believed, therefore, that the modern reader can reconstruct the “period eye,” or the culturally specific values and meanings that were assigned to pictures in their social-historical context by delving into the common repertoire of words and categories used in verbal descriptions of art.  

Following this fundamental idea, I will argue that different typologies of collaboration developed over the course of the period as the perception of collaborative unity changed. In the Quattrocento, unity in a collaborative picture, or cycle of pictures, was typically perceived in a consistent skill level and in the programmatic continuity of the composition, perceptions that reflected the straightforward terms of a contract. In the Cinquecento, unity was perceived in a similarity of individual styles, suggesting the philosophical consimility of souls in friendship. And finally, in the late Cinquecento and Seicento, unity was perceived in the reciprocal accommodation of hands and brushes physically moving in and out of each other’s spaces, a dialogical process that was analogous to the social habits and modes of interaction popularized in conduct books. The trends in art criticism that privileged either the inventive mind or the skilled hand of the artist in the realization of the image played no small part in the accounts of what viewers saw. But it should be pointed out that the different values ascribed to the unity of the collaborative hand, which was sometimes described only decades later, did not change abruptly or completely at each stage. It is more accurate to say that certain types were only more prominent at particular times than at others.

14 Michael Baxandall, Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style (Oxford, 1972), esp. 36-40.
1.1 Antique Origins of a Collaborative Discourse: The Unapportionable Glory of Pliny’s Laocoön

Many of the texts that will be discussed in the following chapters echo a passage in Pliny’s *Natural History*, a first-century tome that was well cultivated and consulted in the early modern period, in part for its critical account of art in antiquity. Towards the end of a catalogue of the greatest sculptors and their works, Pliny addressed what for him was a more nebulous category of sculpture: collaborations. He was uncertain how to categorize objects like the famous *Laocoön* by three Rhodian sculptors, Hagesander, Polydorus, and Athenodorus (Fig. 1.3):

> Beyond these men [i.e. sculptors like Praxiteles], there are not a great many more that are famous. The reputation of some, distinguished though their work may be, has been obscured by the number of artists engaged with them on a single task, because no individual monopolizes the credit nor again can several of them be named on equal terms. This is the case with the Laocoön in the palace of Titus, a work superior to any painting and any bronze. Laocoön, his children and the wonderful clasping coils of the snakes were carved from a single block in accordance with an agreed plan by those eminent craftsmen Hagesander, Polydorus and Athenodorus, all of Rhodes.\(^\text{15}\)

Despite Pliny’s elevation of the marble sculpture as “superior to any painting and any bronze,” he would not extend similar praise to the sculptors themselves, because he was unsure how to portion out the credit. The sculptural group was most impressive but so uniform in facture that it proved too difficult to apportion fame to any individual craftsman.\(^\text{16}\)

This particular passage is not without its interpretive problems. There are two tricky sections that concern our topic at present. The phrase, “nor again can several of them be named on equal terms” (*nec plures pariter nuncupari possunt*), could reasonably be understood to read, “nor can several be named at the same time,” as D. E. Eichholz noted in the Loeb translation.\(^\text{17}\) The other troublesome clause is the one about an ‘agreed plan’ (*de...*)


\(^{16}\) Making distinctions, especially qualitative distinctions, was something of a theme in Pliny’s *Natural History*, see Eugenia Lao, “Luxury and the Creation of a Good Consumer,” in *Pliny the Elder: Themes and Contexts*, ed. Roy K. Gibson and Ruth Morello (Boston, 2011), 53-56.

\(^{17}\) See comments by Eichholz in Pliny, *Natural History*, 28.
Instead of an agreement between the sculptors, this expression, popular in ancient political discourse, might instead refer to the advice or the agreement of a council, meaning some sort of political body (possibly Greek, possibly Roman) responsible for the commission. This reading of the clause was first suggested in Spain only in the early eighteenth century, and has since played no small part in the debates on the date and geographical origin of the sculpture. But here we are concerned with how the inexactitude of Pliny’s ancient description puts the perspectives of Renaissance readers into greater relief, for their translations of the text perforce reflect their own opinions. The clause, *de consilii sententia*, was not as problematic for Italians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as it has been for modern readers. Pliny’s early Italian translators took it to mean that the conception of the work was equally developed, or based on an agreed plan. They understood the clause to mean agreement (*d’accordo*) and shared judgment (*commun parere*). To their mind, there was no subordinate, nor leader or inventor, only sympathetic ideation – a simultaneous birthing from three creators.

There was consensus on the translation of *de consilii sententia* as a shared design, but the phrase about the distribution of credit was trickier for Renaissance readers. The problematic sentence, “because no individual monopolizes the credit nor again can several of them be named on equal terms,” has not been terribly controversial in modern scholarship – scholars tend to be more interested in recovering the original intent than in the trivial concerns of one critic trying to calculate credit. But the distinction between calculating the proportion of the credit and altogether discounting collective credit was not insignificant in the sixteenth century. For the most part, in Italian translations of the *Natural History* from the late fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, Pliny’s reservations about the artistic partnership were interpreted as an opposition to collective fame. In the Giovanni Francesio edition of Pliny (1534), emended from the translation of Cristoforo Landino (first ed. 1476), the passage *nec unus occupat gloriam nec plures pariter nuncupari possunt* was translated as “…perche ne un solo

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18 Antonio Palomino first understood *de consilii sententia* as a reference to the decisions of the Athenian senate; see Settis, *Laocoonte*, 45-48. Settis discussed the attempts of some scholars to reinterpret the connotations of *de consilii sententia*, but ultimately concluded that the meaning as ‘shared understanding’ is the most precise meaning.

occupa la gloria; ne molti si possono insieme nominare…”20 Francesio seemingly eliminated the possibility of proportion (pariter) in favour of totality (insieme) in the Italian: “...because neither one alone takes the glory; nor can it be ascribed to many together.” Authorship becomes the strict purview of one or none at all. With a slight variant, Lodovico Domenichi later (first ed. 1561) made the following amendment to the translation: “ne uno occupa la gloria, ne molti insieme ancora la possono occupare…” – “neither one can take the glory, nor again can many together take it.”21 Domenichi evidently preferred the translation of Landino to that of Antonio Brucioli (first ed. 1544), whose translation more closely replicated the Latin source: “ne uno occupa la gloria, ne piu parimente possono essere nominati.”22

When the marble sculpture representing the Trojan priest Laocoön and his acolytes was excavated in 1506, it was instantly recognizable as the object described by Pliny.23 The fame

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22 Pliny, *Historia naturale*, trans. Antonio Brucioli (Venice, 1548), MXIII: “Dipoi la fama di molti è piu oscura, perché il numero degli artefici nuoce alla clarità di certi, nelle opere eccellenti. Perché ne uno occupa la gloria, ne piu parimente possono essere nominati, come in Laoco[on]te che è nella casa di Tito Imperatore, opera da anteporstarle tutte le altre, & della pittura, & dell’arte statuaria. Di una pietra fecono quello, & i figliuoli, & il mirabile annodamento dei Dragoni, i somami artefici, Argesendo, & Polydoro, & Athenodoro di Rhodi.” Domenichi’s preference is perhaps not surprising since Brucioli was a controversial figure; he was a Lutheran sympathizer and his translation of the Bible to Italian (a process that might explain his greater fidelity to source material) was placed on the pope’s index for including Luther and Martin Bucer in the commentaries.

23 The rediscovery sparked a bidding war among Cardinals, but this was quickly made irrelevant by Pope Julius II who procured it for himself. For the letter written by Francesco da Sangallo describing the reaction among sculptors to the appearance of the famous antique, see Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven, 1999), 3-5. A letter by an unknown author sent to Giovanni Sabindo degli Arienti outlined the demand for the Laocoön; see Michael Baxandall, “Sadoleto’s Laocoön,” in idem, *Words for Pictures: Seven Papers on Renaissance Art and Criticism* (New Haven and London, 2003), 102. It did not take long for debates to appear about the authenticity of this sculpture group being the exact copy described by Pliny. These debates largely hinged on the location in which it was discovered, the reconstruction of the topography of ancient Rome, and the veracity of antique sources; see Michael Koortbojian, “Pliny’s Laocoön?,” in *Antiquity and its Interpreters*, ed. Alina Payne, Ann Kuttner, and Rebekah Smick (Cambridge, 2011), 199-216.
of the unearthed sculpture group surpassed even the reputation that preceded it, and yet the status of its authors was less enduring. Initially it seemed as if Pliny’s reluctance to accord the same fame of the sculpture to the group of craftsmen, albeit eminent (summi artifices), would not be carried over to the Renaissance. In the very year the statue was discovered, the Ferrarese humanist Jacopo Sadoleto wrote what Michael Baxandall has called the “most famous Renaissance description of a work of art,” an ekphrasis of the Laocoön. Sadoleto reserved for the end of his description a lengthy panegyric for the Rhodian sculptors (lines 43-59, more than a quarter of the poem). He obviously esteemed poetry more than sculpture, slightly diminishing the accomplishment of the craftsmen by implying, “even though with nobler deeds [i.e. poetry] than this eternal fame be sought,” and by referring to the “hand’s labour” as opposed to intellectual accomplishment. Nevertheless, by waxing eloquent about the eternal fame of this trio, he contradicted Pliny’s exclusion of the three Rhodian craftsmen from his list of famous sculptors like Praxiteles and Scopas. At the same time, Sadoleto did not name each individual Rhodian artist and by addressing them as a group, using the second person plural, he accorded to them all equal fame. Raphael’s friend Andrea Fulvio in his description of Roman antiquities (1527) was even more pronounced than Sadoleto in his opinion of shared fame, calling it a ‘triple glory’: “artificum quondam Rhodiorum gloria triplex.”

Only one of Sadoleto’s contemporaries tried to reconcile the problem of attribution. In an ekphrasis, Francesco Sperulli clearly struggled with Pliny’s Latin prescriptions and reconceptualized the phrase, perhaps to better capture the spirit of Pliny’s dilemma in front of the collaborative object. He described the three sculptors, who he still kept unnamed, working in competition and he divided their labour between the renderings of the ‘father’, the serpent, and the ‘sons’. Although he perceived a competition and a division of tasks, he

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25 “So then, you great craftsmen who fashioned such great work, bright still with lasting praise – even though with nobler deeds than this eternal fame be sought, and even though high talent might commit its future glory to more honoured medium.” Quoted by Baxandall, “Sadoleto’s Laocoön,” 101.
26 Settis, Laocoonte, 158-159.
27 Settis, Laocoonte, 142-143.
concluded with a somewhat equivocating but effective solution: “For equal merit, they received the palm: but the glory obtained equally by all was directed to no one directly.”

Despite the remarks of Sadoleto and a few contemporaries shortly after the work’s excavation, it is infrequent thereafter to read about the Rhodian sculptors, even though references to the Laocoön abound. Perhaps Pliny was right – the fame of Agesander, Polydorus, and Athenodorus, either as individuals or as collaborators was not enduring. Or perhaps Pliny’s reservations were just too trivial that the problem was dropped in the face of the work’s greater status as a famous antique. Traces of Pliny’s difficulty in apportioning fame to different hands can, nevertheless, be found in early modern responses to contemporary collaborations.

1.2 • The Single Hand in the Fifteenth Century: Consistency of Talent and Continuity of Invention

When Bartolomeo Fazio said that Vittorio Ghiberti’s work on the Gates of Paradise (Fig. 1.1) was so well suited to Lorenzo’s that it appeared the doors were “made by one and the same hand,” he was probably not thinking about style in the sense of personal and individualized expression, which did not often factor into his sense of taste. Compared to Fazio’s general aesthetic interests, his reference to a single hand meant that Vittorio’s craftsmanship (his ars) equaled Lorenzo’s in its ability to express the movement and character of the subjects, akin to the mandates of a poet. Style was likewise a minor topic in contemporary texts like Leon Battista Alberti’s De pictura (1435), reissued in Italian as Della pittura (1436). Alberti was more interested in the technical and speculative knowledge

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29 Around the same time that Sadoleto penned his ekphrasis, Ercole Strozzi described the Laocoön as sculpted by a triple hand (aetas caelatum triplici Laocoonte manu), as transcribed in Settis, Laocoonte, 142-143. Anonymous poets honored the artists in the third person plural for rendering the dying figures so well that they spring to life, but like Sadoleto they did not name the sculptors, as seen in Settis, Laocoonte, 132-133, 148-149. The individual Rhodian sculptors are named in guidebooks long after the discovery of the sculpture group, as in Mariliani’s Urbis Romae Topographiae (Rome, [1550]), 109; transcribed in Settis, Laocoonte, 160-161; and reproduced in Koortbojian, “Pliny’s Laocoön?,” 204. Mariliani quoted Pliny directly and included the names of the sculptors, but dropped the loaded argument about apportioning credit.
30 When the Laocoön was used in discussions of art theory, serving as a model for the practice of developing artists, the makers were insignificant. Giovanni Battista Armenini, for example, lists the Laocoön first among statues in which the style most successfully combines the best from nature; but he makes no mention of the work being a combination of different artists. See Armenini, On the True Precepts of the Art of Painting, trans. Edward J. Olszewski (New York, 1977), 131.
31 On the illusion of movement and emotion as the common theme in the sections on painters and sculptors in De viris illustribus, see Baxandall, “Facius on Painting,” 94-97.
required of a painter in order to optimize the imitation of nature and to most effectively communicate the narrative (the *historia*). The individualizing resonances of style was only a concern to Alberti when it distracted from the integrity of the invention as a whole.\(^32\) Indeed, for much of the fifteenth century, collaborative pictures too were considered unified through a general consistency in the level of craftsmanship and especially in a continuity in subject matter, which was prescribed by the patron and which was, as we will see, commonly composed in agreement. It was not until later in the century, as Baxandall has argued referring to an early description of a collaborative project, that a vocabulary of style was developed with enough sophistication to clearly differentiate the characteristics of hands beyond the quality of pictorial imitation.

It must have seemed natural to Pliny’s translators, the first being Cristoforo Landino in 1476, that a collaborative object would have been made based on an agreed plan, since regularity in the invention and the composition was so common in large decorative programs. Between 1425 and 1429, around the same time Ghiberti’s famous golden doors were commissioned in 1425 (not completed until 1452), Masolino and Masaccio were decorating the Brancacci Chapel in Florence. At what point each painter was brought on board to paint scenes from the Life of St. Peter is still a matter of debate. Masolino and Masaccio may have worked in direct coordination, or at separate times.\(^33\) Whatever the circumstances, each artist connected the episodes together by continuing such attributes as costume and physiognomy, and such compositional elements as the horizon line and the scales of the figures (Figs. 1.4 and 1.5). Even when Filippino Lippi, in 1481, finished the bottom register that was left incomplete at Masaccio’s death, he followed the formula of his forebears. Placed next to each other and across from each other, the pictures were thus unified without affecting each painter’s distinctly meritorious style.

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32 Leon Battista Alberti, *La pittura* (Venice, 1547), 39v-40r (Book 3): “Ma accioche lo studio no sta vano, et speso in danno, si dee fuggire quella usanza di molti, i quali con l’ingegno di loro medesimi contendono ad acquistare lode ne la pittura, senza mettersi inanzi con gli occhi, et co la faccia alcuna naturale di quella cosa. Percioche costoro non imparino a dipinger bene, ma s’avezzano ne gli errori. Perche non sanno ritrovare gli ignoranti quella idea de la bellezza, ch’a pena gli eccellentissimi ingegni possono discernere. Zeusi prestantissimo, eccel. et dottiss. pittore sopra tutti gli altri, essendo per fare una tavola, laquale publicame[n]te voleva dedicare nel tempio di Lucina appresso i Crothoniati, non confidandosi temerariame[n]te nel suo proprio ingegno, si come sogliono quasi tutti i pittori de l’eta nostra, si mise a dipingere...”

33 For an up-to-date account of the scholarship on the Brancacci Chapel, and a convincing discussion about how collaborators of the fifteenth century were formed from networks, see Nicholas A. Eckstein, *Painted Glories: The Brancacci Chapel in Renaissance Florence* (New Haven and London, 2014), 75-107.
Most of the remaining documents related to such collaborative projects in the fifteenth century are contracts. In these contracts, space was generally delegated in equal measure between collaborating painters, and financial compensation was distributed accordingly. This convention was evident in the commission given to several painters to decorate the Sala dei Mesi in the Palazzo Schifanoia. With a strictly devised allegorical program representing the twelve months, each painter was to be paid according to their section and square footage, not according to reputation. After the completion of the program in 1470, the painter Francesco del Cossa wrote to Duke Borso d’Este asking for greater compensation than what had originally been agreed to. He argued that his sections were made with a visibly more sophisticated technique developed from “study.” Recognizing at the same time that his individual style would perhaps not be the issue that would most persuade the duke, Francesco also emphasized the greater expense of his materials, especially gold and other pigments. In the face of Francesco’s request, however, the Duke was intransigent and held fast to the original terms of payment according to square footage.34

In contrast to the numerous complaints about the involvement of the unskilled hand of an assistant, critics and patrons rarely complained about differences between collaborators’ hands.35 There is but one exhortation, related to the contractual terms of a stalled project in 1476, that has frequently been misinterpreted as evidence that patrons were cognizant of individual style and that they expected stylistic uniformity between collaborators, much as they expected from assistants.36 “We order you and desire,” the Duke of Milan decreed to a

34 See Evelyn Welch, Art and Society in Italy, 1350-1500 (Oxford and New York, 1997), 121-123. Stephen Campbell argued that the individual style of Cosmè Tura, who had also contributed to the Sala dei Mesi, made him worthy of the noble minds in the court of Ferrara when it was seen on its own. In contrast, Campbell suggested, Francesco’s request for greater remuneration fell on deaf ears because such demonstrations of individuality were not as equally appreciated in a collaborative program. See Campbell, “Pictura and Scriptura: Cosmè Tura and Style as Courtly Performance,” Art History 19, 2 (1996): 273. This point was reiterated by Campbell in Cosmè Tura of Ferrara: Style, Politics and the Renaissance City, 1450-1495 (New Haven and London, 1997), 12. On Francesco del Cossa’s materials and technique in the frescoes of the Sala dei Mesi, see Vincenzo Gheroldi, “Un conflitto sulla qualità tecnica della pittura murale a Ferrara al tempo di Borso d’Este,” in Cosmè Tura e Francesco del Cossa: L’arte a Ferrara nell’età di Borso d’Este (Ferrara, 2007), 143-157. On the frescoes in the Sala dei Mesi as a whole, see Ranieri Varese, “Gli affreschi di Palazzo Schifanoia,” in Un Rinascimento singolare. La corte degli Estensi a Ferrara, ed. Jadranka Bentini and Grazia Agostini (Milan, 2003), 151-157.

35 The best known case of a patron complaining about the markedly different hand of an assistant is the altarpiece by Domenico Ghirlandaio and his brother Davide, about which Elisabetta Aldovrandini complained through her lawyer that “inter artifices magna est differentia.” See O’Malley, “Painting Contracts,” 169-171.

group of painters on behalf of an aggrieved patron, “that you attend to it according to your obligations, and make sure that the painting not be done by so many hands, as it seems it would want to be done, so as to not make the work disfigured (disforma). But one of you must provide it, each of you being obligated for the whole (obligati in solidum), as quickly as possible.” In this case, it is true, the Duke seems to have had little concern for particular artistic identities, recommending that any one artist should take over its completion. It is not necessarily accurate, however, to say that the Duke was explicitly ordering his painters to work in a uniform or indistinguishable style. There is certainly nothing in the Duke’s words to indicate, as per one interpretation of the passage, that collaboration required the “suppression of artistic individuality,” in contrast to the supposed celebrations of individuality in cases of rivalry. When this passage is placed in the context of the original complaint, the Duke’s words reflect a more typical approach to collaboration in the Quattrocento, an approach in which individual style was of little consequence.

The actual patron of the project, Zaccarina Beccaria, an influential Pavian noblewoman, had originally commissioned five, not three, masters – Vincenzo Foppa, Bonifacio Bembo, Jacopino Vismara, Costantino da Vaprio, and Zanetto Bugatto – to decorate her husband’s funerary chapel in the church of San Giacomo just outside the gates of Pavia in July of 1475. As she later explained in her petition to the Duke, the painters were assigned separately to paint an equal number of scenes from the Life of Christ, and were allotted equal square footage. They were also obligated in solidum. In contractual terms, this meant that even though they were separate parties in the contract, each was liable for the fulfillment of the overall project, a clause that came into effect when the project lapsed in August of 1476 with no sign of progress. Four of the painters, she reported, had started the project, only to then halt their work. What is more, the fifth painter Costantino da Vaprio never showed up at

\[\text{References:}\]

37 “Il perché parendone honesto che gli sii observato quanto per voy gliè stato promisso, vi dicemo et volimo che voy li atendiate secondo le obbligatione vostre, con fare che la depinctura non sii facta per tante mane come pare vorria esser facto, per non fare l’opera disforma: ma uno di voy la fornisca, essendo obligati in solidum, più presto sii possibile.” For a full transcription of the letter, see Ffoulkes and Maiocchi, Vincenzo Foppa, 308 (doc. 28).
38 Rona Goffen, Renaissance Rivals, 10-11.
39 For a transcription of Zaccarina’s petition, see Ffoulkes and Maiocchi, Vincenzo Foppa, 306-307 (doc. 27).
40 See the definition of “obligatio in solidum,” under the related term, “duo rei promitendi,” in Adolf Berger, Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law (s.l., 1953), 445.
all, though he appointed Bartolomeo Caylina, Foppa’s brother-in-law, as his representative. Zaccarina never complained about Bugato by name, probably because he had passed away. And she seems as well to have been understanding that Costantino had been given leave by the Duke to work on other projects in Milan. She remained unsatisfied, however, after confronting the three remaining painters directly. Since they claimed, according to her petition, that the fault lay not with them, she sent her petition to their protector and principal employer the Duke of Milan, Galeazzo Maria Sforza, who assented to her complaint. It is in the directives Sforza issued to Foppa, Bembo, and Vismara where we read that ostensibly charged reproach for working in multiple hands, which the Duke thought might cause the work to become “disforma.”

It is unlikely that Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza had a problem with these artists working together, since this was a troop of painters he often employed himself. At this very moment, they were all working on the decoration in his own chapel in his castle in Pavia. The patron Zaccarina, moreover, never said anything about the artists working in their different styles. Her primary complaint was that the work was not done on time. She did, at one point, express her desire that the work be done in line with the initial foundations of the work, and at another point that the masters finish the work in its entirety, “or at least in the same hands with which the work was started” (et seu saltem de eisdem manibus cum quibus illud inceptum fuit). This suggests that she was either concerned that assistants would take over without supervision, or that other masters would be subcontracted, a particularly damaging prospect if we think she had solicited their services to draw a connection between her family and the Duke, the primary patron of the troop. It was probably her concern that other artists would become involved that led the Duke to caution against different hands, adding the convoluted clause, “as it seems it would want to be done” (come pare vorria esser facto). In relaying her protest, then, the Duke wanted to make sure that his painters oversaw the work themselves without employing other hands, so as to ensure either a consistently high quality with what was already painted, or a continuity in terms of the iconographic forms and attributes. A uniformity of style in such a case would only be tangential or contingent to more practical concerns.

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41 Ffoulkes and Maiocchi, Vincenzo Foppa, 307 (doc. 27).
In the next directive in which the Duke recommended that one artist take over and complete the work quickly, he was not addressing a differentiation in the pictures, but returning to the problem of the delays. By calling attention to the specific terms of their contract (they were *obligati in solidum*), the Duke was simply reminding them that the delays caused by any one artist was no excuse, since each of them was liable for the incomplete work as a whole. Assigning the work to just one artist, therefore, was in everyone’s best interest and would cut across any conflicts posed by multiple schedules. The Duke must have been equally motivated to keep the bulk of his painters working on the decoration in his own chapel in his castle in Pavia, indeed, reminding them of that priority.\(^{42}\) These other concerns – time, quality, and subject matter – would certainly be more consistent with his approach to other artistic projects for which individual style was never discussed.\(^{43}\)

These frescoes in San Giacomo near Pavia have not survived, but we know from the receipts of payment from Zaccarina that, in the end, all the surviving painters returned to the chapel to finish some portion of the overall program. Foppa and Bembo wrapped up their sections by December 16, 1476; Costantino (or his representative) finished his by January 20, 1477; and Vismarra by February that year.\(^{44}\) Each managed to complete their fifth of the painted border, for which they were all paid the same 8 ½ lire imperiali. Though Foppa and Bembo were paid more in total because they ended up painting more scenes than the others, they were all paid the equal sum of 27 lire imperiali, 12 soldi, and 6 denari per scene (*capitulum*), as was apparently the original agreement.\(^{45}\) Even Bugato’s heirs received the appropriate fee for the work he had started and for the fifth of the border he had been able to complete before he died. These payments further support the argument that the Duke preferred his painters do the work themselves rather than have other hands take over from where they left off. Such a reading of the Duke’s concern is admittedly more mundane than

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\(^{42}\) “… declarandovi che nostra intentione non è che per questo si ritardi lopra de la capella de questo nostro castello de Pavia, qual opra volimo sii fornita prestissimo.” See Ffoulkes and Maiocchi, *Vincenzo Foppa*, 308 (doc. 28).

\(^{43}\) For more on the procedures of Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza’s patronage, see Welch, “The Process of Sforza Patronage,” 370-386, especially 381-384 on his frustrations and expectations when coordinating artists.

\(^{44}\) Foppa, who has come to be the most prominent of the painters, was also paid an extra sum for the large Crucifixion he painted on the altar wall; see Ffoulkes and Maiocchi, *Vincenzo Foppa*, 310-312 (docs. 30 and 31).

\(^{45}\) There are illuminating documents from the painters’ guild, in which Costantino da Vaprio was appointed the arbitrator of complaints between masters and assistants, but also between collaborating *magistri*, who were disputing their accounts of payment; see Janice Shell, “The Scuola di San Luca, or Universitas Pictorum, in Renaissance Milan,” *Arte Lombarda*, n.s. 104, 1 (1993): 81.
those interpretations that see his words as evidence that patrons prioritized uniformity over individual style, or as a sign that patrons were starting to recognize that individual style was inherent to every artist. But just because fifteenth-century patrons thought of pictorial consistency in terms of generalized skill and subject matter does not mean they were oblivious to individual style. The latter was simply not a significant evaluative factor. At least, not quite yet.

Another project contemporaneous to the chapel near Pavia gives us further clues about what collaborative unity meant in the fifteenth century. In 1481, the Florentine-based painters, Pietro Perugino, Sandro Botticelli, Cosimo Rosselli, and Domenico Ghirlandaio, were called on to paint the Sistine Chapel in Rome (Figs. 1.6 and 1.7). There is a great deal about this commission that resembles the project in Pavia. The contract that survives – there may have been others that were lost – did not specifically qualify their obligation in solidum, but nevertheless outlined that they be obligated jointly and individually (omnibus et singulis ipsi depictores obilarunt). The painters were commissioned to paint ten bays altogether, each featuring portraits of former popes in the top register, illusionistic curtains in the lowest register, and in the middle register a scene representing moments from either the Life of Moses or the Life of Christ, which were to be typologically related across the nave. There were no clear instructions, at least in this document, about how the ten bays were to be divided between the four painters, but it seems each was initially expected to complete one of the bays, at which point an expert would be brought in to assess their work. A few months later, in January of 1482, these experts determined that each bay would be compensated the same 250 ducats. As a whole, even when other artists were brought on board, this series of

46 Welch, thinking Zaccarina complained about too many different hands, said the Duke demanded “consistency and indistinguishability,” 383. O’Malley, acknowledging the disparity between the Duke’s words and Zaccarina’s complaint, referred to the episode as evidence of a sophisticated value placed on quality and on a uniformity in style, “Painting Contracts,” 168-169. The Duke’s supposed disfavor toward multiple hands was related by Spear to the disfavor that Alberti and Leonardo showed toward personal expression as a deviation from nature, “Divine” Guido, 258. Kemp, “Equal Excellences,” 6, presented the passage as proof that patrons were becoming more aware of the value of individual style.

47 L.D. Ettlinger, The Frescoes in the Sistine Chapel Before Michelangelo: Religious Imagery and Papal Primacy (Oxford, 1965), 21. Slightly different terms were drawn up in Latin and in Italian for Michelozzo, Luca della Robbia, and Maso di Bartolomeo. They were contracted in “sociis,” and as “compagni,” that is as partners of a company, to furnish the bronze doors of the sacristy in the Duomo of Florence in 1446; see doc. 1c in Mareile Büscher, Künstlerverträge in der Florentiner Renaissance (Frankfurt, 2002), 207-208. For further details on this project that dragged on until 1475, see Yael Even, “The Sacristy Portals: Cooperation at the Florentine Cathedral,” Source: Notes in the History of Art 6, 3 (1987): 7-13. To what extent a comparison between the St. John on the sacristy door and the more original St. John on Ghiberti’s baptistery door can be seen as evidence of the constraints collaboration put on creativity, as Even argued, is a matter of debate.
paintings documenting the history of the church was, much like the Brancacci Chapel, coordinated iconographically and compositionally in order to make connections clear in the typological program. Also like the Brancacci Chapel, these coordinating factors did not require that the painters’ styles be the same, the differences being generally apparent without too much scrutiny.\textsuperscript{48}

Only afterwards did the proximity of their hands lead to comparisons of style and technique. In a fortuitous epilogue to our earlier case in Pavia, the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel were cited by the agent of Ludovico Sforza, who was the brother of the departed Galeazzo Maria Sforza, and the regent (de facto Duke) of Milan. In this report from around 1490, the agent compared the styles of the Florentine candidates who might paint in the Certosa di Pavia. With the vagueness of an emerging vocabulary, Sforza’s agent said that Botticelli’s paintings have a virile air (\textit{aria virile}), Filippino Lippi’s a sweeter air (\textit{ari piu dolce}), Perugino’s an angelic and very sweet air (\textit{aria angelica, et molto dolce}), and Ghirlandaio’s a good air (\textit{bona aria}). “All these masters,” he added, “have made proof of themselves in the chapel of Pope Sixtus IV, except Filippino. All of them later also in the [villa di] Spedaletto of Lorenzo il Magnifico, and the palm of victory is pretty much in doubt.”\textsuperscript{49} The agent obviously preferred certain styles over others and yet he did not render a judgment on the combination of different styles in these spaces, because what mattered in a collaboration was that they were all so equivalent in talent that it was impossible to award the palm to any one in particular. What is not clear, is whether or not Ludovico Sforza’s agent was giving a common assessment of collaborative projects by saying the painters confounded individual praise, or whether or not he was picking up on the dilemma directly from Pliny’s \textit{Natural History}, the first translation of which had just been published in 1476.

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Epilogue to Fifteenth-Century Collaborative Unity

Invention, in terms of attributes and composition, and quality of craftsmanship made up the unifying backbone of collaboration in the fifteenth century, while the issue of style was, at best, only implicit in verbal descriptions. In the next century, collaboration branched off in two directions. The single hand became explicitly associated with collaborators working in similar styles. This notion of unity in style, as we will see, created a new set of theoretical problems. Meanwhile, the unifying elements of the narrative, as a matter of course, continued to satisfy the practical demands placed on groups working on large decorative programs. Palma Giovane apparently thought as much and, to his good fortune, it worked out well for him, even though his pursuit of order made him the object of a prank. In an anecdote told by Carlo Ridolfi, Palma approached Tintoretto when the two were working in the Grand Council chamber of the Ducal Palace, because he wanted to know how Tintoretto was depicting the battle scenes involving large crowds of soldiers and ships. The reason for his inquiry was to establish consistency between their representations: “so that they follow the same order (ordine).” What might seem like a practical reason for soliciting information was turned into a practical joke, as Tintoretto told Palma in jest that he was representing the soldiers climbing the masts. The older master must have thought the suggestion was preposterous, but Palma, apparently unaware of the joke, dutifully reproduced the motif in the spirit of consistency. When Tintoretto saw the success of the final product, he declared, “This man has robbed my invention.” If there is any truth to this tale, it means Tintoretto saw Palma’s Defeat of the

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50 In the extensive correspondence between 1502 and 1504 related to Perugino’s Battle of Chastity and Lasciviousness for Isabella d’Este’s studiolo, it is clear again that the painter was committed to matching up with Mantegna’s pendants, the Parnassus (or Mars and Venus) and Pallas and the Vices. Given clear instructions on the invention, and given sketches of Mantegna’s works, he repeatedly asked for confirmation about the sizes of Mantegna’s figures, concerned that the figures would be too small and would not look good next to Mantegna’s pictures. At one point, he was sent a string cut to the length of the largest of Mantegna’s figures. On Peruginos’ Battle, see Campbell, Cabinet of Eros: Renaissance Mythological Painting and the Studiolo of Isabella d’Este (New Haven, 2004), 169-189, and for the documents, ibid., 291-293.

51 In mid sixteenth-century Florence there were debates about the unifying expectations on large teams; see Chapter 1.4 below.

52 Such reproduction of motifs defines Venetian painting in the late Renaissance, and as will be argued in Chapter 4, was a signifier of an artistic community with academic aspirations.

Visconti Fleet Near Cremona (Fig. 1.8) and then copied his own, originally facetious, idea in the ceiling painting, Boarding of the Milanese Fleet on Lake Garda (Fig. 1.9).\textsuperscript{54} Playful interaction aside, the importance of this anecdote for the current discussion is twofold: one, Palma thought some link between them was necessary; and two, he was addressing continuity, not through style, but through matters of invention, or the devices of the narrative.

In another telling example from the late seventeenth century, the painter and biographer Giovanni Battista Passeri praised his former master Domenichino for having faithfully united (fedelmente unito) his fresco of the Ascension of St. Cecilia with Guido Reni’s altarpiece of St. Cecilia with Saints in the Polet Chapel in San Luigi dei Francesi.\textsuperscript{55} Passeri was not suggesting that Domenichino changed his style so that his work would be more compatible with the style of Guido, who had himself copied Raphael’s famous version of the same subject. Semblances between the facial features, clothes, and colours were sufficient for Passeri, so that Domenichino could still be praised for his own “rare, and perspicacious ingegno.”\textsuperscript{56} As long as Domenichino was not trying to make a show of his own personal style, Passeri was content with the unity between two individual artists.

1.3 \textsuperscript{} The Single Hand in the Early Sixteenth Century: Similarities of Styles and Spiritual Compatibility

Not long after Ludovico Sforza’s agent compared the different styles in the Sistine Chapel, critics also began to prioritize the role of individual style when describing the harmony between collaborators, especially the closer the hands had come into contact. This aligns with the first appearance of individual style as a premium condition of the contractual sua mano. In 1501, Michelangelo was hired to make fifteen sculptures and was asked to complete a

\textsuperscript{54} Ridolfi must have been thinking of Palma’s Defeat of the Visconti Fleet near Cremona, 1427 and Tintoretto’s Boarding of the Milanese Fleet on Lake Garda, 1440; see Juergen Schulz, Venetian Painted Ceilings of the Renaissance (Berkeley, 1968), pls. 113 and 110. In both these ceiling paintings there is a figure climbing the masts. One of Palma’s compositional sketches lacks the figure climbing the masts, which might corroborate Ridolfi’s tale; see Stefania Mason Rinaldi, Palma il Giovane: l’opera complete (Milan, 1984), fig. 17. If Ridolfi’s story is to be believed, it would mean Palma’s painting pre-dates that by Tintoretto, who must have been genuinely impressed by the motif in Palma’s version.

\textsuperscript{55} Richard Spear questioned whether the copy of the St. Cecilia with Saints in the Polet Chapel in San Luigi dei Francesi is actually the copy praised by contemporaries. The quality is certainly not great, nor is its condition. See Spear, The “Divine” Guido, 382 n. 121.

\textsuperscript{56} Giovanni Battista Passeri, Vite de’ pittori, scultori, ed architetti che hanno lavorato in Roma (s.l., 2000), 20: “Il nostro Zampieri per andare fedelmente unito con detto Quadro ha vestito la S. Cecilia che sale al Cielo colle medesime vestimenta, che adornano quella di Raffaello tanto nella forma, quanto nel colore, osservazione veramente degna del suo raro, e perspicace ingegno.”
sixteenth already started by Pietro Torrigiano for the Piccolomini altar in Siena (Figs. 1.10 and 1.11). A new characteristic of the _sua mano_ clause was appended to the contract: “he should finish it [Torrigiano’s block] with his hand (_sua mano_) … and it should not show a different master or hand … so that everyone who sees it will say it was his work.” At a time when theory was turning its attention more and more away from the artist’s practical knowledge of art and towards the artist’s mental powers, style added new speculative and associative dimensions to descriptions of collaboration as well. Writers explained collaborative unity in subjective and intellective terms. The greater the likeness in style, it was generally believed, the greater must have been the personal and intellectual affinity between collaborators.

There were various ways to explain a metaphorical consolidation of personalities and hands in collaboration. The conceptual model was typically found in ideal couplings, including kinship, marriage, and friendship. Carlo Ridolfi, for example, drew upon the bonds of fraternal love in order to describe the harmonious synergy of Carlo and Gabriele Caliari, the sons of Paolo Veronese: “These two brothers lived united in the most gentle knot of love, not distinguishing superiority between them, painting indistinguishably in the works they made, and, with the same aim, expecting to scale the heights of fame and fortune with their virtue.”

The notion of two or more hands becoming one also suggested a merging of bodies not unlike the metaphysical union of marriage – as it was put in the bible, “they are no longer two but one flesh” (Mark 10:8). Bernardino Scardeone in 1560 instantiated this idea of

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57 “Item; perché vi he un san Francesco di marmot facto per mano di Pietro Turrisani; si domanda per el Cardinale, che esso Michelangnolo per suo honore et cortesia et humanità, non essendo quello finite di pannamenti et testa, che el finisca di sua mano in Siena, dove sua Signoria Reverendissima el farà condurre, acciò possa stare infra le sue figure, et non si mostri maestro et mano diversa, perchè a lui ne seguitaria manchamento, che ognuno el vedesse, diria fusse sua opera.” See Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, vol. 3 (Siena, 1856), 22. The expectation that Michealngelo would rework a block already in progress in order to eliminate any sign of a hand other than his own, and so that no one could question his particular authorship, is suggestive of a new premium placed on individual style. For a discussion of the altar for which these sculptures were to be made, and the reasons why Michelangelo abandoned the project, see A. Lawrence Jenkens, “Michelangelo, the Piccolomini and Cardinal Francesco’s Chapel in Siena Cathedral,” *The Burlington Magazine* 144, 1197 (2002): 752-754. For interpretations of the contract as evidence for a new interest in style, see Spear, “Divine” Guido, 258; O’Malley, “Painting Contracts,” 169.

58 Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 1, 358: “Vivevano questi due fratelli uniti con nodo soavissimo di Amore, non distinguendosi tra loro superiorità, dipingendo indifferentemente nelle opera, che faceano, e con un medesimo fine attendendo con la virtù allo accrescimento della fama e delle fortune loro...” Based on his description of the Bellini brothers, Gentile and Giovanni, Ridolfi seemed to think that rivalry was more virtuous than fraternal collaborations, see *Maraviglie*, vol. 1, 47: “Separatosi Giovanni dal fratello, cominciò à far opere da se, benche l’Amore tenesse sempre gli animi loro congiunti, ambi cercando con virtuoso gareggiamento avanzarsi nella virtù: essendo l’emulazione degna di lode all’hora, che à glorioso fine è indirizzata.”
corporeal amalgamation when he referred to the Paduan collaborators Domenico Campagnola and Gualtieri Dall’Arzere as consanguineous (*consanguinei*), when in fact Dall’Arzere had married the sister of Campagnola’s godfather.  

We will come across associations drawn between collaboration and the bonds of matrimony in other contexts, but perhaps because Mark’s verses related to the gendered inequalities of marriage, the ideals of virtuous friendship were regarded in theory as the most effective conceptual framework for the collaborative hand. Cicero categorized a friend as a “second self” because of the duplication of a single personality.  

In the same vein, Aristotle had considered a friend (*philos*) to be an “other self,” and defined friendship as “one soul in two bodies,” or at least this was a saying attributed to him by Diogenes Laërtius. By adopting for collaboration what was deemed inherent in ideal friendship, writers believed that the coalescence of styles was not unlike the coalescence of souls in friendship. As we will see, however, Aristotle’s

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59 Bernardino Scardeone, *De antiquitate urbis Patavii*, (Basel, 1560), 373: “In basilica S. Annae ad altare maius, est tabula Dominici Campagnolae. Iampridem obijt eius consanguineus Galterius; qui suo aevo in arte illa inter primos est habitus. Sed inter opera alia pinxit aedes nostras iuxta S. Leonardum, & innumeris alieas. Sunt & alij plurimi nobis minori noti sed fortasse non minus excellentes, quos alij postea suo tempore celebrabunt.” *Consanguineus* and *consanguinità* were legal terms denoting patrileneal collaterality in ancient Roman law, but over the centuries came to include various distances of cognatic kinship; see Gérard Delille, “The Shed Blood of Christ: From Blood as Metaphor to Blood as Bearer of Identity,” in *Blood and Kinship: Matter for Metaphor from Ancient Rome to the Present*, ed. Christopher H. Johnson, Berhard Jussen, David Warren Sabean, and Simon Teuscher (New York, 2013), 138, among other essays from this volume. In Ridolfi’s words, probably based on Scardeone, Dall’Arzere was *coiunto in sangue* with Campagnola; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie dell’arte*, vol. 1, 74. In 1538, Gualtieri Dall’Arzere married the daughter of Domenico’s godfather, Guido Lizzaro, who was also the father of the sculptor Tiziano Minio. On this connection and the number of collaborative projects between the two blood brothers, see Lionello Puppi, “Domenico Campagnola,” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 17 (1974).


61 For the quote about a friend being an other self, see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* ix, 9.


63 On friendship according to ancient philosophy and rhetoric, see Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*; and Kirk Baltzly and Nick Eliopoulos, “The Classical Ideals of Friendship,” in *Friendship: A History*, ed. Barbara Caine (London, 2009), 1-64. Pythagoras was said to have argued that friends are equal and that they share in all things. Pythagoras’ proverb that friends are equal and share all things related more to an ascetic lifestyle than to a sympathy of tastes. This can be found in his life written by Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* viii, 10. But Erasmus made it the first principle of the *Adages* in 1508, as a way to reject individual authorship or individual propriety over intellectual and philosophical traditions. Friendship, instead, was the spirit of sharing intellectual property for the benefit of the community. See Kathy Eden, *Friends Hold All Things in Common: Tradition, Intellectual Property, and the Adages of Erasmus* (New Haven and London, 2001).

maxim of friendship as one soul in two bodies, in particular, offered writers the chance to reformulate the relationship between the soul and the hand in the expression of style, and was adaptable enough to help these writers articulate differently what they perceived to have been brought into unity in the act of collaboration.

1.3.1 Compatible ‘Airs’: Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo

The earliest sign of this new collaborative ideal, without a direct reference to the principle of the single hand, can be found in the early writings about Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo. This form of partnership was entirely different from those in which the hands, inclusive of assistants, were distributed across scenes of a narrative program. Beginning in 1513 with the Pietà in Viterbo (Fig.1.12), Sebastiano, who was trained in Venice and had been working independently in Rome since 1511, signed on to paint certain altarpieces and chapels while employing drawings supplied to him by Michelangelo. Far from the traditional sua mano clause of a contract, the paintings were issued in Sebastiano’s name even though the patrons, who were aware of the arrangements made between the two artists, expected to see traces of Michelangelo’s input as well. Since Giorgio Vasari first penned Sebastiano’s biography in 1550, the resulting works have been viewed as syncretic combinations of disegno and colorito, that is, combinations of the intellective and anatomically charged figure types of Florentine drawing on the one hand, and the atmospheric luminescence and softness of Venetian painting on the other. This bimodal style, especially visible in the Raising of Lazarus (Fig.1.13), has in turn been interpreted as a response to a paragone initiated by Raphael’s supporters declaring him to be equal to Michelangelo in disegno and superior to Michelangelo in colorito because of his ability to paint soft flesh. There were indeed references in the letters exchanged between Sebastiano and Michelangelo to their rivalry with Raphael, and there were also indications that Sebastiano was painting for both of their reputations, as when Sebastiano hoped that with Michelangelo’s help he could “take

vengeance, yours and mine, in a single stroke..." But the dissimilarity of their skillsets should not eclipse the unembodied similarity that was thought to make their hands, if not necessarily their talents, alike. Even acknowledging Michelangelo’s greater reputation and status, their immediate circle regarded Sebastiano as Michelangelo’s kindred spirit, in possession of a style reflective of both of their minds or souls.

The language describing Sebastiano’s paintings after Michelangelo’s drawings was carefully chosen both by their colleagues and by themselves to intimate a naturally occurring imitation that would not diminish Sebastiano’s authority to that of a passive follower, much less to that of an assistant or pupil, or Michelangelo’s authority to that of an artist dependent on the skillful hand of another. Leonardo Sellaio, a mutual friend and Michelangelo’s secretary in Rome, wrote to Michelangelo in 1516 about Sebastiano’s prophets in the Borgherini Chapel (Figs. 1.14 and 1.15): “…according to those who see the work, there is no one of your air [aria] if not he.” Fundamentally, Sellaio’s remark was about their styles. Sebastiano’s style (aria) was like, or at least near enough to do justice to, Michelangelo’s own style (aria). Still, the epigrammatic statement leaves more to unpack. The insubstantial element ‘air,’ a word we have already come across, was an early synonym of style because of its association with appearance and expression. For Petrarch, air referred to the painter’s spirit, which infused its own presence into representational figures, giving them life: “In these [painted figures], even if there be a great difference of features, a certain shadow (umbra), which our painters call air (aer), most apparent in faces and eyes, makes that likeness, which, immediately upon seeing the son, recalls to our mind the memory of the

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64 Paola Barocchi, Giovanni Poggi, and Renzo Ristori, eds., Il carteggio di Michelangelo, vol. 2 (Florence, 1965), 242 (CDLXXI): “Et tutto quello che io ho parlato al Papa, et i termini che io ho usato circa questa hopera, è stato per puro amore et reverential vi porto, et con mezzo vostro far le vendete vostre et mie a un trato, et dar ad intender a le persone maligne che ‘l c’è altri semidei che Rafael da Urbino con e’ soi garzoni; et poi per le parole mi disse el compare Leonardo, che con lettere sue quasi me affermava vui esser più caldo di me in questa cossa. Et si ho comesso eror alcuno, perdonateme.”

65 Cited in Goffen, Renaissance Rivals, 246. The letter by Sellaio on the Prophets painted by Sebastiano in the Borgherini Chapel in San Pietro in Montorio is transcribed in full in Paola Barocchi, Giovanni Poggi, and Renzo Ristori, eds., Carteggio di Michelangelo, vol. 1, 222 (CLXXIV – November 22, 1516): “Non c’è nessuno dell’aria vostra, se none lui.” This sentence could be understood as, “There is none of your air, if it is not his,” which would change the meaning slightly, but within the context of the letter, Sellaio was trying to praise the two as a pair.

66 The meaning of air as a variant of style was common in the circle of Michelangelo, as David Summers noted in its frequent use in Francisco de Hollanda’s dialogue on art; see Summers, Michelangelo and the Language of Art (Princeton, 1981), 57-58.
father.”

Using mimetic painting as a metaphor, Petrarch was instructing a young follower on poetic imitation and on the importance of paraphrasing, as opposed to direct duplication, so as to admit the emotive touch of personal style. According to his analogy, a picture might resemble its object of imitation in its basic form, but something about the picture’s aer – i.e.

individual style – has an expressive life that comes from the spirit of its generative source, the painter. Read next to such a famous explanation of style, Sellaio’s words suggest that the expressive air Sebastiano imparted to the painted prophets was sufficiently homologous to the expressive air Michelangelo originally imparted to his drawn figures. Thus, there was enough reason to see both of their spirits in the frescoes, like the memory of two fathers seen in the child. The genealogical association does not stop there. To take our interpretation a step further, Sebastiano and Michelangelo themselves were, to Sellaio, different in their features but somehow naturally alike in spirit, not unlike the aer of the father seen in the son. While in most of their letters Sebastiano and Michelangelo addressed each other as old and intimate friends (chompare e amicho karissimo; carissimo compar mio; mio carissimo), on other occasions Sebastiano referred to Michelangelo as like a father, as his father, or even as more than a father.

For Sebastiano, whose own style and authorship was acknowledged in the frescoes, his natural compatibility with Michelangelo was pointedly different than the trained conformity

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68 For more on the metaphor and its effect on instruction manuals on art like Cennino Cennini’s, see Andrea Bolland, “Art and Humanism in Early Renaissance Padua: Cennini, Vergerio and Petrarch on Imitation,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 49, 3 (1996): 469-487.

69 On their letters addressing each other as friends and brothers, see Deborah Parker, *Michelangelo and the Art of Letter Writing* (Cambridge, 2010), 14-15.

70 Sebastiano addressed Michelangelo as a father when asking for advice about a low valuation of his work: “Ma, compar mio carissimo et padre mio, a me par dura cossa a un par vostro far precio di tal cossa.”; see Barocchi, Poggi, and Ristori eds., *Carteggio di Michelangelo*, vol. 2, 212 (CDLIII). In 1518, his salutations to Michelangelo read: “Carissimo mio piu de patre;” see Barocchi, Poggi and Ristori eds., *Carteggio di Michelangelo* vol. 2, 32 (CCCV); and “Carissimo mio quanto padre;” see ibid. vol. 2, 86 (CCCLVI). Michelangelo seems to have had this effect on his young protégés. Andrea di Rinieri Quaratesi, writing to Michelangelo, told him that he is “onorando e da me amato quanto padre.” See Carmen Bambach, “Berenson’s Michelangelo,” *Apollo* 171, 575 (2010), 53; and Barocchi, et al., eds., *Il Carteggio di Michelangelo*, vol. 3, 431 (letter DCCCLXXXIX). For more on Michelangelo’s tender relationship with his pupils and his ability to create new forms from their struggles, see William Wallace, “Instruction and Originality in Michelangelo’s Drawings,” in *The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop*, ed. Andrew Ladis and Carolyn Wood (Athens, Ga., 1995), 113-33.
of a studio assistant. His letters concerning Michelangelo’s protracted progress on the tomb of Julius II provide circumstantial insights into his thoughts on the employment of other hands, even though they say nothing about their own collaboration directly.  

When Michelangelo contemplated abandoning the tomb project for Julius II and handing over his materials to the pope’s heirs for someone else to take over, Sebastiano advised him to select his own assistant and argued that his ‘shadow’ (l’ombra) would produce a better whole and an authentic Michelangelo work, even if he laid no further hand on the project himself.  

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Umbra, we should recall, was also paired by Petrarch with aer as a synonym for style. But unlike the naturally consonant air between Michelangelo and Sebastiano, any other hand needed stricter assimilation into Michelangelo’s vision. In fact, Sebastiano intended for Michelangelo’s ‘shadow’ to play double duty in the tomb project. In a figurative sense, the carved block needed to bear the hallmarks of Michelangelo’s style (bisognia un poco de l’ombra vostra), and to achieve this, Sebastiano also said, Michelangelo should literally cast his shadow over the shoulders of his executant (cioè allogare l’opera vui sotto l’ombra vostra). Without this dual shadow (style and oversight), Sebastiano averred, Michelangelo risked complete disassociation from the final result and would receive no credit. He further added that there would be no reason to mention this arrangement to the Della Rovere, and should they find out and claim that the work was not in Michelangelo’s hand, Sebastiano suggested that Michelangelo point to his projects in San Lorenzo as evidence that this was common studio practice.  

Sebastiano’s reasoning was that the executant of the design, as long as he was closely supervised, had no bearing on the authorship.

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72 See Correspondants de Michel-Ange, vol. 1, 74-78, esp. 76 (Sebastiano to Michelangelo on December 5th, 1531): "Bisognia un poco de l’ombra vostra, che si la pigliate per el verso è niente, perché voglio che quello che volete che facino li agenti del Duca, lo faciate vui; cioè alogare l’opera vui sotto l’ombra vostra. Questa cosa è niente, et cussi Nosto Signore li piace questa rasone et me ha ditto che per niente scuopra questa cosa che bisongia farla et non dirla, et se loro se resentsiengo et volesero dire come Michelangelo non lavora de man sua, si pò molto ben respondere che non possete far ogni cosa de man vostra, et che guardino su l’opera che fatte per Nosto Signore, e ancora altre persone che lavorano." For earlier letters concerning this troubled commission, see Michelangelo, Letters, ed. and trans. E. H. Ramsden, vol. 1 (London, 1963), 177 (letter 186).
73 Barocchi, Poggi, and Ristori eds., Carteggio di Michelangelo, 356 (DCCCXXXVIII): “Et se loro se resentisengo et volesero dire come Michelagniolo non lavora de man sua, si pò molto ben respondere che non possete far ogni cosa de man vostra, et che guardino su l’opera che facte per Nosto Signore [Clement VII], e ancora altre persone che lavorano.” On Michelangelo team in San Lorenzo, see William E. Wallace, Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: The Genius as Entrepreneur (Cambridge and New York, 1994).
74 Sebastiano offered similar advice in 1521 concerning the Risen Christ installed in the church of Santa Maria Minerva in Rome. Warning him of the idle gossipers (poltroni et cichaloni) who were declaring that the work
Sebastiano’s independence in working with Michelangelo’s drawings was not inconsequential. To Michelangelo’s way of thinking, both the mind and the hand were active and formative in a recursive creative process. The imaginative source of \textit{disegno}, he generally believed, only mattered insofar as it was united with the hand’s practiced mastery over a given inchoate medium, whether it be marble or pigment.\textsuperscript{75} Of course, Michelangelo tended to express this belief when thinking and making could not be brought into unity, or ironically, when an inevitable symmetry between the two put the quality of the work in jeopardy.\textsuperscript{76} It has often been assumed, for example, that Michelangelo was placing the mind and hand in a hierarchy when he claimed that he “paints with his head and not with his hand” \textit{(si dipinge col cervello e non colla mano)}, and yet he was not at all alienating the hand from the mind as is often said about this quote when taken out of context. Rather, he was advising the pope not to press him to work on the Pauline Chapel while he remained distressed by the affairs related to the tomb of Pope Julius II, because he feared his hand would follow his desperate state of mind.\textsuperscript{77} Michelangelo was not saying the hand’s labour is irrelevant. His real point was that the state of the artist’s mind is just as relevant.

Similarly in the opening stanza of his most discussed sonnet, he wrote with Platonic and Aristotelian undertones: “The greatest artist does not have any concept that a single piece of marble does not circumscribe within its own superfluity, and this is brought out only by a

\footnotesize{truly belonged to his assistant Pietrò Urbano, Sebastiano impelled Michelangelo to “make sure that the figure appears to be by your hand,” in order to dispel such challenges to his authorship. See \textit{Correspondants de Michel-Ange}, vol. 1, 24: “Advertite che bisonga che la paia di mano vostra, aciò ch’e poltroni et cichaloni crepino.” As the case may be, Pietro nearly ruined the marble figure, which apparently required the careful restorations of Giovanni da Reggio. See Sebastian’s later letter, \textit{Correspondants de Michel-Ange}, vol. 1, 28-32. For an explanation of what had been perceived as remaining defects in Michelangelo’s sculpture, see William E. Wallace, “Michelangelo’s Risen Christ,” \textit{The Sixteenth Century Journal} 28, 4 (1997): 1251-1280. Michelangelo prided himself for his mastery of several arts, which is why he was not entirely satisfied with Benedetto Varchi’s conclusion in his lecture on the paragone between painting and sculpture that the ends of noble \textit{disegno} made the different arts equivalent but for the mere contingencies of their material; see Summers, \textit{Michelangelo and the Language of Art}, 270-272. Michelangelo’s conception of artistic creation closely followed Aristotel’s widely accepted theory of creation whereby the male seed was regarded as the formative soul – that is the \textit{pneuma} or breath of life – that actively shapes passive female substance into an intelligible body. Indeed, according to Aristotle himself, artistic creation involved a chain of causation not separable stages – the form conceived in the soul moves the hand in a particular way; the hand then moves the tool; and the tool moves the passive material into shape; see David Summers, “Form and Gender,” \textit{New Literary History} 24, 2 (1993): 255-256.}


\footnotesize{Barocchi, Poggi, and Ristori eds., \textit{Carteggio di Michelangelo}, vol. 4, 150: “Monsignor, la Vostra Signoria mi manda a dire che io dipinga et non dubiti di niente. Io rispondo che si dipigne col ciervello et non con le mani; et chi non può avere il ciervello seco, si vitupera: però fin che la cosa mia non si acccincia, non fo cosa buona.”}
hand that obeys the intellect.” The word ‘obeys’ (ubbidisce) implies a degree of agency or sovereignty that Michelangelo was not always confident he possessed, and as the sonnet proceeds in a Petrarchan tradition of love poetry, the correlation between mind and hand takes on a more reciprocal dynamic. The sonnet continues by relating the latent concetto encased in the marble to the spiritual beauty of a beloved imprinted on the heart of the lover. Out of this passive internal transformation, the lover’s active quest to possess the beloved in physical form is thus akin to the act of realizing an idea in material form. Whether the artist (lover) extracts true life from the corporeal material (beloved) and enjoys the pleasures of love, or misses the mark and finds in the material only death, loss, and unrequited love, will depend on the hand’s skillful ability to draw out an intelligible form reflective of the internal imprint of that spiritual beauty. Hardly a case for obedience, the proportional relationship between the mind and hand in this sonnet was evident to Benedetto Varchi who concluded in his lengthy lecture on the poem in 1547: “He is only a true master who may perfectly realize with his hands what he has perfectly imagined with his mind.”

It was along these lines that Sebastiano expressed his active receptivity to Michelangelo’s invention. He believed he had to be cognizant of the transformative power of the drawings to be able realize the idea in the passive pigment using his own factive habit – the Aristotelian means of transforming material using reason. One of the more abstruse, but still revealing, statements that Sebastiano made about his special understanding of Michelangelo’s inventions came in a request for drawings. Sebastiano wanted help with the altarpiece for the Chigi Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo, a work Sebastiano started but did not complete (Fig. 1.16). He asked Michelangelo for “a little light,” and associated the truth of Michelangelo’s

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78 On this portion of the sonnet and the significance of contour and circumscription in Michelangelo’s sculpture and painting, see Michael Cole, Leonardo, Michelangelo, and the Art of the Figure (New Haven, 2014), 31-81, esp. 66-67. For the full sonnet with a slightly different translation than Cole’s, see Michelangelo, The Poetry of Michelangelo, trans. James M. Saslow (New Haven and London, 1991), 302-303.

79 “Love, therefore, cannot be blamed for my pain, nor can your beauty, your hardness, or your scorn, nor fortune, nor my destiny, nor chance, if you hold both death and mercy in your heart at the same time, and my lowly wits (basso ingegno), though burning, cannot draw from it anything but death.” See Michelangelo, Poetry, trans. Saslow, 302. For sonnets with similar ideas, see Michelangelo, Poetry, trans. Saslow, 332, 406, 407, and 409-410. When his body was maladjusted, as it was from painting the Sistine Ceiling, Michelangelo also recorded poetically that “the reasoning that my mind (mente) produces comes out unsound and strange, for one shoots badly through a crooked barrel,” and then he referred to his work as “La mia pittura morta.” See Michelangelo, Poetry, trans. Saslow, 70-72.

80 Summers, Michelangelo and the Language of Art, 207.
inventions with a light (lumine) that fills men with inspiration, like divine grace (numine).\textsuperscript{81} Hardly a sign of passive dependence, this play on words, collapsing Ficinian Neoplatonics with a Pentecostal liturgical sequence (Veni sancte spiritus), tapped into that well-documented language of love and evangelism with which Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna received each other’s respective gifts of drawing and poetry.\textsuperscript{82} In his request, then, Sebastiano seems to have understood that the drawings were effective for his hand only as long as the inspiration was openly and actively received, like divine grace implanted on the soul.

When Sebastiano penned this letter in 1532, the Neoplatonic language elevating their artistic exchange was at its peak. In the same year, intermediaries for Vittoria Colonna negotiated with Michelangelo asking him to provide drawings as a gift, from which Pontormo could paint the subject of the Noli me tangere (Fig. 1.17).\textsuperscript{83} In the picture that was devised, Christ recoils from the Magdalene as she motions towards him, but he also comes very close himself to touching her heart. From this motif, Christian Kleinbub has argued that the idea of spiritual implantation lay behind the choice of subject and that the gesture encapsulates the charged moment of revelation when the seed of faith was planted in the Magdalene’s soul. Kleinbub was primarily relating this meaning of the picture to Michelangelo’s belief in the affective potential of the image on a receptive viewer (Colonna), like the transformative imprint of a beloved’s image on the heart of the lover. But Kleinbub also interpreted Christ’s gesture of planting his spiritual image in his follower’s heart as a

\textsuperscript{81} Marsha Libina drew attention to the language of divine inspiration in this letter to contest the view, most forcefully advanced by Rona Goffen, that Sebastiano was not only dependent on Michelangelo’s help, but also desperate for his designs; see Libina, “Sebastiano del Piombo and his Collaboration with Michelangelo: Distance and Proximity to the Divine in Catholic Reformation Rome” (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2015), 70-72. For this letter from 1532, see Barocchi, Poggi, and Ristori, Carteggio, vol. 3, 388: “Cussi ancora grandissimo apiacere me fairesti de un poco de lume de la istoria de la Natività de Nostra Donna, con un Dio Padre de sopra con agnoletti intorno, pur al medesmo lume, facto grosso modo. A me mi basta solamente chiarirmi come la intenderisti cui circha l’inventione, perché “sine tuo lumine nichil est in homine”; et se io vi do troppa noia, perdonateme.” As Libina pointed out, Sebastiano was altering a line from the sequence Veni sancte spiritus, substituting numine (divine grace) with lumine (i.e. inspiration).


\textsuperscript{83} On the circumstances for the production of the Noli me tangere, see Michael Hirst and Gudula Mayr, “Michelangelo, Pontormo und das Noli me tangere für Vittoria Colonna,” in Vittoria Colonna: Dichterin und Muse Michelangelos, ed. Silvia Ferino-Pagden (Vienna, 1997), 335-344.
subtext for a gendered, asymmetrical artistic exchange between Michelangelo and Pontormo. The key to this reading of the painting is Aristotle’s formula of creation whereby masculine form acts on effeminate matter. Michelangelo, according to Kleinbub’s interpretation, was making an allusion to his more significant contribution in *disegno* as the formative basis for Pontormo’s effeminate *colorito*. That the image can be interpreted as a self-referential analogy to the transference of grace and inspiration between Michelangelo and Pontormo is convincing enough, but the argument about a gendered hierarchy in their contributions is filtered too much by Kleinbub through Vasari’s rankings of *disegno* and *colorito*. The assumption here is that Michelangelo was regarded as the active mind, and Pontormo simply as a passive hand.

In an otherwise concise and cogent analysis of the power ascribed to Michelangelo’s hand, Paul Barolsky similarly read Christ’s pointing finger in the *Noli me tangere* as a sign of Michelangelo’s primary agency: “Michelangelo’s arresting reinterpretation of his subject is usually ignored, presumably because, as we have seen, the painting is not by his hand. Nevertheless, the invention upon which it depends is another striking example of Michelangelo’s meditation on the power of the hand, even where its touch is not felt or, should we say, *because* it denies such touching.” This interpretation has the effect of reducing the presence of Pontormo’s hand only to what it represents – the absence of Michelangelo’s hand. There is another way to frame the motif in the picture. The fact that Michelangelo’s hand did not touch the painting directly, just as Christ’s finger does not touch the Magdalene’s body, could also allude to the faith Michelangelo had in his associate to recognize, and realize, the significance of his inspiring inventions without requiring his manual interventions.

It was also at this time in the early 1530s that these Neoplatonic ideas, which were seemingly thought to bridge the gap between the minds and hands of collaborators, were circulating even more broadly and publically. The satirical poet Francesco Berni, another mutual friend, poked fun at Michelangelo’s celebrity and included a dig at the spiritually inflected language that suggested a collaborator and friend like Sebastiano had a unique

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comprehension of Michelangelo’s divinely inspired mind. In the *Rime* (1534), Berni addressed one of his capitoli to Sebastiano, but spent the first third of the poem parodying the intense devotion Michelangelo inspired in himself and in others because of his miracles in architecture, sculpture, poetry, and painting. The very sight of Michelangelo, the poet feigned, made his fantasia want to burn incense and hang votives on the artist like an idol. Just as he was ridiculing the cult of Michelangelo by scrutinizing the absurd hyperbole attached to otherwise meritorious accomplishments, Berni also carved out a special place for Sebastiano, who had only recently been made friar in his appointment as Piombatore.

Addressing Sebastiano as “reverend father” (*padre reverendo*) rather than brother, Berni said he was the exception to all other painters who were only copying Michelangelo’s style without the substance, and who were thus better off “selling colours to women.”86 Indeed, Berni offered a reason for Sebastiano’s exceptionalism: “You [padre reverendo – Sebastiano] alone can come close to him [Michelangelo], and not without reason, so great does your individual and singular friendship appear.”87 As Michelangelo’s closest friend, so Berni’s comic verses imply, the padre Sebastiano was the only painter truly ordained in the cult of Michelangelo and thus the only one capable of understanding the divine power of his inventions.88 Berni’s praise was tongue-in-cheek of course, although still intended to flatter, and this did not go unnoticed by the appreciative ears of the artists.89 However facetious, Berni’s aggrandizement of their supposedly exclusive artistic friendship should be taken as acknowledgment of a collaborative persona established by their entourage and by the artists.

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88 This was a part of the inside joke. Just after Sebastiano was appointed to the piombatore he joked to Michelangelo about being ordained a friar: “se me vedesti fratte, credo certo ve la rideresti.” See Barocchi, Poggi, and Ristori, *Carteggio di Michelangelo*, vol. 3, 342.

89 In an equivocation of authorship similar to that of collaboration, Michelangelo responded with his own comic poem penned under Sebastiano’s name, who was then made to quote Michelangelo directly, thanking Berni for laying bare the reality of his false idol and hoping that Berni’s own infallible teaching might ‘illuminate’ Michelangelo to achieve the miracles ascribed to him. For a longer analysis of the motivations behind this poetic correspondence, and the significance of their network of friends, see Matteo Residori, “Sulla corrispondenza poetica tra Berni e Michelangelo (senza dimenticare Sebastiano del Piombo),” in *Les années trente du XVIe siècle italien: actes du colloque international* (Paris, 3-5 juin 2004) (Paris, 2007), 207-224.
themselves who would have understood the joke made at the expense of their Neoplatonic justifications.

In view of the idea that the quality and style of a painting reflects the spirit of the artist, the likemindedness of friendship, much like the philosophical aphorisms of ideal friendship, advanced strong conceptual foundations on which to base a natural compatibility between the styles of collaborators, even if they were not exactly regarded as equals. Allusions to their sympathetic spirits helped to blur the creative borders between contemplative minds and factive hands, or between the inventor and the executant, and served as a conceptual example for Michelangelo’s later partnerships with Marcello Venusti, Jacopo Pontormo, and Daniele da Volterra.90

Much of the language about style, friendship, and likemindedness, which complicated clear authorial divisions between invention and execution, has nevertheless been overshadowed by Vasari’s later description of the partnership in the Life of Sebastiano.91 For Vasari, the extent or quality of Sebastiano’s credit right from their first collaboration on the Pietà in Viterbo was in question (Fig. 1.12). The relevant passage describing this work can only be understood in its original, inelegant syntax: “But because – although it was finished with much diligence by Sebastiano, who created a greatly praised tenebrous landscape, the invention nevertheless and the cartoons were by Michelangelo – this work was held by whoever saw it as truly beautiful, Sebastiano thereby earned the greatest credit, and confirmed the statements of those who favoured him.”92 Vasari acknowledged Sebastiano’s right to claim credit as the painter of a beautiful work, but the awkward and obstructive interjection in his assessment, containing so many contrasting conjunctions, sets the two


91 Sebastiano’s reputation was further damaged by critics from his native Venice who were championing Titian over Michelangelo. See chapter 3.6.

92 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3 bk. 1, 341: “Ma perche, sebene fu con molta diligenza finite da Sebastiano, che vi fece un paese tenebroso, molto lodato, l’invenzione però, & il cartone fu di Michelagnolo; fu quell’opera tenuta da chiunque la vide veramente bellissima onde acquistò Sebastiano grandissimo credito, & co[n]fermò il dire di coloro, che lo favorivano.”
contributions in opposition and throws substantial doubt on the nature of the credit that Sebastiano earned. In Vasari’s estimation, Sebastiano earned his portion of the credit primarily for his labour-intensive *diligenza*, in counterdistinction to Michelangelo’s more noble and intellective invention. The final axe to fall on Sebastiano’s reputation in his biography was Vasari’s account of a permanent rupture between the friends. Upset by Sebastiano’s attempts to have the *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel painted in oil, Michelangelo declared, according to Vasari, that oil painting was “for women and lazy people like Sebastiano.” In undermining Sebastiano’s input, Vasari was as motivated to save Michelangelo from the appearance of dependence, as he was to justify his own practice as a *capo maestro* leading large teams of painters in the execution of his designs. But that is a topic to be discussed later.

1.3.2 Collaborative Amity and the Single Hand of Mariotto Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo

The partnership between Mariotto Albertinelli and Baccio della Porta, better known by his monastic name Fra Bartolomeo, is another example in which viewers made a link between collaboration and friendship. Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo were co-pupils under Cosimo Rosselli before they started their own workshop in the early 1490s. Even after Fra

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93 Sebastiano’s implied dependence on Michelangelo in this influential biography has had a strong hold on modern scholarship until more recently. On the critical fortune of Sebastiano, both positive and negative, see Constanza Barbieri, “The Competition between Raphael and Michelangelo and Sebastiano’s Role in it,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia Hall (Cambridge, 2005), 152-164; and Kristina Hermann Fiore, “Aspetti della fortuna critica di Sebastiano nel Cinque e nel Seicento,” in *Sebastiano del Piombo 1485 + 1547* (Rome, 2008), 73-79.

94 For more on Vasari’s tone towards Sebastiano’s *colorito* in the *Pietà*, see Constanza Barbieri, “Disegno fiorentino, colore Veneto e altri significati emblematici della *Pietà*,” in *Notturno sublime: Sebastiano e Michelangelo nella Pietà di Viterbo* (Rome, 2004), 55-86. In the Borgherini Chapel, Vasari suggested similar to the *Pietà* that Michelangelo made the cartoon for the central Christ at the column; see Vasari, *Vite* (1568), vol. 3 bk. 1, “Ne tacerò che molti credono Michelangelo havere non solo fatto il picciol Disegno di quest’opera, ma che il Christo detto, che è battuto alla colona fusse contornato da lui, per essere grandissima differenza fra la bontà di questa, e quelle dell’altre figure.”

95 Vasari, *Vite* (1568), vol. 3 bk. 1, 349: “Ma è ben vero, che havendosi a dipinger la faccia della cappella del Papa, dove hoggé è il giudizio di esso Buonarrotto, fu fra loro algo[n]to disdegno, havendo persuaso fra Sebastiano al Papa, che la facesse fare a Michelagnolo a olio, là dove esso non voleva farla senon a fresco. Non dicendo dunque Michelagnolo ne si, ne nò, & acconciandosi la faccia a modo di fra Sebastiano, si stette così Michelagnolo, senza metter mano all’opera alcuni mesi; ma essendo pur sollecitato, egli finalmente disse, che non voleva farla senon a fresco; & che il colorire a olio era arte da Donna, & da persone agiate, & infingarde, come fra Bastiano. & così gettata a terra l’incrostatura fatta con ordine del frate, & fatto arricciare ogni cosa in modo da poter lavorare a fresco, Michelagnolo mise mano all’opera, non si scorda[n]do però l’ingiuria, che gli pareva havere ricevuta da fra Sebastiano, col quale tenne odio quasi fin’alla morte di lui.”

96 See Chapter 1.4 below.
Bartolomeo became a Dominican friar in the year 1500, they continued to work together on and off, until 1509 when Albertinelli joined Fra Bartolomeo as co-master of the monastic workshop at San Marco. At the dissolution of the partnership in 1513, upon Albertinelli’s retirement from painting, the workshop had to be legally divided between them. Although these two painters worked together before Michelangelo and Sebastiano even met, the critical response that most concerns this discussion dates to 1550 and 1568 in the two editions of Vasari’s Lives. Advancing on the model of friendship that was thought to support the partnership between Sebastiano del Piombo and Michelangelo, while eschewing its origins, Vasari directly incorporated Aristotle’s aphorisms about ideal friendship (a friend is an other self; and friends are one soul in two bodies) into the expression of the collaborative single hand.

As was the case between Sebastiano and Michelangelo, Vasari put Albertinelli in the position of follower as much as collaborator, primarily because he regarded Fra Bartolomeo more highly. Still, he wrote of Albertinelli that he was a “most familiar and cordial friend, and one could say an other Fra Bartolomeo, not only for their ongoing interaction and practice, but more so for the similarity of style… [They] were one soul and one body. And there was such fraternity between them that when Baccio [i.e. Fra Bartolomeo] left [the workshop of Rosselli]… to make art on his own as a master, Mariotto [Albertinelli] went with him. At the Porta di San Pier Gattolino, they dwelled the one and the other for a long time, working many things together.”

What is more, when Albertinelli was tasked with finishing Fra Bartolomeo’s Last Judgment (Fig. 1.18), according to Vasari, “many unknowingly thought that it was produced by one hand alone.” Whose hand was thought

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97 The workshop was legally dissolved in 1513 leaving us with documents related to the division of materials, including paintings; see Ludovico Borgo, The Works of Mariotto Albertinelli (New York and London, 1976), 548-551 (doc. 24).
98 We will concentrate our attention on the 1568 edition, because the language of friendship is more nuanced, but the theme was established in the 1550 edition; see Vasari, Le vite de’ più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a’ tempi nostri, vol. 3 (Florence, 1550), 609-613.
100 Once Baccio became ‘Fra Bartolomeo’ he had to give up his commission to paint the Last Judgment; see Vasari, Vite, vol. 3, bk. 1 (1568), 43: “Mariotto all’opra (sic.) diede fine: dove con diligenza, & con amore
to have made the painting does not exactly matter, because the one was the same as the other in spirit.

What about this tandem and their similar styles suggested to Vasari and other observers that their pictures were made by ‘one hand alone’? In most of the joint projects issued from their shared workshop, Fra Bartolomeo and Albertinelli designed the composition together, likely using sketches pulled from a common stock. Yet if Ludovico Borgo’s analysis is correct, they appear to have kept their respective brushes to separate areas of the final painting, or to separate panels of a polyptych. Typically, when dealing with a single panel, as in the *God the Father with Saints* in Lucca (Fig.1.19), Albertinelli painted the upper register of figures, while Fra Bartolomeo was responsible for the figures below.101 While there is truly a holistic quality to the surviving pictures, the artists were not intending to disguise their personal identities by working so indistinguishably, for they were still consigned to their own particular areas. Indeed, on the altarpiece commissioned by the Hapsburg diplomat Ferry Carondelet, they both signed their names, and to make sure neither was given greater recognition they signed on the same panel even though their pictures in this case were separate – the panel featuring the *Coronation of the Virgin* by Albertinelli, which now survives only in fragments (Fig.1.20), was originally placed above Fra Bartolomeo’s *sacra conversazione* (Fig.1.21).102 For collaborations like these, united as they were by such similar styles, as Vasari said, their indistinguishable souls in friendship helped to account for each artists’ personal will and self-determination in the creative process, even if their natural compatibility meant their particular hands were not directly identifiable.103

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101 The altarpiece was originally intended for the dominican monastery of St. Peter Martyr in Murano, but they never seem to have taken possession of it, and it was still in possession of the two artists when their property was divided up according to the terms of their dissolution in 1513. Borgo intimates that Albertinelli was responsible for the God the father and angels, and Fra Bartolomeo for the female saints below, and discussed Albertinelli’s drawing for the God the Father and Angels. Borgo, *Works of Albertinelli*, 376-382 (cat. II, 2).

102 See Borgo, *Works of Albertinelli*, 134-138, 420-428 (cat. ii); and Borgo, “The Problem of the Ferry Carondelet Altar-Piece,” *The Burlington Magazine* 113, 820 (1971): 362-371. Albertinelli seems to have been largely responsible for the Coronation of the Virgin that was originally above the sacra conversazione, but which is now in fragments.

103 Vasari, moreover, was not committed in absolute terms to the indistinguishability of their styles, implying that experts could tell them apart if only under great strain. He made this clear in the first edition of the *Lives* when he considered Albertinelli more of a follower. Here Vasari said, “… si giudica spesso spesso la medesima mano: dove i giudici di gli artefici possono appena conoscere la vera da la imitata.” See *Vite* (1550), vol. 3, 609.
1.3.3 One Soul in How Many Hands?

The analogy to the philosophical ideals of friendship, however, was not a perfect fit for Vasari’s description of the metaphorical single hand. While the physical bodies of friends typically remained distinct in philosophy (there may have been one soul, but there were two bodies), such corporeal separation was incongruous with the semantics of the single hand and with related figurations of artistic unity encapsulated in a single body (*corpo*). The reader might have noticed that Vasari made conceptually significant revisions to Aristotle’s maxim in his characterization of Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo. The two painters, Vasari said, “were one soul and one body.”\(^{104}\) In this reformulation into one body, Vasari was able to maintain some theoretical consistency with the idea that the *Last Judgment* appeared to be “worked by one hand alone.”\(^{105}\) The structural incompatibility between the concept of two bodies in friendship and the single hand in collaboration, however trivial it might appear, was an acknowledged problem that others nevertheless adapted using a variety of solutions. To address this thread in the discourse means that we must momentarily jump ahead in time.

When it came to the Beaubrun cousins, the French art biographer André Félibien, in the *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes* (1688), resolved the collaborative incompatibility with Aristotle’s maxim by replacing the metaphorical ‘single hand’ with its instruments, the single palette and brush:

You know the friendship and the close bond between [Henri] and Charles Beaubrun, his cousin. The conformity of mores and sentiments that existed so strongly between them was always admired, for they seemed to have but one spirit and one will. But what is more astonishing is that, in their paintings, one sees the effect of one and the same imagination, as their ideas were alike. Their style was so equal and so similar, that in making the portrait of one person they worked alternately the one and the other, and made use of the same palette and the same paintbrush, one could say that one and the same spirit conducted two different hands.\(^{106}\)

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\(^{104}\) Vasari, *Vite* (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 42-43.

\(^{105}\) Vasari, *Vite* (1568), vol. 3, bk.2, 43.

\(^{106}\) André Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes*, vol. 5 (Geneva, 1972; facsimile of Paris, 1688), 185-186: “Vous sçavez l’amitié & l’étroite liaison qui estoit entre luy & Charles Bobrun son cousin. On a toûjours admiré cette conformité de moeurs & de sentiments qui estoit telle entre eux, qu’ils sembloient n’avoir qu’un mesme esprit & une mesme volonté. Mais ce qui a paru de plus surprenant, c’est que dans leurs Peintures on voit l’effet d’une mesme imagination, & qu’ils ont eû de pareilles idées. Leurs maniere estoit si égale & si semblable, que pour faire le Portrait d’une personne ils y travaillolent alternativement l’un & l’autre, & se servant de la mesme palette & des mesmes pinceaux, on eust dit qu’un mesme esprit conduisout deux differentes mains.”
Despite the change in metonym (the same style meant the same brush, instead of the same hand), the meaning remained more or less unchanged from Vasari—a compatibility in style was the result of a compatibility in spirit as is found in friendship. For Félibien, a portrait like that of the infant Louis XIV and his wet nurse, could be said to have been made by one soul expressed by two hands (Fig.1.22). By making their physical hands the only variable in their creative process, Félibien put aside the importance of manual execution itself. Where one hand left off and where the other began in practice made little difference to the instruments they held or to the appearance of the picture they created.

Only a few years before Félibien presented the model of one soul with two hands and one paintbrush, Giovanni Battista Passeri pointedly undercut the philosophical constitution of friendship as one soul, privileging the virtue of the single hand instead. In the Vite de’ pittori, scultori ed architetti che hanno lavorato in Roma, morti dal 1641 fino al 1673 (written between 1673-1679, but not published until 1772), he could not introduce the life of Agostino Mitelli, a specialist in quadratura, without also introducing his counterpart in figure painting, Angelo Michele Colonna. The balance of their specializations and inclinations was integral to their success between 1640 and 1660. The particular talent (il genio) of Mitelli, according to Passeri, was inclined more to representational architecture, and this was supplemented by Colonna, who “always applied himself to the study of figures.” The outcome of their specialized union was popularly acclaimed. As Passeri put it:

The novelty of their caprices, and the beauty of their curious inventions, which were appearing in their works, excited a loud cheer and no ordinary applause. Seeing with how much accord they were banding together with force and miraculous sweetness, they seemed to be two souls in one body, and two minds with one single hand.

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107 The association of the brush with style was a trend Félibien later opposed in the Idée du peintre parfait of 1707, preferring to trace the skills of an artist to the mind; see Nicola Suthor, “‘Il pennello artificioso’. Zur Intelligenz der Pinselführung,” in Instrumente in Kunst und Wissenschaft: zur Architektonik kultureller Grenzen im 17. Jahrhundert, ed. Helmar Schramm, Ludger Scharte, and Jan Lazardzig (Berlin, 2006), 121.

108 Passeri, Vite, 269: “Perche pare, che questa cognizione rimanga nuda, e povera senza l’accompagnamento delle figure, unissi con Angelo Michele Colonna della sua patria, il quale applicò sempre allo studio delle figure, e fatto così un’accoppiamento leggiadro incominciarono a lasciar vedere quanta forza aveva il valore di così bella unione.”

109 Passeri, Vite, 269: “La novità dei capricci, e la bellezza delle curiose invenzioni, che compariva nelle opere loro eccitò un grido, ed un applauso non ordinario; vedendosi con quanto accordo si collegavano insieme con forza, e dolcezza mirabile, sicchè parevano due anime in un sol corpo, e due menti con una sola mano.”
Rather than disturb the expression of the single hand, Passeri definitively inverted the configuration of ideal friendship from one soul in two bodies to two souls in one body.

The difference in Passeri’s description from what we have seen so far (one soul in one hand; one soul in two hands) might be passed over if one were not paying close attention. But his adaptation is enough to completely overturn the precept of ideal friendship founded on similar minds. Passeri’s collaboration is based on different personalities and inclinations – ornament and figure, force and sweetness – being negotiated into a dialectic resolution epitomized by the single hand. Elsewhere, Passeri abhorred painters’ squabbles over personal style and he excoriated those contemporaries of his who allowed their inclinations and personalities to conspicuously dictate their style. In his view, there was only one true style, determined by artistic principles, discipline, and the study of ancient art. However unattainable this ideal was in reality, the dialogical collaboration between Mitelli and Colonna supported his view of the potential for a true style that supersedes the inevitable traits issued from one’s personal disposition – “two souls in one body, and two minds with one single hand.”

Passeri did not reformulate the relationship between the painters’ souls and the single hand ex nihilo. Between Vasari in 1568 and Passeri in 1679, art literature in Italy returned to an appreciation of practice. Whereas sixteenth-century writers emphasized the contemplative or spiritual source of an image and its style, hence one soul in one hand, seventeenth-century writers could equally celebrate the role of manual skill, or its unconscious mastery of the

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110 Passeri expressed these views in a prefatory “Osservazione,” which was not included in the standard edition of the Vite posthumously published in 1772. It can be found in Passeri, Die Künstlerbiographien von Giovanni Battista Passeri, 11: “A nostri giorni, non si costuma tra Professori di questa, che garire tra di loro della maniera, del gusto, e dello stile, e questo nasce perché non sono bene stabilite le ragioni con suoi saldi principij. Dice Massimo Tirio, che a suoi tempi un Pittore non contraddiceva mai l’altro in questo particolare, perché ciascheduno caminava con gli’istessi erudimenti senza variazione, e questi erano assodati nella vera, e buona disciplina. Ciascheduno introduce insegnamenti a suo genio, e ciaschedun precetto è negato da uno nell’altro, e questo è argomento certissimo, che non vi è il suo sostanziale stabilimento. Li Libri, che possono istruirci in questa scienza sono i marmi, e, benche insensati, e duri, sono bastanti a renderci prudenti, e facili ad operare; ne si è veduto mai nessuno, che sia caminato per questo sentiero, che non habbia colpito qualche gran segno, e vedemo, che quanto di buono si scopre nelle Opere di renomati Pitori, tutto deriva dalla Greca erudizione, così nel dare nobiltà d’aria alle teste, maestà, e grandezza al nudo, inventione, e capriccio alli panneggiamenti, e leggiadria e sveltezza alle posature, et attitudine alle figure d’ogni genere. Dico questo non perché io habbia hauto ingegno, e fortuna d’appigliarmi a questo sicuro amaestramento; ma perche il Tempo me ha fatto conoscere il mio mancamento, e quello ch’ero tenuto di fare per aprofitarmi: così il mio difetto serve ad altri per esempio a non incontrare, sul bel principio, nell’errore; ma d’incaminarsi sul primo a quel buono, che può rendere l’Intelletto amaestrato, e sicuro; ma vi è necessaria la viva voce d’un’ erudito Maestro, che serve d’Oracolo per li buoni insegnamenti.” For more on Passeri’s passage and his nostalgic view of style, see Sohm, Style, 19 ff.
For seventeenth-century viewers like Passeri, then, the single hand represented multiple souls becoming embodied in one hand through the manual integration of their distinct styles.

The remainder of this chapter will focus on this trajectory from Vasari to Passeri in both the theory and practice of collaboration, but a few words now will help orient the discussion. Early signs of this change in perception, without giving over to an appreciation of practice, appeared already in Vasari’s Life of Taddeo Zuccaro from 1568 in which the idea of the single hand was deployed for different ends than it had been in the Life of Mariotto Albertinelli. In this case, Vasari was responding to public criticism that managerial artists like himself were allowing their designs to be executed by painters outside the workshop who had styles that were visibly different. Taddeo Zuccaro, Vasari explained, was able to judiciously accommodate, in a manner not unlike the social habits of Castiglione’s self-fashioned courtier, the different minds and styles of his associates until they cohered into the appearance of a single hand. The manual process of this coordination, however, was not meant to be apparent to the viewer. In the last decade of the sixteenth century, in contrast, viewers looked for the distinctions between hands, as well as the manner in which the hands were integrated. Viewers of the three Carracci in particular were able to perceive their brushes moving in and out of each other’s spaces. This interactive type of unity was more akin to the goals of ‘civil conversation’ popularized in a conduct manual written by Stefano Guazzo in 1574. Out of these foundations set by the Carracci and their interactive coordination, Passeri was able to articulate, a century later, the meaning of the single hand anew.

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111 For a succinct treatment of this theoretical reappraisal of practice, see Nicola Suthor, “‘Art on the Tip of the Brush’: A Blind Manoeuvre? Reflections on Correggio’s Brush, Arent de Gelder’s Spatula, and Pietro Testa’s Figure of Practice,” in Vision and its Instruments: Art, Science, and Technology in Early Modern Europe, ed. Alina Payne (University Park, 2015), 167-189. And on the significance of the pennello (brush) in seventeenth century art theory as a predominant metonym for the whole creative process from the mind to the hand, see Suthor, “‘Il pennello artificioso’. Zur Intelligenz der Pinselführung,” 114-136.
112 See chapter 1.4 below.
113 See chapter 1.5 below.
Thinking and Making on the Margins of the Workshop: Diverse Minds and the Single Hand in Vasari’s Day

While Vasari described Mariotto Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo as one and the same person in spirit leading to a virtually indistinct style, he also provided a different typology for the single hand that centered around disparate personalities, minds, and styles:

Starting this project, Taddeo, with a number of men (huomini), quickly brought it to a finish, showing the greatest judgment (grandissimo giudicio) in knowing how to arrange so many diverse minds (cervelli) in such a large work, and how to understand the different styles (maniere), in such a way that the work showed itself to be all of one and the same hand (mano).

Vasari was describing the decorative program managed by Taddeo Zuccaro for a Roman palace belonging to an unspecified cardinal of Mantua. The project has since been lost, but to Vasari’s eyes at least, these painters with their different minds and different styles were able to come together as if they worked as a single unit under Taddeo’s direction. Since Taddeo’s ‘huomini’ were not raised in his studio, nor trained in his style, their contributions were not the same as the unspoken involvement of traditional assistants in a workshop. In a single passage Vasari managed to justify the expansion of the workshop with visibly different hands while perpetuating the centralized authority of the inventive artist.

By modifying the single hand, substituting similar minds and styles with diverse minds and styles, Vasari was validating, even valorizing, the proliferation of large teams in which one painter directed other variously trained masters and assistants working from his designs. It is surely no coincidence that this was Vasari’s own stock and trade in Renaissance Florence and Rome. But the great model was Raphael and his studio, notably comprised of

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115 According to Cristina Acidini Luchinat, the cardinal was either Sigismond Gonzaga, or Ercole Gonzaga, and suggested that the palace might have been the Palazzo Doria Pamphilj before later structural and pictorial changes. See Acidini Luchinat, *Taddeo e Federico Zuccari. Fratelli pittori del Cinquecento* (Milan, 1998), 59.

116 Vasari’s project for the *Last Judgment* in the cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore is a well-documented example. Vasari requested funds for a maestro d’importanza, who would act as a parallel director on the scaffolding and when Vasari was absent. He further requested a number of maestri pratici paid on a descending scale according to their specialization, ranging from setting the fresco, to painting drapery, landscapes and creating wax and terracotta models, to painting ornaments, fields, clouds and transferring the cartoons, to grinders of pigment. For a transcript of the document, see Cesare Guasti, *La cupola di Santa Maria del Fiore* (Florence, 1857), 144-146. According to Cristina Acidini Luchinat, the head maestro was the Bolognese painter Lorenzo Sabatini. Technical analysis indicates that he probably worked with a fair bit of autonomy in adapting the
Giulio Romano, Giovanni da Udine, and Gianfrancesco Penni, among others. He delegated tasks according to his associates’ distinct dispositions and skills, and involved them in the development of the *concetto* or invention.\textsuperscript{117} After Raphael’s death in 1520, many of these well-known assistants formed smaller and less organized *compagnie*, as they continued Raphael’s work, and for a short period thereafter, as they took on new joint projects as a financially pragmatic measure during a period of intense competition following the death of Leo X in 1521.\textsuperscript{118} These were not always the most harmonious working groups as Cardinal Giuliano de’ Medici (future Pope Clement VII) discovered. For the decorations in the Villa Madama (Fig.1.29), the Cardinal himself had to find a solution for the disagreements between Giulio Romano and Giovanni da Udine, whom he referred to as *quei duo pazzi* and *cervelli fantastichi dipintori*. Sensing their personal animus, he suggested they divide their labour either according to genre or according to design and execution, so that he could be “relieved of this molestation.”\textsuperscript{119} Experiences like this must have brought into focus just what Raphael had accomplished.

On the advent of the foundation of official art academies, the formation of large workshops based on Raphael’s model served two further purposes. They ostensibly provided work and training to an influx of young artists migrating to the city, and they tacitly provided the cheap labour that made it possible for masters to take on more commissions and to meet the tight deadlines imposed on them by their patrons.\textsuperscript{120} According to Vasari, Taddeo, like

\textsuperscript{120} Robert Williams, “The Artist as Worker in Sixteenth-Century Italy,” in *Taddeo and Federico Zuccaro: Artist-Brothers in Renaissance Rome*, ed. Julian Brooks (Los Angeles, 2007), 95-103. Federico Zuccaro, reading and commenting on Vasari’s *Vite*, also touched on the compromising demands of patrons. He wrote in the margins of his copy of the *Vite* about his frescoes in the Villa d’Este: “he had to use many assistants, as often happens in such works, to bring a fast end and to satisfy the will of the cardinal, who wanted things as if thrown from a printing press.” Quoted in John Marcia, “Artistic Practice in Late Cinquecento Rome and
many others, was accused of stealing every commission “in order to profit with the arms of others,” and to this, Taddeo supposedly countered that he took those jobs for his brothers’ benefit, and as part of their training.\(^{121}\) The perception that artists were withdrawing from their manual duties on the pretext of managing an expanded workshop fomented a theoretical debate on the realm of artistic creation and on the relationship between the invention of the mind and the practice of the hand. Opposition to managerial art laid bare the uphill battle facing the likes of Romano Alberti who argued in 1585 that the noble art of painting was purely intellectual and that its mechanical dependence was merely a contingency of the artform, just as writers and mathematicians depended on their own instruments.\(^{122}\) Although the intellective spheres of the mind (mente) earned disegno a status as a liberal art, intellect alone ultimately proved to be an insufficient justification for the estrangement of the hand in the process of creation, for it did not take into account the non-rational fields of the mind (cervello) that had equal hold on the actions of the hand. Because of Taddeo Zuccaro’s intellective ability to acquire a principal style out of these fields of the mind – those subjective faculties that made Michelangelo and Sebastiano, and Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo so alike – the status of the capo maestro, Vasari suggested, was rescued from the stained appearance of a mere shop master indiscriminately churning out work ‘with the arms of others.’ Zuccaro supposedly bypassed the hand using his rational faculties prudentially and judiciously to work with, rather than against, non-rational faculties in a manner not unlike the self-fashioned conversations courtiers were supposed to have with other social classes. This section will first explore the critical attacks against large teams of artists, before delving further into the rhetoric of Vasari’s justification in the Life of Taddeo Zuccaro.

\(^{121}\) Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3 bk. 2, 693: “[Taddeo] si risolvè a posare l’animo, & a non volere più pigliate per Roma, come insino all’hora haveva fatto, ogni basso lavoro, e massimamente per fuggire il biasimo, che gli davano molti dell’arte, dicendo che con certa sua avara rapacita, pigliava ogni lavoro, per guadagnare co[n] le braccia d’altri quello, ch’a molti sarebbe stato honesto trattenime[n]to da potere studiare, come haveva fatto egli nella sua prima giovanezza. Dal quale biasimo si difendeva Taddeo con dire, che lo faceva per rispetto di Federigo, e di quell’altro suo fratello, che haveva alle spalle, e voleva, che con l’aiuto suo imparasseno.”

\(^{122}\) Romano Alberti, Trattato della nobilta della pittura: compostò ad instantia della venerabil Compagnia di San Luca, et nobil’academia delli pittori di Roma (Rome, 1585), 14-15: “… & per dirla piu chiaramente bisogna, che il perfetto Pittore sia teoricamente dotto senza l’operare, il qual’ operar dipoi non diminuisce la nobilta, al contrario di quel che pensano alcuni, servendosi di cio il Pittore per esprimere il suo concetto, il che non puo fare senza la potential motiva & altre cose estrinseche, si come si serve il Theologo, & Orator dello scrivere, il Mathematico del co[m]passo, tavola, gesso, astrolabij, & altri molti instrumenti…” Discussed also in Elizabeth Cropper, The Ideal of Painting: Pietro Testa’s Düsseldorf Notebook (Princeton, 1984), 85.
1.4.1 Managerial Art and the Contested Dualism between Mind and Hand

It was not an uncommon tactic in the competitive communities of Florence and Rome to publicly deride a rival for abusing the loose meaning of *sua mano* as it was traditionally understood from contracts. Aspersions were cast on many of Vasari’s recent forebears and contemporaries, including Perino del Vaga, Benvenuto Cellini, and even the so-called loner Michelangelo, who were all publicly accused of leaving too much of the execution to their assistants. Giovanni Battista Armenini complained that the use of large teams had created abject conditions for apprentices. But the quarrelsome environment related to this practice also led to critical debates about the role of the master, raised the level of authorial self-consciousness, and anticipated seventeenth-century constructs of artistic authenticity separating ‘originals’ from ‘copies.’

The effectiveness of accusations against managerial artists was apparent to Raffaello Borghini who presented such criticism in his dialogue, the *Riposo* (1584). When Borghini’s interlocutors were in the church of Santa Croce in Florence, they turned their attention to the altarpiece featuring *The Agony in the Garden* (c. 1575), which was attributed to Andrea del Minga (Fig.1.30). One of these speakers, the artist Sirigatti, reported that rumors had spread around the city, whether “from envy or because of little love for Minga,” claiming that the altarpiece’s authorship belonged more accurately to three others. The speculation was that Giambologna made the drawing (probably meaning the underdrawing), Stefano

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123 Benvenuto Cellini records in his quasi-fictional autobiography that Baccio Bandinelli had accused him of relying on Bandinelli’s workers for their skill in the execution of the bronze Perseus. Cellini, of course insisted that he did most of the work himself and had set out to prove that he had no need of Bandinelli’s assistants. See Cellini, *Autobiography*, trans. George Bull (New York, 1979), 318-319. For more on the rivalry between Cellini and Bandinelli, see Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, 341-383; Francesco Vossilla, “Baccio Bandinelli e Benvenuto Cellini tra il 1540 e il 1560: Disputa su Firenze e su Roma,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 41, 3 (1997): 254-313. Sebastiano wrote to Michelangelo in anticipation of the arrival of the marble figure of the *Risen Christ* for the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, warning him of the idle gossipers (*poltroni et cichaloni*) who were declaring that the work in fact belonged to the hand of his assistant Pietro Urbano. To dispel such claims, Sebastiano impelled Michelangelo: “make sure that the figure appears to be by your hand.” See *Correspondants de Michel-Ange*, vol. 1, 24. In defending his own reliance on assistants, Baccio Bandinelli castigated Michelangelo’s practice of using assistants without teaching them; see below.


125 On this altarpiece in the Pazzi chapel of Santa Croce, see Marcia Hall, *Renovation and Counter-Reformation*, 129-131; and Alessandro Nesi, *Andrea del Minga (1535-1596) un pittore dello Studiolo tra “calumnia” e … Fortuna* (Florence, 2014), 39-54. Andrea del Minga and his brother were both ejected from the Accademia del Disegno in 1571 for earning money as both an artist and as a guard of the customs house and tax collector. He was reinstated in 1577. See ibid., 49.
Pieri painted the figures, and the Flemish painter Giovanni Ponsi did the landscape.\textsuperscript{126} None of these painters were trained in Minga’s studio, and yet the moderator of the dialogue, Bernardo Vecchietti, swatted away the issue as being of little interest to him: “It went out under the name of Andrea and, they can say what they want, we should hold it as his, and it is very well done and well observed, as you see.”\textsuperscript{127} The unflattering doubt cast on Minga’s singular authorship, then, is a counter-model to that exalted, unapportionable glory in collaboration. The exchange between these speakers reflected what Borghini knew – the authoritative name mattered to some and the physical execution mattered to others.

While there was increasing attention paid in art criticism to the intellectual capacity and inventiveness of the master artist, which culminated in the unprecedented significance placed on disegno, investments in the material execution of the idea survived attempts to displace the hand with the mind. In 1547, Baccio Bandinelli had to explain himself to Duke Cosimo de’ Medici who was unhappy that Bandinelli was leaving the execution of his ambitious sculptural ensemble for the choir in Santa Maria del Fiore to unsupervised assistants.\textsuperscript{128} Without apology, he justified his use of young assistants (garzoni) by appealing to the pragmatic lessons of the history of art itself, pointing out that such projects as Ghiberti’s bronze doors on the Florentine baptistery would not have been completed were it not for the employment of other young artists to execute the designs.\textsuperscript{129} He even went so far as to criticize Michelangelo, deriding him for not employing and teaching the young assistants he needed to finish the facade of San Lorenzo because he feared making rivals.\textsuperscript{130} In an even bolder move, Bandinelli marshaled the authority of antiquity to his defense:

\textsuperscript{126} Giambologna was trained in Antwerp. Stefano Pieri was trained by Bronzino, and was something of a travelling collaborator working on various large projects around Florence, including the decoration for Michelangelo’s funeral and the decoration of the dome in the cathedral; see Giovanni Baglione, Le vite de’ pittori, scultori, et architetti. Dal Pontificato di Gregorio XIII del 1572. In fino a’ tempi di Papa Urbano Ottavo nel 1642 (Rome, 1642), 89-90.
\textsuperscript{127} Borghini, Riposo, trans. Lloyd H. Ellis, 94.
\textsuperscript{128} The project for the choir, consisting of colossal freestanding figures and reliefs, was not complete until after Bandinelli’s death in 1560, and was dismantled in 1842. For a reconstruction of the commission and an up-to-date bibliography, see Massimo Firpo, “Il coro del Duomo fiorentino,” in Baccio Bandinelli: scultore e maestro, eds. Detlef Heikamp and Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi (Florence, 2014), 244-261.
\textsuperscript{130} Leonard Barkan argued that Bandinelli was appealing to the need for hands-on apprenticeships so as to keep the generations of artists developing. Barkan relates this argument to the academy that Bandinelli founded. See Barkan, Unearthing the Past, 292-296.
And in Rome on the historiated columns [of Trajan and of Marcus Aurelius], each one of which is the product of twenty masters (maestri), it is clearly seen that the design (disegno) and the invention (invenzione), which holds the principles of every excellence, derives from a single genius (ingegno). Nevertheless, the figures, for being an infinite number, were worked in many styles (maniere), and all good and beautiful, because a talented designer (disegnatore) guided all these masters. Any other way would never furnish comparable works.¹³¹

By changing the subject from his own assistants (garzoni) to ancient masters (maestri), Bandinelli, who established his own instructional academy in the 1530s, was conflating large workshops with still unclassified systems of collaboration. Echoes of fifteenth-century unity according to invention have come into conflict here with sixteenth-century interests in one consistent style. In Bandinelli’s view, the discernible differences between multiple hands, or styles, did not affect the program as long as it was consistent in its forms (disegno) and invention, as established by a single disegnatore. There is, in fact, a dismissive tone in Bandinelli’s passage towards style, as if it is purely a concern of practice. This is made more emphatic when he isolates his own talent or vision (ingegno) from manner (maniera), a marked departure from the typical understanding of style as coextensive with the particular nature of a painter’s genius.¹³²

Vasari was self-consciously less committed to the divorce between the speculative and the practical parts of painting. Still, he endeavored to justify the outsourcing of execution, despite unconvincing vows not to do so himself. He supposedly learned his lesson in 1546, a

¹³¹ See Louis Alexander Waldman, ed., Bandinelli and Art at the Medici Court: A Corpus of Early Modern Sources (Philadelphia, 2004), doc. 58, 348-349 (December 7, 1547): “E in Roma le colonne istoriate, che ciascheduna è l’età di vinti maestri; dove si vede chiaro che ‘l disegno e le invenzione, che tiene el principato d’ogni excelzenzia viene da un solo ingegno; nientedimanco le figure, per essere i[n]finita quantità, sono lavorate di molte maniere, e tutte buone e belle, perché un valente disegnatore guidò tutti quelli maestri: in altro modo non si potrebbe mai fornire simil’ opere. E mi ricordo quando stavo con Papa Leone, Sua Santità in Firenze mandò per Rafaello da Urbino e per Bun Aroto [sic], e choncluse la faciata de San Lorenzo, e si termin...”. Also transcribed, with some variations in Bottari and Ticozzi, eds., Raccolta di lettere, vol. 1, 71.

¹³² Ingegno, or ingenium, was distinct from the impersonal norms, precepts, and rules classified under ars. In basic terms, ingegno meant talent, but it was more personal than just ubiquitous skill. Like giudizio, ingegno was a natural talent and a personal vision that elevated the artist above the strictures of ars (though without violating the rules). According to a sonnet by Michelangelo, carved figures are imparted with grace and seemingly come to life because of “informed genius” (dotti ingegni). For Cicero, ars was that constant between all arts, and ingenium was the faculty that renders the images of artists different from those of other artists. See Summers, Michelangelo and the Language of Art, 218ff.; and Sohm, Style, 108-114. In some respects the concept verged towards style. For the ars/ingenium polarity and the significance for style, see also Sohm, Style, 67-70. The term was sometimes even interchangeable with individual style and its synonyms, as it was by the Portuguese Francisco de Hollanda – engegho was paralleled with modo and fazer. See Summers, Michelangelo and the Language of Art, 230-231.
year prior to Bandinelli’s letter. Vasari had tried to manage a large team in the Cancelleria in Rome with a similar belief that perfection derives from the design, and not from the instrumental hand and brush painting between the lines. Although he was partly excused because of the little time he was given (only one hundred days), it was apparent to everyone, including to such friends as Anton Francesco Doni, that the outcome was less than a success because of the multiplicity of hands. Vasari incorporated his personal lesson into the Life of Perino del Vaga in the first edition of the Lives of 1550. Having criticized Perino for only drawing the cartoons and leaving the execution to others even when it affected the quality, Vasari presented himself as an authority on the matter because of his own disastrous experience in what has come to be named the Sala dei Cento Giorni (Fig. 1.31):

Another can never imitate the cartoons, however well designed they might be, as precisely and as properly as the hand of the first author, who seeing the work go to ruin, in despair lets it depreciate completely. Therefore, whoever is thirsty for honour must do the work on his own. And I can say this with authority, having laboured with great study myself. Because the cartoons for the hall of the chancellery … had to be executed with much speed in one hundred days, many painters were assigned to colour them. They deviated so much from the outlines and quality of the cartoons, that I made a proposition and have stuck to it, that from then on, no one was to put their hand on any of my works. Therefore, whoever wants to preserve their name and their works,

133 Letter by Anton Francesco Doni to Lelio Torelli on the Sala dei Cento Giorni, 21 May 1547: “e s’altri non avesse avuto a metter mano ai colori che egli, solo per la brevità del tempo, certo faceva stupire l’età nostra.” See Bottari and Ticozzi, eds., Raccolta di lettere, vol. 5, 161. For more on the Sala dei Cento Giorni and the Cancelleria decoration, see Clare Robertson, ‘Il Gran Cardinale’: Alessandro Farnese, Patron of the Arts (New Haven and London, 1992), 53-69. By 1568 even Vasari’s close friend and iconographic collaborator, Vicenzio Borghini, wrote to him: “E talvolta è parso a’ vostri amici che pigliate troppe opere, lequalj, quando poi non sono di vostra mano, risolvetevi pure che non vi possono arrecare quella gloria che converrebbe. Hovvi volute dire questo liberamente, come ricerca la sincera nostra amicizia, mosso solo dal desiderio che ho de l’onore e dell’utile vostro. ” See Karl Frey and Hermann-Walther Frey, eds, Der literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasari (Munich, 1930), 411-412. “And sometimes it seems to your friends that you take on too many works, which, when they are not then of your hand, you dispose of so that you cannot reach that glory that you could attain.” Giulio Mancini, the physician who wrote the first treatise on connoisseurship (1617-21), rubbed more salt in the wounds of Vasari’s legacy by contrasting his practice with that of Nicolo Circignani, known as Pomarancio; see Mancini, Considerazioni sulla pittura (Rome, 1956), 206-207: “Fu huomo di grand’invenzione e prestezza, come si vede in S. Stefano Rotondo, che dicono che tutte quelle pitture fece in un’estate, facendone un quadro il giorno; che pertanto mi par maggior prestezza la sua che quella del Vasari nella Sala della Cancelleria condotta in tre mesi come ivi è scritto, perchè quella v’hebbe aiuti e faceva sol li schizzi per quelli che teneva sotto, ma questo faceva ogni cosa da sè e così presto.” Mancini, who as a connoisseur would be particularly sensitive to such practices, unsurprisingly contrasted the virtue of doing a work in one’s own hand to what he perceived as the undisciplined practice of strictly providing designs. What is more, he went after Vasari’s saving grace – the speed of production.
will do fewer of them, and all in their own hand, if they wish to attain that entire honour that the greatest genius seeks to acquire.\textsuperscript{134}

The musician Gioseffo Zarlino in 1558 understood Vasari’s passage on invention and execution, and took it as a direct lesson on the need to unite theory and practice in other arts like music:

But seeing that for anyone who wants to be a good painter, and to achieve great fame in Painting, it is not enough to use colors beautifully, if he does not know how to give an accurate account of the work he has made; so it is that for anyone who wishes to have the name of true Musician, it is not enough, and does not bring much praise, to have united harmonies when he does not know how to explain such union. I have, therefore, set out to treat of those things that pertain both to the practical and speculative sides of this science together...\textsuperscript{135}

With resonances of Vasari’s experience, Zarlino has inverted the problem for musicians. Whereas Vasari was warning his readers of the need for a practiced hand to express the concepts, Zarlino was advocating the need for a knowledge of theory to enrich practice. Zarlino had nevertheless picked up on Vasari’s initial basic mistake. The idea that a flawless alacrity of the hand required a firm grasp of the image in the mind was an old one dating back to Alberti, and so when Vasari allowed his cartoons to be executed by another hand, he was unadvisedly divorcing practice from theory.\textsuperscript{136} Vasari’s associates, while experienced in practice, must not have understood his concepts sufficiently. Given Vasari’s perennial reliance on hired associates, either he was being rash with his proclamation that he would work only on his own, or he was being disingenuous. Despite

\textsuperscript{134} Vasari, \textit{Vite} (1550), vol. 3, 942 “Ne mai per ben’ disegnati che siano i cartoni, si imita appunto, & propriamente come fa la mano del primo autore. Il quale vedendo andare in rovina l’opera, disperandosi lascia precipitare affatto: Atteso che chi ha sete d’onore debbe far da se solo. Et questo lo posso io dir per prova, che avendo io faticato con grande studio, i cartoni della Sala della cancelleria nel palazzo di San Giorgio di Roma che per aversi a fare con gran prestezza in cento di vi si messe tanti pittori a colorirla, che diviarono talmente da i contorni & bonta di quelli: che feci proposito & cosi osservato, che d’allora in qua nessuno ha messo mano in sulle opera mie. Laonde che vol conservare i nomi & le opera, ne faccia meno: & tutte di man sua se e’ vol conseguire quello intero onore che cerca acquistare un bellissimo ingegno.” Cited in Patricia Rubin with a variant translation, Giorgio Vasari, 121.

\textsuperscript{135} Quoted from the preface to the \textit{Istitutioni harmoniche} (1558), without comparison to Vasari, by Cropper, \textit{Ideal of Painting}, 86.

\textsuperscript{136} Alberti, \textit{La pittura}, 41r-41v: “… et nel l’imitarlio judico, che vi si debba mettere diligenta congiunta a prestezza, di maniera, che’l pittore no[n]a accosty a pennello o stilo a lavoro, che non habbia prima benissimo ordinate ne la mente quell, che’egli è per fare, et in che modo l’ha da fornire. Percioche più secure è levare gli errori de la mente, che scacellarle de l’opera… Percioche quello ingegno, che maneggiato ne l’esercitio si riscalda, diventa pronto, presto, et spedito. Et quella mano velocissima segue, la quale è guidata da certa ragione d’ingegno.”
Vasari’s initial belief that the design would hold the stylistic disparities in abeyance, the mechanical reproduction of forms was evidently not enough to maintain the requisite consistency of a collaborative team. Their wandering brushes, in Vasari’s mind, reflected their lack of understanding and emphasized the need for a manual unification from one source, if not from the beginning, at least at the end in the form of retouching. Retouching, though a straightforward means of integrating diverse styles into a hand more reflective of the primary designer, was not always efficient, and given Vasari’s fastidious record-keeping of the sizes of works and of the time provided to complete them, efficiency was at the top of his mind.\textsuperscript{137} Vicenzo Borghini, Vasari’s friend and iconographic advisor, expressed his concern about the foreign style of Vasari’s frequent collaborator Giovanni Stradano (Jacopo Van der Straet). His remarks are revealing about Vasari’s need for an economy of retouching, especially when dealing with a culturally different, albeit familiar, hand: “I believe that you will only need to retouch the St. George a little bit, which has that hand, or air, which I would like to call Flemish of the master Giovanni, and which could be reduced to your own [hand or air] with a few brushstrokes ...\textsuperscript{138}” For the Jesuit church in Cortona, in contrast, Vasari teamed up with Cristofano Gherardi with whom he had a greater affinity. Vasari admitted in the Lives that these frescoes were “almost entirely in Gherardi’s hand,” that he himself had only provided some sketches, and that he only “sometimes retouched a few things as needed.”\textsuperscript{139} It was riskier still to speed up the work by using less accomplished apprentices (his creati), as opposed to established associates, because it could require even more personal

\textsuperscript{137} The sizes of projects, and the time allowed to finish them, was a point of pride in Vasari’s own biography (and in the lives of his assistants), but he also managed to insert his great efficiency into the life of Taddeo Zuccaro: “[Zuccaro] saw the preparations of Vasari for the above-named Hall [in the Palazzo Vecchio]—namely, forty-four great pictures, of four, six, seven, or ten braccia each—in which he was executing figures for the most part of six or eight braccia, with the assistance only of the Fleming Giovanni Strada and Jacopo Zucchi, his disciples, and Battista Naldini, in all which he took the greatest pleasure, and, hearing that all had been executed in less than a year, it gave him great courage.” See Vasari, Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects, trans. Gaston du C. de Vere, vol. 2 (London, 1996), 233.

\textsuperscript{138} Borghini to Vasari in Arezzo, March 22, 1564: “Credo, che vi bisognerà solo ritoccare un poco il San Giorgio, che ha di quella mano o aria che io voglia dire Fiamminga di maestro Giovanni, che la ridurrete alla vostra con poche pennellate; et mj ricordo havervene già parlato qui.” See Frey ed., Der literarische Nachlass, 63. This painting was part of a program for Vasari’s own family chapel in the church of Santa Maria Assunta in Pieve; see Giorgio Vasari: Disegnatore e Pittore “Istudio, diligenza et amorevole fatica”, exh. cat. ed. Alessandro Cecchi, Alessandra Baroni, and Lilletta Fornasari (Milan, 2011), 206, n.54.

\textsuperscript{139} See Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 470: “Anzi per meglio dire fu quasi tutta questa opera di mano di Christofano, non havendoni fatto il Vasari, che certi schizzi, disegnato alcune cose sopra la calcina, e poi ritoccho tal volta alcuni luoghi, secondo che bisognava.” To see a drawing for this project (The Sacrifice of Noah), possibly in the hand of Gherardi, see Vasari: Disegnatore e Pittore, cat. 12; see also, Paola Barocchi, Vasari pittore (Milan, 1964), 37-38, and pls. 48-51.
labour. On the pictorial cycles in the Palazzo Vecchio (Fig. 1.32), Vasari confessed: “And although some of my young apprentices (giovani miei creati) helped me, occasionally they proved useful and other times not, seeing as I sometimes had to, as you know, redo (rifare) everything with my own hand and recover (ricoprire) the painting, so that it would be of one and the same style.”

Some patrons were evidently open to retouching, knowing that a team having to work quickly could not afford supervisory interruptions. According to Vasari, this was one of the conditions placed on Taddeo Zuccaro by Alessandro Farnese (Vasari’s patron at the Cancelleria) when Taddeo was asked to oversee the decorative projects in the Villa Farnese at Caprarola (Fig. 1.33). Since Taddeo was not going to be on site permanently, he was contractually responsible for the designs, for picking his own collaborators (huomini) who were to be paid directly by Alessandro Farnese, and for periodically returning to the site to “retouch those things that did not proximate his own style (non istessono a suo modo).”

There was nevertheless a rumor (dicendo che), Vasari reported, that Taddeo was offloading too much of the work. Surprised to read about these whispers in Vasari’s Lives, Taddeo’s

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140 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 998: "E se bene mi hanno alcuni de’ giovani miei creati aiutato, mi hanno alcuna volta fatto commodo et alcuna no[n]; perciò che ho avuto tallora, come sanno essi a rifare ogni cosa di mia mano, e tutta ricoprire la tavola, p[er]ché sia d’una medesima maniera.”


142 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 692: “… lo diede a dipignere tutto a Taddeo, con queste condizioni, che non volendosi Taddeo private de’ gli altri suoi lavori di Roma fosse obbligato a fare tutti i disegni, cartoni, ordini, e partimenti dell’opere, che in quel luogo si havevano a fare, di pitture, e di stucchi, che gli huomini i quali havevano a mettere in opera fussono a volonta di Taddeo, ma pagati dal Cardinale, che Taddeo fosse obbligato a lavorarvi egli stesso due, ò tre mesi dell’Anno, & ad andarvi quante volte bisognava a vedere come le cose passavano, e ritoccare quelle che non istessono a suo modo.”

143 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 693: “…dicendo che con certa sua avara rapacita, pigliava ogni lavoro, per guadagnare co[n] le braccia d’altro quello, ch’a molti sarebbe stato honesto trattenime[n]to da potere studiare, come haveva fatto egli nella sua prima giovanezza.”
brother Federico retorted in the margins that “this charge applies more to Giorgio [Vasari] than to Taddeo,” adding that Taddeo should be praised not blamed for helping “young foreigners.”\(^{144}\)

This preoccupation with the consistency of style through retouching helped lay the groundwork for seventeenth-century classifications of authenticity separating a masterpiece (originale) from a studio work (copia). When in doubt, seventeenth-century managerial artists maintained that their works were as good as true originals because of both their designs and their final retouches (ritocchi).\(^{145}\) Peter Paul Rubens accounted for these dual evaluative measures in 1618 when negotiating the exchange of a group of paintings for the antiques owned by Sir Dudley Carleton; the exception was the less concretely classified Prometheus Bound (Fig. 1.34): “Original by my hand and the eagle done by Frans Snyders.”\(^{146}\) Guido Reni insisted on the same dual measure for the Cappella dell’Annunziata (Fig. 1.35). He assured the pope that, despite the greater labour of Lanfranco and Albani, he was responsible for the pensieri and disegni, and that he would re-cover everything with his own brush, adding that this most authoritative gesture was equivalent to the pope using his own hand when putting his signature on an otherwise invalid papal decree.\(^{147}\)

\(^{144}\) Cited in Michel Hochmann, “Les annotations marginales de Federico Zuccaro à un exemplaire des «Vies» de Vasari. La reaction anti-vasarienne à la fin du XVle siècle,” Revue de l’art 80 (1988): 71: “Questa tasa piu a Giorgio che a Taddeo si conviene emendare e maligno a dir questo anzi con molta carita cristiana si dilevata accetare e sovenire molti giovani forestieri per il cui tratenimento e degno di molta laude e non di biasimo come indegniamente gli da questo maledico.”

\(^{145}\) For a good overview of ‘retouching’ as a defense of authorship, see Spear, ‘Divine’ Guido, 253-256. For a discussion of retouching in the development of an assistant into a master, see also Gabriele Bleeke-Byrne, “The Education of the Painter in the Workshop,” in Children of Mercury: The Education of Artists in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Providence, RI, 1984), 35-38.


\(^{147}\) Adapted from Malvasia, Life of Guido Reni, trans. Enggass and Enggass, 54-55; Malvasia, Felsina pittrice, vol. 2, 19: “Beatissimo Padre, soggionse, il graffire, sbozzare, e campire non sono, che fanno il lavoro: sono appunto come un chirografo di Vostra Santità, che prima ch’ella vi ponga la mano e lo firmi, serve a nulla. Oltre che i pensieri, e disegni sono i miei, il tutto ricopro, finisco, e rifaccio in modo, che quando l’opra a me data non riesca di mia mano, mi contento d’incorrere l’indignazione sua, che sarebbe quanto dire per me il dolore della perdita di mille vite.” Malvasia seems to self-consciously avoid the term ‘invention’ in favour of pensieri, as he did on other occasions. For some reason Enggass and Enggass translated ricopro as ‘oversee’, which is symptomatic of the modern belief that authorship was determined by the original design and from supervision rather than the surface touches of the brush.
1.4.2 Accommodating Diverse Minds and Styles in Conversation

Against the backdrop of large teams, and the laborious retouching necessary to bring styles together, Vasari saw something truly remarkable in the collaborative method that Taddeo Zuccaro used for the now-lost project for the cardinal of Mantua in Rome. The passage bears repeating:

Starting this project, Taddeo, with a number of men (huomini), quickly brought it to a finish, showing the greatest judgment (grandissimo giudicio) in knowing how to arrange so many diverse minds (cervelli) in such a large work, and how to understand the different styles (maniere), in such a way that the work showed itself to be all of one and the same hand (mano).\textsuperscript{148}

That Taddeo coordinated the ‘diverse minds’ and styles of his un-named collaborators, suggests that he had less need to physically intervene and erase any obvious disjunctions between hands. Vasari was more than aware of Michelangelo’s idea that the image was formed in the mind before the hand was involved (si dipinge col cervello e non colla mano).\textsuperscript{149} He attributed a similar expression to Leonardo, who supposedly told the Duke Lodovico Sforza, as a way to explain why he was slow to labour on the Last Supper, that he prepared the most perfect image in his mind (mente) before laying his hand to it.\textsuperscript{150} The semantic difference between cervello and mente in these two cases is that Michelangelo was referring to the imaginative and temperamental conditions of his inspiration, whereas

\textsuperscript{148} Vasari, \textit{Vite} (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 691: “Vole[n]do il Cardinal di Montoa fare dipignere dentro tutto il suo palazzo a ca[n]to all’arco di Portogallo, co[n] prestezza grandissima, allogò quell’opera à Taddeo per convienevole prezzo. Il quale Taddeo cominciando, con buo[n]’numero d’huomini, in brieve lo condusse a fine, mostrando havere grandissimo giudicio in sapere accomodare tanti diversi cervelli in opera si grande, e conoscere le maniere differenti, per si fatto modo, che l’opera mostrì esse tutta d’una stessa mano.”

\textsuperscript{149} Barocchi ed., \textit{Carteggio}, vol. 4, 150. Michelangelo’s claim was more poetically articulated in the sonnet \textit{Non ha l’ottimo artista alcun concetto}, a reflection on the potential form enclosed in a piece of marble. Michelangelo lamented that his hand was unequal to the task of excavating this pre-existing mental form. The most thorough analysis of this sonnet for art theory is Summers, \textit{Michelangelo and the Language of Art}, 203-233.

\textsuperscript{150} According to Vasari, Leonardo had defended himself against the complaints of the Dominican prior of Santa Maria dele Grazie, who wanted Leonardo to work more quickly, by explaining to Duke Lodovico Sforza that he was preparing in his mind (mente) the most perfect image before laying his hand to it; see Vasari, \textit{Lives}, trans. Bull, vol. 1 262-263. Vasari, \textit{Vite} (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1 (Life of Leonardo), 6: “Largamente sopra di questo gli ragionò assai de l’arte, e lo fecce capace, che gl’ingegni elevate, talhor, che manco lavorano, piu adoperano, cercando co[n] la mente l’invenzioni, & formandosi quelle perfette idee, che poi esprimono, & ritraggono le mani, da quelle gia concepute nel’intelletto.” When his Theatine patrons in Sant’Andrea della Valle complained that Domenichino had not started painting, Domenichino replied, according to Giovanni Pietro Bellori, “I have worked on it continuously with my mind, with which I paint.” See Bellori, \textit{Le vite de’ pittori, scultori et architetti moderni} (Rome, 1672), 347. For more on the stress that Domenichino put on intelligence and on the formation of the invention before it could be put into execution, see Richard Spear, \textit{Domenichino}, vol. 1 (New York and London, 1982), 25.
Leonardo was referring to the process of his intellect in the sense of devising a clear plan or intention. The effect of both examples, hardly unique in writings on art, was to prioritize the internal processes of artistic creation, to link thinking to making. In a counter-vein, Flemish painters were singled out by Anton Francesco Doni for strictly replicating what they saw without filtering it through the imaginations of the mind. In Doni’s opinion, they lived up to the proverb that “they hold their brain (cervello) in their hands.”

The Life of Taddeo Zuccaro is the only place in the Lives where the word cervello appears in the context of collaboration, but Vasari used the term in other contexts. In some passages, it was equated with inventiveness. The cervelli of Piero di Cosimo, Parmigianino, and Pontormo had a tendency to wander to capricious realms, just as Tintoretto’s cervello was so uncontrollably terribile that it was reflected in his brisk style – it was as if he painted in jest, Vasari said. An eccentric style was a sign of an overactive cervello, as was the case with Morto da Feltre, who was “as unconventional in life as he was in his mind (cervello) and in the novel style in the grotesques he painted, which made him the recipient of great praise.” With a more critical tone, Vasari said that Amico Bolognese’s ‘bizarre’ cervello was equivalent to his ‘mad’ figures. Amico’s fractured mind not only meant that he talked to himself, but that he painted with two hands at once, one yielding the chiaro, the other the scuro. In other passages, Vasari referred to the mind for its role in imitation and tutelage.

Sandro Botticelli’s astute father, according to Vasari, ‘understood the inclinations’ of his

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151 Anton Francesco Doni, Disegno del Doni, partito in piu ragionamenti, ne quali si tratta della scoltura et pittura; de colori, de getti, de modelgi, con molte cose appartenenti a quest’arti: et si termina la nobilità dell’una et dell’altra professione (Venice, 1549), 16v: “Perche in queste cose di leggier disegno gl’oltramontani ci aplicano piu l’ingegno, et la pratica, che gl’Italiani non fanno; onde si dice in proverbio, che gl’hanno il cervello nelle mani.”

152 For the way Vasari exploited the ambiguous separation between the hand and the mind so as to take credit for projects for which he only provided drawings, see Philip Sohm, “Giving Vasari the Giorgio Treatment,” I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance 18, 1 (2015): 61-111.

153 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 21 (Life of Piero di Cosimo); Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 485 (Life of Pontormo); Vasari, Vite (1550), vol. 3, 843-852 (Life of Francesco Mazzuolo – Parmigianino). On Tintoretto, see the Life of Battista Franco in Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 592.

154 See also Life of Morto da Feltre in Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 223: “Questo si vide nel Morto pittore da Feltro, il quale molto fu astratto nella vita come era nel cervello e nelle novità [della maniera] nelle grottesche ch’egli faceva, le quali furono cagione di farlo molto stimare.” For some reason ‘della maniera’ was dropped in the Giuntina edition when transcribed from the Torrentiniana edition.

son’s cervello when he placed him in the shop of Fra Filippo Lippi. Francesco Granacci did not just follow Michelangelo’s style when the two were attending Lorenzo de’ Medici’s garden academy, he followed Michelangelo’s cervello. Antonio Mini, on the other hand, who was one of Michelangelo’s hapless pupils, had a cervello like hard wax and was unable to receive the impression of his master. Taken all together, the cervello was for Vasari a source of inventiveness, individuality, and idiosyncrasy that played on the painter’s hand. It is easy to see, then, how much Taddeo accomplished when he used his intellective judgment to unite various psyches (cervelli) under his direction.

The precise actions Taddeo took to organize the ‘diverse minds’ and how he understood the different ‘manners’ of his collaborators is not clear from Vasari’s description, and there are no extant remains of the frescoes from which to assess his statement with our own eyes. What Vasari does tell us is that these actions were determined by Taddeo’s great judgment (grandissimo giudicio). It is equally important to note that Vasari did not say the appearance of a single hand was the result of Taddeo integrating these painters into his own style, which presumably would have required retouching and which would not have shown a judicious understanding of their minds and styles. If anything, Vasari was suggesting that Taddeo accommodated his designs to their distinct dispositions and skills, based it would seem on the model of a courtier engaged in daily conversation. Such was Castiglione’s advice in the Corteo (1527) on the application of a self-conscious giudizio:

156 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 2, 470-471 (Life of Sandro Botticelli).
157 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 276: “…onde, avvenne che, conoscendo costui ancor fanciullo il valore e la virtù di Michelagnolo e quanto crescendo fusse per produrre grandissimi frutti, non sapeva mai lavarsegli dattorno, anzi con sommessione et osservanza incredibile s’ingegnò sempre di andar secondando quel cervello, di maniera che Michelagnolo fu forzato amarlo sopra tutti gl’altri amici, et a confidar tanto in lui che a niuno più volentieri che al Granaccio conferì mai le cose né comunicò tutto quello che allora sapeva nell’arte.”
158 Antonio Mini’s cervello, like hard wax, was too rigid to take Michelangelo’s impression and so was prevented from inheriting the work of executing Michelangelo’s slaves; see Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 776 (in Life of Michelangelo): “Antonio Mini harebbe volute: ma non hebbe il cervello atto, & quando la cera è dura non s’imprime bene.”
159 Vasari himself claimed his cervello needed a break from the supposed praise showered on him from his friend Bernardino Minerbetti. See Karl Frey, ed., Il carteggio di Giorgio Vasari (Munich, 1923), 379 (28 October 1553): “Io non voglio più canzone, né laude, né inni alle mie virtù che, merciè loro e dell’ambizione, mi hanno mal condotto il cervello; il quale perché ha bisogno di riposo, da parte sua vi prego come mio pastore, che guidate e reggete gli smarriti greggi vostrì.”
160 It is not clear to which cardinal of Mantua Vasari was referring, whether to Francesco Gonzaga or Ercole Gonzaga. For the rationale for either candidate, see Cristina Acidini Luchinat, Taddeo e Federico Zuccari fratelli pittori del Cinquecento, vol. 1 (Milan, 1998), 59.
I truly believe that it is difficult to give any rule for the infinite and various things that occur in conversing, since among all the men in the world two cannot be found that have souls of complete similarity. However, whoever is accustomed to conversation with many people, it is necessary that he be guided by his own judgment (giudicio) and, understanding the differences between the one and the other, that he change his style and method (stile e modo) everyday according to the nature of those with whom he is placed in conversation.

The prudential and mutable comportment Castiglione is describing here, so unlike the shared activities of ideal friends, made it possible for the courtier to fit in seamlessly into any social environment and put his company at ease, no matter their station. According to Vasari, Taddeo used his prudential judgment, the essence of autonomy in a society of self-fashioning, to work with the different temperaments and talents of those who are neither equals nor servants.

In Vasari’s Vite, those artists endowed with good judgment were able to transcend the rules of art and the strict copying of nature. Knowledge of principles and the observation of nature were both useful guides for the artist, but judgment was that innate ability to adjust and adapt as circumstances demanded, and it was accordingly the most important mental procedure on which disegno itself depended. Since the artist must synchronize his hand to the concept in his mind – an exercise that is mediated in the ordering process of disegno – Vasari suggested in his remarks about Taddeo Zuccaro that any unity between painters requires a judicious coordination of their minds first in order for the hands to follow.

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161 Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano*, 143 (II, 17): “Ma in somma non bastaranno ancor tutte queste condizioni del nostro cortegiano per acquistar quella universal grazia de’ signori, cavalieri e donne, se non arà insieme una gentil ed amabile maniera nel conversare cotidiano; e di questo credo veramente che sia difficile dar regola alcuna per le infinite e varie cose che occorrono nel conversare, essendo che tra tutti gli omini del mondo non si trovano due, che siano d’animo totalmente simili. Però chi ha da accomodarsi nel conversare con tanti, bisogna che si guidi col suo giudicio proprio e, conoscendo le differenze dell’uno e dell’altro, ogni di muti stile e modo, secondo la natura di quelli con chi a conversar si mette.”


163 In Vasari’s definition of disegno, both the intellectual powers and the manual training of the artist were included in the process: “Father of our three arts (…), disegno proceeds from the intellect, drawing from many things a universal judgment similar to a form or idea of all the things of nature, which is most singular in its measures. (…) [And] from this cognition is born a certain concept (…) such that something is formed in the mind and then expressed with the hands, which is called disegno. One could conclude that this Disegno is none other than an apparent expression and declaration of the concept that evolves in the soul (…). When it has derived from [a universal] judgment an image of something, disegno [then] requires that the hand be trained through study and practice to draw and express (…) whatever nature has created.” Quoted and discussed by Karen Edis-Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 145-150.
Taddeo himself became that mediator, not just between his own mind and hand, but between several minds and several hands, and only out of his adaptive mediation were the distinct styles of collaborators able to coalesce into what could be regarded as a single hand. By looking to the dynamics of daily conversation as opposed to the consimility of friendship, Vasari identified important shifts in collaborative practice. But his model of self-fashioned conversation was much different than the more egalitarian practices of the Carracci at the tail end of the century.

_Epilogue to Sixteenth-Century Collaborative Unity_

By the seventeenth century, an intensified sensitivity to individual style increased what had only been an implicit tension in the need for stylistic similarity between collaborators. The most telling example of this tension related to the works by Paolo Veronese and Battista Zelotti in the 1550s. Vasari early on praised their joint achievements with that equivocal apportioning of credit expected in collaboration, saying that their projects “gained for the one and the other, credit and reputation.”164 In the Life of Battista Zelotti from the _Maraviglie dell’arte_ (1648), Carlo Ridolfi even admired their collaborative single hand (Figs. 1.23 and 1.24): “Having a similar style (maniera), [Zelotti] worked without difference on the works of Paolo, such that their works appeared to be by the same hand.”165 Still, by Ridolfi’s day, Veronese’s reputation had far surpassed Zelotti’s, such that the Venetian biographer, though appreciating the likenesses between their styles, or their single hand, nevertheless lamented the cost to Zelotti’s reputation. In his view, Zelotti was virtually uncelebrated because his

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164 Vasari, _Vite_ (1568), vol. 3, bk. 2, 525 (Life of Michele Sanmichele): “Dipinse costui [Zelotti] essendo giovane in compagnia di Paulino una sala a tiene sul Vicentino nel palazzo del Collaterale portesco, dove fecero un’infinito numero di figure, che acquistarono all’uno, & l’altro credito, e riputazione.”

165 Carlo Ridolfi, _Le maraviglie dell’arte: ovvero le vite degli illustri pittori veneti e dello stato_ [1648], ed. Detlev Freiherrn von Hadeln, vol. 1 (Rome, 1965), 299; “nelle quali fatiche v’hebbe parte Battista Zelotti suo condiscapollo, che per essere di maniera simile, indifferentemente lavorava nelle opere di Paolo, à segno, che le cose loro parevano d’una medesima mano.” Ridolfi was referring to the frescoes on the ground floor of the Porto family home in Thiene, which can be dated to around 1551. Only a few rough fragments remain from this fresco project, while Zelotti’s frescoes for the piano nobile are still in good condition. See Giuseppe Pavanello and Vincenzo Mancini, _Gli affreschi nelle ville venete. Il Cinquecento_ (Venice, 2008), 510; and Katia Brugnolo Meloncelli, _Battista Zelotti_ (Milan, 1992), 119-120. This working relationship was expanded in the Consiglio de’ Dieci, where Veronese and Zelotti were commissioned for the majority (maggior parte) of the paintings.
style was so similar to Veronese’s that his works were often misattributed to his better known collaborator, especially by those who lacked expertise.\footnote{Despite celebrating their unified style in the Life of Veronese, Ridolfi’s refrain in Zelotti’s Life was that Zelotti was less well known; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 368: “Et in quelle opere [for the Consiglio dei Dieci] approssimossi in guisa al Veronese, che da molti sono credute sue Pitture.” See also Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 378: “E tutto che il Cataio sia luogo delitioso e riguardevole, le opere di Battista nondimeno lo rendono maggiormente nominato, concorrendovi del continuo numero di forestieri e studiosi, della Pittura, per ammirare così esquisite fatiche, le quali da molti, non ben pratici delle maniere, sono stimate per opere di Paolo, poiche, come già dicemmo, Battista con non molta differenza dipinse.” Consider Scaramuccia’s description of the chamber of the Consiglio dei Dieci in the Ducal Palace. In contrast to a very long description of Paolo’s fame as seen in the ceiling paintings, Scaramuccia comes to another oval painting of Jason and Juno, “Egli è di mano di un Battista Zelotti Veronese, il quale molto riuscì valente nella Professione,” \textit{Le finezze}, 91-92. Zelotti, “a certain Battista Zelotti,” was clearly not as well known or as revered as his companion by the seventeenth century. Veronese and Zelotti often worked with a third collaborator, Anselmo Canneri, who like Battista has fallen prey to the tendency to attribute his paintings to Veronese. See Diana Gisolfi Pechukas, “Paolo Veronese e i suoi collaboratori,” in \textit{Nuovi studi su Paolo Veronese}, ed. Massimo Gemin (Venice, 1990), 25-35. For more on Zelotti’s critical reception, see Brugnolo Meloncelli, \textit{Battista Zelotti}, 9-11.} The risk to a painter’s reputation and identity did not in and of itself obviate the need for some similarity, and yet Ridolfi was aware that it was no easy task for an artist, especially one with the most inimitable of styles, to keep true to the essential qualities of his hand while at the same time bringing it harmoniously together with another hand of equal reputation. This point was made in yet another example involving Veronese; this time in the competition to paint the massive canvas featuring the \textit{Paradiso} in the Grand Council Chamber in the Ducal Palace in Venice. Based on the submitted oil sketches, the council made the surprising decision that two of the independent contestants, Veronese and Francesco Bassano, were to share the commission by merging the central Trinity and encircling angels in Veronese’s plan with the rows of saints at the bottom of Bassano’s composition (Figs. 1.25 and 1.26). The work was never completed. In the Life of Veronese, Ridolfi simply said that Veronese’s death prevented the large painting from being carried out, but he gave a different explanation in the Life of Francesco Bassano and in the Life of Tintoretto, who was one of the other contestants and the eventual author of the work. The problem, Ridolfi averred, was that the two artists, Veronese and Bassano, struggled to bring their two distinct styles together (\textit{per la diversità delle maniere; and le maniere loro erano difficile da accordarsi}).\footnote{Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 345 (Life of Paolo Veronese): “Trovasi ancora due inventioni del Paradiso con numero di Beati sopra le nubi in più cerchi collocate, dovendo Paolo far la Pittura per il Maggior Consiglio unito col Bassano, essendo à lui destinata la parte della Trinità e delle Angeli, come più propotionata al di lui operare; il che non hebbe effetto interrotto dall morte…” Ibid., vol. 1, 409 (Life of Francesco da Ponte – Bassano): “Hebbe ancora in commissione del Senato di far un modello del Paradiso per il maggior Consiglio, che dipinger doveva con Paolo, come già toccammo nella di lui vita, che non hebbe effetto per la diversità}
failed attempt at stylistic concord was not for lack of trying or want of mutual respect. Veronese is said to have found Francesco’s style pleasing and even sent his son Carlo to study in Francesco’s shop.\textsuperscript{168} In the end, Veronese’s death in 1588 did indeed make it impossible for the work to come to fruition, at which point it was thought best to reassign the work to a single painter, the aging Jacopo Tintoretto (and by extension to his son Domenico, who executed most of the painting without the presence of his father’s hand).\textsuperscript{169}

The crux of the problem by the end of the sixteenth century, as illustrated in Ridolfi’s two examples, is that each participant needed to be discernible to the viewer, but they also needed to be seen as part of the same project. Their styles could not deviate so far that they became divorced from the consortium. Such was the reaction of the character ‘Bernardo Vecchietti,’ one of the speakers in Raffaello Borghini’s \textit{Riposo} (1584), to Sebastiano Vini’s \textit{Conversion of Saul} (Fig. 1.27), one in a series of new altarpieces installed in Santa Maria Novella in Florence: “let us not try to speak among ourselves about this [painting] since it seems to me of a manner very far from the others and not necessary to be enumerated among them. Therefore, as a different way of painting, we will leave it by itself.”\textsuperscript{170} The apparentness of dissimilarity to the other neighbouring altarpieces was cause enough for ‘Vecchietti’ to comment on style, which was, more often than not, little of this character’s concern in Borghini’s dialogue.\textsuperscript{171} The other ‘manners’ referred to here belonged to Vasari (the project manager) and his frequent collaborators, Battista Naldini, Giovanni Stradano (Fig. 1.28), Jacopo Coppi, among others, whose hands, which were hardly uniform, were distributed

delle maniere.” Ibid., vol. 2, 61 (Life of Jacopo Tintoretto): “Finalmente fù stabilito, prevalendo la parte, che à Paolo Veronese & à Francesco Bassano communemente si dasse, ma perche le maniera loro erano difficili da accordarsi, & perche anco non molto dopo Paolo esì morì, non capitò alcun di loro à darvi principio…”

\textsuperscript{168} For the idea that Carlo entered the Bassano shop, and for a drawing by Carlo reflecting his studies in the shop, see William R. Rearick, \textit{Il disegno veneziano del Cinquecento} (Milan, 2001), 180-81, and fig. 93. Ridolfi mentioned Carlo’s studies after the Bassano, saying Veronese found them pleasing; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 353. Ridolfi also reported that his own master Aliense made a copy from a Bassano painting found in the studio of Veronese; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 210.


\textsuperscript{170} Raffaello Borghini, \textit{Il riposo}, trans. by Lloyd H. Ellis Jr. (Toronto, 2007), 91; and Borghini, \textit{Il riposo} (Florence, 1584), 106: “no[n] ci curiamo di parlare anche di questa; perciò mi par di maniera molto lontana dall’altrc, e da non doversi fra quelle annoverare, perciò come differente modo di dipignere il lasceremo da per se solo.”

\textsuperscript{171} Later in \textit{Il riposo}, the character Michelozza reiterated Vecchietti’s criticism of Vini’s \textit{Conversion of St. Paul}, not for its difference from the others, but more straightforwardly for its bad style. See Borghini, \textit{Riposo}, 198-199: “E della Conversione di San Paolo, che segue non vi curate di parlare, perchè è un opera tanto trita, e di si debole maniera che vi si trova poco di buono.”
throughout the church. Normally the distance separating altarpieces obviated the need for so much consistency, but due to Vasari’s unusual control over the renovations in the church, which included replacing all the altars, these altarpieces followed a certain compositional formula and standard of finish. The curmudgeon of Borghini’s group of speakers could not find the same agreement between Vini’s picture and the others, and unceremoniously dropped it from the conversation as a result.

1.5 • Baroque Collaboration: The vicendevolezza de’ pennelli from the Carracci to Mitelli and Colonna

Although indistinguishable styles were cause for comment in the early sixteenth century and even cause for some concern towards the end of the century, there had never been so much effort applied to the disambiguation of collaborative unity as there was towards the Carracci. Ludovico and his two cousins, Annibale and Agostino, came together in 1582 after having followed different courses of training, and promptly began working together to decorate the palaces of Bologna, including the Palazzo Fava (1583-84) and the Palazzo dei Diamanti (1591). It was the unveiling of the frescoes in the Palazzo Magnani in 1592 (Fig. 1.36), however, that is most significant, not only for the remarkable unity of the pictures, but for the expectations of viewers. While delighting in the coherently rendered illustrations of the founding of Rome, the Carracci’s audience also found pleasure searching out the elusive seams that divided the three hands. A generation later, Carlo Cesare Malvasia famously reported in the Felsina pittrice (1678) that when the Carracci were prompted for answers, “Nothing could be got out of them but the words, ‘It’s by the Carracci: we all of us made...”

172 The church of Santa Maria Novella is a special case for the early modern period in terms of its attempt at a visual coordination between altarpieces. In response to the Counter Reformation, a number of churches tried to unify their chapel programs, but usually by way of corresponding dedications or coordinated altar frames. Vasari was commissioned by Duke Cosimo to manage the restorations of Santa Maria Novella and, for the most part, Cosimo’s vested interest in the church helped keep the private patrons of the various chapels in line with the aesthetic vision for the church; see Marcia B. Hall, Renovation and Counter-Reformation: Vasari and Duke Cosimo in Sta. Maria Novella and Sta. Croce, 1565-1577 (Oxford, 1979).

173 The chapel of Ricasoli with the Conversion of St. Paul was an exception in the renovation, whereby the patron Giovambattista Ricasoli, bishop of Pistoia, asserted his choice of painter who had himself settled in Pistoia. Vini was the only participant who was not a member of the Accademia del Disegno and was decidedly foreign – Vini was born in Verona. More than the others, Vini’s brush was open and his composition departed from the stricter formula, apparently calling too much attention to his artifice (“a manner very far from the others”). Sebastiano Vini was also one of Vasari’s assistants in the Palazzo Vecchio. On Vini and the Conversion of St. Paul altarpiece in Santa Maria Novella, see Hall, Renovation and Counter-Reformation, 104-106.
Despite the Carracci’s own stated intentions of collectivity and without any apparent sense of irony, Malvasia compiled a series of letters and drawings to help the reader parse which Carracci was responsible for what in the fresco and allay some of the beholder’s angst. Tracing origins was a mainstay of truth and the sway of origins in the Palazzo Magnani was too powerful for Malvasia to leave the frescoes authorially uniform and unlocatable.

If Zelotti’s public identity was compromised by working in the same hand as Veronese, the Carracci promoted their collective unity to the level of public mystification and, in doing so, managed to turn the potential risk to their individual reputations into an attraction. The personalities of the three Carracci, the two brothers in particular, were known to be different. Annibale was bolder and more intuitive in practice, whereas Agostino was more inclined to theoretical concerns. Likewise, the styles of Ludovico, Annibale, and Agostino were thought to be recognizably distinct, even if it was a struggle to ascribe individual authorship. In those places where the eye could see all three Carracci working together, according to their close acquaintance Giovanni Battista Agucchi in the *Trattato della pittura* (m.s. c. 1607-1615), “one recognizes some particular and proper things to each of them; but when it comes to the degree of excellence in the works, the experts cannot discern a minimum of difference between the one and the other.”

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177 Papal secretary and diplomat, Giovanni Battista Agucchi penned the *Trattato dell’arte* around 1607, but it was only published as an excerpt in 1646 in a preface to a series of etchings after drawings by Annibale Carracci. See the quotation of Agucchi (under the pseudonym Gratiadio Machati) in the preface by Giovanni Antonio Massani (under the pseudonym Giovanni Atanasio Mosini), *Diverse figure al numero di ottanta, disegnate di penna nell’hore di ricreazione da Annibale Carracci, intagliate da Simone Giulino Pargino*
ascertainably different in the rendering of parts (qualche cosa particolare, e propria di ciascun d’essi), but that is not to say his eye was able to make specific attributions for any particular picture or space. This difficulty no doubt contributed to Agucchi’s greater uncertainty in apportioning credit, that Plinian trope of collaboration.  

Other writers clarified that the difficulty in disentangling such traces of authorship was the result of interlocking hands, a method of unifying styles that was not described for collaborators before the seventeenth century. Luigi Scaramuccia, for one, attempted to capture the effect of Ludovico’s Martydom of St. Ursula (Fig. 1.37) by describing the reaction of the two interlocutors in his book, Le finezze dei pennelli italiani (1674). When Scaramuccia’s artistic pilgrims, ‘Girupeno’ and ‘Genio,’ approached this altarpiece, which Scaramuccia believed was a painting by all three Carracci, they exchanged between themselves no ordinary wonder, for they were admiring such a beautiful and confusing distinction, such as the cruelty and the proud barbarisms of the rogues (Manigoldi), and the placid and Christian constancy in the faces and the attitudes of the virgins. The effects of such a great manner of painting derive from the reciprocating brushes (la vicendevolezza de Pennelli) of each and every Carracci, who so often understood collectively (unitamente) how to treat each other in admirable agreement.  

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178 On the relationship between Agucchi and Annibale, see Ricardo de Mambro Santos, Arcadie del vero: arte e teoria nella Roma del Seicento (Rome, 2001), 14-25.  

179 Luigi Pellegrini Scaramuccia, Le finezze de’ pennelli italiani ammirate e studiate da Girupeno sotto la scorta e disciplina del genio di Raffaello d’Urbino [1674], ed. Guido Giubbini (Milan, 1965) 56: “[Genio and Girupeno] Entrarono per tanto nella Chiesa del Monastero di S. Orsola di lì per appunto al dirimpetto, in cui osseravano due bellissime Tavole de medesimi Caracci, (mà la principale nell’Altar Maggiore, che col Martirio di detta Santa, anzi dell’undici milla Vergini sue Compagne si fà vedere) cagionò loro non ordinario stupore, per mirarvi una così bella, e confusa distintione, come di crudeltà, e fiera barbarie ne Manigoldi, e di placidezza, e Christiana costanza nel volto, e nelle attitudini delle Verginelle; effetti di si fatta maniera di dipingere fù la vicendevolezza de Pennelli di tutti, e trè i Caracci, che ben spesso unitamente li sapevano d’accordo mirabilmente trattare.” Now the painting is attributed to Ludovico alone, but according to Malvasia, Francesco Albani, “always partial to Annibale, spread the word that it was a work in which all three painters had an equal hand, even in determining the composition, and that not only the invention of many of the figures but the application of the color were by Annibale and Agostino.” See Malvasia, Life of the Carracci, 148.
The beautiful and confusing distinction experienced by Scaramuccia’s speakers refers both to the emotional effects of the composition and to the entwined brushes themselves. Malvasia expanded on Scaramuccia’s *vicendevoleza de’ pennelli* in an unparalleled description of collaboration, portraying each of the Carracci in the Palazzo Magnani, as “crossing over and intruding into one another’s spaces in the frieze, with one entering a section started by another, and another in turn passing on to yet another one’s half-completed section,” with the aim “being to leave everyone else confused, so that the prize of excellence would not be divided and praise instead directed at the whole work as one body, not aimed at recognizing the particular painter.”

Never had there been such dynamism and verve in describing the manual process of collaboration. Normally it was the purview of the master to retouch the work of assistants. The Carracci, it would appear, destabilized this hierarchy and retouched each others’ works – three masters of equal standing. Malvasia’s description calls to mind Félibien’s near contemporaneous account of the Beaubrun cousins taking their turns with the brush and rendering their portraits with one soul and two hands. But Félibien put the bulk of his emphasis on the spirits and imaginations of his French artists, whereas Malvasia, in comparison, focused almost entirely on the bodies of the Bolognese Carracci. What is more,

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180 Malvasia, *Life of the Carracci*, 148; Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1, 392: “così l’uno entrar nel principiato dall’altro, e l’altro trapassarsene nel già dimezzato da quello, ne gli aggiunti de’puttini, de’satiri, e de’termmini si dilettarono, con questo unico riguardo che il pregiu dell’eccellenza, restando a tutti in confuse, non si dividesse; e la lode andasse più a cadere sù tutte le operazioni in corpo, che a riconoscerne distintamente l’autore.”

181 The Carracci’s willing acceptance of another hand is worth comparing to an anecdote about Federico Barocci and Federico Zuccaro in Bellori’s *Lives*. When Barocci was in Rome, he was said by Bellori to have visited Zuccaro at work in the Vatican palace. Zuccaro gave his companion his own brushes and asked him to paint two putti. Although Barocci achieved in fresco the oil-like softness characteristic of his style, Zuccaro found the putti too soft, and began to intensify the colours and retrace the contours in Barocci’s presence. While this presumptuous retouching was potentially insulting, as Bellori tells it, this was not the case for the soft-spoken Barocci, who “stood watching and was not at all disconcerted; rather he was grateful to his friend who had advised him in that manner, sincerely and without ambition.” This anecdote about the exchange of brushes was the ideal segue for Bellori to discuss the work that Barocci did with Zuccaro for Pope Pius IV. See Bellori, *Lives of the Modern Painters*, 161; Bellori, *Vite*, 173: “Trasferitosi di nuova à Roma l’anno 1560, andò à visitare Federico Zuccheri, che dipingeva li fregi dell’appartamento ordinato alla venuta del Duca Cosimo de’ Medici nel Palazzo Vaticano. Dopo esserli insieme salutati, il Zuccheri gli presentò i pennelli, perché dipingesse: ricusò da prima il Barocci, modestamente, ma venendo costretto, colorì due putti con tanta unione, che parevano più tosto ad olio, che à fresco. Parve nondimeno al Zuccheri questa maniera sua troppo sfumata, onde preso il pennello, alla sua presenza, andò profilando i dintorni, & accrebbe alquanto più di forza al colore, che solo pareva mancasse alla perfettione dell’opera. Stette à vedere il Barocci, nè si alterò punto, anzi ne seppe grado all’amico, che senza ambitione, e sinceramente l’haveva in quel modo avvertito. Dipingendosi dopo l’anno 1561 per ordine di Papa Pio IV il palazzetto del Bosco di Belvedere, architettura di Pirro Ligorio, fù eletto il Barocci con Federico Zuccheri, & altri à quel lavoro...”
in Malvasia’s account, neither the styles nor the personalities of the Carracci need be the same.

Perhaps because the novelty of the Carracci frescoes was tied to their interlocking brushes, which were in some ineffable way distinct despite the pictures being indistinguishable, no writer ever said they worked with a single hand. Still, contemporary and later critics used other metaphors related to the single body. For Agucchi, their devotion to a shared vision of reform was analogous to their shared blood: “But because in this manner this beautiful profession was infected (so to speak) by so many heresies of art, and was in danger of losing itself completely, three subjects appeared in the city of Bologna who, being strictly conjoined by blood, were no less conjoined in concord among themselves, and united with the resolution to embrace every study and effort in order to reach the highest perfection of art.”182 Agucchi had been denigrating the prior state of art and eclecticism and so here he was suggesting that the Carracci’s united struggle for artistic perfection was, like their pure blood, uncontaminated by what he regarded as an infection spreading across the profession. He was also alluding to the bodily metaphors of unity that collaborators were supposed to engender. As blood relatives, the Carracci were as close to having the same body as collaborators could hope for, even more so than Domenico Campagnola and Gualtieri dall’Arzeri who had to ritualize their consanguinity through marriage.183

According to Malvasia, the Carracci insisted their viewers look at the work as “one body,” not at their particular contributions. If this was true, the Carracci were playing hard to get, knowing that one body was just the bait. The real attraction was the three heads, or the three independent minds, attached to that one body. This is what Malvasia must have meant when he called the Carracci the Geryon of painters, the Geryon being a monstrous ruler of the Western Mediterranean defeated by Hercules:

...it must have been a peaceful rivalry, a harmonious accord even, in which they worked together without conflict or distrust, supporting and helping one another, which is why there were so many similarities among the works

182 Agucchi in Massani, *Diverse figure*, 9: “Ma mentre in tal modo s’infettava (per dir così) di tante heresie dell’arte questa bella professione, e stava in pericolo di smarrir si affiatto; si videro nella Città di Bologna sorgere tre soggetti, i quali essendo strettamente congiunti di sangue, furono tra loro non meno concordi, & uniti col proponimento di abbracciare ogni studio, e fatica, per giungere alla maggiore perfettione dell’arte.”
183 See Chapter 1.3.
brought forth by this Geryon of painting that it is very hard to distinguish one from the other.184

The bodily make up of the Geryon differed according to ancient accounts. According to Aeschylus in the *Agamemnon* and Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*, the Geryon was a monster made up of three bodies.185 In the *Heroides*, Ovid said more broadly that he was a triple prodigy who was three in one (*prodigium triplex ... in tribus unum erat*), which is perhaps more apt for the language of collaboration.186 But another form certainly captures the idea of the Carracci and their fusion of three temperaments, or minds. In the *Theogony*, Hesiod referred to the creature as three-headed, implying three separate heads with a single body (Fig. 1.38).187 In any case, it may not have mattered which version of the Geryon Malvasia had in mind. Cesare Ripa in the *Iconologia* acknowledged several of these different bodily types of the Geryon when he described the emblem of “Insuperable Concord,” but he also ended his commentary with the most practical explanation. Some apparently held the opinion that the Geryon was “three separate brothers who were in such concord that they were judged to be one alone.”188

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184 Under Ludovico’s leadership a healthy rivalry developed, which was surely meant to reflect the competitive curriculum of the Carracci academy. The strain between unity and individuality runs through the whole of the *Life of the Carracci*. I have slightly altered Summerscale’s translation of this passage, Malvasia, *Life of the Carracci*, 146. The full Italian passage reads as follows, Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1, 391-392: “Questa pugna frequentemente direbbesi accaduta fra essi, entratovi anche per terzo Annibale, ma non è così; quando pur fosse, sarebbe un contrasto pacifico, concorde, anzi concertato, con che senza differenza e circospezione operavano assieme, l’uno l’altro sostenendo & aiutando, onde tanto simil si molte volte riescan fra loro le operazioni di questo Gerione pittorico, che dall’una all’altra, differenza alcuna scorgendo non si sappia.” For clarity, Summerscale called them a ‘triple-bodied Geryon of painters’, which is not explicitly stated in the Italian. As justifiable as it is, her interpretive intervention has minor implications for our broader discussion. For more on the meaning of this reference to the Geryon and its place in the biography, see Summerscale’s commentary, 146, n. 141.

185 Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 870; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, bk 9, 183. A popular seventeenth century encyclopedia of historical and literary characters described Geryon as a King of Spain killed by Hercules, and because he ruled over three territories, he was said to have three bodies; see Barezzo Barezzi, *Il pròprìnomio historico, geografico, e poetico* (Venice, 1676), 230.


187 Hesiod, *Theogony*, 287. Antonio Lupis, an obscure but prolific writer in Venice, named his book, which was divided into three types of oration, after the mythological creature, playing on the dual meaning of ‘chapter’ and ‘head’; see Lupis, *Il Gerione diviso in tre capi. Orationi sagre, eroiche, e funebri* (Venice, 1689). The frontispiece features an engraving of a man with one body and three heads.

188 Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia, overo descrittione d’imagini delle virtu’, vitii, affetti, passion humane, corpi celesti, mondo e sue parti* (Padua, 1611), 93: “Per la Concordia insuperabile si rappresenta Gerione huomo armato, con tre visi, col capo cinto d’unà corona d’oro, sei braccia, & altrettante gambe, che te[n]ga in una mano destra una lancia, con l’altra una spada nuda, & nella terza uno scettro. Et l’altre tre mani della parte sinistra, si posano sopra d’uno scudo./Dicesi, che Gerione fu Rè di Spagan, il quale perche haveva tre Regni fu detto tricopore, cioè, che haveva tre corpi; fu ammazzato da Hercole, altri dicano essere stati tre fratelli, così concordi, che erano giudicati un solo.”
The Carracci, it could be argued, optimized the experience of collaborative painting by leaving just enough traces of their individual hands to disclose some of the labour and negotiation that supported the bewildering agreement between their brushes and minds. This process actualized their own academy’s impresa, CONTENTIONE PERFECTUS, or Perfection Out of Contention – contention in the sense of either effort, tension, or discordance. The dialectical effort to reach agreement out of disagreement was the centrepiece in an emerging culture built on civilized conversazione. We have seen that Castiglione’s earlier description of everyday social interaction influenced Vasari’s explanation of Taddeo Zuccaro’s adaptive success in the palace of the Mantuan cardinal, but in general, conversation for Castiglione was best done with equals of like minds and temperaments. Otherwise, such accommodation was a form of role playing, not of self-improvement. An entirely different tone was taken by Stefano Guazzo in the Civil conversazione, a popular conduct manual first published in 1574, shortly before the Carracci set to work in the Bolognese palaces. At one point in Guazzo’s dialogue, the interlocutor ‘Annibale’ – Guazzo’s voice in the dialogue – engages his companion, the ‘Cavaliere,’ in debate, arguing at some length that social interaction is a better elixir for both the body and soul than studying theory in solitude. The core of Guazzo’s argument, expressed through ‘Annibale,’ was that both theoretical and practical knowledge can only be attained from interactions with a variety of people of virtuous conduct. Guazzo’s brand of conversation quickly became the new vogue among men of discerning taste with broad intellectual and creative interests. The practice was personified by Cesare Ripa in the Nova Iconologia (1618) as a man holding both a banderole cautioning against the solitary life (Veh Soli = woe to the solitary) and a caduceus bearing different tongues and intertwining vines of myrtle and

189 Fredrika Jacobs adopted Castiglione’s turn of phrase, “a certain circumspect dissimulation,” to refer to the pleasurable experience of opposing stimuli, such as the appearance of effortlessness that comes from labour (sprezzatura); see Fredrika H. Jacobs, “Aretino and Michelangelo, Dolce and Titian: Femmina, Masculo, Grazia,” The Art Bulletin 82, 1 (2000): 51-67, esp. 51.
191 See Amedeo Quondam’s introduction to Stefano Guazzo, La civil conversazione, ed. Amedeo Quondam (Ferrara, 1993), xxiv-xxix.
192 Guazzo, Civil conversazione, 22-27.
193 On the importance of conversation for artistic tastes in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Cropper and Dempsey, Poussin, 64-105, esp. 90-92 and 105, for the influence of Stefano Guazzo’s Civil conversazione.
pomegranate (Fig. 1.39), motifs that symbolize the coming together of different voices and bodies.¹⁹⁴

The discernible, but indescribable, interactive reconciliation between the Carracci’s individual styles and minds obviously kept their early viewers entranced, as it does today. Modern scholars still debate specific attributions and particular roles in the making of their frescoes, especially for the Palazzo Magnani. Gail Feigenbaum has gone so far as to suggest, and I think justly, that the myriad of attempts to ascribe authorship in these frescoed scenes misses the point of the Carracci’s working process, and the intentional confusion they tried to create.¹⁹⁵ To avoid drowning in a sea of attributions, therefore, this changing notion of interactive collaboration can be more effectively observed in the reception of the Carracci collaboration in other partnerships of the seventeenth century. The Carracci’s balletic performance, evoked by Malvasia’s description of the painters stepping in and out of each other’s pictorial spaces in unison – what Scaramuccia called the vicendevolezza de’ pennelli – became a schema for the most ambitious pictorial partnerships of the seventeenth century. Eventually it became enough of a norm that the apparent simultaneity and confusion created by overlapping collaborative hands was directly associated by both Malvasia and Passeri with the ideal of two minds with a single hand in the pairing of Mitelli and Colonna.

1.5.1 Rubens and Brueghel: Representing Intertwining Hands

The first of these partnerships to develop the vicendevolezza de’ pennelli takes us north of Italy to Antwerp where Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder were in a class of their own in a unique market awash with collaborative pictures. Over two or three stages of execution, Rubens’ figures were variously integrated with Brueghel’s landscapes, animals, and natural props. On close inspection, it is often possible to see the distinct areas of each specialization, the first artist having left the other’s area in reserve. They nevertheless made such a spectacle of their hands overlapping and intruding into each other’s spaces that the

¹⁹⁴ The personification of ‘Conversatione’ was added to the expanded version of the Iconologia; see Cesare Ripa, Nova iconologia (Padua, 1618), 588.
¹⁹⁵ Gail Feigenbaum has argued that the inability to distinguish the hands with certainty, even if differences are sometimes evident, undermines the very point of the modus operandi of the Carracci academies, “Drawing and Collaboration in the Carracci Academy,” 145-165. See also Feigenbaum, “Practice in the Carracci Academy,” in The Artist’s Workshop, ed. Peter M. Lukehard (Washington, 1993), 59-76; and Fabrizio Lollini, “La Scuola dei Carracci tra accademia e bottega,” in La Bottega dell’artista tra Medioevo e Rinascimento, ed. Roberto Cassanelli (Milan, 1998), 312-314.
dialogical process of collaboration is given remarkable immediacy. To borrow Scaramuccia’s words on the Carracci, the viewer can “admire such a beautiful and confusing distinction,” and make a sport out of disentangling the stages of execution.

Their first collaboration dates to the 1590s, but it was not until the middle of the 1610s that they made bolder attempts to obfuscate the straightforward exchanges between hands. In *Nature and Her Followers* (Fig. 1.40), Rubens’ pastoral characters, including satyrs, nymphs, graces, and a statue of Mother Nature herself, are all dispersed on either side of Brueghel’s garland in the middle ground. In the upper register, satyrs coil their bodies around the festoon and around the trees from which it hangs. Attempting to tie the vegetables to the garland, the satyr in the centre foreground reaches through the encircled arms of the nymph as she knots a ribbon around his arms. No doubt a euphemism for coitus and procreation, this act is also suggestive of the generative process of collaboration itself. Only close inspection shows that Rubens created the figures first in an opaque pigment, after which Brueghel had to thread his decorative vegetation through the figures, integrating the two elements while navigating around small details like fingers.196

A number of their compositions thereafter included some sort of interlayering motif, usually involving the depicted hands themselves. In the lower left corner of the *Feast of Acheloüs* (Fig. 1.41), Brueghel’s lobster is cradled in the arms of Rubens’ river god, the tail and legs of the lobster draping over his arm, and its claw sticking through his fingers. Above them, a cornucopia filled with Brueghel’s still-life is carried by two of Rubens’ nymphs between their bodies and through their clutching arms. In *Pan and Syrinx* (Fig. 1.42), Rubens’ satyr grabs onto a cluster of Brueghel’s reeds with his left hand, and with his right hand, he pulls on Syrinx’s veil, parting the reeds in the process. Taking a further step to unify the two figural and natural elements, a brush loaded with green paint was applied in wisps over Pan’s beard and in Syrinx’s hair so that the figures blend in more seamlessly with their environment. In the Munich *Madonna in a Flower Garland* (Fig. 1.43), Brueghel’s flowers poke between the legs and arms of Rubens’ putti, suggesting both three planes of space and three layers of interlocking brushes. On the right side, the hands of the two putti directly overlap between planes of flowers. Other versions of this new genre of Madonna pictures by

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Rubens and Brueghel do not attempt such collaborative intricacy as that in Munich. There is something more dramatic and personal about this festooned Madonna, which features the portrait of Rubens’ own son in the putto at the top right.\(^{197}\)

Flower painting at this moment was admired for the skillful artistry it required, without diminishing, as David Freedberg amply demonstrated, the serious meditative function of these Madonna pictures.\(^{198}\) According to one anecdote told by Pliny, garland painting originated in antiquity in a contest between lovers, and between Art and Nature. Inspired by the wreaths invented by his beloved Glycera, the painter Pausias purportedly used a variety of pigments to match the variety of coloured flowers she gathered together.\(^{199}\) Karel Van Mander embellished the tale in the *Schilderboech* (1604), putting greater emphasis on the artifice involved in Glycera’s inventions, as if her productions were akin to painting with Nature itself.\(^{200}\) Rubens too was familiar with the anecdote, as is clear in a portrait made in collaboration with Osias Beert the Elder (Fig. 1.44). Whereas Beert’s flowers, or pigments, barely kiss the contours of Rubens’ figures, Brueghel’s flowers in the Munich *Madonna in a Garland* are completely enmeshed with Rubens’ putti. If flowers can be seen as analogies to Nature’s pigments, can the putti playfully arranging them without concern for the intruding hands of their playmates be interpreted as allusions to the painters themselves? Can their intertwining cherubic hands even be viewed as allegories of the *vicendevolezza de’ pennelli*?\(^{201}\)

In their collaborations with other painters, as skilled as these other artists were, neither Rubens nor Brueghel ever attempted similar intrusions, testifying to the special trust each had placed in the other.\(^{201}\) Elizabeth Honig, taking Rubens and Brueghel as her primary case study, has intuitively characterized these specialized collaborations in Antwerp as dialogical in nature. Indeed, she tentatively connected this practice to the culture of friendship.


\(^{198}\) Freedberg interpreted the garland paintings in a variety of social and artistic contexts, but put particular emphasis on the status of the Madonna icon after the iconoclasms of the sixteenth century; see Freedberg, “Origins of the Garland Madonna.”

\(^{199}\) Pliny, *Natural History*, bk. 21.3, and bk. 35.40.


\(^{201}\) There is one painting of two nymphs holding a cornucopia topped with a parrot, painted by Rubens and Snyders, that does repeat some of the same tricks as the *Feast of Acheloïs*, but it was done quickly and without the same bravado; see Mulders, “Collaboration Between Rubens and Brueghel,” in Woollett and van Suchtelen, eds., *Rubens & Brueghel*, 124 (cat. 28).
popularized in Stefano Guazzo’s *Civil conversazione*, citing one of Guazzo’s many comparisons between the potential for self-improvement in *conversazione* and the greater beauty achieved from bringing different flowers together into a bouquet. However, Honig distanced these specialized collaborations from practices in Italy, where there was more emphasis on the figure. In many respects she was right to do so, but even leaving aside the existing model of friendship in the Italian discourse on collaboration, it is also significant that Brueghel was in Italy at precisely the time the Carracci were unveiling their frescoes. Although he is not documented as having visited Bologna, he could hardly have been isolated from discussions about their achievements, especially because he was closely connected to the Milanese Cardinal Federico Borromeo, whose interests in art academies and in collecting are well established, indeed evidenced in a letter from Ludovico Carracci outlining the curriculum of the Accademia degli Incamminati. It was Borromeo, moreover, who invented the genre of the Madonna in a Garland, having sent the instructions to Brueghel (Fig. 1.45). Rubens, for his part, must have been similarly aware of the Carracci. Between 1600 and 1608, before his greatest collaborative endeavours with Brueghel, he travelled around Italy and specifically visited the Palazzo Magnani in Bologna. And although there is no evidence that Rubens was ever in direct contact with Agucchi, the Flemish artist was in Rome at the very moment the Bolognese secretary began penning his *Trattato* extolling the Carracci reforms and the faint traces of their hands in collaboration.

1.5.2 The Interlayered Hands of Cerano, Morazzone, and Procaccini in the *Quadro delle tre mani*

A similar interweaving of hands was performatively put on display in Milan, bringing us again to the milieu of Cardinal Federico Borromeo. The collector and Cavalier of Santo

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202 It was typical of Italian theory to focus almost exclusively on the figure, and to propose a dialectic between *disegno* and *colorito*. Lomazzo, as we have discussed, had suggested a resolution to this dialectic in the ideal collaborative pictures of Adam and of Eve. The Netherlandish response to this Italian debate was to transpose ideal combinations into genres. In Book 3 of the *Schilder-Boeck* (1604), Karel Van Mander revised Vasari’s *Vite*, as Walter Melion has explained, in order to undercut the hegemony of Tuscan design, or *teyckenconst*, and to endorse other criteria for pictorial excellence, including the technical skills of other genres, such as landscape, animal, and still-life; see Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon*, 95-117.

203 In 1614, Ludovico Carracci responded to Borromeo’s request for advice about running an academy; see Feigenbaum, “Practice in the Carracci Academy,” 64.


205 On Rubens’ following of the Carracci, see David Jaffé, *Rubens and Italy* (Ithaca, 1977), 54-56.
Stefano, Scipione Toso, commissioned Giovanni Battista Crespi (i.e., il Cerano), Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli (i.e., Morazzone), and Giulio Cesare Procaccini to paint a single panel featuring the *Martyrdom of Saints Rufina and Secunda*, dated to some time around 1620 (Fig. 1.46). This was not a combination of genres, like the works by Rubens and Brueghel. Rather, this was a rare example in which three disparate figure painters were intentionally set next to each other so that their distinct stylistic modes would operate as conspicuously on their own as in their coordination.

In his encomium to the painting in 1636, Giovanni Pasta described the “vivificate tenerezze” of Giulio Cesare Procaccini on the right, next to the “forte robustezza” and chiaroscuro of Morazzone in the middle, and the morbid, alchemical “ingegno” of il Cerano on the left. 206 Quite fittingly, Pasta dubbed the easel painting *Il Quadro delle tre mani*, or “the painting by three hands,” reminiscent of Ercole Strozzi’s reference to the *Laocoön* as sculpted by a triple hand. 207 Whatever its source, the hybridizing nickname is a rare outright rejection of the topos of the single hand. 208 The success of the collaboration must nevertheless have depended on some sort of coordination for the painting to appear as a whole. In 1621, whether before or after the commission was settled is not certain, the historian and art consultant Girolamo Borsieri wrote a letter to the patron Scipione Toso to celebrate the idea of bringing these three leading Milanese painters together. Philip Sohm has argued that Borsieri carefully calibrated his description of their respective styles, positing Morazzone as the harmonizing middle ground in the dialectic between Procaccini’s elevated tenderness on the right and Cerano’s common naturalism on the left. 209

The interlocking figures and the careful interplay of recession and projection give the composition a further sense of unity and the collaboration itself greater immediacy. It is

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206 An excerpt of the letter written by Giovanni Pasta can be found in, “Il quadro delle tre mani,” in *Letteratura artistica dell’età Barocca*, ed. Gianni Carlo Sciolla (Torino, 1983), 276-278; on Procaccini: “Tanto espressero le vivificate tenerezze di Giulio Cesare animante coloritore di si bei volti”; on Morazzone: “Stava nel mezzo spietato carnefice, la cui forte robustezza, mostrava aver sortito razza de giganti…In horridezza dolcemente piacevole, in oscuro vivamente chiaro cappeggiavano per prerogative del Morazzone a cui per compimento della storia aggiunse il Cerano”; on Cerano: “Lo stimai anche per apparato dell’alchimista pitore Fortunato filosofante, a cui fu dato senz’altro mantine, o fuoco, che quello del proprio ingegno, nel crogiuolo d’una cornice, di avventurarne la miniera.”

207 Settis, *Laocoonte*, 142-143.

208 Philip Sohm, who has had access to the full text of Pasta’s hard-to-find description, observed the theme of hands in Pasta’s description of the painting; see Sohm, “Painting Together: ‘A Terrestrial Trinity’ of Painters in the *Quadro delle tre mani*,” in *Artistic Practices and Cultural Transfer in Early Modern Italy: Essays in Honour of Deborah Howard*, ed. Nebahat Avcioğlu and Allison Sherman (Burlington, VT., 2010), 131-147.

virtually impossible to tell who painted over whom and at what stage. Resembling the relief carving of an ancient sarcophagus, the figures are embedded in a complicated and compressed spatial relationship. Cerano’s horse and rider burst toward the picture plane as they stride over a group of figures, including the decapitated St. Secunda, a grieving angel, and a dog, all painted by Cerano. The rider points back into the picture to issue orders with his rod, cutting across Morazzone’s executioner who is supposedly further back in space. Yet Morazzone’s executioner leans forward and wields a sword that overlaps the horse and the shoulder of St. Secunda, both of which were painted by Cerano. Morazzone’s blade even catches the reflection of Secunda’s head next to it. Procaccini’s St. Rufina on the right, like Morazzone’s executioner, appears to be further back from Cerano’s horse and pointing rider, though Rufina too occupies the extreme foreground. In accepting her fate with the consolation of her attending angel, also by Procaccini, Rufina additionally accepts the intrusion of Morazzone’s executioner, his foot crowding her space (and by extension Procaccini’s pictorial space). At the same time, the executioner holds back his assistant (again by Morazzone), who nevertheless pulls at Rufina’s head and shoulder. Flying above the whole crowd, meanwhile, is another angel painted by Procaccini. Though elevated in the composition, this angel is smaller and farthest back from the picture plane, just barely indicated by the very tip of the wing slipping behind the shoulder of Morazzone’s executioner.

All of the intrusions into each others’ spaces and all of the movement in and out of the picture’s shallow depth dissipate the sequence in which these hands built up the composition. The effect is of a pictorial two-step viscerally illustrating the collaborative vicendevolezza of their three brushes that seemingly dab and sweep in unison. As such, the picture is able to reveal its competitive hands in Cerano’s realism and open brushwork, in Morazzone’s violent figures in chiaroscuro, and in Procaccini’s stoic figures rendered with a polished finish. But the picture also denies the opportunity to apportion credit based on the different stages of its creation, including those two most important authorial stages – the initial invention and the final retouching. In fact, Malvasia praised the Quadro delle tre mani
for making it impossible to award the palm to one of its painters alone. Agostino Santagostino stated more unequivocally: “Whoever sees this painting, knows how the contest (gara) between three worthy men stimulated them to make a work worthy of marvel with equal praise for all three.”

1.5.3 The Single Hand of Angelo Michele Colonna and Agostino Mitelli

The two previous examples of collaborative vicendevolezza were applied to portable easel paintings made for the new gallery spaces of Europe. Angelo Michele Colonna and Agostino Mitelli, the culmination of the Baroque collaborative single hand, returned these visual principles of collaboration to the greater scale of fresco (Fig. 1.2). Mitelli was a specialist in quadratura, or fictive architecture, and Colonna was a figure painter, although he had training and experience in quadratura as well. The two worked together extensively between 1640 and 1660, the year Mitelli died while they were on assignment in Madrid. Combinations of figure painting and quadratura can be dated even further back than the conception of single point perspective itself, but something about the interaction between the two elements in the projects by Colonna and Mitelli stood out among contemporaries. Malvasia was already quoted in the introduction to this chapter: “Colonna called in the help of Mitelli, and Mitelli most willingly went to serve him. They worked, the one and the other, with that usual marvelous uniform consonance, which seems to be of one hand…” The pair exhibited, in Malvasia’s eyes, the ideal painterly interrelationship. As the biographer explained, they both had a willingness (ben volontieri) to work in complete concord, and it was because of this willing commitment to work with a ‘single hand,’ that their biographies were combined in a single vita. Commenting on these two specialists, Giovanni Battista Passeri brought the trajectory of the single hand and the model of friendship to its apogee: “Seeing with how much accord they were banding together with force and miraculous

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211 Agostino Santagostino, L’immortalità e gloria del pennello: catalogo delle pitture insigni che stanno esposte al pubblico nella città di Milano [1671], ed. Marco Bona Castellotti (Milan, 1980), 80: “Chi vede questo quadro, conosce come la garra di tre valent’uomini ha servito loro di stimolo per fare un’opera degna di meraviglia con egual lode di tutti tre.”

212 Malvasia, Felsina pittrice, vol. 2, 402: “il Colonna a chiamare in aiuto il Metelli, e l’Metelli ben volontieri andasse a servirlo, operandovi l’uno e l’altro con quel solito maraviglioso uniforme concerto, che sembra di una mano sola, e per si compita opra si vagheggia, e si ammira.”
sweetness, they seemed to be two souls in one body, and two minds with one single hand.”

Since the *vicendevolezza de’ pennelli* was better suited to a dialogical manner experienced by virtuous friends with different dispositions, Passeri could more comfortably upend Aristotle’s formula – now two souls in one body – to better fit the expression of the single hand.

Thanks to Agostino Mitelli’s son, Giovanni, we have Colonna’s own words describing their working relationship. Giovanni solicited a list of works from Colonna in 1665 to help him write his father’s biography. At first, Colonna described Mitelli, who was a few years younger and was a fellow pupil under Girolamo Curini, as his helper (con aiuto del Mitelli) in the antechamber of the Palazzo Pitti in Florence. After this initial audition, the two must have come to a more mutual understanding and support. In his descriptions of their other joint projects, Colonna characterized them making frescoes together (insieme), or even more emphatically, both together (ambidue insieme). In the biography itself, Mitelli’s son Giovanni said the two painters worked in total agreement (operavano di uniforme sentimento) on the project at the Palazzo d’Este at Sassuolo and he elaborated further on the design process. Mitelli, he explained, first conceived and then drew the architectural skeleton (sua nobil idea prima), making the works stand out (facevano spic[c]ore) so as to help the figures that Colonna was devising. Each worked separately on their specialized role (ornament and figure), but neither was more important or more meritorious. As Giovanni put it, the two “virtuosi rendered the works admirable and perfect.” Malvasia described the relationship in similar terms. He could not say why Colonna initially selected Mitelli for a new working companion, suggesting that it could have been because of Mitelli’s potential abilities (genio avvenisse) or out of necessity. However, it became clear that neither painter outranked the other – not in personal status, nor in pictorial genre: “Ultimately, Agostino was no less prolific an inventor, no less established a designer, than he was a graceful painter. And the figures, which should conventionally be the principal element (as the more noble

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213 Passeri, *Vite*, 269: “La novità dei capricci, e la bellezza delle curiose invenzioni, che compariva nelle opere loro eccitò un grido, ed un applauso non ordinario; vedendosi con quanto accordo si collegavano insieme con forza, e dolcezza mirabile, sicchè parevano due anime in un sol corpo, e due menti con una sola mano.”


creation), seemed here to become an accessory. They beg for a place in his entire operation, and for a position in his judicious distribution.”

Was there something in the frescoes that helped visually convey all this language of agreement in status and performance? Unlike the majority of quadratura projects of a similar scale, Colonna and Mitelli did not regard the architectural perspective as a simple container for the more important figures, nor did they treat the architecture as a malleable frame that could be taken over by the figures. Even more than Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel, they integrated the two, figure and architecture, to the point that the one could not be removed without spoiling the purpose of the other. For Colonna, the illusionistic building was as much alive as the figures, and Mitelli understood and was accommodating to his mind. In a rare example of Colonna’s own designs for a quadratura surround, there is a pulsing effect between the architectural solids and voids so that the building swells and undulates like a breathing anatomical body (Fig. 1.47). Mitelli, in contrast, treated architectural structures with the convincing orthogonals that the illusionistic perspective required (Fig. 1.48). But as he relieved the swelling pressure between architectural components as envisioned by Colonna, Mitelli also plotted figures into the right angles reinvesting life into the more tectonically convincing structure (Fig. 1.49). He built up layers of animate and inanimate figures, including life-like satyrs, putti, angels, historiated medallions painted to look like gold, and simulated marble herms and caryatids, all of which helped in their accretion to avoid any abrupt transitions between frame and figure. When it came time for Colonna to develop these figural elements in more detail, he depended on Mitelli’s rationalized structures to articulate the movements of the figures (Fig. 1.50). This dependency was most apparent when he was left with a large open sky, as his figures tended to become more enervated and disjunctive from the whole without architecture to define their space. The simulated heavenly sky in the conch of the Chapel of the Rosary, in the church of San

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217 Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 2, 400: “Fù insomma Agostino non men copioso inventore, non men fondato disegnatore, più grazioso poi coloritore; e le figure, che (come più nobil fattura) dovean dirsi le principali, parvero qui divenire un’accessorio, mendicando elleno dalla sua intera operazione il sito, e dalla sua giudicosia distribuzione il posto.”

218 Using many of the same techniques of layering that Michelangelo developed in the Sistine Ceiling, Colonna and Mitelli integrated the frame and the figure to an unprecedented degree. On Michelangelo’s treatment of the frame and the figure, see Cammy Brothers, *Michelangelo, Drawing, and the Invention of Architecture* (New Haven and London, 2008), 85-151.
Domenico, is one notable exception (Fig. 1.51). But here Colonna was able to organize his flying angels spatially around a structural anchor – a massive wreath.

**Conclusion to Chapter 1**

If collaborations such as those outlined in this chapter were thought to be inimical to individuality, one might expect more examples of artists refusing to work with each other. Not surprisingly, some artists did have a hard time sharing their labour and their fame, but there are not as many examples as one would expect. The quarrelsome Francesco Salviati turned friends into enemies when he was made to collaborate. In the Sala Regia, for example, he tore down a painting already started by Daniele da Volterra, who had shared half the commission. Because of their inability to work together in peace, the project was cancelled in 1563.\(^{219}\) The weight of Guido Reni’s controlling nature was too much to bear for the willing reciprocity of collaboration. Bellori quipped that Reni, having dismissed his collaborators Francesco Albani and Giovanni Lanfranco in the papal chapel of the Quirinal Palace, “was not enamored of company in a work that he was preparing for his fame.”\(^{220}\) In another case told by Malvasia, Reni could not make it work with Albani, who was tasked with the landscape in a painting of *Bacchus and Ariadne* (Fig. 1.52): “Each artist insisted on being last out of modesty and respect for his colleague. But either two such diverse beacons could not converge or perhaps the god Bacchus, the principal deity in the painting, was beating his leafy branch too much; in short, Guido wanted Albani to yield precedence to him, since with every new addition to the painting he covered that verdure and that leafy amenity, making it

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\(^{219}\) Salviati’s whole demeanor in the social niceties of artistic practice was cause for comment by Vasari, vol. 3, pt. 2 (1568), 92: “Alla quale opera mettendo mano, prima che altro facesse, gettò à terra una storia, stata cominciata da Daniello. Onde furono poi fra loro molte contese. Serviva come s’e già detto questo Pontefice nelle cose d’Architettura Pirro Ligorio, il quale haveva molto da principio favorito Francesco, & harebbe seguitato. Ma colui non tenendo più conto ne di Pirro, ne d’altri, poiche hebbe cominciato à lavorare, fu cagione, che d’amico gli divenne in un certo modo avversario, e se ne videro manifestissimi segni...”

\(^{220}\) Bellori, *The Lives of Modern the Painters*, 353. The quotation is in reference to the pope’s chapel in the palace on the Quirinal: “The pope desired to see the paintings and decorations of this chapel of his in a short time, for he needed to use it daily for mass and other holy offices and devotions; therefore he told Guido that he intended him to share the work with the other Bolognese; and so in the beginning he put Albani and Antonio Carracci to work there but he soon dismissed the former, after he had painted some putti in the said chapel; and next, he dismissed Antonio as well when he had finished his istoria of the Presentation, and after some small Virtues were painted on the pilasters, colored in collaboration with the same Albani. Guido was not enamored of company in a work that he was preparing for his fame, even though Albani, Domenichino, and the others of that school were perfectly worthy to make a pope’s magnificence the object of admiration; all the same it was the providence of heaven that it should fall to Guido’s lot to represent in this chapel the beauty of the Virgin and of Paradise.” For more on Guido’s character, see Spear, *The “Divine” Guido*, 19-37. See also Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 2, 226-227 (Life of Francesco Albani).
invisible and changing it to a seascape, which, so Guido said, was more appropriate to an event that happened on a seashore, not in a garden…” Artists could not collaborate if they could not accept another inventive mind or another hand into their space, and if they could not share their fame in equal measure.

More often than not, viewers were able to find common ground between artists without casting the respective individuals into obscurity. The preceding overview of more than two hundred years of collaborative unity as perceived by early modern viewers is best encapsulated in a chart mapping those instances in which collaborators were said to have worked with a single hand, or with some variation on this expression:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRITER (date)</th>
<th>ARTISTS DESCRIBED (date)</th>
<th>MEANING OF SINGLE HAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fazio (1456)</td>
<td>Lorenzo and Vittorio Ghiberti (c. 1452)</td>
<td>continuity of skill and authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasari (1550, 1568)</td>
<td>Mariotto Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo (1490-1513)</td>
<td>same style (one soul in one body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasari (1568)</td>
<td>Taddeo Zuccaro and associates (1550s)</td>
<td>accommodated styles in \textit{disegno}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridolfi (1648)</td>
<td>Battista Zelotti and Paolo Veronese (1550s)</td>
<td>same style (but a risk to identity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malvasia (1678)</td>
<td>Agostino Mitelli and Angelo Michele Colonna (1640-1660)</td>
<td>accord in making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passeri (1679)</td>
<td>Agostino Mitelli and Angelo Michele Colonna (1640-1660)</td>
<td>accord in making (two souls in one body; two minds with one hand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Félibien (1688)</td>
<td>Henri and Charles Beaubrun (1630s-1670s)</td>
<td>same style (one paintbrush; \textit{two hands} controlled by one spirit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relatively speaking the collaborative single hand, as an aphorism of collaborative unity, was referred to only a handful of times in the expanding body of art literature from the period. It was also, without doubt, a cliché. But clichés have a tendency of signaling norms of

\footnote{Malvasia, \textit{The Life of Guido Reni}, 96-97. The painting is now only known in copies and fragments. See Spear, \textbf{“Divine” Guido}, 107. It was initially commissioned by Cardinal Barberini – and progress was overseen by Cardinal Giulio Sacchetti – as a gift for Queen Henrietta Maria of England, but then Barberini, concerned about the content, decided against dispatching the picture; see Lilian H. Zirpolo, \textit{The Sacchetti Family, Their Art Patronage, and Political Aspirations} (Toronto, 2005), 119-121.}
perception, and since the semantic field of the aphorism seems to shift at each infrequent appearance, we are able to identify key moments in the development of the cognitive style of collaboration. Especially when the expression is read in conjunction with descriptions of similar partnerships, numerous typologies of collaborative unity between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century come into clearer focus.

Fifteenth-century habits of thought took a contractual view of multiple hands formally gathered together both as individuals and as a group (obligati in solidum; omnibus et singulis obligarunt). Despite apparent differences in style, as in the Brancacci Chapel and the Sistine Chapel, continuity and consistency between hands was established in quality and composition, which were regulated contractually by size and subject matter. The pragmatism explaining collaborative unity in the fifteenth century was given a speculative turn in the sixteenth century, as writers put greater emphasis on the contemplative and spiritual source of the image. In contrast to the groups formed by patrons in the fifteenth century, partnerships in the early sixteenth century, like that between Sebastiano del Piombo and Michelangelo, and between Mariotto Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo, came together because of the mutual willingness of the artists themselves. Such autonomous formations contributed to the sense that their ability to work in similar styles must have been borne by the sympathy of their spirits, which was thought to be natural in friendship.

The public’s expectation that paintings have a consistent style became a problem by the middle of the sixteenth century. Believing in the primacy of the intellective design, such managerial artists as Baccio Bandinelli and Vasari were caught off guard by criticisms that they were too permissive of hands or styles that were visibly different from their own hand, and from each other. Vasari reasoned that this problem was the result of practiced hands that did not understand the original concept, a problem incidentally that Sebastiano and Michelangelo had worked out between themselves earlier in the century. From observing Taddeo Zuccaro’s work in a now-lost palace in Rome, Vasari determined that the best solution was not to physically intervene with retouching, but to judiciously accommodate the different dispositions of the painters. In this way, every participant would cohere around the initial vision without requiring the retouching of a single hand.

Although Vasari held fast to the speculative or intellective means of unifying collaborators, the contention surrounding the role of the managerial artist anticipated the
attention paid in the seventeenth century to practical skill. To critics, this skill was engendered in the movements of the paintbrush as much as in the hand. The response to the frescoes unveiled in 1592 by the three Carracci in the Palazzo Magnani in Bologna epitomized this renewed attention. For the next century, viewers looked to differentiate Ludovico, Annibale, and Agostino, sensing traces of their hands physically moving in and out of each others’ spaces, a practice Scaramuccia termed the *vicendevolezza de’ pennelli*. The perception of this responsive accord in the act of making was then enacted by Rubens and Brueghel in Antwerp and by Morazzone, Procaccini, and il Cerano in Milan, and culminated in the specialized relationship that was developed between Agostino Mitelli and Angelo Michele Colonna between 1640 and 1660.

Despite shifting priorities from practice to theory and back again, certain basic tenets continued to play a role in the responses of viewers. Critics continued to regard the precept of the single hand as a combination of talents that were variously united to become something more than the sum of their parts. Authorship in those most exalted cases was not generally in question, as all those involved were openly recognized by critics, even if authors could not always be easily differentiated in style. Credit, it was thought following Pliny’s response to the *Laocoön* in the first century, had to be accorded to each contributor equally, or at least to no one in particular. What is perhaps most remarkable about the enduring tradition of the single hand is the pliable perceptiveness of so many critics to the coordination of hands and personalities, whether they were looking at large decorative programs in which the hands are separated, at pictures made by two artists working at different stages of the creative process, at easel paintings with different styles, or at combinations of genres.
CHAPTER 2
Collaboration as an Ideal: Pondering the Potentialities and Realities of Collaboration

It seems to me that whoever wishes to form two paintings of total perfection, one would be of Adam and one of Eve, which are the most noble bodies in the world. The Adam would have to be assigned to Michelangelo to design, to Titian to colour, taking proportion and decorum from Raphael, and the Eve would be designed by Raphael and coloured by Antonio Correggio. These two paintings would be the best paintings ever made in this world.¹

In the Idea del tempio della pittura (1590), the Milanese artist and writer Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo proposed that the most ideal paintings would combine the hands of Michelangelo and Titian, and the hands of Raphael and Correggio. Lomazzo’s stated intention was to make amends for leaving Correggio out of his list of the most eminent painters by assigning the Emilian painter a role on par with the three others. More consequentially, Lomazzo was illustrating the theoretical potential of eclectic imitation by conjuring up an image of collaboration in practice. The timing of the proposition coincided with the Bolognese Carracci who, as individuals, were reforming painting with new procedures of imitation, and who, as a group, were changing the face of collaborative unity with the vicendevolezza de’ pennelli.

The motivation for having multiple artists make the ideal painting was the same motivation for having one artist imitate multiple exemplars. Since antiquity one fundamental principle of the theory of imitation had maintained that nothing in nature exhibited complete perfection. Because there was, by extension, a presupposed fallibility in every achievement of excellence, it was thought that every artistic limitation could be supplemented by the corresponding excellence drawn from another. To make this point for oratorical imitation, Cicero (106 BC-43 BC) famously told the story in De Inventione about the painter Zeuxis, who combined and unified the best features of five women available to him in an attempt to

recapture the renowned beauty of Helen of Troy.² Out of this fable and its lesson on what we might call the economy of excellence, Cicero urged rhetoricians to approach their forebears just as Zeuxis approached his sources in nature. This lesson was the rationale behind the idea that the best painter possessed the best qualities of other artists in a single united body (corpo), as when Paolo Pino mused in the *Dialogo di pittura* (1548) that the greatest painter would combine Michelangelo and Titian, or the former’s disegno and the latter’s colorito, provided they were synthesized in one body only (fussero un corpo solo).³ As discussed in the previous chapter, the expression extolling collaborators as if working with a single hand was a variation on this very idea of the united corpo.

There was a key difference between collaboration and imitation, however. The artist in imitation only had to secure the integrity of his own identity, whereas the artist in collaboration had to simultaneously secure his own identity and accommodate the identities of the other contributors. As much as Lomazzo’s proposition has been perceived, wrongly I will argue, as pure fantasy and as indifferent to the personalities involved, it was a watershed in the discourse on collaboration and artistic practice. It reinforced the point for seventeenth-century writers that practice was, or was at least supposed to be, the very embodiment of theory, entailing reason and self-awareness. Francesco Scannelli in 1657, Carlo Cesare Malvasia in 1678, and Marco Boschini in 1660 tested Lomazzo’s ideal against real collaborations comprised of distinct minds and hands. Each writer had a different idea about how such an ideal could work in practice without sacrifice to the constituent identities. Both Scannelli and Malvasia considered the issue from the position of the artists, but where Scannelli expected sympathetic minds, Malvasia expected distinct minds working in coordination. Boschini, in contrast, considered the issue from the position of the collector who, he suggested, should be stimulated by the observation of different hands to contemplate the broader world. This chapter will review each writer’s approach in its turn once the critical

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² Marcus Tullius Cicero, “Treatise on Rhetorical Invention,” in *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, trans. C. D. Yonge, vol. 4 (London, 1853), 308: “[Zeuxis] did not think that he could find all the component parts of perfect beauty in one person, because nature has made nothing of any class absolutely perfect in every part. Therefore, as if nature would not have enough to give to everybody if it had given everything to one, it balances one advantage bestowed upon a person by another disadvantage.”

³ Paolo Pino, *Dialogo di pittura* [1548], ed. Susanna Falabella (Rome, 2000), 122: “...se Tiziano, e Michiel Angelo fussero un corpo solo, over al disegno di Michiel Angelo aggiuntovi il colore di Tiziano, se gli potrebbe dir lo dio della pittura, si come parimenti sono anco dei propri, e chi tiene altra openione è eretico fetidissimo.”
foundations of the ideal painting have been sufficiently established. Following the structure of the first chapter, it would be instructive to first look at the ancient precedents for the ideal collaborative image.

### 2.1 Antique Origins of the Collaborative Discourse: From Eclectic Imitation to Ideal Collaboration

It has been suggested that Lomazzo may have been inspired by Lucian of Samosata (125-180 A.D.) and his dialogue on images, the Εἰκονες. In order to describe an ideal beauty, Lucian imagined various sculptors and painters being marshalled together, each providing the attributes for which their works were best known. Despite the similarity of the idea to Lomazzo’s ideal, it is hard to fully assess the influence of the Εἰκονες on early modern art literature. Familiarity with the work was certainly not as widespread as with Lucian’s better known ekphrasis of the Calumny by Apelles. Malvasia, in fact, cited the dialogue as an exemplum of eclectic imitation, but misidentified the author as Aelian because he had not read the work first hand. It is important to keep in mind, furthermore, that an Italian

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4 Denis Mahon credited Ernst Gombrich for telling him about Lucian’s dialogue; see Mahon, Studies in Seicento Art and Theory (Westport, Conn., 1971), 120, n. 39; Charles Dempsey also referred to the precedence of Lucian’s dialogue, but did not go quite so far as to call it a source for Lomazzo; see Dempsey, Annibale Carracci and the Beginnings of Baroque Style (Glückstadt, 1977), 63. Maria Loh, citing Dempsey, also referred to Lucian as a potential model in “New and Improved: Repetition as Originality in Italian Baroque Practice and Theory,” The Art Bulletin 86, 3 (2004): 486-87.

5 For the gradual introduction of Lucian’s Greek texts into Italy in the fifteenth century, see David Marsh, Lucian and the Latins (Ann Arbor, 1998); and on the Italian translations, see Lorena De Faveri, Le traduzioni di Luciano in Italia nel XV e XVI secolo (Amsterdam, 2002). On the influence of Lucian’s Calumny in the Renaissance, see Richard Förster, Lucian in der Renaissance (Kiel, 1886) and a more detailed investigation by David Cast on Botticelli’s version, The Calumny of Apelles: A Study in the Humanist Tradition (New Haven and London, 1981), esp. 29-54.

6 References to Lucian’s dialogue on images were occasionally vague or pedantic. Carlo Dati, who was a member of the Accademia della Crusca under the pseudonym Lo Smarrito, discussed the passage in a biography of Apelles, Vite de pittori antichi (Florence, 1667), 131. Jacopo Mazzoni referred to Lucian’s passage in a discussion about the merits of poetry versus painting, in Della difesa della comedia di Dante, (Cesena: Bartolomeo Raverij, 1687), np., paragraphs, 22-23. Agnolo Firenzuola mentioned the passage about the four sculptors as a model of imitative excellence in his book on the beauty of ladies; see Firenzuola, Dialogo delle bellezze delle donne (Venice, 1552), 11v.: “Da cui etiandio il Mag. M. Giorgio Trissino, ò forse da Luciano, il quale la sua belleza compose delle molte belleze, che egli ritrasse dalle eccellenti statue de piu celebrati scultori, che fussero stati sino al tempo suo, imparò il modo del suo ritratto: & così facendo noi, tenteremo se di quattro belle, noi ne possiam fare una bellissima.” Finally, Malvasia referred explicitly to Lucian’s “Imagines,” but he misidentified the author as Aelian; see Malvasia, Il claustro di S. Michele in Bosco (Bologna, 1694), 7. Malvasia probably did not consult Lucian himself, but probably learned about it through Carlo Dati’s book, which he cited elsewhere. Citing Aelian and not Lucian, Malvasia referred the reader simply to a “Dialogo delle Imagini 590”. Dati had cited the same reference and page number, but he had ended the previous sentence mentioning Aelian, which must have been the cause of Malvasia’s confusion. The source Dati consulted was Lucian, Luciani Samosatensis philosophi opera omnia quae extant, trans. into Latin by Jean Bourdelot (I. Bourdelotius) (Paris, 1615), 590.
translation was never issued in the early modern period, and as with Pliny’s passage on the
Laocoön, the Latin translation was not without its complications.\(^7\)

The “Imagines,” as the dialogue was called in Latin, was set between two interlocutors,
‘Lycinus’ and ‘Polystratus’, and revolved around Lycinus’ inability to fully describe the
appearance of a woman whose beauty struck him dumb. On Polystratus’ entreaties for further
description, Lycinus suggested that only the combined efforts of the best masters would be
able to sufficiently capture the likeness of the unidentified woman. (Various clues reveal that
Lucian was flattering Panthea, the mistress of emperor Lucius Verus). Lycinus first imagined
particular sculptors and their masterpieces coming together, including Praxiteles and the
Knidian Aphrodite, Alcamenes and the Aphrodite in the Garden, Phidias and the Lemnian
Athena, Phidias and his unidentified Amazonian, and Calamis with his Sosandra from the
Athenian Acropolis.\(^8\) But, just as Lomazzo later suggested that Titian and Correggio paint
over the forms created by Michelangelo and Raphael, Lucian added to his sculptural forms
the best known skills of four painters and their representative works – Euphranor’s Juno,
Polygnotus’ Cassandra, Apelles’ Pacate, and Aetion’s Roxana. The ideal portrait of Panthea
was then polished off with the poetry of Homer and his description of Helen. With the
outward appearance having been determined by sculptural, pictorial, and poetic models, the
second half of Lucian’s dialogue was devoted to an assemblage of philosophers who could
best articulate the virtues of her soul. Lucian brought his multiple sources together with great
animation, turning a prototypical eclectic imitation into a description of an ideal
collaboration.\(^9\)

\(^7\) It was first published in a Latin translation as the “Imagines” in 1529 by Vincentius Obsopoeus (1485-1539),
whose translation was the predominant one in reprints for the next century. I have translated and will discuss
the passage according to a sixteenth-century Latin edition; see Lucian, “Imagines,” trans. Vincentius
Obsopoeus, in Luciani Samosatensis Opera, quae quidem extant, omnia, e Graeco sermone in Latinum, partim
iamolim diversis autoribus, parim nunc demum per Iacobum Micyllum, quacunque reliqua fuere, translata
(Frankfurt, 1538), 180r-183r. The Opera omnia used the transcriptions of different translators for different
works in the compendium. Obsopoeus’ was the canonical version for the “Imagines.”

\(^8\) Lucian was a Greek rhetorician who, if it were not for the irascibility of his mason uncle, might have joined
the family workshop in sculpture. He described his childhood and his calling to rhetoric in a work now
referred to as “The Dream, or the Career,” in Lucian, Lucian, trans. A. M. Harmon, vol. 3 (London, 1921),
213-233.

\(^9\) The description of the four painters being summoned one by one to adorn the figure serves as a fitting example
of this process: “With the work divided between them, Euphranor will paint her hair, as he painted it on the
Juno. But Polygnotus would imitate the unique allure of her eyebrows and the beautiful blush of her cheeks in
the same way he did the Cassandra in the assembly hall in Delphi. He will also prepare the clothing,
endeavoring to create the thinnest possible, in order that he may fittingly apply whatever is appropriate to the
body, but leave much of it to blow in the breeze. Next, Apelles himself would complete the rest of the body,
By imagining a collaboration across time and space, Lucian found a new way of illustrating the process of imitation in the arts, putting a twist on Cicero’s story of Zeuxis and the economy of excellence. But the economy of excellence in the theory of ancient imitation engendered another problem: how to achieve the seamless coordination of diverse fragments. By Lucian’s time it had become a commonplace to argue that artists could access such cognitive notions as the philosophical Idea, which recognized ideal patterns of beauty from select individual features in nature. It was also well established that it was the job of mental faculties to recombine such variety seamlessly. The younger Seneca (4 BC-65 AD) wrote in a letter on the subject of rhetorical imitation what would become a well-worn analogy in the theories of early modern literature and art. The most rehearsed passage on eclectic imitation was his metaphor of the bee that flies from flower to flower in the manufacturing of honey. Seneca argued from this analogy that unity should come about from an act of internalization, that is, from the assimilation of the sources into the ingenium of the imitator. At this point, Seneca moved from his apian model to a digestive metaphor in which the nutrients of food following the likeness of the Pacata, in such a way as to apply blush quite moderately to avoid excessive pallor. As for the lips, there may be no other than those that Aetion added to the Roxana.” See Lucian, “Imagines,” 181r: “Illi diviso inter se opere, Euphranor comam pinget, qualem lunonis depinxit. At Polygnotus superciliorum decoram distantiam, & malarum decentem rubedine’ cuius modi Cassandram apud Delphos fecit in conventiculis, exprimat. Amictum verò ille quoque praeparet, quàm poterit tenuissimè elaboratum, ut quaeunque par est corpori decenter applicet, multa verò venitis diffundenda relinquat: Porro, reliquum corpus ipse Apelles absolvat, secundem Pacate simulachrum, ita tamen ne nimium addat albedinis, sed planè temperanter rubescat. Labia autem non sint alia, atque Roxanae Aetion addidit.”

10 On the concept of Idea in Antiquity, see Erwin Panofsky, Idea: A Concept in Art Theory, trans. Joseph J.S. Peake (Columbia, 1968), 3-32. According to James S. Ackerman, it was Pico della Mirandola who was the first Renaissance humanist to suggest that the Idea was the source that unified diverse models, “Imitation” in idem, Origins, Imitation, Conventions: Representation in the Visual Arts (Cambridge, 2002), 130.

11 The apian metaphor, which G.W. Pigman III has traced so well for the Renaissance, was split in two directions, in part, based on conflicting arguments about the point at which honey is made: see Pigman III, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance,” Renaissance Quarterly 33, 1 (1980): 1-32. See also Thomas Greene, The Light of Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry (New Haven and London, 1982), 72-80. On the one hand, it was thought that the bee could have transformed the particles of various flowers into honey. This interpretation was preferred by Seneca himself. His famous apian metaphor was followed by a digestive metaphor, in which the human body breaks down various foods into the important nutrients before absorbing them into the bloodstream. On the other hand, unlike the transformative message, the sugar of honey could already have been made by the flowers, and so the bee’s job was just to gather and combine the honey from the flowers.
are absorbed into the bloodstream.\textsuperscript{12} This process of internalization set the stage for the transformative powers of self-expression, which he placed under the command of the soul.\textsuperscript{13}

Lucian too considered the problem of coordination, albeit briskly and abstractly. His speakers, Lycinus and Polystratus, had already outlined the sculptors they would enlist for the portrait when they turned their attention to the consequences of bringing these sources together. Because coordination was the central problem in the theories of collaboration in the early modern period, it would be prudent to look at Lucian’s dialogue from the perspective of his Renaissance readers, especially on the issue of coordination. The passage below is a translation based on Vincentius Obsopoeus’ canonical Latin version:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Lycinus}: Those are most beautiful works, my friend, and so you will need no other artists. And now, as far as will be possible, I will reveal to you a single composite image out of all of them, possessing from each one a particular model feature.

\textit{Polystratus}: And how will that be possible?

\textit{Lycinus}: Without difficulty, Polystratus, if right away one transfers the images to \textit{oratio}. We entrust to it the capacity to embellish, and then the ability to unite and fit together as splendidly as possible the same works, while preserving moderation and pleasant variety.

\textit{Polystratus}: You speak correctly and so, under these conditions, may \textit{oratio} proceed to the demonstration. With great pleasure, I am eager to see what use may be made of them, or in what way it will be able to complete from all of those a single composition that is in no part disharmonious.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{12} Macrobius (fl. early 5\textsuperscript{th} century) in his \textit{Saturnalia} copied Seneca’s advice nearly verbatim, making only a few amendments. One of the most significant changes was the meaning of Seneca’s digestive metaphor and the significance of a full transformation, instead of an absorption into personal expression, Macrobius highlights the importance of arrangement; see Pigman III, “Versions of Imitation,” 6-7.

\textsuperscript{13} Seneca, \textit{Epistulae} 84, 5-7. For those interested in reading an Italian translation that our critics may have consulted, see Seneca, \textit{L’epistole di Seneca}, trans. Anton Francesco Doni, (Milan, 1611), 342-343: “Poi dovemo confondere, & mescolare in un sapore tutte quelle cose varie, col fiato, & potenza dell’ingegno nostro; accioche se pure si conoscesse donde sia stato tolto, paia nondimeno altro, che quello donde è stato levato: il che vediamo che fâ la natura nel nostro corpo senza nostra opera. Li nutrimenti i quali noi pigliamo, fin che durono nella sua qualità, et sodi nuotono per lo stomaco, sono gravezze, ma quando da quel che erono si sono mutati, all’hora si convertiscono in sangue, & in nutrimento. Facciamo questo medesimo nelle cose da le quali si nutriscono gl’ingegni; che tutte le cose che habbiamo raccolte non le lasciamo intiere, & sempre d’altrui, ma smaltiamole; altrimenti andranno nella memoria, & non nell’ingegno. Consentiamò à quelle fedelmente, et facciamole nostre: accioche di molte cose, se ne faccia una; si come un numero si fa di più unì, quando un conto comprende, & raccoglie le somme disperse, & minute. Questo facci l’animo nostro; nasconda tutte le cose dalle quali è aiutato, mostri solamente quello che gl’ha fatto.”

\textsuperscript{14} See Lucian, “Imagines;” 180v:
The pleasure derived from these imitative exercises was in observing different authors come together into a whole. It is somewhat strange, however, that *oratio*, a faculty of speech, was summoned by the two speakers in the Latin translation to unify the diverse visual sources. The Greek word used by Lucian is *logos* (λόγος), which could, depending on context, be better translated as *ratio* – reason and the faculty for making judgments.\(^{15}\) Perhaps the Latin translator, Vincentius Obsopoeus, thought Lucian was dismissing the issue as a simple rhetorical exercise, or perhaps he thought that oratorical skill was the only way to unify different artists. After all, Cicero discussed the power of oratory to unify a society in the first book of *De Inventione*.\(^{16}\) Whatever the translators believed, it is most likely that Lucian had the other meaning of *logos* in mind, intending for the faculty of reason to unify the various sources. Such an idea is more in keeping with the interiorized processes of imitation outlined by Seneca and others. Some early modern readers of Lucian’s original Greek might even have understood *logos* to mean such a rational faculty, even if it did not make it into print.

In the end, Lucian’s “Imagines” was not an essay on imitation, let alone on collaboration, no matter how much it utilized the tropes of imitative theory. Lucian was primarily writing an encomium to the beauty of Panthea, the emperor’s mistress.\(^{17}\) At the one point when Lucian did venture into a theoretical question about coordination, summoning *logos*, reason and judgment, he seems to have been understood in a way that would be of little use for future art critics. More than likely, if Lucian’s hypothetical collaboration provided some sort

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\(^{15}\) Jean Baudoin avoided the problem altogether in his French translation; see Lucian, *Les oeuvre de Lucien*, trans. Jean Baudoin (Paris, 1613), 277v: “Tu ne parles pas mal: Voyons donc comme tu feras cest ouvrage, composé de tous les autres pourtraicts, & sans en estre rien different.” The confusion was not limited to the early modern translator. Even Luigi Settembrini in his 1862 Italian translation thought that *Eloquenza* was the appropriate faculty responsible for bringing the images together; see Lucian, *Opere di Luciano*, trans. Luigi Settembrini, vol. 2 (Florence, 1862), 262. The translation by A.M. Harmon in the Loeb Classical Library similarly interprets the Greek to mean “Master Eloquence,”; see Lucian, *Lucian*, trans. Harmon, 297-335.

\(^{16}\) Cicero, *De Inventione*, bk 1.

\(^{17}\) Lucian seems to have had to defend his encomium against charges of flattery by Panthea herself, for he followed the *Εἰκόνες with Υπερ των εἰκόνων (defense of images); see Lucian, *Lucian*, trans. Harmon, 297-335.
of inspiration for Lomazzo’s ideal painting of Adam and Eve, the source stopped short of providing genuine solutions, either as a result of the puzzling translation or because Lomazzo did not read it first hand.

2.2 Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo’s Ideal Paintings of Adam and Eve: Self-Awareness and Adaptation in Imitation and in Collaboration

Read in isolation, Lomazzo’s collaborative analogy to imitation suggests a straightforward exchange between hands. There is no direct sign of either Lucian’s logos or Pino’s fused single body. It was the ostensible simplicity of the ideal painting that made it the target for some of Lomazzo’s early critics. These critics included Domenichino, who saw it as illustrative of Lomazzo’s illogical understanding of the relationship between disegno and colore, and Scannelli, who thought that, because of the discordant personalities, the model could not have worked were it literally executed. It would be easy, then, to call it a whimsical analogy and leave it at that. But whimsy would be out of character with Lomazzo’s systematic, albeit imaginative, use of similar illustrative devices and with his contrived attempts to make every proposition concomitant with the universalizing framework of the treatise as a whole. The title of the treatise, “The Idea of the Temple of Painting,” already belies Lomazzo’s universalizing approach to thinking about art. The Neoplatonic Idea of painting referred to the notion in the mind of an absolute ideal, which originated in God before descending through various celestial spheres to the minds of artists. As we will see, even though Lomazzo thought that style was conditioned by astrological forces to which the artist had to remain true in order to be most effective, self-awareness and discretion

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18 Domenichino’s critical letter of Lomazzo was originally published by Bellori, who provided no interpretative context for its contents, in Le vite de’ pittori, scultori et architetti moderni (Rome, 1672), 359: “Mi pare ancora che dica il Lomazzo che un huomo disegnato al naturale, non sarebbe conosciuto per il solo disegno; ma ben si con l’aggiunta del colore simile, e questo è ancor falso; poiche Apelle col solo carbone disegnò il ritratto di colui, che l’haveva introdotto al convito, e fù subito riconosciuto, con istupore dal Rè Tolomeo, e tanta ba[sta] alla scoltura, che non hà colore alcuno. Dice ancora che a fare un quadro perfetto sarebbe Adamo, & Eva; l’Adamo disegnato da Michel Angelo, colorito da Titiano; l’Eva disegnata da Rafaelle, e colorita dal Coreggio; hor veda V.S. dove va’ à cadere chi erra ne primi principij.” From the clues in the letter itself, Mahon proposed that it was written around 1632 while Domenichino was in Naples; see Mahon, Studies in Seicento Art and Theory, 121. The first principles Domenichino was referring to derive from Aristotle’s concept of creation as masculine form acting on feminine matter, meaning Domenichino’s complaint was aimed at Lomazzo’s suggestion that colour gives form to line, rather than the other way around. For a more considerate explanation of Domenichino’s intellectual interests, see Richard Spear, Domenichino, vol. 1 (New York and London, 1982), 23-46; and for more specific remarks about his criticism of Lomazzo’s Adam and Eve, see ibid., 29-30 and 33.
provided some measure of interchange within a matrix of influences, making it possible for the kind of combinations presented in the ideal paintings of Adam and Eve.

2.2.1 The Ideal Painting in the General Context of the Idea del tempio della pittura

Especially because Lomazzo did not dwell on the Edenic scheme for long, the ideal painting must be read in the general context of the Idea del tempio della pittura.\(^{19}\) The title of the treatise refers to a metaphorical round temple that Lomazzo created to illustrate the structural integrity of what he regarded as the seven universal elements of art: proportion, motion, colour, light, perspective, composition, and form. To help his readers organize these seven elements in their minds, Lomazzo described them as the basic building blocks of the temple (Figs. 2.1 and 2.2). He considered the first five elements – proportion, motion, colour, light, and perspective – to be theoretical because they depend on speculative knowledge. In the imaginary temple, they make up the five bands of the walls, stacked one on top of the other with proportion on the bottom and perspective on top. The two remaining elements – composition and form – were considered practical because they tie the first five theoretical elements together and effectively express the invention. They are represented as the dome and the lantern, which respectively enclose and illuminate the space of the temple. Finally, the weight of all these elements in the temple is distributed to seven columns. These supportive posts correspond to the seven painters that Lomazzo thought best represented seven fundamental styles. Each of these seven painters, Lomazzo explained, worked consistently with the seven elements of art in a way that best reflected the predominant influence of one of the seven planets. Accordingly these painters were called the seven ‘planetary governors.’ They consist of Michelangelo (Saturn), Gaudenzio Ferrari (Jupiter), Polidoro da Caravaggio (Mars), Leonardo da Vinci (the Sun), Raphael (Venus), Andrea

Mantegna (Mercury), and Titian (the Moon) – note Correggio’s conspicuous absence on this list.

The vaguely delineated significance of the ideal paintings of Adam and Eve is consistent with the notoriously unpolished character of the overall treatise and with Lomazzo’s superimpositions of drafts following different theoretical schemes.²⁰ The passage on the ideal painting served as a conclusion to Chapter 17, which was the last chapter of what Gerald Ackerman has called the astrological draft. During this phase of writing, Lomazzo was focused most intently on the governing planets and their corresponding temperaments, and on explaining how the seven most eminent painters treated the elements of art differently from each other.²¹ The specific topic of Chapter 17 was forma, the last of the seven elements of art. Forma was defined by Lomazzo as the inventive language of art that provides the appropriate qualities of a figure so that its character is identifiable.²² There were seven distinct kinds of forma, or character types, and Lomazzo analogized each type to one of seven bestial natures. Since these seven animals were each associated with one of the seven planets, their natures were in turn associated with one of the seven great masters, or ‘planetary governors.’ After attributing the laborious nature of the ox to the seventh governor Titian, Lomazzo digressed from the topic of animals to address the concerns of certain unnamed painters who were demanding that Correggio be given his place among the seven governors of painting.²³ Despite attacking the judgment of his artist-critics, who he said lacked knowledge and adhered too closely to practice alone, Lomazzo came up with his two

²⁰ The Idea del tempio was put together out of the unpublished introductions to the chapters of his earlier treatise, the Trattato dell’arte della pittura (1584), and so what was originally intended as a single complete treatise was broken apart into two publications. The organization of this material was made more convoluted still because of Lomazzo’s evolving drafts (a rhetorical draft, a cosmological draft, and an astrological draft). Due to its fragmentary evolution, which may have been exacerbated by Lomazzo’s blindness, both treatises are notorious for chronic and confusing typos (descrizione instead of discrezione), broken thoughts, and contradictions. The most comprehensive analysis of the structures of Lomazzo’s treatises is Gerald Ackerman, “The Structure of Lomazzo’s Treatise on Painting” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1964). For a condensed version of Ackerman’s dissertation, see Ackerman, “Lomazzo’s Treatise on Painting,” Art Bulletin 49 (1967): 317-26.

²¹ Lomazzo, Idea del tempio, 57-60.

²² Williams has discussed the relationship between theory and practice in Lomazzo’s temple, and the interdependent distinctions between composition and form; see Williams, Art, Theory, and Culture, 129-131.

²³ The identities of these critical painters are unknown. Based on Lomazzo’s vitriolic description of these painters, as lacking knowledge and adhering too closely to practice, Robert Klein suggested that Lomazzo was thinking of Antonio Campi and other proto-Caravaggisti painters in Milan, see Lomazzo, Idea del tempio della pittura, trans. Robert Klein, vol. 2 (Florence, 1974), 559.
hypothetical paintings of Adam and of Eve to show that he did indeed consider Correggio to be equal to the governors.

2.2.2 Self-Awareness and the Adaptive Faculty of Discrezione

Although Lomazzo did not explicitly delineate how his ideal model could be brought together seamlessly, the integrity of individual style was generally the priority in his way of thinking about imitation and about artistic development, just as it was for his contemporaries. Armenini, for example, was justifiably concerned about the discord of imitative assemblages when a work of art did not cohere under a prevailing style. At the beginning of the Idea del tempio, Lomazzo too was adamant that for all the study and the repeated imitation that were required in artistic training, the manifold influences had to be seamlessly integrated by innate talent, self-awareness, and discernment. Young painters, he argued, needed to concentrate on following those artists whose temperaments matched their own. But by no means did such self-awareness prevent the painter from incorporating other temperaments and specialties once they had established a facility in their own style.

Self-awareness was the pre-requisite to learning, understanding, and assimilating the essential characteristics of alternative styles, especially of those exemplars that Lomazzo was categorizing in his ideal temple. Vasari had provided Lomazzo with the paradigmatic lesson on self-awareness when he described Raphael’s artistic development. Raphael, according to Vasari, realizing that he excelled most at representing the nude female form, and recognizing that he could not match Michelangelo in depicting the nude male, learned just enough to become adequate in depicting masculine figures without compromising his own particular skills.

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24 Giovanni Battista Armenini, De’ veri precetti della pittura (Ravenna, 1587), 66: “...attesoché, a chi di una parte si cura solo e chi un’altra pigliando et altri quella di lui tramutando et intricandola con l’altra, così diverse e strane manie[re] si veggono rimanere in costoro, perché del loro male non è il maggiore, quanto è il voler traporvi delle parti altrui, le quali quantunque siano belissime nel suo genere, quivi però a mischiarle si vede che rimangono disunite.” Armenini’s last remark that some painters improperly tack Michelangelo’s appendages onto other figures of a different type also suggests a certain apprehension about discordant genres, perhaps thinking, like Lomazzo, that Michelangelo’s ‘masculine’ style could not be easily combined with the ‘effeminate’ style of Correggio. But this is not a conclusive interpretation of Armenini’s meaning.


26 Giorgio Vasari, Le vite de’ piu eccellenti pittori scultori, e architetti, vol. 3, bk. 1 (Florence, 1568), 85-86.
chapter, “On the Strength of the Institution of Art and the Diversity of [Artistic] Natures.” According to Lomazzo, practice had to be developed in equal measure to theory, and yet, for all the experience and knowledge in one’s possession, art was only superficial if the body and the mind operated without an awareness of one’s own particular nature. The faculty responsible for this self-reflection, what Lomazzo called the foundation of the temple, was *discrezione*.

*Discrezione*, which can be translated either as discretion or discernment, is that intuitive, but judicious faculty that the painter uses in the aesthetic development of a picture. Painters must use their discretion (*discrezione*) to prudently adapt and alter rules developed by theory and practice. In the discretionary process the whole picture will be united naturally without leaving traces of art. The rational, and selective objectivity of discernment (*discrezione*), as Lomazzo explained in Chapter 3, must also be reflexive. Only with a complete and cognizant integration of one’s disposition to the heavenly bodies, can one pierce sensory matter and see the non-mimetic and immaterial beauty resonating from God in other terrestrial objects and beings:

> It is only *discrezione* that allows us to understand clearly, deep down, what we are doing. And from this understanding derive the purity of our intelligence, stability in judgment, and ultimately, the true and rational way to work. In exercising *discrezione*, we come to realize how important is the power we have of knowing ourselves, and moreover, the dimension of the authority and greatness that is in artistic perfection, enabling us to bring forth, from the God‐given faculties of our mind, the beauty and profundity of ideas that have arrived there through direct channels from the supreme Idea.

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27 Lomazzo referred to Vasari’s argument when he wrote in the *Idea del tempio*, 7: “Di qui è per dirne il vero, che essendo ciò male agevole à conoscere, la maggior parte non intendendo la disposizione, il genio, & in essa facciano quelle fatiche che si possano far maggiori, la dove chi conosce il suo genio, è quello segue, facilmente aggiunse al colmo dell’ecceellenza, in quella parte dove egli è inclinato, come si è veduto in Rafaello Sancio.” Lomazzo referred to the lesson again in the penultimate chapter, on the coordination of the parts of painting. See ibid., chap. 33.

28 See Jean Julia Chai’s introduction in Lomazzo, *Idea of the Temple of Painting*, trans. Jean Julia Chai (University Park, Pa., 2013), 15-22. Chai translated *discrezione* as discernment, which does capture its deliberative perception. Lomazzo’s usage also corresponds to the more literal translation as discretion, a cognate of discernment. The word discretion privileges both the ability to adapt to particular circumstances, and the quality of going unnoticed.

29 Lomazzo, *Idea of the Temple*, 54; Lomazzo, *Idea del tempio*, 12: “Imperoché per lei sola possiamo conoscere fin dalle viscere chiaramente ciò che facciamo, e da questa cognizione ne risulta poi la purità dell’ingegno e la stabilità del giudizio, e finalmente la vera e ragionevol via di operare. Nella qual essercitandoci, vegniamo ad intendere quanto importi la podestà che abbiamo di conoscere noi medesimi e appresso quanta si l’autorità et grandezza che è nella perfezione dell’arte, potendosi dalle parti del animo, concesseci da Iddio fare scaturire la bellezza e profondità delle idee colà pervenute, per dritti canali, da la suprema Idea, la quale tanto più...
The consistency with which each of the seven governors, i.e. the most representative painters, worked in alignment with the force of their corresponding planet was a sign of their self-awareness. Thus the styles of the seven most representative painters served as Lomazzo’s guides from Chapters 10 to 17 of the Idea del tempio. In these chapters, Lomazzo discussed each of the seven elements of art separately, breaking each element down into seven further subdivisions, according to the seven styles of the governors of art.

Although he divided art into seven characteristic styles, he began to clarify in Chapter 10 why all artists, not just the seven governors, have their own particular style when each is primarily subordinate to one of the seven planetary influences. As it turns out, all painters differ because of their various, albeit weaker, submissions to the others planets. Self-awareness and discrezione are again vital. The manifold influences of the other planets alter a painter’s relative approach to the seven elements of painting. Were it not for self-awareness and innate talent on the one hand, and the adaptive function of discretion (discrezione) on the other, the interpenetration of planetary influences would create a discordant union between the component parts of art. The discretion of each painter is thus responsible for the complete unity of all the parts of painting in tune with the planetary influences. According to Neoplatonic philosophy, the reasoning of every individual is different and subject to free will, and since it is through discretion that reason manifests itself, Lomazzo was suggesting that discretion is the faculty underlying the unique quality of every painter’s style and autonomy.

30 Lomazzo, Idea del tempio, chapter 10, 43-44: “Mà prima habbiamo da sapere che il fondamento di tutto cioè delle parti principali, e de i suoi generi, sopra il quale ogni cosa come sopra saldissima base si riposa, & onde deriva tutta la bellezza, e quello che i Greci chiamano Euritmia, e noi nominiamo disegno. Perche egli entra, et penetra per tutto secondo le spetie, & parti della discrezione [i.e. discernment], come di parte in parte anderò dichiarando ne i seguenti capitoli. Et perchè se ben ciascun de i governatori hà la sua propria maniera che corrispo[n]de alla natura del pianeto al quale l’habbiamo paragonato, & sottoposto, tutta via hà participato anco della maniera dell’altro chi più, e chi meno, come nel penultimo di questa Idea tratterò alcuna cosa di questo, accioche si sappia come tanti generi si hanno di ritirare ad un solo, e che in questo consiste tutta la somma dell’opera.” See also, Idea del tempio, 145-150 (chap. 37). Lomazzo did not go quite so far as to mention that all things emit their particular qualities, or rays, which can more weakly influence other bodies. For a succinct summary of the theory of ‘Rays,’ see Mary Quinlan-McGrath, Influences: Art, Optics, and Astrology in the Italian Renaissance (Chicago and London, 2013), 50-51.

31 In this sense, the judicial aspect of discrezione is closely aligned with Ficino’s use of ratio, which mediates between the universal principles of the angelic sphere and particulars of the corporeal sphere. However, the free will involved in decision making means that every one judges differently and reasons differently; see Paul Oskar Kristeller, The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino (Gloucester, Mass., 1964), 256-288, and 380-381, especially a quote by Ficino on choice, 381: “Choice (electio) is an action connected with the human species,
In his introductory remarks to Chapter 17 on forma and the ideal painting, Lomazzo reiterated his point that a painter’s character and style is not exclusive to a singular planetary emanation, even if there is a predominant correspondence. In this discussion, he also laid the groundwork for his ideal collaborative model of imitation that came at the end of the chapter:

... if someone was found in which was united all the natures of such animals, he would be the greatest painter that ever existed among mortals. The more they participate in the other natures, the greater they would be. This can be observed in those governors who were more or less excellent, the more or less they participated in the nature of the others as well as in their own.

The ideal paintings of Adam and Eve helped fulfill Lomazzo’s introductory supposition. The hypothetical collaboration between Michelangelo, Titian, Raphael, and Correggio was Lomazzo’s way of demonstrating the greater metaphysical whole that could be made up out of a diversity of ‘equal excellences,’ that is to say of equally meritorious styles being emanated and incorporated into each other, as would have to be the case for these painters to work as one hand.

Lomazzo must, nevertheless, have intended for his ideal paintings to be a model of imitation for a single, self-aware painter using his discrezione, even if he did not say so

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As is the discursive thought of ratio. For these two things are peculiar to man. Consequently, if men reasoned through a natural instinct, the opinion of all men about individual matters would be the same; and if they chose by nature, the choice of all would be the same. But in reality different persons choose different things in different ways, as they judge differently in reasoning.”

The reason why Lomazzo is discussing form in terms of animal natures relates to a Neoplatonic notion that humans have three souls. The highest soul is nearest the angels and farthest from the body, and possesses the contemplative mind; the middle soul is ratio, or reason; and the lowest is irrational and is tied to the corporeal body like the mortal souls of animals. It is this lowest cosmic soul that administers form to corporeal things. For an explanation of the relationship between human and animal souls in Neoplatonic philosophy, see Kristeller, The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino, 384 ff.

Lomazzo, Idea, 57: “Ne d’altronde creo io a[n]cara procedere, che frà pittori uno seguiti la forma d’un Governatore, e quelli d’un’altro, e fra gli huomini à tale piaccia più l’una, & à tale più l’altra, se non da questa istessa conformità di natura. E però se si trovase alcuno, nel qual fossero unite tutte le nature di tali animali, quello sarebbe il più gran pittore che mai fosse stato fra i mortali, & di quante più participasse, tanto maggior sarebbe, come si vede ne i Governatori i quali secondo che hanno participato più è meno della natura anco de gli altri, sono stati più è meno eccellenti.” On forma and animal natures, see note 32. Klein has tried to make sense of the ideal painting in terms of broader astrological philosophies, meaning that the temperament of such a painter would have to be completely neutral and universal, a postulation rejected apparently by Galen. In a Christian context, such a harmony of forces was thought possible only in the body of Jesus Christ, see “Les Sept Gouverneurs,” 287 n. 27. Lomazzo did not come up with the notion of such a painter on a whim. In Chapter 33, Lomazzo discussed musical harmonics in relation to the stars, and again pondered, “Onde chi nascesse al mondo ornato del dono di tal concetti sarebbe il primo Pittore che in lui fosse stato è fosse per esser mai.” See Lomazzo, Idea del tempio, 131.
outright. He suddenly cut his digression short with a simple phrase, “But returning to my first concept...”:

But returning to my first concept, thanks to a hole that illuminates the whole temple and its parts, forma, which is coloured from above in the vault of the temple, can be brought down and seen by those who are born painters, that is to say those who are naturally gifted with the parts of painting, which are necessary to exercise such an art. Only these painters, and no others, will be permitted to contemplate the Idea of my temple, to understand perfectly the whole of art, and to laudably put it into practice, provided they add discernment (discrezione), which will be discussed in the next chapter. There I will demonstrate what the parts of discernment are, and how they can all work together (concorrere) to produce a good painter, and I will situate discernment on the threshold of the temple. From the threshold, the Idea can be clearly seen by anyone entering the temple with the desire to attentively understand and admire all the governors ... and all their styles (modi di fare). In this way, the true art of working with art, which is not to reveal any art in art, will be discovered.34

Lomazzo had already discussed the importance of discrezione in Chapter 3, for its ability to recognize and adapt to the heavenly bodies. He provided a more straightforward definition of discrezione in the introduction to Chapter 18: “In short it provides the method and general instruction for composing and uniting the parts [of painting] together so that they appear as one body, without which every work would remain disconnected.”35

The ideal painting of Adam and Eve, therefore, was strategically situated in the text. It was the culmination of the preceding chapters on the temperaments of the planetary governors, and it was an effective way of demonstrating the potential that could be reached by studying the subsequent chapters (chapters 18-25) on discrezione and the various methods of ordering the parts of painting, and their subspecies, into a unified whole. As a means to

34 Lomazzo, Idea del tempio, 60: “Ma ritornando al mio primo proponimento, questa forma così colorata di sopra nel Cielo del tempio si potrà per il foro che alluma tutto il tempio, & le sue parti discendere, & vedere quale sia la vera forma della pittura, da quelli i quali saranro nati pittori, cioè dotati naturalmente di quelle parti che sono necessarie per essercitar cotal arte. Percioche à questi soli, e non ad altri sarà concesso nel contemplar questa Idea del mio tempio l’intendere perfettamente tutta l’arte, & iodevolmente metterla in prattica aggiungendovi la descrizion di cui son per dire nel segue[n]nte capitolo. Ove mostrerò quali siano le sue parti, e come habbino da concorrer tutte à formare il buon pittore collocandola nel soglio del tempio. Nel quale ella si potrà chiaramente vedere da qualunque entri nel tempio con desiderio di intendere, & miri attentamente tutti i Governatori che reggono il tempio a guisa de i Governatori del mondo, & tutti i suoi modi di fare. Onde si verrà a scuoprire quale sia l’arte vera di operare con arte, non dimostrando nell’arte, alcun arte. Il che si come è il più difficile, così è il più bello, & il più lodato che sia in ciascun arte.”
transcend fixed rules, the intuitive and rational faculty of *discrezione* was as integral to Lomazzo’s painter as *giudizio* was to Vasari’s proper painter, and to Vasari’s proper managerial artist Taddeo Zuccaro.\(^\text{36}\) For Lomazzo, the adaptive judgment in discretion was particularly important when making the necessary adjustments to the component parts of painting in a way that the whole ensemble seems natural, effortless, and appropriate to the invention.\(^\text{37}\) He surely thought such a faculty would be responsible for overseeing the four styles being incorporated in the ideal painting.

### 2.2.3 Artistic Ancestry and Self-Knowledge

For Michelangelo, Titian, Raphael and Correggio to be paired conceptually in imitation would require a strong sense of oneself. That Lomazzo put so much stock in self-awareness helps us to further understand the subject matter of the deceptively simple formula of the ideal paintings. Lomazzo’s stated intention for suggesting the subject of Adam and Eve was reasonable enough. They were, “the most noble bodies in the world.” Such pithiness only intimates other meaningful connotations. As the first human progenitors, Adam and Eve were regarded as the closest to the ideal body, the paradigm against which bodily diversity and anomalies over ensuing generations could be traced and measured. Accordingly, the archetypal couple was the most widely used example for anatomical illustrations, reminding the viewer of their own distant and physical relationship to their earliest ancestors, and

\(^{36}\) See Chapter 1.4. Like *giudizio*, *discrezione* is not fixed by rules. It is necessarily adaptive so as to navigate the varied planetary influences along with the countless decisions that have to be made on the invention and on the best aspects of the best models. Beyond looking at Vasari, one might also compare Lomazzo’s *discrezione* to Federico Zuccaro’s *giudizio*, discussed in Panofsky, *Idea: A Concept in Art Theory*, 73-79.

\(^{37}\) *Discrezione* for Lomazzo, unlike *giudizio* for Vasari, was a more metaphysical kind of judgment that channeled the Idea, or the form descended from God. Lomazzo, *Idea del tempio*, 12: “Ancora che molti non senza scienza & pratica, habbino conseguito nella pittura, tutte le cose desiderate da loro, non però perfettamente l’hanno potuto conseguire, senza l’aiuto de la discrezione, cioè senza la preparazione, & ordinazione di lei nel tutto.” This is the basic explanation of *discrezione* in Lomazzo. For more on the term for the *Idea del tempio*, see Ackerman, “Structure of Lomazzo,” 54-56; Williams, *Art, Theory, Culture*, 123-135; Klein, ed., *Idea del tempio*, 519-520; and Jean Julia Chai’s introduction to Lomazzo, *Idea of the Temple of Painting*, 15-22. Leaving aside his ideas about empathic enchantment, Lomazzo’s interest in musical harmonics would also have made him poignantly sensitive to the importance of bringing the collaborators into consonance, though he never completed this thought in Chapter 17. On Lomazzo’s ideas about figures and the enchanting force of musical harmonics, see Michael W. Cole, “Harmonic Force in Cinquecento Painting,” in *Animationen/Transgressionen: das Kunstwerk als Lebewesen*, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer and Anja Zimmermann (Berlin, 2005), 73-94. Musical harmonies, and discords, may have played a role later in Boschini’s formulation of the ideal painting, see below.
ultimately to God, who created Adam and Eve in His own image.\textsuperscript{38} In fact, anatomical broadsheets of Adam and Eve often encouraged the viewer in the contemplative endeavor of self-reflection, employing the Socratic maxim based on the oracle from the temple of Apollo from Delphi, \textit{Nosce te ipsum} – ‘Know thyself’.\textsuperscript{39}

The exhortation to be self-aware reflected the epistemological aims of the \textit{Idea del tempio} as well. As the subjects for an ideal collaborative picture, Adam and Eve suggested to readers their own artistic origins, implying that the most representative modes of painting could be similarly traced back to elements that had slowly dispersed from a pure original style. Considering the long lineage of human forms and temperaments, and consequently of artistic styles, readers were supposed to ponder from which of the four artistic roots they descended. Indeed, Lomazzo later listed and discussed the followers of each of the seven governors, as if they were part of an expanding genealogical chart: “... following and conforming to their predecessors’ styles, these later artists nevertheless differed among themselves, like the governors. They may be placed in the second rank, and those who came after them, in the third, and so on with the rest.”\textsuperscript{40} For Lomazzo, the decline of art was inevitable with the passing of each generation, as it was in Antiquity: “Far removed from the excellence of these ancient painters, were those who were their successors, and in turn, those who came and will ever come after the modern governors will be as far removed from their excellence.”\textsuperscript{41} The notion of the expansion and dilution of art with each generation must have suggested to Lomazzo that a collaborative project, like the ideal painting, had the potential to bring

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38 Fredrika H. Jacobs, \textit{The Living Image in Renaissance Art} (Cambridge, 2005), 55-56 and 153-155. Indeed in the earlier, second chapter, “On the Strength of the Institution of Art and the Diversity of Natures,” Lomazzo had more to say about the fundamental goal of art. Nature herself, he claimed, could not recreate the perfect beauty as well as a painter with a knowledge of art and a refined judgment. By capturing metaphysical beauty, the artist is able to “lead us closer to the contemplation of the miraculous creation first established by God, making us see in him, through the parts harmoniously composed together, His excellence in that guise that is seen in man;” see Lomazzo, \textit{Idea del tempio}, 6: “& per lei si viene ad aguzzar in modo, & affinare il giudizio, che sicuramente può dirsi, la natura istessa non poter ridurre à tanta eccellenza, e bellezza un soggetto, nè far che renda tanto dileto, e ci conduca più vicino alla considerazione della mirabile fabrica prima instiuita da Dio, facendoci veder in lui, per le parti armonicamente composte insieme, l’eccellenza sua, in quella guisa che si vede nell’huomo.”


40 Lomazzo, \textit{Idea of the Temple}, 160; Lomazzo, \textit{Idea del tempio}, 149: “Si come hanno fatto molti eccellentissimi huomini succeduti dopo que’ primi sette splendori dell’arte, seguendo, & conformandosi alle maniere loro, diversi però frà di se come furono essi Governatori. Et questi si possono collocare nella seconda schiera, si come quelli che a loro sono succeduti poi nella terza, & così di mano in mano.”

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together the best traces from the fragmented origins of art. One might wonder, then, if ideal collaboration, like eclectic imitation, could serve as a re-enactment of the divine creation of the world when Adam and Eve were first formed in God’s own image.

2.3 From Chimeras to Indissoluble Friends: Francesco Scannelli’s Practical Conditions for Collaboration

Although Lomazzo implied that such a collaboration would involve a rationally adaptive process, the ideal painting of Adam and Eve was purely speculative and, unlike his literary respondents who we will turn to now, he did not directly examine how it would work as a genuine exercise. Francesco Scannelli, in a lengthy excogitation on painting called, *Il microcosmo della pittura* (1657), was censorious when it came to Lomazzo and his hypothetical collaboration between Michelangelo, Titian, Raphael, and Correggio. He considered Paolo Pino’s more exclusive assertion that the best painter would be a combination of just Michelangelo and Titian to be even worse. Scannelli, a physician and art consultant, cast away such impractical ideal musings as “vain imaginations, like chimeras of the intellect, in every way far from the desired effect of real existence...” Scannelli had a hard time seeing the transcendent possibilities of collaboration, in part because his perception of collaborative unity was based on a similarity of styles that was more prevalent in the sixteenth century. Out of his criticism of Lomazzo, Scannelli developed a comprehensive procedure for collaborators to work in unity, but the aim of this procedure, it will be shown, recalls the “one soul in one body” that Vasari described for Mariotto Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo a century earlier.

Scannelli’s attack on Lomazzo was an important turning point in the *Microcosmo*’s tenth chapter titled, “How the best ancient and modern masters, although different among themselves in their styles and particular qualities, were nevertheless accomplished in every part of their best works.”

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42 Francesco Scannelli, *Il microcosmo della pittura* [1657], ed. Guido Giubbini (Milan, 1966), 75: “e per ciò lasciandosi da parte coteste vane immaginationi, come chimere dell’intelletto per ogni parte lontane dall’effetto desiderato della real essistenza...”

43 This is Chapter X of Scannelli, *Microcosmo*, 67-74; titled in the Italian as, “Come i primi Maestri antichi, e moderni, se bene frà di loro differenti nelle maniere, e particolari qualità, furono però nelle meglio operationi per ogni parte compiti.” Like Scannelli himself, this chapter has been depressingly understudied. Denis Mahon spent some time trying to characterize it, because of the reference to Lomazzo’s ideal painting. But Mahon, justifiably referring to Scannelli’s “rambling and digressive style,” could not hide his frustration with the chapter as a whole, relying heavily on quotations and ending his discussion rather abruptly; see Mahon,
style when it is stable in its expression. Like Lomazzo, Scannelli argued that talents and styles differ, because they are the products of genius, a faculty conditioned by different astrological forces, by varying temperaments, and by other external affects on the disposition. But he held more firmly to the overall integrity of individual style, taking umbrage at the implication of the ideal painting: “[Lomazzo] wanted to believe that the most beautiful painting can be formed only by uniting the best qualities.” Scannelli then took it upon himself to dismantle any notion that Michelangelo, Titian, Raphael, and Correggio were somehow inadequate and that each could be improved were they to combine their special talents with those of another.

Scannelli showed little interest in humouring hypothetical scenarios and looked at the ideal painting of Adam and Eve, as if it were a literal collaboration:

Since these extraordinary subjects [i.e. painters] were seen in the same era, and easily at the same time, and because it was thus possible for such a congress to have created the most adequate work together, it can be considered as a practical act. One would discern in any similar case that the arrangement would probably not produce, but by varied and opposing difficulty, the conjunction of these incompatible materials in terms of a bond and form of perfection. They simply do not have between them the requisite affinity (simboleità).

Scannelli conceptualized the problem of the ideal painting in a very significant way, considering the demands of collaboration in reality – a reality, that is, based on his own primary principles of art. The process of imitation did not really concern Scannelli here. In a real collaboration, where the identity of each participant is important, the incompatible

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44 Scannelli, *Microcosmo*, 68: “Perche il dimostrarsi mediante l’operatione di talenti, e maniera diversa, non è che effetto de’ conaturali genij, che per l’ordinario vengono ad originarsi da Climi del Cielo, che sono cause universali, e remote, come dalle più prossime de’ particolari Maestri, da’ proprj temperamenti; e da simili accidenti esteriori, che vengono a concorrere per cause maggiormente vicine alla più immediata disposizione.”

45 Scannelli, *Microcosmo*, 68: “…per compimento di bella Pittura, non stimando adeguata la particolar sufficienza de’ primi, e più eccellenti Maestri, vole, che solo mediante l’unione delle migliori qualità si possa formare la bellissima Pittura…” Scannelli continued on this point about the holism of each of the four master’s styles in the next chapter, *Microcosmo*, 75-82.

46 Scannelli, *Microcosmo*, 68-69: “…mà considerandosi ciò in ordine all’atto pratico, sendo che per essere vissuti questi straordinarj soggetti ad una stessa età, è facilmente ad un medesimo tempo, e però data come possibile l’occasione di un tal congresso per fabbricare di concerto l’opera adeguatissima, conoscerassi un simil caso non poter sortire verisimilmente, che varie, e repugnanti difficoltà per l’unione di queste incompatibili materie in ordine alla lega, e forma di perfettione; non havendo in fatti frà di loro la debita simboleità.”
natures of the four painters would rupture the consistency of style. Based on this view, Scannelli took the opportunity to consider, at length, the practicalities of pictorial collaboration – _considerandosi ciò in ordine all’atto pratico_ – and contemplate under what circumstances a balance between stylistic consistency and self-identity might be achieved. Over the remaining course of the tenth chapter of the _Microcosmo_, he developed for the first time in the early modern period a theory for collaboration. That is to say, Scannelli was the first to clearly define the technical parameters of a collaboration and develop a system of principles that might be applied in real life.

For Scannelli, it was not enough for the best painter in each category of excellence to simply contribute their particular skill, because he not only saw the need for the composition to be unified, but the need for the various stages of facture to be in balance as well. The fragmentation or cohesion of a collaboration, especially in cases of retouching, primarily occurred when the work was transmitted between artists. The extreme force and artifice of Michelangelo’s outlines, for example, would have unavoidably clashed with the naturalism of Titian’s fleshy tints. 47 One contributor would necessarily be left unsatisfied, Scannelli believed, “being in this case that the help of one could not serve but by the confusion of the other.” 48 The figural forms in this case would have been disjointed as a result of mental and psychological discord. 49

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47 Scannelli, _Microcosmo_, 69 “…perche si potrà anco rispondere essere necessario pe’l compimento di buona Pittura, che il colorito, e disegno unitamente consipri alla formazione dell’opera, ed anco il particolar disegno, e puro contorno essere valevoli per dimostrare con la proportione la gratia, e vera naturalezza, ed altre buone qualità conforme al proprio talento dell’Artefice; e però conosceremo non potere conformarsi ad un tal disegno la differente maniera di Titiano. Ritiene il primo un’idea di corpo in estremo risentito; e di studio ultramodo ricercato, e diligentemente l’altro non concepisce l’opera, che dentro a’ limiti della stessa natura. Eccoti co’ colori Titiano a ridurre il contornato del Bonarota, il quale in conformità del proprio genio tenendo nella mente impresso l’Idolo della buona, e desianta naturalezza, e così mentre procura col proprio stile uniformarsi al vero, incontrando eccessi ne’ contorni, parte de’ caricati lineamenti con i colori anNulla, altri diminuisse, & alcuni varia ne’ siti, e conoscendo il più, e meno di linea acuta, & ottusa arrecare più facilità, gratia, & espressione maggiormente propria, non può che ridurla a forza di colore al proprio gusto. In maniera, che dato soprapiangia il medesimo Bonarota, vedendo l’opera ridotta con differentissimo gusto, non restera, che mal sodisfatto, sendo che in questo caso l’aiuto dell’uno non potria servire, che per la confusione dell’altro. Ne meno vale il dire, che sia detto vulgato, e vero, non solo del medesimo Bonarota, mà parimente della commune de’ Professori.”

48 Scannelli, _Microcosmo_, 70: “In maniera che dato soprapiangia il medesimo Bonarota, vedendo l’opera ridotta con differentisimo gusto, non restera, che mal sodisfatto, sendo che in questo caso l’aiuto dell’uno non potria servire, che per la confusione dell’altro.”

49 More broadly in the _Microcosmo_, Scannelli saw the study and artifice of the Tusco-Roman school, according to common practices of _disegno_, as vastly distinct from the intuitive and naturalizing colourism of the Lombard and Venetian schools; see Guido Giubbini’s introduction in Scannelli, _Microcosmo_, esp. xii. Robert
Just what did Scannelli have in mind as the ‘requisite affinity,’ or *simboleitā*? And how could collaborating painters develop this elusive similitude? Building on his criticism of the ideal painting, Scannelli established a series of conditions on which a painter, or ‘subject’ (*soggetto*) as he called them, could successfully work on that of another ‘subject.’ The solution for Scannelli was certainly not to restrain the subjective. What was required was a complete unity between theory and practice. Whereas Lomazzo implied that such a collaboration was only possible among experienced and self-aware artists, Scannelli believed the adaptive process had to start during the stages of development. For optimal results in a collaboration, he argued, the participants had to possess common knowledge, skill, and training, and the relationship had to be formed for mutual profit with perfection as the only aim. Before codifying these criteria, Scannelli first demonstrated their necessity by presenting three examples in which hands were made to overlap. Each combination in these three examples was wanting in one of the integral elements he would eventually list as necessary for a unified collaboration. These cases shed particular light on Scannelli’s understanding of the relationship between the artist’s mind and hand.

**2.3.1 Scannelli’s First Condition of Collaboration: Equal Intelligence**

Scannelli’s first example related to the Bolognese painter Angelo Michele Colonna and his frustrated efforts to arrange a project with a distant patron. Colonna supposedly had to defend himself against the misguided complaints of his patron, a certain ‘Cavaliere primario’ from Forlì, who unadvisedly used a local painter to execute Colonna’s designs for the facade of his palazzo. According to Scannelli’s account, Colonna had dutifully supplied his patron with a drawing accompanied by a letter, explaining that with the drawing in hand the majority of the effort (*faticà*) was already done and all that remained was for him to come and execute it. A self-interested local painter, devoid of understanding (*nulla d’intendimento*), was then able to convince the gentleman to let him have Colonna’s drawing so he could paint the facade himself, a larceny that was unfortunately aided by Colonna’s own suggestion that most of the work had already been done in the drawing. Because this un-named lowly painter, who

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Enggass and Jonathan Brown have translated pertinent sections from Scannelli on this division and provided a brief comment, in *Italian and Spanish Art, 1600-1750: Sources and Documents* (Evanston, IL, 1999), 42-48.
Scannelli called a *pittore volgare* and *pittore ordinario*, aspired more to his own interests than to good art, the frescoes that were produced were unsatisfactory.

Even though Colonna was the one who was initially treated disrespectfully by this painter’s misdeeds, he was still forced to explain to his patron why the painting did not turn out as expected. What he had meant in his earlier letter, he clarified, was that the mental effort was mostly sorted out in the drawing, but this did not mean that the physical labour was a mere formality. He told his disappointed patron that because everyone has their own understanding of their own drawing, “having different tastes and different abilities, others cannot duly profit [from another’s drawing].” Scannelli would return to the importance of taste, ability, and mutual benefit later. His conclusion to this anecdote rested mainly on the point that the painter of lesser intelligence, even if sometimes capable enough in colour, “can neither understand, nor adapt to adequately execute the drawing of another.”

2.3.2 Scannelli’s Second Condition of Collaboration: Shared Study and Mutual Benefit

Scannelli next presented the example of Marcello Venusti, a painter who worked after the designs of Michelangelo (Fig. 2.3).

These two came a step closer to possessing the proper qualities of a collaborative relationship. Although Marcello lacked the thoughtfulness and inventiveness necessary for good design (*mancante nel pensiero, e capriccio spettante al buon disegno*), he studied with Michelangelo long enough that he was able to apply his acquired knowledge to his paintings and become “uniform to a certain course” (*uniformarsi*

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50 Scannelli, *Microcosmo*, 71-72: “...rispose immediatamente il suddetto Colonna, che questa maggior fatica [mentioned in his first letter], non intendeva essere fatta, che per lui, come quello, c’h'aveva adeguata conoscenza del proprio disegno, e non altrimenti per altri, i quali per ritrovarsi di gusto, e sufficienza differenti, non possono debitame[n]te approfittarsi, e di ciò pare, che la ragione sia in pronto, perche quello di meno intelligenza non può conoscere, né tampoco accommodating per essequire adeguatamente l’altrui disegno; con tutto che tal volta egli si alquanto sufficiente ne’ colori.” Scannelli’s patron, Francesco I d’Este, the Duke of Modena, would perhaps have read this anecdote as a justification for his perseverance in having Colonna paint the frescoes in his palace in Sassuola alongside his frequent collaborator Agostino Mitelli. Colonna and Mitelli faced the violent protestations of local painters in Modena in 1645. See Alice Jarrard, *Architecture as Performance in Seventeenth-Century Europe: Court Ritual in Modena, Rome, and Paris* (Cambridge, UK, 2003), 126. On the other hand, Agostino Mitelli’s son, Giovanni, recorded in a biographical manuscript that Agostino refused to partner with another painter, Giovanni (Jean) Boulanger on another set of frescoes, preferring to stick with Colonna. As a result, Francesco did not pay him for the cartoons of the work already done in Sassuola, and prevented his trip to France; see Eibia Feinblatt, “Angelo Michele Colonna: A Profile,” *The Burlington Magazine* 121, 919 (1979): 626 n. 34.

ad un tal’andamento). Marcello did not share the same talent or ability (sufficienza) as
Michelangelo, but he was able to make meritorious paintings, because of the knowledge and
taste he came to share with Michelangelo from extended proximity and study.⁵²

Scannelli’s example of Marcello was hardly a ringing endorsement of a collaboration at
its best. He did praise Marcello’s copies, but the undertone was that Marcello and
Michelangelo were not genuine collaborators, because they were not of equal talent.⁵³
Rather, they were a master and follower, a relationship that demanded conformity in one
direction and in which only one member truly benefitted. Scannelli made it clear that
Marcello and Michelangelo could not be compared to the fantasy of Titian paired with
Michelangelo, because in the latter case there would be no such hierarchy. The Venetian
painter was self-sufficient and, because he only followed the imitation of nature, he would
not have benefited from the idealism of Michelangelo as Marcello did.

Considering the subjects of Scannelli’s criticism in this section of the chapter, it is
surprising that he never referred to the working relationship between Sebastiano del Piombo
and Michelangelo, which he analyzed on two separate occasions elsewhere in the
Microcosmo. In the most relevant passage – a distant 160 pages after the chapter on
collaboration – Scannelli credited both Sebastiano and Michelangelo together for the fresco
of the Flagellation (Fig. 1.15), which is still located in the Borgherini Chapel in the church of
San Pietro in Montorio in Rome:

The work is in every way famous, and more beautiful than any other made by
the greatest painter, and more accomplished for being such a unique painting,
which contains in itself all of the most exact and capable virtue of
Michelangelo and Sebastiano together. Both … set out to demonstrate the
force of their extraordinary knowledge, and in truth such a virtuous intent
succeeded in its parts, especially in regard to the principal figure of the

⁵² Scannelli had picked up on a notion of stylistic contagion that Raffaello Borghini also expressed about
Giovanni Stradano and Francesco Salviati: “[Stradano] was called on by Francesco Salviati, and working in
his company, he greatly advanced in painting, for the most part adopting his style.” See Raffaello Borghini, Il
Riposo, (Florence, 1584), 580: “…fu chiamato da Francesco Salviati, e lavorando in sua compagnia si avanzò
molto nella pittura prendendo in gran parte la sua maniera.”
⁵³ Scannelli did not say anything new when it came to relationships between master and student. In
Castiglione’s discussion of imitation, the Count, arguing against strict rules of perfection based on imitations
only after Petrarch and Boccaccio, claimed that many can perfect their style and be recognized as such even
though they are dissimilar to others. On this declaration, he pointed to the differences between Leonardo,
Michelangelo, Raphael, and Giorgione. On teachers and pupils of writing, he said, “però [Cicero] afferma
ancor che i maestri debbano considerar la natura dei discipuli e, quella tenendo per guido, indirizzargli ed
aiutargli alla via, che lo ingegno loro e la natural disposizion gli inclina.” See Baldassare Castiglione, Il libro
del cortegiano, ed. Nicola Longo (Milan, 2000), 82.
blessed Christ, who, in the arrangement of the well ordered and well expressed invention, reveals the most perfect painting that ever was demonstrated by one or the other master, and also the most complete, and rare in comparison to every other of the most excellent beauties.\textsuperscript{54}

Given such celebrations, Scannelli’s omission of Sebastiano in the chapter on collaboration in favour of the less effective pairing of Marcello Venusti and Michelangelo must have been strategic. It was common knowledge that Sebastiano and Titian had themselves worked closely together under Giorgione’s leadership in Venice.\textsuperscript{55} Perhaps Scannelli feared that his argument about the incompatibility between Titian and Michelangelo would have carried less weight were he to call attention to Sebastiano’s relationship with Michelangelo too soon.

2.3.3 Scannelli’s Third Condition of Collaboration: Equal Skill and Same Tastes

In the first two examples, Scannelli focused on collaborations between designers and executants. In the final example he dealt with incomplete paintings retouched by other artists, particularly those of Guido Reni after his death. He also returned more concertedly to the issue of equal ability, which he only briefly touched on in the first example. To his way of thinking, even when two painters developed side by side in the same school, a lesser painter could not fulfill the vision of the other who initiated the work. Scannelli was particularly concerned about the incomplete drawings, oil sketches, and paintings started by Guido that were brought to completion by members of his school and by other meritorious painters after his death. Scannelli was adamant that none was able to match the essence of Guido’s own finished works, arguing that the contrast between Guido’s authentic paintings and those completed by otherwise worthy followers related as much to a personal disconnect as to the unsurpassable quality of Guido’s hand.\textsuperscript{56} Having to work outside of one’s personal taste and

\textsuperscript{54} Scannelli, \textit{Microcosmo}, 236: “…la quale [pittura] dimostra la figura del redentore legato ignudo alla Colonna di natural grandezza, opera per ogni parte famosa, e sopra ogni altra dell’Artefice in estremo bella, e compita per esser quell’unico dipinto, il quale in se contiene il tutto della più esatta, e sufficiente virtù di Michelangelo, e Sebastiano insieme, quando amendue come s’e detto nel primo libro in concorrenza del divino Rafaello procurarono dimostrare uno sforzo del loro straordinario sapere, ed in vero riusci in parte un tal virtuoso intento, massime in riguardo della figura principale del benedetto Christo, il quale in ordine all’inventione ben regolata, e meglio espressa si palesa il più perfetto dipinto, che mai dimostrasse l’uno, e l’altro Maestro, & anco compito, e raro al pari d’ogni altro della più eccellente bellezza.”

\textsuperscript{55} See Chapter 3 for more on this relationship and its presence in early modern criticism.

\textsuperscript{56} There is an inventory that documents the plethora of unfinished paintings left behind after Guido’s death. See John Spike, “L’inventario dello studio di Guido Reni (11 Ottobre 1642),” \textit{Accademia Clementina. Atti e Memorie} 22 (1988): 43-65; and for the unfinished works and Reni’s own practice of retouching half-complete
special abilities, which is what a painter is doing when they finish another’s work, was regarded by Scannelli as unnatural for any painter’s normal practice no matter their skill level.

After a brief, but important digression that we will discuss momentarily, Scannelli ended the chapter by returning to the topic of Guido Reni’s unfinished works, for which he provided a simple alternative to retouching. He claimed he was present when Guercino refused to paint over Guido’s sketch for a painting of St. Bruno, which was designed for a Carthusian monastery near Bologna. According to Scannelli, Guercino respectfully insisted on making an entirely new version, so that he would be obliged to no one but himself. He further recommended that the sketch be kept on display, so that it could continue to be studied and so that their two versions could be compared side by side. It would seem, then, that Scannelli’s real solution to the discord of collaboration, was to avoid collaboration all together.

Scannelli’s fixation on Guido Reni and his unfinished works was topical not just because the painter had died the decade before. Guido’s hand was considered so important not only for the quality of its application, but also for its mythical association to his genius, that the art market had created a whole range of classifications based on the degree to which it was involved in the execution of the final product. As an art consultant for Francesco I d’Este, the Duke of Modena and dedicatee of the Microcosmo, Scannelli must have been especially sensitive to the common practice of selling off a master’s remaining works after they had been posthumously finished by another hand. In Scannelli’s estimation, this practice of retouching a painting to be sold on the market had the opposite effect of its paintings and copies made by assistants, see Richard Spear, The “Divine” Guido: Religion, Sex, Money, and Art in the World of Guido Reni (New Haven, 1997), 248-274, esp. 250-252.

57 Scannelli, Microcosmo, 74. Guercino’s painting is now in the Pinacoteca in Bologna. Scannelli had a personal relationship with Guercino, as this passage would indicate – Scannelli says he was there to hear Guercino’s response to the request. For more on the relationship and its bearing on some of Scannelli’s criticism, especially with regard to Guercino’s late change of style, see Mahon, Studies in Seicento Art and Theory, 48-52; and see further remarks in Mahon’s footnotes, especially, 44 n.52.

58 Spear, “Divine” Guido, 253-274.

59 Scannelli’s role in the duke’s acquisitions of paintings is still unclear to me. He was obviously very familiar with the collections, celebrating many of its works. But Giubbini refers to Scannelli as a consultant for Francesco I d’Este without giving specific instances; see introduction to Scannelli, Microcosmo, vii. Scannelli is also barely mentioned in the essays on Francesco I as a collector in Stefano Casciu, Sonia Cavicchioli, and Elena Fumagalli, eds., Modena barocca: opere e artisti alla corte di Francesco I d’Este (1629-1658) (Florence, 2013). Denis Mahon said Scannelli was a protégé to the Duke’s segretario da camera, Geminiano Poggi, and helped acquire some pictures; see Mahon, “Eclecticism and the Carracci,” 322. Unfortunately, Mahon did not provide any references, except to say that he hoped to provide a further study in the future.
intention, because it depreciated the value accorded to the master’s hand alone. This concern gives us some idea of the motivation behind Scannelli’s criticism of the ideal painting. As in a posthumously finished work, the ideal painting would involve one inimitable artist putting his hand over the hand of another inimitable artist.

2.3.4 Scannelli’s Solution for the Subjective and Aesthetic Unity of Collaboration

Even if Scannelli’s criticism of Lomazzo was motivated by baser interests, he still thought the issue pertinent enough to be given some room to maneuver. What followed from Scannelli’s three cautionary examples of Angelo Michele Colonna, Marcello Venusti, and Guido Reni was a reluctant endorsement of collaboration. As if he was still leery about the theory he was about to provide, he buried this endorsement in his discussion of Guido Reni’s unfinished works. Here, Scannelli issued a restrictive set of circumstances that he thought could lead hands into unity without sacrificing their identities: “In similar cases, only he who has equal training and intelligence will be able to take up with his natural talents what the other began.”

This judgment based on Guido’s unfinished paintings was transformed into a longer list of collaborative conditions, which he supposedly based on other artistic examples:

And only those various subjects who in fact acquired uniform natural talents, study, and abilities, have together demonstrated the right outcome in their way of painting. Habituata in such a way, they displayed in their operations little discrepancy. They were cultivated and accustomed jointly in the agreement of a style (concorso di maniera) and of a particular taste, which one would believe impossible at this point, and they were cultivated in a union whereby the one benefited the other in opportunity. Thus when it came time for the second subject to take up the work set forth by the first subject, who by then was tired in means and body, they were not only able to complete the work, but even perfect it. Masters of this sort were the Carracci, the Dossi, the Campi, and similar worthy Lombards, and truly extraordinary subjects, who having studied together, including learning from one another, were occasionally, and at different times, like masters, students, models, rivals, and companions.

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60 Scannelli, Microcosmo, 73: “... e solo quello, c’havrà co’talenti di natura anco del pari lo studio, ed intelligenza potrà in simili occasionali incontrare l’altrui principiato.”

61 Scannelli, Microcosmo, 73: “Et i soggetti diversi, che hanno dimostrato unitamente co[n]corde il buon esito dell’operationi nella Pittura solo furono quelli, che in fatti ottennero uniformi i naturali talenti, lo studio, e la sufficienza, in modo che habituati in tal maniera si dimostrarono nell’operatione poco discrepanti, e così come allevati, & assuefatti unitamente nel concorso di maniera, e gusto particolare si può credere non potesse in tal co[n]jettura, ed unione, che l’uno giovare in occorrenza all’altro, poscia che alle volte arrivando il secondo
This passage is singularly important. In Scannelli’s attempt to provide a definable system for consonant hands, he established the first theory for collaboration in the early modern period.

The first step to collaborative unity, according to this theory, is to develop through habit a sympathy of talent, mind, and ability. Together, these conjunctions can lead to the same style and taste, and by extension render the different roles of artistic production interchangeable. Lastly, collaborators have to be interdependent, because the benefits of the exchange have to be shared mutually. Taken all together, Scannelli was arguing that only artists who are nearly indistinguishable in their personalities would be able to work with equal indistinguishability. Is it any wonder that his list of exemplary collaborators was made up entirely of siblings who shared the same blood: the Carracci, the Dossi, and the Campi?62

Given the extent of Scannelli’s conditions, requiring a near total conformity between painters, he must have intended for the application of his theory to be restrictive and limiting. Indeed, he was reticent to acknowledge that multiple signature hands could work together at all. Scannelli seems only to have been able to accept the coordination of hands under more noble circumstances. However confining, his solution for collaboration was not arbitrarily established. For Scannelli, collaborators had to have ‘uniform natural talents, study, and abilities,’ and they had to share ‘a particular taste.’ Scannelli was implicitly invoking the language of ideal friendship. Using friendship as a model was not new, but Scannelli was not interested in the typical platitudes of adages. Vasari, as we have said, adopted Aristotle’s maxim directly when he likened friendship to the collaborative unity of Albertinelli and Fra Bartolomeo. Later writers, like Félibien and Passeri, too made their own adaptations to the maxim. But these applications of love and friendship to collaboration stopped short of providing the underlying conditions of similitude based on talent, mind, taste, and ability that made the analogy of friendship so potent for Scannelli. Instead of adages, Scannelli focused

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62 The Carracci, comprising Ludovico, Agostino, and Annibale, were the most famous collaborators Scannelli listed and they will come up again in the section on Malvasia. Dosso Dossi and his brother Battista worked in the same shop in Ferrara; see Mauro Lucco, “Battista Dossi and Sebastiano Fillipi,” in Dosso’s Fate: Painting and Court Culture in Renaissance Italy, ed. Luisa Ciammitti, Steven F. Ostrow, and Salvatore Settis (Los Angeles, 1998), 263-287. The Campi were brothers named Giulio, Vincenzo, and Antonio, see Marco Tanzi, I Campi (Milan, 2004).
on the philosophical criteria of friendship, which had become standardized in the manuals on love and manners by writers like Alberti, Castiglione, and Montaigne among others. As Castiglione explained in the Cortegiano, for example: “... certainly it stands to reason that among those who are bound by strict friendship and indissoluble companionship, so are their wishes, minds, judgments, and talents formed together.”63 If the word friendship here were substituted with collaboration, one would think they were reading Scannelli rather than Castiglione. Moreover, ideal friendship, as it was typically represented, was also to be of mutual benefit for both friends, with each striving together for virtue as its raison d’être.64 Scannelli too said that each hand in collaboration had to ‘benefit the other in opportunity,’ with the ultimate aim being not just the useful completion of a painting, but its perfection. We should not assume that Scannelli was advocating for anonymity or authorlessness in the perfect collaboration. The process of parallel formation in the collaborative bond, as he described in his theory, evoked the idea that a friend in common pursuit of virtue helps the individual in his moral and prudential quest for self-knowledge. Such self-reflexivity was vital for the integrity of genius and style, as Scannelli had expounded in the introduction and in the extensive title to this tenth chapter of the Microcosmo.65

As was expected from the title of the chapter, “How the best ancient and modern masters, although different among themselves in their styles and particular qualities, were nevertheless accomplished in every part of their best works,” Scannelli’s examination of

63 Castiglione, Cortegiano, 162: “...perché indubitamente la ragion vol che di quelli che sono con stretta amicizia ed indissolubil compagnia congiunti, siano ancor le voluntà, gli animi, i giudici e gli ingegni conformi.” Cf. a passage by Cicero in which the character Laelius is speaking of his friendship with Scipio; see Cicero, “On Friendship,” in Letters of Marcus Tullius Cicero with his Treatise on Friendship and Old Age, trans. E. S. Schuckburgh (New York, 1909), 25: “We lived under the same roof; passed together thro’ the same military employments; and were actuated in all our pursuits, whether of a public or private nature, by the same common principles and views. In short, and to express at once the whole spirit and essence of friendship; our inclinations our sentiments, and our studies, were in perfect accord.” And cf. Leon Battista Alberti, The Albertis of Florence: Leon Battista Alberti’s Della famiglia, trans. Guido A. Guarino (Lewisburg, 1971), esp. 283 and 287-88 (Book IV): “The greatest friendship, as I have been saying must lack nothing; if necessary parts are missing, it cannot be called complete. What the necessary attributes of friendship are, we have already made clear: a true, simple, and open affection, pleasant intimacy and conversation in which are honorably shared the interests, opinions, and fortunes of both friends, and, to cement all this, every kind of ready service”; or ibid., 268 (Book IV): “They say that virtue is the bond and the best source of friendship, and that friendship flourishes and brings forth good fruit where there is good will, agreement on goals, and frequent association.”


65 On the ‘hermeneutics of self’ in early modern friendship, see Eva Österberg, Friendship and Love. Ethics and Politics: Studies in Mediaeval and Early Modern History (Budapest and New York, 2010), 91-146.
collaboration started out as an essay on the integrity of individual style. But the chapter changed course quite dramatically when he turned his attention to Lomazzo’s ideal painting. Because Scannelli was concerned about the confrontation of individual styles when a painting was retouched, he inadvertently used the ideal painting as a point of entry into an artistic concept that is still rarely considered at such length – stylistic similitude. Though this was not the subject of the chapter’s title, his discussion developed a rather well defined socio-anthropological formula to account for styles that look alike. Without taking it for granted that workshops naturally produce artists according to a brand, Scannelli looked for more specific and personal causes of resemblance than the common classifications grouping styles according to region or historical period.66 By thinking about the various mental and manual factors that contribute to a painter’s style, he was able to explain why some collaborations fail, while others succeed, and he did it without compromising his belief that styles are inherently personal and not subject to manipulation and change once established.

2.4 Historicizing the Ideal from False Starts to Actualized Practice: Carlo Cesare Malvasia on the Carracci

Perhaps the homogenizing requirements that Scannelli established for aspiring collaborators were so practical as to become impractical, not to mention dispiriting. The way he dismantled the ideal painting, in particular, left little room for wonder and for an improvement to human fallibility. Carlo Cesare Malvasia, on the other hand, looked at the practical demands of painting, just as Scannelli did twenty years earlier, but he saw greater potential in the ideal painting both as a model of imitation and as a model of collaboration. As a biographer, Malvasia put a good deal of focus in the Felsina pittrice (1678) on the differences between

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66 Already on a broader scale, Scannelli’s treatise was delineating the internal similarities of three geographic schools of painting – the Tusco-Roman school represented by Raphael, the Venetian school represented by Titian, and the Lombard school represented by Correggio. In his opposition to Vasari, he was not particularly concerned with biographical groupings according to artistic periods. For this argument, see Giovanna Perini, “Emilian Seicento art literature and the transition from fifteenth- to sixteenth-century art,” in Drawing Relationships in Northern Italian Renaissance Art: Patronage and Theories of Invention, ed. Giancarla Periti (Aldershot, 2004), esp. 37-38. On the historicizing of style based on similarity, see Sohm, Style, 86-87, and 105-114; and Sohm, “Ordering History with Style: Giorgio Vasari on the Art of History,” in Antiquity and its Interpreters, ed. Alina Payne et al. (Cambridge, 2000), esp. 43-45. As Sohm has indicated, Vasari organized the history of style into three general periods, according to a general similarity, or genus, of style. But part of the purpose of such ordering artists into collectives was to make the cycle of rise and decline perceptible and to show how the individual stands apart from their own time period. Scannelli has looked at style from the other direction. He discussed the differences between styles, and the root causes of individuality, as a way to explain similarities in styles.
Ludovico, Annibale, and Agostino Carracci as collaborators. This biographical interest is quite a contrast to Scannelli who simply listed the Carracci among those collaborators he thought possessed a ‘requisite affinity’, meaning they shared the same disposition, training, and talent. Malvasia certainly admired the cohesion of the Carracci frescoes and enthusiastically described the confusion they intentionally created in the eyes of their viewers. But he admired this cohesion primarily because of the independent personalities involved, which were brought together by the mutual intrusions of their brushes. Sometimes Malvasia’s tributes to their unity were no more than interjections, keeping the delicate balance of their collaboration undisturbed while he detailed their individual and distinct contributions. In the middle of a long description of their different attributes, for example, we are briskly told, “At any rate, all three of them would help one another in a reciprocal way” (scambievolmente s’aiutassero). When Malvasia had to make sense of the reciprocal exchange of their distinct abilities and minds, Lomazzo’s formula was fixed in his own mind.

As far as Malvasia was concerned, the ideal painting defined the imitative goals of the Carracci. Later in the *Claustro di S. Michele in Bosco* (1694), a short descriptive guide to the already deteriorating frescoes painted between 1604 and 1605 by Ludovico Carracci and the Accademia degli Incamminati in the cloister of San Michele, he called Lomazzo’s ideal painting the “very maxim of the Carracci.” So much of the *Claustro*’s thirty-three pages of text is devoted to the styles of Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, and Correggio, and to the imitation of their styles in the frescoes of San Michele, that Malvasia’s guidebook could more accurately be called a lecture on the ideal painting (Figs. 2.4 and 2.5). Of greater

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67 See Chapter 1.5.
68 In this quote, Malvasia is describing the various contributions of the Carracci in the fresco cycle in the Palazzo Fava. See Carlo Cesare Malvasia, *Malvasia’s Life of the Carracci*, trans. Anne Summerscale (University Park, Pa., 2000), 103.
69 Malvasia was responding to Domenichino’s criticism of Lomazzo; see Malvasia, *Claustro*, 7: “Come, dich’io? qual caduta in errori, e qual’errore ne’ primi principii, in chi si prefisse nella mente per maniera propria, e singolare un si mirabile misto? E’ possibile che in tanto tempo, nel quale avea praticato i Tré Maestri questo loro dignissimo Allievo, non si fosse mai avveduto, la proposizione del Lomazzi, esser stata per l’appunto la massima de’ Carracci?”
70 Malvasia structured the central theme of the *Claustro* around a rather inelegant sonnet written by Agostino Carracci dedicated to Nicolò dell’Abbate. Agostino’s verses dealt with the subject of the proper painter, combining Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, Correggio, as well as Tibaldi, Primaticcio, and Parmigianino. The sonnet was originally transcribed by Malvasia in the life of Nicolò dell’Abbate in the *Felsina*, vol. 1, 159, before it was repeated in the introduction to the *Claustro di S. Michele*, 8. In the descriptive guide to the cloister that followed the introduction on the sonnet, Malvasia organized his observations around these poetic
interest here, however, is the *Felsina pittrice* where Lomazzo’s formula was used by Malvasia to frame a historical trajectory of artistic reform, from its false starts, to its realization in eclectic imitation, and finally to its culminating embodiment in collaboration.

### 2.4.1 The Ideal Painting Left Unfulfilled by Orazio Samacchini

The first time Malvasia referred to the ideal painting in the *Felsina pittrice* was in the earlier Life of Orazio Samacchini, a biography that was meant to evince the dangers of single source imitation. Without yet naming Samacchini (1532-1577), Malvasia wrote a lengthy introduction on the topic, starting with the ideal painting. In the very first line of this mannerist’s life, Malvasia referred to what he called a popular desire to see the perfect painting of Adam and Eve. Although Malvasia did not name Lomazzo, he described the precise arrangement proposed by Lomazzo for the paintings of Adam and Eve: “the former [Adam] outlined by [Michelangelo] Buonaroti, but executed by Titian; the latter [Eve] drawn by [Raphael] Sanzio, but painted by Correggio.” Clearly thinking in terms of imitation, Malvasia pointed out that this ideal painting of Adam and Eve would require a single painter, “to couple and unite together those particular and precise gifts that are sparse and separate in so many.” Echoing Cicero’s economy of excellence, Malvasia added that such coordination was necessary, because, “Nature does not know how, nor can it, nor will it give all [gifts] to one alone.”

The model of eclectic imitation was then turned, almost without transition, into a cautionary lesson against stylistic conformity and single source imitation. Malvasia shifted

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71 Carlo Cesare Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice: vite de pittori bolognese*, vol. 1 (Bologna, 1678), 207: “Non senza ragione, e mistero vollero molti, che nel tanto da essi bramato perfetto quadro di un’Adamo, & Eva, quello contornato dal Buonaroti, mà da Tiziano eseguito; questa dal Sanzio disegnata, mà dal Coreggio colorita si vedesse; potendosi solo, e dovendosi in tal guisa insieme accoppiare & unire quelle particolari, e precise doti, che in tanti sparse, e partite, ad un solo tutte non sà, non può, ne vuole donar la Natura.”
from the coveted ideal painting to an attack on Vasari for elevating Central Italian painters over all others.\textsuperscript{72} He had a special grievance with the Aretine’s alleged statement that Correggio, a master from Emilia, would have been a greater painter if he had been to Rome to see the work of Raphael – in fact, Vasari more mildly suggested that Correggio would have benefitted from a trip to Rome.\textsuperscript{73} As a Lombard himself, Malvasia protested against such claims, arguing that Correggio would have lost his Lombard gifts of naturalism, which was the very source of his accomplishment.\textsuperscript{74} In a long, and awkward, sequence of rhetorical questions, Malvasia tried to poke holes in the proposition that one style should conform to another:

To force one style on another, what does one have? The Roman style with the Lombard? If that one leans more towards the statuesque, this one leans more towards the natural; that one respects more the artifice, this one more the purity; then, for the one [style] to enter into the other, is it not sacrificed, since each is permitted to prevail in their own style alone?\textsuperscript{75}

In other words, a painter cannot transform into something he is not. Had Correggio tried to be more like Raphael, as Vasari supposedly wanted, then the pure naturalism of his Northern Italian \textit{colorito} would not have conformed with the artifice (the intellectual and ideal forms) of Central Italian \textit{disegno} and vice versa – at least not without sacrifice.

Malvasia saw the same differences of style and disposition between Correggio and Raphael that Scannelli saw between Titian and Michelangelo.\textsuperscript{76} Malvasia, however, did not

\textsuperscript{72} For more on Malvasia’s anti-Vasarian approach to his biographies, see the essay by Giovanna Perini, \textit{“Emilian Seicento Art Literature,”} 41–47.

\textsuperscript{73} Malvasia, \textit{Felsina pittrice,} vol. 1, 207: “O s’ingannò dunque il Vasari, quando credette, che se le cose di Rafaelle veduto avesse Antonio [Correggio], più gran Maestro divenuto fosse; ò fù un’astuto paradosso di quell’Autore, per mostrare pure, e ben’imprimere (come sempre ei batte) che fuori della Scuola di Roma altra non ve ne sia; onde senza a quella portarsi, abbia dell’impossibile divenir gran Pittore.”

\textsuperscript{74} Malvasia classed Michelangelo and Raphael as the Roman school, not the Tuscan school. He thought even Florentines like Andrea del Sarto were poorly treated by Vasari because of the way he classified the regional schools.

\textsuperscript{75} Malvasia, \textit{Felsina pittrice,} vol. 1, 207: “E che hà che fare uno stile coll’altro? la maniera Romana colla Lombarda? se quella più alla statua, questa più al naturale s’appoggia; quella più dell’artificio, questa più della purità si pregia; quella più dello studio, e del disegno, questa più della verità, e del colorito fa pompa; ond’entrar l’una nell’altra non si conceda, a ciascuna nella propria solo prevalere sia dato?”

\textsuperscript{76} Malvasia cited Scannelli and the \textit{Microcosmo} quite a few times in the \textit{Felsina} usually indicating a certain respect for his opinion. For a comprehensive list of references in the \textit{Felsina}, see Giubbini’s introduction to Scannelli, \textit{Microcosmo,} xv. Malvasia may have been piqued that Scannelli did not celebrate the Bolognese painters enough, but his criticisms of Scannelli were mostly expressed when he wanted to show his sympathy with Albani, who had complained about his treatment in the \textit{Microcosmo}. See the exchange of letters between Scannelli and Albani, and a reply by Malvasia, all of which was published by Malvasia in the \textit{Felsina pittrice,} vol. 2, 276–280. Malvasia had Albani’s annotated copy of the \textit{Microcosmo} and mentioned this copy in a letter to the bibliophile Magliabechi; see Giovanna Perini, \textit{“L’epistolario del Malvasia – Primi frammenti: le lettere..."}
see this as a reason to condemn the ideal painting like his predecessor. On the contrary, he
promoted the purpose it served as a demonstration of eclectic imitation at its best. It would be
reasonable for one painter to try to unite Correggio and Raphael in imitation, as in the ideal
painting, but it would be wrong to suggest, as Vasari supposedly did, that Correggio himself
needed to change his own style against his own inclinations. Malvasia further claimed that
other painters were impaired by submitting themselves to Roman art as Vasari had
encouraged. Andrea del Sarto and Sebastiano del Piombo both conformed so much in their
imitations of Roman painting that the one lost his “Tuscan exquisiteness” and the other his
“Venetian bravura.”77

Malvasia had still yet to mention the name of Orazio Samacchini, the subject of the
biography (Fig. 2.6). The lengthy cautionary excursion on imitation in the introduction to his
biography established the lesson to be learned from the mistakes of Samacchini, whose
celebrated potential early in life was apparently squandered when he moved to Rome at a
young age. Malvasia believed that if Samacchini had retained his own natural Lombard
colourism instead of pursuing a Roman style in its entirety, his fame would have endured.
The integrity of self-identity was a traditional topic in the discourse on imitation dating back
to ancient oratory. This argument in and of itself was not new. Lomazzo, Malvasia’s source
for the ideal painting, promoted a similar view in the Idea del tempio, encouraging the young
painter to reflect on their own ingenium so as to choose the appropriate models. This was
even a lesson, as Malvasia pointed out, that Vasari himself extracted from the exemplary life
of Raphael. The painter from Urbino was able to appropriate a variety of other styles without
losing sight of his own.78 Nevertheless, Samacchini’s mistakes provided an important
foreground to the accomplishments of the Carracci.

77 Malvasia, Felsina pittrice, vol. 1, 208. Bravura was one of Marco Boschini’s favourite terms for the
ergetic, indeed martial, boldness of Venetian painting. See Nicola Suthor, Bravura: Virtuosität und
Mutwilligkeit in der Malerei der Frühen Neuzeit (Munich, 2010), esp. 65-77.
78 Vasari, Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1, 85-87. Malvasia saw Vasari’s passage on Raphael as a contradiction of his
criticism of Correggio. Raphael’s imitative technique was cited again by Malvasia in the Claustro di S.
Michele, 5.
2.4.2 The Manifestation of the Ideal Painting in the Carracci Collaboration

Now this, my dear Annibale, … is the style I like: this is what you must hold on to, because to imitate a single master is to make oneself his follower and his inferior, while to draw from all four of them and also select things from other painters is to make oneself their judge and leader.\(^{79}\)

In this *oratio ficta* in the *Felsina pittrice*, Ludovico Carracci commended Annibale’s stylistic fusion of Titian, Correggio, Veronese, and Parmigianino in a single altarpiece. Most importantly, Ludovico was impressed by his cousin’s control over his four models. Using Ludovico’s voice in the *Felsina pittrice* was an effective way for Malvasia to bring the Carracci studio to life, demonstrating that the Carracci consciously selected and arranged these styles themselves. This passage also subtly intimates that an imitator must imagine themselves as a leader of a collaborative team.

To be sure, in the *Life of the Carracci*, Malvasia observed Ludovico, Annibale, and Agostino each assimilating the styles of a variety of painters, bringing them together under the controlling aegis of the single judicious mind, much like Lucian’s *logos*, and Lomazzo’s *discrezione*. The models for the Carracci were not exclusively Michelangelo, Titian, Correggio, and Raphael. Although scattered, Malvasia did provide a few iterations of Lomazzo’s premise, which eventually in the *Claustro* he stated outright was the ‘maxim of the Carracci.’\(^{80}\) In the *Madonna degli Scalzi* altarpiece, for example, Malvasia suggested that Ludovico had united Correggio with Michelangelo in the figure of St. Jerome on the left (Fig. 2.7).\(^{81}\) And in describing Ludovico’s frescoes in the cloister of San Michele in Bosco, Malvasia named all four of the ideal painters as corrective models.\(^{82}\) But none of these

\(^{79}\) Malvasia, *Life of the Carracci*, 138-139; Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1, 388. The painting Malvasia is referring to is the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saint John the Baptist, Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, dated to 1593.

\(^{80}\) See note 69.

\(^{81}\) Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, 435: “...quando ebbe anco ardire di aggiungere alle piu lodate maniere di tutti i passati Maestri ciò che in esse, per ultimo compimento de’ loro dipinti miracoli, poter bramarsi parea: cioè a dire alla giustezza di Rafaelle il bel colorito del Coreggio, e al bel colorito del Coreggio il gran disegno di Rafaelle; come, per esempio, al fondamento del Buonaroti la tenerezza di Tiziano, e alla tenerezza di Tiziano la intelligenza profonda del Buonaroti, confondendo insomma di questi, e d’ogni altro gran Pittore insieme le particolari doti, per comporle, e formarne poi di tutte insieme l’Elena della studiata sua idea. E se bene io ogni
scattered allusions to the ideal painting would be enough to indicate that it was of central significance for the Carracci, were it not for the first paragraph of their shared biography:

Taking the best from all the best painters with a facility that was no longer customary or appreciated, [Ludovico] formed a succinct compendium – indeed a precious extract – that every aspiring painter longed to equal but could never hope to surpass; and coupling together and uniting (accoppiando insieme ed unendo) Raphael’s perfect proportion with Michelangelo’s knowledge, and adding to these Titian’s color and the angelic purity of Correggio, he formed out of all these manners a single one which left nothing to be desired when compared with either the Roman, the Florentine, the Venetian, or the Lombard manner.\(^{83}\)

Here, Malvasia declared that mannerist painting was reformed by Ludovico when he combined the four styles of the ideal painters specifically. The opening reference to Lomazzo’s ideal set the stage for the collaborative integration of the three Carracci, which Malvasia began to discuss about a page and a half later. As he did in the introduction to the Life of Orazio Samacchini, the lawyer Malvasia took his time to build up the evidence for this culminating argument. The reader, therefore, will have to bear with me while we examine the pertinent passages in sequence.

The opening paragraph to the Life of the Carracci was more than a clever allusion to Lomazzo. In the first line of Samacchini’s biography, Malvasia had said that the ideal painting was a model that every one had wanted to see become a reality. Unfortunately this was not to be accomplished in Samacchini’s lifetime, because the potential he displayed early in life was stultified when he conformed to one style alone, namely the Roman style. We come to see now that it took another Bolognese painter, Ludovico Carracci, to break out of such formulaic mannerism and unite Raphael, Michelangelo, Titian, and Correggio. If it was a reasonable and popular desire to see the ideal painting, as Malvasia had put it in the Life of Samacchini, only Ludovico was able to bring it to the people after the false starts of his

\(^{83}\) Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1, 358: “Da tutti i migliori il meglio togliendo, si vidde con facilità non più usata, e gradita, formarne un breve compendio, anzi un prezioso estratto, fuori, & oltre del quale poco più che bramarne si veggia, questa la di lui intenzione esser stata si scorge, nel tanto però rinomato Cortile di S. Michele in Bosco...” Naturally this passage was repeated in Malvasia, *Claustro di San Michele*, 5.
recent forebears. He achieved, Malvasia said in the introduction, what “every aspiring painter longed to equal but could never hope to surpass.”

That Malvasia had contrived a link between the two lives is reinforced in the semantics of their descriptions. A phrase he had used in that first reference to the ideal painting in the Life of Samacchini about needing to couple together and unite the gifts of the four artists – *dovendosi in tal guisa insieme accoppiare & unire* – was no longer a need in Ludovico’s imitation of the same four sources – *accoppiando insieme ed unendo*.

Malvasia may not have intended the connection to be perceptible to the casual reader. Nevertheless, using the ideal painting as his guide, the biographer was following a train of thought that helped him to organize his expansive material. He plotted the ideal painting along a historical and artistic trajectory that began in the life of Orazio Samacchini when the ideal painting only had the potential of being realized in imitation. This was followed by the reform of painting under Ludovico, who did realize this ideal as a model of imitation. But the reform of mannerism was not the apex of the trajectory. The culmination of the ideal painting was, instead, physically actualized in the Carracci collaboration itself.

Ludovico, according to Malvasia, was not just a leader in imitation, ushering in a new period of art based on the model of the ideal painting, he was the leader of the family studio – not in the traditional sense of a master, but in the sense of a first among equals. Having celebrated Ludovico’s reform, Malvasia provided a brief outline of Ludovico’s travels through Florence, Parma, Mantua, and Venice – Malvasia made a point of the fact that he did not go to Rome – before returning to Bologna where he took his two cousins under his wing. Malvasia then spent some time introducing Ludovico’s cousins, the two brothers Agostino and Annibale, by emphasizing their very different personalities and artistic approaches:

What a great difference in genius without there being a difference in the choice of study and profession! Agostino, timid in performance, and cautious, Annibale in contrast bold and dashing; the one always seeking out the most difficult problems to reassure himself of his mastery by overcoming them, the

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84 It would be worth looking to see if there are similar trajectories in the *Felsina* in which a hypothetical theory is manifested later in another painter’s style. Guido Reni, for example, created a new style in opposition to Caravaggio’s based on a hypothetical proposal made first by Annibale Carracci; see Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 2, 9-10. The trajectory in this case, however, was contained just in Guido’s biography. For a longer interpretation of this anecdote, see Giovanna Perini, “Biographical Anecdotes and Historical Truth: An Example from Malvasia’s ‘Life of Guido Reni’,” *Studi Secenteschi* 31 (1990): 149-160.

85 These are the only two times both *accoppiare insieme* and *unire* appear in the same sentence, though the terms appear separately elsewhere in the *Felsina*, and even in the Life of the Carracci.
other always elegantly dodging certain tasks in order not to get bogged down in them and not to get sluggish; the one diligent and studious, the other summary and effortless, yet both of them the issue of one body, the sons of the same father, and fed and raised together. This difference was nonetheless to their benefit, and without it they would never have arrived at that ultimate degree of perfection they eventually attained, for if contraries modify and correct each other, one could give succor to the other’s need in a reciprocal exchange of their particular gifts.\(^{86}\) (Emphases mine)

There are two points to be highlighted from this quote. The first point is that there is much in this passage that recalls Scannelli’s conditions for collaboration: a common upbringing, shared study, and the hopes for reciprocal exchange and mutual profit in the future. There is even a passing reference to a shared body (albeit their father’s). However, in Malvasia’s characterizations, their personalities, and accordingly, their styles, were very different. Such differences were essential to their success as a group, a stark contradiction to Scannelli’s theory of sympathetic dispositions. The second point is that there is an important textual comparison that can be made, again, to the Life of Samacchini. The reference to an exchange of their own particular gifts (della propria dote) recalls that earlier description of a proper imitation based on the ideal painting of Adam and Eve: “needing to couple and unite together (insieme accopiare & unire) those particular and precise gifts (particolari, e precise doti) that are sparse and separate in so many.”\(^{87}\) But on that occasion, in the Life of Samacchini, Malvasia did not explain how particular gifts given separately to several painters by Nature could be united or exchanged. Later, in the Claustro di S. Michele in Bosco, he clarified that the incompatible styles of the ideal painters could be unified through the coordination of the

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\(^{86}\) Malvasia, *Life of the Carracci*, 87; Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1, 360: “Gran diversità di genio in non diversa elezione di studio, e di professione! Agostino timido nell’Arte, e guardingo; Annibale coraggioso al contrario, e sprezzante: quello le difficoltà più scabrose incontrar sempre, per assicurarsene, per superarle; questo con bel ripiego scansar sempre gl’impegni, per non istitichirvisi dentro, per non impigirsi: il primo diligente, e ricercato; l’altro compendioso, e facile; e pure ambiduo’ d’un’ istesso corpo usciti, del medesimo padre figliuoli, insiem nudriti & allevati. Diversità tuttavia così a loro success as a group, a stark contradiction to Scannelli’s theory of sympathetic dispositions. The second point is that there is an important textual comparison that can be made, again, to the Life of Samacchini. The reference to an exchange of their own particular gifts (della propria dote) recalls that earlier description of a proper imitation based on the ideal painting of Adam and Eve: “needing to couple and unite together (insieme accopiare & unire) those particular and precise gifts (particolari, e precise doti) that are sparse and separate in so many.”\(^{87}\) But on that occasion, in the Life of Samacchini, Malvasia did not explain how particular gifts given separately to several painters by Nature could be united or exchanged. Later, in the *Claustro di S. Michele in Bosco*, he clarified that the incompatible styles of the ideal painters could be unified through the coordination of the

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\(^{87}\) Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1, 207 (Life of Orazio Samacchini): “Non senza ragione, e mistero vollero molti, che nel tanto da essi bramato perfetto quadro di un’Adamo, & Eva, quello contornato dal Buonaroti, mà da Tiziano eseguito; questa dal Sanzio disegnata, mà dal Coreggio colorita si vedesse; potendosi solo, e dovendosi in tal guisa insieme accoppiare & unire quelle particolari, e precise doti, che in tanti sparse, e partite, ad un solo tutte non sà, non può, ne vuole donar la Natura.” Emphasis mine.
singular artist who has to have, “fixed such a miraculous mixture in his mind as his own singular and proper style.”

This brings us to the next step in Malvasia’s trajectory. Right after describing the discordant personalities of Annibale and Agostino, the passage moved on to their coordination under Ludovico, and in turn finalized the transition from the ideal system of imitation governed by the single mind to a system of collaboration:

This [exchange of gifts] indeed was always Ludovico’s intention – that is, to bring them together (d’unirli) some day, and to offset the diligence of Agostino against the impatience of Annibale, and in turn the quickness of Annibale against the timidity of Agostino. To bring them together (d’unirli) some day – this meant when they reached a riper age, which would teach them to see the utility of such a union (unione) and the benefit of consultation (conferenza), for in the meantime there was nothing but discord and contentious competition between them, because Annibale with his rather simple, open nature, went about things in a spontaneous, premeditated way and was utterly unable to adjust to the habits of his brother, who was tight-laced and shrewd, and made fun of his goodness. For this reason Ludovico wanted them to remain separate in the beginning, hoping at least to weaken, if not entirely eradicate an aversion and deep antipathy that once out in the open would have grown enormous and become chronic in the foment of constant daily association; he hoped that time, need, and the wish for gain would be a remedy, and intervened by asserting his greater authority as the senior relative.

It is easy to imagine Annibale and Agostino acting like Titian and Michelangelo as described in Scannelli’s indignant vision of the ideal painting.

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88 See Malvasia, *Claustro*, 7: “Come, dich’io? qual caduta in errori, e qual’errore ne’ primi principii, in chi si prefisse nella mente per maniera propria, e singolare un si mirabile misto? E’ possibile che in tanto tempo, nel quale avea praticato i Trè Maestri questo loro dignissimo Allievo, non si fosse mai avveduto, la proposizione del Lomazzi, esser stata per l’appunto la massima de’ Carracci?” This phrase was fundamental for Dempsey’s explanation about the eclectic imitation of the Carracci, in *Annibale Carracci*, 64-66; he repeated this interpretation again in Dempsey, “Malvasia’s *Il Claustro*,” 111.

Later in the biography, Malvasia said outright that the intuitive Annibale was fixated on Titian and Correggio as his artistic guides and that the intellectualizing Agostino wanted to add the diligence of Michelangelo and Raphael to Annibale’s naturalistic inclinations. If Malvasia saw the two young brothers, Annibale and Agostino, together as the reincarnation of the four painters in the ideal painting, he also saw in Lomazzo’s imitative model the solution to their collaborative discord. Ludovico, who had already united the styles of the four old masters, represented an objective detachment from such competing forces. His objectivity and command made it possible for him to be the leader for Annibale and Agostino and to unite their ‘particular gifts,’ an outcome Scannelli had thought too preposterous to imagine. For Malvasia, then, collaboration simulated the principles of imitation. Multiplicity required a single mind acting as judge and leader, a mind that selected strengths, tempered weaknesses, and assimilated juxtapositions to the point that all styles could work cooperatively. What is more, Ludovico had wanted to keep the other two separate at first. On this point, the slow development of their collaborative accord especially simulated the slow development of a young apprentice’s style through imitation. Initially, different models needed to be studied separately and studiously until knowledge and maturity would make it possible to manage the stark differences between the sources and effortlessly bring them together into a singular style.

Due to reasons of regional pride, Malvasia needed Ludovico, who stayed in Bologna, to act as that judicious agent. He did try, somewhat insincerely, to insist on their equally deserved praise, even quoting a description by Scannelli for support. But in the end,

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91 In the following transcription, I have italicized the most pertinent phrases. Malvasia, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1, 490: “Quando poi viene [Scannelli] al superbo palco della Sala del Serenis. di Modana, per lo quale volle Ludovico ch’anche i Cugini operasse ro, lascia ben sì di mentovare il tremendo Plutone di Agostino, ma celebrando la Venere di Annibale, la Galatea, e la Flora di Lodovico, non solo non asserisco, quella di queste esser migliore, ch’anzi sfugge il paragone, e fà loro comune la lode in tal guisa:… Concludendosi dunque, non potersi, ne doversi dar maggioranza trà di loro, già che i sopraccennati Autori anch’essi, pendenti con la comune voce sparsa in Annibale, non l’han saputo fare, non preferendolo risolutamente a gli altri, ma dichiarandoli nell’opere uguali: che se poi l’altrui politica, per mostrar pure che quando anche de’Carracci si tratta, bisogna similmente colà portarsi, altro di maggiore non trovandosi al Mondo di essi che la Galeria di Annibale, volesse pure in lui solo persistere, e sostenere, che più grand’huomo, per tal rispetto, de gli altri duoi egli sia; sarei necessitato mantenter in contrario lo stesso concetto di maggioranza in Lodovico, e replicherei
Malvasia said that he felt compelled to name a leader only because Annibale was being championed over the others for the style he developed in Rome.92 This was a theme Malvasia liked to dismantle, having already, in the Life of Orazio Samacchini, come to the defense of Correggio for not touring Rome and absorbing the works of Raphael. In any event, their concord was not to last. Despite Malvasia’s frequent assertions of a harmonious rivalry (della loro virtuosa solo concorde emulazione) between the three of them, Annibale’s jealousy and petty competition with his brother Agostino was a recurring motif of their biography.93 Later in the biography, Malvasia contentiously argued that the styles of Annibale and Agostino, like that of Samacchini, deteriorated in Rome at a distance from Ludovico. Their fraternal conflicts peaked without their cousin’s prevailing reason: “Thus it is no wonder that when distance prevented the two brothers from availing themselves of such leadership and support, they never again attained the level of the works they had done at an earlier time and when they were under his [Ludovico’s] guidance.”94

The Bolognese lawyer Malvasia was strategic and concerted in his use of the ideal painting, presenting both imitation and the act of collaboration as a series of counter-arguments tipped this way or that by a primary agent.95 Just as the imitation of multiple models required the controlling mind of an impresario to harmonize the discordant parts, so

92 In Bellori’s biographies of 1672, it was Annibale who had been elevated as the leader of the trio and not without prejudice. Bellori preferred Annibale, because he had migrated to Rome where the influence of Raphael – Bellori’s epitome of artistic excellence – gave Annibale’s style a classicism more attuned to Central Italy. On the success of all three Carracci taking up the “new style”, which Annibale brought with him after travelling first to Parma to copy Correggio and then to Venice to study Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano, and Veronese, with whom he met apparently and had dinner, see Giovanni Pietro Bellori, Lives of the Modern Artists, Sculptors and Architects, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl (Cambridge, 2005), 75 (Life of Annibale Carracci): “Beyond this, it is believed that Annibale’s character contributed more than a little [to their success in improving style from nowhere], for he was without envy and without ambition, practicing with the other two in one and the same school, the school being the master. This one merit is to be credited to him alone, that he was the originator and the example to his brothers, who depended upon his guidance and his teachings.”


94 It was Ludovico who then saved Annibale after he had chased off his brother, realizing how much he needed him. On the conflict between the brothers in Rome; see Malvasia, Life of the Carracci, 170-175.

too did a collaboration of multiple authors need, at least initially, someone who would maintain consistency, quality, and order between all players. Scannelli had balked at the potential results of the ideal painting and discouraged those who tried to imagine it. As a physician, he diagnosed the symptoms of other failed collaborations and prescribed a remedy based on ideal friendship. If others hoped that a collaboration could combine the different excellences of its participants and create a supra-excellence, such could not be effected under Scannelli’s strict system of cloned painters. As a dealer and connoisseur, Marco Boschini had a different take on the ideal painting were it set to practice. He was more interested in how curious collectors might experience it and what knowledge they might extract from observing the coordination of disparate hands.

2.5 ▪ Marco Boschini’s Experience of a United Marvel: Both as a Whole and in Parts

Eccellenza: Oh chi possedesse unir sto Colorito,  
Sto machiar venezian con la vaghezza,  
La saria pur la vera esquisitezza,  
Per no passar de là dal esquisito!

Compare: A parte ognuna de ste operacion  
Basta a far segnalata una persona,  
E far ch’l Mondo in general rasona,  
Tuto devoto e pien d’amiracion.

Eccellenza: Oh, whoever could unite this Colorito,  
this Venetian staining with its beauty,  
that would be the one true exquisiteness,  
if not exceed the exquisite!

Compare: Separately each of these ways of working  
is enough to make one person identifiable,  
and makes the world in general rational,  
completely devout and full of admiration.

This is a painting, where the great Titian  
made Our first Mother [Eve] so beautiful  
that to finish the rest of the canvas  
may have seemed like a too distant possibility.

Indeed the painting remained as such imperfect;  
that is to say, the Lady was without her Consort.  
But ever bold, like death,  
our Tintoreto finished the Adam.

In addition there are animals painted so life-like  
by the great Bassano, wonder of the world,  
that for these [animals] one could well say wonder of  
the whole universe!

These animals drew forth eloquence, and praise, and writings!
Ghe xe mo anca de più: con man maestre
Quel Lodovico Pozzo da Treviso
Ha formà int’un paese el Paradiso,
Stago per dir più belo del Terestre.

A tal che questo è l’unico de l’Arte,
E ‘l più bel che se veda a nostri zorni:
Qua gh’è machia (sic.), gh’è forza, gh’è
dintorni,
Tenerezza e vaghezza, e insieme, e a parte.

Toca a goder ste perle e sti rubini
(Per cusi dir, per no ghe dir Pitura),
Dove la dignità base ha segura,
A Casa gloriosa Moresini.

Eccellenza: Mo veramente aponto l’è una
zogia,
Più no se puol bramar, la xe cusì;
La vogio veder certo un de sti di,
Son tuto curioso e pien de vogia.

Compare: Se la capita là, la xe per veder
A miera moderni e quadri antighi.
Dove fa l’Arte ala Natura i fighi,
E chi no i vede certo nol puol creder.

In Boschini’s dialogue, the *Carta del navegar pitoresco* (1660), the noble speaker
‘Eccellenza’ contemplated the ideal appearance of a painting if it could combine the *colorito*
of different Venetian painters. The other interlocutor, the connoisseur named ‘Compare,’
described such a combination in a painting of Adam and Eve in a terrestrial paradise.
According to his description, the hands of four painters were set to the canvas one by one –
Titian on Eve, Tintoretto on Adam, Bassano on the animals, and lastly Pozzoserrato on the
landscape. Boschini’s appreciation of the picture’s manifold brushwork, which combines
macchia, forza, dintorni, tenerezza, and vaghezza, is consonant with the Baroque
*vicendevolezza de’ pennelli*. But because no such painting as described by Boschini’s
‘Compare’ has ever been found, one can only imagine what this hybrid picture would look
like – perhaps something like the *Quadro delle tre mani* discussed in the last chapter, but in a
Venetian manner. The mere suggestion of such a thing is tantalizing and yet, the fact that

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96 Marco Boschini, *Carta del navegar pitoresco* [1660], ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice, 1966), 369-370.
Boschini was the only writer to refer to this astonishing painting should signal to the reader that it was most likely a literary fiction.

His verses describing this collaboration bear an uncanny resemblance to Lomazzo’s hypothetical ideal painting.\(^{97}\) Consider the introductions to their respective ideals. At the beginning of Chapter 17 of the *Idea del Tempio*, a chapter on the temperaments of painters and their corresponding animal natures, Lomazzo mused, “if someone was found, in which was united all the natures of such animals, he would be the greatest painter that ever existed among mortals.” He brought this thought to its apogee a few pages later when he presented the two ideal collaborative paintings of Adam and Eve, which “would be the best paintings ever made in the world.”\(^{98}\) Boschini introduced his Adam and Eve painting made by four different hands with this corresponding conjecture: “Oh, whoever could unite this *Colorito*, this Venetian staining with its beauty, that would be the one true exquisiteness, if not exceed the exquisite!”\(^{99}\) True to form, Boschini put his own spin on the well known motif. Rather than a composite of *disegno* and *colorito*, pairing Central Italian ink with Northern Italian pigment, he put only Venetian paint brushes on the job. All of Boschini’s four artists would also have had to overlap and interact on the same canvas at the same stage of production. Another adaptation of no small import was the expansion of the subject to include animals and a landscape. Boschini’s ideal painting now encompassed all of creation, and with it, other genres of painting.\(^{100}\) Whether it was a real painting or not, Boschini was surely trying to compete with Lomazzo’s prototype.

\(^{97}\) Towards the beginning of his tome, Boschini betrayed his knowledge of Lomazzo and the ideal painting when he celebrated the Milanese painter and writer for having asserted Titian’s merit over Correggio’s; see Boschini, *Carta del navegar*, 35. Later on, clearly thinking of Lomazzo, Boschini made a correspondence between planetary Gods and Venetian painters; see Boschini, *Carta del navegar*, 655. For the influence of Lomazzo on Boschini in general, see the introduction by Anna Pallucchini to Boschini, *Carta del navegar*, XXXII-XXXIII; see also Mitchell Frank Merling, “Marco Boschini’s ‘La carta del navegar pitoresco’: Art theory and virtuoso culture in seventeenth-century Venice” (PhD diss., Brown University, 1992), 208-211.

\(^{98}\) Lomazzo, *Idea del tempio*, 60: “che questi due sarebbero i miglior quadri che fossero mai fatti al mondo.” For the full passage see above.

\(^{99}\) Boschini, *Carta del navegar*, 369. Boschini had the further motivation of recalling his Venetian forebear, Paolo Pino, who first suggested that the theoretical fusion of Michelangelo and Titian.

\(^{100}\) Boschini’s acknowledgement of landscape in this version is rather surprising. Linda Borean has provided some useful insights on the way genre paintings like landscapes were displayed and regarded in Venetian collections. Even though the value of these genres was on the rise, she noticed from the inventories and other sources that landscapes were often placed in less exalted spaces than the loftier subjects placed in the prominent *salone*; see Borean, “Il collezionismo e la fortuna dei generi,” in *Il collezionismo d’arte a Venezia. Il Seicento*, ed. Linda Borean and Stefania Mason (Venice, 2007), 63-83. But perhaps this is why Boschini chose a less exalted painter to fill the role of the landscape artist.
Up to this point, I have been tracing the reception of Lomazzo’s ideal painting of Adam and Eve and the way it shaped the theories of collaboration according to the broader theoretical frameworks of various authors. This section on Boschini will be no different, but an explanation is owed for breaking up the chronology of this reception. Boschini’s description of Adam and Eve was published in 1660 in the *Carta del navegare pittoresco*, placing it in time between our two other case studies – Scannelli (1657) and Malvasia (1678).

Although the authors that we have been discussing were aware of each others’ work, their theories were so different that they were not part of a clear trajectory of ideas. Thus, they do not necessitate a chronological arc. Still, my reasons for closing the discussion with Boschini are more practical than that and hopefully more satisfactory for the reader. The first reason has to do with the structure of the overall dissertation. The Adam and Eve that Boschini envisioned was an exclusively Venetian product, which leads more readily to the following chapters on Venetian painting and practice. Chapter three in particular will look at a few Venetian paintings that were recorded in seventeenth-century collections and that reflect the type of collaboration Boschini is describing here. The second reason relates to the central themes developed over these last two chapters, most especially the dialectic between various types of unity and individuation, especially of the Baroque type. The *vicendevolezza de’ pennelli* initiated by the Carracci confused the viewers’ sense of what they were looking for, whether it was the illusionistic whole of the pictures, or the traces of the Carracci at work. Boschini’s dynamic way of looking at paintings in general, and at the ideal painting in particular, provided a fluid apparatus for moving between these two modes of viewing.

Critics like Vasari had an equally tough time coming to terms with the open brushwork of Venetian painting in the Cinquecento in general, as the visible artifice was seen to be at odds with the stereotype of Venetian naturalism. In the case of Titian’s late paintings, the only solution Vasari could muster was to look at the painting from far away where the picture was resolved into a whole.\(^{101}\) It took Boschini and his ‘Map of Painterly Navigation’ to mount a spirited defense of expressive *colorito*. For the Venetian writer, the heart of Venetian

\(^{101}\) For a fuller assessment of sketchy painting and the common observation that the distance from the picture made a difference, see Philip Sohm, *Pittoresco: Marco Boschini, his Critics, and their Critiques of Painterly Brushwork in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge and New York), 43-53. Thomas Puttfarken has a number of other useful insights about the finish of Titian’s late paintings and the history of distance in poetic discourse; however, his argument that Titian was himself teaching Vasari about the poetics of sketchy painting has been a contentious interpretation; see Puttfarken, *Titian and Tragic Painting: Aristotle’s Poetics and the Rise of the Modern Artist* (New Haven and London, 2005), 196-204.
painting no longer lay in its naturalism, but in its expressive artifice—its disorderly order of brushstrokes and broken contours.\textsuperscript{102} Boschini approached the topic of the ideal painting accordingly, not from the point of view of the artists striving to work with a single hand, but rather from the material and experiential point of view of the collector and connoisseur, who could appreciate the tangible hands in the visible brushstrokes, as well as the effect of the whole. In Boschini’s artistic worldview, one coming from a deep experience in connoisseurship, the appreciation of Venetian painting had always demanded a balance of the illusory and the artificial, those two poles of pictorial representation that are put into conflict in a collaboration. He took into greater consideration the epistemological interests of the viewer in the context of the art gallery, in which the observation of techniques and materials could be a means to thinking about the operations of the broader world.

2.5.1 Organizing Diversity and the Epistemological Context of Collecting

A combination of emergent museum culture and new rigors of scientific examination proved to be an influential backdrop to the discussions of the ideal painting and of collaboration, even if the context was not always consciously acknowledged in art literature.\textsuperscript{103} From the second half of the sixteenth century, collecting practices were being reshaped in accordance with natural philosophy, as the eye was increasingly focused on the variety and the vastness of particulars in the physical universe.\textsuperscript{104} (In fact, studying the universe was thought to be a

\textsuperscript{102} The reader may wish to read Boschini against the passages by Scannelli and Malvasia above, comparing Central Italian artifice to Venetian naturalism. On visible brushwork and sketchy painting as artifice or as naturalism in early modern art theory, see Sohm, \textit{Pittoresco}, 82-87. Boschini proudly declared of Venetian painters that their work was “all style with nothing natural.” See also Merling, “Marco Boschini,” 225-276.

\textsuperscript{103} The context of collecting was by no means unimportant for other writers dealing with collaboration, but they had different priorities in their sights than had Boschini. Lomazzo was primarily interested in imitation, and this priority was taken up for the most part by Malvasia, who superimposed the model onto collaborative practice. Boschini certainly recognized the importance of the model for imitative practices but he turned his attention more pointedly towards its value for collecting and the art market. While Scannelli revealed some of his own concerns about the value of retouched paintings on the art market, his main objective had less to do with the viewer’s response than the actual practice of joint production.

way of reacquiring knowledge that had been lost during the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden!” The comparison and classification of particulars, it was believed, helped the museum collector to create an encyclopedic knowledge of the world, which could be organized relationally according to symbolic or functional relationships. As endorsed by Cicero’s economy of excellence, the variety and plenitude of art was similarly thought to reflect the variety of nature and was likewise to be appreciated, as well as organized. Lomazzo’s temple of governing painters certainly was symptomatic of this epistemology.


106 See Horst Bredekamp, Lure of Antiquity. In his manual for connoisseurship of 1649, Abraham Bosse discussed different kinds of artists and different kinds of collectors, arguing that it is better to see much so as to better understand the subtleties of different manners. Moreover, he chastised those who collect only because they like to look at the works, for greater contentment is gained from knowing what one is looking at and from connoisseurship of different manners. This has the added insurance of knowing that one is not being swindled with a copy, but instead has a more valuable Original, which was one of his major preoccupations. See Bosse, Sentimens sur la distinction des diverses manieres de peinture, dessein & graveure, & des originaux d’avec leurs copies (Paris, 1649), esp. 17-19.

107 On art collecting in Venice, see the recent series Linda Borean and Stefania Mason, eds., Il collezionismo d’arte a Venezia. Dalle origini al Cinquecento (Venice, 2008) and idem, Il collezionismo d’arte a Venezia. Il Seicento (Venice, 2007); Bernard Aikema, Rosella Lauber, and Max Seidel, eds., Il collezionismo a Venezia e nel Veneto ai tempi della Serenissima (Venice, 2005); and Isabella Cechini, Quadri e commercio a Venezia durante il Seicento: Uno studio sul mercato dell’arte (Venice, 2000). Often art in collections was organized according to genres or subjects. Valerio Giustiniani, a Bolognese in Rome, organized his collection along very different guidelines; see Elizabeth Cropper and Charles Dempsey, Nicolas Poussin: Friendship and the Love of Painting (Princeton, 1996), 23-105. In some cases the drive to organize art was steeped in the Catholic Reformation’s need to make sense of art in its new and re-affirmed values; see Pamela Jones for her discussion of Federico Borromeo’s vast and varied collection of sacred art, Federico Borromeo and the Ambrosiana. See also the acclaimed article by Charles Dempsey, “Mythic Inventions in Counter-Reformation Painting,” in Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth, ed. P. A. Ramsey (Binghamton and New York, 1982), 55-75. Genevieve Warwick has shown how the Oratorian father Sebastianio Resta, philanthropist and famed collector of drawings, concentrated his efforts on drawings that most effected devotion and, at the same time, he helped to preserve the heritage of Italian art; see Warwick, The Arts of Collecting: Padre Sebastiano Resta and the Market for Drawings in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge, 2000). An essay by Massimiliano Rossi is a profitable read, “Il modello della «galleria» nella letteratura artistica veneta del XVII secolo,” in Il collezionismo d’arte a Venezia. Il Seicento, ed. Linda Borean and Stefania Mason (Venice, 2007), 166-181. Rossi discussed the historical canti of Giulio Strozzi’s Venetia edificata in which God Himself is imagined in illustration and poetic verse as a collector sitting in the gallery in the sky.
Like the close-looking connoisseur, who was putting pressure on art critics to think more about the distinctions between unified hands, botanists, entomologists, and general anatomists were using new technology to look more and more closely at the details of natural objects, observing with their own eyes the structural similarities and dissimilarities between species on various levels. Not long after Galileo invented the microscope in the early seventeenth century, the physician Giulio Mancini was writing the first treatise on connoisseurship, the Considerazioni sulla pittura (ms. c.1620).\(^{108}\) By the time Boschini’s Carta went to the printing press in 1660, the first illustrated volumes of microscopic discoveries were in the offing.\(^{109}\) Malvasia, too, privileged inspections of art with the physical eye (oculare ispezione) as opposed to blindly following traditional accounts, and referred vaguely to important scientific experiments in England and Florence. He had close ties to Bolognese members of pan-European academies, like the Royal Society in London, which were involved in such probing endeavors. One such member known to Malvasia was Marcello Malpighi who made a number of important biological discoveries with the microscope.\(^{110}\)

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\(^{109}\) On the microscope, observation, and the ordering of structures, see David Freedberg, The Eye of the Lynx: Galileo, His Friends, and the Beginning of Natural History (Chicago, 2002), esp. 179-194. See also, William B. Ashworth, Jr., “Remarkable Humans and Singular Beasts,” in The Age of the Marvelous, exh. cat., ed. Joy Kenseth (Hanover, 1991), 139-140, and in the same exhibition catalogue, see cats. 129-135. 130. The etchings and engravings in the first illustrated microscopic manuals were very sophisticated. Robert Hooke’s illustrated Micrographia, or Some Physiological Descriptions of Minute Bodies Made by Magnifying Glasses, was published in London in 1665. In Italy in the 1660s, Marcello Malpighi was making some important anatomical and biological discoveries by use of the microscope, but his illustrated Opera omnia was not published until later. There is a large body of literature on Malpighi, but for his important use of the microscope, see Luigi Belloni, “Marcello Malpighi and the Founding of Anatomical Microscopy,” in Reason, Experiment, and Mysticism in the Scientific Revolution, ed. M. L. Righini Bonelli and William R. Shea (New York, 1975), 95-110; and a more recent treatment, Domenico Bertoloni Meli, Mechanism, Experiment, Disease: Marcello Malpighi and Seventeenth-Century Anatomy (Baltimore, 2011).

\(^{110}\) Elizabeth Cropper has a fascinating discussion about Malvasia and his emphasis on an “oculare ispezione”, or personal visual inspection; see Cropper, “Malvasia and Vasari: Emilian and Tuscan Histories of Art,” in Bologna. Cultural Crossroads from the Medieval to the Baroque: Recent Anglo-American Scholarship, ed. Gian Mario Anselmi, Angela De Benedictis, and Nicholas Terpstra (Bologna, 2013), 100-102. Cropper explained that Malvasia had close connections to Bolognese members of the Royal Society of London, among them Marcello Malpighi (see previous footnote). In Florence, the Accademia dei Cimenti was founded in 1657 on the principles of experimentation versus traditional authority.
What is more, the ideal painting, envisioned as a hybrid of multiple hands, coincided with a culture of collecting that valued marvels and curiosities. Rare objects could include such fantastical possessions like the horn of a unicorn, or pieces of history, like a unique coin, or could even include naturally born hybrids and deformities – specimens that upset standards of unity and order in nature. In one important instance in 1625, the naturalists in the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome, an academy that counted Mancini among its members, was encouraged by Pope Urban VIII to dissect a two-headed calf and debate whether or not it was to be considered one or two animals (Fig. 2.8). Their findings were published with illustrations in the *Rerum medicarum Novae Hispaniae Thesaurus seu plantarum animalium mineralium Mexicarnorum Historia* (1649).

It is clear that for many viewers the collaborative fusion of many hands into one was not unlike the ‘monsters’ lighting up the stage of early modern collections and infiltrating natural scientific inquiries. Admittedly, collaborative paintings were not displayed among natural curiosities, at least not to my knowledge, but that does not mean they were excluded from a shared habit of thought. Scannelli referred to the ideal paintings described by Lomazzo and Paolo Pino as chimeras – monstrous caprices of the dreaming mind. Yet by the middle of the sixteenth century, teratology was regarding deformities less as ill portents sent from God and more as marvels and curiosities. They became signs of God’s creative bounty and a source for understanding the order of the natural world. Malvasia, for one, enthusiastically

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112 This case is discussed by Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, 102-103; and by Francisco Hernandez and Johannes Faber, *Rerum medicarum Novae Hispaniae Thesaurus seu plantarum animalium mineralium Mexicarnorum Historia* (Rome, 1649), 599ff., esp. 626 and 628 for illustrations. The section on the two-headed calf was described by Faber, who mentioned that Mancini was present during discussions. See also Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature*, 213-214.

113 See Paula Findlen, “Inventing Nature: Commerce, Art, and Science in the Early Modern Cabinet of Curiosities,” in *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Pamela H. Smith and Paula Findlen (New York, 2001), 297-323. Findlen provided a glimpse into the marketplace of hybrids and monstrosities, especially so-called hydites, which created a whole industry of fabricators. The craftsmanship also affected valuations of curiosities. Some collectors, as Findlen showed, paid extra for what they knew to be fakes, just because they were impressed that others were being fooled by them. This is a tremendous context in which to think about Boschini’s own claims of a hybrid painting.

114 Norman R. Smith has provided a succinct overview of abnormalities in Renaissance literature and its relationship to both Antiquity and the Middle Ages; see Smith, “Portentous Births and the Monstrous Imagination in Renaissance Culture,” in *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imagination*, ed. Timothy S. Jones and David A. Spruner (Kalamazoo, 2002), 267-283. With the discovery in 1572 of a dragon with the feet of a bird, hybridity and deformity, Ulisse Aldrovandi helped,
invoked the triple-headed Geryon of ancient mythology as a metaphor for the Carracci trio. But it was perhaps Giovanni Pasta who best expressed the curious and marvelous new status of collaborations when he celebrated the *Quadro delle tre mani* (see Chapter 1.5.2): “In my opinion it is but a prodigious monster concerning both its beauty and deformity.”

Giving his description an air of plausibility, Boschini claimed that his rare Venetian marvel representing Adam and Eve was held in the collection of the procurator Morosini. The reference to a specific collection, I would argue, was a deliberate and fabricated maneuver by Boschini to redirect the conversation. Not only did it help to disguise the painting’s literary origin in Lomazzo, but it also helped to palliate what was a radical shift in theoretical pretensions. The ideal painting was no longer a model for imitation or for collaboration. It was a model for the art market. Just like the collectibles and wonders proliferating in museums across Europe, the possibility alone of such a hybrid painting as that between Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano, and Pozzoserrato was meant to marvel (the styles were *maraviege*) and elicit curiosity (*sono tuto curioso*), and had to be seen to be believed (*chi no i vede certo nol puol creder*). Like the marvelous deformities of nature, the painting was formed only with divine permission from the “Celestial Rector.” Boschini even likened the work to precious collectibles like rubies and pearls:

> Come enjoy these pearls and these rubies  
> (That is to say nothing of Painting),  
> where basic dignity is ensured,  
> in the glorious house of Morosini.


116 The procurator of San Marco de ultra, Angelo Morosini (1629-1692), was said by Giustiniano Martinioni to possess “una Galeria da Principe.” However, Martinioni did not identify any of the works in his collection; see Francesco Sansovino – Giustiniano Martinioni, *Venetia città nobilissima, et singolare* (Venice, 1663), 374. Morosini was primarily interested in numismatics and medals and the vast majority of his painted and sculpted works were acquired by means of inheritance, especially from his cousin Francesco Morosini. For more on Angelo Morosini, see Martina Frank’s short biography in Linda Borean and Stefania Mason, eds. *Collezionismo d’arte a Venezia. Il Seicento*, 290-291.
The antecedents of “these rubies and pearls” were the manifold styles in the preceding stanza. Boschini often used the shimmering qualities of rubies and precious stones as a metaphor for the bright brushstrokes of Venetian painting. Certainly in this case, he was comparing more than just their aesthetic qualities.\(^{117}\) The trained connoisseur appraised the authenticity of paintings by looking closely at the quality and confidence of the brushstrokes, just as early merchant manuals urged the merchant to train their eye in order to discern the different qualities and colours of precious stones, and assess the proper market valuation.\(^{118}\) That Boschini was a merchant of fake pearls made out of glass (perle di vetro), and a friend of forgers might also suggest something of the fabricated nature of the painting.\(^{119}\) All together, the reader was being pressed into thinking about such a collaborative painting as it should be experienced by a connoisseur and by a knowledgeable visitor to a collection.

The Adam and Eve in the Morosini collection was not just a marvel, it was four marvels (maraviegie) united by God, and thus it was like a collection unto itself. The word maraviglia, or maravegia in the Venetian dialect, was virtually synonymous with ‘curiosity’, which was a polysemic term with psychological, mental, and material connotations: as a pleasurable response to novelty, as an interest in understanding the world (and one’s place in it), and as the very object of rarity, wonder, and inquiry.\(^{120}\) For the visitor, being put in front of an assemblage of curiosities was a form of entertainment, but it was also an educational means.

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\(^{117}\) In praising his dedicatee Leopold Wilhelm as a collector, Boschini provided a telling example in which Venetian painting was likened to jewels and their monetary value, *Carta del navegar*, 334: “Bisogna creder, che se quella fronte,/ Che ha intrezzâ’l lauro ala corona d’oro,/ Tien ste gran zogie in l’unico Tesoro,/ Le vagia piú che de diamanti un monte.” For more examples of Boschini’s metaphors of jewels as brushstrokes, especially when describing works by Venetian painters like Bassano, Tintoretto, and Veronese, see Sohm, *Pittoresco*, 154-155.


\(^{119}\) For the reference to Boschini as a merchant of pearls of glass, see Isabella Cecchini, *Quadri e Commercio*, 224. Boschini may have been the expert in pearls that Sera referred to in his letter to Cardinal Leopoldo de’ Medici; see Jennifer Fletcher, “Marco Boschini and Paolo del Sera: Collectors and Connoisseurs of Venice,” *Apollo CX*, 213 (1979): 424, n.6. Merling has argued, however, that there is nothing in the letter to specifically identify Boschini as the expert, “Marco Boschini,” 24, n. 6.

of observing the diversity of the world in one space.\textsuperscript{121} Boschini’s noble speaker, ‘Eccellenza,’ was an example of a visitor looking for entertainment to satiate his unbridled curiosity in a collection, expressing his full desire to see the marvelous collaboration (\textit{sono tuto curioso}).\textsuperscript{122} The response of the expert ‘Compare’ (Boschini’s surrogate) elevated the discourse and shifted the conversation. ‘Compare’ was an example of the judicious visitor who would want to expand his knowledge of the variety of painting, much like the natural philosopher interested in the diversity of nature.\textsuperscript{123} Not only does ‘Compare’ mention that you have to see the painting to believe it, but of this Edenic paradise, he says: “To understand it, is to see a thousand modern and antique paintings. There, Art makes Nature into figs and who does not see it surely cannot believe it.” In this painting of paradise, the diversity of nature was replaced by the individuality of the painters, and the painting, as a representation of diverse artifice, actually outshone Nature itself.

Boschini’s suggestion that understanding the collaborative painting was the equivalent of seeing a thousand modern and antique paintings went beyond mere encomium. As the product of the human mind and the imagination, Art or artifice was, for Boschini, tantamount to style, because it was personal and not dependent on nature to reproduce forms. The viewer would learn nothing of a Venetian painting, if in the interests of naturalism, they were denied the chance to see, or touch, the physical traces of agency – that is to say, the haptic brushstrokes that made the painting glimmer like prized jewels in a collection.\textsuperscript{124} In its visible artifice, Boschini’s Adam and Eve was like a small gallery unto itself, where various styles could be observed in a mixture and where universal principles of art could be taught.

\textsuperscript{121} As a microcosm, the collection was equated in turn with the collector’s knowledge and mastery over nature. Andrea Vendramin, Federigo Contarini, the Ruzzini family, among others were especially notable for their collections of curiosities in Venice, see Pomian, \textit{Collectors and Curiosities}, 85-95.

\textsuperscript{122} When Boschini’s two speakers were introduced in the \textit{Carta}, the noble ‘Eccellenza’ betrays his excitement at the experience of seeing what is new and trendy: “Che cosa gh’è da nuovo in la Pitura?/So che vu praticè tuti i Pitori,/ E diversi discorsi avè con lori/ Sora sta profession per aventura/ Ghe xe curiosità? gh’è forestieri,/Che compra, che recerca, che domanda?/ So che ghe ne concore d’ogni banda,/Più lesti che no xe cani levrieri.” See Boschini, \textit{Carta del navegar}, 21.

\textsuperscript{123} To the point made in the previous note, the speaker Compare has a bit of a biting response to Eccellenza’s peaked curiosity. He censures the market for being saturated with unwitting foreign dilettantes who do not follow the advice of the best experts, i.e. Boschini. See Boschini, \textit{Carta del navegar}, 21-22. Later, he says of Painting, “La Pitura xe un cibo celestial,/ Che nutrisse la mente e l’inteleto.” See Boschini, \textit{Carta del navegar}, 25.

\textsuperscript{124} On the importance Boschini placed on the senses over reason for the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, see Sohm, \textit{Pittoresco}, 115-130.
Qualities of variety and mixture were not peculiar to Boschini’s notion of collecting. In the *Considerazioni*, that widely read manual for collectors, the physician and connoisseur Mancini imparted on his readers the importance of displaying a mix of paintings both for the enhancement of pleasure and for the discernment of different styles:

I would not like for the same school and style to be placed together, as for example, in the category of sacred works, all the works of Raphael and his school, including Giulio, Timoteo, Buon Fattore, and others already mentioned. But I would prefer that they be interposed with other styles and schools of the same period, because in this way they will delight more through variety, and, with the comparison of their various methods of working, the more they will affect feelings without offending taste...\textsuperscript{125}

Mancini suggested various ways to group paintings thematically in a gallery space according to genre, period, and school. Ultimately, the *punctum* of this organization was to ameliorate and refine one’s discernment of relative artistic qualities, if not artistic paternity specifically.\textsuperscript{126} Abraham Bosse, in *Sentiments sur la distinction des diverses manières de peinture, dessin et gravure, et des originaux d’avec leurs copies* (1649), agreed that it was “better to see much so as to better understand the subtleties of different manners.”\textsuperscript{127} He further chastised those who collected only because they liked to look at the works. Greater contentment was gained from knowing what one was looking at and from an appreciation of different manners. A refined eye further insured the collector against the deceitful copy, instead of the coveted ‘Original’, one of Bosse’s major preoccupations.\textsuperscript{128} Boschini’s version of the ideal painting of Adam and Eve similarly demonstrated the virtues of visible artifice as a source of comparative knowledge. Following Mancini’s prescription for the gallery space,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[125] Giulio Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura* (Rome, 1956), 144-145: “Ma non vorrei già che fosse messa insieme la medessima schuola e maniera, come per esempio nelle cose sacre tutte le cose di Raffaello e sua scuola, come di Giulio, Timoteo, Buon Fattore et altri già detti, ma vorrei che si tramezzassero con altre maniere e schuole del medessimo secolo, perchè in questo modo, per la varietà, deleteranno più e, con la comparation della varietà del modo di far, più si faranno sentir senza offesa di gusto, come sarebbe se fra queste si proponessse qualche pittura d’altro secolo.”
\item[126] Mancini was as interested in the physical health benefits as of the mental benefits, see Frances Gage, “Exercise for Mind and Body: Giulio Manini, Collecting, and the Beholding of Landscape Painting in the Seventeenth Century,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 61, 4 (2008): 1167-1207. Donatella Sparti has pointed out with some conviction that Mancini was not interested in attribution, as much as the qualitative judgments of an expert; Sparti, “Novità su Giulio Mancini: Medicina, arte e presunta ‘Connoisseurship,’” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 52 (2008): 58-65.
\item[128] While Bosse’s *Sentimens* was clearly dedicated to style and its distinctions, he also espoused a contradictory belief that style was a defect caused by different vantage points of the same object and by the imaginations of painters; see ibid., 39-40. Bosse’s notion of style as an unnatural defect is discussed further by Sohm, *Style*, 131.
\end{footnotes}
Boschini’s collaborators – Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano, and Pozzoserrato – were not, strictly speaking, members of the same school or studio. But they were members of a fraternity bred on Venetian painting, and the juxtaposition afforded by their proximity on a single canvas provided the opportunity to gauge both their common and different qualities of the brush.

In the preface to the Ricche minere, titled the “Breve istruzione” (1674), Boschini made such a dialectic the topic of his chapter titled, “Distinzione di sette Maniere in certa guisa consimili,” about the seven most prominent painters of late Renaissance Venice: Palma Giovane, Leonardo Corona, Andrea Vicentino, Sante Peranda, Aliense (Antonio Vassilacchi), Pietro Malombra, and Girolamo Pilotto. This generation of painters at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century had similar styles (tengono molta simpatia fra di loro, and elsewhere, the sette simpatici), because they were all close followers of Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese. However, Boschini insisted that only the viewer’s inexperience made their works look the same: “Often, the uninitiated to their way of working is not so ready to make distinctions among them; although, in reality, each [painter] has his own distinct characteristics in some parts, if not overall.”

Boschini made it his project to divide this generation into seven painters, or styles, and rank them (as listed above). The works of these painters can still be found next to each other in several churches in Venice (San Zulian, San Nicolò dei Mendicoli, Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, just to name a few), but Boschini singled out the church of San Bartolomeo as a living example of the Venetian community of harmonious difference:

Pietro Malombra is likewise in this very fraternity, even making those same forms of figures, whether nude, draped, or grouped in narratives. However, in the fleshy Colorito, they do not appear as florid and fleshy as in Palma, as in Leonardo [Corona], as in [Andrea] Vicentino, and as in [Sante] Peranda, although they are more natural in Colorito than in Aliense and more enchanting. And truly, whoever sees the Angel Michael in the panel in the church of San Bartolommeo, lauds a great deal the virtù of this singular painter. And in this church are also seen works, if not of all seven of these rare painters, at least of four, which are by Palma, by Corona, by Peranda, and, as I said, by Malombra. This proximity serves (so to speak) as the cornerstone of a

130 Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in Carta del navegar, 740: “Molte volte, chi non è pratico del loro operare non è così pronto a farne di essi la distinzione; ancorché realmente ognuno da per sé tenga carattere, se non in tutto, in qualche parte diverso.” The importance of this passage as a demonstration piece of connoisseurship was also discussed by Nicola Ivanoff, “Stile e maniera,” Saggi e memorie di storia dell’arte 1 (1957): 123; and by Anna Pallucchini, citing Ivanoff in her introduction to Boschini, Carta del navegar, LVIII.
paragone to compare what I have said, testing if I strike the truth in what I have argued. I always trust those who know better than me.¹³¹

Even the church space was like a surrogate gallery, providing the opportunity to admire and learn about various styles. In this case, each painter was different and identifiable in the details, but when seen only as a whole, they were difficult to tell apart. In order to see the differences between these four similar painters, as Boschini had been outlining, it was necessary to see them close together in the same space. Boschini expressly hoped that his clarification of the sette maniere consimili would inform both the expert and the dilettante of art.¹³²

Whereas Scannelli and Malvasia proposed that a collaboration was best when it mostly dissimulated the multiplicity of contributors, for Boschini, there was no merit in having to hunt out the differences between the hands of painters in a work. The fratellanza of four hands on the Venetian Adam and Eve was supposed to provide pleasure, in part, because it was didactic without being pedantic. In the totality of a collaborative painting, the viewer could witness the whole effect of the Venetian fraternity; but, with the painters placed so close together, the viewer would be made equally aware of the essential differences between them.

The painting of Adam and Eve made by four united marvels was special (l’unico de l’Arte) for Boschini precisely because no painter was required to conform to another, or cede control to another. Style, colorito, or artifice were left as they had been intended without having to resemble anything else: “Here there is sketch, there is force, there is atmosphere, tenderness and charm.” The boldness of macchia and forza is antonymous to the more delicate tenerezza and vaghezza. Yet all four qualities apparently lay together visibly, in

¹³¹ Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in Carta del navegar, 742: “Pietro Malomba è similmente nella stessa fratellanza, tenendo ancor egli quelle forme di figure si negli ignudi, come nel panneggiare, e ne’ concerti delle istorie; pure nel Colorito le sue Carni non si vedono così sanguigne e tanto carnose come nel Palma, in Leonardo, nel Vicentino e nel Peranda, bensi più naturale nel Colorito dell’Aliense e più dilettevole. E veramente chi vede l’Angelo Michele, nella Tavola in Chiesa di San Bartolomeo, loda in estremo la Virtù di questo singolare Pittore; e in questa Chiesa pure si vedono opere, se non di tutti sette questi rari Pittori, almeno di quattro, che sono del Palma, del Corona, del Peranda e (come ho detto) del Melombra. Questa vicinanza serve (per cosi dire) come pietra di paragone per confrontare il mio detto, facendo prova se colpisco nella verità di quello che mi sono assunto di dire; rimettendomi sempre a chi più intende di me.”

¹³² Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in Carta del navegar, 743: “Ecco terminato il mio discorso, se non fruttuoso, almeno pieno di buon desiderio di servire (come promisi) a’ Geniali di Pittura; e se questo non leverà totalmente il velame, che potesse impedire l’intelligenza a’ Dilettanti, resti bipartita l’incapacità; si che tochi l’una parte a chi scrive e l’altra a chi si dileta, poiché finalmente il Cieco non giudica de’ colori.” How fitting would this conclusion be to the Adam and Eve made by four different hands issuing Venetian colorito?
concord. The Adam and Eve, as a hybrid birthed by Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano, and Pozzoseratto, was a source of knowledge, because it reflected the diversity of art, like the diversity of nature, and made it suitable for the encyclopedic mandate of a collection. In its artifice, it also illustrated a more dynamic and fluid experience of looking at a collaborative painting.

2.5.2 Collaboration as a Discordia Concors

Boschini delineated the various types of colorito – and for Boschini colorito is style – that could be seen in the Venetian painting of Adam and Eve: “Here there is sketch, there is force, there is atmosphere, tenderness and charm...” But these did not remain autonomous qualities of four brushes; they were beautiful both together and in parts (e insieme, e a parte). This qualifying phrase calls to mind the conventional philosophy of decorum and corporeal beauty as a proportional relationship of the parts to the whole. More provocative than that association, it also appropriated the intellectual and formative role of disegno and gave it instead to the active brushes of colorito. Properties of the brush could be measured and balanced just like the contoured proportions of the human body.

Boschini’s ideal painting based on proportionate and ordered brushes was precisely that union of discernible difference that art critics of collaboration had been trying to articulate since Pliny’s frustrations with the Laocoön. Boschini was able to declare that a collaborative painting could show both unity and multiplicity, because he was already overturning the idea that the instruments in a painting’s facture had to be singular and unapparent in a representational image. In the “Breve istruzione,” he likened the brush, with the different strokes and dabs that it makes, to a musical instrument, with the harmoniously distinct notes that it produces:

This great classic [painter, Jacopo Bassano], therefore, had such a fierce stroke of the brush that certainly in such handling he had no equal and, unlike others, he disdained diligence and finish with a Chaos (so to speak) of indistinct colours and mishmashes of confusion, which from close up and under the eye, resemble more a discord than a perfect artifice. Moreover, this Chaos is a virtuous deceit, without confusing the fact. But moving back the necessary distance, the eye and ear of the mind are satisfied and enjoy the most gentle harmony that a well tuned instrument can render when plucked by
the master hand, and the most sympathetic union between Art and Nature that
the human concert (concerto umano) can form.\textsuperscript{133}

Boschini is here likening the Venetian style, represented by Jacopo Bassano, to the principles
of musical harmonization and the philosophy of the discordia concors, or the inverse
concordia discors. In terms of music, this philosophy is best known from the musical theorist
Franchinus Gaffurius whose treatise was emblazoned with the motto, Harmonia est discordia
concors – Harmony is concord out of discord.\textsuperscript{134}

In its combination of four brushes, the ideal painting of Adam and Eve was like a quartet
brought together for a visual polyphony or a performance in counterpoint – the ultimate
demonstration in music of the discordia concors. In the Istitutioni harmoniche of 1558, the
musical theorist and maestro di capella of San Marco, Gioseffo Zarlino, defined counterpoint
in a way that would have been conceptually appropriate for the viewer of a collaboration,
attempting to aesthetically resolve the dialectic between unity and individuation into a single
hand:

... counterpoint is that Concordance, or agreement, which is born from one
body that has in itself various parts, and various modulations accommodated
to the piece and ordered with voices separated one from the other by
commensurable and harmonic intervals. And it is that which ... I called proper
Harmony. It can also be said that Counterpoint is a harmonic mode that
contains in itself diverse variations of sounds, or of lyrical voices, with certain
rational proportions and measures of tempo: or rather that it is an artificial
union of various sounds, reduced to concordance.\textsuperscript{135}

The harmony of musical composition and performance was a recurring metaphor in
Boschini’s Carta and in his later “Breve istruzione” – concertare, for example, was his

\textsuperscript{133} Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in Carta del navegar, 725-726: “Questo [Giacomo Bassano] gran Classico
dunque è stato di così fiero colpo di pennello, che certo in simile maneggio non ha avuto pari e, a differenza
d’ogn’altro, sprezzando la diligenza e la finitezza, con un Caos (per così dire) de colori indistinti e miscugli di
distrazione, che da vicino e sotto l’occhio rassombrano più tosto un sconcerto, che un perfetto artificio; e pure
quello è un inganno così Virtuoso, che non confondendosi sul fatto, ma scostandosi in debita distanza, l’occhio
e l’orecchio dell’Intelletto restano paghi, e godono la più soave armonia che render possa un ben accordato
strumento, tocco da maestra mano, e la più simpatica unione tra l’Arte e la Natura che possi formare
concerto umano.” This passage in Boschini was discussed by Sohm, Pittresco, 146.

\textsuperscript{134} Franchinus Gaffurius, De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus (Milan, 1518), title page.

\textsuperscript{135} Gioseffo Zarlino, Istitutioni harmoniche [1558 1\textsuperscript{st} ed.] (Venice, 1573), 171 (bk. 3, 1): “Dico adunque che
Contrapunto è quella Concordanza, o concen[n]to, che nasce da un corpo, il quale habbia in se diverse parti, et
diverse modulazioni accommodate alla cantilena, ordinate con voci distanti l’una dall’altra per intervalli
comensurabili, et harmonici; et è quello, che nel cap.12. della Seconda parte io nominai Harmonia propria. Si
può anche dire, che’l Contrapunto si un modo di harmonia, che contenghi in se diverse variationi de suoni, o
de voci cantabili, con certa ragione di proporzioni, et misura di tempo: overamente che’l sia una certa unione
arteficiosa de suoni diversi, ridutta alla concordanza.”
preferred word for the composing of an image – but the *discordia concors* was rooted in broader cosmogonies, as well.\textsuperscript{136}

In Greek mythology, Harmonia was born to Venus and Mars and possessed the respective attributes of both parents, i.e. Love, or attraction, and Strife, or repulsion. The harmony of the world, it was popularly believed, was created and continued to operate in compliance with these opposing motions. But it was Empedocles who was credited as founding a cosmological system according to which everything is made up by the attraction and repulsion of the four elements: earth, fire, air, and water. In this worldview, the various combinations of these elements are governed by a centrifugal attraction of love or friendship, which draws elements towards the centre, and a centripetal repulsion of strife and enmity, which pulls elements away from the centre. Even when there is unity brought about by Love, Strife always remains in the outskirts, so that what is mixed is always to some degree kept separate and unmixed, a state of flux that helped rationalize the variety and the changing nature of the world (compare to Boschini’s remarks about the different *Coloriti* of Venetian painting, stanza 2).\textsuperscript{137} This principle was behind Renaissance notions of beauty, because it explained harmony as the proportionate relationships of the parts to each other and to the whole (*e insieme, e a parte*). By extension, it was also a popular iconographic theme in Renaissance painting.\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{136} For more on the *discordia concors* in music and its relationship to harmony, see Claude V. Palisca, *Music and Ideas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Thomas J. Mathiesen (Urbana, 2006), 13-28. Paul Christopher Schick has provided an excellent theoretical overview of polyphony and the importance of the *discordia concors*, in “Concordia Discourse: Polyphony and Dialogue in Willaert, Wert, and Monteverdi” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1997), esp. 28-42.

\textsuperscript{137} In the fragment canonically numbered 35, Empedocles explained that all of creation is determined by the mixing and unmixing of these elements according to the centrifugal forces of love or friendship and the centripetal repulsion of strife or enmity: “When strife reached the lowest depth of the eddy and love gets into the middle of the whirl, there all these come together to be one alone, not suddenly, but voluntarily coming together, each from a different direction. And as they were being mixed ten thousand tribes of mortals poured forth; but many stood unmixed, alternating with those being blended, the ones that strife above still held in check; for not yet has it blamelessly moved entirely out to the furthest limits of the circle, but some of its limbs remained within, and others had gone out. And as far as it [strife] had at any stage run out ahead, so far did the immortal and kindly stream of blameless love then come forward. And immediately things which had previously learned to be immortal grew mortal, and things previously unblended were mixed, interchanging their paths. And as they were mixed ten thousand tribes of mortals poured forth, fitted together in all kinds of forms, a wonder to behold.” Empedocles, *The Poem of Empedocles*, trans. Brad Inwood (Toronto, 2001). Inwood renumbered the sequence of the fragments, so that 35 is numbered as 61.

\textsuperscript{138} Pico della Mirandola provided a long but relevant definition of beauty: “And for this reason no simple thing can be beautiful. From which it follows that there is no beauty in God because beauty includes in it a certain imperfection, that is, it must be composed in a certain manner: which in no way applies to the first cause. ... But below it [the first cause] begins beauty because there begins contrariety, without which there would be no
Based on the mingling of opposites, Empedocles’ worldview was also the origin of the principle of the *discordia concors*, and made a great impression on such philosophers and poets as Plato, Lucretius, Ovid, and Horace when they described the act of creation.\footnote{Plato, *Timaeus*; Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, bk. 5; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 1, 430-433; Horace, *Epistles*, bk. 1, xii.} This ancient philosophy evolved via medieval mysticism and the Neoplatonics of Italy (and Germany) into the early modern habit of thinking about the cosmos. According to this adapted cosmology, the differences in the world were not considered to be in conflict with the celestial sphere and the ideal of God, which was separate from the worldly sphere but not impenetrable. The mind and soul, it was believed, were able to mediate the two spheres, moving between the visible individuality and multiplicity of the terrestrial world, on the one hand, and the intelligible perception of the unified whole of the universe, on the other. The only way to recognize the creative One, i.e. God, who was otherwise imperceptible to the senses, was to see the totality of the Many in their measured and proportional relationships.

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creation but only God. Nor do contrariety and discord between various elements suffice to constitute a creature, but by due proportion the contrariety must become united and the discord made concordant; and this may be offered as the true definition of Beauty, namely, that it is nothing else than an amicable enmity and a concordant discord. For this reason did Heraclitus say that war and contention are the father and master of all things, and, concerning Homer, that he who curses strife may be said to have blasphemed against nature. But Empedocles spoke more perfectly when he introduced discord not by itself but together with concord as the origin of all things, understanding by discord the variety of elements of which they are composed, and by concord their union; and therefore he said that only in God is there no discord because in him there is no union of diverse elements, but his unity is simple, without any composition. And since in the constitution of created things it is necessary that the union overcomes the strife (otherwise the thing would perish because its elements would fall apart) – for this reason is it said by the poets that Venus loves Mars, because Beauty, which we call Venus, cannot subsist without contrariety; and that Venus tames and mitigates Mars, because the tempering power restrains and overcomes the strife and hate which persist between the contrary elements...” Quoted by Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New York, 1968), 88-89; for the subject of the *discordia concors* in Renaissance art, see ibid., 85-96. In his dialogues on love, Leone Ebreo used this theory to explain the nature of love in the universe, extending the system to the nature of friendship among other types of love. The first edition of the *Dialoghi d’amore di maestro Leon Medico Hebreo* was published in Rome in 1535, but it was reprinted in Italy, among many other countries, throughout the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. The *discordia concors* was also a popular literary form in the Renaissance and Baroque period, becoming known in English literature as metaphysical wit; see Frank L. Huntley, “Dr. Johnson and Metaphysical Wit; Or, ‘Discordia Concors’ Yoked and Balanced,” *The Bulletin of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 2 (1969): 103-112; and Melissa C. Wanamaker, *Discordia Concors: The Wit of Metaphysical Poetry* (London, 1975). It could also be seen as consistent with paradoxical tropes of the Renaissance, see Rosalie L. Cole, *Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton, 1966). Vicenzo Borghini, as far as I have found, is the only one to explicitly use the expression *discordanza concorde* to refer to a pictorial composition as the proper arrangements of subjects and objects on the picture plane. Not surprisingly, he was comparing pictorial composition to musical composition; see Thomas Puttfarken, *The Discovery of Pictorial Composition: Theories of Visual Order in Painting 1400-1800* (New Haven, 2000), 180-183.
To put it more simply, multiplicity was essential to the ability of observing the unifying force of the One creator.¹⁴⁰

Without using this cosmological terminology, Boschini had already illustrated the idea in detailing Jacopo Bassano’s “divine image,” the *Adoration of the Shepherds* in San Giorgio Maggiore (Fig. 2.9). Boschini described moving up to see the beguiling artifice, including the brushstrokes, contours, and shadows, then moving back the right distance where the colouring is resolved into a perfect image, and finally up close once more where he would be confused again by the effect of the artifice. Playing on the subject of the painting, he then equated this experience to the appropriate distance in reverence to God, who cannot be accessed directly with the touch of the hand.¹⁴¹ The way Boschini changed perspectives when he looked at paintings by moving closer and farther back, as he did with the metaphorical musical performances of Jacopo Bassano, was also like man’s mobility between the sensible and non-sensible realms of the cosmos. In Boschini’s visual experience of Venetian painting, the particular brushstrokes when seen up close paralleled the irrational multiplicity – the ostensibly chaotic Many – which could be rationally unified from a distance when looking at the overall harmonious composition – the One.

A collaboration like the Adam and Eve painting, then, also needed to be looked at fluidly from both poles of the dialectic – from the visible, experiential, and unrationalized differences of *Colorito*, and from the intelligible, and reverential position of the overall composition. In fact, Boschini’s verses about the collaborative Edenic scene, alternating between *Mondo* and *celeste Retor*, *Mondo* and *tondo* (universe), and *Paradiso* and *Terestre*,


¹⁴¹ Boschini, *Carta del navegar*, 201-202: “Vedela là quel Dio come l’è fato?/ Quela si, che xe Imagine divina,/ Tuta de colpi e tuta de dotrina!/ Né gh’è un contorno, un’ombra, un segno, un trato./ Se vede che ’l se muove, e che ’l è vivo;/ In debita distancia el fa el so efeto:/ L’è si ben colorio, l’è si perfeto,/ Che un’ombra apresso a quel mi ghe descrivo./ Là si se vede el nobil’artificio/ Del Penel venezian, che l’ochio ingana,/ E dà dileto in porporcion lontana!/ E andeghe a presso, zavaria el giudicio./ Questo ne insegna che con reverencia/ Star ne bisogna in porporcion distante/ Davanti a Dio, co’l cuor tuto adorante,/ E con modestia starghe ala presencia./ Esempio, ch’è de fruto anche al Cristian,/ Per haver in te’l cuor la viva Fede,/ E creder più de quelo, che se vede:/ Che no’ se puol tocar Dio con le man.”
and culminating with its beauty e insieme, e a parte, mimic the mind’s interpenetration between the terrestrial (variety and multiplicity) and the celestial spheres (the complete whole). To see a collaboration in this dynamic way divulged something about the greater power that unites all works together as Art. Or as Boschini put it, this was the means to understand “a thousand modern and antique paintings.”

2.5.3 Open Artifice and Venetian Liberty

The way Boschini envisioned the collaboration between Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano, and Pozzoserrato was not just as a reflection of the harmony of the cosmos, but the harmony of the Republic of Venice and the art community itself. The representation of Adam and Eve was made up of such diverse styles that it was a summation of both modern and ancient art, “where Art turns Nature into figs” (Dove fa l’Arte ala Natura i fighi). It was an illustration of the artifice that originated in the imaginations of the Venetian painters and that was based on study and practice, not on a direct reproduction of nature. The expression, fare a... i fighi, was a play on words of a vulgar expression, fare le fighe (fighe = female genitalia), which Boschini used elsewhere to denigrate Naturalist painters, including those who painted in a Caravaggesque style depicting half-length figures starkly set against a black background, and those Central Italian mannerists, such as Vasari and Zuccaro. Boschini considered Naturalist painters to be foreigners who needed to draw from anatomy and live models, relying entirely on nature and reproducing what they saw with an exactitude and mechanical diligence that was apparent in the polished finish of their paintings. That Lomazzo chose Adam and Eve, the first two human forms, as the subjects of the ideal painting may have been fortuitous for Boschini’s polemic against the Naturalists. Their advocates, or so Boschini said, argued that nature superseded ancient sculpture as a model, because the human figure was the original model created by God. He may have been attacking these Naturalist tenets, then, when he

142 On Boschini’s attacks on the Naturalists and his emphasis on artifice, see Sohm, *Pittoresco*, 100-111. Boschini was overturning the derogation leveled against Venetian painters since Vasari.
143 Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in *Carta del navegar*, 749: “ma replicano quelli che parlano nella stessa forma dei Naturali, aggiungendovi che il Naturale non riceve la perfezione dalle Statue, ma bensi le Statue dal Naturale. Ripigliano i primi, che le Statue dell’Antico, come il Laocoonte, l’Ercole dei Farnesi, la Venere dei Medici, sono in tutta perfezione; e rispondono gli altri che la più antica figura è l’umana, creato dal Divin Motore, e che per ciò tiene ella il luogo sopra le Statue.”
claimed that his version of Adam and Eve demonstrated the best principles of ancient and modern painting and showed Art outclassing Nature.\textsuperscript{144}

In contrast to the diligent and polished finish of the ‘foreign’ Naturalists, the open artifice that defined the \textit{maniera Veneziana} was only possible in the free Republican city on the lagoon. In the Serenissima, the doors to painters’ studios were always open and painters were ready to demonstrate the virtuosic creativity of their informed imaginations in the act of making:

After all, the Venetian Style carries with itself the same liberty, which every person living in this native city carries, and which yields a distant force. Of the Venetians the door stays open. When one wants, they can go freely to where the Venetian paints, and observe them. No one refuses: this is certain. With such a path, they demonstrate their valour and their mastery of working. There, everyone who sees them in labour stays totally enchanted and astonished. Because these Venetians are so in command and have their past studies so well impressed in their idea, they can print money [i.e. they can freely paint from their imaginations] for whoever is present.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{144} Boschini, however, did distance himself from a direct knowledge of Aristotle, see Sohm, \textit{Pittresco}, 119; the contrast between Artifice and Nature, in any case, finds its roots in the \textit{Metaphysics}, bk 2. Aristotle distinguished creations made by external forces, i.e. by man, from creations made internally in nature. These contrasting creations were called \textit{techne} and \textit{physis}, often translated as Art, or Artifice, and Nature. Aristotle’s distinctions in the \textit{Metaphysics} played an important role in Renaissance debates about the merits of the arts. See for example Robert Williams, \textit{Art, Theory, and Culture}, 150-162, for a discussion of Tasso’s participation in the debate, attempting to show that artifice and nature contributed equally to the creation of poetry. Boschini’s response to the longer debate in Aristotelian terms, however, would require more analysis. Some of the history of the debate in art literature about the merits of artifice versus nature was discussed, although not in relation to Aristotle, by Sohm, \textit{Pittresco}, 82-87. On artifice and naturalism, Merling discussed the influence of the Aristotelian principles of quantity and quality, but did not mention Boschini’s possible knowledge of the \textit{Metaphysics}; see Merling, “Marco Boschini,” 225-276.

\textsuperscript{145} Boschini, \textit{Carta del navegar}, 98: “In suma la Maniera Veneziana/ Porta con sì l’istessa libertà,/ Che porta ognun che vive in sta Cità,/Patria, che tien l’obligacion lontana./ Dei Veneziani sta la porta averta:/ Se puol quando se vuol liberamente/ Andar dove i depenze, e darghe a mente:/ Nissun dise: no’l gh’è; questa xe certa./ Mostrando con tal strada el so valor,/ E la gran patronia de l’operar:/ Dove ognuno, che i vede a lavorar,/ Resta tuto incantà, pien de stupor./ Perché sti Veneziani ha in patronia,/ E cusì ben impresso in la so idea/ El studio fato zà, che sta monea/ I puol stampar, presente chi se sia.” On the significance of Boschini’s claim, see Sohm, \textit{Style}, 24-25 and for the legacy of his statement, ibid., 210, n. 27. The state’s unique ecology, as a city on the sea, in combination with its enduring peace, religiosity, civil concord, and stability contributed to a strong Venetian identity, which came to be known as the Myth of Venice. This Myth, developing since the late Middle Ages, was perpetuated, and refuted with counter-Myths, by various observers from Europe and from the East within the Ottoman Empire. For more on this Myth, see Edward Muir, \textit{Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice} (Princeton, 1981),13-61; and John Martin and Dennis Romano, “Reconsidering Venice,” in \textit{Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State}, 1297-1797, ed. John Martin and Dennis Romano (Baltimore and London, 2000), 1-35. On the visualization of these ideas in the iconography of the state, see Staale Sinding-Larsen, \textit{Christ in the Council Hall: Studies in the Religious Iconography of the Venetian Republic} (Rome, 1974); and David Rosand, \textit{The Myths of Venice: The Figuration of a State} (Chapel Hill, 2001).
Venetian painters were free to paint according to their own minds. Like the Serenissima itself, with its authority to mint its own currency, the imaginations of Venetian painters were subject to no other artistic sovereign and thus determined their own value. In its diverse artifice, the marvel painted by Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano, and Pozzoserrato, suggests that collaboration was, for Boschini, one more demonstration of the strength of Venetian painting—a strength that lay in a mythical liberty and collective spirit. Like Venetian style, Venetian liberty embraced diversity, while the Republic kept such diversity in agreement under its banner.

Conclusion to Chapter 2

When Boschini concocted his Venetian version of the ideal painting of Adam and Eve in the Carta, he was well aware of Lomazzo’s ideal painting in the Idea del tempio from 1590, and he would have also been aware of Scannelli’s thoughts, which were published in the

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146 Money was controlled by the state and its value was dependent on an open trust that it be the same with each impression. If each painter metaphorically prints their own money, they are like their own state and thus their currency is identifiable and different than that of another’s. In other words, their value is not dependent on the re-impression of another’s style (artistic currency). At least for a short period in the 1660s, and possibly earlier, Boschini was employed by the Venetian mint to make exchange rate sheets, see Merling, “Marco Boschini,” 40 and Fletcher, “Boschini and Paolo del Sera,” 424 n.14.

147 Boschini found all sorts of analogies to celebrate Venetian painting as a harmonious community of opposites. Right from the beginning of the Carta, in the dedicatory letter to Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria, Boschini likened the Venetian community of painters to the Venetian armada. Twenty-two painters in all, from Giovanni Bellini to Palma Giovane, were given specific jobs in the crew led by Titian and Tintoretto. See Boschini, Carta del navegar, 3-5. In another passage addressing Titian’s artistic ascendancy, Boschini made the comparison of Painting to Comedia, or of painters to thespians, as a comedy was comprised of a conventional troop of type characters much as painters had their own styles. The point to be derived from this functional diversity of the theatre, Boschini said, was the accolades bestowed on the members of the cast, each having contributed to the performance: “For sure each of them is to be praised, because they play their part timely and well. But to one alone does not amass all the Praise, and it should not be given to one.” (This is a remarkably clear echo of Pliny’s comments on the troubled glory of the Laocoön!). See Boschini, Carta del navegar, 32-33. In the “Breve istruzione,” Boschini claimed that the chamber group at the centre of Veronese’s Marriage Feast at Cana was comprised of the portraits of Titian playing the bass, of Jacopo Bassano playing the flute, of Tintoretto playing the violin, and of Veronese himself playing the viola. In other words, Venetian painting as a group was made up of four different sounds (coloriti), as from different instruments, and when brought together produced a harmonious whole. Boschini could not help but ponder, again, “He who can better compose (concertar) the Harmony of the Music of Painting, will there advance with his own instrument.” See Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in Carta del navegar, 755. By “the Harmony of the Music of Painting,” Boschini did not mean the painter who could harmonize colours, but the painter who could harmoniously compose the different qualities of Colorito, both as a whole and in parts, as he said of the Adam and Eve painting.

148 See Filippo de Vivo’s description of communication in the government councils of the Venetian republic. He showed how the state had to maneuver between ideals and practical realities, allowing openness and disagreement during debates while at the same time requiring the appearance of a unified voice. See Vivo, Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics (Oxford, 2007), esp. 25-31.
Microcosmo in 1657, three years before the Carta went to press in 1660. Scannelli had criticized the very concept of the ideal painting, as if Lomazzo was unsatisfied with the special skill of each painter on their own terms. Boschini, I think, would have agreed that each painter should be appreciated on their own without wishing they were something more. His own representative in the Carta, the expert ‘Compare,’ tempered such a desire for the perfect painting by pointing out, “Separately each of these modes is enough to make one person identifiable, and makes the world in general rational, completely devout and full of admiration.” Boschini probably would have also assented to Scannelli’s disapproval of the idea that Titian should blend his style with that of Michelangelo, Vasari’s paragon.

Where Boschini seems to have departed most from Scannelli’s logic was on the relationship between individuality and unity. Scannelli accepted the premise that individuality was unimpeachable, but he thought it was an obstacle to the unity of a collaboration. His solution, which he derived from the concept of ideal friendship, required the subjects themselves to be alike, in essence, effacing their individuation without losing their individuality. Boschini would not have wholly disapproved of this last idea. He was, for example, able to appreciate the similarities between Battista Zelotti and Paolo Veronese and the effectiveness of their sympathetic minds when they worked together, an effectiveness that had made Ridolfi concerned about Zelotti’s reputation. But Boschini would surely have disagreed that a likeness in spirit was a necessary condition of collaboration.

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149 Scannelli and Boschini were mutual admirers, although Boschini was not too receptive to Scannelli championing Correggio over Titian, cf. Boschini, Carta del navegar, 40 and 337. Before the Microcosmo went to publication, Boschini had shared a draft of the Carta with Scannelli, who was able to promote the upcoming tome in the Microcosmo, 267: “Chi brama più esatto racconto potrà leggere con libri d’altre Autori l’opera di Marco Boschini Soggetto pratico, e spiritoso, che in quarta rima dimostra con esattezza, e facilità il tutto, che si può desiderare intorno à Pittori, ed opere di questa famesissima Scuola dello Stato Veneto.”

Boschini reported in turn that Scannelli sent him a copy of the Microcosmo as soon as it was printed, in Carta del navegar, 337.

150 Boschini, Carta del navegar, 369.

151 Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in Carta del navegar, 737: “Imaginisi il Mondo se fu erudito, che Paolo Veronese non seppe trovare pennello più conforme al suo genio del pennello Gio. Battista suo Condiscepolo, mentre, in occasione di dipingere a fresco in opere grandi (per sbrigarsene con celerità), ricorreva all’aiuto di lui, e tal volta in una facciata medesima, concordemente operando, terminavano e concludevano in unione il concerto d’alcune Istorie; e di queste per il Vicentino e per il Padovano se ne vede più d’una. Oh parallelo di gran Virtù! Oh cimento di Gloria, che rendeva all’uno ed all’altro corrispondente l’onore! Dirasi dunque che, se Paolo fu abbondante di leggiadria, copioso di vaghezze, opulento di grazie, ricco d’ornamenti, pomposo d’Architettura e gran distributor d’invenzioni, il Zilotti fu ripieno di maestà, massiccio di forme, numerosi d’oggetti intendente d’edifici, padrone di concerti e vero possedere dell’Arte.” On Ridolfi’s concerns, see Epilogue to Chapter 1.4.
Malvasia, who was writing after Boschini, kept a more open mind than Scannelli to the popular desire for the ideal painting. Both agreed that the Carracci were the epitome of collaboration, but while Scannelli said the Carracci possessed the requisite shared souls, Malvasia saw them as the very manifestation of the ideal painting. The three Carracci, in Malvasia’s view, had discordant personalities with their own particular gifts, which could only be harmonized into a single body under the mediating mind of Ludovico. Using eclectic imitation as his guide, Malvasia thought the leadership of one mind could reduce the multiplicity into a singular appearance that would leave everyone confused as to the roles of the individual contributors. Indeed, to Malvasia’s great delight, Boschini was one of those confused viewers when Malvasia showed him around Bologna. Of course, Boschini might have wondered if this was really something to boast about.

Despite the differences between Scannelli and Malvasia, Lomazzo’s imaginary collaboration caused them both to think about how painters could make a work together in practice. Malvasia and Scannelli thought the unity of the picture was determined on the creative side, when the painters were exchanging their particular contributions. For Scannelli this required long-term study and training together, whereas for Malvasia, it was up to the mind of one leader to coordinate different painters and their intertwining brushes to a point where any discord would be eliminated. Boschini took a position from the other side of creative production. For him, seeing the making of a picture in collaboration should get the viewer thinking. In his system, the mediation of collaborative differences occurs after the brushes are laid to rest, at which point the task fell to the educated viewer to appreciate the visible differences from up close, and their intelligible unity from a distance.

The next chapter will show that Boschini’s united marvel was novel in theory, but not in the demands of the art market. Several inventories, predating the Carta by a little more than a decade or less, recorded paintings with unlikely attributions to three Venetian hands on a single canvas. One of these paintings has been identified and it demonstrates the type of collaboration that Boschini thought was optimal for a collection. In its unity of discernible difference, this imagined collaboration was manufactured to be the ideal conversation piece among the educated gentility.

152 Malvasia was discussing what he saw as the wrong-headed celebration of Annibale as better than Ludovico, arguing that so many of the experts, Boschini and Scannelli among them, were unable to tell the difference between their works when Malvasia showed them around Bologna; see Malvasia, Felsina pittrice, vol. 2, 492.
CHAPTER 3
Collaboration and Connoisseurship in the Seventeenth Century:
The Hands of Sebastiano del Piombo, Giorgione, and Titian
Re-Imagined in the Triple Portrait

A few of you have asked me to demonstrate the technical styles of artists and
distinguish the one from the other … To this I must respond frankly, it is a
most difficult thing, if not to say impossible, to be done through reading.¹

With these words, Marco Boschini, the leading expert of the Venetian art market in the late
seventeenth century, sidestepped those dilettantes who hoped to pick up the tricks of the
trade from books. On other occasions when he did try to use words to disambiguate similar
styles, he still referred his readers to a location where they could judge hands side by side
with their own eyes.² The subject of this chapter is a painting in the Detroit Institute of Arts
that would seem to have been ideally suited for those collectors looking for simple lessons on
the individual styles of old masters (Fig. 3.1). The painting, commonly called the Triple
Portrait, consists of a group of three half-length figures set into an obscure narrative that
borders between portraiture and genre, and that echoes similar compositions made popular by
Giorgione in the early sixteenth century in Venice. In the centre of the picture, a man in a
dark brown cap, padded doublet, and ermine hemmed overcoat stands behind two female
figures. The woman in white puffed silk on the left reaches across the man to place her hand
on the chest of the woman in a black bodice and mantle. At first glance, the triangulated
group intertwines in a balanced arrangement of light, shadow, neutral tones, and pops of
yellow, so that the palpable atmosphere and the colour palette suggest a coherently executed
figure group. After even a brief inspection, however, the brushwork discloses the techniques
of what appear to be three different painters. Three names that were inscribed onto the back
of the painting, some time in the late sixteenth or seventeenth century, ostensibly reinforce

¹ Marco Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” preface to Le ricche minere della pittura veneziana (Venice, 1674), in
Boschini, La carta del navegar pitoresco, ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice and Rome, 1966), 703: “Restami ora
da sodisfarvi in nuova cosa, che mi ha chiesto alcuno di voi, cioè che io vi mostri il modo di praticar le
maniera de gli Auttori e distinguer l’una dall’altra; e ciò per la brama che tenete di saper far scienza
all’occorenza delle migliori. Al che francamente devo rispondervi esser cosa questa difficilissima, per non
dirvi impossibile, da conseguirsi per via di lettura.”
² Boschini urged his readers to go the church of San Bartolomeo to test his characterizations of the so-called
“seven styles of a certain similarity,” meaning the seven most prominent painters of the late Renaissance. See
Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in Carta del navegar, 740-747; and Chapter 2.5.1. For another lengthy
pontification on visual experience, see Abraham Bosse, Sentimens sur la distinction des diverses manières de
peinture, dessin et gravure, et des originaux d’avec leurs copies (Paris, 1649).
this perception of separate hands: “FRA BASTIAN DEL PIOMBO,” “GIORZON,” and “TITIAN” (Fig. 3.2). Each name is placed behind one of the figures painted on the front, ascribing the visibly different hands to Titian for the woman on the left, to Giorgione for the man in the middle, and to Sebastiano del Piombo for the woman on the right.

Scholarly attention to the *Triple Portrait* has quite naturally concentrated on authorship almost exclusively. The authorship purported in the inscription on the back of the canvas was still being supported as recently as 2008 in an exhibition on Sebastiano del Piombo, but justifiably not everyone has accepted the attribution to these three painters. In my view, the *Triple Portrait* is a pastiche, but by no means a careless assemblage of motifs, and was made by a single painter towards the turn of the seventeenth century, closer in time to when the names were written on the back of the canvas. This chapter will argue that long after the three artists actually worked together in one studio, a pasticheur, and subsequently a collector, imagined the close working relationship between Giorgione, Titian, and Sebastiano, in order to establish a taxonomy of their styles. This re-imagining of a collaboration, it will be shown, also coincided with certain intangible values operating on the art market. The painting suited the interests of seventeenth-century collectors looking for visual evidence of social interactions between artists. There was even a niche for paintings that showcased three famous Venetian painters allegedly bringing their distinct hands together on a single canvas.

In addition to raising obligatory questions about attribution and function, the *Triple Portrait* calls for an inquiry into the evaluative procedures that upheld the attribution to these three painters in the seventeenth century. The *Triple Portrait* would appear to be precisely what Boschini had in mind when he described the ideal collaborative painting of Adam and Eve as a microcosm stimulating the viewer into contemplating the universe through sensible diversity. But while the contemplative potential of an image might have been a common rationale in collecting, the experience of the connoisseur did not necessarily start with what he could see directly. When collectors and connoisseurs noticed different techniques in a

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3 The *terminus post quem* of this inscription would be 1531, the year Sebastiano was appointed to the office of the Piombo, that is the keeper of the lead papal seal. On the dating to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, see Rodolfo Pallucchini, “I due ‘creati’ di Giorgione: Sebastiano e Tiziano,” in *Giorgione a Venezia*, exhibition catalogue (Milan, 1978), 15.

single picture, their perceptions of those styles were informed by what they had already read about the artists they suspected were responsible. On this issue, I will explore the role that art biography may have played in the art market.\(^5\) There is good reason to believe that the *Triple Portrait* appealed to the habits of early collectors who, against the advice of experts like Boschini, mined art literature both for descriptions of stylistic attributes that might aid in attribution, and for descriptions of the personalities that, it was believed, might be found projected in the subject matter.\(^6\) In the case of the *Triple Portrait*, I will propose that the subject matter is suggestive of themes related to unity and the notional single hand of collaborators.

There is enough material and contextual evidence for a discussion about the dating of the *Triple Portrait* and how it might have functioned in seventeenth-century collections. It is much more difficult to draw conclusions about the intention of whoever made the picture. The working hypothesis in this study is that the painting was made as a fake, albeit a convincing fake. Too much of our understanding of the circumspect practices of the Venetian art market has been determined by the career of Pietro della Vecchia, the famous *simia Giorgione* of the Seicento.\(^7\) It is certainly true that the three figures of the *Triple Portrait* are more evocative of early sixteenth-century Venetian painting than are the half-length soldiers fabricated by Pietro della Vecchia (Fig.3.3). Yet Della Vecchia has perhaps become a red herring in our pursuit to assess the skills of early modern forgers, and by extension the effectiveness of early modern connoisseurship. He is well known, even today, for his imitations of Giorgione, but only because he marketed himself as such. As Maria Loh has

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\(^5\) Bernard Aikema recently argued that Carlo Ridolfi’s *Life of Giorgione* successfully participated in a campaign to reinvent Giorgione’s characteristic oeuvre so that it would align with Seicento pictorial modes; see Aikema, “Giorgione and the Seicento, or How a Star was Born,” in *Giorgione entmythisiert*, ed. Silvia Ferino-Pagden (Turnhout, 2008), 175-189.

\(^6\) Such a role for the biographies challenges the argument that Vasari was primarily concerned with ekphrasis and was uninterested in delineating specific stylistic attributes; see Svetlana Leontief Alpers, “Ekphrasis and Aesthetic Attitudes in Vasari’s Lives,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 23, 3/4 (1960): 190-215. While it is true that connoisseurs and collectors had a variety of means to determine authorship, it is also unwarranted to suggest, as Elizabeth Piliod has argued using a select body of sources, that Vasari and other art biographies were therefore not determinative of value on the art market until the nineteenth century; see “Vasari: The Territory Beyond,” in *Giorgio Vasari and the Birth of the Museum*, ed. Maia Wellington Gahtan (Burlington, 2014), 233-240. Wenceslaus Hollar’s engraving after Giorgione’s self-portrait in the guise of David bears an inscription connecting the picture to the one described by Vasari, and is enough to prove that Piliod’s argument is pure presumption.

\(^7\) For an overview of the history of copies and fakes, see Massimo Ferretti, “Falsi e tradizione artistica,” in *Storia dell’arte italiana* 3, 3 (Torino, 1981): 115-195; and Isabella Cecchini, *Quadri e commercio a Venezia durante il Seicento. Uno studio sul mercato dell’arte* (Venice, 2000), 213-215.
astutely pointed out, Della Vecchi was not intending to deceive absolutely. He was providing material for the civilizing discourse of the gallery, which required that the audience be able to see, after the spell had lifted, the alterity of the pastiche – to see both Giorgione and the “ape of Giorgione.” Although such novelties as Della Vecchia’s imitations help us to keep some perspective on the slow evolution of connoisseurship, we would be ill-advised to think that skilled forgers, who had no financial incentive to have light cast upon them, and every financial incentive to remain in the shadows, did not exist in the early seventeenth century.

3.1 • The Challenge of Indistinguishability in Early Modern Collecting and Criticism

Sebastiano del Piombo and Titian worked closely in Venice under Giorgione’s leadership from around 1506 to 1510, the year Giorgione died of the plague. As Giorgio Vasari concluded in the *Vite* of 1550, Giorgione’s legacy endured in both Sebastiano and Titian, “his two excellent creations.” Accordingly, it has been suggested more than once that the *Triple Portrait* might have been passed along to each artist, one figure at a time. The work, so the argument goes, would have been left behind first by Giorgione, who only completed the central figure before his death. Sebastiano, having taken up the work of his former mentor, only executed the female figure on the right before he jettisoned the project upon his departure for Rome in 1511. Lastly, it was left with Titian, who finalized the composition by setting his hand to the woman on the left. Some of the justification for this scenario comes from the notes of Marcantonio Michiel. When the Venetian nobleman catalogued collections from across northern Italy in the second quarter of the sixteenth century, he recorded several works that were started by Giorgione and posthumously completed by Sebastiano, or by

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10 For a bibliographic list of supporters of this hypothesis, see Mauro Lucco’s entry in the exhibition catalogue, *Sebastiano del Piombo 1485 + 1547*, cat. 8.
Titian. Sebastiano, according to Michiel, finished the *Three Philosophers*. Titian apparently brought the *Sleeping Venus* (i.e. the *Dresden Venus*) to its final form by finishing the landscape and by adding a cupid (since covered over) to the right side of the composition. It is not altogether implausible, therefore, that an incomplete *Triple Portrait* was left in the dutiful hands of Giorgione’s colleagues, who could then have brought it to its present state. But the scenario proposed for the *Triple Portrait*, each painter having the opportunity to complete just one figure before moving on, is fortuitous to a suspicious degree, especially because the styles mark each stage of the painting’s collaborative production more clearly than in those paintings described by Michiel. It should also be pointed out that none of the paintings in Michiel’s notes were said to have been completed by both Sebastiano and Titian.

The current challenge of assigning paintings, like the *Concert Champêtre*, strictly to Giorgione, to Sebastiano del Piombo, or to Titian was a topic of discussion already by the middle of the sixteenth century. In the case of Sebastiano, for example, Vasari described what must have been a dispute over the authorship of the high altarpiece in San Giovanni Crisostomo (Fig. 3.4). In the first edition of the *Vite* of 1550, Vasari listed this painting among Giorgione’s works, while he gave no specifics about any of Sebastiano’s works in Venice. In the second edition of the *Vite* of 1568, after another visit to the lagoon city and with more reliable contacts at his disposal, Vasari changed his mind and imputed blame on his original informants: “[Sebastiano] made at this time in San Giovanni Crisostomo in

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11 The *Three Philosophers* was described by Marcantonio Michiel in the collection of Taddeo Contarino in 1525. See Michiel, *Notizia d’opere del disegno* (Florence, 2000), 53.
12 The *Sleeping Venus*, otherwise known as the *Dresden Venus*, was described in the collection of Hieronimo Marcello in 1525. See Michiel, *Notizia d’opere*, 53. In the same collection another painting was described as, “El Christo morto sopra el sepolcro, cun lanzolo chel sostenta, fo de man de Zorzi da Castelfranco reconzata da Titiano.” See Michiel, *Notizia d’opere*, 57.
Venice a panel with a few figures that reveal much of the manner of Giorgione, to the point that this panel has sometimes been held by those who have little understanding of the things of art to be by the hand of Giorgione.”

Venetian writers took a less definitive and more diplomatic approach to this disputed painting, attributing the altarpiece to Giorgione with the assistance of Sebastiano.

Distinguishing the hand of Giorgione from the hand of early Titian posed similar challenges. Again, Vasari mentioned one problematic group of half-length figures in a representation of *Christ Carrying the Cross* (Fig. 3.5). As he did with the San Giovanni Crisostomo altarpiece, Vasari initially listed the painting in Giorgione’s biography of 1550. In the later expanded edition of 1568, he retained that passage, but when he added the Life of Titian, he listed the same painting among Titian’s works, acknowledging that some ascribed the half-length figures to Giorgione. In yet another example, Vasari said that the portrait of a member of the Barbarigo family would have been identified as the work of Giorgione were it not for Titian’s signature. In the *Maraviglie dell’arte* (1648), Carlo Ridolfi made a similar statement about their portraiture, placing even more emphasis on their indistinguishability: “…no difference at all could be perceived between the two. As a result, many portraits are identified with some confusion and no distinction, now as the work of one, now as the work of the other…” The taxonomic challenge was further compounded by a tendency, prevalent as early as the sixteenth century, of misattributing to Giorgione or to Titian the works of other contemporaries, including Palma Vecchio and Giovanni Cariani, who had taken up the Giorgionesque genre of placing half-length figures in enigmatic situations. Ridolfi might

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17 Vasari, *Vite*, vol. 3, bk. 2 (1568), 808 (Life of Titian).

have added the confusion created by copyists and imitators of his own time, such as Pietro della Vecchia.  

3.2 • The Pasting Process of a pasticcio c. 1600

Given the reputed working relationship between Giorgione, Sebastiano, and Titian, and given the problems associated with their indivisibility, the prospect of having their distinct hands apparent in the Detroit Triple Portrait would be significant. Surprisingly, it was only after the names inscribed on the back of the Triple Portrait were re-discovered in 1926 that the appearance of multiple hands was recognized at all in modern scholarship. It took the ‘utterance’ of the inscription on the back of the painting to plant the seed in the minds of some connoisseurs. At the time the inscription was unveiled, William Valentiner recognized without any sense of irony that, “when once these names have been uttered, the style in which the three different parts of the picture are executed points most plausibly to the correctness of this attribution, even to those who have only a superficial knowledge of these masters.” The subliminal force of these names inked onto the back of the canvas is remarkable. Many of the top eyes in the field of Venetian painting (those with more than a superficial knowledge) have weighed in, and while I hold the deepest respect for their expertise, I cannot agree with the arguments they put forward for identifying Sebastiano del Piombo, Giorgione, and Titian in a joint effort. It is more likely that one painter carefully assembled figures that were thought to be representative of each of their works.

Although analyses of the painting have been brief, the bibliography on the Triple Portrait is extensive with references stretching back well into the nineteenth century. There has been a number of attempts to ascribe it to a single painter from the first half of the sixteenth century, including to Giovanni Cariani, Sebastiano del Piombo, Palma Vecchio, and

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19 For a recent overview of this trend in the seventeenth century, with a plethora of seldom published examples, see the book by Enrico Maria Dal Pozzolo, Il fantasma di Giorgione. Stregonerie pittoriche di Pietro della Vecchia nella Venezia falsolina del ’600 (Treviso, 2011). Another standard source for later Giorgionismo is Anderson, Giorgione; and Bernard Aikema, Pietro della Vecchia, 75-92.


Pordenone. Yet, of these disparate suggestions of singular authorship, the apparent differences in style have been left either unexplained, or inadequately explained. While both Giovanni Cariani and Palma Vecchio varied their brushwork, sometimes even on a single painting, it was never as pronounced as what is seen in the Detroit *Triple Portrait*. If one believes the group painting to be the product of a single hand during the earlier part of the sixteenth century, it stretches the limits of credulity to suggest nonchalantly an ‘exercise in techniques’. Such an exercise would be astonishing in the context of the early or even the mid sixteenth century in Venice. Instead it would fit better in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century when there was a greater preoccupation with stylistic modes of famous Renaissance artists. The increasing popularity of these kinds of modal exercises at the end of the sixteenth century is best exemplified by Lomazzo’s proposition that two ideal paintings of Adam and Eve would combine Michelangelo and Titian on the Adam, and Raphael and Correggio on the Eve.

The sense of space and unified atmosphere in the composition of the *Triple Portrait* give further reason to believe a later date and a single mind at work, despite differences in

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22 See Lucco’s list of all the attributions in, *Sebastiano del Piombo 1485 + 1547*, cat. 8.

23 Harold Wethey, *The Paintings of Titian*, vol. 2 (London, 1971), 152. This hypothesis was echoed by Anderson, *Giorgione*, 326, who wondered if the painting was made by a pasticheur conducting an “academic exercise” from the mid-1540s, or later. Pietro Zampetti was inclined to see the hands of the Giorgione group, but also wondered about a single artist wanting to indicate their three styles; see Zampetti, *Giorgione e i giorgioneschi*, exh. cat. (Venice, 1955), cat. 43, 97.

24 There is one surprising passage in Marcantonio Michiel’s notes of Italian collections that might indicate an interest, however uncommon, in such pastiche exercises. See Michiel, *Notizia d’opere*, 59: “El detto M. Michiel [Contarini] ha più quadretti de capretti et tauolette di sua mano, ritratti da carte del Mantegna, Raphaello et altri, ma coloriti da lui alla maniera de Jacometto et felicemente.”


26 Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *Idea del tempio della pittura* (Milan, 1590), 60. Paolo Pino did suggest that Titian and Michelangelo would be the greatest painter in combination, in the *Dialogo di pittura* [1548], ed. Susanna Falabella (Rome, 2000), 122. For more on these ideals, see Chapter 2.
brushwork. The highlights and more brightly pitched tones have been carefully composed in such a way as to overlap the darker tones and vice versa, articulating a coherent relationship between receding planes. The slight orthogonal tilt of the man in the middle further undercuts the integrity of the primary plane created by the two women in the foreground. Compared to the *Triple Portrait*, Giorgione’s so-called *Three Ages of Man* (Fig. 3.6) and Titian’s *Concert* (Fig. 3.7) both generate a more planar space for the figures to inhabit. These figures are superimposed on top of each other, but aligned parallel to the picture plane. They are also set starkly against a dark background to the point of flattening the composition as a whole. Even in Palma Vecchio’s more comparable compositions of *Christ and the Adulteress* in the Capitoline Museum and in the Hermitage (Figs. 3.8 and 3.9), the figures in the front and in the back planes are aligned along clearly delineated planes of space.

While, in general, the depiction of atmosphere was of vital interest to Venetian painters from as early as the fifteenth century, the atmosphere in the *Triple Portrait* speaks more to qualities from the second half of the sixteenth century. What seems like a tangible depth with a single air is given a sense of being penetrated by our vision, as the planes are connected through a subtle repetition of yellow, visible on the man’s hat, the hair of the woman on the left, and the weave of the bodice worn by the woman on the right. The figures, furthermore, blend in more convincingly with the warm earth tones of the background. Although less exuberant, the overall effect is more consistent with the effects of spatial recession typical of painting at the end of the sixteenth century.

Outside of what the painting itself can tell us about when it was made, the earliest indication of its existence dates to the early seventeenth century when copies of it started to be made in paint and in print.\(^{27}\) One variant alone could suggest an early date for the *Triple Portrait*, but it depends on which picture we establish as the prototype and which the copy. Recently auctioned through Christie’s London, a painting of a single female figure, and a near facsimile of the woman on the right side of the *Triple Portrait*, has traditionally been

\(^{27}\) For the list of complete and partial copies, see Lucco, *L'opera completa di Sebastiano*, cat. 19; and Rylands, *Palma il Vecchio*, cat. A.22. Over the years, several of these copies have been published. One of these copies is in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, but it is severely crammed and cropped; see Contini, “Passi di Piombo,” fig. 8. Another, less skillful copy can be found in the Galleria Colonna in Rome; see *Catalogo sommario della Galleria Colonna in Roma. Dipinti*, eds. Eduard A. Safarik and Gabriello Milantoni (Rome, 1981), cat. 196. The most frequently cited copy is in the Gallerie dell’Accademia in Venice, see Sandra Moschini Marconi, *Gallerie dell’Accademia di Venezia. Opere d’arte del Secolo XVI*, vol. 2 (Rome, 1962), cat. 346, fig. 346.
attributed to Vincenzo Catena from around 1515 (Fig. 3.10). If, as has been suggested, Catena copied this figure from the Triple Portrait, then the Triple Portrait would have to be dated to around 1510. Catena did have a close relationship with Giorgione and his studio. On the back of Giorgione’s Laura, an autograph script dated to 1506 refers to Catena as Giorgione’s ‘cholega.’ Still later, in 1528, Catena appeared as a witness to the marriage of Sebastiano’s sister Adriana Luciani. But aside from these circumstantial connections between the painters, the temptation to believe that Catena copied his figure from the Detroit Triple Portrait derives from the tendency to assume that the version of better quality — in this case the figure in the Detroit composition — is the original.

The situation is much more complicated than these qualitative assessments allow. There is a second version of Catena’s woman with a coin that has yet to be published in relation to the Triple Portrait. This version was seen in an antique shop in Switzerland in 1995 and a photograph was taken of it for the slide collection of the Fondazione Federico Zeri at the University of Bologna (Fig. 3.11). The contours of the woman’s profile and the head-dress virtually replicate the first variant in London, and yet the details are more delicately rendered in a manner much more akin to the ‘Sebastiano’ figure in Detroit, especially in the hair. Also more comparable to the Triple Portrait are the wisps of hair that hang down next to the cheek. Altogether, these details indicate that this second variant from Switzerland, not the figure from London, was the archetype for both the London and the Detroit compositions, each imitator drawing on different essentials from the Swiss model. The painter of the London version paid closest attention to the form and outline of the Swiss figure, whereas the

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28 This painting was first identified by Tancred Borenius in the collection of Charles Newton Robinson in England, “The Venetian School in the Grand Ducal Collection, Oldenburg,” Burlington Magazine 23 (1913): 26, 35. It was published by Giles Robertson in 1954 when it was in the possession of Olga Schnitzler in Vienna; see Robertson, Vincenzo Catena (Edinburgh, 1954), cat. 24, p. 52. Robertson dated the painting to around 1515. In 2009 it was posted for auction through Christie’s London, sale 7783, lot 115.

29 Lucco, L’opera completa di Sebastiano, cat. 19

30 Aside from the inscription on the back of Giorgione’s Laura, it has been argued, based on x-rays, that Giorgione’s Self-Portrait as David was painted over a composition of the Madonna and Child by Catena. For the arguments for and against this interpretation, see Anderson, Giorgione, 306-307.

31 Robertson, Vincenzo Catena, 6.

32 For a passionate defense of this tendency to see the artist’s ‘spiritual expression’ only in an ‘original’ image, see Max Friedländer, “Artistic Quality: Original and Copy,” The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs 78, 458 (1941): 143-145, 147-148, 151.

33 See the Fondazione Federico Zeri at the Università di Bologna, b. 0425, sch. 35790, accessed online September 22, 2014, [http://www.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/catalogo/scheda.jsp?decorator=layout_S2&apply=true&tipo_scheda=OA&id=40582&titolo=Giorgione%0a%09%09%09%0a%09%09++++%2c+Ritratto+di+giovane+donna](http://www.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/catalogo/scheda.jsp?decorator=layout_S2&apply=true&tipo_scheda=OA&id=40582&titolo=Giorgione%0a%09%09%09%0a%09%09++++%2c+Ritratto+di+giovane+donna).
painter of the Detroit pastiche was more concerned with the softness of the rendering. Consider the strings of pearls, for example. On the Swiss woman with a coin, and on the London copy as well, the proportions and weight of the pearls are more convincing than those on the figure in Detroit where they are dabbed on almost perfunctorily, as if in the act of copying.

Other subtle differences in the *Triple Portrait* are revealed by x-rays to be later alterations (Fig. 3.12). Initially, the bridge of the nose on the figure in the *Triple Portrait* had a deeper profile, more like the nose on the Swiss figure. Then, with a brush loaded with white paint, which stands out in the x-ray, the tip of her nose was made a little more prominent and the bridge of her nose was made flush with her brow. At one point, the Sebastianesque figure in the Detroit *Triple Portrait* even held something like a coin in her left hand, but this too was then covered over with dark paint matching her mantle. Unless Catena knew about what the figure looked like beneath the surface, the possibility of which is very slight, then the best conclusion to draw from all of these alterations is that the pasticheur of the *Triple Portrait* copied Catena’s figure, perhaps having mistaken it for a work by Sebastiano. This kind of scenario would explain why the figure on the right in the Detroit painting is so detached from the group in both style and gaze. She has been transplanted from a single-figure composition into a group of figures. The style was then updated and the clothes altered to fit better with the overall composition.

As for the Giorgionesque figure in the middle of the *Triple Portrait*, there is another painting that may have acted as its exemplar. A lost portrait attributed to Giorgione is now known only through the album of drawings cataloguing the collection of Andrea Vendramin (Fig. 3.13). This portrait too is very suggestive in pose and expression. The outline of the tilted face and the use of the large cap, something that became understood in the seventeenth century as a leitmotif of Giorgione’s oeuvre, were reproduced quite closely.

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34 See Contini, “Passi di Piombo,” 43, fig. 9.
35 This idea was also suggested by Robertson, *Vincenzo Catena*, 25.
36 Borenius, *Picture Gallery*, pl. 14 B; mentioned also by Holberton, “Giorgione’s *Sfumato*,” 63.
37 Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 1, 87-88: “Dipinse in oltre un gran testone di Polifemo con cappellaccio in capo, che gli formava ombre gagliarde sul viso, degna fatica di quella mano per l’espressione di si gra[n] volto.” See also Boschini, “Le ricche minere,” in *Carta*, 709: “L’idee di questo Pittore sono tutte gravi, maestose e riguardevoli, corrispondenti appunta a quel nome di Giorgione, e per questo si vede il suo genio diretto a figure gravi, con Berettoni in capo, ornati di bizzarre pennacchiere, vestiti all’antica, con camicie che si veggono sotto a’ giupponi, e questi trinciati, con maniche a buffi, dragoni dello stile di Gio. Bellini, ma con più belle forme…”
were then made to the particulars of the clothing and to the style, placing greater emphasis on the use of shadow, the reasons for which will be detailed shortly. Such a procedure would not be dissimilar to the evolution of the woman on the right. It was not important that the copies be exact replicas for the figures in the *Triple Portrait*. Instead the imitated forms were only meant to serve as convincing vessels for bearing, or rather simulating, the primary index of individuality – the distinct hand of each artist who had purportedly held the brush.

### 3.3 ▪ Vasari’s Giorgione, Sebastiano del Piombo, and Titian Reified in the *Triple Portrait*

To say that it was opportune to be able to see three distinct manners of brushwork in the *Triple Portrait*, is putting it mildly when we realize that these differences are especially apparent in the hair, the eyes, and the clothes. These were the very areas where Giulio Mancini – the first writer in the seventeenth century to articulate methods of distinguishing originals from copies and fakes – expected to see those most indicative signature strokes of a master’s hand. For Mancini, the hand’s control of the brush revealed the spirit and command of the maker, especially in the handling of the hair, eyes, and drapery. With exaggerated differences in these same areas, the figures in the *Triple Portrait* act as display pieces, showcasing the basic style of each painter according to what a collector might have read, namely in Vasari’s *Vite* (1550 and 1568 editions). In each of the respective biographies of our three painters, Vasari redefined Giorgione’s style in an attempt to explain the origins of each of their particular stylistic traits – the very traits accentuated so conspicuously in the *Triple Portrait*.

Vasari’s descriptions of Giorgione’s style, based as it was on Leonardo’s *sfumato*, paid particular attention to the shadows – *una certa oscurità di ombre; terribilmente di scuro; negli scuri; tinta di ombre*. What these descriptions do not explain is that, in Giorgione’s

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39 Vasari mentioned in the preface to the third part of the *Vite* (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1, n.p.: “Seguendò dopo lui [Leonardo] ancora che alquanto lontano, Giorgione da Castel Franco; Il quale sfumò le sue piture, & dette una terribil’ movenzia alle sue cose, per una certa oscurità di ombre bene intese.” For remarks in the Life of
paintings, shadows were chiefly employed as a lyrical device to engender various moods. In some of his works, the shadow covers the whole face to enhance the contemplative spirit of the figure. Other times, only the eyes are cast in shadow. In such cases these shadows are meant to enliven the character by drawing attention to the eyes. The eyelids were typically highlighted ever so slightly, giving the appearance that they protrude from the shadow cast over them by the brow (Fig. 3.14). In contrast, the mood and expression of the shadows on the male figure at the centre of the *Triple Portrait*, representing Giorgione’s hand, are secondary in function to a playful formalism not typically seen in Giorgione’s oeuvre. In comparison to the *Terris Portrait* (Fig. 3.15), for example, the shadows on the Giorgionesque figure in the *Triple Portrait* go further in creating a topography of the face. They fall rhythmically across different parts of the face and at various depths – under his hat, his eyes, his nose, the corners of his lips, and his chin. What might look like a frown is just the result of shadows at the sides of his mouth. The painter of the *Triple Portrait*, in other words, has focused so much on shadow, which is the basic stylistic element that Vasari’s readers would know best from Giorgione’s biography, that it has become the very subject of this arcane figure.

Sebastiano and Titian similarly used shadow as a lyrical device, but in their biographies shading was of little note to Vasari, even though Vasari traced their styles directly to Giorgione. In the *Triple Portrait*, the shadows are likewise insignificant in the figures purportedly made by Giorgione’s two followers. What sets the Sebastianesque figure apart Giorgione specifically, see Vasari, *Vite* (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1, 13: “Haveva veduto, Giorgione, alcune cose di mano di Lionardo, molto fumeggiate, & cacciate, come si è detto, terribilmente di scuro.” Ibid.: “Diedegli la natura tanto benigno spirito, che egli nel colorito a olio, & a fresco fece alcune vivezze, & altre cose morbide, & unite, & sfumate talmente negli scuri,...” Ibid.: “In Fiorenza è di man sua in casa de’ figliuoli di Giovan Borgherini, il ritratto d’esso Giovanni, quando era giovane in Venezia, & nel medesimo quadro il maestro, che lo guidava, che non si puo veder in due teste ne miglior macchie di color di carne, ne piu bella tinta di ombre.” On the influence that Vasari’s emphasis on Giorgione’s sfumato has had on modern attributions, see Holberton, “Giorgione’s *Sfumato*,” 55-69.

40 The *Boy with an Arrow* (c. 1508) was described already by Marcantonio Michiel as a problematic picture in 1532 when he said there was a dispute about authenticity in two separate versions; see Michiel, *Notizia d’opere*, 51.

41 Ridolfi thought shadow was a motif of Giorgione’s as well, in *Maraviglie*, vol. 1, 87-88: “Dipinse inoltre un gran testone di Polifemo con cappellaccio in capo che gli formava ombre gagliarde sul viso, degna fatica di quella mano per la espressione di si gran volto.” In comparison to later seventeenth-century giorgionismo, the shadows in the *Triple Portrait* seem even more like sophisticated imitations. By the second quarter of the Seicento, Venice was flooded with Caravaggisti painters, including Pietro della Vecchia’s father-in-law, Nicolas Regnier. Imitations of Giorgione’s shadows became even darker, more exaggerated, and more brooding. These later imitations have affected our own sense of Seicento giorgionismo.
from the other two figures is a smooth polish and the gentlest of modeling, especially in the rendering of her downy hair and her glistening eye. These features pointedly capture Vasari’s repeated references to Sebastiano’s slow speed of execution and to the soft finish (morbido) of his paintings – not once mentioning shadows.\footnote{Vasari did praise the \textit{gran rilievo} of Sebastiano’s San Giovanni Crisostomo altarpiece, but this was not an aspect of Sebastiano’s style that he emphasized in the rest of the \textit{vita}; see Vasari, \textit{Vite} (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1, 340.} Looking at Sebastiano’s wall paintings for Agostino Chigi in Rome, Vasari was specific about what Sebastiano took away from his time with Giorgione. These walls showed that the Venetian had “learned from Giorgione a method of painting softly.”\footnote{For the most notable reference to Sebastiano’s softness, see Vasari, \textit{Vite} (1550), vol. 3, 896; Vasari, \textit{Vite} (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1, 340: “…per avere egli da Giorgione imparato un modo morbido di colorire…”} This is a surprising statement since Vasari only once described \textit{le cose morbide} in Giorgione’s own biography, and even then he was referring to the soft effect of the shadows.

In narrowing Sebastiano’s style down to softness, the pasticheur of the \textit{Triple Portrait}, as we have seen, found the best suited model in a single figure by Vincenzo Catena. Other comparisons help us see what elements were less salient for the pasticheur. The Sebastianoesque figure, for example, has been likened to the St. Catherine in the group of female saints on the left of the San Giovanni Crisostomo altarpiece, a painting that was singled out by Vasari for being difficult to assign to either Giorgione or Sebastiano. Regardless of the basic resemblance in pose and demeanor, the woman in profile in the Detroit picture suggests little of Sebastiano’s manner in comparison. His figures were indeed typically rendered with warm, softly modeled flesh, but contained within a rigidly calculated volumetric form – almost sculptural. In the Detroit painting, the woman is rendered with a delicately concealed brush that imparts extreme softness and yet her flesh is colder and in less relief than the standard Sebastiano figure (observe the neck in particular). Even the contour of her profile lacks the confidence seen in Sebastiano’s bounded forms, most evident in the self-assured hand tracing around the face of St. Catherine.

When Vasari described what attracted Titian to Giorgione’s studio, the key trait of Giorgione’s artifice was yet again quite different: “Giorgione da Castel Franco … began to impart on his works more softness, and greater relief, with a beautiful style (bella maniera). Nevertheless, he still needed to place himself in front of living and natural things, in order to copy them as best he understood with his colours, and to apply them in patches (macchiare)
of crude and gentle tints according to what life showed him without making a design.”

In this description of Giorgione’s style from the Life of Titian – not from the Life of Giorgione – we have the softness that Sebastiano supposedly adopted from Giorgione, but an even greater emphasis on *macchia*. As happened in the Life of Sebastiano, Giorgione’s shadows have been dropped entirely from the conversation. Vasari only once used the word *macchia*, or stain, in the Life of Giorgione itself, but there Vasari meant that Giorgione’s highlights had a certain fleshiness (*macchie di carne*). By using the verb *macchiare* in Titian’s biography, Vasari meant instead that Giorgione applied loose brushstrokes of unblended colors, something that would come to define Titian’s style more and more as he matured.

By subtly altering the language and tone he used to describe Giorgione’s technique, Vasari was establishing an origin for Titian’s late painterly style described towards the end of the biography:

> It is certainly true that the technique (*modo di fare*) that Titian used in the later works is rather different than that of his youth. Since the first works were completed with a certain refinement (*finezza*) and incredible diligence and could be seen from up close and from a distance; while these later works, are made up of brushstrokes applied in large sweeps and in patches (*macchie*), so that the paintings cannot be viewed from up close, whereas they appear perfect from far away.

Although Vasari was evidently flummoxed by the suddenness of such a loose aesthetic, by redefining Giorgione’s *macchia*, as he did at the beginning of Titian’s biography, he was at least able to provide some sort of origin for its development. What is more, in order to contrast the large sweeps of paint in Titian’s late paintings, Vasari introduced a new description of his early works, which now showed ‘refinement and diligence.’ The contrast issued from this famous passage is dutifully captured in the figure on the left of the *Triple*.

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The fussy tonal gradations in the face of the woman on the left are set starkly against the ‘crude patches’ of dry brush in the hair and sleeve.46

The thick layering of highlights over thin lowlights in her hair and sleeve imply Titian’s bold hand. Yet even at an early stage in his career, Titian’s bravado with the brush had a clearer sense of underlying form. Especially when he had thick white pigment on his brush, Titian treated paint more like modeling clay. His command of dense paint can be seen in the drapery of what would have been the contemporary Noli me tangere (Fig. 3.16), where thick undulations of raised pigment help to articulate the folds of the fabric as they loosely ruffle and sweep, or as they are interrupted and filled out by the Magdalene’s body beneath. In the Detroit picture, in contrast, especially in the sleeve, the confidence of forms and folds is less certain than one might expect from Titian. The sleeve is composed of large slabs of paint in highlights that serve little purpose other than to suggest patches of pigment – macchia for macchia’s sake – while the underlying physiognomy of the shoulder and arm is left unapparent.

Each figure of the Detroit group seemingly demonstrated the stylistic paradigms that Vasari stressed for each painter – Giorgione’s shadows, Sebastiano’s softness, and Titian’s patches of colour offset by a certain diligence. Admittedly, these qualities are not unrepresentative of the oeuvres of these three masters. However, these general characteristics are accentuated far more in the Triple Portrait than other formal elements that typically make Giorgione, Sebastiano, and Titian distinguishable, such as Sebastiano’s sense of geometric volume and Titian’s convincingly modeled forms. It is as if a pasticheur has zeroed in on the stylistic traits a dilettante collector might look for by having read Vasari, and has thus made their ‘styles’ more apparent even while assembling the models within a unified atmosphere. Why this might have been valuable for a collector will be discussed next.

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46 On the artistic freedom that became associated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with diligenza and prestezza as appreciated techniques of handling the brush, see Nicola Suthor, “‘Il pennello artificioso’. Zur Intelligenz der Pinselführung,” in Instrumente in Kunst und Wissenschaft: zur Architekttonik kultureller Grenzen im 17. Jahrhundert, ed. Helmar Schramm, Ludger Scharte, and Jan Lazardzig (Berlin, 2006), 117-120.
3.4 • Looking for Hands, Looking for Disunity in the Sociable Gallery Space

Even if, at a distance, the different qualities and techniques of the *Triple Portrait* are blurred, so that the unity of the picture becomes perceptible, the apparent differences between hands, from up close, meant that the painting could serve multiple functions. In the simplest terms, leaving the signature styles detectable on the painted surface activated comparisons and distinctions between each artist’s *maniera*, which would have obvious benefits given the documented difficulties in distinguishing between the hands of Giorgione, Sebastiano, and Titian. The invitation to delineate authorship simultaneously enlivened the civilizing discourse in a gallery, contributed to the encyclopedic knowledge of the owner, and added biographical prestige to the value of the collectible.47

It was not uncommon in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for an evaluator’s eyes to see more than one hand operating in a single composition. Connoisseurs and their collector clients, by practice, looked for signs of an identifiable hand in the various details in order to appraise the command of the hand over the form-giving brush. Historically distant paintings were tricky, as Marcantonio Michiel made clear when he stood in front of *St. Jerome in his Study*, a painting that is today generally attributed to Antonello da Messina and dated to the 1470s (Fig. 3.17). He thought the painting had the appearance of northern authorship, possibly by Jan van Eyck, or Hans Memling, except for the face, which seemed to him to have been rendered by an Italian artist, such as Jacometto Veneziano.48 The mere possibility of seeing multiple hands was equally worthy of note to Carlo Ridolfi, whose Lives of Venetian painters, known as the *Maraviglie dell’arte* (1648), was written with collectors in mind rather than general theorists or critics. Ridolfi repeatedly pointed out such manual interventions, whether it be the additional hand of an assistant, of a restorer, or of a collaborator.49 It is indeed true that the overwhelming majority of his remarks related to

47 For a similar argument with a focus on Antwerp, see Elizabeth Honig, *Painting and the Art Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven, 1998), 177-189.
49 For the comments about the presence of another hand, but not including cases of posthumous completion, see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 1, 200 (Life of Orazio Vecellio); ibid., 204 (Life of Girolamo di Titiano); ibid., 222 (Life of Giuseppe Salviati); ibid., 237 (Life of Schiavone); and ibid., 287 (Life of Paolo Veronese); *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 214 (Life of Aliense), and ibid., 218 (Life of Aliense). For hands involved in restorations or alterations, see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 1, 102 (Life of Pordenone); ibid., 185 (Life of Titian); ibid., 304 (Life of Paolo Veronese); ibid., 311 (Life of Veronese); and ibid., 385 (Life of Jacopo Bassano); *Maraviglie*, vol. 2,
works posthumously completed by pupils or by other masters, as this was a preoccupation of those connoisseurs determined to own ‘originals’ as opposed to ‘copies’.50

Predictably, the analytical methodology of connoisseurs, including the more esteemed artist evaluators, occasionally led to dubious attributions when oral or documentary history was not available. The painter and dealer Nicolas Regnier claimed to own a painting by Lorenzo Lotto representing Saint Jerome, in which the landscape bore the supposed appearance of Antonio Correggio’s hand.51 Not averse to bending the truth for a sale, including peddling the occasional fake, Regnier’s questionable assessment was documented in the pamphlet that lists all the works he was selling by lottery in 1666.52 On the art market in seventeenth-century Antwerp, a single collaborative painting bearing noticeably different but identifiable hands was considered a prestigious object, a prestige the Flemish Regnier

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50 In my list of posthumously completed works, I have included works completed by others when Ridolfi considered the master to be too old to finish them. See Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 31 (Life of Carpaccio); ibid., 52 (Life of Giovanni Bellini); ibid., 57 (Life of Giovanni Bellini), repeated in ibid., 141 (Life of Titian); ibid., 83 (Life of Giorgione), repeated in ibid., 140 (Life of Titian); ibid., 186 (Life of Titian); ibid., 340-343 (Life of Carlo, Gabriele, and Benedetto Caliari); ibid., 386 (Life of Jacopo Bassano); ibid., 399 (Life of Francesco Bassano); Maraviglie, vol. 2, 103 (Life of Leonardo Corona); ibid., 117 (Life of Orlando Fiacco); ibid., 121 (Life of Felice Riccio, detto Brusasorci); ibid., 165-166 (Life of Leandro Bassano); ibid., 251 (Life of Pietro Damin); ibid., 252 (Life of Matteo Ingoli); ibid., 253 (Life of Matteo Ingoli); ibid., 280 (Life of Sante Peranda). Only once was Ridolfi able to say that both contributors signed the work, in this case when Orlando Fiacco finished a painting by Bernardino India in the Grand Council chamber in Verona; see Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 117.

51 Transcribed in Simone Savini-Branca, Il collezionismo veneziano nel ‘600 (Padua, 1964), 104 (G.56): “Un Quadro di mano di Lorenzo Lotto, con sopra il ritratto d’un San Girolamo figura intiera, scrivendo, quale stà à sedere dentro una grotta appresso molti libri, con il Crocifisso, & il Leone in un cespuglio, con dietro un bellissimo Paese, pare mano del Coreggio...”

52 For more on Nicolas Regnier, see Annicke Lemoine, “Nicolas Régnier et son entourage: nouvelles propositions biographiques,” Revue de l’art 117 (1997): 54-63. See also Pier Luigi Fantelli, “Nicolò Renieri «pittor fiamengo»,” Saggi e memorie di storia dell’arte 9 (1974): 77-115. The resemblance between Lotto and Correggio was also a topic of discussion in the nineteenth century, with some connoisseurs, like Giovanni Morelli, believing that there must have been some cross-influence, or at the very least that they were “kindred spirits,” in Italian Painters: The Galleries of Munich and Dresden (London, 1893), 50-55. This theory was vehemently rejected by Bernard Berenson, Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism (London, 1905), 130-136. Cecil Gould too argued that there must have been encounters and pictorial exchanges between the two painters in the 1510s and 1520s; Gould, “Lotto and Correggio,” in Lorenzo Lotto: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi per il V centenario della nascita, ed. Pietro Zampetti and Vittorio Sgarbi (Treviso, 1980), 169-171.
was evidently trying to import to Italy.\textsuperscript{53} He demonstrated his willingness to see multiple hands already in 1659, when he identified in the Widmann collection a “Saint Cosmas done in part by Titian and in part by Tintoretto,” appraising its value at 120 ducats.\textsuperscript{54} If he believed his own attribution, this seems to be a rather low valuation considering the pair of hands he identified.\textsuperscript{55}

When a Giorgionesque painting did not already have a known provenance, authorship proved especially difficult to pin down. We have a particularly instructive piece of correspondence from 1672 about the \textit{Christ and the Adulteress}, which is now in the Glasgow Museum and for which the attribution is still debated (Fig. 3.18).\textsuperscript{56} The painter Ciro Ferri requested the opinion of another painter, Livio Mehus, asking him if this work that was reportedly done by Palma Vecchio was an original or a copy.\textsuperscript{57} This query proved more difficult, mostly because factors other than what constituted a copy and what constituted an original had to be taken into consideration.\textsuperscript{58} Initially Mehus responded with similar suspicions about Palma’s authorship, but he also said he was impressed with it enough at a certain distance that he believed it to be an original that at least dated to Palma’s period, or as he put it, “the time when the best school of Venetian colorito flourished.” It was not an original Palma Vecchio, and yet it was not necessarily a copy either, given the quality of the picture. In order to make a specific attribution, the painter-appraiser then moved closer to scrutinize the details in which subtle signs of disunity revealed a breeding ground of multiple


\textsuperscript{54} Fabrizio Magani, \textit{Il collezionismo e la committenza artistica della famiglia Widmann dal Seicento all’Ottocento} (Venice, 1989), 34. See also Linda Borean, “Collecting in Venice,” in \textit{Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice}, exh. cat. edited by Frederick Ilchman (Boston, 2009), 62.

\textsuperscript{55} For comparable assessments of copies versus originals, including Regnier’s assessments, see Cecchini, \textit{Quadri e commercio}, 215.

\textsuperscript{56} Like so many other early sixteenth-century paintings, the \textit{Christ and the Adulteress}, now in Glasgow, has been subject to the same wide ranging attributions from Giorgione to Giovanni Cariani. I am inclined to see the style of Sebastiano del Piombo, but Beverly Louise Brown recently made some strong arguments in favour of Titian, in “Corroborative Detail: Titian’s ‘Christ and the Adulteress’,” \textit{Artibus et Historiae} 28, 56 (2007): 73-105.

\textsuperscript{57} Livio Mehus was a something of a protean painter from the Medici court. For more on Mehus, see Marco Chiarini, ed., \textit{Livio Mehus. Un pittore barocco alla corte dei Medici 1627-1691} (Florence, 2000).

hands at work. Mehus was first led by "the touch of the brush and the strength of the coloring" to perceive the single hand of Schiavone, while in other particulars he saw the hand of Giorgione, then hints of a young Titian, until ultimately he imagined a collaborative scenario in which the master Giorgione supervised his capable young pupil and made some retouches.\textsuperscript{59} It is fair to assume that common knowledge of Giorgione’s studio guided Mehus in this final account of multiple attributions.\textsuperscript{60}

Cardinal Federico Borromeo in the \textit{Musaeum} (1625) was lured into similar observations when looking at the pictures in the Ambrosiana:

A different type of carelessness recommends another painting nearby, although it is not known by whose hand it is. The excellence of its \textit{disegno} would lead you to say that it was a work by Giorgione, not Titian, yet if you look at its remarkably vigorous use of \textit{colorito} you would attribute it to Titian, not Giorgione. We could, to be charitable, give equal credit to both of them. It is a painting of the Virgin Mother of God with her Child and an Angel holding the hand of the little boy Tobias. To give a sense of the Angel’s pace, he is shown moving forward in a very full stride, which the boy tries to match by running. Two features in particular of the artist’s depiction of the hurried pace were done admirably: he endowed the Angel with superhuman nimbleness, adjusting his stride to that of the boy, who was weaker; moreover little Tobias, with all his anxiety and his labored gait, is unable to keep up and has an expression on his face that seems to beseech his leader’s help.\textsuperscript{61}

This passage can be read against developing strategies of connoisseurship that looked at manual dexterity for an underlying character. Recognizing that the style of an artist could change over the course of his life, Roger de Piles instructed the connoisseur at the end of the seventeenth century to gain a knowledge of both the characteristic movements of the artist’s

\textsuperscript{59} The letter is transcribed in Giovanni Gaetano Bottari and Stefano Ticozzi, eds., \textit{Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, sculture ed architettura scritte da’ più celebri personaggi dei secoli XV, XVI, e XVII}, vol. 2 (Milan, 1822), 61-64: “Per il tutto insieme stimo che ciascheduno professore, che non totalmente sia privo del buon gusto, lo stimerà un bonissimo quadro, e si conosce benissimo che questo quadro è stato fatto nel medesimo tempo di quando fioriva la migliore scuola del colorito veneziano. E se prima al buio dubitavo del Palma Vecchio, ora al lume l’escludo affatto, e senza dubbio; poiché il tocco del pennello, ed il forte colorito pare dello Schiavone; ma, per l’altre particolarità che ci trovo, piuttosto lo giudico di Giorgione; e se non è di Giorgione, lo stimo di Tiziano. Se non sarà giudicato originale, dico che non può essere, se non stato copiato sotto i lor occhi, e che poi un de’ due maestri di lor propria mano l’abbiano rivisto, e passatovi sopra col loro pennello.” Discussed as well by Philip Sohm, \textit{Pittoreresco: Marco Boschini, His Critics, and their Critiques of Painterly Brushwork in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Italy} (Cambridge and New York, 1991), 70-71.

\textsuperscript{60} Although cautioning against the vagaries of the details, Johannes Wilde came to a very similar conclusion as Mehus, believing that Giorgione supervised a painting that was otherwise executed entirely by Titian. See Wilde, \textit{Venetian Art from Bellini to Titian} (Oxford, 1981), 120.

brush and, moreso, of his mind. Anticipating de Piles’ remarks on character, Borromeo saw an estimable painting overall in the *Holy Family with Tobias and the Angel* (Fig. 3.19), but what he saw as a noticeable difference in execution suggested to him a ‘carelessness,’ which he attributed to the relationship of a master and follower, Giorgione and Titian.

Borromeo’s approach to making an attribution was not dissimilar to that used by Mehus when assessing the *Christ and the Adulteress*, except Borromeo went a step further. His perception of multiple hands provided a meta-narrative that surely added to the intangible value of the picture. His sense of the working relationship between Giorgione and Titian was projected onto the interactions of the figures. Just as the angel and the boy tried to walk at each other’s pace, despite different physical abilities, so Giorgione and Titian, Borromeo suggested, must have been trying to work together, despite being at two different stages of artistic development. Borromeo concluded from this reading of the painting that the Venetian pair deserved equal credit. This is a wonderful analogy, but not sustainable in the end. The picture has been firmly attributed to Bonifacio de’ Pitati and has been dated to the 1520s.

Even in works that were not made by multiple hands, the ostensible indices of authorship provided the opportunity to participate in pleasurable conversation and to demonstrate one’s knowledge both by identifying the authors (the potential risk of deattribution ever latent) and by assessing the value. Across Europe, games were played to test a visitor’s ability to recognize quality and authorship, and traps were set for unsuspecting viewers whereby pastiches, like Pietro della Vecchia’s alter-Giorgione paintings, were presented as original old master paintings. As an added bonus, unworthy dilettantes could be called out for their shallow knowledge, or their irrational bias. In 1668, for example, the famous scientist

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63 At least by 1671 the picture was already thought to be by Palma Vecchio; see Agostino Santagostino, *L’immortalità e gloria del pennello: catalogo delle pitture insigni che stanno esposte al pubblico nella città di Milano* [1671], ed. Marco Bona (Milan, 1980), 73. In 1880, Morelli made the definitive attribution to Bonifacio de’ Pitati. On the picture today, see Pamela M. Jones, *Federico Borromeo and the Ambrosiana: Art Patronage and Reform in Seventeenth-Century Milan* (Cambridge and New York, 1993), cat. 1A: 14; and David Alan Brown’s catalogue entry in *Bellini, Giorgione, Titian and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting*, cat. 12.
64 Loh described the Medici practice of gathering a council together to discuss potential acquisitions and appraisals, and she considered whether or not a Pietro della Vecchia painting, made in imitation of Giorgione and sent by Boschini, was meant to be used as a prank on these advisors and other guests. See Maria Loh, “Originals, Reproductions, and a ‘Particular Taste’ for Pastiche,” 254.
65 For a story told by Boschini about a game played by Odoardo Farnese on the critics of Annibale Carracci, see Boschini, *Carta del navigar*, 517-519; quoted again by Carlo Cesare Malvasia in the *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 1
Christiaan Huygens wrote to his brother Constatijn Junior (a name we will see again in connection to the *Triple Portrait*), relishing the laughter that broke out when he challenged the attributions of a Flemish dealer in Paris.  

Even King Charles I of England removed the names affixed to the frame so that he could enjoy the spectacle involved in attribution.

The earliest identifiable collector to believe the triple authorship of the *Triple Portrait* was the Dutch merchant Nicolaas Sohier, whose collection was inventoried after his death in 1642: “Another painting, three half personages by three different masters as Titisiaen Jorge del Castel Franco and Bastian del Piombe.” We do not know when the painting came into Sohier’s collection, nor do we know if he was responsible for the names on the back, or if he was convinced of the attribution because of that inscription. It is clear nevertheless that he had a certain flare for cultural self-fashioning. Visitors to Sohier’s home, including Italian merchants and the poet and secretary to the Prince of Orange, Constantijn Huygens the Elder, often remarked on the lavish furnishings as well as the collection of paintings filling the rooms.

Most of the paintings in Sohier’s sizeable collection were portraits, genre paintings, landscapes, and still lifes by both named and un-named artists. Works were spread out across several rooms of his house, but most of the major works were located in a gallery, or as it was described in the inventory, the “large reception hall of paintings” (*in de groote sael Schilderyen*). As might be expected, most of the artists who were named were northerners (Frans Snyder, Adriaen Brouwer, Gerrit van Honthorst, Jan Lievens, Rubens, etc.). But he had a special affinity for Venice as well. The majority of the Italian painters featured in his

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67 For the reports of the papal agent about these games, see Jonathan Brown, *Kings and Connoisseurs: Collecting Art in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Princeton, 1995), 47.


collection had flourished in Venice (Paolo Veronese, Jacopo Bassano, Palma Vecchio, Paris Bordone, Titian). Sohier was also reputed to be a purveyor of Italian music, especially Venetian madrigals. The polyphonic voices performing these madrigals with their concordia discors would have been especially apposite when heard in conjunction with the supposed multiple hands seen in the Triple Portrait.

Sohier’s inventory provides no details about how the Triple Portrait was displayed, but we have some idea from another collaborative picture. In the inventory, a painting of The Head of Medusa, was rightly attributed to both Rubens and Frans Snyders, now known only from a second version in Vienna (Fig. 3.20). In 1630, Constantijn Huygens the Elder described this painting and implied that Sohier reserved some showmanship for this prized possession so as to enhance the visitor’s experience: “The combination is so shrewdly executed that the spectator would be shocked by the sudden confrontation (normally the painting is covered), but at the same time the spectator is moved by the lifelikeness and beauty with which the grim subject is rendered.”

The distribution of hands in the Triple Portrait is also worth comparing to another collaborative painting that we know with certainty was intended for the spectacle of a private collection in Milan: The Martyrdom of Saints Rufina and Seconda, or what came to be known as the Quadro delle tre mani, made by Procaccini, Morazzone, and il Cerano around 1620 (Fig. 1.46). In both the Triple Portrait and the Quadro delle tre mani picture, the looser hand that was known for its unrefined sense of naturalism (‘Titian’ and il Cerano) was placed on the left side of the composition. This naturalism was contrasted by the polished control of the hand working on the opposite side of the canvas (‘Sebastiano’ and Procaccini). Finally, the third hand belonged to painters who were famous in the seventeenth century for their imposing martial subjects (‘Giorgione’ and Morazzone). While occupying a prominent place in the centre of their respective paintings, this third hand, demonstrating its bravura, nevertheless allowed itself to be recessed in both compositions by sticking to its strength in

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70 In 1638, Constantijn Huygens sought Sohier’s advice about what Italian composers were “most in vogue”; see Willem Jozef Andries Jonckbloet, “Les correspondance de Constantin Huygens,” in Musique et musiciens au 17e siècle. Correspondance et oeuvre musicales de Constantin Huygens (Leiden, 1882), letter VII (dated March 6, 1638).
71 “een dito synde een meduse van Rubens en Snyers.” Transcribed online at, “The Montias Database.”
rendering shadows.73 The overall result in each work is an extraordinarily balanced whole that still allows for the discriminating activities of the newly emerging art gallery. That the Triple Portrait captures the same spirit as the Quadro delle tre mani suggests a similar function and weighs heavily in favour of a relatively contemporaneous date.

3.5 A Sudden Niche for Allegedly Collaborative Triple Portraits

Unfortunately, we still know too little about fakes on the early seventeenth-century art market to be able to identify the hands of fakers, and I must admit that my many attempts to catch the culprit of what I am inclined to believe to be a fake have been denied. That is the very point of a pastiche, if not a full fledged forgery, after all.74 A ‘pastiche,’ or a convincing imitation, is already temporally unstable and authorially liminal – “neither Originals, nor Copies,” as Rogier De Piles defined it in 1699.75 A pastiche claims a referentiality to a form, or style that is recognizably historical by the time it is made, while in its machinations it creates something entirely new. The Detroit Triple Portrait and its purported authorship, which is provided by the inscription on the back, lay claim to a rather narrowly defined historical moment – the close working relationship between Giorgione and his two followers around the year 1510. There were claims in other collections from across Europe to similar historical moments involving collaborating hands. These novel claims, however, stretched the chronological boundaries into untenable realms. In the decade that followed Sohier’s inventory of 1642, where the Triple Portrait was first documented, records from three other collections listed similar paintings and repeated the same basic formula: a single painting; three half-length figures, heads, or portraits; and each figure painted by a different artist.76

One such dubious collaboration appeared in a vast list of European paintings in the 1654 inventory of the recently deceased Countess Alethea of Arundel. Along with her husband Thomas Howard, Alethea was one of the most prominent collectors of the seventeenth century with special connections to the Venetian art market. One entry in her inventory

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73 On the concept of bravura, likening martial boldness to the command of the painter’s brush, see Nicola Suthor, Bravura: Virtuosität und Mutwilligkeit in der Malerei der Frühen Neuzeit (Munich, 2010).
74 For a thoughtful consideration of what constitutes a pastiche, including issues of forgery and temporal instability, see Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, Anachronic Renaissance (New York, 2010), 289-299; and Loh, “Originals,” 243-266.
76 These inventories were first compiled in relation to the Detroit Triple Portrait by Garas, “Musici, adultere e conversioni,” 112; and by Caterina Furlan, Il Pordenone (Milan, 1988), 332.
records Titian, Tintoretto, and Pordenone as the authors of a single work, simply described as “tre ritratti in un quadro.” The appearance of these three painters as authors of three heads in a single work is surprising, especially because Pordenone and Tintoretto considered themselves to be Titian’s competitors. The second reported triple portrait comes from the list of paintings drawn up for the widow of Gasparo Chechel in 1657. One painting was described in terms that accord with the records of our other inventoried collaborations: “three figures, one seems to be by Tintoretto and the other by Giorgione, and the third by Titian.” The purported coordination between Tintoretto, Giorgione, and Titian is not just doubtful, but chronologically absurd, since Tintoretto’s earliest painting is dated thirty years after Giorgione’s death. The train of thought that led to this attribution is not recorded, though it likely reflects the belief of the owner Gasparo, since the inventory was based on his own catalogue of goods. A third example of such a triple portrait is dated to 1656 in the collection of Michele Pietra in Venice. This painting reportedly bore the hands of three members of the Bassano family, presumably Jacopo, Francesco, and Leandro: “Tre teste di mano dei Bassani, una del vecchio l’altra del giovini con soazeta nera.” Unlike the other two examples, and more like Sohier’s example, this scenario involving three Bassani is at least plausible.

With the exception of the painting recorded in Sohier’s list, that is to say our Triple Portrait in Detroit, none of these otherwise undocumented paintings have been identified. To

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78 Vasari did wrongly believe that Pordenone was the author of the Christ at the Pool of Bethesda in the church of San Rocco, in Vite (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1, 187. This was corrected by Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 1, 103.

79 “Un Detto sopra tela con cornice meze dorate con tre Figure, una Par del Tintoretto e l’altra di Zorzon et la Terza di Titiano.” Transcribed in Savini-Branca, Collezionismo veneziano, 144.

80 Tintoretto’s earliest painting, a sacra conversazione, is dated to 1540. See Robert Echols’ entry in Tintoretto, exh. cat. edited by Miguel Falomir (Madrid, 2007), cat. 1.

81 For more on Gasparo Chechel, see Linda Borean, “Gaspar Chechel,” in Il collezionismo d’arte a Venezia. Il Seicento, ed. Linda Borean and Stefania Mason (Venice, 2007), 248.

82 This entry from 1656 is recorded after the death of Michele Pietra, a painter and restorer, who descended from a merchant German family and lived in the parish of Santi Apostoli. It is possible that Boschini himself used the restoration services of Pietra, as he likened his work to that of a surgeon who fixes bones and revives life. See Boschini, Carta del navigar, 584-586. For Pietra’s inventory, see Savini-Branca, Collezionismo veneziano, 134-140, esp. 138. For a brief biography of Pietra, see Cecchini, Quadri e commercio, 179-180.
present these records, as has been done, as evidence of a not uncommon practice is misleading. These records only show that a seicento collector has identified the hands of three masters in a painting of a particular type. There is simply no documentary evidence before 1642 of any three painters in Venice working together on a single painting in this way. The chronological clustering of these inventory records is especially significant: 1642 for the Detroit *Triple Portrait*; 1654 for a painting by Titian, Pordenone, and Tintoretto; 1656 for a painting by the three Bassani; and 1657 for a painting by Titian, Giorgione, and Tintoretto. We could add 1660, if we feel compelled, as some have, to include the example described by Marco Boschini of the Adam and Eve supposedly by Titian, Tintoretto, Bassano, and Pozzoserrato. The sudden appearance of these paintings in galleries more than a century after their purported creations suggests, instead, that these kinds of pictures were made only shortly prior to their being recorded.

These alleged three-figure collaborations were objects of caution even in the seventeenth-century. The compiler of Chechel’s inventory was uncertain, calling attention only to the appearance of these hands, while Boschini rightfully planted the seed of doubt about his Adam and Eve painting by issuing the disclaimer, “if it is true,” so as to distance himself from the attribution. Our case study involving the trio of Sebastiano, Giorgione, and Titian, was not immune to scepticism either. In 1695, Constantijn Huygens Junior called the attribution a mistake (*abusive*) when it was in the collection of Sohier’s heir Marinus de Jode, who was upholding the attribution. Shortly thereafter, the *Triple Portrait* was in William

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83 Lucco turned to the inventories of these other collections to support his belief that a collaboration between Titian, Giorgione, and Sebastiano was within the realm of possibility for our *Triple Portrait*, which is nevertheless the only painting to be linked to one of these inventories. See his entry in, *Sebastiano del Piombo 1485 + 1547*, cat. 8. Another example of such misleading interpretations of the inventories can be found in the catalogue, *Le siècle de Titien: l’âge d’or de la peinture a Venise*, exh. cat. (Paris, 1993), cat. 34, p. 297: “Plusieurs mentions anciennes…de tableaux présentant trois figures peintes par trois artistes différents, montrent en tout cas que cette pratique n’était pas inconcevable à Venise au XVIe siècle.”

84 There is one notable case of Titian’s hand posthumously retouching a *sacra conversazione* by Palma Vecchio (now in the Gallerie dell’Accademia in Venice) and making his hand comparatively apparent. See the entry in *Titian*, exh. cat. edited by David Jaffé (London, 2003), cat. 17.

85 Boschini’s Adam and Eve was cited as evidence by Furlan, *Pordenone*, 332. See Chapter 2.5 for more on this passage in the *Carta del navegar pitoresco*.

86 Boschini, *Carta del navegar*, 369: “Dal celeste Retor no’ vien concesso/ Ste maravegie unir; pur tutavia,/ Se è vero che s’un quadro ele ghe sia,/ Se puol dir: una volta el l’ha permesso.”

87 Constantijn Huygens Jr., *Journal van Constantijn Huygens, den zoon, van 21 October 1688 tot 2 Sept. 1696* (Utrecht, 1881), vol. 2, 542: “Naemiddagh gingh tot Wiljets adress tot den Drost van ‘t Hoff, de Jode genaemt, en sagen daer de schilderij, daerin twee vrouwen ende een man komen, werdende geseght te wesen van Giorgione, Titiaen en Sebastiaen del Rombo (sic.), maer abusive.” Huygens Jr. also saw a pastoral scene featuring the shepherds and the angels by Bassano that obviously pleased him more; ibid.: “Oock het stuck dat
III’s collection only to be sold at auction in 1712. At first, the painting was simply attributed to Titian alone, who was also the only author named by Wallerant Vaillant when he made a print after the painting in 1662. After the painting failed to sell, however, it was re-attributed to Titian, Giorgione, and Palma Vecchio when it was again put up for auction in 1713.88

This general interest in celebrating three hands was not all that remarkable in the Seicento. The three Carracci were quickly regarded in the beginning of the century as the “great triumvirate,” and were seen as emblems of insuperable concord.89 In 1621, the three leading painters of Rome, Giuseppe Cesari d’Arpino, Annibale Carracci, and Caravaggio, were similarly declared to have been the “triumvirate of painting.”90 Perhaps it was in dispute of this declaration that the three Milanese painters Morazzone, il Cerano, and Giulio Cesare Procaccini were set to the single painting that became known as the Quadro delle tre mani.91 The combinatory strength allegedly produced by the three painters in the Detroit picture anticipated an even more compelling variant conjured up by Boschini in 1664: “Pordenone ... was a contemporary of Giorgione and Titian, and when the former is united with the two latter, one can form a triumvirate of painterly perfection.”92

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88 In the king’s collection in December 1712 it was recorded simply as “Drie tronie van Titian.” In April 1713, it was reported to be by Titian, Giorgione, and Palma, and the initials on the man’s hat was described as GH: “Twee vrowen en een manspersoon tot aen de middel, hebbende de man op de muts een cijfer GH, door Titiaen Georgon en Palma.” Finally in July 1713 it was listed as “Drie Tonien, in een Stuk, zynde Titiaen, Gorgon, en Palma, van Titiaen, zyn goede tydt.” See Koenraad Jonckheere, The Auction of King William’s Paintings 1713 (Philadelphia, 2008), 248-249, Lot 17.

89 At the end of Benedetto Morello’s description of the funeral of Agostino Carracci, Morello called the three Carracci the ‘great triumvirate’ (bel Triunvirato dei Carracci), as transcribed by Malvasia in the Felsina pittrice, vol. 2, 421. See also Malvasia, Life of the Carracci, trans. Anne Summerscale (University Park, PA., 2000), 196. Lucio Faberio too described the Carracci as a triumvirate in his Oration upon the death of Agostino Carracci, as transcribed again in Malvasia, Felsina pittrice, vol. 2, 428; Malvasia, Life of the Carracci, 201.


91 This appellation came from a short encomium to the painting penned by Giovanni Pasta in 1636. For more on the Quadro delle tre mani and Giovanni Pasta, see the recent essay by Philip Sohm, “Painting Together: ‘A Terrestrial Trinity’ of Painters in the Quadro delle tre mani,” in Artistic Practices and Cultural Transfer in Early Modern Italy: Essays in Honor of Deborah Howard, ed. Nebahat Avcioglu and Allison Sherman (Burlington, VT., 2015), 131-147.

3.6 The Reputation and Exploitation of the Giorgione Group in Collecting and Criticism

Not only did the Detroit Triple Portrait provide the collector with three famous hands in a single acquisition, but it contributed to another source of prestige that we often take for granted. By intimating something about the personal and artistic relationships between Sebastiano, Giorgione, and Titian, the painting had value as a pseudo-document of the artists’ social life, and coincided with various pastiche paintings that helped to visually reconstruct Titian’s social world using his independent self-portraits. Some portraits imagined Titian in the company of other artists, just as Lomazzo envisioned in the ideal paintings of Adam and Eve by Michelangelo and Titian, and by Raphael and Correggio. In the Chasing of the Moneylenders from the Temple (Art Institute of Minneapolis), for example, El Greco placed the faces of Titian, Michelangelo, Giulio Clovio, and Raphael in the bottom corner, a space normally reserved for donor portraits (Fig. 3.21). Bartolomeo Passerotti included Titian’s portrait next to his dear friend Jacopo Sansovino in a representation of an imaginary academy on the occasion of an anatomy lesson conducted by Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo. Neither El Greco’s painting, nor Passerotti’s drawing, claims to represent a true event of course. Other pastiche pictures did try to imagine authentic encounters, as is the case in a painting in Hampton Court under the title Titian and His Friends (Fig. 3.22). It features three half-length portraits, each copied after different portraits by Titian of

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94 Nichols, Titian, figs. 139 and 140.


96 Imagining artists coming together was a commonplace in the second half of the sixteenth century. On Vasari’s participation in this brand of hero worship, see Joan Stack, “Artists into Heroes: The Commemoration of Artists in the Art of Giorgio Vasari,” in Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art, ed. Mary Rogers (Aldershot, 2000), 163-175.
individual sitters. These copied figures included Titian’s own self-portrait, as well as a figure copied after the portrait of the Venetian senator Andrea dei Franceschi (Fig. 3.23), whom Ridolfi referred to as “amorevolissimo del Pittore,” and another copy after an unidentified sitter who originally held a letter inscribed, “Di Titiano Vecellio singolare amico” (Fig. 3.24).97 Another pastiche portrait, by an unknown painter, took Titian’s Berlin Self-Portrait and provided him with a visitor to occupy his averted attention (Fig. 3.25). Meanwhile, his famously resting right hand was made to hold a drawing for his new companion to examine. 98 At one point in the home of Domenico Ruzzini, it was described by Ridolfi as an authentic late self-portrait by Titian engaged in conversation with the mosaicist Francesco Zuccato. 99 Titian was thought to have first apprenticed in the workshop of the Zuccato family and it was also known that Titian maintained a friendship with this family long after he had moved onto an illustrious painting career.100

Although the Triple Portrait reveals nothing of Titian’s physiognomic identity, it suggests a different kind of document for his social world than the portraits cobbled together together


98 Unfortunately, the painting that matches Ridolfi’s description has been hard to track since 1955 when it was sold by Christie’s London; but a black and white photograph documents the work. Attribution of this painting has varied, from Titian himself around 1540, to various followers and imitators up to the seventeenth-century. See George Martin Richter “Two Titian Self-Portraits,” The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs 58, 337 (1931): 160-63 and 166-68 (Titian, c. 1540); Giorgio Tagliaferro and Bernard Aikema, Le botteghe di Tiziano (Florence, 2009), 208 (Orazio Vecellio, 1565-1570); Wethey, The Paintings of Titian, vol. 2, 183 (Anonymous, c. 1600); Davis, “Titian, A singular friend,” 264 (“Palmaesque imitator” – Giovanni Contarini?, c. 1600). Lionello Puppi said he had recently seen the painting in person in a private collection, which he did not name, and left his impression of its authorship for later. He still implied a connection to the “fake” self-portraits, such as the one in Washington, probably by Pietro della Vecchia; see Puppi, “Tiziano Vecellio. Autoritratto,” in Tiziano e Paolo III. Il pittore e il suo modello, ed. Lionello Puppi and Andrea Donati (Rome, 2012), 28, esp. n. 82. For a poor, but fairly close copy, see Oskar Fischel, Tizian. Des Meisters Gemälde (Stuttgart, [1924]), 277.

99 Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 1, 180. For more on the large and renowned Ruzzini collection, see the biographical entry by Rosella Lauber in Il collezionismo d’arte a Venezia. Il Seicento, ed. Linda Borean and Stefania Mason (Venice, 2007), 311-313.

out of Titian’s oeuvre. The distinct brushwork, the *vicendevolezza de’ pennelli*, professes the shared physical space of Titian and his companions in a more haptic sense. In order to understand why techniques reflecting the socio-biographical activities of the studio headed by Giorgione would have been important for the early modern collector, we must first consider how the group was represented in texts of the early modern period, and how this trio was represented in collections. We must, in particular, probe the long shadow that these visual and literary representations have cast on Sebastiano’s place in Venetian art history, a place which dissuades some scholars from accepting the Detroit *Triple Portrait* as a seventeenth-century re-imagining.¹⁰¹

Compared to oft-repeated accounts of Titian’s ascension over Giorgione at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, Sebastiano’s relationship with Giorgione is much less interesting as far as the literary sources are concerned. According to Vasari, Sebastiano’s path to Giorgione’s studio was similar to Titian’s. He apprenticed under the Bellini before leaving to work with Giorgione who was credited with bringing the *arte moderna* to Venice.¹⁰² Aside from Sebastiano’s motivation for changing his curriculum, Vasari was more concerned with the stages of Sebastiano’s life after Giorgione’s death, when the Venetian moved to Rome and teamed up with Michelangelo in competition with Raphael.¹⁰³ The legacy Sebastiano left behind in the collective memory of his compatriots was also minimal. In some respects, this apparent oblivion was necessary for Titian’s reputation.

In Sebastiano’s own lifetime, he was commonly referred to by some variant of the epithet Veneziano.¹⁰⁴ His settlement in Rome and his association with Michelangelo nevertheless drew the ire of his posthumous Venetian critics. He was thrust into the middle of a debate between Vasari and increasingly vituperative art writers of Venice, from Ludovico Dolce to Marco Boschini. Centering on the relative merits of *disegno* and *colorito*, this debate compared the Florentine emphasis on the intellectual faculties of drawing against the

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¹⁰¹ See Mauro Lucco’s entry in *Sebastiano del Piombo 1485 + 1547*, 110: “È infatti interessanti ricordare che la primissima attribuzione di cui abbiamo conoscenza, quella riportata nell’inventario di Guglielmo d’Orange, ai primi del Settecento... è a Tiziano, Giorgione e Palma; ciò che peraltro corrisponde piuttosto bene al tipico atteggiamen to veneziano di dimenticanza, o trascuratezza, nei confronti di Sebastiano.” The earliest attribution is in fact the one naming Sebastiano in Sohier’s collection in 1642, which Lucco noted in the provenance.
¹⁰³ See Chapter 1.3.1.
¹⁰⁴ Vasari and Benvenuto Cellini referred to him as Sebastiano Veneziano. Marino Sanuto would also claim Sebastiano as ‘nostro’ in his correspondence as Venetian envoy to Rome. And when Sebastiano signed his works upon his arrival in Rome he used the name ‘Sebastianus Venetus’; see Hirst, *Sebastiano del Piombo*, 3.
Venetian emphasis on both naturalism and the expressive application of paint. But the intellectualizing and philosophizing of each side of the disagreement is not terribly relevant to our present topic. Rather, we are concerned with the way Sebastiano and Titian were used as actors in this theoretical disputa. If Titian was to compete with Michelangelo for artistic supremacy, as was Dolce’s intention in the Aretino (1557), he could not be seen as equal to Sebastiano who had been aided by Michelangelo’s drawings. In Dolce’s first volley, therefore, he compared Sebastiano to Horace’s fabled crow dressing itself up in the feathers of another, and he likened him to a clumsy knight unable to hold the lance given to him. Sebastiano, he concluded, was thus no match for Raphael, and much less so for Titian. Dolce then recounted the story of Sebastiano guiding Titian through the Sistine apartments. When Titian noticed the presence of a different hand, he rebuked whoever was responsible for restoring Raphael’s frescoes, unaware that Sebastiano’s hand was apparently to blame. By the end of Dolce’s dialogue, Titian appeared nothing like this characterization of Sebastiano, and was elevated above both Michelangelo and Raphael. In the second edition of the Vite of 1568, Vasari countered Dolce by quoting Sebastiano in an oratio ficta in which the Venetian, looking at Titian’s woodcut representing the Triumph of the Faith (Fig. 3.26), declared that Titian would have benefited from a trip to Rome to study the works of Raphael and Michelangelo – the two rivals Titian was said to have bested in Dolce’s Aretino.


107 See Dolce, Dolce’s Aretino, 94-95. See also Mark Roskill’s comments to this passage in ibid., 238-239.

108 Vasari, Vite (1568), 3-2, 807. Rona Goffen also identified this passage as strategically motivated by Vasari, but not in the context of the debate between Dolce and Vasari. See Goffen, Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian (New Haven, 2002), 338.
Artistic campanilismo escalated to such a point that Sebastiano eventually became an artist without a regional identity. The supposed disavowal of Sebastiano by Venetian art critics was effectively complete and explicit by the middle of the seventeenth century. Despite having been born in Venice, unlike Titian who was from Cadore, Sebastiano was left out of Ridolfi’s biographies in the Maraviglie dell’arte (1648). The perception of Sebastiano’s antagonism towards, and abandonment of Venice was then discussed openly by Marco Boschini in the Carta del navegar pitoresco (1660), where Sebastiano was described as “the one who made fun of Titian” (se burlava di Tizian), a clear reference to the remarks he supposedly made about Titian’s woodcut. Boschini added that he would not elaborate on the Venetian émigré, because Sebastiano had produced too little in Venice to qualify him as one of its painters. In Boschini’s view, Sebastiano was a Roman painter: “I can say few words about him:…Because he made his operation/ in Rome, where he received great prizes./ Of him grand things are described by Vasari./ Where one’s goods are found, there is his homeland...”

Even if Sebastiano’s place as a Venetian painter was impaired in art criticism, Venetian collectors did not necessarily agree with the condemnations of him. Despite what we have

109 Kristina Herrmann Fiore made a similar comment on Sebastiano’s national status; see “Aspetti della fortuna critica di Sebastiano nel Cinquecento e nel Seicento,” in Sebastiano del Piombo 1485 + 1547, 73.

110 Boschini referred to Sebastiano’s comments about Titian as part of his attacks against Vasari; see Boschini, Carta del navegar, 36. Among Sebastiano’s works in Venice, Boschini mentioned only the organ shutters for San Bartolomeo (now in the Accademia) and the San Giovanni Crisostomo altarpiece, about which he said that Sebastiano only assisted; see Boschini, Carta del navegar, 432-433.

111 Boschini, Carta del navegar, 432-433: “Puochrome posso dir de lu:…Perché l’ha fato le so operacion/ A Roma, dove l’ha ebe premii rari./De lu gran cose ha rasonà el Vasari./Dove è ‘l ben xe la Patria; l’ha rason.” The Carracci postille to Vasari’s Life of Titian echo this sentiment, dismissing Sebastiano as a mere follower of Michelangelo; see Denis Mahon, “Eclecticism and the Carracci,” Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 16, 3 (1953): 310. Ridolfi made a similar remark about Girolamo Muziano, yet still included his biography; Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 1, 266.

112 Sebastiano’s name appears in many Venetian inventories, although not with the same frequency as the usual suspects – Titian, Giorgione, Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, or the Bassani. Whether he was collected as a Venetian or a Roman, or whether the issue of his regional identity was even considered relevant, has not been relayed to us in these inventories. Ridolfi listed one of his paintings among those of Central Italian painters in the Life of Domenico Riccio detto il Brusasorci, in Maraviglie, vol. 2, 110. Nicolas Regnier listed a portrait of Cardinal Monte by Sebastiano next to a portrait by Heinrich Aldegrevre, and next to history paintings by Francesco Albani and Guido Reni; see Simona Savini-Branca, Collezionismo veneziano, 103. When Martinioni described Regnier’s collection, Sebastiano’s portrait followed a painting by Bronzino, and was then itself followed by Francesco Albani and Guido Reni; see Sansovino-Martinioni, Città nobilissima, 378. In Andrea Vendramin’s collection, his work was displayed directly over a portrait by Titian; see Tancred Borenius, The Picture Gallery of Andrea Vendramin (London, 1923), pl. 26. In the collection of Giovan Battista Combi another portrait of a cardinal by Sebastiano was listed in the inventory after portraits by Tintoretto, Giorgione, Pordenone, Lorenzo Lotto, Titian, and another Tintoretto; see Mason and Borean, eds., Il collezionismo. Il Seicento, 342.
come to understand about Sebastiano’s critical misfortunes in Venice, collectors evidently consulted Vasari’s biographies where the three were described as very close. This can be seen in a book of drawings created around 1605 by the great inheritor of Venetian Renaissance painting, Palma Giovane. On twelve sheets of paper, Palma divided thirty-six portraits of artists into triads, each artist made identifiable by an accompanying inscription. The groupings on several sheets, though not all, were based on the close associations between the artists, especially if they were tied to the same studio. Raphael’s portrait, to name just one example, shared a page with Giulio Romano and Perino del Vaga, his two assistants in the Sistine apartments. On another sheet, Titian’s face was included with Giorgione, and with a bearded artist whose name is inscribed “BAS VEN F.”, an abbreviation that should be read as ‘Bastiano Veneziano Fra’ (Fig. 3.27). Sebastiano del Piombo was known as Sebastiano Veneziano and was a frate as holder of the papal seal, called the piombo.113 The poet Francesco Molza even called him “Fra Bastiano of Venice” explicitly.114 Still, we do not need an inscription to identify this graphically rendered personage with Sebastiano, as the face duplicates the woodcut portrait that opens his biography in Vasari’s Vite of 1568 (Fig. 3.28).115 More recently the abbreviated inscription was tentatively interpreted to read Francesco Bassano.116 Such an oversight of Sebastiano’s likeness is remarkable, especially since it is so well known that Palma consulted Vasari’s woodcuts for these portraits. The fact that he was not considered a candidate attests to the modern preconception that Sebastiano suffered a damnatio memoria in Venice by the seventeenth century.

As the case above demonstrates, Titian and Sebastiano were still regarded as the dear students of Giorgione, at least in the early part of the seventeenth century. This is further indicated in a particular case in Verona. In a guidebook published in 1620 touring the palace...

of Giovanni Giacomo Giusti, the dialogue’s interlocutors reflected on a painting attributed to Giorgione. According to the cicerone of the dialogue, the work contained a large figure ready to pluck the chord of a lute while singing for two rapt male listeners. When pressed by his foreign companions for more information about Giorgione, the guide pointed out (no doubt based on his reading of Vasari) that Giorgione was an excellent lute player, adding: “…if I had to tell you my feelings, I believe that he has portrayed himself in this painting with lute in hand; and that the two next to him are his pupils, perhaps Titian, and he who became Fra Bastiano dal Piombo, who were most dear to the one who taught them.” The author of the dialogue, Francesco Pona, may have been looking at a painting now universally attributed to Giovanni Cariani, rather than to Giorgione (Fig. 3.29). This painting is currently in the National Gallery in Washington and, like Pona’s description, has a hulking central figure who plays the lute and sings to two male listeners on either side of him. If this is the same painting described by Pona, then we can see clearly that his identification of the figures as Giorgione, Titian, and Sebastiano was quixotic at the very least. Perhaps because of the evocative rendering of the figures’ faces, he was hoping to see personages that fit into the biography of the reputed painter, especially when it included artistic companions.

3.7 ♦ Excursus: An Exploration of the Iconography in the Triple Portrait as an Allegory of Collaboration

The two examples by Pona and Palma tell us that a pasticheur at the turn of the century would not have been on shaky ground in reproducing this group of painters as one might believe today. In fact, their well known relationships would have added to the prestige of the painting, and might have been sought in any subject matter suggestive of their close personal relationship. To this point, I have intentionally deferred discussion of the subject matter of the Triple Portrait until the importance of its early (mis)attribution to Titian, Giorgione, and

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117 Francesco Pona, Sileno, overo delle bellezze del luogo dell’ill.mo sig. co. Gio. Giacomo Giusti (Verona, 1620): 45-47: “…s’io debbo dirvi il mio senso, credo ch’egli sè stesso ritraggesse in questo quadro, col Liuto in braccio; e che gli due c’hà egli à canto, siano de’ scolari suoi, forse Titiano, e quello che fù poi Frà Bastiano dal Piombo, che furono i più carri à cui egli insegnasse.” Thanks are due to Philip Sohm for first alerting me to this passage.

118 Davide Dossi, “La collezione di Agostino e Gian Giacomo Giusti,” Verona illustrata 21 (2008): 125-126, fig. 66. Dossi pointed out that this painting was described in the Bevilacqua inventory of 1593 as “un quadro de Zorzon dal liuto grande.”

119 For more on the painting, see Rodolfo Pallucchini and Francesco Rossi, Giovanni Cariani (Milan, 1983), cat. 46.
Sebastiano was well enough established.\textsuperscript{120} I have also chosen so far to stick to one of the more neutral titles, though there have been a variety of proposals over the years. It has usually been the title alone that provides any indication of a scholar’s personal response to the subject. More specific designations have suggested a moralizing narrative, such as \textit{The Seduction}, or \textit{The Appeal}.

\textsuperscript{121} Some investigations, with only a little more explanation, have concluded that the painting is a representation of \textit{Hercules Between Vice and Virtue}, or \textit{Jason Between Creusa and Medea}.\textsuperscript{122} If the painting is a representation of such a scene of seduction or moral tension, however, there is an uncharacteristic lack of psychological reaction. What initially looks like a faint frown or scowl on the man’s face is actually the result of a deep shadow painted at the corner of his lips. When seen in person and up close, his mouth is rather straight and emotionally unrevealing. Any gravity in his demeanor relates more to the imitation of Giorgione and to attempts to evoke his epithet ‘Big George’, a reputation he gained in part from his big, serious subjects. The three figures are also enclosed in a circular grouping without the sense of outward direction and strict division that one normally encounters in such moralizing tales.\textsuperscript{123}

The rather flaccid mood overall is more indicative of an allegory than the momentariness of a psychologically charged narrative, and it is in looking to allegories related to themes of unity that we find the most useful comparisons. To be clear, the discussion of the iconography that follows is more of an excursus than a firm argument. The \textit{Triple Portrait}, I contend, was meant to subliminally massage the perception of the expectant collector so that he would project themes of unity and harmony onto the act of painting itself, or onto the intertwining minds and bodies in collaboration, which would in turn reinforce attributions to the famous trio of painters. Although there was no established iconography for collaboration,\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{120} As I was completing the current study, I discovered the recent dissertation by Alessandro Rossi, “Dipinti tra sguardo e pensiero. Studi attorno a Giorgione, Morazzone e Tiepolo” (PhD diss., Università degli Studi di Bergamo, 2013), which has a lengthy reflection on the problem of fixing a specific meaning to the Detroit \textit{Triple Portrait}.


\textsuperscript{122} For Hercules between Vice and Virtue, see Abraham Bredius and Frederick Schmidt-Degener, \textit{Die Grossherzogliche Gemäldegalerie im Augusteum zu Oldenburg} (Oldenburg, 1906), 31. On the proposed interpretation of Medea and Creusa, see Paul Schubring, “A Surmise Concerning the Subject of the Venetian Figure Painting in the Detroit Museum,” \textit{Art in America} (1926): 35-40.

\textsuperscript{123} The fullest account of this popular iconography was established by Erwin Panofsky, \textit{Hercules am Scheideweg und andere antike Bildstoffe in der neueren Kunst} (Berlin, 1930).
which was indeed an anachronistic term, there was a common discourse for extolling collaborative hands, as was discussed in the first chapter. In art criticism, collaborative projects were, by this point in the early seventeenth century, celebrated as two minds with one hand. Various models of social bonds, including friendship, marriage, and kinship, lent themselves to this discourse in which two or more bodies act were said to act as one.

3.7.1 Comparative Allegories of Marriage and Marriage Portraits

Titian’s *Allegory of Marriage* and Paolo Veronese’s *Happy Union* are two well known allegories of marriage that offer compelling comparisons with the arcane subject of the Detroit *Triple Portrait*. Although the more conspicuous symbols are nowhere to be found in the *Triple Portrait*, the figures in all three of these paintings are similarly arranged, have equivalent gestures, comportments, and moods, and are donned in comparable appurtenances. The first of these allegories is Titian’s *Allegory of Marriage* in the Louvre (Fig. 3.30), in which the marchese Alfonso d’Avalos is situated behind his wife, who stares somewhat blankly into space despite her husband’s touch. Across from her, the nude woman with a myrtle crown and flowing hair approaches the couple with her hand to her heart – a personification of Marital Faith. The other comparable allegory is the *Happy Union*, one of four pictures by Paolo Veronese illustrating four different states of love: *Infidelity, Scorn, Respect*, and *Happy Union* (Fig. 3.31). As in the *Triple Portrait*, two women occupy the foreground of the *Happy Union*. A bride, with long flowing hair, pearls, and a golden necklace, touches her heart with her ringed right hand. Her centrality is balanced by the elevated position of her counterpart, a woman in the nude who is likely a personification of Concordia. With a stoic gaze and with her hair tied up, Concordia reaches out with a laurel wreath to crown the virtuous bride at her feet. This bride is connected to the groom behind her, each partner grasping what might be an olive branch, a symbol of their peaceful union, or what might be a laurel branch with berries, a symbol of their prospective fecundity.

124 The authoritative interpretation of this painting remains Erwin Panofsky, *Problems in Titian: Mostly Iconographic* (New York, 1969), 126-129. Titian’s painting was widely copied and disseminated not only in England where it was held in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but also in Venice. Padovanino, for example, made several variants on the composition; see Ruggeri, *Padovanino*, cat. 19.

The figures in these marriage allegories are similar in their basic makeup to our *Triple Portrait*. Two women – one with tied up hair, the other with loose hair – flank a male figure, who is pushed slightly to the background. The Detroit picture, however, has been stripped of many of the overt attributes, such as the myrtle, the olive/laurel branch, or even the Cupid or putto. There are, nevertheless, items in these allegories that are reproduced in the *Triple Portrait*. These items behave like disguised symbols, signifying the drawn out wedding ceremonies of the Italian Renaissance. Many of the stages of such weddings involved an exchange of gifts that were representative of a new domestic companionship. The dowry and trousseau came into the possession of the groom, and an assortment of clothes and jewellery was given to the bride in a counter-trousseau. Performative gifting was followed by gestures symbolizing the bonds of the couple’s union, such as the exchange of rings and the joining of hands as an oath of faith (the *dextrarum iunctio*). With a similar mood to the *Triple Portrait*, a select number of marriage portraits, by Paris Bordone (Fig. 3.32), by Bernardino Licinio (Fig. 3.33), and by Callisto Piazza, were made to document some of these performative moments involving the bride, the groom, and their attendants.

Pieces of jewellery, like those worn by the two women in the *Triple Portrait*, were conspicuous emblems in the bride’s apparel, visibly conveying the strength of the marital union, or concord. The woman on the left of the *Triple Portrait*, for example, bears two identifications of the branch held by the couple, see Enrico Maria Dal Pozzolo, *Colori d’amore: parole, gesti e carezze nella pittura veneziana del Cinquecento* (Treviso, 2008), 41 and 193 n.61.


127 Despite similar moralizing interpretations to the *Triple Portrait*, Paris Bordone’s *Amanti* was convincingly linked by Harula Economopoulos to key moments in the marriage ceremony, in “Considerazioni su ruoli dimenticati: gli ‘Amanti’ di Paris Bordon e la figura del compare dell’anello,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 2, 3 (1992): 99-123. See also Enrico Maria Dal Pozzolo, *Colori d’amore*, 166-172. It is likely the comare who appears behind the couple in a marriage portrait by Bernardino Licinio and possibly in the portrait by Callisto Piazza. The portrait by Licinio is known only from a faithful copy from the early eighteenth century; see Economopoulous, “Considerazione su ruoli dimenticati,” 106-108, and fig. 8. See also Dal Pozzolo, who believes that the marriage portrait is in fact a nineteenth-century copy from an original, in *Colori d’amore*, 170, fig. 162, and 229 n.44. For the marriage portrait by Callisto Piazzo, featuring the washing of the hands during the *dextrarum iunctio*, see Dal Pozzolo, *Colori d’amore*, 80-83.

128 On the fine materials that were obtained for weddings across a variety of classes in Renaissance Venice, see Patricia Allerston, “Wedding finery in sixteenth-century Venice,” in *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650*, ed. Trevor Dean and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge, 1998), 25-40.
items that signified the binding of two souls and bodies. The long gold necklace that she wears was associated with the chain, or *catena*, that binds the couple together, and was featured in several portraits of wives throughout Italy. A binding necklace was especially important in Cesare Ripa’s description of ‘Concordia Matrimoniale’ (Fig. 3.34), symbolizing the love and friendship of spouses whose souls and flesh become one, much like the common expression celebrating the appearance of a single collaborative hand.\(^\text{129}\) This lady in white in the *Triple Portrait* also wears a ring on her right outstretched hand, or more specifically on the fourth digit of her right hand. Although it was increasingly common for the ring to be placed on the fourth digit of the left hand, as is customary today, it was not until 1614 in the *Rituale Romanum* that the left hand was strictly codified.\(^\text{130}\) The traditional meaning of the wedding ring derives from ancient custom based on the belief that the fourth digit contains the vein that carries the blood directly from the heart. Accordingly, the ring placed on this finger indicated that the two hearts were joined together, further enacting the concept of combinatory flesh in marriage. Especially when the ring bestowed on the bride held a stone, according to medieval canon, it reflected the husband’s promise of devotion: “as a sign of mutual trust, or rather as a pledge of love by which their hearts are joined.”\(^\text{131}\)

The stoic woman on the right of the *Triple Portrait* has two items of jewellery that refer variously to purity, chastity, and the conjugation of the marriage. Whereas the woman on the left wears a gold necklace symbolic of the chains binding the couple together, the woman on the right wears the paternoster belt associated in kind with the strength of the conjugal union and with the sacred bonds of the whole family. This strength is most visibly expressed in Parmigianino’s portrait of Camilla Gonzaga, whose three sons each grab a strand of hanging beads (Fig. 3.35).\(^\text{132}\) The thread of pearls tied into the woman’s hair was typically given to the bride by the groom’s mother before the nuptials took place, because it was a symbol of

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\(^\text{129}\) Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia, overo descrittione d’imagini delle virtù, vitij, affetti, passion humane, corpi celesti, mondo e sue parti* (Padua, 1611), 89.


\(^\text{132}\) On the significance of the belt, see Economopoulos, “Considerazioni su ruoli dimenticati,” 108-112.
purity and chastity. What is more, according to Lodovico Dolce in his treatise on precious stones, pearls were synonymous with ‘unione’:

The pearl is usually round, and some refer to it as a union, because no more than one is found in each conch. And if there is enough room in the conch to produce more than one, they are englobed together, that is to say composed in their roundness, and if set against the light, the distinctions can be seen. Many times two or three have been seen. 

I can think of no better description of the union of discernible difference seen in the Triple Portrait, which has the appearance of a whole until closer scrutiny reveals its distinct parts. Because coiffure was not excluded from the cultural codes marking the various stages of a wedding ceremony, and of the marriage that followed, the different hairstyles of the two women in the Triple Portrait need further comment. The hairstyle of the ‘Sebastianesque’ woman on the right contributes again to the theme of purity, which was conveyed already by the rosary belt and the pearls. Left hanging down past her shoulders, her hairstyle is common in representations of a new bride being presented to the family at her nuptials. According to Cesare Vecellio, in his description of a betrothed bride, gold thread was typically put in her hair, like the gold ribbon seen on the figure on the right. Her black gown, however, indicates that she is in transition from an unmarried state to a married state, which would be signaled with a white dress (Fig. 3.36). This long-haired bride at the moment of her nuptials was also represented in Veronese’s Happy Union, where she is likewise adorned with pearls and connected to the young putto who holds her belt chain. The flowing locks are represented as well in Titian’s marriage allegory in the figure of Marital Faith, who personifies the importance of the oath-taking. Veronese included the dog (Fido) next to his bridal figure to reinforce this same notion of oath-taking fidelity. In contrast to the loose locks of the Sebastianesque bride in the Triple Portrait, the hair of the Titianesque woman on the left is

134 Ludovico Dolce, Libri tre di M. Lodovico Dolce: ne i quali si tratta delle diverse sorti delle Gemme, che produce la natura (Venice, 1565), 51r-51v: “È la perla per lo piu rotondo, e da alcuni è detta unione, essendo che in ciascuna conca non se ne trova piu che una. E se per l’abondanza dell’aire se ne creano piu in una conca, tutte insieme sono globate, cioè composte nella loro rotondità, laquale opponendosi elle al lume si vede distinta. E se ne sono vedute molte volte due e tre.” Cited without quotation in Economopoulos, “Considerazioni su ruoli dimenticati,” 120.
135 For the costume of the bride prior to the vows, see Cesare Vecellio, De gli habit antichi, et moderni (Venice, 1593), 96. For the bride’s change of clothes after presentation to her new family, see ibid., 97.
tied up around her head, more typical of a wife after matrimony. In this fashion, she resembles the wife in Titian’s *Marriage Allegory* and Veronese’s personification of Concordia in the *Happy Union*, each on the left side of their respective compositions.

With their hair, the two figures are balanced in a chiasmus – one with tightly tied hair, but loose and patchy brushwork, and the other with loose hair, but tightly controlled and fine brushwork. This balance seemingly evinces the agreement that would have been expected between the purported painters. Such supposed willingness and reciprocity were qualities that were also expected in order for a marriage to be sanctioned, although practice may not have always agreed with the law. Prior to the Council of Trent, tradition had established a number of rituals in the marriage ceremony, but the only truly legal requirement was the willing consent of both individuals.\(^{136}\) After Trent, the families were included among the parties whose consent was required,\(^{137}\) and as much as the union had devolved into a contract between families, the consent of the couple was still necessary. A longstanding maxim from the period proclaimed, “unwilling marriages usually have bad results.”\(^{138}\)

It is not just the jewellery and the hair in the Detroit *Triple Portrait* that have strong associations with ideas of willing unity. The singularly conspicuous gesture in the composition is a further signifier of such reciprocal accord. The outstretched hand, which bears the ring symbolizing conjoined hearts, is placed over the heart specifically. In Cesare Ripa’s *Iconologia*, an outstretched hand placed on a heart was described as a symbol of mutual love, appearing in the personification of “Marital Concordia.” Touching another’s heart expressed the sentiment of sharing a single heart, an important ideal of marriage and of collaboration.\(^{139}\) We have already seen this gesture of the hand placed on the heart both in Veronese’s *Happy Union* and in Titian’s *Allegory of Marriage*. But because of its related connotations of concordant unity, trust, and fidelity, this gesture had similar meanings tied to

\(^{136}\) The form by which consent was recognized varied according to different ritual traditions, but the free consent of the couple was always a requirement in some form; see Christiana Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 1985), 179. See also, Trevor Dean and Kate Lowe, “Introduction: Issues in the History,” in *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650*, ed. Trevor Dean and Kate Lowe (Cambridge and New York, 1998), 10; Brian Richardson, “Amore Maritale”, in *Women in Italian Renaissance Culture and Society*, ed. Letizia Panizza (Oxford, 2000), 194-208.

\(^{137}\) Andrea Bayer, “Introduction: Art and Love in Renaissance Italy,” in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, exh. cat. edited by Andrea Bayer (New York, 2008), 3; Krohn, “Marriage as a Key,” 12.


\(^{139}\) Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, 99. Ripa was clearly alluding to the verses of Mark 10:8.
friendship as well, appearing in Ripa’s explanation of “Fede in Amicitia,” for example.\textsuperscript{140} This sign was equally integral to Rubens’ \textit{Self-Portrait with Friends} from around 1602 (Fig. 3.37). In this group of figures, Rubens portrayed himself touching his own heart, over which was placed the outstretched hand of one of his humanist friends.\textsuperscript{141}

The reciprocity and fidelity afforded by an effective union was thought to fall more suitably to a true friend, which offered a compelling parallel for those critics, including Vasari, who had tried to make theoretical sense of collaboration.\textsuperscript{142} But attitudes towards marriage were changing over the course of the sixteenth century. Aristotle supplied an intellectual pretext for the benefits of friendship in marriage without necessarily overturning its gendered hierarchy. It was the expectation of ideal friends that they be virtually the same person in spirit, and that they be joined together for virtue, more so than for utility or pleasure. Friendship in marriage, on the other hand, involved, for Aristotle, two partners with different functions and skills who strive towards a common purpose.\textsuperscript{143} This argument about companionate partnership was taken up by Mario Equicola in his defense of women, \textit{De mulieribus} of 1502, and by Erasmus as well.\textsuperscript{144} In many ways, this marital alternative to friendship spoke more strongly to the ideals of collaboration and the \textit{vicendevolezza de’ pennelli}, as it involved two distinct painters becoming a single bodily entity out of their complementary skills. Even if patriarchal authority was still inherent in early modern marriage, it would have at least accorded well with the idea that Giorgione was the leader in this harmonious marriage of styles depicted in the \textit{Triple Portrait}.

3.7.2 The Intertwined Initials as an Emblem of Collaborative Oaths

The male figure in the centre of the composition really only has one main attribute, which has so far been neglected in our interpretation. The initials, C, H, and A, inscribed in yellow

\textsuperscript{140} See for example, “Fede nell’amicitia,” in Ripa, \textit{Iconologia}, 202.
\textsuperscript{141} The identity of this foreground figure has not been settled. On this painting and the visual cues that identify the theme of friendship, see Kate Bomford, “Peter Paul Rubens and the Value of Friendship,” \textit{Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek} 54 (2003): 228-257. See also Michael Jaffé, \textit{Rubens and Italy} (Oxford, 1977), 75.
\textsuperscript{142} To pick just one example, see Vasari, \textit{Vite} (1568), vol. 3, bk. 1, 42: “Mariotto Albertinelli, familiarissimo, e cordialissimo amico, & si puo dirc un’altro fra Bartolomeo; non solo per la continua conversatione, & pratica, ma anchera per la simiglianza della maniera mentre che egli attese dadovero all’arte.” For more on this passage, see Chapter 1.3.
on the large hat, have been the greatest source of frustration for those attempting to unlock the enigmatic invention of the Detroit Triple Portrait, and there has yet to be a convincing interpretation. I will not claim to hold the definitive keys to their meaning, but I would be remiss to avoid offering an explanation of my own for these mystifying letters. As is virtually inevitable with such a cipher, I must confess, nevertheless, that in my attempts to explain it, I am guided by a presupposition that the initials correspond to the theme I believe to be central to the invention as a whole, that is artistic harmony, if not collaboration more specifically.

The composition of the letters might contribute as much to our understanding of the initials as the meaning of the letters themselves. The three intertwined initials, C, H, and A, inscribed on the man’s hat replicate the positions of the three figures. The letter ‘C’, in particular, seems to envelop its companions into itself like an embrace, just as the arm of the woman on the left reaches out towards her counterpart. The entwined letters and their equivalent figures evoke various iconographic illustrations that Ripa described in relation to ideas of unity and harmony. In such passages, he pointed to certain attributes or symbols, like the roots of the pomegranate, because of their intertwining features (intrecciata). If the arrangement of the letters encapsulates the general idea of unity on its own, it could be inferred that each letter relates to a virtue of unity that is conveyed by its corresponding figure. The letter ‘C’ corresponds to the woman in white who wears the necklace and the ring, attributes of Concordia. The ‘A’ corresponds to the woman in black, whose belt, pearls, and hairstyle suggest attributes of truth and virginal purity particularly in friendship or love – Amicitia or Amor. Since the letter ‘A’ takes the position of the woman on the right, the feminine noun, Amicitia, is the better option out of the two. Given the theme of unity,

145 Bredius and Schmidt-Degener argued that the initials are Greek letters standing for Hercules, Vice, and Virtue, in Grossherzoglische Gemäldegalerie, 31. This theory was tentatively supported by Pallucchini and Rossi, Giovanni Cariani, 290. William Suida thought they stand for Charitas, Amor, and Humanitas, and thus emblematize the Scuola della Carità; see Suida, “Giorgione in American Museums,” 151. On the interpretation that the painting refers to the love (amor) and honesty (honestas) of the swan (cigna), see Enrico Guidoni, Giorgione: opere e significanti ([n.p.], 1999), cat. 67.

146 For the emblem of Amicitia etiam post mortem durans, Andrea Alciati illustrated a grape vine coiling around a dead tree in the Emblemata (Padua, 1621). This symbol was employed by Rubens in his portrait of Justus Lipsius and His Pupils, including Rubens’ brother Philip. See Bomford, “Rubens and the Value of Friendship,” 230, and fig. 3.

147 In the philosophy of friendship, the two words are virtual synonyms. As the interlocutor Adovardo put it in Alberti’s dialogue, Della famiglia, Book IV: “It is called amicizia because it is the one experience which requires the affection of soul called amore”. See Leon Battista Alberti, The Family in Renaissance Florence, translated by Renée Neu Watkins (Columbia, 1969), 283.
Harmonia is one possible interpretation for the letter ‘H’, but Harmonia is a feminine personification and it would be redundant next to Concordia anyway.

It was once suggested, without explanation, that the initials stand for Amor, Concordia, and Honor. Honor is an intriguing option when it is compared to a three-figure group in an ancient Roman relief. In ancient Rome, a triangulated grouping of three figures was a common image type for any agreement requiring the swearing of an oath in good faith, especially in the marital union. These visualizations of oaths, moreover, usually took place in front of the figure of Concordia (Figs. 3.38 and 3.39). The particular marble group I would like to bring to the fore was reproduced in Pierio Valeriano’s Hieroglyphica under the iconography of FIDIVS DEVS (Fig. 3.40). Each of the figures on this oath-taking relief apparently had inscriptions linking them to a particular virtue. The man on the left was identified as HONOR, who Valeriano described as beardless, but mature. HONOR, in this illustration, reaches across the body of a young boy, inscribed with the name of Love or AMOR, and clasps hands with a virgin personifying Truth, or VERITAS. In Valeriano’s reading of what he took to be an emblematic representation of oath taking, Honor supports good faith, Truth gives birth to good faith, and Love nourishes good faith. Perhaps we could apply a similar method to our reading of the allegory of collaboration in the Detroit Triple Portrait. If we connect the initials to the figures, then it would appear that Concordia reaches across Honor to touch Amicitia. By extending Valeriano’s model, the picture could be said to argue that Concordia supports collaboration, Amicitia engenders collaboration, and Honor nourishes collaboration.

148 Pietro Maria Bardi proposed this meaning in a conversation recorded by Suida, “Giorgione in American Museums,” 151.

149 Many of the examples of this kind of arrangement would have been seen on Roman sarcophagi. For two notable examples, see Diana E. E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson, eds., I Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome, exh. cat. (Austin, 1996), cats. 162 and 163. Such imagery was very common in Roman relief sculpture and on Roman coins, and related to the bonds of marriage, with a personification of Concordia standing between the married couple.

150 Ioanne Pierio Valeriano, Hieroglyphica sev de sacris Aegyptiorvm, aliav'mqve gentium literis commentarii (Lyon, 1594), 573: “Praestantissimum extat Romae in antiquo marmore Fidij simulacrum, sic expressum: Vir est imberbis quidem, sed tamen maturam prae se ferens aetatem, cui adiectum est nomen, HONOR, hic VERITATI, quae virginis forma expressa est, manum porrigit, prenditque: in medio autem AMOR est puerili aetate: quod haec tria sint, quibus Fides nititur, quaeque illam inuiolatam conservant: nempe honoris studium, veritas promissorum, vt videlicet ab vtroque seruetur, & amor, qui nisi adsit & faveat, facilè fides corrumpitur: nam fidem honos sustiner, veritas parit, amor nutrit.” I have not been able to find the exact marble described by Valeriano.
3.7.3 A Marriage Allegory Conflated with a Triple Portrait

Taken all together, the subtle attributes and initials in the *Triple Portrait* may be thought to allude to allegories of marriage and friendship and to their themes of concord and unity. The idea that marriage, like collaboration, represents two bodies becoming one is integral to such virtues. Strictly speaking, however, the two bodies involved in marriage do not correspond to the group of three bodies in the *Triple Portrait* and to the three respective hands of Giorgione, Sebastiano, and Titian. If the idea of the *Triple Portrait* was to celebrate the triumvirate of Titian, Giorgione, and Sebastiano del Piombo, marriage portraiture did not adequately express the collaborative idea that these were three parts of a single entity.

With a composition that includes all three angles of the face – that is three quarter turn, full face (or near full face), and profile – the *Triple Portrait* is redolent of a genre of portraiture in which these same three views of the face were composed after an individual sitter in a single picture. The best known version of this kind of composition is Lorenzo Lotto’s *Triple Portrait of a Goldsmith* (Fig. 3.41). Lotto’s triple portrait was sold under Titian’s name to the king of England in 1628, and Daniel Nys, the art dealer responsible for the sale, provided a description of the painting that should be very familiar to us by now: “Tre teste in un unico dipinto.”151 The curly haired gentleman in this portrait, possibly a jeweller from Lotto’s circle of friends, has an expression not dissimilar to the male figure in the *Triple Portrait*, an important point considering the influence of Lotto’s composition, thought to be by Titian.

Shortly before Lotto’s triple portrait was shipped to England, Domenico Tintoretto adopted the formula to capture his own likeness, which was later described in Spanish as “Three heads on one canvas...,” and in Italian as “Four portraits of Domenico Tintoretto ... in different views,” which took into account the bust in the background (Fig. 3.42).152 While Domenico’s face is the same in each view, he wears a different costume to identify three distinct public personae: on the left, the fur-lined overcoat of a gentleman; on the right, the

151 For an up-to-date bibliography, see the recent catalogue from an exhibition in Rome, *Lorenzo Lotto*, exh. cat. (Milan, 2011), cat. 39.
toga of a citizen; and in the centre, the cap, collar, and overcoat of a painter.\textsuperscript{153} Once in England under Titian’s name, Lotto’s picture inspired Anthony Van Dyck’s triple portrait of King Charles I in 1635 (Fig. 3.43). Van Dyck’s triple portrait of Charles was then sent to Gian Lorenzo Bernini, who used it as a model to create a portrait bust of the king. By a stroke of misfortune, Bernini’s bust was destroyed in a fire, depriving us of a collaboration involving a famous painter and a famous sculptor. Bernini found the model of the triple portrait so useful, in any case, that a similar version of Cardinal Richelieu was made by Philippe de Champaigne in order for Bernini to produce a bust from it (Fig. 3.44). Unlike the bust of Charles I, however, Richelieu’s sculptural likeness was criticized for its unconvincing resemblance, a charge Bernini blamed on the triple portrait he was given.\textsuperscript{154}

Although the Detroit Triple Portrait does not repeat the same face with its three different angles, it gives the same impression – I would say – of showing three different parts of a single entity. Instead of a physiognomic likeness, these three figures represent three aspects of a singular studio style. In other words, the painting is about the shared identity of three hands rather than of three faces, especially as this manual identity was transmitted from one generation to another – from Giorgione to Titian and Sebastiano. There is, in fact, a precedent in the genre of triple portraiture for this genealogical idea. One often overlooked prototype of the triple portrait is in the Uffizi, representing three generations of the Gaddi, a family of painters from the fourteenth century (Fig. 3.45). Depicted in this painting, which is dated to the fifteenth century, are the grandson Agnolo Gaddi in profile on the right side, the father Taddeo Gaddi in three-quarter turn on the left side, and the grandfather Gaddo Gaddi in a frontal pose in the centre. While their facial features suggest only slight family resemblances, their garments have been coordinated in combinations of red and black so that their kinship is made apparent.\textsuperscript{155} This origin supports the contested argument that Lotto’s three faces, or \textit{tre visi}, may have been an allusion to three jeweller brothers from Treviso.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{154} See the exhibition catalogue from Los Angeles and Ottawa, \textit{Bernini and the Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture} (Los Angeles, 2008), cats. 6.2 and 6.3.
\textsuperscript{155} For an up-to-date bibliography, as well as the provenance of the portrait, and a discussion of its disputed authorship, see Carl Brandon Strehlke’s catalogue entry in \textit{Beato Angelico a Pontassieve. Dipinti e sculture del Rinascimento fiorentino}, ed. Ada Labriola (Florence, 2010), cat. 14.
We have seen that others thought of artistic heritage in combinations of three as well, even if they were not coordinated in the exact same way. Based on a similar principle of artistic heritage, Palma Giovane drew a series of artists’ portraits organized according to their links in the studio, and these portraits included, as we have seen, Giorgione with Titian and Sebastiano. He also designed his own funerary monument with a triad of portrait busts, connecting his personal artistic patrimony to both Titian and his great uncle Palma Vecchio (Fig. 4.53).

In the Detroit *Triple Portrait*, we can see how Giorgione’s style was thought to have been taken in two different directions by his most famous artistic inheritors. If a collector was invested in the regional debates between Central Italian *disegno* and Venetian *colorito*, moreover, they might have been aware of the opposing positions Sebastiano and Titian were made to take by critics. Whereas the softly polished and licked surfaces of Sebastiano’s style, as represented by the figure on the right of our painting, became associated with Central Italian painting epitomized by *disegno*, the increasingly painterly *macchia* of Titian’s style, as represented by the figure on the left, became associated with Venetian painting. The *sfumato* of the figure supposedly made by Giorgione in the middle of the *Triple Portrait*, can be seen in this same vein as that pure origin, as the initial harmonious wedding of *disegno* and *colorito*.

**Conclusion to Chapter 3**

There is no evidence to prove that a collector, dealer, dilettante, or even painter used their knowledge of the personal relationships between Giorgione, Sebastiano, and Titian to reconstruct the authorship of the *Triple Portrait* specifically. Nor is there any direct evidence to show that these same viewers connected the painting’s subject matter to the circumstances for its creation. I have tried to justify my interpretation, nevertheless, by arguing that in a broader context the ambiguity of the picture lends itself, perhaps intentionally, to the kind of

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erudite demonstrations of connoisseurship that often linked a painter’s hand to biographical impressions and to stylistic motifs described in books, no matter how imaginative these demonstrations might have been, or might still be.

While I maintain that the general theme of the painting relates to collaborative unity and concord, it seems to me that there was an accretion of different visual models that provided a number of interpretative layers. Since there was no established iconography for such a concept as collaboration, the pasticheur would have been forced to draw on allegories related to more familiar concepts, like marriage, friendship, and kinship, with similar ideals of unity and harmony. Then, to avoid confusion with these established allegorical subjects, the painting was stripped down of specific attributes and symbols, those typical tools of an allegory. The *Triple Portrait*, in this line of interpretation, was not meant to be a straightforward allegory. The puzzling subject was only supposed to be suggestive of more unequivocal themes about fidelity, unity, and coordination, steering the conversation in a gallery space towards the kind of psychological projection we heard from Federico Borromeo, who saw the biographical relationship between Titian and Giorgione enacted in a candid exchange between Tobias and the Angel, or from Francesco Pona who imagined Giorgione singing to his two dear followers. By withholding a deliberate meaning, moreover, the painting played into the hands of the predatory connoisseur, who scrutinized minor variations in the forms and in the brushstrokes, perhaps with Vasari’s descriptions in the back of their minds. This kind of intuitive process is consistent with the snowballing assessment made by Livio Mehus – who was no mere dilettante – in front of the *Christ and the Adulteress*, rolling from attribution to attribution before settling on the idea that it was made by Titian’s hand under the supervision of Giorgione.
CHAPTER 4
Palma Giovane and Aliense Drawn Together:
Marital Bonds, Artistic Patrimonies, and Stylistic Affinities
in Late Renaissance Venice

Some time around the year 1600, Jacopo Palma Giovane (1548-1628) and Antonio
Vassilacchi, known as l’Aliense (1556-1629), painted separate versions of the Christ
Resurrected (Fig. 4.1 and 4.2). Palma’s was installed on the tabernacle in the church of San
Zaccaria, a space where the two worked together from 1595 to 1605. Aliense’s was placed in
the lunette of the Chapel of the Sacrament in the church of San Vidal, Aliense’s eventual
burial place.¹ This was a common subject in late Renaissance Venice and generally the pose
of Christ’s body was quite standard. Still, these two particular figurations by Palma and
Aliense replicate each other more exactly than most other variants. There are differences in
the flowing drapery over Christ’s arm and the objects in his left hand, and yet the only
distinction in his actual body is the tilt of the head. Otherwise, the torso, arms, legs, and feet
are in precisely the same positions. And though the sleeping guards are pushed farther
outward in Aliense’s version, so as to accommodate a different compositional format, the
contours of the clouds still echo the guards in Palma’s version.² It is apparent that there was
an exchange of drawings (for the closest variant, see Fig.4.3), but how should this exchange
be interpreted?³ If such repetition is evidence of a creative exhaustion typically associated

¹ Aliense’s lunette painting is reproduced in Haris Makrykostas, Antonio Vassilacchi Aliense 1556-1629: A
Greek Painter in Italy (Athens, 2008), pl. 9. Carlo Ridolfi described it in the same paragraph as the paintings
he did for the radiating chapels in San Zaccaria; see Ridolfi, Le maraviglie dell’arte: ovvero le vite degli
also tells us that the painting was originally in the Chapel of the Sacrament, though today it is raised very high
over the nave. Because Giovanni Stringa listed Palma’s paintings for the tabernacle in his guide to San
Zaccaria, we know they must have been complete by 1604; see Francesco Sansovino – Giovanni Stringa,
Venetia città nobilissima, et singolare (Venice, 1604), 130r. Unfortunately, Stringa added nothing to
Sansovino’s description of San Vidal, so we cannot be sure if Aliense finished the paintings before or after its
publication in 1604; see Sansovino-Stringa, Venetia città nobilissima, 80v-90r.

² It is difficult to ascertain who shared the original drawing with whom, because we only have approximate
dates for each version. We know that Aliense’s painting in San Vidal was probably contemporaneous with
their joint work in San Zaccaria, because Ridolfi listed Aliense’s work in San Vidal first in the same paragraph
as his paintings in the radiating chapels in San Zaccaria; see Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 219. Our initial
inclination might be to conclude that Palma provided his in-law with his drawing, or perhaps even a cartoon,
but we should not be so quick to privilege Palma because of his greater reputation. On the contrary, Palma was
said to have painted the Last Supper originally in the refectory of San Francesco della Vigna after Aliense’s
drawing. This was the arrangement described by Martinioni; see Francesco Sansovino – Giustiniano
Martinioni, Venetia città nobilissima, et singolare (Venice, 1681), 55. And Palma painted the Assumption of
the Virgin for the conch in Salò after Aliense’s design as well.

³ The figure illustrated is from a sketchbook in the Ashmolean Museum collection. The resurrected Christ in
this sketch is close in pose and the drapery over the arms is similar, but it could not be the drawing that was
with late Renaissance Venice, Palma must have been working under different notions of invention and creativity. A similar resurrected figure was featured as the very product of his artistic powers in his self-portrait (Fig.4.4).

My interest in Palma Giovane and Aliense lies not so much with their pictorial exchange per se, as it does with their personal relationship and what it might tell us about the aesthetic suppositions of Venetian painting at the end of the Renaissance. In the year 1600, right around the time the two versions of the Christ Resurrected were made, Palma’s daughter Giulia married Aliense’s younger brother, Giacomo Vassilacchi. Perhaps because the marriage was never mentioned in the artists’ biographies, including those penned by Aliense’s former pupil Carlo Ridolfi, the family alliance has gone virtually unnoticed in the substantial scholarship on Palma and in the few studies on Aliense. That the marriage was exchanged. The light source for the sketched figure is different than the two paintings, and the torso does not have the same bend to the right side.

4 ASPV, Santa Croce, Matrimoni 2 (May 30, 1600). Although seldom recognized, the marriage between Giacomo Vassilacchi and Giulia Palma has been pointed out before, but never with the aim of interpreting its significance. In 1915, Ricciotti Bratti published the parish record of the marriage. While Palma was named directly in the document as the father of the bride, Bratti rightly assumed that the groom, Giacomo Vassilacchi, was related to Aliense (Antonio Vassilacchi), who was not named at all. This marriage record was only one in a series of such archival documents that Bratti published in an article on Venetian artists from an array of periods, and so he said nothing further about the significance of his discovery; see Ricciotti Bratti, “Notizie d’arte e d’artisti,” Nuovo Archivio Veneto N.S. 30, 2 (1915): 469. In 1979, Ileana Chiappini di Sorio transcribed Palma’s last will and testament of 1627 in which Palma referred to Giacomo Vassilacchi as his deceased son-in-law. Not having consulted Bratti, Chiappini also suggested in a footnote that the Giacomo who was named by Palma was a relative of Aliense, but wrongly supposed he was Aliense’s son; see Ileana Chiappini di Sorio, “Le ultime volontà di Giacomo Palma il Giovane,” Notizie da Palazzo Albani 8, 2 (1979): 61-66. Palma’s will was also published in French by René de Mas-Latrie, “Testament et codicille de Jacques Palma le Jeune,” Gazette des Beaux Arts, 22 (1867): 295-299; but Mas-Latrie did not comment on the appearance of the name Giacomo Vassilacchi. In a Greek article, Chryssa Maltezou published an overview of archival documents related to Aliense as a Greek immigrant in Venice. As a part of her discussion about Aliense’s family, Maltezou provided new documentary evidence to clearly establish that Giacomo was the brother of Aliense and she even cited the marriage between Giacomo Vassilacchi and Giulia Palma, a fact that had only been registered previously in two footnotes. But because Maltezou was more concerned with Aliense as a Greek immigrant than as an artist, it was not her intention to discuss the art historical implications of this marriage. Palma was only briefly mentioned. See Chryssa Maltezou, “Ο ζωγράφος Αντώνιος Βασιλάκης. Νέα αρχαιολογικά τεκμήρια για τη ζωή και το έργο του,” Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 33 (2012): 253-256. After I had conducted most of my own investigation, Director Maltezou of the Istituto Ellenico in Venice told me of her own forthcoming article. I must extend my sincerest thanks to her for providing me with a copy of her article while I awaited the published version and for briefly going over the most relevant sections with me in person. A number of documents she uncovered provide integral information for my own study, as will be cited below.

5 Anton Maria Mucchi, Il duomo di Salò (Bologna, 1932). Marcello Riccioni, Una riforma nella pittura bresciana del Seicento: Palma il Giovane: la decorazione del coro nel Duomo di Salò (Roccafranca, 2008). In the context of broader art historical studies, see Michel Hochmann, Peintres et commanditaires à Venise (1540-1628) (Paris and Padua, 1992), 88. David Rosand pointed out the partnership in Salò to support his view that Aliense drew a frame around Palma’s drawing of the Pietà. Rosand believed this drawing may have been in Aliense’s collection. See Rosand, “Aliense’s Collection of Drawings: A Suggestion,” Master
not a topic of public discussion should not be cause to dismiss its significance. Quite the contrary – the marriage was the culmination of a much longer friendship and was the catalyst for a short burst of collaborative activity that brought their hands together as one.

There were at least five joint projects altogether. The first was for the organ decoration in the politically-charged conventual church of San Zaccaria in 1595. Although it predated the marriage, their exclusive employment in the church continued for another decade until around 1605 (Figs. A1-A15). Shortly after the marriage, in 1602, Palma accepted the commission to decorate the choir in the cathedral of Salò and, it must be stressed, he accepted the commission only on the condition that Aliense be involved (Figs. 4.55-4.61). Unfortunately, the three other projects have long since gone missing. Some time around 1602, they sent a cycle of scenes from the story of Psyche to Sigismund III of Poland. Between 1604 and 1605, they brought their hands together for the refectory of San Francesco della Vigna on a painting of the Last Supper, which Palma apparently executed after drawings by Aliense. Lastly, they decorated the Vicentine villa owned by a lawyer named

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*Drawings* 7, 2 (1969): 156-157. The most surprising comment was made by Giorgia Boccassini, “Profilo dell’Aliense,” *Arte Veneta*, XII (1958): 113. She argued, citing only Salò, that Aliense was not as affected as his contemporaries by the influences of Palma, except occasionally when he needed to work with Palma, and that otherwise there was little connection between them. This will be shown to be a mischaracterization to say the least.

6 For a reconstruction of the decorative program in San Zaccaria, see the Appendix.

7 Quoted in Riccioni, *Una riforma nella pittura bresciana*, 42 n. 14: “… basta dirli che senza la compagnia sua non avrei voluto tal incarico, ne potuto accetirlo”

8 They were documented in Ridolfi’s *Maraviglie dell’arte* of 1648, and because Ridolfi said he would try to keep to relative chronologies when listing their respective works, rough dates for these projects can be pieced together; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 185.

9 Ridolfi said only that Palma was employed for ‘part’ of the Psyche cycle; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 194-195 (Life of Palma): “Al Rè Sigismondo III. di Polonia fece ancora parte della favola di Psiche.” *Parte* was the word he most commonly used for indicating collaboration, as he clarified in the Life of Aliense; see ibid. vol. 2, 214 (Life of Aliense): “Dipinse anco per lo medesimo Rè parte della favola di Psiche compartita col Palma.” The Psyche series is very difficult to date, as there are no remaining traces. Based on the regional and chronological ordering of works in these Lives, this work for Sigismund could date to any time between 1593 and 1618; but these are surely the works Palma himself referred to in his first letter to the board of Salò in January 1602. According to Palma’s letter Aliense was to begin designs while in Salò, but he would then need to return to Venice to “finish certain works that he is doing for the king of Poland” (…*se ne verrà a Venezia per finire certe opere che lui fa per il re di Polonia*...), transcribed in Riccioni, *Una riforma nella pittura bresciana*, 42 n. 14.

10 Ridolfi mentioned this collaboration in the life of Palma, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 188: “E nel Refettorio dipinse una gran tela con la cena medesimamente di Christo co’ Discepoli, nella quale v’hebbe anco parte l’Aliense.” The Last Supper was listed after the organ for the church of San Zaccaria, which has an inscribed date of 1595. Giovanni Stringa did not cite the painting in the monastery in 1604; see Sansovino-Stringa, *Venetia città nobilissima*, 115r.-119r. This gives us a relative *terminus post quem*, while its place in Ridolfi’s *Maraviglie* gives us a *terminus ante quem* of 1605, because Ridolfi referred to the painting in Palma’s biography just
Gerolamo Aviani some time early in the century. Almost all of their productions were thus concentrated in the years just before and shortly after the marriage of 1600. Even though Palma lived to 1628 and Aliense to 1629, their collaborations probably ceased by 1610, the year Aliense’s brother Giacomo died, leaving behind Giulia Palma and their two children. All of this would seem to point to a traditional system of alliance formation and workshop production, and in an economic sense that is true. However, this marriage alliance between their families was also symptomatic of an artistic community that was expressly dismantling and recasting professional and social boundaries in the free exchange of invention.

The preceding chapters have focused on the points of view of critics and collectors to understand how they evaluated the operations of the mind and the hand when artists were seen to be consciously working together. This fourth and final chapter will turn back now to the point of view of artists, for they too appear to have been attuned to the idea that collaboration involved both the joining of the workshop – the space of the labouring body – and the expansion of the studio – the space of the inventive mind. Using the Palma-Aliense

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11 According to Giustiniano Martinioni in his 1681 edition of Sansovino’s *Venetia città nobilissima*, Palma executed the painting of the Last Supper after Aliense’s drawing. He also tells us that the painting was in the refectory; see Sansovino-Martinioni, *Venetia città nobilissima*, 55.

12 ASPV, Santa Margherita, Morti 2, n.p. January 3, 1610 (m.v. 1609). The death record provided his age at 41, meaning he was born around 1569.
partnership as an exemplar, I will propose that the repetition of forms and the convergence of styles, what art historians have regarded as self-evident monotony, was cultivated by Venetian artists as an ennobling sign of academic sodality based on collaboration, friendship, kinship, and shared artistic patrimonies. An overview of the activities of this network of Venetian artists, which will be the focus of the first half of the chapter, should help to revise common interpretations of decline as the byproduct of artists who were submissive, or unthinking, in the face of political and religious pressures, or of artists who were struggling unsuccessfully to incorporate Central Italian theory into Venetian practice. In what ways the marriage alliance between the families of Palma and Aliense was a hallmark of this social climate, and how the partnership was confronted by realities altogether unrelated to artistic invention, such as the demands of patrons, finances, and changing personal circumstances, will be a source of further consideration in the second half of the chapter.

4.1 The Network Beyond the Partnership and the ‘Monotony’ of Venetian Art

For the most part, the biography of Palma Giovane has been pretty well established. However, the surviving drawings, vite, letters, contracts, and testimonials provide more than biographical timelines. They reveal Palma’s conscious awareness of his professional and social environment. To put it another way, the evidence hardly shows an isolated genius, but rather a painter heedful of his relationships to other artists, many of whom could be, at one and the same time, his friends, collaborators, colleagues, followers, and rivals – precisely what Scannelli perceived among such collaborators as the Carracci. The extent of this documentation, beyond contemporary biographies whose writers were often motivated by their own concerns, is rare for Venetian painters of the Renaissance. Yet, a comprehensive study of Palma’s relationships to his colleagues has not been undertaken. As I hope to show, even an initial reconstruction of Palma’s artistic network has a bearing on the traditional interpretations of monotony and decline in the late Venetian Renaissance.

4.1.1 Explanations of Decline in the Historiography of Venetian Painting

The seventeenth-century Venetian, let alone the modern art historian, was probably not meant to recognize the duplication of Christ’s body in Palma’s and Aliense’s respective

13 See Chapter 2.3.
versions of the *Christ Resurrected*. It is difficult to say whether the picture that came second was consciously acknowledging the original as a quotation, and this uncertainty about the intention of the copy gives the impression of uninspired repetition, or repetitiousness. Artistic replication like that in late Renaissance Venice normally stands apart from art historical values of originality and individuality, and from related norms of artistic will and autonomy. It has seemed natural when looking at the broader corpus of works created in Venice between 1590 and 1628, the year Palma died, to see an artistic culture thriving on motifs rather than on novelty. There are recurring patterns in the poses of figures (especially Christ figures), in the schematic expressions, in the warm, bright reflections of rounded body parts, in the fields of vibrant blue and red against a dark earthy or golden ground, and in the quickly receding, off-centre perspectives. The patterning of limbs and body parts in the drawing manuals published by Odoardo Fialetti and Giacomo Franco in 1608 and 1611, both with contributions by Palma, have not helped to dispel this image of design by rote (Figs. 4.5 and 4.6).

The styles of Venetian painters embodied the replicative patterning of their art. Since Marco Boschini, critics have commented on a repetitious style, not just in the oeuvre of a single painter, but of a whole generation comprised of Palma, Aliense, Domenico Tintoretto (son of the more famous Jacopo), Leonardo Corona, Sante Peranda, Pietro Malombra, Giovanni Contarini, and Andrea Vicentino among others. As a period style, Venetian painting of the early Seicento is quite easy to identify. Distinguishing individual styles is an altogether harder task, or at least not a terribly exciting one for most viewers. The way Boschini saw it in 1674, the painters of this generation had all imitated the styles of Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto, and out of these shared models, the *epigoni* descended into a style of minor variation, which he called the seven similar styles.  

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14 On this point, the two receptive modes of repetition that Maria Loh discussed as a backdrop to the art of Padovanino and his deliberate quotations of Titian’s oeuvre can be useful. Unlike the more self-aware repetitive mode, the repetitious has no intention of consciously acknowledging its source, or of making referentiality an integral component of the experience; see Maria Loh, *Titian Remade: Repetition and the Transformation of Early Modern Italian Art* (Los Angeles, 2007), 55–61.

15 Odoardo Fialetti, *Il vero modo et ordine per dissegnar tutte le parti et membra del corpo humano* (Venice, 1608); Giacomo Franco, *De excellencia et nobilitate delineationis libri duo* (Venice, 1611).

16 Boschini, “Breve istruzione,” in *Carta del navegar pitoresco* [1660], ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice, 1966), 740. In the *Carta* itself, 409–410, Boschini was less derisive, and in fact, celebrated these very *epigoni*. He said that the souls of Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto, and Jacopo Bassano, had been transferred into the generation that followed. For more on Boschini’s description of these seven painters, see Chapter 2.
to clarify and order their differences, he was still essentially of the opinion that their styles had coalesced to a rare degree.

Accordingly, Antonio Maria Zanetti in his *Della pittura Veneziana* (1771) labeled the period style as ‘mannerist’; in other words, repetitive, formulaic, eclectic, and devoid of force, of naturalism, and of sincere emotion.\(^\text{17}\) In most assessments, Palma Giovane has occupied a troubled position as the leading representative of this generation of so-called mannerists. On the one hand, he has been seen as standing apart from his generation as its most self-possessed, skillful, and prolific artist, producing his best works in the 1580s and early 1590s. On the other hand, he has also been cast as the most formulaic artist of the group, especially after the turn of the century, and thus the most culpable for its perfunctory shortcomings. As Luigi Lanzi famously put it in 1795, Palma “is a painter who can equally be called the last of the good age and the first of the worst.”\(^\text{18}\)

Opinion has changed very little in the three and a half centuries since Boschini. The painting of this period is still regarded as the inevitable creative exhaustion in the wake of the great cinquecento masters. ‘Monotony’ has been the most oft repeated derogation, against which there have been few apologists.\(^\text{19}\) Even those who have offered more fulsome

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\(^\text{18}\) Luigi Lanzi, *Storia pittorica dell’Italia dal risorgimento delle belle arti fin presso la fine del XVIII secolo* (Milan, 1823) vol. 3, 121: “Jacopo Palma il giovane, così detto a differenza dell’altro Jacopo suo prozio, è pittore che ugualmente si può chiamare l’ultimo della buona età e il primo della cattiva.” The first edition was published in Bassano, 1795-1796.

\(^\text{19}\) Giuseppe Fiocco, *La pittura veneziana del Seicento e Settecento* (Venice, 1929), n.p., as quoted by Rodolfo Pallucchini, *La pittura veneziana del Seicento*, vol. 1 (Venice, 1981), 32: “[they] arrived at a type of predictable painting due to the monotony of colour and the universality of types, in which inventive richness is found reduced to the minimum.” Pallucchini, on the proliferation of Palma’s works in Venetian churches, described the situation this way: “this rhythm signified a process of industrialization of religious images, produced serially, even with little compositional differentiation... provoking the sensation of a painting without time, typified to the point of monotony.” To this, he added, “Establishing a chronology of palmesque works becomes a despairing task and in a certain sense vain precisely because of the uniformity of his pictorial discourse.” See Pallucchini, *La pittura veneziana*, 36. Rudolf Wittkower named Palma specifically as the most ‘monotonous’; see Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy, 1600-1750*, vol. 1 (New Haven, 1999, 1st ed. 1953), 72. Eduard Safarik and Gabriello Milantoni blamed the generation of similar styles for residual mannerisms throughout the century: “The persistence of single elements of the late-mannerist language, which return unexpectedly again in various artists of reform, is one of the key aspects of the Seicento in Venice. The intelligence, knowledge, and craft of Palma gathers itself into a sort of encyclopedic *summa* to be offered as consultation and to be passed down.” This quote has been translated from Safarik and Milantoni, “La pittura del Seicento a Venezia,” in *La pittura in Italia. Il Seicento*, ed. Mina Gregori and Erich Schleier, vol. 1 (Milan, 1989), 160. See also the similar comments by Peter Humfrey below. The one writer to pen a defense has been Federico Zeri who wrote a very short piece celebrating the painting of seventeenth-century Venice, in “Pittori
treatments of the historical context, seeing beyond the internal logic of rise and decline with
the passing of artistic periods, have felt no need to revive it from its dark slumber in the art
historical margins. The tendency since the advent of patronage studies has been to perpetuate
the image of a socio-political climate incapable of nurturing artistic individuality either
creatively or financially. Rodolfo Pallucchini and Filippo Pedrocco, for example, have seen
an intimate connection between the Venetian state and the condition of Venetian painting in
the Seicento, suggesting that artistic entrenchment was consonant with the isolation
experienced by Venice during and after the Interdict of 1606. Others have suggested that
this uniformity was analogous to, if not mandated by, the state’s self-promotion of political
harmony and tradition. The state has not been the only culprit of course. According to
scholars, like Peter Humfrey, the Church’s need for a fast turnover on important decorative

20 In Francis Haskell’s account of patronage in early modern Italy, Tiepolo rose to creative prominence in the
eighteenth century despite the demise of the financial and political capital necessary to support a thriving
artistic culture beginning in the early seventeenth century. Haskell argued that the conservative artistic climate
throughout the seventeenth century was the result of an oligarchy closing in on itself in the face of economic
and militaristic decline. An artist like Tiepolo was only able to escape this conservative style because he left
the city with enough frequency to change his palette, because the aristocracy was breaking from its state-
centred identity and celebrating individual families, and because foreign patrons from more progressive
domains like England were flooding into the city to partake of its pleasures. See Francis Haskell, Patrons and
Painters: A Study in the Relations Between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque (New Haven and

21 Pallucchini, La pittura veneziana, 36: “Il conformismo di Palma il Giovane assunse un valore emblematico
proprio di fronte alla posizione presa dalla Repubblica verso il papato, cioè all’isolamento che comportava
l’Interdetto che Paolo V promulgò nel 1606. Il fenomeno delle ‘sette Maniere’ – così acutamente connotato
dal Boschini (1674) – è in un certo senso un tentativo di autarchia culturale, che vive sui residui del passato
glorioso isolandosi dalla cultura figurativa italiana.” This idea of isolationism, which delayed the arrival of the
caravaggisti and classicists of the Carracci school, was repeated by Filippo Pedrocco, “Venezia,” in La pittura
Venezia la sfinge,” 224-226.

22 Jürgen Schulz, looking at the tradition of ceiling painting in Venice, suggested that it was the number of
group commissions funded by the state that led to styles becoming too much alike; see Schulz, Venetian
Painted Ceilings of the Renaissance (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), 46-48. Peter Humfrey suggested a
similar view, “Venezia 1540-1600,” in La pittura nel Veneto. Il Cinquecento, ed. Mauro Lucco, vol. 2 (Milan,
1996), 531. Stefania Mason Rinaldi considered the context of Venice after the Battle of Lepanto, during which
time there was an adaptation to the Venetian Myth extolling peace over war, but primarily she discussed
Palma’s style in relation to the Counter Reformation; see Mason Rinaldi, Palma il Giovane, 28.
programs and for a clear and coordinated iconography may have had a debilitating effect on individual creativity.\textsuperscript{23}

These deterministic interpretations explain ‘monotony’ using a top-down model. However, the case study presented here on Palma and Aliense, and on their broader artistic network, provides good reason to think that it was the artists who were deliberately drawing themselves together into social circumstances that fostered stylistic affiliation. Civic and ecclesiastical patrons did appear to have a prescribed set of subject matter, hence the preponderance of Resurrections, and may well have gravitated towards the benefits of such affiliation, but they were not the primary agents behind what was really an internal development. To be clear, the aim here is not to reinvigorate enthusiasm for a period of art history that elicits so much ennui. Venetian painters were consciously preoccupied with their artistic patrimony, as Boschini said, and they were repetitious to a degree not generally associated with those celebrated modern geniuses whose personal and identifiable visions helped them to rise above the norms of their respective periods. The question is why this repetitiousness happened on such a scale and whether this seemingly normative artistic practice might have been actively fostered by the artists themselves with their own objectives in mind.

In the sense that the artists, both as individuals and as a group, were responsive actors in this period, it is worth revisiting the general context that David Rosand presented in a seminal article titled “The Crisis of the Venetian Renaissance Tradition” (1970). Rosand argued that Venetian painters, with Palma Giovane, Aliense, and Domenico Tintoretto at the forefront, actively tried to reform painting, even ‘modernize’ it, with a glance towards the academic centres of Central Italy and Bologna.\textsuperscript{24} His proposition of a mindful artistic movement has been a formidable presence in the scholarship, even if he still ultimately implicated the state for blocking changes to the traditional guild system. His essay is especially relevant because he assigned prominent roles to Palma and Aliense, in addition to Domenico Tintoretto, and because he also saw the relationship between theory and practice at the root of the problem.

\textsuperscript{23} Peter Humfrey has argued that the requirement to coordinate the altars in Counter-Reformation churches, like the Redentore, left little flexibility to pique the interest of the painter, and thus dry compositions were the result; see Humfrey, “Co-ordinated Altarpieces” in The Altarpiece in the Renaissance (Cambridge, 1990), 211. See also Mason, “La peinture vénitienne,” esp. 526-527 and 538-539.

Rosand argued that the decline of Venetian art could be connected to what he perceived to be the struggle in Venice to have painting be regarded as a liberal art. The foundation for what he saw as a crisis of identity, was an opposition between two regional artistic traditions; the ineffable and expressive naturalism of colorito in Venice, was opposed in theory and in practice to the intellection of disegno in Central Italy. Although Venetians had always utilized drawing in the preparation of their paintings, it was unusual for a drawing to be treated as an autonomous medium in Venice. Attitudes changed, Rosand contended, as artists at the end of the sixteenth century began to draw for its own sake. By privileging disegno, not just drawing itself but its theoretical underpinnings, Venetian painters according to Rosand became committed to the educational mandates of the Italian art academies, most especially of the Carracci academy in Bologna, which was successful in synthesizing the idealism of disegno and the naturalism of colorito and thus in reforming painting. Domenico Tintoretto, Rosand pointed out drawing on information from Ridolfi, was interested in literature and poetics. Aliense, for his part, insisted on the importance of mathematics and history, and supposedly complained to Ridolfi about upstart young painters becoming masters without an appropriate period of study. Drawing manuals published for the first time in Venice in 1608 and 1611, with contributions from Palma, further suggested to Rosand that there was a new interest in the theory and education through drawing. Another component of this identity crisis, Rosand reasoned, was that the refocusing of artistic education was antithetical to the rules of the guild. Based on these two propositions (reform needed education, and education undermined the authority of the guild), Rosand came to the conclusion that a reform of art in Venice would have required emancipation from the guild.

25 Especially influential on Rosand’s outlook was Nikolaus Pevsner’s canonical Academies of Art (first ed. 1940), which traced the various forms and machinations of the academy alongside the social standing of the artist. As in Rosand’s “Crisis,” education was central to Pevsner’s chronology of emancipation. See Pevsner, Academies of Art (1973 ed.), 34: “The new conception of the artist’s position in society entailed of necessity a new conception of art education. For up to Michelangelo’s time medieval methods had still been unchallenged.” Venice played a minor role in Pevsner’s survey and Rosand seemingly confronted the lacuna by trying to show the city’s struggle as a failed parallel to the struggle Pevsner described for Genoa and Bologna, Rosand’s most frequently cited comparison. See Pevsner’s chapter, “Baroque and Rococo 1600-1750” in Academies of Art, esp. 67-78 on the importance of these cities.

26 Rosand, “Crisis,” 5: “Highly ambitious and keenly aware of crucial modern developments in centers like Bologna and Rome, these artists were not simply the passive recipients of a great heritage; they actually tried to transform the Venetian renaissance tradition, to modernize it, in effect.”

and the establishment of an official academy.\textsuperscript{28} Had such an academy been established in Venice in the late Renaissance period, he implied, it would have steered art on course with the Carracci reforms of painting in Bologna. However, the Venetian state, which Rosand said was “interested more in rules than status,” sided with the guild and prevented such an artistic aggiornamento.\textsuperscript{29} Rosand concluded with a slightly different, though not incompatible thesis on the decline of art: Domenico, Aliense, and Palma specifically were simply deficient in the technique of drawing. They lacked an adequate command of anatomy and proportion, and so their misguided pursuit of disegno compromised the expressive tactility that had made Venetian painting great to begin with.

This chapter will agree with Rosand’s basic idea that the artists themselves were looking to, and in some cases anticipating, the academies in Bologna and Rome. However, Venetian painters did not feel the need to present themselves as deeply learned, nor did they have to free themselves from the guild in order to advance their social standing. In fact, the engraver Giacomo Franco in the preface to his drawing manual, which was compiled with Palma’s input, expressly forwent principles of proportion and mathematics, preferring the conventional view that painting’s status was secured by famous artists and their historical relationships with great rulers.\textsuperscript{30} In reconstructing Palma’s artistic network, it will instead be argued that Palma and his circle were developing pretensions of gentility as a group. The temperament of this group was more akin to informal academies, otherwise known as

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\textsuperscript{28} It was already a commonly held opinion in 1970 that the establishment of the modern artist was a result of a change in artistic education, incorporating humanist learning first in Florence before spreading to other centres. According to this standard account, learned artists like Leonardo and Michelangelo made the case that painting and sculpture should be considered liberal arts, paving the way for the establishment of academies and the liberation from the guild, which was deemed by Rosand’s predecessors as the \textit{bête noire}, the holdover of medieval repression. Rosand cited Rudolf and Margot Wittkower, \textit{Born under Saturn: The Character and Conduct of Artists: A Documented History from Antiquity to the French Revolution} (New York, 1963); Anthony Blunt, \textit{Artistic Theory in Italy, 1450-1600} (Oxford, 1956); and Nikolaus Pevsner, \textit{Academies of Art Past and Present} (first ed. Cambridge, 1940). Some of the rhetoric Rosand employed to describe the changing attitude in Venice echoed that of Wittkower, who was one of his dissertation advisors. Wittkower’s demonization of the guild in \textit{Born Under Saturn} (1963), however, was far more escalated in language than Rosand’s derision of the ‘medieval’ system: “But the day came when artists began to revolt against the hierarchical order [i.e. the guild] of which they were an integral part – a day when they regarded the organization meant to protect their interests as prison rather than shelter”; \textit{Born Under Saturn}, 14.

\textsuperscript{29} Rosand, “Crisis,” 6: “Novelty and innovation were positively discouraged by this system. The implications of the new artistic attitudes went far beyond theory and practice in the workshop; they challenged the authority of the \textit{Arte dei Depentori}...The state was therefore necessarily involved, and, since its basic concern was the preservation of traditional order, artistic aggiornamento in Venice was frustrated.”

\textsuperscript{30} See chapter 4.2.
conversazioni, which were self-directed and privately sponsored. The very repetitiousness of forms and styles emblematized a collection of individuals who often worked in close proximity, who no longer held onto their drawings as trade secrets, and who were bound by expressions of affection and academic sodality. This collective pursuit need not have disturbed the commercial interests of the guild or the state any more than academies in Bologna or Rome. The internally and casually directed company may even have had the advantage of appealing to noble dilettantes without recourse to the constrictive ties of a patronage system. On the other hand, the ideal objective of this group proved to be a mask when Palma and Aliense were confronted by the inevitability of professional, domestic, and financial pressures. But that is a topic for the second half of this chapter.

4.1.2 The Close and Expansive Ties of Palma’s Artistic Social Circle

Without knowing about the family alliance between Palma and Aliense, Rosand singled out these two artists as the leaders of the so-called decline. He also singled out Domenico Tintoretto, who had a close relationship of his own with Palma and Aliense. In fact, Domenico apparently proposed to Palma that they form a similar marriage alliance. Palma warmly recalled this offer in his will, explaining that he had to decline the solicitations of his close friend because of his age. Given these two marriage alliances, one with Aliense and

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31 For a useful overview of informal academies as conversazioni, or spaces for the gathering of like-minded individuals interested in conversation and an escape from courtly airs, especially as it relates to Salvator Rosa and the Accademia dei Percossi in Florence, see Alexandra Carol Hoare, “Salvator Rosa as ‘amico vero’: The Role of Friendship in the Making of a Free Artist” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2010), 99-101. Pevsner characterized such informal academies, which were prevalent in the seventeenth century, much as Rosand did, as little more than studios for life drawing without any of the interests in social class or education common for the official academies of the sixteenth century; see idem, Academies of Art, 69-80.

32 The most problematic assumption in Rosand’s essay is that an official, institutionalized academy was necessary for a reform of art. The first art academy in Florence, the Accademia del Disegno, authorized by the state in 1563, did little to reform Mannerism in that region. And in truth, the Carracci academy, called the Accademia degli Incamminati, which was the acme of artistic reform at the time, was not officially sponsored and did not seem to pursue such a status. See Charles Dempsey, “Some Observations on the Education of Artists in Florence and Bologna during the Later Sixteenth Century,” Art Bulletin 42 (1980): 558. Dempsey has also pointed out that the academies in Rome and Florence were not trying to free themselves from the guild, but were instead interested in incorporating the guilds into an academy; see idem, “Disegno and Logos, Paragone and Academy,” in The Accademia Seminars: The Accademia di San Luca in Rome, c. 1590-1635, ed. Peter M. Lukehart (Washington and New Haven, 2009), 48.

33 Rosand was aware of this proposal but was unsure what to make of it in his dissertation; see Rosand, “Palma Giovane and Venetian Mannerism” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 166.

34 For Palma’s will, see ASV, Not. Test. b. 1244, n. 355, and transcribed by Chiappini, “Le ultime volonta”: “E perché io son molto ubligatto alla casa et alla virtu’ del signor Giacomo Tentoretto fu eccellentissimo pititore la cui fama sara’ sempre immortale; come per molti favori ricevuti in tempo di sua vita e come per molto amore
one nearly with Domenico Tintoretto, a very close-knit and interconnected artistic circle is already beginning to emerge. Aliense had his own relationship with the Tintoretto shop dating back decades. According to Ridolfi, Aliense had a falling out with Veronese, sold all his drawings from his time in the studio and began to follow Domenico’s famous father Jacopo Tintoretto. This must have happened some time after 1574 when Aliense was working with both Veronese and Tintoretto on the paintings for the ephemeral arch welcoming King Henry III of France to Venice. By 1591, Aliense was able to sign his name next to both Jacopo and Domenico Tintoretto on the contract for the decoration in the Scuola dei Mercanti. Since he was allotted equal payment as the two Tintoretto, he must have been more than an assistant by this point. One further testament to the personal connection between Aliense and Domenico has unfortunately been lost. Domenico supposedly made a portrait of Aliense seated, holding his glasses and wearing a robe lined with ormesino – a kind of light fabric from Ormuz, where Aliense’s older brother went missing in a trading ship in 1596.

The effects of this network on style can be seen in an altarpiece for the Zitelle church in Venice, in which Aliense blended traits of Palma’s and Domenico’s works (Fig. 4.7). He was still painting with his typically vivid colours and with heavy contours around the face, but he also incorporated Palma’s hyper rounded heads and arms, as well as his more recent practice of framing the forms in large schematic fields of drapery, as seen for example in Palma’s altarpiece installed across the nave a few years later (Fig. 4.8). The abstracted apparel and

pasatto fra me con il signor Domenico Tintoretto suo figliolo, universamente et in patria eccelentissimo nella pitura, laso al signor Domenigo quattro pezzi di mie disegni li qualli si dovera’ elegere de li miei a suo piacimento e si bene sono cosa di pocho valore e che non a’ bisogno di simil cosa, pero’ di questo pocho saro’ sicuro che ne rester’ servitto per esser puro segno de amore il quale avanzo magiormente demostratto in vitta mia quando la etta’ mia et il resto avesse permesso che io mi apparentasse seco si come avessi desiderato.”

35 Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 210-211. For more on Aliense in Veronese’s shop and his subsequent transformations in style see, Hans Dieter Huber, Paolo Veronese: Kunst als soziales System (Munich, 2005), 104-11.
38 For more on the works of Aliense and Palma in the Zitelle, otherwise known as the church of Santa Maria della Presentazione, see Barbara Mazza, “Committenti e artisti nell’età delle riforme: l’arredo della chiesa di Santa Maria della Presentazione,” in Le Zitelle. Architettura, arte e storia di un’istituzione veneziana, ed. Lionello Puppi (Venice, 1992), 133-137.
rounded forms are also reminiscent of Domenico’s style, as seen in the *Dream of St. Mark* (Fig. 4.9) painted around 1585.\(^\text{39}\)

In addition to his ties to Aliense and Domenico, Palma had close relationships with many other artists. Although he did not formalize these relationships through marriage, there was a tendency for him to treat his artist friends like extensions of his home and studio. It will not be my aim here to provide a fully mapped network of Palma’s contacts, which would be useful for other purposes, but which would also be unwieldy for this case study.\(^\text{40}\) It will serve us better for the present to keep the selection smaller, focusing on a few of Palma’s collaborators. Even a small sample will demonstrate the extent to which Palma intentionally blurred the boundaries between his professional, social, and domestic spheres.

*Palma Remembering His Friend in Rome: Matteo da Lecce 1568*

One of Palma’s earliest surviving drawings is a portrait of a fellow painter in Rome (Fig. 4.10), where Palma was sent to train independently between 1564 and 1568 under the sponsorship of Guidobaldo II della Rovere. Initially, Palma recorded the sitter’s name and the date he sketched it – “mateo da leze painter in rome in 1568.” Then, at a later date, he returned to the drawing and wrote in a different ink, “who then died in Peru/ companion of dearest giacomo palma.”\(^\text{41}\) In this early portrait, Matteo da Lecce is holding something that is hard to make out, perhaps a book, and he is seated on what appears to be a stone block – an ad hoc seat one would expect to find during an excursion among the Roman ruins. Not only

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\(^{40}\) For a convincing explanation of network theory and social capital, and its utility for art history, with a focus on early fifteenth-century Florence, see Nicholas A. Eckstein, “Pittori, amici e vicini: The Formal and Informal Bonds of Community amongst Florentine Artists,” in *Sociability and its Discontents: Civil Society, Social Capital, and their Alternatives in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Nicholas A. Eckstein and Nicholas Terpstra (Turnhout, 2009), 109-128.

\(^{41}\) “mateo da leze pitor in/roma nel 1568,”... “qual morse poi nel peru/ compagno di giacomo palma car.mo.” Hans Tietze and Erika Tietze-Conrat rejected the attribution of this drawing to Palma on the basis of its ‘Roman linework’; see idem, *The Drawings of the Venetian Painters in the 15th and 16th Centuries* (New York, 1979), A1045; but more recent consensus affirms his authorship after arguments made by David Rosand, “Palma il Giovane as Draughtsman: The Early Career and Related Observations,” *Master Drawings* 8, 2 (1970): 151-152. The dating dates to his period of study in Rome before returning to Venice where he applied himself more conscientiously to the styles of Titian and Tintoretto. See also, Mason Rinaldi, *Palma il Giovane*, Cat. D 146; and Michel Hochmann, *Venise et Rome, 1500-1600: deux écoles de peinture et leurs échanges* (Geneva, 2004), 419-421.
did Palma capture the likeness of Matteo, but he obviously cared enough about his memory to conserve the drawing, keeping it around long enough to update the information almost fifty years later in 1616 when Matteo was falsely reported dead in Lima, Peru. This was a habit of documentation that Palma maintained with his family as well. The care he took with such graphically rendered memories is the reason why this sheet has survived up to the present as a rare document of Palma’s artistic activities during an early sojourn in Rome.

Palma’s guardian in Rome, the ambassador for Guidobaldo II della Rovere, had picked up on his charge’s need for the benefits of socializing. The ambassador reported to Guidobaldo II:

All in all, he [Palma] has been and is currently well, except that, being alone, he seems not to be profiting as he would if he were in a house where there were other apprentices of the profession, and if he worked continuously in diverse tasks. He makes better use of his time at night than during the day and being alone he seems to lose himself.

This ambassador decided that he would place him with “a few worthy persons.” Such a person most likely included the slightly older Matteo, who was the son of the noble Piero Gondi, who in turn had been a close friend of Michelangelo, Matteo’s master. By the time Palma portrayed his friend in 1568, Matteo was painting the frescoes in the Trinità dei Monti after designs by the recently deceased Michelangelo. Palma’s portrait of Matteo could very well attest to his own presence at this project in Trinità dei Monti. The Roman-style drawing on the verso of the portrait is a copy after one of the figures in Daniele da Volterra’s fresco of the Deposition in the same church (Fig. 4.11).

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42 For a thorough account of Matteo’s life, see Antonio Palesati and Nicoletta Lepri, Matteo da Leccia: Manierista Toscano dall’Europa al Perù ([Pomarance], 1999), 19-34, esp. 28-31, on the confusion of Matteo’s death. According to Palesati and Lepri, Matteo’s assistant reported him dead when he returned to Italy, allowing him to sell the works his master had left behind and recuperate a credit he believed his master owed to him. As it turns out, it was Matteo’s wife who died in 1616. Matteo likely lived until about 1632.

43 See his portrait of his wife below, and other family portraits discussed in chapter IV.2 (iii).

44 Guidobaldo II’s ambassador, Traiano Mario quoted in Mason Rinaldi, Palma il Giovane, 10: “di tutto è stato sta ben contento, eccetto che gli pare di non fare stando solo il profitto che faria, se fosse in una casa dove fossero altri giovani del mestiere e che vi lavorasse di continuo in diversi modi. Fa più conto del tempo della notte che di quel del giorno e stando solo gli par di perderlo.” He would place him “una qualche persona valente.” For more on Palma’s early studies in Rome, see David Rosand, “Palma: Early Career,” 148-161.

45 Palesati and Lepri, Matteo da Leccia, 20-21. Unfortunately these frescoes have not survived, but it is reasonable to assume that they helped Matteo prepare for his accomplished frescoes in the Sistine chapel; see ibid, 45-55.

46 Rosand, “Palma: Early Career”, 151. For a recent discussion of Daniele da Volterra, as a follower in the circle of Michelangelo, and of his Deposition, see Morten Steen Hansen, In Michelangelo’s Mirror: Perino del Vaga; Daniele da Volterra, Pellegrino Tibaldi (University Park, 2013).
What we see from this portrait drawing is that Palma had sentimental ties to his colleagues very early on in his career. He obviously liked to have close ties with his collaborators, as it was no more than a year after Palma took this snapshot that he and Matteo were registered together, along with more than a dozen painters, in Cesare Nebbia’s équipe working in the Villa d’Este in Tivoli. Palma’s experience working with his friend Matteo, while at the same time observing Nebbia’s managerial efficiency must have served him well in his own cooperative ventures in Venice. Palma may also have become acculturated to the climate of friendship and the free exchange of drawings in the circle of Girolamo Muziano, Cesare Nebbia, and Taddeo Zuccaro.

So-Called “Workshop-Academies” in Venice

Palma’s fond memory of drawing alongside a friend and collaborator in Rome certainly resonated on his return to Venice, where in different circles his drawing techniques changed dramatically towards those of Titian and Tintoretto. Palma’s ability to shift styles as he moved between regions reveals some of his protean character. He was sensitive to the styles of those working around him and this was symptomatic of his inclination towards drawing as a shared activity. Rosand, quite rightly in my opinion, saw the practice of drawing as the source by which the academic movements of Italy—Rome and Bologna in particular—permeated the Venetian artistic consciousness. However, there were already informal groups of painters in Venice that self-identified as academies. Rosand acknowledged these groups, but he had to be careful how he characterized them. Had these Venetian academies operated with a mandate towards theory like the major art academies in Florence and Rome, it would be harder to argue that the state and the guild blocked reform. Accordingly, Rosand reframed these informal academies as ‘workshop-academies’, which he argued were established for the sharing of workshop resources, not for intellectual deliberations on disegno. Palma was not

49 Rosand, “Crisis,” 32-34.
directly linked to these ‘academies’, but I will argue that he and Aliense were co-founders of an early iteration.

Rosand listed three of these “workshop-academies.” 1) Domenico Tintoretto apparently considered opening up his home and studio in order for painters to have access to the reliefs, drawings, and models that he had inherited from his father, and as Ridolfi put it, “so that an Academy would be formed, where everyone could study.”50 2) In 1631, Philip Esengren left to the painter Matteo Ponzone six drawing albums that he described as being done by his own hand in an “accademia” he did not name or define. One of these surviving albums indeed bears the title, LIBRO XVIII DI FILIPPO ESENGRENO FATO NEL ACADEMIA. The fact that it contains mostly life drawings, as Rosand pointed out, suggests that the academy was formed in part to share the cost of live models.51 3) In a well-known letter addressed to Palma in 1616, Marcantonio Bassetti thanked him from Rome for his advice on sketching in oil. He further explained how a Roman circle of artists, including Carlo Saraceni, Antonio Tempesta, and Domenichino, were gathering together to practice this type of drawing, and referring to themselves as the Accademia alla Veneziana.52 About this expressive, non-speculative mode of drawing with paint, Bassetti said that, “when one draws, they are still painting.”53 For Rosand, this kind of painterly drawing was precisely what the Roman academician Federico Zuccaro had in mind when he penned his lament for the state of Venetian painting in 1605 hoisting Jacopo Tintoretto up as the main cause of decline.54

52 Incidentally, this technique was practiced more habitually by Domenico Tintoretto than by Palma.
53 Rosand, “Crisis,” 33. The letter is known from Giovanni Gaetano Bottari and Stefano Ticozzi, eds., Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architettura scritte da’ più celebri personaggi dei secoli XV, XVI, e XVII, vol. 4 (Milan, 1822), 382: “E sebbene in me non vi è alcuna di queste prerogative, non posso però trattenermi violentato dalla mia osservanza verso di Lei di nominarla continuamente ne’ miei discorsi, mentre me trovo in compagnia d’altri Pittori. Io le resto molto obbligato dell’ammonizione, che mi fa, dandomi animo, e consigliandomi per sempre ad affaticarmi; per la qual cosa mi sforzerò più che mai di metterlo in esecuzione, avendo dato principio alla nostra Accademia, 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.” This passage was also the basis for an article by Linda Freeman Bauer on the oil sketch, “Quanto si disegna, si dipinge ancora’: Some Observations on the Development of the Oil Sketch,” Storia dell’arte 32 (1978): 45-57.
54 Rosand, “Crisis,” 33.
There is another way to understand these informal academies without having to polarize theory and practice. What Rosand saw as the diminishing of the academy – the focus on workshop practice and materials – was for these groups the very means of elevating the profession as a whole. In all three of these examples of informal academies (Domenico’s, Esengren’s, and Bassetti’s), the foundation was the conviviality of the artistic community in the shared activity of drawing. In a kind of democratization of art, Domenico Tintoretto wanted to open up his studio for every painter to study its materials, and Ridolfi also added that when Domenico no longer felt affection towards his fellow painters, he withdrew his proposal. Esengren’s collection consisted of more than just the ‘academy albums’ that he left to Ponzone. Indeed, he made bequests of his materials to other artists, although he did not mention an academy in each case. He distributed and dispersed his artistic resources between a variety of painters, as a sign of the bonds that drawing had effected between them. He left drawing albums to Filippo Zanimberti and, “as a sign of love,” he left fifty reliefs and a dozen drawing albums to his “old friend” Padovanino (Alessandro Varotari). Lastly, to the quadratura painter Giuseppe Alabardi, he left four drawing albums apparently done in Palma’s hand.  

If the loosely defined Venetian academies were formed for the shared experience of drawing, Palma was the chief representative in many ways. His will of 1627 preceded Esengren’s will by a few years and anticipated the spirit of friendship that was in Esengren’s bequests. Palma left four of his own drawings to Domenico Tintoretto as a sign of the “great love passed between me and [him].” In other words, Palma directly equated artistic exchange with an exchange of love. Although Palma did not use the word academy, his drawings were left to a close friend who, as we saw, had plans to open up his own studio for the use of an academy. Meanwhile, Bassetti was discussing Palma’s advice in his Accademia

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55 The will was transcribed in Ludwig, “Archivalische Beiträge,” 92.
56 See Chiappini di Soria, “Le ultime volontà di Giacomo Palma,” 64: “E perché io son molto ubligatto alla casa et alla virtu’ del signor Giacomo Tintoretto fu eccellentissimo pittore la cui fama sara’ sempre imortalle; come per molti favori ricevuti in tempo di sua vita e come per molto amore pasatto fra me con il signor Domenico Tintoretto suo figliolo, universamente et in patria eccelentissimo nella pitura, laso al signor Domenigo quattro pezzi di mie disegni li quali si dovera’ elegere de li miei a suo piacimento.”
57 In a similar vein, Ridolfi tells us that Palma allowed the German painter, Johann Rottenhammer, with whom he was befriended, to make use of his drawings. See Maraviglie, vol. 2, 77: “Fioriva nello stesso tempo in detta Città Iacopo Palma il giovine, di cui divenuto Giovanni amico, segui alcune volte la di lui maniera, valendosi anco tal’hora d’alcuna sua invenzione.” We will see that Palma’s willingness to share his drawings with his friends dates back to an informal academy with Gambarato and Aliense in the 1580’s.
“alla Veneziana,” and Esengren owned a whole album of Palma’s drawings that he probably used in his own academy.

We might be able to trace these Palma-drawings in Esengren’s possession back to another unofficial drawing academy. Some of Esengren’s drawings were purchased from the collection of Girolamo Gambarato (1550-1628), whose short *vita* in Ridolfi’s *Maraviglie*, wedged between the Lives of Palma and Aliense, describes what could essentially be called a fledgling drawing academy alongside these two artists. Gambarato was a former pupil of Giuseppe Salviati and a painter of little note except for one important painting, *The Presentation of the Parasol to Doge Ziani* (c. 1583), in the Grand Council Hall of the Ducal Palace (Fig. 4.16). According to Ridolfi, he “was not much of an inventor,” and so both Palma and Aliense provided him with drawings for two paintings in the Palazzo Ducale, including the *Presentation of the Parasol* (Fig. 4.17), 58 and even helped him with the execution of one of his paintings in the senate chamber. 59 Gambarato may also have been painting directly alongside Palma, Aliense, and Marco Vecellio (Titian’s nephew) on the frescoes over the arches in the now lost church of San Basilio. 60 Even more noteworthy than these collaborations were their appearances in each others’ studios where they drew together. Gambarato supposedly posed as a model for the *ignudi* in Palma’s painting of the *Gathering of Manna* (c. 1580) in San Giacomo dell’Orio, on condition that he receive copies of the

58 Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 206-207. According to Ridolfi, Palma provided Gambarato with drawings for the figures in Gambarato’s one important work, Pope Alexander III, Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, and Doge Ziani at the port in Ancano, which was painted for the Grand Council hall in the Palazzo Ducale. According to William R. Rearick, the report about Palma’s help (coadiuvò) bears out in a series of drawings used in preparation for the painting. A drawing in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York of the Doge Ziani shows a better command compared to Gambarato’s other drawings and certainly compared to his earlier compositional sketch in Stockholm. The Uffizi drawing bears no resemblance to the few comparable drawings we know of Gambarato’s static and heavy chalk and shows that Gambarato had a different pose for the Doge before Palma gave him this figure sketch now in New York. A subsequent drawing in Stockholm shows Gambarato trying to apply his friend’s suggestions to the composition. See Rearick, *Il disegno veneziano del Cinquecento* (Milan, 2001), 192. For Palma’s figure sketch, see ibid., fig. 96 and for a finished drawing by Gambarato see Tietze and Tietze-Conrat, *Drawings of the Venetians*, 166-167, pl. CLXXXV, 3 and 4.

59 Ridolfi referred to Aliense taking part (*v’ebbe alcuna parte*) with Gambarato in the paintings of the *Doge as Protector of Scholars and Poets* for the Sala del Senato in the ducal palace; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 206. See Jürgen Schulz, *Venetian Painted Ceilings of the Renaissance*, cat. 43, and for a reproduction, see Makrykostas, *Antonio Vassilacchi*, 131 pl. 29.

60 Ridolfi said that some of Gambarato’s paintings could be found in the frescoes over the arches in San Basilio, but he did not mention Palma, Aliense, and Vecellio here; see *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 206. Boschini said that the painter over the arches was ‘Antonio’ Gambarato in his guidebook, but he listed the three others; see Boschini, *Le minere della pittura* (Venice, 1664), 339: “Sopra gli archi, vi sono diversi quadri, delle prime maniere, del Palma, Aliense, Marco di Tiziano, e Antonio Gambarato.” I have yet to find any information on Antonio from Gambara. Aside from Gerolamo, who was inscribed in the Arte dei Depentori from 1591-1606, there was an Iseppo de Gasparo Gambarato inscribed from 1603-1622; see Favaro, *Arte dei Pittori*, 148 and 149.
drawings (Figs. 4.18 and 4.19). For Aliense’s part, he would occasionally work on Gambarato’s paintings in the market at the Rialto, before returning to draw with him in Gambarato’s home, where there was an impressive collection of “paintings and drawings made by excellent authors.”

Suddenly, for reasons Ridolfi did not explain, Gambarato sold off his collection in 1606 at a rock bottom price to none other than Philip Esengren who, we might think, was inspired by this acquisition to form his own academy. The circumstances of this grouping would suggest that the informal workshop-academies, as Rosand called them, were in fact developing much earlier, as early as 1580 – right around the time Annibale and Agostino Carracci visited Venice and, consequently, before they helped establish their own academy in Bologna.

Giving another artist a drawing, as can be seen so repeatedly in Venice at this time, traditionally had greater meaning than the professional expediency of sharing material resources. A century earlier, Albrecht Dürer had famously reached out to Raphael in Rome by sending him a self-portrait and in return Raphael sent him a drawing – a preparatory study for the Battle of Ostia in the Sistine apartments (Fig. 4.12). With an inscription not unlike those Palma tended to make about his friends and family, Dürer documented the exchange of gifts and commented on its significance: “Raffahell de Urbin, who is so highly esteemed by the pope, made these naked figures and sent this to Albrecht Dürer in Nuremberg in order to show him his hand.” In a similar vein, Vasari created a story to explain how Antonella da

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61 Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 206. For this painting in the old sacristy of San Giacomo dell’Orio, see Mason Rinaldi, Palma il Giovane, 121, cat. 385; and Antonio Niero, Chiesa di S. Giacomo dall’Orio (Venice, 1990), 76-77.

62 Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 206-207: “...spesso ancora trattenendo a lavorar nelle opere sue in Rialto l’Aliense nella volta ch’egli teneva, si riduceva poi nell’andare a casa a desinar con lui... [Gambarato] Tenne nobilissimo studio di pitture e disegni fatti da eccellenti autori.” This reputation was pointed out, almost word for word, by Boschini as well in Descrizione di tutte le pubbliche pitture, 51.

63 Catherine Whistler has provided a very good overview of such informal academies for the practice of life drawing in which artists could share the costs of a live model in one space. She too pointed out the trip of Annibale and Agostino and their possible inspiration from drawing practices in Venice; see Whistler, “Life Drawing,” esp. 380 ff. These sorts of open studios to share resources were happening elsewhere in Italy, even in Florence where there was an officially sanctioned Accademia del Disegno; see Julian Brooks, “Florentine Artists and Disegno in Late Cinquecento Rome,” in The Accademia Seminars: The Accademia di San Luca in Rome, c. 1590-1635, ed. Peter M. Lukehart (Washington and New Haven, 2009), 225-243.

Messina convinced Jan Van Eyck to divulge his secret knowledge of oil painting. He gave the Flemish painter drawings in the ‘Italian manner’, and this gift was seen as a sign of respect – not as a commodified exchange – and as a result Van Eyck was moved to divulge his own closely guarded techniques.\textsuperscript{65} The willful exposure of the hand on a drawing was no minor gesture, for it provided the most intimate glimpse of the personal generative process. For this reason, Vasari recalled that in return for one of his own drawings, Michele Sanmicheli sent opulent gifts to Vasari’s mother, that is to say, to a more originary source for the creation of the drawing.\textsuperscript{66}

Venetian painters in particular were coming together to draw for the experience of affiliation, as much as for the ideas, and accordingly the drawing was the common currency in the economy of academic sodality. Their exchanges of drawings call to mind the humanist practice of exchanging letters and books inscribed with messages of devotion and friendship.\textsuperscript{67} Humanist friends, basing their friendship on virtue, the highest of Aristotle’s order of friendship, were supposed to provide correctives for each other in an ongoing process of moral transformation whereby the honorable traits in each friend become impressed into the other. Conversation and the sharing of ideas was the nourishment in humanist circles of this inter-transformative power. In this process, the personal epistolary hand, not unlike the draftsman’s hand, took on a semiotic purpose beyond the authentication

\textsuperscript{65} For a longer analysis of this anecdote, and the broader theme of studio secrecy, see Marc Gottlieb, “The Painter’s Secret: Invention and Rivalry from Vasari to Balzac,” \textit{The Art Bulletin} 84, 3 (2002): 470-472.


\textsuperscript{67} Kate Bomford discussed virtuous friendship and the dynamic transformations that it engendered in relation to Rubens’ self-portraits surrounded by his humanist friends; see, Bomford, “Peter Paul Rubens and the Value of Friendship,” \textit{Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek} 54 (2003): 239-243.
of the script itself. Erasmus even encouraged letter writers to train their hands in drawing as a way to improve their personal script. This way, one could avoid having to dictate personal thoughts to a secretary, whose presence suppresses the openness of speech shared between friends.

In this sense, Michelangelo’s practice of sharing his drawings with his most devoted friends, not all of whom were artists, such as Vittoria Colonna, Tommaso de’ Cavalieri, and Sebastiano del Piombo, is the clearest precedent for what we see in Venice in the early seventeenth century. Whereas Pietro Aretino was unsuccessful in his requests to Michelangelo for drawings, perhaps because he coveted the artifact as a collectible, the Portuguese painter Francisco de Hollanda, understood the significance of these gifts in the way Michelangelo intended: “And for the great love that I hold for your rare things, especially for those by your lordship from the time that I was in Rome, I ask that from your hand you do me the honour of sending me a few designs in memory of your works, even if they are no more than a few lines or profiles, as from ancient Apelles, so that it will be a true sign of your lordship’s health and be a firm record of our friendship.”

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69 Erasmus, De recta Graeci et Latini sermonis pronunciatione, translated by Jonathan Goldberg in Writing Matter: From the Hands of the English Renaissance (Stanford, 1990), 278: “To be brief: a letter that is a product of someone else’s fingers hardly deserves the name. For secretaries import a great deal of their own. If you dictate verbatim, then it is goodbye to your privacy; and so you disguise some things and suppress others in order to avoid having an unwanted confidant. Hence, quite apart from the problem of the genuineness of the text, no open conversation with a friend is possible here. It is very easy to forge a signature but very difficult to forge a complete letter. A man’s handwriting, like his voice, has a special, individual quality.”


71 For Aretino’s requests, wanting to see the effects of Michelangelo’s divine hand on the Last Judgment, see Paola Barocchi, Giovanni Poggi, and Renzo Ristori, eds. Il carteggio di Michelangelo, vol. 4 (Florence, 1965), 90-91 and 181-182. For Francesco de Hollanda’s letter to Michelangelo, see Barocchi, Poggi, and Ristori, Carteggio, vol. 5, 9 (Aug. 15, 1553): “Et per il grande amore che io tengo a le cose rare, maxime a le de Vostra Signoria del tempo che io fui in Roma, gli prego che de sua mano mi faccia gratia di mandarme
gifted drawings as mementos of social encounters. He gave his drawings to foreign painters, including Federico Zuccaro and the Cavalier Giuseppe d’Arpino, both of whom visited his studio and art collection.\textsuperscript{72} When he was tasked with painting yet another Resurrection (Fig. 4.13) alongside Domenico Cresti (known as Passignano), he apparently gifted to his collaborator what Ridolfi referred to as a \textit{disegno a chiaroscuro}. Admiring the drawing, Passignano used it for the pendant painting of the Crucifixion (Fig. 4.14).\textsuperscript{73} Although the drawing has been lost, this \textit{disegno a chiaroscuro} was probably something like the preparatory oil sketches that Domenico Tintoretto frequently employed (Fig. 4.15) and that Palma later provided Bassetti for the so-called \textit{Accademia alla Veneziana} in Rome.\textsuperscript{74}

\textit{Public and Private Declarations of Friendship: Pattern Manuals by Giacomo Franco and the Brief Life of Titian by Tizianello}

If the bequests of drawings and the references to academies call to mind the sodalities of early humanist academies, the expressions of affection attached to the gifted drawings are also indicative of the modes of address in letter writing. Nowhere is the combination of shared invention and civilized address more apparent than in the public and private friendship between Palma and the engraver Giacomo Franco. In addition to being an artist, trained by his father Battista Franco, Giacomo Franco was also a publisher specializing in luxury illustrated books, including books on architectural orders, figure drawing, calligraphy, and even embroidery and lace.\textsuperscript{75} These books, intended for the delectation and instruction of noble dilettantes (\textit{virtuosi}), are of particular interest because of their dedication to the inventive possibilities of patterns. Indeed, Franco often refers to the patterned plates of each

\footnotesize{alcun desegno, in memoria de le opere sue, anchora che piu non sia che qualque linia o profilo, come de l’antico Apelle, acciò che me sia un vero segno de la sanità de la Signoria Vostra et etiandio una ferma recordati[o]ne di nostra amicitia.”

\textsuperscript{72} Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 223.

\textsuperscript{73} Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 211: “… della quale invention havendo Antonio [Aliense] fatto un gran disegno a chiero scuro, invaghitosene il cavalier Passignano che al dirimpetto dipinse il Crocefisso, l’ottenne in dono.” See also Makrykostas, \textit{Antonio Vassilacchi}, 86-87, pl. 6; and Hochmann, \textit{Venise et Rome}, 431 and fig. 107.

\textsuperscript{74} For more on the oil sketch by Domenico Tintoretto, in preparation for the altar to St. Stephen in San Giorgio Maggiore, see Cooper, \textit{Palladio’s Venice}, 134-135 and fig. 135.

\textsuperscript{75} These books will be discussed in turn. Similar pattern-type books published by Franco that will not be discussed, include a catalogue of numismatics copied after Enea Vico, \textit{Reliqua Librorum Aeneae Vici Parmensis ad Imperatorum Historiam ex antiquis nummis} (Venice: Giacomo Franco, 1601); a costume book, \textit{Habiti d’huomeni et donne venetiane} (Venice: Giacomo Franco, 1614); and a book of portraits of famous princes and captains, \textit{Effigie naturali di maggior prencipi et piu valorosi capitanii di questa eta con l’arme loro} (Venice: Giacomo Franco, 1596).}
art form as *inventioni* either in the title or in the preface. Palma too is a recurring character in these manuals, as if the two artists shared an enthusiasm for subtle variations on essential forms.

Palma was a star contributor to the designs of the plates for Franco’s two-volume drawing manual titled, *De excellentia et nobilitate delineationis libri duo* (1611), which was reissued under Palma’s exclusive authorship in 1636 as the *Regole per imparar a disegnar* because his name had more widespread recognition.\(^76\) Palma was also the subject of the dedication in Franco’s edition of the *Cinque ordini di architettura* by Vignola (1603), and much as we saw with the exchanges of drawings within the informal academies, Franco’s dedication was, as he put it, compelled by “the bonds of love” (Figs. 4.20 and 4.21).\(^77\) Palma was, moreover, the recipient of one of the short letters in Franco’s calligraphy manual, the *Franco modo di scrivere cancellaresco moderno* (1595):

> To the very Magnificent and most Excellent Painter, Signor Giacomo Palma... I dare to declare that the love that I bear for you and the esteem in which I hold you is equal to your virtue. As your virtue is most celebrated among painters, so doubtlessly does my love earn me first place among all those who know you.\(^78\)

At the bottom of the page, a calligraphic line twirls inventively into the form of a dog, possibly to symbolize Franco’s fidelity to his friend (Fig. 4.22). The next plate featured a note for Palma’s other close friend, the sculptor Alessandro Vittoria, this time with a series of cursive loops suggesting the form of Vittoria’s famed portrait busts (Fig. 4.23).\(^79\)

For good reason, associations have been made between the functions of the drawing manuals and the calligraphy manuals, each serving as models from which *virtuosi* dilettantes

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\(^{76}\) Giacomo Franco, *De excellentia et nobilitate delineationis libri duo* (Venice, 1611). Palma had earlier contributed designs for the frontispiece and a few compositional sketches in Odoardo Fialetti’s *Il vero modo et ordine per disegnar tutte le parti et membra del corpo humano* (Venice, 1608).


\(^{79}\) For the message to Vittoria, see ibid., fol. 29.
could train their hands (Figs. 4.24 and 4.25).\textsuperscript{80} Indeed, Franco made this very comparison in the preface to his drawing manual.\textsuperscript{81} Drawing and handwriting had been closely aligned since the fifteenth century because of their similar mechanical techniques and their similar instruments;\textsuperscript{82} but the patterns in these luxury books also had more otiose intentions – appreciating the inventiveness found at the intersection between standardized forms and deviations of the skillful hand. Franco was weary of formal rules and, to his mind, patterns made it possible to see the personal approach to the impersonal. In the art of calligraphy, he was especially taken by each secretary’s stylistic variations on otherwise repetitious, etiquette-driven salutations and signatures (Fig. 4.26). Employing the most famous calligraphers to write for different plates in the \textit{Franco modo di scrivere}, he referred to their styles as inventions.\textsuperscript{83} So too in the drawing manual did he shy away from rules. He only briskly covered the most essential points of proportion, arguing that such speculative information was more useful for sculptors than for painters who must by necessity deviate

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\textsuperscript{80} Rosand, who initially presented the Venetian drawing manuals as evidence that the tenets of \textit{disegno} were being imported from Central Italy, nevertheless concluded that they were meant for “informed amateurs interested in studio recipes and technical matters.” See Rosand, “Crisis,” 12-22. Chittima Amornpichetkul rejected Rosand’s assessments and argued that the illustrated drawing manuals were used by young apprentices. She pointed to similar illustrations used by Agostino Carracci, which were possibly used for instruction, and to a similar sheet of eyes used by one instructor in the \textit{Academia de’ Pittori} illustrated by Pierfrancesco Alberti; see Amornpichetkul, “Seventeenth-Century Italian Drawing Books: Their Origins and Development,” in \textit{Children of Mercury: The Education of Artists in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries} (Providence, RI, 1984), 108-118, esp. 112. Philip Sohm first made the connection to calligraphy manuals, arguing that these manuals continued the Venetian tradition of art by practice and not on the importation of theoretical traditions from Central Italy; “Carlo Ridolfi and Marco Boschini,” in \textit{La pittura nel Veneto. Il Seicento}, ed. Mauro Lucco, vol. 2 (Milan, 2000), 733-744. Advancing on this suggestion, Catherine Whistler traced Palma’s estimable network of dealers, agents, and collectors, including Alethea Arundel, Sir Henry Wotton, Bartolomeo dalla Nave, Daniel Nys, and Nicholas Lanier, to show that these books were intended primarily for connoisseurs and collectors who had begun to deem skilled draftsmanship, much like calligraphy, as an essential attribute of gentility and as an aid to the discerning eye; see Whistler, “Learning to Draw in Venice: the Role of Drawing Manuals,” 123-129. On the general rise of the amateur draftsmen and the prescriptions for the noble gentleman to learn the art of design, see R.P. Ciardi, “Le regole del disegno di Alessandro Allori e la nascita del dilettantismo pittorico,” \textit{Storia dell’Arte} 12 (1971): 267-284. On the gentleman practitioner in drawing as it related to the Accademia di San Luca in Rome and to the \textit{Considerazioni di Mancini}, a pioneer in connoisseurship, see Frances Gage, “Giulio Mancini and Artist Amateur Relations in Roman Academies,” in \textit{The Accademia Seminars: The Accademia di San Luca in Rome, c. 1590-1635}, ed. Peter M. Lukehart (Washington and New Haven, 2009), 246-287.

\textsuperscript{81} Franco, \textit{De excellentia et nobilitate delineationis}, n.p.: “E perche in ogni cosa si deve à poco à poco andar cominciando, e si come fanno i maestri di scrivere, che prima insegnano a’ principianti à formare i caratteri, poi le sillabe, e finalmente le parole intiere; cosi mi pare, che si debba osservar nel disegnare, prima disgn[al]no occhi, nasi, bocche, orecchie, piedi, mani, e poi teste, bracci, ga[m]be, e torsi, si d’huomo, come di donna, & in fine la figura intiera [etc.]”

\textsuperscript{82} See David Rosand, \textit{Drawing Acts: Studies in Graphic Expression and Representation} (Cambridge and New York, 2002), 139-144.

\textsuperscript{83} Franco, \textit{Franco modo di scrivere}, n.p.
from rules in the process of foreshortening and who rely more on the eye than the compass. Rather than provide schematically ordered limbs to make the rules of proportion and anatomy clear, the pages with Palma’s body parts are more animated. The arms and legs seem to jockey for position as they project and recede in intertwining clusters, much like the inspired *groppi* (tangled lines) of calligraphy (Fig. 4.27). The reader or viewer, Franco hoped, would take pleasure as much in the expressive medium as the semantic form, and disentangle the intellective process by which the skilled hand pieced the playful puzzle together.

When thinking about this association between drawing and handwriting, it is worth keeping in mind that the cursive script, with its increasingly intricate loops, was a cultural commodity because of its semiotic function in the art of letter writing and in civilized modes of address. Cursive types were both formally standardized and permissively stylized because they participated in the introduction and maintenance of social bonds. In the late sixteenth century, the ever greater appearance of swiftness in the controlled handling of the pen signified the immediacy and spontaneity of words in the process of dictation and set the tone for the highly embellished manners of presentation. One indication that sketched drawings, which are normally thought of as studies for private consumption, could operate within similar modes of address can be gleaned from a pair of drawings by Palma. In a sketchbook in the Ashmolean, a fragment of a signature penned in the up-to-date *cancellaresca moderna* hovers above a drawing of Judith and her faithful servant (Fig.

84 Franco, *De excellentia et nobilitate delineationis*, n.p.: “E benche nel corpo humano si trovi ch’ogni picciol membro corrisponde di misura alle sue parti, tuttavia non mi pare necessario in questo luogo à dirlo, poiche vi sono stati molti, si Pittori, come litterati, c’hanno commentato questa eccellentissima arte, & insieme dato regole, e precetti intorno à quella … Dicovi adunque che’l parlar di questo non è mia inte[n]zione, poiche l’arte della Pittura poco si serve di simil misure, esse[n]do più necessaria à Scultori, ch’a Pittori, poiche la Pittura scorciando perde ogni misura: è ben vero che’l saper le sopradette cose no[n] è male … e tutte queste cose [proportions] sono più tosto da essere misurate nella Pittura con l’occhio, che col compasso, e ciò si potrà fare seco[n]do la grandezza, or picciolezza della figura, che sarà di più, o meno testa.”

85 For a very nuanced exploration of the intertwining functions of drawing and writing, see Nicola Suthor, “Guerino’s ‘Wet’ Drawing,” *Revs* 63/64 (2013): 80-92.

86 The main protagonists of this evolution were Gianfrancesco Cresci and Marcello Scalzini, whose manual *Il secretario* (Venice, 1581) was published and engraved by Franco himself. For a thorough overview of the development of chancery cursive, and the important role played by the development of engraving techniques to capture the character of the scripts, see Stanley Morison, *Early Italian Writing-Books: Renaissance to Baroque*, ed. Nicolas Barker (Boston, 1990), esp. 112-129. There is nevertheless a certain symmetry to art history that must be kept in mind. Morison, who was writing in the early twentieth century, was critical of scripts that sacrificed legibility for swiftness and embellishment, referring to manuals at the end of the century as a period of degeneration. In fact, he referred to Franco’s books as “the lowest point reached in calligraphical publishing of the century.” See ibid., 136.
It was not uncommon for artists to practice their handwriting or to scribble notes on whatever sheet of paper was at hand, and yet in another album in the Accademia di San Luca the figures are reproduced exactly, right down to the drapery folds, and above these figures is Palma’s now complete and neatly aligned signature followed by a dedication to none other than the loyal Giacomo Franco (Fig. 4.29). The copied script and figures suggest a preconceived gift masquerading as a spontaneous realization of an idea. The subject of the drawing serves as both the content and the valediction of the graphic letter, for Palma is indicating that he himself is Giacomo’s loyal servant.

If this act of copying makes the gift seem more formal than personal, the lines between the professional and the domestic spheres of this relationship were nevertheless blurred much as they were in Palma’s relationship with Aliense and Domenico Tintoretto. Franco was close with Palma’s wife, Andriana. In 1582, the engraver appeared as a witness in her last will and testament when she was concerned about her health during her first pregnancy. Andriana too was the subject of a dedication when Franco produced a pattern book for lace, embroidery, and needlepoint, a gendered equivalent to the calligraphy and drawing manuals, titled the Nuova inventione (1596) (Figs. 4.30 and 4.31). His valediction states, “most loving friend and servant.”

The language Franco used to describe Andriana’s needle work is remarkable for its emphasis on both craft and inventiveness, something that is clear already in the title. Andriana, he said, was endowed with intellect and genius, and her work was legitimized by ancient exempla:

Having seen you many, many times and praised you with my uttermost wonder (you not having in your judicious and virtuous handiwork any less than Arachne and Pallas Athena who you equal), I now had a mind to exhaust my own intellect in a manner that the world will understand how much I am fittingly and honorably inclined to you. And so responding to the lady’s profession, and in particular to your noble intellect, I extracted from my idea a

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88 For this drawing, and the album as a whole, see Luigi Grassi, ed., Il libro dei disegno di Jacopo Palma il Giovane all’Accademia di S. Luca (Rome, 1968), pl. 56.
89 The first and only will made by Palma’s wife Andriana dates to 1582 during the perilous pregnancy of their first child, ASV, Not. Test., b. 582, n. 56 (1582); see Gustav Ludwig, “Archivalische Beiträge,” 119-120. Ludwig incorrectly records the busta of Andriana’s will as 1580. Also mentioned in Tietze and Tietze-Conrat, Drawings of the Venetians, 198.
90 Giacomo Franco, Nuova inventione de diverse mostre così di punto in aere come de retticelli hoggi di usate per tutte le parte del mondo (Venice, 1596), n.p.: “Compadre & Servitore affettoattissimmo.”
few engraved demonstrations of such domestic crafts, and had them published as a unique gift and particular dedication to your ladyship. And I have done this not because I am unaware that you are capable of inventing these yourself with more beauty and worth, but rather so that you understand both my devotion and reverence towards you from this little gesture. I owe it to the pilgrims of your gifts, who among all the ladies easily give you the palm. To you alone therefore I intended this little book of mine on needlework and embroidery of various sorts, because you alone understand how deeply I yearn to give occasion to your most acute genius (acutissimo suo ingegno) to make it celebrated by everyone.  

I like to think this pattern book, and its dedication, was the inspiration for Palma’s candid portrait of Andriana intent on her needle work (Fig. 4.32). Inscribed with the date 1596, the same date as the publication of the Nuova inventione, her likeness takes on the inspired character of an artist portrait. Instead of a brush and canvas, she wields her own instruments – the curved needle between the fingers of her right hand and the fabric ground in her left. However, her needle hand almost melts into the shadows on her face, even while the bold and rounded contours of her fingers reiterate the fiery ringlets of her hair. Hand and mind are becoming one under the inspiration of her “acutissimo ingegno”. What is more, her face and eyes are obscured in the contemplative shade of her downturned head, not unlike a melancholic figure, or the humble if waspish philosopher, Diogenes the Cynic, pictured at the bottom of the page.

Almost forty years after he appeared in Andriana’s will, Franco remembered Palma in his own will of 1620, bequeathing to Palma a gold coin valued at 20 ducats, so “that he enjoy it for my love.” Another surprising name appears in Franco’s will. He left to the painter...
Tiziano Vecellio, known as Tizianello (‘little Titian’), twenty five ducats.\footnote{“...lasso a messer Titian pitor ducati vinticinque per una volta tutta la cusina de rami peltri, cavioni cento giardni spirituali tutto sia di esso Titian.” See Ludwig, “Archivalische Beiträge,” 104.} Palma had his own relationship with this painter. Tizianello was the son of Titian’s assistant and cousin once removed, Marco Vecellio, who we have already noted worked with Gambarato, Palma, and Aliense in San Basilio. Like Palma, Tizianello was named after his famous forebear, and again like Palma, he took full advantage of his namesake, honouring his ancestry by writing a brief life of Titian, called the \textit{Breve compendio della vita di Tiziano} (1622) complete with a family tree. The biography nevertheless ended with celebrations, not of Titian, but of Domenico Tintoretto and Palma. Tizianello described Domenico as the heir to Jacopo Tintoretto’s legacy and as “most loving towards his friends.”\footnote{Tizianello wrote the biography anonymously, \textit{Breve compendio della vita di Tiziano} [1622], ed. Lionello Puppi (Milan, 2009), 58. Listing the generation of painters who flourished because of Titian, “… Giacomo Tintoretto, l’ingegno ammirabile del quale era molto da lui stimato et osservato, come da ogni virtuoso ingegno al presente è riverita et stimata l’eccellenza del signor Domenico Tintoretto, suo degno figliuolo, imitator del valor del padre et amorevolissimo verso gli amici.”} He then turned to Palma with even more valorization, referring to his funerary monument, which was only recently installed in 1621 with portraits of Palma himself, his great uncle and namesake Palma Vecchio, and his idol Titian (Fig.4.53). Although the book was about Titian, the very last line of the biography closes with Palma’s own inheritance of the field: “[Titian and Palma Vecchio’s] virtue is honourably alive and resplendent in him [Palma Giovane].”\footnote{Tizianello, \textit{Breve compendio}, 58: “Sigillo della virtù di tant’uomo è stata la cara dimostrazione fatta ultimamente dall’illustre et eccellente pittore il signor Giacomo Palma il quale, con eterno deposito di bronzi, marmi et pitture fatte della sua eccellente mano, ha volute, nella chiesa dei reverendi padri predicatori di San Giovanni e Paolo in Venezia, onorar la memoria del suddetto Tiziano et del vecchio Palma suo avo, dai quali apprese i veri documenti dell’arte, et ora la virtù loro onoratamente vive et risplende in lui.”}

Tizianello’s effusive praise of Palma was a mark of their own working relationship. Palma and Tizianello provided pendant paintings for a Passion cycle in the Chapel of the Sacrament in San Giacomo dell’Orio some time after 1604 and it is possible that Palma had vouched for Tizianello with the great English patrons the Arundels, the dedicatees of the brief life of Titian.\footnote{The chapel of the Sacrament was renovated between 1597 and 1604 on the recommendations of Lorenzo Priuli. Tizianello, and possibly Giulio del Moro, painted the lunettes with a \textit{Flagellation} on the right and \textit{Ecce Homo} on the left respectively. Underneath those lunettes Palma painted scenes of the \textit{Via Crucis} on the left and the \textit{Entombment} on the right. See Giovanni Costantini, \textit{La Chiesa di S. Giacomo dall’Orio in Venezia}, (Venice, 1912), 19-20; Niero, \textit{San Giacomo dall’Orio}, 56-62. Lionello Puppi dated the project to 1618 based on Costantini and Niero, but this should read 1613; see Puppi’s introduction to Tizianello, \textit{Breve compendio}, 16. Nevertheless, this was the date when the Scuola del Sacramento expanded their benches and commissioned Tizianello to provide a painting of Christ in the Garden, which is now in the sacristy. Neither}
acrimonious ending, however. Aletheia Arundel lodged a complaint with the Collegio of Venice in 1625, because Tizianello was dodging his obligation to paint for her in England despite having accepted payments.  

Palma and Alessandro Vittoria: The New Titian and Michelangelo

According to Ridolfi, Palma was drawn to an influential artist soon after his return from Rome: “He then became a friend of Alessandro Vittoria, on whose judgment the whole city depended for any deliberations that had to be made, not only in matters of sculpture and architecture, but in painting as well.” Like Palma, the sculptor and architect Alessandro Vittoria demonstrated a fascination with the styles and faces of his great artistic forebears, which extended to a collection of artists’ portraits. If Palma saw himself as Titian’s heir in a new generation of painters, as testified by his funerary monument in Santi Giovanni e Paolo, he aligned himself quite quickly with a sculptor and architect who, despite not being a painter, aspired to be the Michelangelo of Venice, the original expert in all three sister arts.

Costantini, nor Niero gave dates for the paintings in the chapel. Stefania Mason Rinaldi dated Palma’s paintings in the chapel to around 1604 based primarily on the Visite pastorale of Ziane, who called the chapel complete, Palma il Giovane, 123. Ziane’s remarks could very well refer to the structural state of the chapel rather than its decorative state and so 1604 is only a terminus post quem.

98 For the complaint reported to the Collegio, see Calendar of State Paper and Manuscripts, Relating to the English Affairs. Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy, vol. XVIII. 1623-1625, ed. Allen B. Hinds (Hereford, 1912), 606-607. Jennifer Fletcher, “The Arundels in the Veneto,” 67, has commented on these events. David Howarth, “The Patronage and Collecting of Aletheia, Countess of Arundel 1606-1654,” Journal of the History of Collections 10, 2 (1998): 129. As Lionello Puppi has pointed out, Tizianello’s jail time in 1635, for which he was sentenced to two years and subsequently reduced to four months, was too late to be connected with Aletheia’s complaint; see his remarks in Tizianello, Breve compendio, 18-19.

99 Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 174-175: “Divenuto poscia famigliare di Alessandro Vittoria, dal cui giudizio dipendeva all’hora la Città tutta nelle deliberationi, che à far si havevano delle cose di scoltura, e dell’architettura non solo, mà della Pittura.”

100 Vittoria was an avid collector who possessed Parmigianino’s famous self-portrait tondo; see Avery, “The House of Alessandro Vittoria Reconstructed,” 20. Indeed, Palma was a witness to Vittoria’s acquisition of a set of Parmigianino drawings in 1581; see ASV, San Zaccaria, “Commissaria Vittoria,” b. 18, vol. 1, fol. 56r; transcribed also in Avery, “Documenti,” doc. 111. For Vittoria’s collection, see Avery, 19-21, esp. 20 for the list of artists’ portraits, including Palma’s; see also Victoria Avery, “Alessandro Vittoria collezionista,” in “La bellissima maniera”: Alessandro Vittoria e la scultura veneta del Cinquecento, ed. Andrea Bacchi, Lia Camerlengo, and Manfred Leithe-Jasper (Trent, 1999), 140-151; Lanzoni, “Alessandro Vittoria,” 98-134.

101 In imitation of Michelangelo’s tomb in Florence, Vittoria celebrated his command over the three sister arts by having the personifications of painting, architecture, and sculpture form a triangle around his bust. In fact, the figure of sculpture was a direct quotation from Michelangelo’s tomb. Even though Vittoria did not actually paint with his own hands, by adopting Michelangelo’s reputation as the champion of the three sister arts, Vittoria proclaimed his own mastery in disegno, and thus in all three media. See Victoria Avery, “The Michelangelo of Venice?,” in Reactions to the Master: Michelangelo’s Effect on Art and Artists in the Sixteenth Century, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis and Paul Joannides (Aldershot, 2003), 157-179.
From as early as 1575, the two developed a favourable relationship, with the older Vittoria acting as a kind of mentor and protector for the painter.\(^\text{102}\) Vittoria was certainly known to have used his favour to win commissions for his friend Palma, and Ridolfi recounted their artful practices of making gains by deceiving patrons.\(^\text{103}\) The only documented case of influence, however, was for an altarpiece in the church of San Zulian, a commission that Palma was awarded by the mercer’s guild in 1583 (Fig. 4.33). Likely owing to Vittoria’s presence, which is noted in the archival record documenting the votes on the contest, Palma managed to beat out Tintoretto and Francesco Bassano.\(^\text{104}\) What is more, this altarpiece at San Zulian was the first of four opportunities for Palma and Vittoria to create an altarpiece together, combining architecture, sculpture, and painting. Here Vittoria’s statues of Daniel and St. Catherine were placed in front of the columns of the altarpiece where they twist their bodies back towards Palma’s painting of the Virgin ascending to heaven from her tomb.\(^\text{105}\) The second altarpiece, made in 1593 for the church of Sant’Antonin, was dedicated

\(^\text{102}\) In a contract dated to 1575 Palma served as witness to the acquisition of stone columns needed for one of Vittoria’s designs; see Ludwig, “Archivalische Beiträge,” 29; also transcribed by Victoria Avery, “Documenti sulla vita e le opera di Alessandro Vittoria (c. 1525-1608),” Studi trentini di scienze storiche 78 (1999): doc. 92(vi).

\(^\text{103}\) Apparently, the friars of Santa Maria Gloriosa were less than enthusiastic about the Martyrdom of St. Catherine, the altarpiece that Palma had made for the right wall of their church. When Vittoria’s opinion was requested, he pretended not to know who had done the painting and praised it very highly in all its parts, so that eventually Palma was properly remunerated; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 186. On the particular altarpiece, see Mason Rinaldi, *Palma il Giovane*, cat. 442. In another anecdote, the painter Pietro Malombra supposedly criticized Palma’s altarpiece of the Madonna and Child with Saints in San Zaccaria to the point that Palma was forced to rereit it (Fig. A9). With Vittoria’s help, Ridolfi said, Palma redesigned the altarpiece so quickly and so well that Malombra was shocked and silenced. See Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 188.

\(^\text{104}\) Vittoria was explicitly recorded as present when Palma was selected by the guild officers in a lopsided victory over no less than Jacopo Tintoretto, Francesco Bassano, and a Ludovico Veronese; see Stefania Mason Rinaldi, “Tre momenti documentati dell’attività di Palma il Giovane,” Arte Veneta 29 (1975): 202; also transcribed in Avery, “Documenti”: doc. 119(xi). According to Ridolfi, Vittoria’s favour also got Palma the commission for the frescoes for the sepulcher of Girolamo Canale in Santi Giovanni e Paolo; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 175. He further ensured that Palma was given the commission to paint The Washing of the Feet and Christ in Front of Caiaphas in San Giovanni in Bragora; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 175. Ridolfi also suggested that Palma was given the large ceiling painting in the Grand Council chamber because of Vittoria’s influence, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 177. For their collaboration in San Salvador, Vittoria reportedly insisted on Palma over Andrea Vicentino; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 187.

to St. Sabbas (Fig. 4.34). As in San Zulian, Vittoria provided sculptural figures – this time cherubs supporting the body of St. Sabbas – that were placed in front of the painting. Above the relic, Palma painted the saint ascending over his corporeal remains towards God in Heaven, pictured in the lunette above. The third altarpiece, dated to between 1595 and 1600, was for the Luganegheri (the sausage-makers guild) in San Salvador (Fig. 4.35). Here again, Vittoria designed the statues of St. Roch and St. Sebastian to go on either side of Palma’s painting of the Madonna Appearing above Sts. Anthony, John the Baptist, and Francis. And the fourth altarpiece, dated to 1599, was made for the namesake of the church of San Zaccaria (Fig. A7). Though the altar frame was deliberately archaizing to make it consistent with the other altars, the arrangement of sculpture and painting was similar to that in Sant’Antonin.

In San Salvador, Vittoria and Palma were placed in a fortuitous spatial relationship to their respective mentors, Sansovino and Titian, who had been paired up directly across the nave in the 1560s (Fig. 4.36). Whereas Sansovino’s architecture for the altar of the Annunciation falls back deferentially behind the frame around Titian’s Annunciation (c. 1564), Vittoria’s sculptural figures project forward from the altarpiece without overwhelming Palma’s figures. Not only were Palma and Vittoria able to assert their roles in this space as the new leading painter and sculptor of Venice, but they suggested a more coveted ideal – the pairing of a new Titian and a new Michelangelo. Vittoria’s St. Sebastian on the right, a famous work from which he made copies for friends and collectors, is a quotation of


106 Mason Rinaldi, Palma il Giovane, cats. 342-352.
107 Lanzoni, “Alessandro Vittoria,” 70-84. Lorenzo Finocchi Ghersi, “Artisti e committenti a San Salvador,” Arte Veneta 51 (1997): 20-39. Mason Rinaldi, Palma il Giovane, cat. 477. On the date, Mason Rinaldi suggested c. 1600, Palma il Giovane, cat. 477; Victoria Avery provided a much earlier date of the late 1580s, assuming the works date from the time the Luganegheri (sausage-makers guild) took possession of the altar from the D’Anna family; see Avery, “The Michelangelo of Venice?,” 170. Lanzoni argued that the sculptures by Vittoria should be dated to around 1595, but in a footnote, she also pointed out that there was a document in Vittoria’s Memorie, which suggests that he may have been paid only in 1600 and 1601; see Lanzoni, “Alessandro Vittoria,” 74 n. 112.
108 See the appendix for more.
109 Lanzoni too recognized the charged spatial relationship these altarpieces took on for Vittoria and Palma, though she was more inclined to suggest Vittoria was associating himself with Titian. In her interpretation, Vittoria engaged in a paragone on the merits of sculpture versus painting, “Alessandro Vittoria,” 9-10, and 84. In Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Vittoria had installed a fully sculpted altar and altarpiece to which Titian may have been responding in the Pietà, originally intended for his funerary monument in the Frari; see Zbyněk Smetana, “Setting the Record Straight: Titian’s Pietà and Vittoria’s Zane Altar,” Aurora 3 (2002): 42-61.
Michelangelo’s Haman (Fig. 4.37) in the Sistine Chapel and the Good Thief on the right side of the Last Judgment.\(^{110}\)

Several suggestive clues indicate that Aliense was a third member of this group but the nature of his position is not as clear, especially because Ridolfi claimed that Vittoria resented Aliense for not awarding him the commission to cast his design for the bronze high altar in San Giorgio Maggiore (Fig.4.38).\(^{111}\) The first collaboration between Palma and Vittoria in San Zulian was contemporaneous with the virtual drawing academy shared between Palma, Aliense, and Gambarato, and this might explain Aliense’s knowledge of the plans for San Zulian mid-production. In two presentation drawings meant for cloth standards, Aliense took up his colleagues’ favourite compositional formula, positioning saints on the outside of the aedicule and placing them against pairs of columns (Figs. 4.39 and 4.40). The contract for the standards are transcribed on the back of both these drawings and is dated December 13, 1583 – just a few weeks after Palma won the commission for San Zulian on November 6, 1583.\(^{112}\)

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\(^{111}\) Aliense was the expert hired by the abbot of the monastery to help select the winning design for the tabernacle; see Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 215: “Approvato il parere di quello dall’Abbate, gli rimise ancora l’elettione dello Scultore, e fù da lui scelto Girolamo Campagna, non senza mortificatione del Vittoria, che per tale cagione gli fù poi all’auuenire sempre poco amico.” Victoria Avery, pointing to known drawings for the work, argued that Aliense was not the inventor of the complicated iconography. Believing that these drawings belong to the original contestants, and not Aliense or Campagna, she suggested that the abbot was behind the plan, not Aliense, even though he was a signatory on the contract. See Avery, “Altarpiece of the Holy Trinity and Evangelists,” in The Encyclopedia of Sculpture, ed. Antonia Boström, vol. 1 (New York and London, 2004), 241-242. However, I am not sure I agree that the drawing in Munich is unlike any from Aliense’s oeuvre, as Avery said. In fact, the short pen strokes, and the dark rounded eyes, bear a good resemblance to the manner seen in Palma’s drawings for the organ in San Zaccaria (see Fig. 99), but with less fluidity, which is typical of Aliense’s style. For the drawing, see David McTavish, “A Drawing by Girolamo Campagna for the High Altar of San Giorgio,” Arte Veneta 34 (1980): 165-168. William R. Rearick too assigned the drawing to Aliense, see Il disegno veneziano, 196. The contract is dated to January 20, 1591; but there is a question whether or not this is in more veneto, in which case, the year would be 1592. Von Hadeln asks this question in Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 213, n. 1. Matthews in Venice and the Veneto says Campagna was commissioned in 1591. Avery, McTavish, and Rearick, however, provide the date 1592.

\(^{112}\) See Tietze and Tietze-Conrat, Drawings of the Venetians, 33 and 34; Bert W. Meijer, “Disegni di Antonio Vassilacchi detto l’Aliense,” Arte Veneta 53 (1998): 36-37, and figs. 4 and 5; and Rearick, Il disegno veneziano, 194, and fig. 101. Might it also have been Aliense who connected his two companions, Palma and Vittoria, together graphically when a frame resembling Vittoria’s funerary monument in San Zaccaria was drawn around a sketch of figures by Palma? On this combination drawing, Tietze made the connection of the frame to Vittoria’s monument and suggested that it was a proposal between Vittoria and Palma. David Rosand pointed out that the style of the graphic frame was not that of a sculptor or architect, let alone of Vittoria himself; see Rosand, “Aliense’s Collection of Drawings,” 156-157. He proposed instead Aliense’s hand, but he did not make an elaborate argument, briefly basing his attribution on the similarity of the drawing style to Luca Cambiaso, a major influence on early Seicento drawing, and on the likelihood of the draughtsman being a collector. This attribution was attacked rather sardonically by J. A. Gere in a letter to the editor, Master Drawings 8, 2 (1970), 172. He suggested instead the attribution of Giovanni Baglione based on a note by Pouncey. This was reiterated by Gere and Pouncey together in Italian drawings in the British Museum, Artists
A few years later in 1591, an ‘Antonio pittor’, who may have been Aliense (Antonio Vassilacchi), appears in Vittoria’s account book receiving the same fee as Palma for painting the façade of Vittoria’s home near San Zaccaria. Lastly, Vittoria’s St. Sebastian takes a prominent place among ancient fragments in Palma’s portrait of a collector who might very well be Aliense (Fig. 4.41). The identity of this sitter has been much disputed, but there is a certain resemblance to his portrait in Ridolfi’s Maraviglie (Fig. 4.42). If correct, the dating of the portrait, between 1595 and 1600, places it after the supposed quarrel over the bronze high altar in San Giorgio Maggiore, and right at the time the collaborative project between Palma and Aliense began in San Zaccaria.

The sitter in this portrait, moreover, is presenting what appears to be a drawing, perhaps a chiaroscuro oil sketch. Its direct vertical alignment with the St. Sebastian statuette implies a connection between drawing, sculpture, and even painting. If the sitter is Aliense, could he be offering the drawing as a gift to an unnamed recipient? Expressions of friendship were frequently made through a third party, as when Francesco Berni addressed his sonnet to Sebastiano del Piombo in order to praise Michelangelo. In such a case, might Aliense have had Palma make the portrait to serve as a gift for Vittoria and his large collection of artists’ portraits? Around the same time, in 1596, Palma publicly expressed his own devotion to Vittoria through the engraver Hendrick Goltzius (Fig. 4.43). Palma had Goltzius copy his design of St. Jerome and dedicated the invention to Vittoria in a plaque on the top left: “Alexandro Victorio Insigni/ Statuario & Architetto/ amicitiae ergo/ D[at]. D[edicavit]. Jacobus Palma Invent[um].”

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113 Avery discussed this record in “The House of Alessandro Vittoria,” 11, and see ibid, 46 n.23, for the suggestion that Antonio may have been Aliense. This ‘Antonio’ was paid 62 lire, the same as Palma, for his work on the facade and so he must have been of a status deserving of some recognition, at any rate. ASV, San Zaccaria, “Commissaria Vittoria,” b. 18, vol. 1, 69: “9 dito [Magio 1592] contai a m. Antonio dipintore per aver dipinto le due bande di la faciata – L. 62”; and on the next line, “9 dito contai a m. Jacomo Palma per aver dipinto la parte di mizo di la faciata – L. 62.”

114 For an overview of the arguments in favour of identifying this figure as either the collector Bartolomeo della Nave, or as Alessandro Vittoria, see Linda Borean, “Ritratti di collezionisti a Venezia tra secondo Cinquecento e prima metà del Seicento. Alcune considerazioni,” Artibus et Historiae 68 (2013): 107-109. In her more recent article, Borean seemed inclined to favour Aliense’s identity; see Borean, “L’artista e il suo doppio. Ritratti di pittori del Seicento venziano,” Artibus et Historiae 70 (2014): 65.

115 See chapter 1.

Palma’s artistic social circle – to say nothing of the poets, musicians, and foreign artists that were said to frequent his home and studio – could be expanded still more broadly.\textsuperscript{117} It is nevertheless my hope that the concentrated sample size of Aliense, Domenico Tintoretto, Marcantonio Bassetti, Gerolamo Gambarato, Giacomo Franco, Tizianello, and Vittoria is sufficiently large enough to demonstrate the qualitative relationships that formed around Palma as colleague, friend, and collaborator. The first point to take away from this network is that, next to Vittoria, Palma was the chief representative of the group, but because cross references abound, the ties were more interconnected than strictly centralized. The second related point is that the academies alluded to by some of the painters in this group take on greater importance when the convivial quality of their interrelationship is recognized. We do not always have lists of members in these academies, which may not have been exclusive, and it seems unlikely that they had formalized rules and procedures. Their understanding of an academy was not of an institutional school, but of a fellowship of individuals with a common pursuit. It is worth remembering that this was the basis of many of the early academies that were casually formed in the fifteenth century, including the intellectual circle that was named after Leonardo da Vinci in Mantua – the Academia Leonardi Vinci – for which a series of knot drawings are a potent emblem.\textsuperscript{118} Luke Syson’s explanation of these patterned knot drawings could equally describe the point being made here about the

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\item \textsuperscript{117} For an overview of the artists who traveled to Venice from the 1570s to the 1620s, and who sought Palma out, see Stefano Pierguidi, “‘In quel paese il suo Palma avrebbe appunto la Palma’. Veneziani e foresti in gara a Venezia nel Seicento,” \textit{Studi veneziani} n.s. 63 (2011): 297-317. Whether Sante Peranda, who collaborated with Palma extensively, fit securely into the particular network discussed in this chapter, or whether he was in a separate orbit has not become clear just yet. Although he had been a pupil of his supposed rival Leonardo Corona, Peranda expressly coordinated his paintings with Palma in the churches of San Bartolomeo and San Nicolò dei Tolentini. He also took over from Palma the painting cycle of Psyche for the Duke Alessandro I Pico of Mirandola. On the coordinated works between Palma and Peranda, see Aldo Cicinelli, “I dipinti del Palma e del Peranda dalla reggia dei Pico al Palazzo Ducale di Mantova,” in \textit{Arte a Mirandola al tempo dei Pico}, exhibition catalogue edited by Vittorio Erlindo (Mirandola and Mantua, 1994), 62-69, and cats. 7.1-7.5. Esengren included Peranda’s pupils Zanimberti and Ponzone in his will, but that falls short of a direct tie to Peranda.
\item \textsuperscript{118} David Chambers, “The Earlier ‘Academies’ in Italy,” in \textit{Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century}, ed. David S. Chambers and François Quiviger (London, 1995), 1-14. There has been some debate about whether or not there was a real ‘Academia Leonardi Vinci,’ in Milan in the last decade of the fifteenth century. The nature of this academy affects how one is to interpret a series of engraved sheets of knotwork, sporting a medal with the name of the academy, and another engraving of an idealized woman in profile, also with the name of the academy. Jill Pederson found in a manuscript, called the \textit{Isola beata}, by Henrico Boscano, that such an academy did exist and that it was made up of humanists, poets, musicians, and artists, including Leonardo da Vinci; see Pederson, “Henrico Boscano’s \textit{Isola beata}: New Evidence for the Academia Leonardi Vinci in Renaissance Milan,” \textit{Renaissance Studies} 22, 4 (2008): 450-475.
\end{itemize}
patterning of Venetian painting: “... this congregation of separate parts into a visually satisfying whole could also stand for all the many complex and individual ways of thinking within a unified group of philosophers.”\textsuperscript{119} The family alliance created between Palma and Aliense was manifestly symptomatic of such personal and artistic integrations.

4.2 \textbf{From Noble Motivations to Harsh Realities in the Palma-Aliense Partnership}

On May 30\textsuperscript{th}, 1600, Palma’s daughter Giulia Palma and Aliense’s brother Giacomo Vassilacchi declared their mutual consent to marry and their wedding ceremony took place the following week on June 5\textsuperscript{th} in the church of San Cristoforo on Murano.\textsuperscript{120} The marriage alliance likely arose from conventional motivations to pool economic capital and familial influence. In other respects the formal bond between the artists embodied those theoretical ambitions of uniting famous artistic patrimonies, whether in imitation or in the reimagining of a hypothetical collaboration. Whatever the reason for its formation, the partnership became unsustainable, not because of artistic disagreement but because of the realities of daily life.

Ridolfi was totally silent about the marriage itself, even though he referred to five joint projects dated to between 1600 and 1610 that probably proceeded from the arrangement.\textsuperscript{121} In comparison to biographers like Vasari, Malvasia, and Passeri, Ridolfi was more restrained in his treatment of personal information, but he still provided other details about Aliense’s domestic life, mentioning, for example, that Aliense had two daughters in the Franciscan convent of Santa Chiara and that Aliense himself had married three times.\textsuperscript{122} It is hard to believe, then, that Ridolfi would have thought a marriage bond between the families of Aliense and Palma was not germane to either biography. He certainly would have known about it. Ridolfi was a pupil in Aliense’s shop for five years, probably between 1606 and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{120} ASPV, Santa Croce, Matrimoni 2 (1600). On the requirements for an approved matrimony, see Bishop Antonio Grimani, \textit{Constitutioni, et decreti approvati nella sinodo diocesana, sopra la retta disciplina monacale sotto L’illustissimo, et Reverendissimo Monsignor Antonio Grimani Vescovo di Torcello. L’anno della Natività del Nostro Signore. 1592. Il giorno 7. 8. et 9. d’Aprile} (Venice, 1592), 53v-57v. Because the church of Santa Croce was being renovated, the marriage had to take place outside the parish. The church of San Cristoforo appears to have been the church chosen by the parishioners of Santa Croce, as Gabriele Cailari, Veronese’s son, was married there as well in 1598 for the same reason; see Ricciotti Bratti, “Notizie d’arte e d’artisti,” \textit{Nuovo Archivio Veneto} N.S. 30, 2 (1915): 451. The church was reconsecrated in July of 1600.
\item \textsuperscript{121} See intro for the list of these projects and their dates.
\item \textsuperscript{122} On the daughters in Santa Chiara, see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 216; and on Aliense’s marriage to his third wife, see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 218.
\end{itemize}
1611, and he claimed to have had a close relationship with his late master right up until his death in 1629.\textsuperscript{123}

Only at one point in the Life of Aliense did Ridolfi start to draw back the curtain and offer a glimpse at the personal relationship. Even then he strained to keep the circumstances of the anecdote obfuscated. Aliense’s financial situation apparently changed some time after work was completed in Salò in 1605, and Ridolfi pitied the sudden financial straights of his late master. Although he laid part of the blame on Aliense’s prodigal lifestyle, the real impetus for his master’s precipitous turn of fortune was a legal dispute with Palma: “Thus, involved in litigation with Palma, [Aliense] wasted much of his time and assets dealing with lawyers. He devoted most of his work to paying for their services and a few of them abandoned him in his greatest need. Poorly defended in the end, he was left destroyed with his own possessions lost.”\textsuperscript{124} In such a charged passage, we actually learn very little about the nature of the litigation between these two painters and, to my knowledge, no one has since thought to pursue the matter. I will argue that these two biographical details, marriage and litigation, were not unrelated and that these circumstances were the catalysts for their professional partnership and for its subsequent break down.

4.2.1 The Circumstances of the Marriage and its Symbolic Import

While Giacomo Vassilacchi was roughly 31 years old in 1600, Giulia would have been younger than 18, quite possibly 16, which was the age of maturity.\textsuperscript{125} Their first child, a boy named Gianne, was born in 1606 and in 1608 they had a daughter Andriana, who was named after her maternal grandmother – Giulia’s mother and Palma’s wife.\textsuperscript{126} Palma may have appreciated the strong prospect of a grandchild who could take up his legacy, especially

\textsuperscript{123} Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 307-308.
\textsuperscript{124} Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 220-221: “Quindi dati a litigi con il Palma, consumò molto tempo, e gli haveri sopra a’ Palagi e nelle pratiche degli Avvocati, impiegando il più dell’opera sua nel loro servigio, da alcuni de’ quali fù al maggior uopo abbandonato, & in fine mal difeso, rimase perditore.”
\textsuperscript{125} Giacomo Vassilacchi’s death record of January, 1610 (m.v. 1609) says he was 41 years old and so he was born around the year 1569: ASPV, Santa Margarita, Morti 2 n.p. (1609). The first and only will made by Palma’s wife Andriana dates to 1582 during the perilous pregnancy of their first child, ASV, Not. Test., b. 582, n. 56 (1582); and transcribed by Ludwig, “Archivalische Beiträge,” 119-120. Ludwig incorrectly records the busta of Andriana’s will as 1580. As this was the first child, who was unnamed in the will, this means Giulia would have to have been born in 1582 at the earliest.
\textsuperscript{126} For the baptismal record of Gianne, see ASPV, Santa Margherita, Battesimi 2, 26v: “1606 adi 27 ditto [di Giugno].” For Andriana, ASPV, Santa Margherita, Battesimi 3, 2v: “1608 adi 8 Giugno.”
given the eventuality of a child taking his name Jacopo or the variant Giacomo, and eventuality that was never realized. 127 His son-in-law Giacomo Vassilacchi, thirteen years younger than his brother Aliense, seems to have been developing his own career as a painter under Aliense’s supervision. Only a few short months before the wedding, Giacomo, who was a member of the Scuola dei Greci, was paid for the designs of a Madonna and a St. John the Baptist, which were to be made into mosaics for the Greek church of San Giorgio dei Greci (Fig. 4.44). 128 This means he was able to retain a job that Palma himself had failed to keep just two years earlier. Palma had submitted a model for a mosaic of Christ Enthroned, but it was deemed by some in the community to be at odds with Greek ritual and the Greek style (Fig. 4.45). As a result it was replaced by the design of a member of the scuola who adapted Palma’s already archaizing oil sketch to a more traditional Byzantine form (Fig. 4.46). 129 It is also conceivable that Giacomo was the compagno who was supposed to assist Aliense in the painting cycle for the church of San Pietro in Perugia, since his name was recorded among those present when the contract was drawn up in 1592 (Figs. 4.47 and 4.48). 130 Giacomo’s proximity to his brother Aliense in the last decade of the sixteenth century means that he likely would have been well acquainted with Palma. Among other points of contact at this time, the two masters worked together in the church of San Zaccaria from 1595 onwards. 131

127 In his will, Palma left the materials of his studio to his grandson Giacomo, who was born to his other surviving daughter, Chiara, and who was nine or ten at the time, but this was only on the condition that young Giacomo take up the profession. Otherwise the materials were to be equally distributed between Palma’s two daughters. As Giulia leaves a number of Palma’s paintings to others in her will, it seems likely that young Giacomo did not fulfill his grandfather’s wishes. Nevertheless, Palma hoped his grandson would carry on the family business and, since his name was Giacomo, he would carry the torch as a Giacomo Palma, the third after Giacomo Palma il Vecchio and Giacomo Palma il Giovane, despite having a different family name.

128 The mosaics are reproduced in Makrykostas, Antonio Vassilacchi, 50-51. The prospect of further commissions may explain his registration alongside Aliense in the Scuola dei Greci in the same year. The ‘Jacomo Vassilachi’ who received payment on January 10th, 1600 (m.v. 1599) is obviously not just a ‘careless rendering of Aliense, as Makrykostas argued; see Antonio Vassilacchi, 52-53. A “Giovanni Vassilacchi” was also inscribed in this year; see Giorgia Boccassini, “Profilo,” 124 n.10. It is no doubt after this brother, Giovanni, that Giacomo and Giulia’s only son Gianne Vassilacchi was named.


130 Giorgia Boccassini, “Le tele dell’Aliense a Perugia,” Arte Veneta XI (1957): 190 (contract with Giacomo’s signature) and 188, n.15 and n.16 for references to the helping compagno.

131 Since October 5th, 1593, Palma and Aliense, together with Andrea Vicentino, Matteo del Moro, Marco della Carità, and Zamaria Buduino, were on the board responsible for overseeing the sizeable endowment left by Vincenzo Catena to the Arte dei deponenti. They served until 1597 when the ‘banca’ took possession of the funds; see Favaro, Arte dei pittori, 111, n. 2.
There were other financial incentives of the family alliance for both sides. Despite signs pointing to a fledgling artistic vocation, Giacomo’s professional course began to deviate some time after 1596 when he was made procurator general for the Vassilacchi family business in the textile trade.\(^{132}\) Although Giacomo did not declare his profession in the marriage record of 1600, he did declare himself outright to be a wool merchant in the baptismal record of their first child Gianne in 1606.\(^{133}\) He still held this occupation at the birth of their daughter Andriana in 1608, and still at his untimely death early in 1610, having succumbed to an undisclosed injury.\(^{134}\) Giulia’s dowry, which was probably on par with those of the upper middle class, surely appealed to Giacomo and Aliense, as it could have been invested in the family business; Palma in turn must have thought Giacomo’s position would provide further financial security for his daughter.\(^{135}\)

*The Meaning of Marriage in Venetian Workshops*

How did the Palma-Vassilacchi marriage relate to the custom of endogamy more generally in the Venetian workshop? In the 1648 lives of Venetian artists, published as the *Maraviglie dell’arte*, the biographer and painter Carlo Ridolfi only referred to seventeen wives out of a total of one hundred and fifty-six artists spread over two volumes. As might be expected, these meager references increased in frequency as the biographies approached Ridolfi’s own

\(^{132}\) The Vassilacchi family, consisting of Aliense, his brother Giacomo, their sister Isabetta, and their mother Pasqua, had a stake in an undisclosed business that was being managed by another brother, Zuanne Vassilacchi, in partnership with a Guielmo Rubbi. In 1595, Zuanne went missing and was presumed dead in Ormuz, an island in the Persian Gulf occupied by the Portuguese. It became necessary to draw up a document establishing who would be the procurator general representing the family in the business. Given the location of Zuanne’s disappearance, this joint business venture was most likely related to the textile trade and Giacomo’s election as procurator might explain his appellation as a merchant of wool from 1606 on. See Maltezou, “Ἀντώνιος Βασιλάκης,” ASV, Notarile, Atti, 7886, 611 r.-613r. Zuanne, or Giovanni, was also a member of the Scuola dei Greci; see Boccassini, “Profilo dell’Aliense,” 124 n.10. Unfortunately, Boccassini does not give the dates when the brothers paid their dues. The other partner in the business, Guielmo Rubbi, was the son of Z. Antonio. A certain Zuan Antonio di Vielmo Rubbi was a mercer who recorded his inventory in 1561; see Luca Molà, *The Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, 2000), chapter 7, note 52. There is another sign of their association with wool merchants. A wool merchant was the godfather of Aliense’s first two children, Pasqua and Stefano; see Melania G. Mazzucco, *Tintoretto & i suoi figli: storia di una famiglia veneziana* (Milan, 2009), 862 n. 12.

\(^{133}\) ASPV, Santa Margarita, Battesimi 2, 26v (1606): “Zuane et Silvesio figlio del s.r Giacomo Vassilacchi mercat[n]ti de lana, et de Mad.ma giulia palma.”

\(^{134}\) For the birth of Andriana Vassilacchi, ASPV, Santa Margarita, Battesimi 3, 2v; for the death of Giacomo Vassilacchi, see ASPV, Santa Margherita, Morti 2, n.p. January 3, 1610 (m.v. 1609).

\(^{135}\) For his daughter Lucretia, Palma provided about 3000 ducats and we will see that he provided 2000 ducats for his granddaughter, Andriana. For more on the dowries provided by Venetian artists, and Palma’s was close to what Titian provided his own daughter, see Michel Hochmann, *Peintres et commanditaires*, 41-43.
lifetime when he would have had a readier access to pertinent domestic information. In the second volume, he mentioned the wife of an artist in more then 20% of the biographies (12 out of 51), as opposed to less than 5% (5 out 105) in the first volume.\textsuperscript{136}

When Ridolfi did mention the wife of an artist it was for a variety of purposes. He touched on themes of love, money, and artistic progeny, suggesting the benefits and drawbacks of different couplings. The love of a wife could offer sincere consolation, whereas an infatuation could be a distraction to productivity.\textsuperscript{137} Alternatively, an artist’s wife could be a responsible manager of domestic finances, a controlling taskmaster, or just an added weight on the painter’s purse.\textsuperscript{138} Ridolfi himself, it would seem, did not aspire to such domestic arrangements. Aside from some autobiographical tales in the Maraviglie about his youthful amorous encounters, it was not until 1656, eight years after the Maraviglie went to press, that he entered into wedlock at the age of 62.\textsuperscript{139} He died two years later. Not surprisingly, he

\textsuperscript{136} In three of the cases of the first volume, Ridolfi had consulted Vasari. The references to the wives of Andrea Mantegna and Giuseppe Salviati are essentially quotations from Vasari; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 69 (Mantegna), and vol. 1, 221 (Salviati). In the case of Latanzio Gambara, he actually corrected Vasari, who said his father-in-law was Alessandro Moretto, when in fact he was married to the daughter of Gerolamo Romanino, in whose shop he had acted as assistant; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 275. For more on this relationship, see below. A study into Vasari’s portrayal of wives would be worthwhile. Paul Barolsky has made some useful, but preliminary comments on the topic. See \textit{Why Mona Lisa Smiles and Other Tales by Vasari} (University Park, 1991), 70-73.

\textsuperscript{137} Paolo Farinato and his wife were so close that they followed each other in death, dying at the same time; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 131. Francesco Bassano’s wife was a model of support as well; see footnote below. On Giovanni Battista Bissoni, see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 261, and on Tiberio Tinelli, see ibid., vol. 2, 289-290. Both Bissoni and Tinelli stopped working because they were distracted by their love for their wives, according to Ridolfi. Claudio (not to be confused with Carlo) Ridolfi’s career was held back by his wife, who begged him to stay with her in her hometown of Corinaldo, “una picciola Terra,” during his best years; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 303.

\textsuperscript{138} The ‘greedy’ wife of Jacopo Bassano (Dal Ponte), would berate him for his charitable donations; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 389. The account book shared by Jacopo and his father Francesco shows that the Dal Ponte family undervalued their works habitually and never gained more than a modest income despite a near monopoly on commissions in the region; see Michelangelo Muraro, \textit{Il Libro secondo di Francesco e Jacopo Dal Ponte} (Bassano, 1992), esp. 6-19 for Muraro’s comments. In contrast to this family practice, Francesco Bassano the Younger, apparently depended on his wife Giustina to take care of the finances, according to Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 398; for her heartbreaking reaction at the discovery of his suicide induced by psychosis, see \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 399.

\textsuperscript{139} In his autobiography, Ridolfi described his time in the countryside escaping the plague of 1630 and his love for a shepherdess; see Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 313: “Soleva ancora una Pastorella del vicino Contado recarsi tal’ora il latte delle munte caprette, tal’hor mazzi di fiori; allettava ella co’sguardi e co’ vezzi, era di bruno sì, mà di vezzoso volto, di gentile aspetto, di costumi modesti, tutta brillo e vaghezza. In fine trionfava in lei Amore ignudo non con altre armi, che della natia bellezza; mà non conobbi giamai cosa così scaltra come lei.” His later engagement to another woman was registered in 1648, well before the ceremony in the church of the Redentore on February 10, 1656. His wife’s name was Pasquetta Vidali. For transcriptions of the records from the parish of San Samuele, see Andrea Polati, \textit{Il Cavalier Carlo Ridolfi (1594-1658): la vita e l’opera pittorica} (Vicenza, 2010), 122. There has not, to my knowledge, been any indication as to what Pasquetta’s age was when she married the elderly Ridolfi. Given the time between the engagement and the
never bore heirs, but from the tone of his will, he developed something of a touching bond with his betrothed in the short time they were together.\footnote{ASV, Notarile testamenti, b. 884, n. 29, transcribed in Andrea Polati, \textit{Carlo Ridolfi (1594-1658)}, 117-120.}

Before his belated vows, Ridolfi’s ideas of marriage and its effects on the workshop had perhaps been tarnished by what he witnessed in the home of his master Aliense. In Ridolfi’s own estimation, the two were very close. Aliense, he said, was like a father and Ridolfi loved him like a friend. Ridolfi added that when Aliense died he mourned his old master like a part of himself.\footnote{Ibid.: “…& essendo passato alle terze nozze, non gli bastando l’haver sottratto il collo dal giogo de’ due primi matrimonii, aggravato da molta famiglia, gli convenne poscia faticare sino al fine della vita…”} The pupil, however, could not but reprove his master for taking a third wife when he was already under financial constraints owing to his legal dispute with Palma: “…having moved on to his third nuptials, it not being enough to have removed his neck from the yoke of his first two matrimonies, and having been burdened by a big family, he was forced to toil until the end of his life.”\footnote{Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 221-222: “…e essendo passato alle terze nozze, non gli bastando l’haver sottratto il collo dal giogo de’ due primi matrimonii, aggravato da molta famiglia, gli convenne poscia faticare sino al fine della vita…”}

Most evocative in Ridolfi’s memory of his master was a self-portrait drawing that Aliense liked to show his friends. The Greek-born painter depicted himself holding up on his shoulders, his wife, her nurse, her uncle, and his new stepson.\footnote{Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 311: “Mi ritrovai l’anno sussegente alla morte dell’Aliense Pittore, dal quale (come narrai) hebbi i principi, della professione: l’honorai vivendo come Padre, l’amai come amico, e lo piansi in morte come parte di me stesso.”} The lost drawing was a satirical take on the hero Aeneas, who like Aliense was an immigrant from the East, but whose familial duty, in contrast to Aliense’s duty to his extended family, demanded he carry his own father and his own son out of a burning Troy. There may be a flare of poetic license in Ridolfi’s anecdote, but whether or not the tale of this drawing was an embellishment, or even a complete fiction, it still gives us an idea of the author’s own prejudice towards matrimonial partnerships.

Ridolfi mentioned wives in situations where they served the endogamy of the workshop as well. Almost a third of his references to wives related to marriages within the workshop,
although there were two notable examples that he overlooked. One example was Palma’s father Antonio who married the niece of his master Bonifacio de’ Pitati, who had no male heir of his own. The other was Paolo Veronese who married Elena Badile, the daughter of his first master, Antonio Badile. It is well known that the family workshop was an enduring phenomenon in Venice, hence the longevity of the Vivarini, Bellini, Vecellio, Bassano, Veronese, and Tintoretto shops. Hans Tietze pointed out that marriage alliances were not uncommon in the workshops of Venetian painters because they ensured the same sort of loyalty from a talented assistant as could be expected from a blood relative. Tietze’s point can be expanded further by looking at a few passages in the Maraviglie that highlight Ridolfi’s view of workshop marriages. Battista d’Angelo, Ridolfi recounted, took the Moro name when he married the daughter of his master Francesco Torbido il Moro. Lattanzio Gambara married the daughter of his second master Girolamo Romanino as the relationship advanced from tutelage to a more equitable partnership. According to Ridolfi, Gambara received as dowry a few pouncings and the rights to the pictures in his house.


146 Within this list I have included the marriage between Dario Varotari and Giambattista Ponchino’s daughter; see Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 80: “Andatosene Paolo à Venetia, pervenuto Dario in adulta età, trasportò la sua Casa à Padova, e di la passando spesso à Venetia, fattosi amico di Bazzacco [Ponchino]... à cui piacendo le maniere di Dario, e la qualità de’ suoi costumi, gli diede una sua filgiuola in moglie, con pensiero di trattenerlo à Venetia.” The two had never been master and apprentice and Ridolfi only said Dario became friends with Ponchino; but Ponchino was almost forty years older than Dario, and had worked in the circle of Dario’s master Paolo Veronese. Ridolfi referred to Ponchino as molto amico of Paolo, Maraviglie, vol. 1, 297; and Ponchino was the one who invited Paolo and Zelotti to paint with him in the chamber of the Council of Ten in the Palazzo Ducale in Venice.

147 Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 115; Vasari said there was a complication with the inheritance that he was to receive from Francesco, Vite (1568), vol. 3-1, 258. Battista married Francesco’s daughter Margherita around 1534 or 1535. He was remarried in 1567 and died in 1573. Bernard Jestaz has recovered the vadimonium claimed by this second wife Lucrezia, which details a number of items in Battista’s workshop listed in the restitution of the value of her dowry; see Jestaz, “Un fonds d’atelier de Battista del Moro (1573),” Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz 44, 2/3 (2000): 292-305. It was not uncommon for assistants to take the name of their master regardless of marital ties.

When Maffeo Verona was in the studio of Alvise Luigi Benfatto dal Friso, “he not only learned art [from him], but took a daughter as his wife.”

A marriage was about more than keeping the competition from leaving the studio, it was a signifier of an artistic affiliation in name, in material, and most importantly in style – to take another’s art, was to take their daughter. That artistic inheritance could be reified in marriage shows an associative way of thinking about stylistic kinship that is not unlike the analogy of collaboration to friendship and other bonds of love that we have discussed in previous chapters.

**Horizontal Marriage Ties and Virtual Patrimonies**

The alliance between Palma and Aliense, cemented in a family marriage, deviated from this tradition without departing from its central principle of artistic affiliation. Such marital bonds between artists were typically oriented vertically to ensure the continuity of the workshop with the passing of generations. The alliance between Palma and Aliense, however, was not about a direct artistic succession. Their alliance was formalized indirectly through other family members, acknowledging the artistic resemblances associated with the traditional workshop-marriage while avoiding its stratification.

As we will see in Salò, Aliense acknowledged Palma’s lead, but with some equivocation.

Their workshops do not appear to have been officially integrated and it is clear that Aliense was by no means an extra hand relieving Palma of labour. Even though his nickname, ‘the foreigner,’ must have been a constant reminder of his status as a Greek immigrant, it did not prevent him from becoming well enough established to be included in Boschini’s list of the top seven Venetian painters of Palma’s generation. Aliense had been trained for a short period in Paolo Veronese’s workshop and, after a falling out, had become a follower of Jacopo Tintoretto. In the last decade of the sixteenth century, Aliense was the head (gastaldo) of the painters’ guild (the Arte dei Depentori), and he was producing his best work, not only in Venice, as in the Ducal Palace or in the Scuola dei Mercanti, but more so...

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149 Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 152: “… se ne passò alla scola di Luigi Benfatto, da cui imparò l’arte non solo, ma n’hebbe una figliuola in moglie.”

150 For more on art and ‘ancestry worship,’ including the adoption of names, see Philip Sohm, *The Artist Grows Old: The Aging of Art and Artists in Italy, 1500-1800* (New Haven and London, 2007), 35.

151 These kinds of angled alliances were common among the various professions treating the ‘health of the body’ in Turin; see Sandra Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body in Early Modern Italy: Identities, Families and Masculinities* (Manchester, 2007).
on the mainland, particularly on the large decorative programs in the church of San Pietro in Perugia and in the church of the Scuola di Santa Croce in Belluno. By the time he was working with Palma in Salò in 1602, Aliense was at the height of his earning power with a notable collection of drawings and paintings, and a comfortable residence of his own that impressed the envoys from Salò.

One famous precedent for such a horizontal alignment immediately comes to mind. In 1453, Andrea Mantegna married Nicolosia, the daughter of Jacopo Bellini, who was the rival of Mantegna’s master Squarcione. Leaving aside recently revealed complications in the Bellini family structure, this marriage not only tied Mantegna to Jacopo Bellini, his bride’s father, but to her brothers Gentile and Giovanni as well. Unlike the relationship between Palma and Aliense, Mantegna never collaborated formally on an artistic project with any of the Bellini, although there was a significant exchange of ideas between Mantegna and Giovanni, in particular. In fact, Giovanni was reluctant to send a mythological painting to Isabella d’Este in Mantua, where Mantegna was the leading court artist, partly because it would have hung next to the great mythological works of his brother-in-law. One other...

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152 As gastaldo of the Arte, Aliense was particularly committed to cracking down on fee dodgers; see Elena Favaro, Arte dei pittori in Venezia e i suoi statute (Florence, 1975), 104 and passim. On the ten paintings provided to Perugia, see Boccassini, “Le tele dell’Aliense,” 186-190. And on the program in Belluno, see Giorgio Fossaluzza, “Tra Venezia e Belluno: il Bacio di Giuda dell’Aliense per la chiesa di Santa Croce «impastò del furor del Tintoretto»,” in L’attenzione e la critica. Scritti di storia dell’arte in memoria di Terisio Pignatti, ed. Maria Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel and Augusto Gentili (Padua, 2008), 181-208.


154 Daniel Maze expertly applied Venetian statutes on inheritance and guardianship to an analysis of existing Bellini documents. He determined that Giovanni Bellini was not Jacopo’s son and Gentile’s brother; Giovanni was Jacopo’s legitimate half-brother and Gentile’s uncle. Most likely Jacopo became guardian of his younger brother when their father Nicolò died some time around Giovanni’s birth. Over time Giovanni must have come to see Jacopo as a father and Gentile as a brother, and vice versa, and this explains why the biographies classified them this way. See Daniel Wallace Maze, “Giovanni Bellini: Birth, Parentage, and Independence,” Renaissance Quarterly 66, 3 (2013): 783-823.

155 On the relationship between Giovanni and Mantegna, see Keith Christiansen, “Bellini and Mantegna,” in The Cambridge Companion to Giovanni Bellini, ed. Peter Humfrey (Cambridge, 2004), 48-74. A bold reassessment of the chronology of Giovanni’s corpus and the cross-fertilization with Mantegna was recently made by Luciano Bellosi, “Giovanni Bellini e Andrea Mantegna,” in Mantegna 1431-1506, ed. Giovanni...
fitting precedent similarly dates from the mid-fifteenth century: the collaborative partnership between Antonio Vivarini and his brother-in-law Giovanni d’Alemagna in the 1440s. Though both painters signed the works they did together, which makes it easier to identify their projects, there are few details about the marriage and about how their partnership came about. I have yet to come across any similar examples until after the Palma-Aliense partnership.

If the horizontal arrangement between Palma and Aliense was uncommon since the middle of the fifteenth century, it is even more remarkable to read in Palma’s will of 1627 that Domenico Tintoretto had once asked him to form an alliance (apparentasse) by marrying his sister. Domenico had several sisters and unfortunately Palma provided neither sufficient details to identify which one of them his friend had in mind, nor when the proposal was made. We do know that for one of his sisters Domenico took the traditional route and convinced Ottavia to marry Sebastiano Casser, one of Domenico’s workshop assistants. Only after a probationary period, however, did Casser prove himself worthy to adopt the Tintoretto name, a practice that was not unheard of in the master-pupil relationship.

Agosti and Dominique Thiébaut (Paris, 2008), 103-49. If Maze’s convincing hypothesis about Giovanni’s date of birth (between 1424 and 1428) is correct, then Bellosi’s remarks about the datings of Bellini’s paintings and the exchange of ideas and styles with Mantegna is corroborated; see Maze, “Bellini: Birth, Parentage, and Independence,” 810-812


157 In the late seventeenth century, Nicholas Regnier married his two daughters to painters, Daniel van den Dyck and Pietro della Vecchia, who were not pupils but were members of his entourage in the art trade; see Annicke Lemoine, “Nicolas Régner et son entourage: nouvelles propositions biographiques,” Revue de l’art 117 (1997): 54-63. It was not possible to examine marriage trends in all regions of Italy, but one relevant example from Rome is the arranged marriage between Perino del Vaga and Giovanfrancesco Penni’s sister in 1525. Perino and Penni had both emerged from Raphael’s large workshop, and Linda Wolk-Simon suggests that this arrangement was made out of fear of Perino becoming a competitor of the Raphael shop inherited by Giulio Romano and Penni; see Wolk-Simon, “Competition, Collaboration, and Specialization in the Roman Art World, 1520-27,” in The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture, ed. Kenneth Gouwens and Sheryl E. Reiss (Aldershot, 2005), 261.

158 See ASV, Not. Test. b. 1244, n. 355, and transcribed by Chiappini, “Le ultime volonta.”

159 On the lives of the various members of the Tintoretto family, see Mazzucco, Tintoretto & i suoi figli. See also, Erica Tietze-Conrat, “Mariette, fille du Tintoret,” Gazette des Beaux Arts (1934): 259.

160 For the primary account of Ottavia’s first marriage and then her subsequent marriage to Casser, see her last will and testament where she provided an extensive diary of her life, ASV, Not. Test., 1139, n. 229; transcribed also in the appendix to Carlo Ridolfi, Vite dei Tintoretto da Le Maraviglie dell’Arte overo le vite degli’illustri pittori veneti e dello stato (Venice, 1994), 137-140. See also Hans Tietze, “Master and workshop in the Venetian Renaissance,” Parnassus, 11, 8 (1939): 35. For the issue of pupils taking their master’s name,
Although these marriages created direct and practical links between artists, we might wonder if Palma was cognizant of the artistic patrimonies with which he could now identify himself, albeit indirectly. By becoming aligned with Aliense, who was one of Veronese’s former students, and by nearly entering into a marital alliance with Domenico Tintoretto, Palma could boast close ties with the artistic genealogies of both Paolo Veronese and Jacopo Tintoretto. This association must have been on his mind since 1584 when he was commissioned with them to paint a triptych of allegories on the ceiling of the Grand Council chamber of the Palazzo Ducale, elevating him to their echelon of artistic recognition (Figs. 4.49-4.51). Around 1605, a few years after the Palma and Vassilacchi families were joined, Palma made his connection to these two artistic forebears explicit. On a single sheet in the Devonshire Collection in Chatsworth, he drew his self-portrait with the heads of Tintoretto and Veronese hovering above. On another sheet, which was bound into an album that includes eleven other sheets of artists’ portraits (now in the Frits Lugt collection in the Institut Néerlandais in Paris), he copied these heads again (Fig. 4.52). In the latter drawing, however, Palma took much greater care in the rendering. He also reconfigured the heads so that Tintoretto is at the peak of the triangulated portraits, while Veronese is in the lower left corner and Palma himself is in the lower right.

The configuration of these heads is comparable to Palma’s funerary monument in Santi Giovanni e Paolo, which unambiguously commemorates another one of his artistic patrimonies (Fig. 4.53). Palma had this monument made in 1621, several years before his death in 1628. The bust of Palma’s great uncle and namesake, Jacopo Palma il Vecchio, is on the lower left corner, while Titian’s bust naturally took pride of place on the apex of the triangle. Titian was Palma’s earliest Venetian model, if not his teacher in a formal context,

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as in the example of Alessandro Allori using the Bronzino name, see in Elizabeth Pilliod, Pontormo, Bronzino, and Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine Art (New Haven, 2001), 109-112.

161 On this programmatic trio of works, see Rosand, Myths of Venice, 41-46.

162 Michael Jaffé, The Devonshire Collection of Italian Drawings, vol. 4 (London, 1994), 106, cat. 814. Later in the seventeenth century, the collector Sebastiano Resta wrongly inscribed Tintoretto’s portrait as Jacopo Bassano, and Palma’s portrait as Pietro Malombra. The portraits correspond quite closely to the portraits in the Frits Lugt collection in Paris (see note below), where a more contemporary hand, possibly Palma’s, provided the accurate identifications.


164 This sheet has been reproduced in Heinrich Schwarz, “Palma Giovane and His Family: Observations on Some Portrait Drawings,” in Master Drawings 3, 2 (1965): pl. 26b.
and after Titian’s death in 1576, Palma finished his final painting, the Pietà, which was meant for Titian’s own tomb. In the bottom right corner of this painting Palma recorded his respectful devotion: “Because Titian left the work unfinished, Palma reverently finished it and dedicated it to God.” Believing himself to be the inheritor of Venetian painting from both his mentor and his uncle, Palma further vaunted his legacy in his own funerary monument. The socle that groups the three portrait busts together has an inscription that puns on the Palma name celebrating the palm of victory awarded to all together: TITIANO VECELIO/ IACOBO PALMA/ SENIOI IVNIOIRQ- AERE PALMEO COMUNI GLORIA. In a painted backdrop, two putti hold palm fronds over the heads of the two Palma effigies and two angels bellow celebratory trumpets in their direction. Like an exclamation mark, these angels embrace a palm tree that grows out from above Titian’s head, an unmistakable symbol of Palma’s artistic ancestral tree.

A similar meaning must apply to the triple portrait drawing of Palma, Paolo Veronese, and Jacopo Tintoretto in the Frits Lugt collection. Tintoretto was fittingly placed at the top of the trio in the very spot where Titian’s bust was later placed in Palma’s funerary monument. According to Ridolfi, Palma thought of Tintoretto, along with Titian, as the father of art (Padre dell’Arte), and so, had Palma married Domenico’s sister, Tintoretto would have been more than just a figural father. Veronese’s portrait in the drawing meanwhile was placed in the spot corresponding to Palma Vecchio’s bust. As the former master of Palma’s current in-
law Aliense, perhaps Veronese was seen by Palma as an artistic uncle in this ancestral triangulation.\textsuperscript{168}

Palma’s preoccupation with his artistic ancestry was by no means unique in this period.\textsuperscript{169} His attempts to unite the descendants of this cherished heritage through friendship and marriage, however, was more unorthodox and gets directly at the heart of the seemingly unvaried style of the period. It was Marco Boschini who in 1674 suggested that Palma’s generation had converged so much in their style, precisely because they were all trying to imitate Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, and Bassano. We may further recall that Palma’s Milanese contemporary, Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, believed that each successive generation after Michelangelo, Titian, Raphael, and Correggio would further dilute the perfection that they had all achieved. The implication of Lomazzo’s ideal painting of Adam and Eve was that the proper recombination of these four painters provided access to a pure, originary style.\textsuperscript{170} By bringing their artistic inheritances together, therefore, Palma and his circle were similarly in pursuit of a collective ideal style.

4.2.2 Money Matters

Palma’s biography in Ridolfi’s \textit{Maraviglie} provides us with further economic and commercial dimensions to consider when interpreting the nature of the Palma-Aliense partnership and the so-called ‘monotony’ of art during this period. In Ridolfi’s estimation, Palma’s friendships with other artists and patrons had a more insidious effect than the loftier aims of collegiality discussed so far. Contrary to his public reputation at the time, Palma’s acumen at making friends was, Ridolfi tells us, motivated by money. He used his influence with the imposing sculptor Alessandro Vittoria, for example, to take commissions away from other painters – in one case Aliense – and even trick unsuspecting patrons who were unhappy.

\textsuperscript{168} According to Ridolfi, Palma used to praise Veronese’s tondi in the Consiglio de’ Dieci, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 1, 298: “... e soleva dire Iacopo Palma, che in questo caso Paolo gionse al maggior segno dell’esquisitezza, e che in quelle fece un misto del più erudito, che si pratichi nell’antico, e della più nobile sua maniera.” Palma was also somehow included in the commissions in the church of San Nicolò dei Mendicoli, whose monks granted almost exclusive rights to Veronese’s pupils, including Aliense, after the master’s death. See Mason Rinaldi, \textit{Palma il Giovane}, 130 cat. 449.

\textsuperscript{169} Maria Loh has amply demonstrated the conscious strategies of Venetian painters of the seventeenth century to align their careers with the great masters of the Cinquecento; see Loh, \textit{Titian Remade}.

\textsuperscript{170} See chapter II.2.
with his work.\textsuperscript{171} For using his expansive social influence, Palma was further singled out by Ridolfi for stealing commissions from the likes of Leonardo da Corona as well, which was, in Ridolfi’s words, “an extreme abuse” of an already too common practice.\textsuperscript{172}

Palma, it would seem, had a bit of a reputation for being hyper competitive too. Boschini, who knew Palma as an old man through his master Odoardo Fialetti, claimed that Palma felt the heat of his closest competitor Corona. When Corona died, Palma gloated, “I won,” apparently as a dual sign of respect and venom.\textsuperscript{173} To Ridolfi’s mind, however, it was money, not fame, which fueled Palma’s competitive drive. Palma’s avarice was made worse still by a paucity of competition. When he emerged in the late 1590s as the leading painter in Venice after the deaths of Tintoretto and Francesco Bassano, “he then expected to make works in great quantity, having as the only aim in many of these to earn more profit than praise.”\textsuperscript{174} Palma made so many paintings for churches, in fact, that Ridolfi said he would have to describe only the best works so as to spare the reader’s patience.\textsuperscript{175} Such a remark was a backhanded compliment that echoed Vasari’s faint praise for Titian and the multitude of portraits he produced.\textsuperscript{176}

It was during this period of redoubling commissions in the 1590s that Palma and Aliense began to work together, leading to more production still upon the family alliance in 1600. The artistic landscape in Venice and its territories changed yet again, according to Ridolfi, at the premature passings of Leonardo da Corona and Giovanni Contarini in 1605 (Ridolfi was...
mistaken that Contarini died in 1605; in fact he died around 1603).\textsuperscript{177} Palma suddenly found himself completely uncontested: “With Contarini and Leonardo, who were gaining no little fortune, out of the way, and with Aliense, although estimable, caring little for labour, jobs from every part were given to [Palma], the field being free, so to speak, from rivals.” (We will come back to Aliense’s supposed indolence shortly.) Once the field was clear of competitors, Palma expanded his production even more. Again Ridolfi referred to his drive for profit (\textit{utilità}): “therewith he rose early in the morning to paint incessantly until the evening, and in the winter until five or six o’clock at night, still excited by profit, which he gained by sending the [pictures] in large numbers to various places throughout the state and elsewhere.”\textsuperscript{178}

By this point Palma was fifty-seven and, not having to worry about rivals, he faced fewer of those obstacles that, in Ridolfi’s eyes, should have quelled an avarice caused by latent gerascophobia, a fear of growing old:

But although Palma was accompanied by good fortune and many friends, which continually procured for him works without having to be disturbed at home, and which made him well paid (having in his time earned many thousands of scudi, therewith he could have, with great pride to himself and to his profession, made a profound testament of excellence in many of his works), he gave his whole self to labour. He worked without any break, not having any other aim than to occupy every site, following in this the humour of Tintoretto, and to gain ever more riches, thinking that his earnings would not be enough to sustain him in his old age, since man cannot always produce excellent things. Thus, you must make peace and repose occasionally from work, since the refreshed spirit more easily contributes to the works of the intellect and produces purer effects. In the end, you will not be more unhappy in this life than the one who denies himself a rest, so as to leave to posterity his hard-earned remains, which often turn into very little use.\textsuperscript{179}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{177} Ridolfi said Contarini died at the age of 56 in 1605; see \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 94. But already by 1604 Giovanni Stringa said Contarini was recently dead; see Sansovino-Stringa, \textit{Venetia}, 225v. This was pointed out by Von Hadeln in Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 100 n.1.

\textsuperscript{178} Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 189: “Mà ci conviene anco favellar delle opere esterne, havendone il Palma fra questo tempo molte dipinte, poiche essendo mancato finalmente il Contarino e Leonardo, che gli facevano non poca fortuna, e l’Aliense, benche valoroso, poco curando d’affaticarsi, concorreva à lui gli’impieghi da ogni parte, essendogli rimasto (per così dire) il campo libero dagli emuli, onde ei soleva nel bel mattino sino à sera, e nel tempo del verno fino alle cinque, e sei hore di notte incessantemente dipingere, eccitato ancora dall’utile, che ne traeva, mandandone quantità per varij luoghi dello stato, & altrove.”

\textsuperscript{179} Ridolfi, \textit{Maraviglie}, vol. 2, 203: “Ma benche il Palma fosse accompagnato da buona Fortuna e copioso d’amici, che gli procuravano del continuo le opere senza punto incommodarsi di Casa, che le venivano ben pagate (havendo per lo tempo suo guadagnato gran migliaia di scudi, onde haverrebbe potuto con maggior decoro di se e ella professione dar saggi maggiori di eccellenza in molte delle opere sue) datosi nondimeno in
Ridolfi was not the only one to link Palma’s greed to stereotypes of growing old and of decline. Giambattista Marino requested a work by Palma in 1620 on the condition that he perfect it, “because they tell me that in these final years he makes few good things and that he works more with the goal of earning without study.” Not regarding Palma as a model to follow, Ridolfi characterized him at this stage of his life as a virtual automaton possessed by work and money. This singular focus on work and money was the setup for Ridolfi’s account of Palma’s despicable reaction to the death of his wife Andriana, who died in 1606. As Ridolfi tells it, Palma skipped the funeral so as to stay home and work, inquiring into the ceremony only at the return of his daughters. This is a surprising tale given Palma’s intimate portraits of his wife. Ridolfi’s characterization, it should be noted, was no doubt coloured by what he witnessed between Palma and his own master Aliense.

In Ridolfi’s view, Aliense was the polar opposite when it came to money and impending old age. In one anecdote, their rival Leonardo Corona tried to steal a commission away from Aliense, offering to undercut his rate by ten ducats, only to learn that Aliense was working "tutto alla fatica, operava senza alcuna intermittenza, non havendo altro per fine, che di occupar ogni luogo, seguendo in ciò l’humore del Tintoretto, e per far avanzzi di ricchezze, pensando, che le accumulate ancora non le bastassero per lo sostentamento di sua vecchiezza; poiche non sempre può l’huomo produrre effetti eccellenti: onde fà di mestieri tal’hora la quiete ed il riposo, poiche gli spiriti rinfrancati più agevolmente concorrono poi alle operationi dell’intelletto, producendo effetti più purgati, non essendo in fine il più infelice in questa vita di colui, che toglie à se stesso il riposo, per lasciar a’ posteri que’ sudati avvanzi, che si convertono spesso in uso non buono.”

Quoted in Mason Rinaldi, Palma il Giovane, 58.

Ridolfi’s descriptions of Palma as a poor model of an aging artist, who became increasingly workmanlike, was a long established theme in the literature on art. Erin Campbell has discussed the problem that was facing early modern writers who were concerned that drawing attention to the physical setbacks of old age would draw too much attention to the mechanical dimension of art as opposed to the intellectual. Writers accordingly used the model of courtly manner books to strategically address art and old age. See Campbell, “The Art of Aging Gracefully: The Elderly Artist as Courtier in Early Modern Theory and Criticism,” Sixteenth Century Journal 33, 2 (2002): 321-331. For more on the theme of artists growing old and the various ways artists incorporated, whether consciously or subconsciously, their declining powers into their art, see Sohm, The Artist Grows Old.

As in the Matteo da Lecce portrait, several drawings capture his wife with her attention averted to other activities. In these renderings, the quiet candidness of her poses and expressions indicate that she was seemingly unaware of her husband’s palpably tender gaze. See Schwarz, “Palma Giovane and His Family,” esp. pls. 25a and 26a; an additional, even more personal, drawing of this type can be found in Rafael Fernandez, “Three Drawings by Jacopo Palma Giovane,” Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies 4 (1969), 109-110, fig. 1.
for free.\textsuperscript{184} While Aliense did not care about earning money, he certainly enjoyed spending it, giving no thought to his future:

He lived nevertheless in his early years in such a happy state that his own good fortune gave material to the followers of envy, and he earned from his art many thousands of scudi, with the savings of which he could have lived peacefully into his old age. But keeping his house well furnished, decorated with pictures of much value, and spending prodigally in everything, he thought little about those years which carry with them those major discomforts and which are poorly suited to work.\textsuperscript{185}

If Aliense’s home was as lavish as Ridolfi suggests, one might understand why Palma would be drawn into a partnership that had the potential to benefit his family as well. Ridolfi did not identify those ‘followers of envy’ who were drawn to Aliense’s wealth, but financial interests did lead to a legal dispute with Palma.

Ridolfi would seem to suggest that the year 1605 had the most adverse effect on Palma’s commitment to quality and fame, as this was a time when his competitors were now dead and gone. This was also the year he and Aliense completed their work in the Duomo of Salò. And so this might be a good place to start considering the working relationship. The first joint project by Palma and Aliense, carried out between 1595 and 1605, was a decorative program that transformed the ritual space of San Zaccaria, an important conventual church in Venice. A reconstruction of this important program can be found in an appendix, but the remaining evidence tells us very little about the personalities involved for it to warrant discussion here. The same cannot be said for their decoration in the choir of the cathedral of Salò, for which there is an abundance of epistolary records. Their work in Salò was completed just one year before Ridolfi was accepted into Aliense’s workshop and became a witness first-hand to the events that transpired between the one-time collaborators. As we will come to see, Palma’s persona is borne out by some of the documents. He did delegate his friends, like Aliense, to advance his factory-like output and his standards of compensation could affect those

\textsuperscript{184} The commission was for a painting in the Gesuati. See Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 213. He also refused payment from a Cavalier of Perugia for a portrait, but this in turn led to a contest of courtesies; see Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 216.

\textsuperscript{185} Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 221: “Visse egli nondimeno ne’ primi tempi suoi in cosi felice stato, che la di lui buona Fortuna dava materia à gli emuli d’invidia, e trasse dall’arte sua gran migliaia di scudi, che con il risparmio haverebbe potuto tranquillamente vivere nella vecchiezza; mà tenendo Casa allestita di nobili suppellettili, ornata di pitture di molto valore, e spendendo prodigamente nelle cose tutte, poco pensò à quegli anni, che portano seco gli incommodi maggiori, e che mal sono adeguati alle fatiche.”
relationships. But we will also see that he was far from unfeeling with his cherished family members, for he provided them with all the pecuniary advantages at his disposal.

4.2.3 Good Cop, Bad Cop in Salò

In January of 1602, Jacopo Palma Giovane agreed to decorate the choir in the Cathedral of Salò, a comune near Brescia. Citing old age and bad timing, he delayed his arrival and sent Aliense in his stead with the powers to negotiate the contract and begin any designs. As Palma explained to his reluctant patrons: “it goes without saying that without his partnership I would not have wanted the assignment, nor could I have accepted it ... In short I intend to be present in everything that he will devise and work on, and I will be content to continue the works designed by him or even started.” At the age of fifty-four, Palma was not a young man, but he was hardly over the hill. Indeed, he had twenty-six productive years still ahead of him. Older, but never short on commissions, Palma was expanding his market deep into the mainland territories with the help of Aliense.

Aliense had a great deal to do with the invention of the program (Fig.4.54). On January 12, 1602, it was Aliense who devised and proposed the program for the decoration of the choir, including: 1) a fresco of the Assumption of the Virgin in the conch (Fig. 4.55); 2) an altarpiece of the Annunciation to replace the wooden Gothic polyptych; 3) two large canvases around the apse wall, featuring The Birth of the Virgin (Fig. 4.56) and The Visitation (Fig. 4.57); 4) four portraits of the Evangelists in the pendentives (Fig. 4.58); 5) frescoed ornamentation; and 6) tentative subjects for the organ and counter-organ, which were later finalized as the Bronze Serpent (Fig. 4.59) and The Fall of Manna. On the whole, it was Aliense’s proposals that formed the basis of an agreement, which was ratified in Venice in the home of Alessandro Vittoria. Other than the rejected proposal to replace the

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186 Riccioni, Una riforma nella pittura bresciana, 42 n. 14: “Il Signor Antonio Aliense si parte con mastro Piero vostro portalettere insieme con un giovine, anzi uomo atto a far ogni sorte de fatiche così d’ornamenti, (...) credo che benissimo le avrà inteso dall’Illustissimo Vostro, che io voglio per compagno detto Aliense, et lo avevo eletto sino al principio che mi fu fatto motto di detta opera, (...) basta dirli che senza la compagnia sua non avrei voluto tal incarico, ne potuto accetirlo, e le ne faccia giudizio della mia risoluzione, insomma tengo ad esser presente in tutto quello che lui trattacerà et opererà, et mi contenterà a continuare le opere da lui disegnate ovvero principiate.”

187 Riccioni, Una riforma nella pittura bresciana, 48, n. 24: “Veneri tirai li trecento scudi dal Magnifico Signor Pietro Sorà, et subito li sborsai al Magnifico Palma et Vasilacho Aliensis, quali ratificarono la scrittura con un istromento pubblico, diedero per segurtà il Magnifico Alessandro Vittoria scultore di Venezia uomo onoratissimo et ricchissimo.” The provision of ‘sigurtà’ in notarial documents was the provision of a room and
old wooden altarpiece with a painting of the *Annunciation*, only a few minor changes were made to the plan. Palma added an *Annunciation* to the program only in 1628 (commissioned in 1609), but it is the least public of the works, impossible to see unless one stands in the shallow space behind the retable.

Aliense’s involvement made it possible for Palma to take on even more commissions without having to make himself present at a site miles away from home. Still, given Palma’s expression of faith in his partner only two years after their families were bound through marriage, the prolific painter had evidently subscribed to the notion that collaborators should have a certain sympathy of spirit and mutual trust. Each painter deferred to the skill of the other and insisted on their commitment to work cooperatively. Aliense put it this way when explaining to the patrons why he would not paint until Palma’s arrival: “... for the reverence that I hold for him, needing to work according to his will and out of a mutual will (*comun volere*).”

Aliense knew that the patrons wanted the Palma brand, but he also needed to clarify that this was a horizontal, not a vertical partnership. Not only did this attitude of a symbiotic will, with its stated proximity and reciprocity, reflect that of ideal friendship and marriage, but Aliense’s remarks about their *comun volere* echoed, though perhaps unwittingly, Pliny’s comments on the *Laocoön*. The three Rhodian sculptors worked according to shared opinion, or as Pliny’s Renaissance translators put it, *di comun parere*.

On an artistic level Palma and Aliense expressed a commonality of purpose one would expect in a family alliance. The letters, however, reveal some of the practical applications and limitations of these values. As the project in Salò dragged on, concord proved harder to sustain despite such declarations of mutual regard.

At times Palma comes across in these letters as a difficult celebrity needing to be handled with kid gloves. In order to convince his patrons to accept his partnership with Aliense, he insisted that he was too old and busy to be involved in any negotiations. He made a legal guarantee that procedure was followed and that everyone was present in the chambers; for a definition, see Stefania T. Salvi, *Tra privato e pubblico. Notai e professione notarile a Milano (secolo XVIII)* (Milan, 2012), 258.

188 Riccioni, *Una riforma nella pittura bresciana*, 48, n. 27, April 10, 1602: “... per aspettare il sig. Palma nel dar principio all’opera che va dipinta a fresco si per la riverenza che io le porto dovendo operare secondo la sua volontà et di comun volere; come per dar satisfazione a questi Signori salodiensi che essendo lui principalmente richiesto è bene il dovere che lui sii anco nel dar principio all’opera che così si gratificherà ogn’un...” The other reason he gave for postponing his trip to Salò for a month was that, like Palma, he had work for others he had to finish.

it clear that he would be comfortable with any decisions Aliense was to make as his representative. Yet as soon as Palma was informed of the financial terms of 1,300 scudi to which Aliense had apparently agreed, he could hardly conceal his displeasure. His reaction was reported to the Eletti by their nuncio, but Palma felt the need to reiterate his feelings himself in another letter:

...You should remain most obliged to the said Signor Antonio for having done that which, if I were present, would not have happened, and it is most certain that I could not have done your work at two thousand scudi. I believe that, having caressed you, I am obliged to serve you at such a low rate. The consolation we hope to have in these blessed countries will compensate for the meager deal that he made. But above all we ask you to find us a house above the lake, and close to the church, as Aliense requested. Rest assured... that we promise you a work that conforms to your merit, and at our cost, and of great beauty as if we were rewarded according to our merit, hoping that on another occasion our labours will be recognized.

In Ridolfi’s eyes, Aliense was careless with money and did not concern himself with rates as Palma did. Palma, on the other hand, had a reputation for profit-seeking, as we have seen. Given Palma’s apparent displeasure at the deal Aliense struck, we should test these contrasting reputations against some raw data, even though we have less to work with for Aliense. Aliense was seemingly inclined to offer bulk rates, as in San Pietro in Perugia, where he took a major cut in terms of what he charged per scale. In 1592, he signed a contract with the Cassinese monks to do a painting depicting *The Tree of the Benedictine Order* (Fig. 4.47), which was measured at 6m x 9.5m (20’ x 31¼’), for the sum of 700 ducats. This was a decent return at a little over 12 ducats per square meter. The next year, however, he agreed to provide their church with another ten paintings – four paintings at 4.25m x 5m (14’ x 17’), and six at 4.25m x 4.6m (14’ x 15’) – for only 1600 ducats in total, adding up to almost 8 ducats per square meter, a 33% discount (Fig.4.48). In terms of the

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190 For a full transcription of the contract, see Monica Ibsen, *Il Duomo di Salò* (Gussago and Salò, 1999), 189-191.

191 Riccioni, *Una riforma nella pittura bresciana*, 47: “...dovrete restare con molto obbligo a detto Signor Antonio per aver fatto quello che se fosse stato io presente non l’avrei fatto, e certissimo che non si poteva fare l’opera vostra di 2/M scudi. Credo che l’averli fatto carezze, l’abbi fatto risolver a servirvi così basso, supplirà al magro mercato che lui ha fatto, la consolazione che speriamo de avere in questi benedetti paesi, ma sopra ogni cosa le preghiamo trovarci casa sopra il lago, et vicina alla chiesa, come ve ne fece istanzia il suddetto: resti ... consolate, che si promettemmo opera conforme al suo merito, et al nostro debito, et di tanta bontà come se fossimo stati premiati secondo il merito nostro, sperando che con altra occasione sarà riconosciute le nostre fatiche...”

overall scale, the choir project in Salò is probably comparable and perhaps a little smaller, and thus 1300 scudi was more or less consistent with Aliense’s reduced bulk rate (the scudo was valued at just a little more than the Venetian ducat). Palma’s rates fluctuated as well between 1590 and 1610. His highest rate in terms of scale was charged in 1608 to the church of San Domenico in Reggio Emilia. He charged 300 ducats for a relatively small and unassuming altarpiece (*Madonna and Child with St. Hyacinth*), measuring 4.1 square meters – that is a substantial 73 ducats per square meter. Like Aliense’s reduced pricing, Palma’s lowest rate was 8 ducats per square meter, when he agreed to 75 ducats in 1592 for a fair sized series of wall paintings (*Brazen Serpent; San Cleto; and Sant’Elena*) measuring 9.6 square meters in total. Just as Aliense reduced his rate for a patron promising repeated work, Palma gave this lower rate to the Crociferi, his most frequent patron over the previous decade. This would also explain why in 1609 he agreed to paint for Salò the *Annunciation*, which the Eletti initially said they did not need, for only 300 ducats (11 ducats per square meter).¹⁹³

There is one telling comparison indicating that their rates were not necessarily as dissimilar as Ridolfi (and Palma himself) suggested. In this case we have the benefit of comparing rates for the same patron. In 1609, Aliense offered the monks in Santa Maria dei Carmini a painting of an unidentified subject for their refectory. It was to measure 3.7m x 8.7m (12’ x 28½’) and was valued at 500 ducats.¹⁹⁴ This equals 15.5 ducats per square meter. For the same monks in 1613, Palma was paid 400 ducats for *The Multiplication of the Fishes* (Fig. 4.61), a *laterale* next to the high altar. That 400 ducats was almost three times more than the 140 ducats his lesser known collaborator, Marco Vicentino, earned for the pendant painting of *The Gathering of the Manna* (Fig. 4.62). But when that sum of 400 ducats is converted into a scaled rate (3m x 8.6m), we find that Palma was paid 15.5 ducats per square meter, precisely the rate Aliense commanded from the same patron a few years earlier.¹⁹⁵

Even if Palma was truly expecting a greater amount than Aliense from their patrons in Salò, what was his strategy for writing such a letter dripping with contempt? Was he really

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¹⁹³ For these rates, see Sohm, “Venice,” *Painting for Profit: The Economic Lives of Seventeenth-Century Italian Painters*, ed. Philip Sohm and Richard Spear (New Haven, 2010), 247-248; Salò was also near Brescia, whose patrons according to Sohm’s calculations tended to pay substantially more than Venetians in order to attract better painters to such a provincial city; see Sohm, “Venice,” 234-235.
¹⁹⁴ See Maltezou, “Αντώνιος Βασιλάκης”, appendix.
venting about his frustration with his collaborator, or was he just posturing for greater compensation and accommodation, as some of his concluding rhetoric suggests? Or was he trying to further ingratiate his partner to an unsure patron? Aliense was subsequently given a commission to decorate the chapel of San Marco in the left aisle of the church (Fig. 4.63), and from then on, the envoys for Salò sought out Aliense more than Palma to discuss their progress, a burden Palma may have wanted to avoid from the start. Aliense’s role became particularly vital as the project that was supposed to take a few months dragged on for three years. Delays were caused by both patrons and painters, each voicing their complaints with some vitriol. Only the cool heads and selective reports of their respective representatives, that is, the envoys and Aliense, kept the palpable volatility from blowing the whole thing up. The Assumption fresco (Fig. 4.55) painted on the conch was completed in 1602, but from this point on, the project lagged as animosity spewed from both the painters and the patrons.

Each side took their turns pushing work back. In August 1602, Palma insulted the taste and expertise of his patrons and of the whole region. Possibly due to financial setbacks, they were taking too much time preparing the supports for the pendentives and walls, which had to be ready in order for Palma and Aliense to complete their frescoes (Fig. 4.58). In April 1604, it was the board’s turn to complain. They sent a letter to their envoy Tracogno with instructions on how to pressure Palma to come to Salò to finish the frescoes. They were unhappy that Palma had still not travelled to Salò, only sending Aliense, and they did not accept what they said were Palma’s excuses of being too busy and suffering from catarrh. They enclosed with these instructions another sharply worded letter that was supposed to be given directly to Palma accusing him of deceiving the comune. In Tracogno’s response, written at the very end of April 1604, he admitted to the Eletti that he had withheld the acrid letter from the famous painter and he further explained that he had seen their progress on the oil paintings meant for the organ. He added that he had shown the letter to Aliense, who he saw as the easier artist to work with, and he was assured that Aliense would make himself available to come promptly. With a description of their progress, Tracogno successfully assuaged his employers. It likely helped that Palma and Aliense had decided to make a gift of

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196 Riccioni, Una riforma nella pittura bresciana, 50.
197 Riccioni, Una riforma nella pittura bresciana, 52-54, n. 38.
two paintings (*The Sacrifice of Isaac* and *Cain and Abel*), which were made to go on the inside of the organ doors (Fig. 4.60).

Relationships were soothed after this last exchange and, after still more delays, their job was at last considered fulfilled on July 3, 1605 – almost a full year before the birth of the first Palma-Vassilacchi child. What is most remarkable in all this correspondence, given the overt posturing, is that no one felt it pertinent to mention the marital alliance – not the envoys for the *comune*, not Palma, and not Aliense, who was frequently stuck in the middle. There was an acknowledgment of their *comun volere* but not their familial connection. A certain professional decorum must have undergirded the intimacy of their bond. That their families were now joined in marriage had more to do with a compact between themselves than an assurance for current or potential patrons. Of course, we cannot exclude the possibility that Giulia Palma and Giacomo Vassilacchi were simply in love and were married without regard for the working relationship of their family. Still, the two artists felt no compunction to spin such circumstances to their advantage, which they could have done had they wished.

4.2.4 The Litigious Fallout and the Dissolution of the Palma-Aliense Partnership

Whether we read these letters related to Salò as early fault lines or as strategic posturing, the legal dispute referred to by Ridolfi was probably not the result of professional fractures. A document that will be presented here for the first time indicates, when read in combination with other clues, that the inheritance left by Giacomo precipitated the financially inflected animosity between Palma and Aliense.

The marriage between Palma’s daughter, Giulia Palma, and Aliense’s brother, Giacomo Vassilacchi, may have grown into a more meaningful partnership than a marriage of professional convenience. Their strong personal bond can be inferred from the deep trust and beneficence that Giacomo extended to Giulia in his will, favouring her over his other kin. Giacomo drew up his will in 1606 shortly before the birth of their first child Gianne. In it he named Giulia the executor (*commissaria*) and sole beneficiary of his goods after any

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198 Riccioni, *Una riforma nella pittura bresciana*, 58. Palma made a new deal with the Eletti to paint the Annunciation later, and, in this case, he did not have it sent to be installed until just before his death in 1628.
199 The economical, political, patrilineal, matrilineal, and especially psychological complexity of Venetian marriages from the fourteenth century to the sixteenth century is discussed by Stanley Chojnacki, “The Power of Love,” in idem, *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, 2000), 153-168. At the heart of this discussion is the strong bonds that were formed between spouses and then manifested in testaments.
deductions for his modest entombment, for prayers, and for charitable donations to the poor. He made no exclusions on her use of his estate if she were to remarry, which she did at an unknown later date. He further requested that, upon Giulia’s death, the remainder be passed to any children they might have had, whether male or female, otherwise it was to go to his nearest relative.  

Giacomo and Giulia only had the two children in the end, Gianne and Andriana, and Giulia was assured guardianship from her late husband’s will. Their only male heir passed away shortly after the patriarch of the family; but thanks to Palma’s sentimentality, we know what young Gianne looked like. In a drawing album in the Pierpoint Morgan Library, Palma made a series of portraits of his family. Included in this series was a self-portrait, various sketches of his wife Andriana, and drawings of his daughter Verginia, his son Belisario, and a young boy named ‘Gianne Vasillachi’ (Fig. 4.64). Previous accounts have mistakenly identified this child as Palma’s son, despite the Vassilacchi name conspicuously inscribed above. In a typically unpunctuated inscription, the portrait documents Gianne’s birth and untimely death: “1606 on the day June 20 1606 / was born Gianne Vassilachi at the age of / four years and six months who lived with a most gentle character/ died /Dec. 20 / 1610.” Palma accurately recorded Gianne’s birthday and even returned to the drawing to record his grandson’s death, as he did with his friend Matteo da Lecce. The portrait of young Gianne, which was included alongside drawings of his grandfather Palma, his grandmother Andriana, and his aunts and uncles, is a touching testament to the integration of the two families and a sign of the socio-artistic values associating collaboration with kinship.

Giulia especially would have felt the loss of her son at the end of 1610, less than a year after the death of her husband Giacomo who died on the 3rd of January, 1610 (1609 m.v.). It was right around this time, moreover, that the collaborative projects between Palma and Aliense dried up. By the time the toddler Gianne passed away in December 1610, his mother

200 ASV, Not., Test., 684, n. 916.
201 As commissaria of Giacomo’s estate, she was the natural guardian without being explicitly named as such; see Anna Bellavitis, “Women, Family, and Property in Early Modern Venice,” in Across the Religious Divide: Women, Property, and Law in the Wider Mediterranean (ca. 1300-1800), ed. Jutta Gisela Sperling and Shona Kelly Wray (New York, 2010), 179-180.
202 Tietze and Tietze-Conrat, Drawings of the Venetians, no. 1048; and Schwarz, “Palma Giovane and His Family,” 159, 163, and pl. 29a.
203 “1601 adi 20 zugno nasce 1606/ Gianne Vassilachi di etta di/ ani quattro e misi sie che/ tanto vise di un giudicio gn.mo/ morsi adi/ 20 di dic/ 1610.” Palma’s inscription is verified by the baptismal record in the parish archives; see footnote above.
Giulia must have already moved them out of their home in Santa Margherita. But Gianne did not live long enough to see his mother remarried to Zuan Antonio Pretti. Andriana, the second child and only remaining heir, was born in 1608. She did see her mother remarry and was then married herself in 1625, almost as soon as she reached the age of maturity. Andriana Vassilacchi’s marriage is important, because the circumstances surrounding the payment of her dowry has left us with a trace of what caused the fallout between Palma and Aliense, although Aliense was not explicitly named in these documents.

In January of 1625 (m.v. 1624), at the age of sixteen, Andriana Vassilacchi married Giovanni Battista Fossa. The key notarial document related to the event, and discussed here for the first time, is a contract that was drawn up in 1625 between Palma and Giulia Palma’s second husband, Zuan Antonio Pretti, to cover Andriana’s dowry. The amount of the dowry was 2000 ducats and was supposed to have been a legacy (dimissoria) from Andriana’s father Giacomo Vassilacchi, but for reasons that were disclosed only vaguely and in fragments this legacy was not available from the estate, because of legal disputes. As Palma’s daughter and Andriana’s mother, Giulia, was executor and usufructuary of her first husband’s estate, she was responsible for seeing that Andriana’s legacy from Giacomo be made available. However, there had been some dispute over the inheritance that had affected what was disposable for Andriana. The contract indicates that the amount Giulia had claimed at Giacomo’s death in restitution of her own dowry, which was typically passed down for the dowry of a daughter, had been willingly reduced by Giulia. In addition, there had been, according to the document, “expenses resulting from litigations against the inheritance, as well as costs made in settlements out of court with those litigants” (nec non le spese de liti havute per occasion della d[ett]a heredità, ac etias li esborsi fatti per occasione

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204 It is not clear what Giulia did after Giacomo’s death, and before she moved in with her second husband, Zuan Antonio Preti. Because Gianne’s death record could not be found in the parish records of Santa Margherita where they had been living up to Giacomo’s death, this means they must have moved into another parish. As Monica Chojnacka has amply demonstrated, the living arrangements of widows varied at the end of the sixteenth century. What was rarer than expected was for the widow to move back in with her parents. Often a widow was the head of her own household, while other times they moved in with siblings or offspring. See Chojnacka, *Working Women of Early Modern Venice* (Baltimore, 2001), 14-21. That widows tended not to rely on the help of their parents, as Chojnacka suggested, should tell us something about Palma’s caring nature when he made sure to provide for his widowed daughter Claria, leaving her 3000 ducats as well as other legacies, and when he helped provide his grand-daughter Adriana with a dowry of 2000 ducats. See below for more details.

205 ASPV, S. Angelo, Matrimoni, 4 (1625; m.v. 1624).
These were the circumstances behind the notarized agreement struck between Palma and Giulia’s second husband, Zuan Antonio Pretti. To shore up the funds for Andriana, Palma convinced Pretti to defer the remainder of the dowry owed to him from his marriage to Giulia until after Palma’s death, at which point Pretti would be given the full amount out of Palma’s estate.

Unfortunately, the litigants against Giulia Palma were not named in this document and the date of the dispute was not disclosed. Without court records, or an explicit statement, we can only speculate about the basis for a challenge brought against Giulia’s and, by extension Andriana’s, inheritance. The litigants could have been creditors of the Vassilacchi business in the wool trade, but that would not explain Giulia’s willing accommodation on the restitution of her dowry. The restitution of a dowry was by statute the first priority in any claim on inheritance. It seems more likely that this was the same dispute Ridolfi referred to as the source of Aliense’s financial ruin, which I will provide again in its full context:

Because he [Aliense] became old and, because, as Fortune changes her face, he became dispirited by many adversities, turbulences, and agitations of the soul, he could not apply himself to study, as had been his habit. Nevertheless one should not maliciously find his works less perfect, disregarding his better works and diminishing his praise. It often happens, as some say, that a change

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206 Several studies have demonstrated the way Venetian women were able to maneuver the complicated legal systems of Renaissance Venice. On the restitution of dowries, see Bellavitis, “Women, Family, and Property,” 175-190; idem, Identité, mariage, mobilité sociale: Citoyennes et citoyens a Venise au XVle siècle (Rome, 2001); and idem, Famille, genre, transmission à Venise au XVle siècle (Rome, 2008), 55-72. Stanley Chojnacki, “Getting Back the Dowry,” in idem, Women and Men; and on divorce and separation, see Joanne Ferraro, Marriage Wars in Late Renaissance Venice (New York, 2001); and Daniela Hacke, Women, Sex and Marriage in Early Modern Venice (Aldershot, 2004). Other studies, like that of Monica Chojnacka, have explored the surprising number of women, especially widows, who managed their own finances, properties, and even businesses in early modern Venice; see Chojnacka, Working Women, 26-49.

207 This much has already been published in Palma’s will where he made provisions for Pretti. See ASV, Notarile Testamenti, b. 1244, n. 355: “To Giulia my daughter I leave to her a one time amount of one hundred ducats out of affection knowing that she has no need as I said above and all the more that I, having spent on the marriage of her daughter Andriana and gave to her the dowry with my own [estate], as is seen in her marriage contract where there is also entered those two thousand ducats, which was the dimissoria (legacy) of signor Giacomo Vassilacchi her father, and which the signor Zanantonio Pretti had to give to her Andriana at her marriage.” Even though Palma named the notary “Contessino Zopino” where the agreement was made, it has not been published until now probably because there is nothing in it directly related to Palma’s artistic output. The contract, which we have been discussing, can indeed still be found in the acts of the notary Costantino Zoppini.

208 Hacke has made a few remarks about settlements out of courts when marriages were in dispute and pointed out the need for further investigation into the relationship between notarial material and court systems; see Hacke, Women, Sex and Marriage, 62-64.

209 Chojnacki, “Getting Back the Dowry,” in Women and Men, 104. See also Chojnacka who has provided a few cases where widows appealed to the Pien Collegio to relieve themselves of the debts incurred by their husbands; see idem, Working Women, 43.
of fortune often follows disturbances of the soul and of the mind, an error in judgment, fear and trepidation in the heart, and changes of will in the spirit. And Aelian also said: When it comes to Fortune, changes and unexpected reversals are unstable. Thus, involved in litigation with Palma, he wasted much of his time and assets dealing with lawyers. He devoted most of his work to paying for their services and a few of them abandoned him in his greatest need. Poorly defended in the end, he was left destroyed with his own possessions lost... Palma’s supporters never failed to harass him (since everyone is always inclined in favour towards the more fortunate), such that Antonio [Aliense] lived the remainder of his days overwhelmed, not only by domestic cares, but by the greater torment of other wickedness...210

Ridolfi must have been a witness to the events between the Vassilacchi and Palma families. He was in Aliense’s shop for five years, as he recorded in his autobiography, probably between 1606 and 1611.211 Presumably this dispute would have occurred shortly after Giacomo’s death in 1610, and no doubt this experience coloured Ridolfi’s opinion of Palma’s rapaciousness.212 Giulia and her father Palma, however, apparently believed that she was the one on the losing end. According to the document related to Andriana’s dowry, Giulia Palma had reduced her claim on her own dowry willingly (in conscientia sua), but why is left unexplained.213

210 Ridolfi, Maraviglie, vol. 2, 220-221: “Qui terminano le operationi di Antonio, benche qualche tempo sopravvivesse, & operasse altre cose, poiche gionto alla vecchiezza, e cangiando faccia la Fortuna, abbattuto dalle molte avversità, frà le turbulenze, le agitazioni dell’animo, non poteva applicarsi, come era suo costume allo studio, che però non devonsi malignamente ricercar le opere sue men perfette, trascurando le megliori, per iscemargli la lode, poiche spesso avviene, come alcun disse, che: Mutationem fortunae plerumque sequitur animi, & mentis perturbatio, error in consilijis, pavor et trepidatio in corde et mutationes voluntatum in animis. Et Eliano disse pure, che: Fortunae instabiles sunt vices, et repentinem commutationes. Quindi datosi à litigi con il Palma, consumò molto tempo, e gli haveri sopra a’ Palagi e nelle pratiche degli Avvocati, impiegando il più dell’opera sua nel loro servigio, da alcuni de’ quali fu al maggior uopo abbandonato, & in fine mal difeso, rimase perditore...Non mancavano in tanto gli aderenti del Palma di perseguitarlo in ogni occasione (poiche ogn’uno piega sempre in favore del più fortunato) si che Antonio visse il rimanente del tempo suo oppresso dalle famigliari cure non solo, mà in più maniere travagliato dall’altrui malvagità, verificandosi in lui il comune detto, che: Non comincia Fortuna mai per poco. Quando un mortal si piglia à scherno, e à gioco.”


212 Ridolfi’s passage on the litigation was immediately followed by criticism of Aliense for marrying a third time. Aliense’s second wife died in 1509. For the will of Giacomina Stimador, who died in November, 1509, see ASV., Not. Test., 226, II, c. 3v. In November 1610, Aliense was making arrangements to provide a painting for the sacristy of the Santa Maria dei Carmine in memory of Giacomina; see ASV., Not., Atti, b. 5439, 579r-v. Transcribed in Maltezou, “Ο ζωγράφος Αντώνιος Βασιλάκης,” 256. Giacomò Vassilacchi died in 1510, and so presumably the litigation followed not long after, followed by Aliense’s third marriage.

213 It is possible the reduction that Giulia made on her dowry was the required one third, which was considered a gift to the bridegroom, and which was called the corredo. It was typical for the amount of the dowry returned to widows to be two thirds the original sum; see Chojnacki, “Getting Back the Dowry,” in Women and Men, 97. Still the document makes it sound as if Giulia made the decision to reduce the amount for some unconventional reason, and that it was not a statutory reduction. The system of inheritance worked on the
Giacomo did not make the typical exclusions in his will on her use of his estate if she were to remarry. Once she was remarried to Pretti, her continued access to the estate as sole *commissaria*, or as she preferred to think of it, as usufructuary, would conceivably have caused tension with Aliense, who was the nearest male relative and part owner of the wool business. In Venice, widows could take control of a shop, but not of a *fraterrna*, and certainly not one involved in overseas trade.\(^{214}\) There were other potential complications related to the restoration of the dowry, which would have been Aliense’s responsibility as brother-in-law.\(^{215}\) If her dowry had been incorporated into the shared capital of the Vassilacchi wool-trading business, which had been managed by Giacomo as procurator general since 1596, Giulia’s attempts to restore it out of Giacomo’s estate could have been very difficult.\(^{216}\) In similar cases discussed by Anna Bellavitis, a widow could have a hard time restoring her dowry from the capital of a cooperative business involved in overseas trade. In fact, she was often expected to leave it with her brothers-in-law.\(^{217}\) One can only speculate, but perhaps Giulia’s willing concession on the value of her dowry can be explained by agreements made out of court on the value of the usufruct of the business.\(^{218}\)
In the end, the contract of 1626 between Palma and Prettì for the payment of young Andriana Vassilacchi’s dowry would seem to suggest that the Palmas were hard done by in this legal dispute with the Vassilacchi, whereas Ridolfi would lead us to believe that the dispute was more detrimental to Aliense’s purse. In either case, the personal dispute, which probably occurred around the year 1610, ended their decade-long collaborative experiment. Such an end is suggestive about the risks associated with any collaboration, especially when it blended the personal and the professional. Initially the very same intimacy made the painters feel more comfortable cooperating in a series of collaborations, a sentiment that reflected the culture of the broader artistic community, to say nothing of the concepts of collaboration disseminating in art literature at the time.

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Contrary to the characterization of Palma’s motivations in the *Maraviglie*, a variety of sources attest that Palma was a caring and affectionate husband, father, and grandfather. If there was any truth to Ridolfi’s anecdote about Palma’s reaction to his wife’s death, it could just as easily be explained as a loving husband unable to cope with the loss of his wife, as opposed to Ridolfi’s suggestion that he was an unfeeling man concerned more about professional obligations. In fact, having lived to the age of 80, Palma experienced the tragic misfortune of outliving the majority of his family. In the census of 1595-1598, Palma was supporting his wife, his sister, three servants, and seven children – four girls and three boys.219 By the time he drafted his will in 1627, he had lost his wife, all three of his sons and one of his daughters, leaving him with only two surviving daughters, one of whom was in poor health.220

When Palma’s daughter, Giulia Palma-Vassilacchi-Prettì, died in 1648, her will requested that she be interred next to none other than her father in SS. Giovanni e Paolo. Her tomb can still be seen today on the floor next to her father’s, placed dutifully just a step behind the great painter at the entrance to the sacristy (Fig. 4.65). Above them both, over the sacristy door, Palma’s funerary monument perpetually commemorates Palma’s cherished

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190. Panciera argued that the decline was not as fast in Venice as Sella had suggested, but was much slower until around 1640.
220 In a poem titled, “Morte d’un figliuolo di Giacomo Palma,” Giambattista Marino eulogized the death of one of Palma’s sons at a very early age; see Marino, *La Galeria*, ed. Marzio Pieri (Trent, 2005), 203. Ridolfi says that one son died a drifter and another from dissipation, *Maraviglie* vol. 2, 204.
artistic patrimony. Given such devotion to his family, it would have been out of character for Palma to make arrangements for his daughter to marry the brother of one of his artistic colleagues simply for professional and financial gain. Incorporating Aliense into his family was a signifier of a more intimate bond, and an acknowledgement of a stylistic affinity that was so important in a climate of academic formations, and in an emerging theory of collaboration.

So why did Ridolfi leave this marriage out of their biographies? I offer my final thoughts as a form of conclusion to this discussion of the marriage. It is my belief that Ridolfi wanted to protect the authorial integrity of his own master, wary that Aliense’s identity might be subsumed into the prolific corpus of the more renowned painter. On another occasion that was discussed already in Chapter 1, Ridolfi lamented that Giovanni Battista Zelotti was uncelebrated and that his paintings were too often attributed to Paolo Veronese. The cause for such confusion, he said, was that “their works appeared to be by the same hand.”

Ridolfi was apparently thinking that the complete fusion of one painter’s identity into another’s was one potential risk of a closely knit collaboration. In the case of Palma and Aliense, however, too much familiarity turned out to be the litigious means of its dissolution.

**Conclusion to Chapter 4**

In this chapter, I have argued that the repetitiousness we see in late Renaissance Venice was the product of an open and cooperative artistic community that fostered collaboration like that between Palma and Aliense. This explanation for the so-called decline of art, or at least one important aspect of its decline, might in its basic form call to mind a conventional view about collaboration; that it puts limitations on individuality, and thus leads to a form of artistic stasis. However, I have tried to avoid the position that personal attributes or environmental conditions – resolute individuality, progressive patrons, freedom from the guild, or education in theory – were deficient or absent in the period, for such an approach would only reaffirm through circular reasoning certain preconceptions about what makes another period great and would miss the point of this Venetian period in its own right. As much as the normative character of Venetian art might displease modern tastes, and I include

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221 Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 1, 299: referring to the frescoes for the Porto family home in Thiene, “nelle quali fatiche v’hebbe parte Battista Zelotti suo condiscenopo, che per essere di maniera simile, indifferentemente lavorava nelle opere di Paolo, à segno, che le cose loro parevano d’una medesima mano.”

222 See the Introduction.
my own tastes here, it was the conscious effect of a profession that saw greater reward in
collégiality and interaction than in isolated contemplation.223

Practice was very much at the core of this process, especially noticeable in the recitation
of figural and formal types like the two versions of the Christ Resurrected, and yet this
practice was also thought to embody those intangibles commonly found in critical
assessments of collaboration, such as the correlation between friendship and stylistic
affiliation. Drawings were exchanged like letters with expressions of love and friendship
because artists were not merely sharing resources. Friends were thought to be especially
receptive to the identity and the intention of the hand, and were experienced enough to
recognize the personal touches to common figure types. If the calligraphy and drawing
manuals are any indication, moreover, the pattern-like repetition of these shared “inventions”
appealed to a broader culture of virtuosi, or dilettante polymaths, who appreciated subtle
variations on standardized forms, not unlike the connoisseur who made a habit of looking for
fine distinctions in the gestural spirit of the hand.224 Altogether the exchange of drawings and
the discourse of friendship suggest that styles were converging naturally because artists were
purposefully working in close proximity.225

In tandem with this proximity of practice, the artists in this group subscribed to the
notion that a certain ideal could be achieved in the coordinated imitation of the best artists.
But as much as they looked directly to artistic models of the past, painters like Palma,
Aliense, and Domenico Tintoretto (and the sculptor Vittoria) also looked to each other as

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223 This idea that was espoused in Stefano Guazzo’s Civil conversazione in 1576 and was similarly followed by
the Carracci to very different ends. See Chapter 1.5.
224 On connoisseurship and collaboration, see Chapter 3.
225 In this light, the network of artists outlined here could be suitably called a “community of practice,” a term
first coined by Etienne Wenger. A community of practice defines a group within a profession that forms
naturally around the interactive process of learning. The group is typically comprised of members who are
engaged in learning through common experience not theory, who are mutually accountable in joint enterprises,
and who are open to a shared repertoire. Individual identity is relational or figurational in a negotiated process.
The participant finds meaning in the interplay between the act of participating in the endeavor (in our case that
would be the routines of drawing and gifting, or collaboration more directly) and the reification of the
collective endeavor (in our case, the academy or the marriage alliance). See Etienne Wenger, Communities of
Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity (Cambridge, 1998). After studying the network of artists in Venice,
I have preferred to think about the material in terms of Wenger’s communities of practice rather than Michel
Foucault’s “fellowships of discourse,” which Karen-edis Barzman related to the Accademia del Disegno in
Florence; see Barzman, The Florentine Academy and the Early Modern State: The Discipline of Disegno
(Cambridge, 2000), 180-82. I do not get the same sense of power relations, or of enclosure and exclusivity,
which Foucault saw at the core of these discourses; see Foucault, “Orders of Discourse,” Social Science
models of imitation, since they were the descendants of those great artistic patrimonies. Friendship, marriage, and collaboration brought these artistic genealogies together in body as well as in imitation, effectively collapsing the former divisions between workshops and studios.

The family alliance between Palma and Aliense from 1600-1610 epitomized such academic sodality coursing through the broader community. As one would expect from collaborators and family members familiar with each other’s work after years of drawing together, each deferred to the other and stated as much in their correspondence with their patrons in Salò. They nevertheless took advantage of their distinct personas, strategically presenting to a provincial patron different temperaments in order to bolster their bargaining power. In the end, however, these two did more than open up the doors to the workshop and exchange drawings. Despite the noble intentions of collaborators, the exchange of financial capital between their families proved to be too much for the terms of their professional friendship to bear.
APPENDIX
A Reconstruction of the Ceremonial Decoration in San Zaccaria

Though contracts and negotiations have yet to be recovered as they have been for Salò, the benefits of employing close and cooperative artists for patrons can be seen in the church of San Zaccaria. The church, just east of the doge’s chapel of San Marco and the Palazzo Ducale, was dedicated to St. John the Baptist’s father St. Zachary, whose body the nuns claimed to have in their possession. The convent was one of the oldest in Venice, having been established in the ninth century, and was a prestigious repository for unmarried daughters of the nobility. Consequently, it was one of the wealthiest convents in the city and a convent of longstanding political importance. Not surprisingly, then, a good deal of scholarship has been carried out on the patronage and the evolution of the church space, for which there were three different structural periods. The current church, built over the northern aisle of a twelfth-century church, was constructed in the fifteenth century according to the designs of Antonio Gambello (from 1458-1481) and Mauro Codussi (from 1483-1489). At the time, the nave and apse of the old church were still intact on the south side of the new church and this remaining space became a segregated choir for the nuns (see plan in Fig. A2). At last the new church was consecrated in 1543. Since then, almost every inch of wall space has been taken up with paintings (Fig. A1), and yet, aside from a short guidebook,
little has been written on the church decoration and patronage after its consecration. In particular, a large-scale renovation project starting in 1595 warrants greater attention. Involving our two protagonists Palma Giovane and Aliense, this renovation project fundamentally transformed the ritual experiences of the church. Alessandro Vittoria also had an important presence in this space. In addition to contributing designs for altars and tabernacles, he installed his funerary monument next to the sacristy door and was interred next to the high altar in 1608 (Fig. A16).

The renovation project must have centred on the final transition from the old church to the new church. Well after the consecration, the convent’s relics, including the body of St. Zachary, were still held in the old church until 1595 when they were at last moved into their new repositories. The ceremonial translation of these bodily relics was a state affair led by the Doge Marino Grimani. Some of the bodies were moved to chapels in the ambulatory,

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3 Silvio Tramontin, *San Zaccaria* (Venice, 1979). Gary Radke made a few remarks on the renovations of 1595, but his attempt to show that the patriarch had ceded almost complete control of the patronage of the church would seem to have been based more on assumption than evidence. His article was mainly concerned with the authority of the nuns to patronize their own art in the fifteenth century. For some of his comments about the end of the sixteenth century and their misguided assertions, see below. Stefania Mason Rinaldi has provided the most analysis of the Palma paintings; see *Palma il Giovane*, cat. 485-491.

4 Vittoria expressed his first wish to be interred in San Zaccaria in his eighth will, on December 6, 1601; see Avery, “Documenti,” doc. 147. By August 3, 1602 he had come to an agreement; see ASV, *San Zaccaria*, b. 18, “Commissaria Vittoria,” vol. 1, fol. 52r-v; and transcribed in Avery, “Documenti,” doc. 148(i).

5 Two scholars who seem unaware of each others’ work have recently given the date of the translation ceremony as February 24, 1600. Enrico Morini provided this date in his article on Byzantine relics in Venice, “Note di lipsangrafia veneziana,” *Bizantinistica: rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi* ser. 2, vol. 1 (1999): 151. His citation for the source of this date is not fully documented, nor explicitly stated. It would seem, from suggestive clues in his footnotes, however, that it came from Tramontin, *San Zaccaria*. There is a passage in Tramontin that reports the date February 24th, 1600, but this longwinded sentence is confusing; see Tramontin, *San Zaccaria*, 75. Tramontin did not say how he established this date for the translation of the bodies, although he implied that it is recorded in the painting of the event by Antonio Zanchi in the church, but there is no such date. He also seems to have been of the mistaken belief that the current marble urn from 1663 is the work of Alessandro Vittoria, who died in 1608.

Gary Radke has also argued that the translation of the bodies and the procession involving Marino Grimani occurred on February 24, 1600, and his reasoning for such precision is even more curious; see “Nuns and their Art,” 456 and n. 87. Radke said he found the date in Stringa’s amended version of Sansovino-Stringa, *Venetia, città nobilissima* (1604), 135v. In all the versions I have consulted, including those in the Marciana library where Radke consulted many of his other sources, the date is not actually recorded. What is more, Radke supported his argument with the misunderstanding that Marino Grimani did not take office until 1597. In fact, 1597 was the year Grimani’s wife, the dogaressa, was coronated in a famous ceremony. Grimani himself was indisputably elected to office in 1595. The translation of the bodies was recorded again by Stringa later in the guide when he provided a brief life of Marino Grimani; see Sansovino-Stringa, *Venetia* (1604), 420r. Stringa did not give the year of the translation in this section either, but he gives a very clear order of events for Grimani’s time in office. He discussed the translation ceremony shortly after Grimani’s election, and before the entry into Venice of Gian Francesco Aldobrandini. Nephew of the pope and commander of papal forces, Aldobrandini came to Venice on his way home from Hungary on May 12, 1596; see Victor Ceresole, *Di alcune relazione tra la casa degli Aldobrandini e la repubblica di Venezia* (Venice,
while the body of St. Zachary took pride of place over his altar, situated on the right side of the portal linking the new church and the nun’s choir in the old church space. Domenico Bozzoni, chronicling the history of the convent in 1678, remarked that the ceremony in 1595 had occasioned some expense and he described the event as if it was the church’s official opening, even though the church had been consecrated in 1543. The inscription over the new portal to the nuns’ choir records the date of its installation in September, 1595, and if we assume this project was completed just in time for an important event, as was often required of such projects, then the translation of the bodies from the old church to the new church would have most likely occurred on September 6, 1595, the Feast day of St. Zachary. Tradition had recorded September 6 as the day the body was first translated from Constantinople to Venice, and so the grand procession consisting of the Doge and numerous dignitaries must have been turned into a re-enactment of the founding of the convent itself.

1880), 20 ff. This event was then followed in Stringa’s memory, 420v, by the elevation of Lorenzo Priuli from Patriarch to Cardinal on June 5, 1596. A little further down, he discussed events from 1597, including the coronation ceremony for Grimani’s wife. We should be able to trust Stringa’s memory on the order of recent events, as he was the canon of San Marco and so responsible for ducal ceremonies during the office of Marino Grimani.

All other clues we have from the seventeenth century clearly point to 1595 as the date of the translation. The inscription over the newly installed portal to the nuns’ choir is one such clue, since the date of the renovation was often described in relation to the translation of the bodies in Stringa and other guidebooks. The earliest explicit reference to the date of 1595 is found in the archival records for San Zaccaria where there is a manuscript dated 1635. This manuscript chronicles the history of the church up to the consecration. A great deal of this text, which often refers to “our church” is copied directly from other sources, including Sansovino’s, Venetia, città nobilissima, from 1581 to which Stringa had added his account in 1604. Most of the text is clearly taken from Sansovino, not from Stringa, and at the end of this long uncited quotation, the compiler added that the bodies of the saints were translated to the new church in 1595: ASV, San Zaccaria, “Memorie,” Parte II, 2r. Other guidebooks of the late seventeenth century specifically recorded the date of the translation ceremony as 1595. See Sansovino-Martinioni, Venetia, città nobilissima (1663), 86; and Domenico Martinelli, Il ritratto di Venezia (Venice, 1684), 114.

6 Domenico Bozzoni, Il silento di s. Zaccaria snodato nella publicatione, dell’antichissima origine, prosperosi ingrandimenti, et amplissimi privilegij, dell’insigne suo monistero di Venetia (Venice, 1678), 90: “...con somme importanti di larghissime spese, nell’Anno 1595 si traslattarono li Corpi Santi alle nuove Capelle per cio’ fabricate, ma con Solennità si maestosa, che merita una particolar co[n]sideratione. Intervennero il Serenissimo Pre[n]cipe, colla Serenissima Signoria, et Eccelentissimo Senato, i Regij Ambasatori, colla maggior Pompa di questa Augustissima Dominante in Prosessione, esponendosi alla Publica Adoratione, non solo i Corpi Santi al’hora traslatati, ma tutte le insigni Relique, conservate nel Sacrario interiore, così famose, e grandi, che meritano un registro particolare nel fine del presente Libro. La conspicua festivitá di questa Traslatione invitó l’innumerabile moltitudine (sic.) del popo, à Vaggheggiare, si la struttura del nuovo Tempio, come la Santitá delle Relique, con Pietà, e decoro proprio di Venetia in si fatte fontioni; restando poi coll’accettata Clausura (come s’accenno poch’anzi) le Monache, à guisa di perle nelle loro Conchiglie, degne d’una singolare veneratione, e stima.”

7 On the feasts of San Zaccaria, see Tramontin, San Zaccaria, 75.
The remodeling in 1595 was also the culmination of a process of forced observance and enclosure, known as clausura, which was initiated by the government in 1514 to great protest and ongoing resistance.\(^8\) In fact, the nuns were quite likely compelled to carry out this renovation after the apostolic visitation of the determined Patriarch Lorenzo Priuli.\(^9\) The installation of the large grated portal and grated windows – since filled in – between the new church and the nuns’ choir, guaranteed the separation of laity and observants while making it possible both for the sisters to observe mass and for their voices to carry into the church from the choir (Fig. A3).\(^10\) Special attention in the pictorial decoration was similarly given to the intercessory roles of the sisters and their participation in various ceremonies.

Though the community of nuns, many of whom were improperly forced into observance, were to remain “pearls hidden in their shells,” as Domenico Bozzoni called them, the sisters seem to have found a way to make their presence visible in the paintings provided by Palma and Aliense.\(^11\) From 1595 to 1605, Palma Giovane and Aliense were exclusively tasked with the painted decoration, celebrating the community concealed behind the walls.\(^12\) The decoration was probably patronized by the nuns themselves, rather than by private patrons, and the limitations placed on their contact with the outside world since the enforcement of

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9 An inscription over the door records the date M. D. LXXXXV SEPT. Unfortunately, I have not had the chance to consult the relevant archives on the determinations of the patriarchal visits and I have not found anyone who makes reference to these archives as they relate to San Zaccaria. This information should be found in ASPV, Curia patriarcalle, Archivio segreto, *Visite pastorali*, monasteri femminili, b. 2, “Visite de monache”, visita Priuli (1592-1596).
10 In 1604, Giovanni Stringa pointed out one more pertinent feature of this altar, which was on the wall dividing the new church and the nuns’ choir: “Sotto il detto sepolcro vi è una finestra con le sue ferrate indorate, per dove veggono le Monache di dentro il Santissimo Corpo, et sangue del Signore che leva il Sacerdote quando quivi celebra la Santa Messa.” See Sansovino-Stringa, *Venetia*, 135v. This window just over the altar and beneath the urn, has held the body of St. Athanasius since the early nineteenth-century.
11 Mary Laven provides a balanced discussion of the coercion of nuns into taking the veil based on court documents, *Virgins of Venice: Enclosed Lives and Broken Vows in the Renaissance* *Convent* (London, 2002), 22-42.
12 Coordinating the church interior was not uncommon in this late period of the sixteenth century. Palma had already participated in the projects of the Redentore, which was coordinated both in the design of the altars and in the program of their dedications. He also made significant contributions to San Nicolò dei Tolentini, where the architecture was coordinated as in the Redentore, and where Palma himself was stylistically paired with another collaborator, Sante Peranda, across the nave. See Peter Humfrey, “Co-ordinated Altarpieces in Renaissance Venice: The Progress of an Ideal,” in *The Altarpiece in the Renaissance*, ed. Peter Humfrey and Martin Kemp (Cambridge, 1990), 190-212; and Giles Knox, “The Unified Church Interior in Baroque Italy: S. Maria Maggiore in Bergamo,” *The Art Bulletin* 82, 4 (2000): 679-701. See also Marcia B. Hall, *Renovation and Counter-Reformation: Vasari and Duke Cosimo in Sta. Maria Novella and Sta. Croce*, 1565-1577 (Oxford, 1979).
clausura in 1514 must have made it easier to coordinate with two artists alone. What is more, Aliense, perhaps more so than Palma, was the natural choice to decorate this Benedictine church. He had just designed the bronze high altar in the Benedictine church of San Giorgio Maggiore in 1592 (Fig. 4.38), and had executed a large cycle of paintings filling the Benedictine church of San Pietro in Perugia in 1594 (Fig. 4.47 and 4.48).

The crowding of monumental paintings, which fill up almost every inch of wall space in San Zaccaria today, does a disservice to the balanced distribution of these two artists who brought programmatic continuity to its various ceremonial functions and consistency to its appearance. The artists seemingly insinuated themselves into every viewpoint. Seventeen new paintings, triple the number of paintings in the church at the time, transformed the space, but since so many of their works have been moved from their original location, some reconstruction of the program is required.

The Organ (1595)

Probably just in time to amplify the solemnities of the translation of the relics, an organ was installed in the new church and adorned with seven paintings by Palma and Aliense. Palma painted the organ shutters, which he inscribed MDVC (1595), while Aliense did the paintings for the cantoria. Unfortunately, this organ was removed in the eighteenth century and its decoration was left to the ravages of time. Some paintings have since been restored nearly to their original condition, some are in very poor condition despite restoration, and some have been lost altogether.

When open, the two inner organ doors (now lost) represented St. Zachary and St. Lizerio (Fig. A4), whose body was also reputed to have been in the church and who was the patron saint of an adjacent scuola dedicated to him. When closed, the outside organ shutters, which were recently restored, illustrated the Israelite women singing the praises of David for

13 Before 1595, the nave already had two altarpieces, one by Giovanni Bellini (a famous sacra conversazione) and another by Giuseppe Salviati (The Miracles of Saints Cosmo and Damien). Small paintings of saints by Giovanni Bellini were in the chapels of the ambulatory. The sacristy held an altarpiece by Paolo Veronese (a sacra conversazione). Somewhere in the church there was an altarpiece by Jacopo Tintoretto (The Birth of Saint John the Baptist), which was moved as part of renovations in 1595. Lastly, there were some frescoes in the lunettes above the cornice, which were covered over with panel paintings in the seventeenth century.

14 Tramontin, San Zaccaria, 76.
his victory against the Philistines (Fig. A5). David, as the author of the psalms, was a common subject for organ shutters, but in this case the Israelite women on the closed shutter doors would have personified the ‘disembodied voices’ of the concealed nuns singing in accompaniment when the doors were opened. The representation of the future King David, for whom the women sang, also provided the optimal analogy for the Doge himself. Upon entering the church, the Doge passed underneath the organ and its painted decoration. Since the shutter doors would have been open during the ceremony, the painted images paid tribute to the event the rest of the year whenever the organ was not in use. In this way, whether open or closed, whether in reality or symbolically, the nuns perpetually sang the praises of their republican prince.

Three of Aliense’s paintings for the cantoria, now hanging separately and unassumingly on the front wall of the church, are not well known to art historical scholarship. His paintings included two Old Testament scenes, the Sacrifice of Isaac (Fig. A6) and Daniel in the Lions Den (Fig. A7), and two groups of saints. One of these groups of saints has gone missing, while the surviving group, a Madonna and Child with Saints (Fig. A8), has been stripped of a great deal of paint. As a result, it is difficult to identify the saints depicted, although the habit of the martyred nun suggests she was Benedictine. The Sacrifice of Isaac is in decent condition, but a block of the Daniel canvas has been cut out so as to fit around the plaque from 1543 that commemorates the consecration of the church. Aliense, who had a reputation for using “peacock-like” colours, was a little more reserved with his chromatic scale in these paintings. This is especially visible in the Daniel scene and in the group of saints, which are pitched more towards the earthier tones of Palma’s painting.

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15 Samuel 18: 6-7. The outer doors are now held in the chapel of St. Athanasius, the old choir, but the inside doors representing San Zaccaria and San Lizerio have been lost. Palma’s preparatory designs remain, however. See Mason Rinaldi, *Palma il Giovane*, 133, and 158; Tietze and Tietze-Conrat, *Drawings of the Venetians*, n. 991.

16 The most comprehensive study on organ decoration in Venice is by Massimo Bisson, *Meravigliose macchine di giubilo. L’architettura e l’arte degli organi e Venezia nel Rinascimento* (Venice, 2012).

17 I have taken my cue from Craig Monson, *Disembodied Voices: Music and Culture in an Early Modern Italian Convent* (Berkeley, 1995).

18 Massimo Bisson, *Meravigliose macchine*, 171-176. Makrykostas recognized the image of the Sacrifice of Isaac but made no mention of the other two paintings by Aliense; see Makrykostas, *Antonio Vassilacchi*.

19 When Tramontin was writing about the church, Aliense’s paintings were in storage, San Zaccaria, 52. They were restored in 1984 and then put on the front wall of the church. The church has incorrectly labeled the Daniel in the Lions Den as the Angel Announcing to San Zaccaria by Antonio Zanchi, but the style is clearly that of Aliense and the presence of the lion confirms that the subject is Daniel.
The Processional Route (1599-1605)

The organ, with its decoration, was installed in time for the translation ceremony in 1595. But its liturgical and ceremonial function, not to mention its political association, was not limited to this one-time event. The church, was the site of other processions and ceremonies performed by the scuole of Venice.20 And of course it was the backdrop for the public presentation of new postulants to the convent, which could take place most ceremoniously on Easter weekend. But the most politically charged event in the church was the annual andata of the doge on Easter Sunday. Every year since the twelfth century, the church was the main site of a procession led by the Doge, the Signoria, and dignitaries who came to hear Vespers on Easter Sunday in tribute to the nuns who in the ninth century had donated part of their land to the state for the development of the Piazza San Marco. Even in the sixteenth century, there were a variety of theories about the origin of this ritual. The most popular legend recounted that Pope Benedict III was sheltered by the nuns of San Zaccaria in 855 while he was a refugee from the anti-pope Anastasius III. As a reward, he granted visitors to the church an annual indulgence, and he gave the convent a number of relics and a crown. The abbess then gave the crown to the doge when he came to the church for his indulgence.21 This legend was one of several origin stories for the iconic ducal corno, and every year on Easter Sunday, weather permitting, the doge visited the church in trionfo, heard Vespers, and received his corno, which was newly made by the nuns of San Zaccaria.22

20 Andrew Hopkins, “The Influence of Ducal Ceremony on Church Design in Venice” Architectural History 41 (1998), 43-46. As will be discussed below, the Easter Sunday ceremony was the most important and prestigious, but there were other processions to the church, such as those of the Scuole on Palm Sunday. Singing was an integral part of the processional stops by the Scuole; see Jonathan Glixon, “Gathering Together,” in idem, Honoring God and the City: Music at the Venetian Confraternities, 1260-1807 (Oxford and New York, 2003), 43-76. For the catalogue of officials, their order in the procession, and their vestments, see Sansovino-Stringa, Venetia, 330r ff.
21 This moment when the abbess gave the crown to the doge was depicted by Antonio Zanchi in 1688 in the first lunette over the right aisle of the church. The face of the reigning doge, Francesco Morosini, was used for the face of the doge.
22 The procession to San Zaccaria concluded a whole week of rituals in the church of San Marco. These rituals in San Marco were codified by Giovanni Stringa and published in 1597, Officium Maioris Hebdomadae, Iuxta Consuetudinem Ecclesiae S. Marci Venetiam (Venice, [1597]). See also, John Bettley, “The Office of Holy Week at St. Mark’s, Venice, in the Late 16th Century, and the Musical Contributions of Giovanni Croce,” Early Music 22, 1 (1994): 45-60.
*The Right Aisle*

Palma was given the commission to paint the two altarpieces on the right aisle. The first altar on the right bears a painting of the Madonna and Child with saints (Fig. A9). This altar was actually the last of the commissions, dating probably to around 1605, while all the rest of the works can be dated more closely to the years around 1600. The second altar on the right was dedicated to the body of St. Zachary. Part of the annual *andata* at Easter took place by the grates to the convent church, and next to the archaizing altar of St. Zachary designed by Vittoria and Palma (Fig. A10). Here the doge knelt on a cloth of gold to hear Vespers sung by the musicians of San Marco. The ceremony was concluded with the performance of Compline, which was sung by the nuns themselves, again, presumably in imitation of the Israelite women praising David. The doge, with a league of officials and dignitaries, then processed his way around the ambulatory before exiting another door.

Though the body of St. Zachary had been moved into a wooden urn in 1595, the altar designed by Alessandro Vittoria, and its altarpiece by Palma, seem not to have been in place until August 1599, the date inscribed on the lintel above (Fig. A10). Palma’s design for the altarpiece featuring the ascension of St. Zachary hovering over his physical remains was an adaptation of the altarpiece he had painted of the ascension of Saint Sabbas for the church of Sant’Antonin in 1593, which similarly featured an altar designed by Alessandro Vittoria (Fig. A11). In 1665, the wooden urn was replaced with the elaborate marble urn, which is supported by angels and topped with a putto. This new scheme changes the original effect quite dramatically.

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23 For an anecdote about Vittoria helping Palma fix the altarpiece, because of criticisms by Pietro Malombra, see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 188.

24 According to Giovanni Stringa the archaic design of the altar was intentional so as to be coordinated with the altar of St. Mary across the nave; see Sansovino-Stringa, *Venetia*, 135v: “...sopra un’altare molto grande, ricco, & bello, che corrisponde, anco per disegno a quello di Maria Vergine, dipinto da Gian Bellino, come di sopra s’è detto.” Ridolfi specifically states that Vittoria made the design of the altar of St. Zaccaria; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 188. In 1665, the wooden urn was replaced with the elaborate marble urn, which is supported by angels and topped with a putto. This new scheme changes the original effect quite dramatically; see ASV, *San Zaccaria*, b. 2/1.1, fol. 61. The first altar on the right, with the St. Benedict in the centre as the order’s founder, was the last of the commissions some time around 1605. On this altar and Vittoria’s supposed help in the design, see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 188.


26 Ridolfi reported that Vittoria was the architect on the altar, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 188.


28 ASV, *San Zaccaria*, b. 2/1.1, fol. 61. This translation took place on September 3rd, again, just in time for the Feast of San Zaccaria on September 6th.
The Chancel and Ambulatory

Proceeding around the ambulatory, the focus of the Easter procession would have been on the chancel and the tabernacle in the centre. Alessandro Vittoria may have designed the micro-architecture of the tabernacle, as he had for the altar of St. Zachary (Fig. 102). Given the importance of Easter Sunday for the church, the form of the chancel and tabernacle alludes appropriately to the Holy Sepulchre. What is more, Palma provided four paintings of the Passion for the aedicules on all four sides of the tabernacle, emphasizing Christ’s body: on the front is Christ Supported by Angels, on the sides are Christ Crowned with Thorns and Christ at the Column, and on the back is Christ Resurrected. Facing east, Palma’s Christ Resurrected, which resembles Aliense’s version in San Vidal, was in direct sight of two paintings by Aliense in the radiating chapels. These paintings featured saints and martyrs, but only one still survives and is hanging now in what is now called the chapel of Sant’Atanasio (the nuns’ choir space in the seventeenth century) (Fig. A12). The two figures on the sides of this painting are St. John the Baptist, who was the son of St. Zachary, and St. Catherine, a common representative of nuns. The three central figures in this painting are being crowned by angels holding palms in their hands and so they are presumably the martyrs whose bodies were interred in the chapels, including an unspecified Pope Leo.

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30 The oldest church of San Zaccaria originally had a replica of the Holy Sepulchre made in the late ninth or early tenth century. Radke referred to the now lost replica of the Holy Sepulchre, which was probably located in the catacomb beneath the chapel of San Tarasio; see Radke, “Nuns and their Art,” 446, esp. n. 48. Dellwing discussed the significance of the tabernacle and chancel for the Easter procession and their association with the Holy Sepulchre; see Dellwing, “Die Kirche San Zaccaria,” 231-232.

31 Rinaldi, cats. 487-490.

32 Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 219: “& in San Zacheria nelle Cappellette dietro al tabernacolo, nelle quali riposano alcune relicie de’ Martiri, rtrasse le imagini loro.” In the relative order that Ridolfi placed Aliense’s works, these martyr paintings are mentioned after Aliense’s return to Venice from Salò, Zugliano, and Noventa, which would date them to some time in the first decade of the seventeenth century. They are also listed between the Coronation of Baldwin of Flanders in the Ducal Palace (1604), which Ridolfi said was executed by his son Stefano, and a series of mythological paintings sent to his former pupil Henrich Valchemburg in Germany. Palma also sent mythological scenes to Valchemburg around the same time, which Mason Rinaldi has dated to 1600-1610; see Ridolfi, *Maraviglie*, vol. 2, 195; and Mason Rinaldi, *Palma il Giovane*, cat. 223.

33 Their precise identities are difficult to discern. The central figure in the papal tiara has been labeled by the church today as St. Gregory, but the convent only claimed to possess the body of St. Gregory Nazienzus, who was not a pope. The papal tiara suggests instead that this figure is either St. Stephen or St. Leo, both papal saints whose bodies the convent claimed to have in their possession. Bozzoni, the seventeenth century chronicler of the convent, specifically stated that the body of St. Leo was placed in the high altar, likely meaning the chapels behind the chancel; see Bozzoni, *Silentio*, n.p., Appendix: “Il Corpo di S. Leone Pontefice riposto nell’Altar maggiore.” I have not been able to determine which Pope Leo this is supposed to
The Left Aisle

In the left aisle, visitors passed beside Giovanni Bellini’s famous altarpiece on the left wall of the church, the *Madonna and Child with Saints Peter, Lucy, Catherine, and Jerome* (otherwise known as the *San Zaccaria Altarpiece*, 1505). It is now sandwiched between Aliense’s two large scenes from the life of the Virgin (Fig. A13). These two scenes are, *The Marriage of Mary to Joseph* (Fig. A14), and *The Presentation of the Virgin to the Temple* (Fig. A15). All together, these three paintings on the left wall celebrate the Virgin Mary, and signify the virginal virtue of the nuns and their intercessory roles. The analogy between the Virgin Mary and the virginal sisters themselves would have been apparent during the stately annual Easter celebration, as the noble daughters were seen during this princely event as symbols of the uncorrupted Serenissima. The dramatically large size and location of these two paintings, however, made these scenes particularly visible to the nuns, who would have seen them from the grated windows and the grated portal immediately across the nave.

Although Aliense’s paintings provided a theatrical backdrop to the various processions and ceremonies that took place in the church, including the *andata* at Easter, they also mirrored the ceremonies of profession and consecration, which could take place at Easter. These were the moments when virginal postulates officially joined the conventual community, as the Virgin Mary was presented to the church, and proclaimed their marriage to Christ. In San

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34 Saints Lucy and Catherine were common models for nuns. Jerome was also depicted on the high altar in the old church, probably because of his letters to Eustochia on the virtues of female chastity; see Radke, “Nuns and their Art,” 443.

35 Marilyn Dunn has argued that in the churches of Roman convents, nuns displayed paintings that fashioned their identities as virginal intercessors for the public who would not be able to see them; see idem, “*Invisibilia per visibilia*: Roman Nuns, Art Patronage, and the Construction of Identity,” in *Wives, Widows, Mistresses, and Nuns in Early Modern Italy: Making the Invisible Visible through Art and Patronage*, ed. Katherine A. McIver (Surrey, UK; Burlington VT.: Ashgate, 2012), 181-205.

36 Sperling has argued that conventual virginity was a metaphor for the state, as an uncorrupted Venetia, but also of the “true nobility” of the patriciate. The convents served to house noble daughters who would be unable to, or would be too costly to, marry at a social class of an equal or higher level. This was of utmost importance in the endogamy of the government since the *serrata* of 1297; see Sperling, *Convents and the Body Politic*, 72-114. This sentiment is surely expressed by the alarmist appeal of the Patriarch Giovanni Tiepolo, who was open to loosening the strictures on conventual life, but insisted on forced profession: “If the two thousand or more noblewomen, who in this City live locked up in convents as if in a public storehouse, had been able or had wanted to dispose of themselves differently, what confusion! What damage! What disorder! What dangers! What scandals, and what terrible consequences would have been witnessed for their families and for the City!” Quoted by Mary Laven, *Virgins of Venice*, 28-29.
Zaccaria, the two ceremonies were often performed concurrently and were presided over by the Patriarch.  

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The pride the two painters must have felt as they approached completion in San Zaccaria was made apparent when Palma used the church as a showroom for their subsequent partnership in Salò. The canvases for the organ shutters in Salò (Fig. 4.60) needed to be judged by Venetian experts before being exported in 1604 and Palma chose the church of San Zaccaria as the venue to publicly display his version of *Cain and Abel*. Aliense, in contrast, opted to mount his pendant painting near the Rialto bridge in the Campo San Bartolomeo, perhaps because he had reprised and improved on his *Sacrifice of Isaac* from the cantoria in San Zaccaria. According to Palma’s letter to the Eletti of Salò, in any case, Aliense preferred the more modest venue of the Rialto because he did not like to celebrate himself. This explanation was consistent with the distinct artistic personalities presented to their patrons in the western most reaches of the Venetian territories – one artist eager for recognition and the other humble and unassuming.

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37 The marriage of St. Catherine to Christ would have been an equally effective image, but would not have served as well as a pendant to the other Marian images on this wall. See Sperling, *Convents and the Body Politic*, 137-141; Mary Laven, *Virgins of Venice*, 22-42; Kate Lowe, “Secular Brides and Convent Brides: Wedding Ceremonies in Italy during the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation,” in *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Primhak, “Women in Religious Communities,” 153-155. At one time, consecration was held during the festival of the Epiphany, but it is not clear if this was still the case after the Council of Trent. In 1622, Benedetto Buonmattei pointed out that consecration was originally restricted to the weekend of the Epiphany, the Holy Week of Easter, and the feasts of the Apostles, but this was then expanded to include any Sunday; Benedetto Buonmattei, *Modo di consecrar le vergini* (Cesena, 1773 [1st ed. 1622]), 16. Aside from Buonmattei, there were other guides for nuns ceremonies written in the seventeenth century. Before the reforms of the sixteenth century, the consecration ceremony had been codified in a manuscript, which is now contained in the ASV, *San Zaccaria*, b. 5 “Ceremoniale.”

CONCLUSION
Avenues for Broader Study

The intention of this dissertation was to situate collaboration in the artistic discourse of the early modern period, so that cooperative productions, for all of their formal continuities and discontinuities, might be analyzed on firmer contextualized footing. In the minds of early modern viewers, the intersubjective forces of the collaborative process were demonstrative of those most nebulous and interrelated concepts normally associated with individual genius, including artistic identity, originality, and style. What is more, collaboration was thought to be capable of creating the perfect image, as the hypothetical reflections on the ideal painting of Adam and Eve indicate. Although the richest examples of collaborative works were hypothetical, and in the case of the Detroit *Triple Portrait* possibly fraudulent, critics were still cognizant of artistic practice and of the social circumstances that played a role in the integration of multiple styles. The case study of Palma Giovane and Aliense suggests that artists too ascribed to the notion that friendship and kinship (loosely defined) supported the equality, reciprocity, and normativity required of collaboration in theory. Still, for this partnership, the pragmatic understanding of the ideal collaborative relationship turned out to be insufficient under the strain of financial interests.

Guided by the primary sources first and foremost, I did not set out to provide a comprehensive overview of every work made in joint authorship. It would be reasonable moving forward to expand the project by looking at artistic relationships that did not always garner the attention of early modern critics, and to consider more loosely formed artistic correspondences that were not necessarily collaborative according to the parameters laid out in the introduction. Not only might such an expansion provide alternative perspectives of collaborative practice, but it might further enrich our understanding of the social significance of style in early modern culture. Style is a central thread that weaves it way through the four preceding chapters. Collaborative pictures invited the viewer to consider the relationship between artists, and in doing so style served as a signifier of affiliation as much as a signifier of individuality. Similar styles, for example, were interpreted as evidence of interpersonal affinities, while subtle differences of style in an otherwise integrated composition were appreciated as residual traces of inventive dialogue and interaction. One subtext in the discourse on collaboration, which emerged most poignantly in the second chapter, was the
capacity of an artist to alter or adapt his style in response to another. Both Lomazzo and Malvasia left room for the mature artist to use his self-awareness and judgment to adapt to different styles, whereas Scannelli thought it was deleterious for an artist to make any sort of accommodation once he had established his own personal style.

Given new trends in the digital humanities, the time to study artistic interactions on a broad scale has never been more opportune. Providing a methodological model, Simone Testa was recently able to map the circulation of knowledge in literary and science academies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, using the information compiled for the Database of Italian Academies. What Testa discovered was that there was more extensive communication between academies, and even across generations of academies, than has heretofore been recognized.\(^1\) I can foresee a similar digital project with the potential to map different forms of contact between artists and plot the circulation of styles both within regions and between regions. As was discussed in the fourth chapter of this dissertation, the informal art academies that suddenly appeared in Venice at the end of the sixteenth century fostered a community style that signified social bonds in the circle of artists around Palma Giovane. However, more study is needed to measure the reach of this community and to compare this phenomenon to other regions of Europe. The spread of Leonardo da Vinci’s style among his followers might offer a particularly fruitful starting point for comparison.

Continuing Leonardo’s legacy after his departure from Milan, Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio and Marco d’Oggiono established their own collaborative partnership, signing contracts as a ‘compagnia depinctori,’\(^2\) while Leonardo’s Spanish followers Fernando Yáñez and Fernando de los Llanos formed a similar partnership when they carried the Leonardesque style back to their native Spain.\(^3\) No doubt, a digital catalogue of artistic contacts would lend force to David Young Kim’s book on the travelling artist and the mobility of style.\(^4\)

Such a project would also need to consider the different political, economic, and social pressures that might have circumscribed artistic interaction. Questions of context arose here

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\(^4\) David Young Kim, *The Travelling Artist in the Italian Renaissance: Geography, Mobility, and Style* (New Haven, 2014).
in the first chapter surveying the expression of the single hand. Although the notion of the single hand had an enduring and widespread presence, the meaning of the expression changed for reasons that are still as yet unclear. Political turnover in Rome and Florence in the middle of the sixteenth century, to take the most prominent example, led to large-scale decorative programs that, because of the need to have them painted quickly, required teams of artists with disparate temperaments and skills – “one hand with diverse minds and different styles,” as Vasari described them. However, the resulting inequalities between artists seem to have been felt more acutely in the courtly settings of Florence and Rome than in Bologna where the Carracci created a different culture of academic cooperation based on civil conversazione. In Venice meanwhile, the fact that Palma and his fellow artists felt the need to establish something like an informal academy at this time raises other questions about what organizations were available earlier for artists to socialize within their own social group, and what might have prompted this change in social behavior at the end of the sixteenth century.

Of course, an expansion of the topic need not be limited to interaction between painters alone. It was not uncommon for painters to be close friends, or even housemates, with sculptors and architects. The relationships between Sebastiano del Piombo and Michelangelo, and between Palma and Alessandro Vittoria have already been discussed here, albeit briefly. Additions to the list should also include Titian and Jacopo Sansovino, Titian and Giulio Romano, Andrea del Sarto and Sansovino, Leonardo da Vinci and Giovan Francesco Rustici, and Poussin and Duquesnoy, to name just a few of the best known examples. These

6 Giorgio Vasari, Vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori, et architetti, vol. 3, bk. 2 (Florence, 1568), 823: “Giovò anco pur’assai all’uno, & all’altro la pratica, e l’amicizia, che nella loro fanciullezza, & poi nella gioventu hebbero insieme Andrea del Sarto, & Jacopo Sansovino, i quali seguitando la maniera medesima nel disegno, ebbero la medesima grazia nel fare, l’uno nella pittura, & l’altro nella scultura, perche conferendo insieme i dubbi dell’arte, & face[nd]o Jacopo per Andrea modelli di figure, s’aiutavano l’un l’altro sommamente.”
8 Giovanni Pietro Bellori, Lives of the Modern Artists, Sculptors and Architects, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl (Cambridge, 2005), 311: “He [Poussin] lived in company and in the same house with François the Fleming, the sculptor, and both of them were very keen to progress, so that together they devoted themselves attentively to ancient things. With this opportunity he too addressed himself to modeling and working in relief, and he was very helpful to François as they embarked on the study of the beauty and proportion of statues, measuring them together, as can be seen in the case of the one of Antinous. They also made a study of the Game of cupids by Titian in the Ludovisi gardens, which is now in Spain: as these cupids are of admirable beauty, Nicolas not only copied them in painting, but together with his companion he modeled them in clay in bas-
partnerships could offer an interesting alternative to the notion of the ‘single hand’ of collaboration since they may not have faced the same expectations of stylistic unity. Looking at the cooperative relationships between sculptors and painters, moreover, could help to recast, if not pacify, the emphasis on the paragone in Renaissance studies, and could offer an important equivalent to the ideal painting of Adam and Eve as a composite of styles.

The relationship between connoisseurship and the natural sciences has been another topic of ongoing discussion to which the study of collaboration can make further cautionary contributions. Critics and connoisseurs, in their approach to stylistic ambiguity, were participating in a culture that both thrived on and stumbled over questions about natural creation, the nature of truth, the quality of evidence, and the power of direct observation. As a point of comparison, François de Belleforest provided in 1578 an expository essay on indistinguishable human bodies for an expanded edition of Pierre Boaistuau’s wildly popular book, the Histoires prodigieuses. There were, in Belleforest’s estimation, various reasons why an individual might appear indistinguishable from another. These reasons, including kinship, spiritual imprints, the Idea, and artful imitation, might all sound familiar to the reader of the present thesis. According to Belleforest, identical twins with matching faces, voices, gestures, and personalities were the natural byproduct of a father’s seed mixing with the mother’s blood, creating one body and soul divided into two. Belleforest also discussed examples of children who were conceived by an unfaithful mother but who still grew up to look like her husband. In these instances, Belleforest said, the features of the man, who the children believed to be their father, were imprinted on their souls by the power of the imagination, and it was this spiritual imprint that then changed their outward appearance. The toughest examples for Belleforest to explain, however, were those in which men looked and acted like each other despite coming from different countries and from different bloodlines. Belleforest simply and skeptically reasoned that the common Idea of Nature can sometimes result in the reproduction of humours and appearances. One of Belleforest’s examples of

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9 It might still be premature to suggest that collaborative painting contributed to the methodology of the Scientific Revolution, as Pamela H. Smith has argued for seventeenth-century art in general; see Smith, The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in the Scientific Revolution (Chicago, 2004).

10 Pierre Boaistuau, Claude de Tesserant, and François de Belleforest, Histoires prodigieuses extraictes de plusieurs fameux auteurs, Grecs & Latin, sacrez & prophanes, divisées en cinq livres (Antwerp, 1594), 355-
indistinguishable figures was the famous case involving the estranged Martin Guerre and his impostor, Arnauld du Tilh, who deceived a village, perhaps even Martin’s own wife, because of an uncanny physical resemblance that was matched by artful impersonation. Recalling the complex trial of the impostor, who many still believed to be Martin Guerre, Michel de Montaigne in 1588 suggested that, in cases like these, judges should be able to issue this less definitive verdict: “The Court does not understand anything whatsoever about this case.”

In many ways, the point of a collaborative picture is to elicit the kind of enthusiasm and philosophical skepticism that we see in the famous reports about Martin Guerre and his impostor. Especially for seventeenth-century writers, the dialogical negotiation between several minds and hands in collaboration held out the possibility of observing an image in its generative process – not merely observing the physical labour in the application of paint, but observing an idea, indeed several ideas, as they are forged into a single material realization. Yet for all that style disclosed, the picture deliberately withheld a clear view of the full process, compelling the viewer to use his or her own intellection to unravel the plurality of inventive hands, however they were unified. Ultimately, it is my hope that scholars today can similarly embrace the indeterminacy and equivocation that was engendered by collaborative painting and find new ways of approaching various combinations of minds and hands.

367. The chapter is titled “De deux gentils hommes se rapportans tellement de face, voix, parolle, et gestes qu’il estoit impossible de les discerner en sorte quelconque.”


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