





MASTER  
DRAWINGS  
2023

## Acknowledgements

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## Florian Härb & Liberté Nuti

### Master Drawings 2023

Front Cover Illustration (Detail)  
Wassily Kandinsky, *Descente*

Back Cover Illustration (Detail)  
Gaetano Gandolfi, *A Capriccio of Heads of Seven Young Women in elaborate Headdress*

Frontispiece Illustration (Detail)  
Paul Klee, *Ein Paar Staemme*

Endpaper Illustration (Detail)  
Oskar Kokoschka, *Young Woman In Red Skirt, Seen From Behind*

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Design & Layout by Chris Boulden

# MASTER DRAWINGS 2023



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MASTER DRAWINGS  
LONDON

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BY APPOINTMENT

## 1. *Diana and her Nymphs surprised by Actaeon (recto)* *Madonna lactans (verso)*

Numbered in pen and ink, lower left corner (*verso*), No. 248; and in pencil, upper right corner (*verso*), 18  
Pen and brown ink, over black chalk, on pink prepared paper (*recto*); pen and brown ink (*verso*)  
142 x 188 mm

### PROVENANCE

Giovanni Morelli (1816–1891), Milan and Bergamo (L. 1902), his inscription, *Vincenzo Tamagni (recto)* and *Vincenzo Tamagni da San Gimignano? (verso)*; by bequest to  
Gustavo Frizzoni (1840–1919), Milan, on deposit at the Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan, 1906  
Charlotte von Prybram-Gladona (1910–2002), Salzburg  
Kurt Meissner, Zurich, 1990, from whom acquired by  
Dr. Robert Landolt (1913–2008), Chur; by descent

### LITERATURE

F. Malaguzzi Valeri, *I disegni della R. Pinacoteca di Brera*, Milan, 1906, cat. no. 11 (as Venetian School, 16th Century?)  
F. Malaguzzi Valeri, *I disegni della R. Pinacoteca di Brera. Novantaquattro tavole riproducenti a colori i più notevoli disegni della importante raccolta milanese*, Milan, 1912, cat. no. 11 (as Venetian School, 16th Century?)  
B. Berenson, *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*, Chicago and London, 1938, I, p. 143, II, p. 354, cat. nos. 2756I and 2756J, III, figs. 364 and 369 (erroneously considering *recto* and *verso* to be two separate sheets)  
B. Berenson, *I disegni dei pittori fiorentini (revised and enlarged version)*, Milan, 1961, p. 210  
D. Rust, 'The Drawings of Vincenzo Tamagni da San Gimignano,' in *National Gallery of Art. Report and Studies in the History of Art*, II, 1968, cat. nos. B22 and B22v  
C. von Prybram-Gladona, *Unbekannte Zeichnungen alter Meister aus*

*europäischem Privatbesitz*, Munich, 1967, cat. nos. 37 and 37a, illustrated  
G. Bora et al., *I disegni della collezione Morelli*, Cinisello Balsamo, 1988, p. 333, cat. no. 259, the *recto* illustrated  
F. Mariano, *I disegni di Vincenzo Tamagni*, thesis, University of Perugia, 2007-08, pp. 94-95, fig. 73  
E. Pagliano, *De chair et d'esprit. Dessins italiens du musée de Grenoble*, Grenoble, 2010, pp. 48-49, under cat. no. 8, footnote 9  
R. Castrovinci, *Vincenzo Tamagni da San Gimignano. Discepolo di Raffaello*, Rome, 2017, p. 218, cat. no. 94, the *recto* illustrated

This double-sided sheet has long been an important constituent of the relatively small drawings oeuvre of Vincenzo Tamagni of San Gimignano, bearing all the hallmarks of his characteristic drawing style, strongly influenced by Raphael and his school.<sup>1</sup> Executed in his preferred technique on pink prepared paper, both *recto* and *verso* are closely related to two sheets at Grenoble (figs. 1, 4) and Princeton (fig. 5), and another two at Turin (figs. 2, 3, 6).<sup>2</sup> The drawing's first known owner, the art critic, collector and connoisseur, Giovanni Morelli, correctly assigned it to Tamagni. When its subsequent owner, Gustavo Frizzoni, deposited the sheet at the Brera, it was catalogued as a work of the Venetian school, apparently at the suggestion of the American art historian and collector, Charles Loeser (1864–1928). Bernard Berenson later restored the correct attribution to Tamagni.

More specifically, the *recto* relates to three sketches of the same subject on the *versos* of two drawings at Turin and that at Grenoble, while the *verso* relates to the *recto* of one of the Turin drawings (inv. 15824b) and to those at Grenoble and Princeton (the *recto* of the other drawing at Turin, inv. 15824a, shows Christ



Recto



Fig. 1; Grenoble, inv. MGD 1001, verso



Fig. 2; Turin, inv. 15824a, verso



Fig. 3; Turin, inv. 15824b, verso

1. The seminal article on Tamagni as a draughtsman is A.E. Popham, 'Some drawings by Vincenzo Tamagni da San Gimignano,' in *Old Master Drawings*, Sept.-March 1939-40, pp. 44-46. See also David Rust's article of 1968, cited above.  
2. For the drawing at Grenoble, see Pagliano, *op. cit.*, cat. no. 8, illustrated; for the Princeton drawing, see Castrovinci, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-09, cat. 83, illustrated; and for the sheets at Turin, see *eadem*, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-14, cat. nos. 88-89, both illustrated. Typical sheets by Tamagni drawn on pink prepared paper are in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, and in the British Museum, see *ibid.*, pp. 186-87, cat. no. 56, and pp. 189-90, cat. no. 61, both illustrated.



Verso



Fig. 4; Grenoble, inv. MGD 1001, recto



Fig. 5; Princeton, inv. 1947-143, recto



Fig. 6; Turin, inv. 15824b, recto



Fig. 7

the Redeemer and two angels). This suggests that all these sheets were probably made at roughly the same time and, since they are all double-sided, that some, or all of them, could stem from the same sketchbook.

The drawing on the *recto* illustrates the story of *Diana and Actaeon*, as told in Book III (138-250) of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It shows Actaeon, as he surprises Diana, goddess of hunting, and her nymphs, while bathing in her crystal pool located in the valley of Gargaphia, which was sacred to the virgin goddess and whose sanctity the young hunter had just breached. By spraying water at his head, Diana turned Actaeon into a stag. Thus unable to communicate with his hounds, they chase him to his death, his demise deftly described in the poem which names the hounds individually as they tear him apart; this scene is depicted at right in the drawing. Like our drawing, that in Grenoble shows the hunter just before his transformation. Diana's pool is filled by a fountain with a temple housing a statue of the goddess. On the *versos* of the two drawings at Turin, both much sketchier in execution, Actaeon is already partially transformed into a stag. The precise purpose of all these designs has not yet been firmly established, but they were possibly made for a series of mythological frescoes based on the *Metamorphoses* in the Sala del Loggiato of the Palazzo Farnese at Gradoli (Lazio), which were recently attributed to Tamagni and dated to *circa* 1521-24.<sup>3</sup> These include a much-damaged fresco of *Diana and Actaeon*, which in turn is inspired by a print of the subject by Giovanni Battista Palumba of *circa* 1500-10 (fig. 7).<sup>4</sup> Several other frescoes are also based upon Palumbo's prints. One of the drawings at Turin, as Rossanna Castrovinci pointed out in her recent monograph on the artist, clearly seems to reflect Palumba's composition.<sup>5</sup>

Our *verso* shows a swift pen sketch of a *Madonna lactans*. The figure is close in type and style to the three Madonnas, enthroned in front of a niche and holding the Christ Child, on the *rectos* of the drawings at Grenoble, Turin and Princeton, all of which, however, show a complete composition with additional six saints. These drawings have been linked to several *Sacra Conversazione* altarpieces of the 1520s, particularly those in the churches of S. Gerolamo at San Gimignano, of 1522, and of S. Giovanni Battista at Pomarance, dated 1525.<sup>6</sup> A dating for our drawing to the first half of the 1520s, before Tamagni's brief return to Rome (*c.* 1525), therefore seems most plausible.

Tamagni trained with Giovanni Antonio Bazzi called il Sodoma (1477-1549), whom he assisted in 1505-06, while still a teenager, in his famous frescoes in the monastery of Monteliveto Maggiore near Siena. By 1508-09 he worked with Sodoma in Rome in the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican. Both men subsequently fell out over an unpaid debt, and Tamagni was briefly incarcerated in Montalcino. Back in Rome in 1515 he joined Raphael's workshop in the decoration of Cardinal Bibbiena's Loggetta and Stufetta, also in the Vatican. He then worked alongside Giovanni da Udine, Giulio Romano, Giovan Francesco Penni, Perino del Vaga and Polidoro da Caravaggio on the frescoes in the Vatican Logge (1517), before participating, with a similar *équipe*, in the decoration of the Farnesina, the villa of the financier Agostino Chigi (1466-1520). Vasari specifically notes a number of *allantica* facade decorations in Rome, all now lost. He then seems to have returned to S. Gimignano where, after a brief spell back in Rome working in the Villa Lante, he spent the remainder of his career.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-60.

4. Bartsch XIII.249.2. For the fresco, see F. Gennari Santori, 'La decorazione del Palazzo Farnese a Gradoli,' in *Storia dell'arte*, 83, 1995, p. 98, fig. 21.

5. Castrovinci, *op. cit.*, p. 214, under cat. no. 88.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 142-43, cat. no. 14, and pp. 150-51, cat. no. 21, both illustrated.

## 2. *Saint Anthony and Saint Francis, Taddeo and Federico Zuccaro, their Mother and four of Federico's Children*

Pen and brown ink  
127 x 192 mm

### PROVENANCE

Alfred Normand, Paris (1910–1993), by descent  
Sale: Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 21 November 2001, lot 6, illustrated  
Private collection, France



Fig. 1

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Francesca Genga, wife of Federico Zuccaro (?), as St. Lucy           | 6. Fra Angelo Zuccaro, brother of Ottaviano Snr, as St. Francis | 11. Cinzia, 1590–1601                           |
| 2. Taddeo Zuccaro Snr, GF of Federico and Taddeo, as St. Judas Thaddeus | Nos. 7–13. The children of Federico, by age                     | 12. Laura 1592–95                               |
| 3. Taddeo Zuccaro   | 7. Ottaviano, b. 1579   | 13. Girolamo, b. 1593                           |
| 4. Federico Zuccaro   | 8. Isabella, b. 1581  | 14. Antonia Nari, mother of Federico and Taddeo |
| 5. Ottaviano Zuccaro Snr, father of Federico and Taddeo                 | 9. Alessandro Taddeo, 1584–?1597/98                             | 15. St. Anthony                                 |
|   | 10. Orazio, b. 1585   | 16. Maddalena, daughter of Taddeo               |
|   |   | 17. St. Catherine                               |

As yet unpublished, this spirited pen drawing is a new addition to the corpus of drawings by Federico Zuccaro.<sup>1</sup> More specifically, it is a study for the lower part of the so-called Pala Zuccari (fig. 1), a large canvas Federico conceived most likely in the later 1590s in Rome and donated in 1603 to the convent of S. Caterina in his hometown of Sant'Angelo in Vado in the Marche, where Maddalena, daughter of his long-deceased brother Taddeo (1529–1566), had been a nun since 1579.<sup>2</sup> Federico delivered the painting during his stay in Sant'Angelo in Vado from June to October 1603. Today the altarpiece is preserved in the town's Palazzo Comunale.

The altarpiece adopts the traditional form of a *Sacra Conversazione* with the Madonna and Child enthroned and flanked by four saints: Catherine and Anthony at left and Lucy and Francis at right. The saints are surrounded by thirteen members of the Zuccaro family spanning four generations. Saints Lucy and Francis most likely portray two further members of the family. Federico thus turned the familiar altar form of the *Sacra Conversazione* with saints and donors into a homage to, and apotheosis of, his family.

Several extant drawings and the likely age of some of the depicted members of Federico's family suggest that the painting's design underwent several revisions. The personae and saints depicted may be identified as follows: standing at left is Saint Catherine, patron saint of the convent the painting was destined for, her right hand resting on the head of Maddalena (daughter of Taddeo Zuccaro and nun in said convent).<sup>3</sup> Standing in the left foreground is Saint Anthony, patron saint of Antonia Nari, Federico's mother, kneeling and her hands in prayer directed at the Virgin. Standing at right is Saint Lucy, second titular saint of the convent, possibly portraying Francesca Genga, Federico's wife who died in 1601. In front of her, Saint Judas Thaddeus as Federico's grandfather, Taddeo Zuccaro the Elder, presents to the Virgin his nephews, Taddeo and, at right, Federico, his left hand resting on the head of his firstborn son Ottaviano (b. 1579). Kneeling before this group is Ottaviano senior, Federico's father, accompanied by his brother, Fra Angelo Zuccaro in the guise



1. We are grateful to Dr. James Mundy for sharing information on the Pala Zuccari with us. Dr. Mundy will include the present drawing in his forthcoming catalogue raisonné of the drawings of Federico Zuccaro. For a comprehensive summary of the project, see C. Acidini Luchinat, *Taddeo e Federico Zuccari fratelli pittori del Cinquecento*, Milan and Rome, 1999, vol. II, pp. 232–34.  
2. The date and dedication are inscribed on the picture: *Federicus Zuccarus / suae familiae / advocatis et patriae grati animi monumentum / d[ono?] f[ecit?] AD 1603*. However, according to C. Acidini (*op. cit.*, p. 232) this inscription sits on top of an earlier one, discovered in 1985, which unfortunately remains illegible.  
3. Below Maddalena is the head of a bearded man in profile, whom Acidini Luchinat (*op. cit.*, p. 232) tentatively identifies as 'Luigi', though the identity of the man remains unclear.

of Saint Francis. Sitting or kneeling in the centre foreground are Federico's remaining six children: at left, to the right of her grandmother Antonia, is Federico's second-born, Isabella (b. 1581); the boy's head in the centre back, somewhat in the shade and looking at Isabella, is his third-born, Alessandro Taddeo (b. 1584), who died probably in *circa* 1597-98. Underneath the left arm of Saint Francis is Orazio (b. 1585), while the fifth-born, Cinzia (1590-1601) is seen just below the saint's left hand. Like her mother Francesca, she was already dead when the picture was donated, and so was little Laura next to her, who had died in 1595 at the age of three. The toddler in the foreground holding up an apple is Girolamo, the youngest of Federico's children, born in 1593.

What year work on the altarpiece began remains unknown but the composition must have evolved over time. A quick sketch of the entire composition at Princeton (fig. 2) may have been Federico's starting point. It includes some adult members of the family but no children: Federico's grandfather Taddeo senior (standing between the Madonna and S. Lucy), his parents (roughly in the same position as in the painting) and, most likely, Taddeo (kneeling at far left with S. Catherine's hand resting on his head), and he himself kneeling below S. Lucy at right.<sup>4</sup>

Our drawing presents a later stage which includes four children. The general disposition of the saints, Antonia Nari and the group with Taddeo, Federico and his firstborn son Ottaviano at right, roughly corresponds to the painting. Isabella (slightly smaller in relation to her grandmother than in the painting), Girolamo and Orazio are also largely arranged as in the final composition. The idea of Girolamo holding up an apple is already present. Federico was clearly concerned with this group and particularly with the position of little Girolamo's left arm, since he studied the group in a separate sketch on the right margin. None of the other three children is included and neither is Taddeo's daughter Maddalena.

The ages of the children in the drawing roughly correspond to those in the painting: Girolamo appears to be a three-year-old toddler, Orazio a ten or eleven-year-old boy, and Isabella a fifteen-year-old girl. Thus, the drawing and painting represent the children as they probably looked in about 1595-96. Whether this is also the date of the drawing remains unclear, however, since none of the other three children, all dead by the time of the painting's delivery in 1603 (Laura: 1595; Alessandro Taddeo:



Fig. 2

c. 1597-98; and Cinzia: 1601), is included. We can only speculate as to the reason for their absence, but it may well be possible that the drawing was made after 1601, the year Cinzia and her mother died, which may have caused Federico to revise earlier plans. The drawing seems to suggest that Federico planned to include only children who were at that moment alive, dating the sheet to *post* 1601. Why these children should be represented at a much younger age than they would have been in or shortly after 1601 remains unclear unless, perhaps, that part of the painting was already executed at the time. If the drawing was made before 1601, or even earlier, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to explain the absence of some of the other, then still living children.

It seems conceivable that Federico, at some point after our drawing was made, decided to also include the deceased children, as well as Maddalena, who is not present in our drawing. This would help explain why the portraits of the three dead children in the painting feel somewhat squeezed into the space left between Isabella, the left hand of Saint Francis, and little Girolamo. This is further corroborated by our drawing which offers no space at all in the centre to realistically add three more children. Furthermore, while the children still alive in 1601 are all brightly

lit from the right and in prayer in the painting (except little Girolamo who is too small to pray and holds the apple instead), the three deceased ones reveal only their shaded faces, or rather their souls for whom their siblings and the entire family are praying.

If this analysis proves correct then Federico, most likely following the death of Cinzia and her mother in 1601, changed his plans for the painting. After abandoning his initial design to include only adult members of his family, as represented by the Princeton drawing, he subsequently thought of showing only his

still living children, as can be seen in our drawing. Dissatisfied with this idea too, he revised the composition again to include all his deceased children, but showing them at a point in time when they were all alive together, *circa* 1595, which, incidentally, corresponds well to the apparent ages of the children in the painting. Our drawing thus represents an important intermediary step in the development of what is unquestionably Federico's most personal painting to come down to us.

4. Inv. 48-746; 322 x 196 mm. F. Gibbons, *Catalogue of the Italian Drawings in the Art Museum, Princeton University*, 1977, vol. 1, p. 217, cat. no. 703, illustrated. A weak copy of this drawing is in the Uffizi (inv. 13644F); see Acidini Luchinat, *op. cit.*, II, p. 232, fig. 2 (as Federico Zuccaro?). Acidini Luchinat (*ibid.*, p. 268, note 3) further mentions a drawing for the entire composition without children at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Chartres (without inventory number), which it has not been possible to identify. Acidini Luchinat further cites a drawing at the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, which, however, is a partial copy, possibly not autograph, after Titian's lost 1531 *Votive Painting of the Doge Andrea Gritti* for the Palazzo Ducale and not directly related to the *Pala Zuccari*; see M. Lorenzoni, *I soggiorni veneziani dei Federico Zuccari: i taccuini di disegni*, Ph.D. thesis, Udine University, 2014-15, pp. 294-95, illustrated. Another drawing attributed to Federico of the whole composition, yet with several differences in the details and including some but not all children (in slightly different positions), is in a private collection (formerly Galerie Terrades, Paris). However, the handling of the drawing suggests it may be based on a lost original. Oddly, the drawing omits the grandmother Antonia, casting doubts on how accurate it might record a now-lost drawing by Federico.

### 3. *The Wedding at Cana*

Inscribed on the verso, *Gregorio Pagani*

Black chalk, brush and brown ink, brown wash heightened with white  
410 x 262 mm

#### PROVENANCE

William Young Ottley (1771–1836), London, his mount and attribution,  
*Gregorio Pagani, Pitt. Fior[enti]:no.*

Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830), London (Lugt. 2445)

Samuel Woodburn (1786–1853) London

Sale: Christie's, London, 4 June 1860, part of lot 28 (*The feast at Cana, PAGANI*); 13s. 10

Matthew Holbeche Bloxam (1805–1888), Rugby, his inscription on the  
mount, *Rugby School Art Museum, e dono Matt H Bloxam / a.d 1661–1716 /  
marriage feast at Cana* (on the mount), by whom given to  
The Rugby School Art Museum, Rugby, Warwickshire, until 2018

#### LITERATURE

A. Popham, undated typescript catalogue (c. 1945–50), cat. no. 30

C. Thiem, *Gregorio Pagani. Ein Wegbereiter der Florentiner Barockmalerei*,  
Stuttgart, 1970, cat. no. Z 41, fig. 49

E. Pillsbury, review of C. Thiem, *op. cit.*, *The Art Bulletin*, LXI, 1974, no. 2, p. 287

M.C. Mazzi, *Museo Civico di Pistoia. Catalogo delle collezioni*, Pistoia, 1982,  
p. 138, under cat. no. 41

This large and fully elaborated drawing is for Pagani's altarpiece formerly in the Franchini chapel in the church of S. Francesco at Pistoia and today in Museo Civico. Commissioned towards the end of Pagani's life and left incomplete at his premature death, the painting was finished by his pupil, Matteo Rosselli (1578–1650), according to Pagani's early biographer, the historian Filippo Baldinucci. The ample use of brown wash and white gouache in our drawing has led Christel Thiem, author of the seminal study on the artist, to describe it as similar to a *bozzetto*. Rosselli completed also another altarpiece left unfinished at Pagani's death, that of the *Immaculate Conception* for SS. Annunziata in Florence, which was destroyed in the 1966 flood of the river Arno.

In Pagani's time, the subject of the *Wedding at Cana*, here set in the sumptuously decorated interior of a palazzo, was well established in Florentine painting and particularly popular for refectory decorations. It offered the painter the opportunity to show both his mastery of a complex multi-figure composition and his skill at still-life painting, as evident in the focus on the vases in the foreground, the lavishly set table, and in particular the large sideboard at left stacked with rich silverware. Here, one must keep in mind that the actual miracle performed

in the story, the metamorphosis of water into wine, is nigh but impossible to submit to canvas. In this respect, and with regard to the steeply receding dining table, as Thiem has observed, Pagani deferred to a painting by his own teacher, Santi di Tito's *Wedding at Cana* of about ten years previously and today in the villa I Collazzi outside Florence (fig. 1).



Fig. 1

It remains unclear whether the few differences between our drawing and the Pistoia painting were made by Pagani or subsequently by Rosselli. In the painting a young attendant pouring wine replaced the older man and the dog seated at right. In the right background overlooking the courtyard is a balustrade populated with onlookers, a feature that appears to have been borrowed from Girolamo Macchietti's famous *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* in S. Maria Novella of circa 1573.

One of the most gifted draughtsmen working in Florence at the cusp of late Mannerism and the emerging Baroque, Gregorio Pagani developed a highly idiosyncratic drawing style for which



the *Wedding at Cana* is a prime example. His master Santi di Tito (1536-1602) had a long-lasting influence on his style. In Santi's studio, he met and befriended Ludovico Cardi, called Il Cigoli, with whom he shared the commitment to their teacher's reformed style, with its strong emphasis on drawing from life and on the naturalist treatment of light and colour. Important influences on his art were also Federico Barocci, Annibale Carracci and Correggio. By Florentine standards, Pagani's drawings often convey a surprisingly painterly impression, a feature shared with Cigoli's drawings, who was equally interested in northern Italian and Venetian painting. Only about a hundred and twenty drawings by Pagani are known today. Most of these are figure studies in chalk, in addition to some highly finished composition drawings such as the present sheet. Pagani's drawings are preserved in major public collections, including the Uffizi, the Louvre, Metropolitan Museum of Art, the British Museum, the Victoria and

Albert Museum, and Christ Church, Oxford. Particularly close in style and technique to our sheet are the *Virgin and Child in a Rose Garden with Saints Dominic and Sebastian* in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the *Madonna of the Rosary* in the Louvre.<sup>1</sup>

Our drawing has a distinguished English provenance since possibly the late eighteenth century. We do not know where William Young Ottley acquired the drawing, but it was possibly during his ten year stay in Italy in the 1790s. The correct attribution to Pagani was then either already established or he made it subsequently. Ottley later sold his drawings collection to Sir Thomas Lawrence. At the sale of Lawrence's collection in 1860, the drawing was acquired by his nephew, the antiquarian, eminent writer on gothic architecture, and avid drawings collector, Matthew Holbeche Bloxam, who gave his collection to the Rugby School, his alma mater in Warwickshire, in a series of gifts towards the end of his life.



1. Inv. 8942; Thiem, *op. cit.*, p. 79, cat. no. Z23, fig. 36; and inv. 1386; *ibid.*, pp. 78-79, cat. no. Z 20, fig. 37, respectively.

#### 4. *A Female Nude, full-length, Holding up a Globe*

Inscribed and numbered on the old mount, *N 1760*, and, *No. 155* (crossed out) and, *192* / *Jacques Van Schuppen and 1670-1751. / Collection de Chennevières (note au dos)* and, *Jac. Van Schuppen (verso of the old mount)*  
Black chalk, pastel on blue paper  
468 x 281 mm

##### PROVENANCE

An eighteenth-century Viennese collector, to M. Joly, then sold by Michel Habersetzer, Paris (last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) Charles-Philippe, marquis de Chennevières (1820–1899), Paris and Bellesme (L. 2073), his inscription on the *verso*, *Jac. van Schuppen / fils du graveur et fondateur de l'académie royale de Vienne / ces pastels viennent d'une collection formée au 18e. s. a Vienne / en concurrence de celle de Mariette en France / Michel en avait achete 1500 [?] de M. Joly (verso of the mount, L. 3027a)*; this inscription transcribed on the *verso* of the mount by a later hand with the additional comment, *Note de la main du marquis de Chennevières*.  
Sale: Paris, Roblin, 4-7 April 1900, part of lot 467 (*Académies de femmes nues. Trois dessins*; 16 francs to Lemeilleur)  
M. Louis Delatigny (1854–1936), Rouen (L. 1768a); his sale, Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 4-5 November 1937, lot 352  
M. Germain Seligman (1893–1978), Paris and New York (L. 3863)  
Mr. Christopher Powney, London  
Sale: London, Christie's, 26 March 1968, lot 88  
Sale: New York, Sotheby's Parke Bernet, 8 May 1973, lot 27, where purchased by Mrs. Drue Heinz, DBE (1915–2018), New York and Lasswade (Scotland), by descent

##### LITERATURE

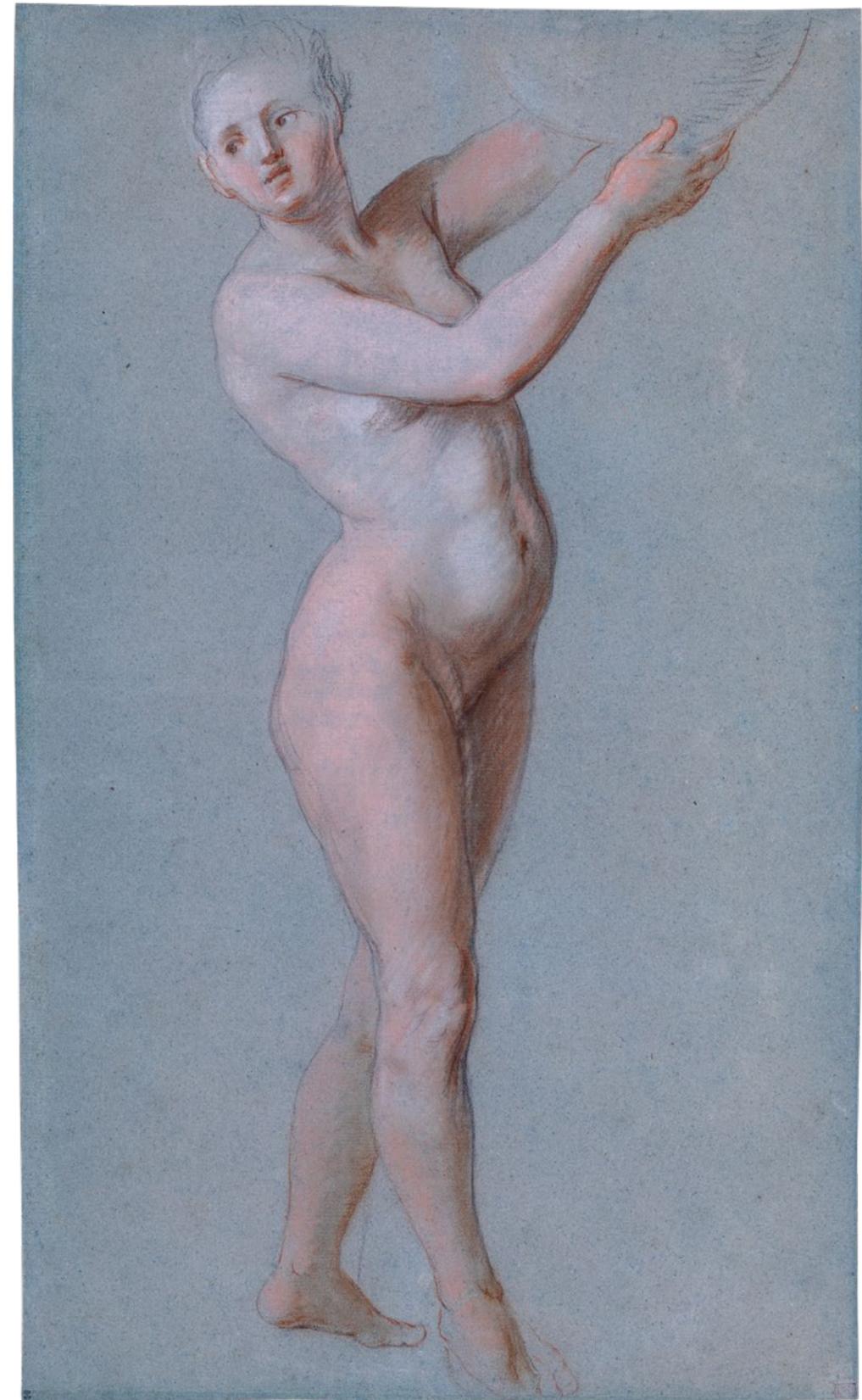
P. Schreiden, 'Jacques Van Schuppen 1670-1751,' in *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, XXXV, 1982, p. 86, cat. no. 95, pl. 103  
P. Schreiden, *Jacques Van Schuppen 1670-1751. L'influence française à Vienne dans les arts plastiques au cours de la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle*, Brussels, 1983, p. 86, cat. no. 95, pl. 103  
L.-A. Prat (et al.), *Histoire des collections du musée du Louvre. La collection Chennevières. Quatre siècles de dessins français*, Paris, 2007, p. 369, cat. no. 573, illustrated

This full-length drawing of a young woman holding up a globe is a rare early example of a female *académie* by Jacob Van Schuppen, best known as the first director of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture in Vienna. Datable to the 1720s, this exceptional sheet attests to Van Schuppen's French artistic heritage while also foreshadowing an attention to the female *académie* that would emerge in France from the 1730s

onwards, pioneered by François Boucher. From its inception in 1648, the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture had privileged drawing from the live model, leading to the term *académie* being used to refer to the actual drawings resulting from this practice. However, this concerned solely the male model (women were only allowed to pose from 1750, and even then, exclusively for head studies). Clearly, these restrictions did not apply to the more private realm of the artist's studio, as attended by Boucher's numerous sensual female nudes, which blur the boundaries between preparatory studies and independent drawings. Conversely, Van Schuppen's drawing is striking for its emphasis on close observation. Executed in coloured pastels on beautifully conserved blue paper, it is a careful study of anatomy and movement, as well as of tone and shading. The model is lit from left to right and reddish-brown pastel is applied to convey the darker shadows on her left shoulder, inner thighs and right knee. Comparable *académies* by Van Schuppen only show male models, while a stylistically close study of a clothed female figure holding a basket is in the Albertina.<sup>1</sup> A larger group of sheets focus on head studies, both male and female.

Although no directly related work by Van Schuppen has been identified so far, comparable figures can be found in his two main decorative programmes for Palais Lobkowitz (today the Theatre Museum) and the Stallburg palace (which now hosts the Spanish Riding School), both in Vienna. Palais Lobkowitz owes its name to Prince Ferdinand Philipp Lobkowitz who acquired it in 1753. It was originally built between 1685 and 1687 by Giovanni Pietro Tencala for Count Gundacker von Althan (1665–1747), a general, diplomat and, from 1716, the Director General of Works with responsibility for all court construction projects under Charles VI. In 1726, in his capacity as Imperial Director of Artistic Affairs, he was appointed Honorary President of the newly founded Academy of Fine Arts, which, from 1733, was based in his palace. The room decorated by Van Schuppen at Palais Lobkowitz is a space of relatively modest size, renowned as the birthplace of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3 – hence its current name of 'Eroica Hall'. The decorative programme, datable to 1720–23, comprises of eleven allegories of the liberal and mechanical arts. The focus on female personifications of the arts suggests a related context for the conception of our drawing, and comparable facial types can be found, for instance, in the allegories of Civil Architecture and Geography.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps a more compelling case can be made for a connection between our sheet and Van Schuppen's two ceiling paintings for



1. Inv. 10462. Pastel on brown paper, 239 x 227 mm.  
2. Schreiden, *op. cit.*, 1982, pp. 77–78, cat. no. 28, figs. 31–32.

the second floor of the Stallburg, which Emperor Charles VI had had converted into a picture gallery. Probably executed between 1726 and 1728, the two paintings, entitled *Painting received into the Realm of Apollo* (Kunsthistorisches Museum; fig. 1),<sup>3</sup> and *Minerva rescuing the Arts* (now lost but known from a *bozzetto*),<sup>4</sup> were likely meant to exalt the newly founded Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. The first scene shows Charles VI in the guise of Apollo admitting Painting amongst the Muses. The ascent of the Liberal Arts towards the Olympian realm is contrasted by the fall of the supplanted artisans into Hell. The left-hand group of allegories leaning or standing on clouds includes a female figure holding up a globe or armillary sphere. Although her pose does not match that of our nude *académie*, it is possible to connect the Stallburg commission with Van Schuppen's dedication to the study of the nude female model. Two further studies of female nudes, possibly related to the same project, are now untraced but were once in the collection of Charles-Philippe, marquis de Chennevières, the renowned art historian and collector of predominantly French drawings, whose handwritten inscription on our drawing's mount traces its earlier provenance back to an eighteenth century Viennese collection.



Fig. 1

Portraitist, history and genre painter, Jacob Van Schuppen trained in Paris, initially under his father, the Antwerp-born engraver Pierre-Louis (1627–1702), and later in the studio of Nicolas de Largillier (1656–1746), a family friend. Dissatisfied with his father's and Largillier's sole focus on portraiture, Van Schuppen would soon pursue his interest in the study of the full figure and in anatomy, thus specializing in history painting. His animated *Meleager Killing the Calydonian Boar* secured his admission to the Académie royale in 1704.<sup>5</sup> By mid-1707 he had moved to Lorraine, where he was at the service of Duke Leopold at Lunéville. In late 1712 we moved to Vienna, where his first patron was Prince Eugène, soon replaced by Count Althan, whose position at court favoured Van Schuppen's promotion to court

painter (*peintre de cabinet*), in 1721. His early decorative scheme for Palais Lobkowitz attests to Van Schuppen's engagement with artistic theory and pedagogy that would soon be realized in the plan for a Viennese Academy, which would come to define his career.<sup>6</sup> One such institution, of Italian inspiration, had already existed, founded by Peter Strudel in 1692 and closed at his death in 1714. In 1726 Charles VI approved by decree the institution of the Palatine Imperial and Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture and placed Van Schuppen at its helm.<sup>7</sup> Modelled largely on its Paris counterpart, and committed to the practice of drawing, the Viennese Academy was an instant success, attracting students from Austria, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands as well as Turkey and America.

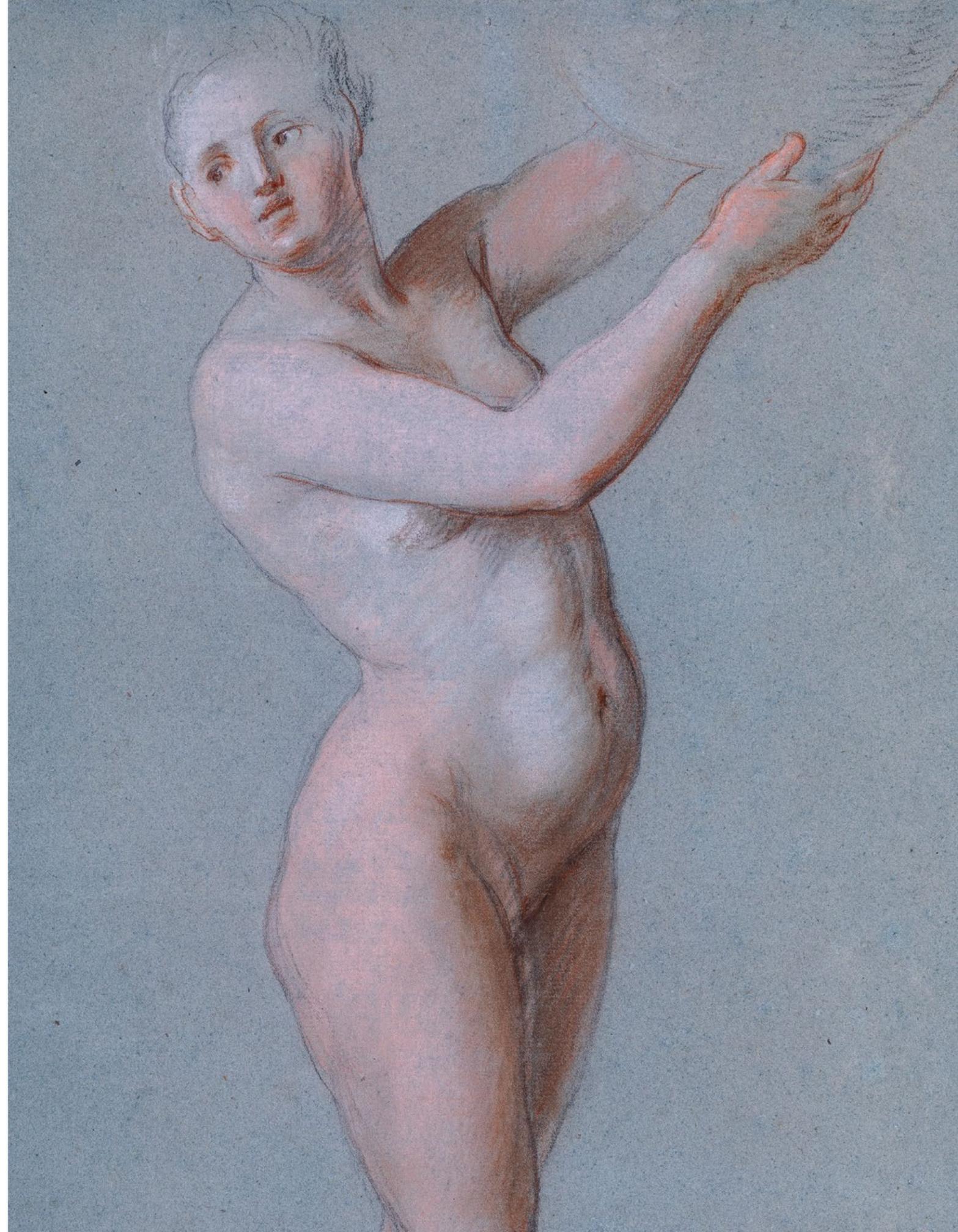
3. *Ibid.*, p. 78, cat. no. 32, fig. 38.

4. Van Schuppen's *bozzetti* for both paintings (Schreiden, *op. cit.*, p. 78, cat. nos. 31 and 33, figs. 37 and 40) were recently with Dr Robert Keil Kunsthandel, Vienna. See S. Haag and G. Swoboda (eds.) *Die Galerie Kaiser Karls VI. in Wien. Solimenas Widmungsbild und Storffers Inventar (1720-1733)*, Vienna, 2010, p. 17, figs. 12-13.

5. Montpellier, Musée Fabre, inv. no. D.803.120; Schreiden, *op. cit.*, 1982, p. 73, cat. no. 5, pl. 5.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

7. On the history of the Academy, see *ibid.*, p. 17, note 108.



## 5. *The Holy Family adoring the Christ Child*

Pen and brown ink, wash, over black chalk  
225 x 193 mm

### PROVENANCE

Given by the artist for safekeeping (before his and his sons' departure to Spain in 1762) to the Library of the Somasco convent at Santa Maria della Salute, Venice (suppressed in 1810); Tiepolo's son Giuseppe Maria was a priest there

Conte Leopoldo Cicognara (1767–1834), Venice

Antonio Canova (1757–1822); by inheritance to his half-brother

Monsignor Giovanni Battista Sartori-Canova (1757–1858)

Francesco Pesaro (according to Edward Cheney's handwritten note on his bookplate), from whom purchased in 1842 by

Edward Cheney (1803–1884), Badger Hall, Shropshire; by descent to his brother-in-law

Col. Alfred Capel-Cure (1826–1896), Blake Hall, Ongar (Essex)

Sale: London, Sotheby's, 29 April 1885, part of lot 1024 (to E. Parsons and Sons, London; £15)

Savile Gallery, London, May 1928

Private collection, Germany

### EXHIBITIONS

London, Savile Gallery, *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Drawings by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696–1770)*, May 1928, possibly cat. no. 39

This drawing once belonged to an album generally referred to as the Owen-Savile album. It was given this name because in the 1920s it was owned, or co-owned, by Richard Owen, an English art dealer based in Paris who worked closely with the Savile Gallery in London. The album contained more than sixty-seven drawings by Battista Tiepolo on the theme of the *Holy Family*, and a further ninety-three studies of heads, which are recorded in photographs from Owen's archives now preserved at the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge.<sup>1</sup> A selection of forty drawings from this album, including at least twenty-two depicting the *Holy Family* (or closely related themes) were exhibited at the Savile Gallery in London in May 1928. The accompanying exhibition catalogue illustrates only ten of these, and the summary descriptions of the drawings and the lack of measurements make it difficult, and often impossible, to identify the extant drawings with certainty. The Savile drawings were sold with a copy of the bookplate of the album's nineteenth-century owner, the collector Edward Cheney, who had purchased the album in Venice in 1842.

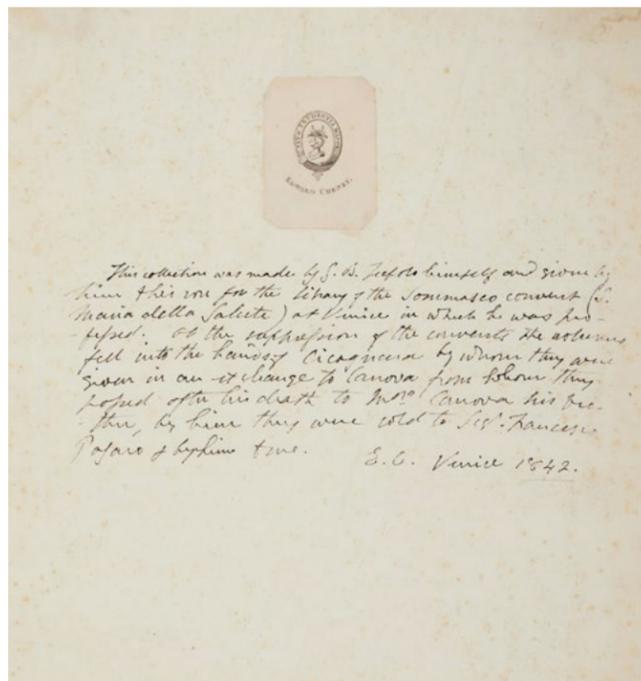


Fig. 1

Cheney's inscription on this bookplate lists the early provenance of the album all the way back to Battista Tiepolo (fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> Drawings from the Owen-Savile album can be found today in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Morgan Library, the National Gallery of Art, Washington, the Ashmolean Museum, the Fogg Art Museum, the Hamburg Kunsthalle, the Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, the National Galleries of Scotland, and other public and private collections.

According to Cheney, prior to his departure for Spain in 1762, Tiepolo is said to have given this album, along with eight others, to the library of the monastery of the Padri Somaschi at Santa Maria della Salute, Venice, for safekeeping. His second son, Giovanni Maria, was a priest at that monastery. After the suppression of the convent in 1810, the albums were subsequently owned by Count Leopoldo Cicognara, Antonio Canova and his half-brother, before being acquired by one signor Francesco Pesaro, who in turn sold them to Cheney in 1842.<sup>3</sup> In 1885, a year after Cheney's death, nine albums from his collection, including the Owen-Savile album, totalling over one thousand drawings,

2. G. Knox, *Catalogue of the Tiepolo Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, p. 6, fig. 1. The original bookplate from Cheney's album, hitherto only known from a reproduction in Knox's V&A catalogue, resurfaced at Sotheby's, New York, 25 January 2023, part of lot 50.

3. The identity of sig. Pesaro remains unclear. He cannot, however, be identified as Francesco Pesaro, the Venetian ambassador to Madrid, who died in 1799.



1. G. Knox, *Tiepolo, A Bicentenary Exhibition 1770–1970*, exhibition catalogue, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, 1970, p. XIV.

were sold in a single lot at Sotheby's and bought by the London dealers Edwin Parsons and Sons. The lot number, 1024 can still be found written on the extant copies of Cheney's bookplate from the Savile Gallery exhibition.

George Knox dates the drawings from the Owen-Savile album to *circa* 1754-62.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the drawings from the Savile Gallery show, others were sold by Owen in Paris. It remains unclear whether the present drawing was part of the Savile exhibition or if it was sold through Owen's Paris gallery. The fact that these drawings were kept together for well over a hundred and fifty years until circa 1928 explains the exceptional condition in which sheets such as this survive. The present sheet is a particularly beautiful example from this series revealing both

the artist's mastery in the handling of the pen and his brilliance in distributing the light.

As Knox has further pointed out, the Giambattista's drawings of the *Holy Family* were made as independent works of art and are not in any way preparatory for paintings. Each variation on the familiar theme of the *Holy Family*, with or without the Baptist or angels, or that of the related subject of the *Rest of the Flight into Egypt*, emphasizes a different aspect of the narrative and often highlights a specific role or emotional state of one of its protagonists. In Knox's own words, Tiepolo's drawings of the *Holy Family* 'float on the page like exquisite arabesques, and together they represent the most magnificently sustained testimony to Giambattista's graphic inventiveness.'<sup>5</sup>

4. J. Byam Shaw and G. Knox, *The Robert Lehman Collection. Vol. 6, Italian Eighteenth-Century Drawings*, New York, 1987, p. 122, under cat. no. 93.

5. *Ibid.*

## 6. *A Capriccio of Heads of Seven Young Women in elaborate Headdress*

Pen and brown and red ink  
171 x 221 mm

### PROVENANCE

Sale: Milan, Sotheby's, 17 May 1990, lot 12 (as Mauro Gandolfi)  
Private collection, Italy

### LITERATURE

P. Bagni, *I Gandolfi: affreschi, dipinti, bozzetti, disegni*, Bologna, 1992, p. 626, fig. 598 (as Gaetano Gandolfi)

Executed in pen and brown and red ink, this is among Gaetano Gandolfi's finest drawings of *capricci* of heads to come down to us. Very fine parallel and cross hatching combine with small dots for a smooth surface effect reminiscent of stipple engravings such as those Francesco Bartolozzi made in the 1760s after drawings by Guercino in the Royal collections. It is a virtuosic exercise in a particularly difficult technique which allows for few, if any, errors. The drawing presents the heads of the seven young women, densely grouped together and seen from different angles, wearing extravagant, veil-like head-dresses that appear to be loosely inspired by calash bonnets, a type of headwear that was particularly fashionable in the 1770s but worn well into the early nineteenth century.

These studies belong to a type of drawing that Gandolfi made from the 1770s to the end of the century, of which perhaps some fifty to seventy sheets are still extant. More specifically, our sheet is closely related to his pen-and-brown-ink drawing of *Heads of five Women* (private collection; fig. 1) sporting elaborate hairdos that were popular in the late eighteenth century, called *pouf*, where curls interwoven with ribbons and pearls were piled up to sometimes astonishing heights.<sup>1</sup> Based on an inscription on the drawing suggesting it was made by Gaetano's son, Mauro (1764–1834), this sheet, along with several others, was repeatedly attributed to the youngest of the three Gandolfis in the 1970s and 1980s. However, in her seminal 1994 article on Gaetano Gandolfi's *Capricci of Heads*, Donatella Biagi Maino firmly re-established the traditional attribution of these drawings to Gaetano Gandolfi.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1

More specifically, Biagi Maino published a set of twenty etchings of various head studies after drawings by Gaetano, entitled *Raccolta di Teste Pittoriche inventate e disegnate a penna da G. Gandolfi Acc. Clem. e incise da Luigi Tadolini*. These etchings offer the whole range of Gaetano's head *capricci* – elegant young women with fancy hairdos, men of all ages, clerics, Orientals – often mixing one or more of these in a single composition while juxtaposing the young and the old, women and men, rich and poor, the mundane and the devout. One of these etchings reproduces, in reverse, Gaetano's drawing of the *Heads of five Women*, mentioned above, thus settling the question of attribution for this and closely related drawings.<sup>3</sup> The printmaker, Luigi Tadolini (1753–1823), was a pupil of Gaetano, working on this set in the late 1780s or early 1790s. Marcello Oretti, the Bolognese historiographer who died in 1787, mentions the print project in his brief biography of Tadolini.<sup>4</sup> Our drawing, too, was sold with an attribution to Mauro in 1990, but the correct attribution to Gaetano was swiftly reinstated in Prisco Bagni's 1992 monograph on the three members of the Gandolfi family.



1. D. Biagi Maino, "Gaetano Gandolfi's 'capricci' of heads: drawings and engravings," in *Burlington Magazine*, 1994, no. 1095, 136, p. 378, fig. 57.

2. Biagi Maino, *op. cit.*, pp. 375–379. The set of prints available to Biagi Maino at the time comprised only 20 prints. Previously, L. Bianchi (*I Gandolfi*, Rome, 1936, p. 89, note 81) mentioned having seen twenty-three prints, though without further specification. More recently, the full set of 23 prints (plus frontispiece) was published in G. Galeazzi,

"Un importante documento inedito (fine sec. XVIII): Raccolta di Teste Pittoriche inventate, e disegnate a penna dal sig. Gaetano Gandolfi Accademico Clementino," in *La Torre della Magione, Notiziario del comitato per Bologna storica ed artistica*, XLI, no. 1, January–April 2014, pp. 9–12, all illustrated.

3. Biagi Maino, *op. cit.*, p. 378, fig. 58.

4. M. Oretti, *Notizie de' Professori del Disegno*, vol. XIII, Bologna, Biblioteca Comunale, MS B. 135, fol. 139.

In addition to the *Heads of five Women*, Biagi Maino, identified four more drawings by Gaetano, all in the Cini Foundation at Venice, as preparatory for Tadolini's set.<sup>5</sup> The precise but fluid handling of the pen and the comparable *mise-en-page* with tightly arranged groups of heads are particularly comparable to our sheet. As for the dating of these drawings, a study by Gaetano of *Heads of three Men and a Woman* in the collection of the Castello Sforzesco, Milan, bears the date 1777 (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup> It is slightly less finished than ours but executed in the same fluid yet precise style. Another sheet, *Five Heads of Women and Men* (present whereabouts unknown) is close in style to both the Cini drawings and to our drawing.<sup>7</sup> Signed and dated by Gaetano 1785, it bears an inscription – *servi al suo amico Tadolini* – suggesting that it was given to Tadolini but remained eventually unused for the print set. A dating of our drawing to the same period, the 1780s, is therefore most plausible.

Gaetano Gandolfi's head studies stand in a long Bolognese tradition going back to pen-and-ink drawings of Bartolomeo Passerotti, the Carracci Academy, Guercino and, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Donati Creti. Yet, as Biagio Maino has pointed out, Gaetano's studies are different from the at times caricatural sketches of his predecessors and should be interpreted 'as a self-conscious response to the most up-to-date international cultural currents of the period.' More precisely, they must be seen in the context of the intense academic discourse at the time of Gaetano's formative years on the expression of the emotions, following the Italian publication of Charles Le Brun's *Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière* in 1751.<sup>8</sup> In his *capricci* of heads, Gaetano deploys his brilliant draughtsmanship to offer the widest possible range of characters from all walks of life, including the latest fashions, as in our sheet, in a highly original, fundamentally new, and visually compelling form.



Fig. 2



5. Biagi Maino, *op. cit.*, p. 378, note 11, and p. 377, fig. 55.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 379. Inv. Au. B 1053, 143 x 202 mm. For an illustration, see Bagni, *op. cit.*, p. 624, cat. no. 595, illustrated.

7. Biagi Maino, *op. cit.*, p. 379, fig. 59. This drawing was sold in New York, Christie's, 14th January 1986, lot 142, illustrated.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 379.

## 7. *A Vase of Campanulas (Bell Flowers) and two Oranges*

Signed, lower right, *E. Filliard*  
Watercolor, pencil, in the artist's original frame  
86 x 66 mm

Ernest Filliard is best known today for his refined watercolours with delicate flower arrangements in vases. Occasionally, as in this delightful example, he worked on a miniature scale, depicting a pot of Campanulas, one of his favourite flowers. He also designed the gilt and painted frame. Filliard initially trained in his hometown of Chambéry with Benoît Molin (1810–1894), director of the city's Musée des Beaux-Arts, and quickly exhibited a great talent for watercolour, specializing in flower still-lives. In 1901 he transferred to Paris and set up a studio in Boulevard Montparnasse. A member of several artists' associations, such as the Société des Aquarellistes Français, he was awarded numerous honours during his long career, including the *Legion d'Honneur* in 1914.



Actual size

## 8. *Young Woman in a red Skirt, seen from behind*

Signed with monogram, lower left, OK  
Pencil, watercolour and gouache on buff paper  
440 x 300 mm

### PROVENANCE

Sale: Luzern, Galerie Fischer, 3 July 1973, lot 1341, illustrated,  
where purchased by  
Galleria W. Apolloni, Rome; sold in February 1975 to  
Private collection, Rome, by descent  
Private collection

Executed in late 1907.

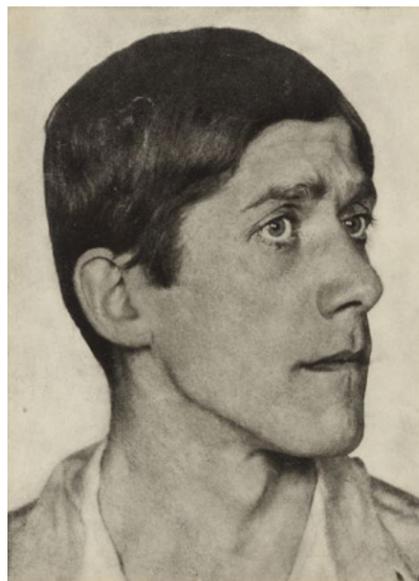
Kunstsalon in Vienna in January 1908 featuring one hundred and twenty drawings and prints by the artist. More generally, in the years 1906 and 1907, Vienna hosted a great number of exhibitions of international artists, including van Gogh, Cezanne, Gauguin, Jules Pascin, and Käthe Kollwitz, among others, exposing the young artist to the latest artistic developments in Europe.<sup>1</sup> While most of Kokoschka's studies of the human body made in the the autumn and winter of 1907–08 are pure outline drawings, some, such as the present sheet, were further elaborated with watercolour and gouache which, set against the light brown paper Kokoschka typically used for such drawings, adds a powerful colouristic effect and greater depth to his figures.

1907 was the year Kokoschka received his first important commissions, including his early masterpiece, the text and illustrations for the fairy tale book, *Die Träumenden Knaben* (*The Dreaming Boys*), designed between November 1907 and January 1908 and published in Vienna in June of that year. Numerous studies of nude or semi-nude young women, including those of his fellow artist at the Vienna Kunstgewerbeschule (later the Academy of Applied Arts), then sixteen-year-old Lilith Lang (1891–1952), sister of Kokoschka's friend, the print maker Erwin Lang (1886–1968), were made in the context of this book project.

Our *Young Woman in red Skirt*, most likely depicting a different model at the academy, appears in several other drawings, all made towards the end of 1907 and early 1908. Particularly close in style, technique, and size, and most likely made during

the same drawing session, is a study of the same young woman, also seen from the back and holding up her hair with her right hand (private collection; fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> Another drawing shows her from the front with her hands raised above her head in an expressive gesture reminiscent of Rodin's drawings of Cambodian dancers, as Alfred Weidinger has pointed out.<sup>3</sup> A fourth drawing (private collection) shows her seen from the side, bending forwards with her left arm extended downwards as though touching the ground.<sup>4</sup> Other drawings most likely also show the same model.<sup>5</sup>

1. A. Weidinger and A. Strobl, *Oskar Kokoschka. Die Zeichnungen und Aquarelle 1897-1916*, Salzburg, 2008, pp. 73-74.  
2. Weidinger and Strobl, *op. cit.*, p. 99, cat. no. 173, illustrated.  
3. Present location unknown; *ibid.*, pp. 83-84, fig. 142.  
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 83, fig. 141.  
5. *Ibid.*, p. 150, cat. no. 229 (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden); p. 154, cat. no. 235 (private collection); p. 157, cat. no. 237 (Leopold Museum, Vienna), all illustrated.

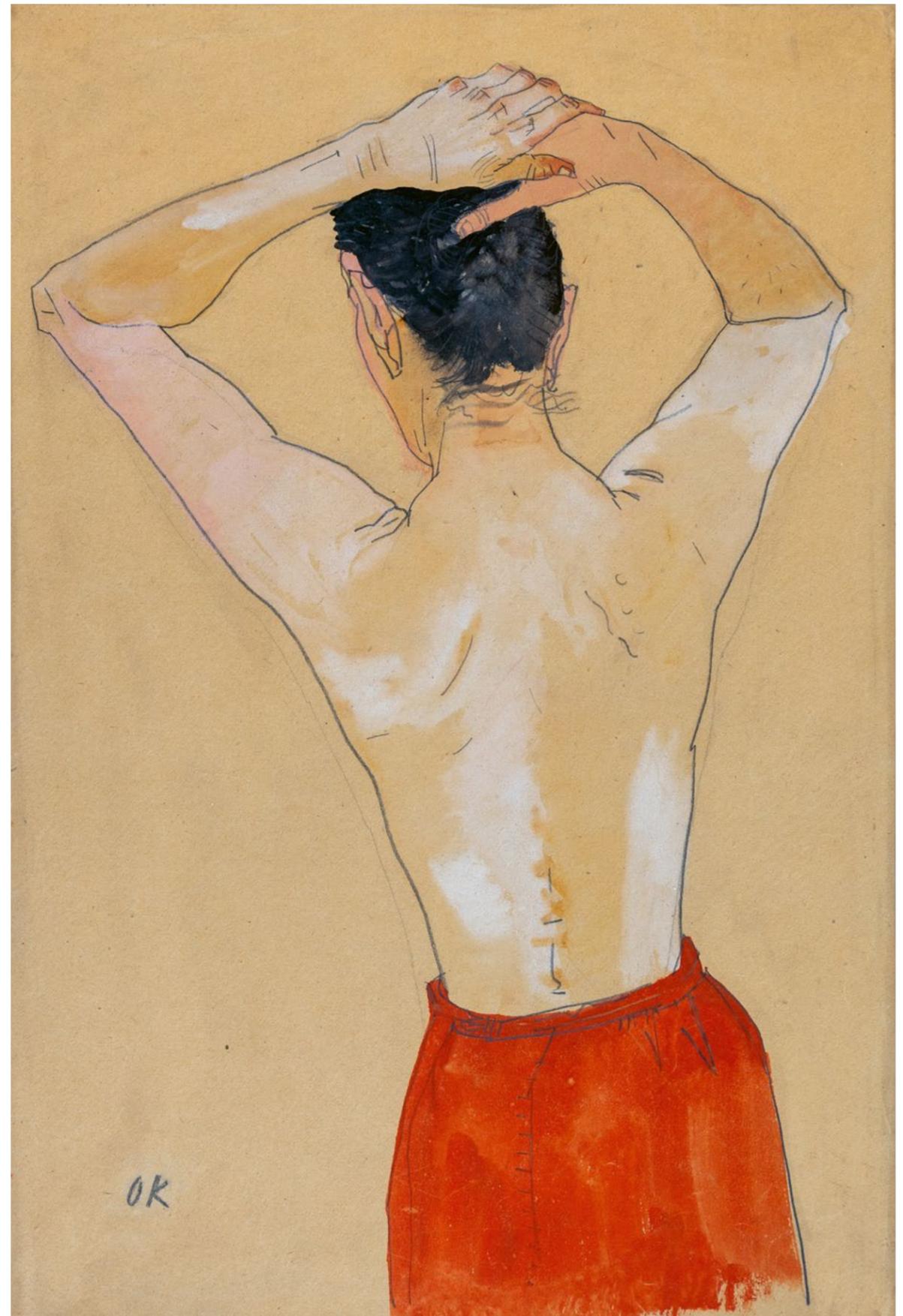


Oskar Kokoschka by Hugo Erfurth, 1919



Fig. 1

Not seen in public for nearly fifty years, this magnificent study of a young woman in a bright red skirt, seen from behind with her hands raised behind her head, is among the most accomplished and elaborate representations of the female figure to survive from Oskar Kokoschka's early maturity in 1907–08. It is characterised by forceful outlines in pencil reflecting the influence of his older Viennese compatriot, Gustav Klimt, though Kokoschka's drawings feature more angular and sharper forms often combined with expressive gestures compared to Klimt's softer and more flowing lines. Perhaps an even stronger influence at the time, particularly in the use of colour, were the drawings and watercolours by Auguste Rodin (1840–1917), of which Kokoschka had first-hand knowledge. In fact, Rodin's drawings were shown in exhibitions at Budapest in December 1907 and at the Heller'sche



The highly expressive poses and strong use of colour in Kokoschka's drawings of this type may also be seen as a harbinger of what was to come shortly after with the drawings of Egon Schiele. Although four years Schiele's senior, Kokoschka is sometimes perceived as an artist of a slightly later generation, perhaps because he outlived his Viennese colleague by over six decades and because of Schiele's arguably more radical approach to the human body from circa 1909-10 onwards. One easily forgets, however, that Kokoschka had somewhat paved the way for Schiele's powerful approach to the human figure with such works as the *Young Woman in red Skirt*.



## 9. *Mz Lustig*

Signed and dated in pencil, lower left, *K. Schwitters 1921*, and titled, lower right, *Lustig*, on the artist's mount

Pencil, collage on paper

135 x 111 mm (image); 165 x 135 mm (artist's mount)

### PROVENANCE

Marcia and Frederick R. Weisman, Beverly Hills, acquired in 1940 (according to their label on the backing board)

Kate Steinitz (Beuthen 1898-1975 Los Angeles), Los Angeles (a label by a German photographer, Photo Frost, Bad Pyrmont, addressed to her on the verso of the mount)

Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, post 1962 (their label, no. 1044, on the backing board) and their address written on the back of the mount

Marlborough-Gerson Gallery, New York, post 1963 (their label, no. NON 2040, on the backing board)

Galerie Rudolf Zwirner, Cologne (their shipping label on the backing board)

Galerie Michel Couturier and Cie., Paris, by 1970, by descent

Private collection

### LITERATURE

K. Orchard and I. Schulz, *Kurt Schwitters, catalogue raisonné, vol. I, 1905-1922*, Hannover, 2000, cat. no. 902, illustrated

### EXHIBITIONS

Düsseldorf, Städtische Kunsthalle; Berlin, Akademie der Künste; Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie; Basel, Kunsthalle; and Hamburg, Kunstverein, *Kurt Schwitters*, 1971, cat. no. 62, illustrated

Executed in 1921.

**'My aim is the total work of art [Gesamtkunstwerk], which combines all branches of art into an artistic unit... First I combined individual categories of art, I have pasted together poems from words and sentences so as to produce a rhythmic design. I have on the other hand pasted up pictures and drawings so that sentences could be read in them.**

**I have driven nails into pictures so as to produce a plastic relief apart from the pictorial quality of the paintings. I did this so as to efface the boundaries between the arts.'**

Kurt Schwitters<sup>1</sup>



Kurt Schwitters

**M***z Lustig* (Funny) is a classic early Merz-collage made at the height of the first, revolutionary phase of Schwitters' career in 1921. A fusion of torn and cut-out paper fragments along with other detritus that has been glued together, it is a work that collectively transforms apparently random and broken forms, letters, shapes and images, into a new, unified and cohesive pictorial architecture.

Executed in 1921, *Lustig* is notable for being one of the earliest of Schwitters' Merz-collages to comprise almost entirely of different types of typography: of individual letters, words and fragments of words.<sup>2</sup> As in these examples, the overall effect of their unique pictorial balancing act of dynamic and angular collisions of apparently nonsensical and contradictory word-fragments is one that, in some ways, visually echoes the daily onslaught of printed information that so dominated modern metropolitan life in post-war Germany in the form of newspapers, pamphlets, posters, advertisements, proclamations and manifestos. At the same time, these assemblages' harmonious resolution of their broken words and imagery into a coherent pictorial unity is one that also reinforces Schwitters' belief in there being an innate a relationship between the arts of poetry and assemblage and in there also being an ultimate healing potential of the art that he called 'Merz'.

Indeed, for Schwitters, the origins of 'Merz' itself, lay ultimately in poetry. 'To begin with,' Schwitters explained, 'I concerned myself with other art forms, for example poetry. Elements of poetry are letters, syllables, words, sentences. Poetry arises from the interaction of these elements. A word is played off against a word in poetry, ...so too in an assemblage or a collage, 'factor is played off against factor,' material against material.'<sup>3</sup> *Lustig* is one of Schwitters' earliest Merz collages where this principle of attempting to intertwine and reconcile the two different syntaxes of words and imagery pictorially, has been achieved in a way that prefigures some of the artist's later, more extensive experiments with typographic design in the mid-1920s.

The title of this collage, *Lustig*, or funny, is, appropriately, in this respect, one that itself probably derives from a fragment in the collage: the word 'stig' which can be read running vertically down the right-hand corner of the picture.

2. Other early examples of this type include *Starkbild* of 1919 in the Menil Collection at Houston, *Zeichnung F* of 1920 in the MoMA, New York, and *Mai 191* of 1920 in the Schwitters Estate.

3. Kurt Schwitters, *Holland Dada*, 1923, p. 11, quoted in Elderfield, *op. cit.*, 1985, p. 43.





As John Elderfield has written, ‘Schwitters’ titles, like his pictures themselves and the word-fragments in them, were intended to express, “what cannot be understood, what can only be seen.” Their meaning was an “abstract meaning” and they even constituted “a poem about the picture.”<sup>4</sup>

The title *Lustig* is also similar in this respect to that of the word ‘Merz’, which was itself a fragment that had first appeared in an assemblage of 1919 and derived from a label reading: ‘Kommerz und Privatbank.’ Schwitters then adopted this fragmented word as the title for his one-man artistic revolution in which the whole of art and life were to be merged through the ‘business’ of assembling fragments and detritus of modern life into new glorified forms and expressions of the ultimate triumph of the human spirit. Throughout this period, as his friend and neighbour Kate Steinitz, recalled, there, in Hannover, in the midst of all the chaos, poverty and disorder of the immediate post-war years, Schwitters was, frequently to be seen wandering the city streets, ‘a crazy, original genius-character, carelessly dressed, absorbed in his own thoughts, picking up all sorts of curious stuff... always getting down from his bike to pick up some colourful piece of paper that somebody had thrown away.’<sup>5</sup>

Steinitz, who was later to make a study of typography and to collaborate with Schwitters on a number of experimental typographical publications in the mid-1920s was a life-long friend of the artist who may also, it appears, have at one time been the owner of *Lustig*.<sup>6</sup> In her memoir of the artist written in 1968 she recalls that amongst Schwitters favourite locations for sourcing his materials were printers’ premises, such as the Molling factory in Hannover, where lots of paper got thrown away. This factory, Steinitz recalled, ‘had a basement room for all the rubbish and wastepaper. All the proofs and misprints from the lithography department were broomed twice a day toward a chute that dumped them down into the cellar. This cellar was a treasure trove for Kurt. Whenever we couldn’t find him when it was time to go home, we would finally discover him squatting or kneeling in the midst of the discarded paper, carefully sorting...’<sup>7</sup>

4. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

5. K. Traumann Steinitz, *Kurt Schwitters A Portrait from Life*, Berkeley, 1968, p. 68.

6. Together with Theo van Doesburg and Schwitters, Steinitz produced several children’s fairy-tale books featuring unusual typography, including *Hahnepeter* (1924), *Die Märchen vom Paradies* (1924-25), and *Die Scheuche* (1925).

7. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

## 10. Mz 477

Signed and inscribed, lower right, *K. Schwitters 22. B*, and titled, lower left, *Mz 477*.

Pencil, collage on paper, on the artist's mount  
180 x 145 mm (image); 275 x 225 mm (artist's mount)

### PROVENANCE

Galerie Michel Couturier and Cie., Paris, by 1967, by descent  
Private collection

### LITERATURE

W. Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters*, Cologne-New York, 1967, cat. no. 54,  
illustrated

K. Orchard and I. Schulz, *Kurt Schwitters, catalogue raisonné, vol. I, 1905-1922*,  
Hannover, 2000, cat. no.1014, illustrated

Executed in 1922.

**'I abandoned all reproduction of natural elements and painted only with pictorial elements. These are my abstractions. I adjusted the elements of the picture to one another, just as I had formerly done at the academy, yet not for the purpose of reproducing nature but with a view to expression.'**

Kurt Schwitters, 1921<sup>1</sup>



Kurt Schwitters

**M**z 477 is a masterful Merz collage (*Merz-Zeichnung*) created by Kurt Schwitters in 1922 and evidently a work that the artist himself prized highly. Labelled in ink on the mount with a large letter 'B', it belongs to a rare group of Merz collages from 1922 that were labelled with a special price concerning their prospective sale. The collages *Mz 464 (Die Not)* and *Mz 465 (Abendschönheit)*, for instance, are listed as belonging to a series 'A', while the collages, *Mz 474 De schoenmaker*, *Mz 476, worden ist*, *Mz 478 Gemälde*, and the present work, *Mz 477*, have all been labelled as the more expensive type 'B'. During the traumatic period of high inflation in Germany, in the early 1920s, Schwitters often made use of a coded system of price classification on specially selected works. As Karin Orchard and Isabel Schulz have noted in their catalogue raisonné on the artist, Schwitters' 'notation of a series A, B or C, or a 0 on the front, or even more frequently on the back of a collage refers to the different price levels: the zero indicates the basic net price (2,500 reichsmarks in December 1922), while the letters mean two, three or four times the amount of the basic price.'<sup>2</sup> Based on this principle *Mz 477* is a work for which Schwitters was asking three times the normal price for one of his Merz-collages.

This may well be because *Mz 447* is a work that eloquently demonstrates how, by 1922, the artist had gained complete mastery of the assemblage technique to a point where he was now able to seamlessly integrate an apparently endless variety of different forms, materials, colours and textures into a dynamic and coherent abstract whole within a comparatively small and compact pictorial space. Indeed, as Schwitters once pointed out in this regard, it was, in fact, 'only in [such] a limited space,' that it was 'possible to assign compositional values to each part in relation to other parts.'<sup>3</sup>

*Mz 477* is a work that exemplifies this point. Here, in a work measuring 18 x 14,5 cm, each, essentially abstract element or material in this compact collage visibly asserts itself simultaneously as both an autonomous and independent entity and also as an essential and completely integrated component of the composition as a whole. This composition, which incorporates a wide range of different materials ranging from strips of patterned fabric and

2. Orchard and Schulz, op. cit., 2000, p. 37.

3. K. Schwitters, 'Das Ziel meiner Merzkunst,' 1938, quoted in F. Lach (ed.), *Kurt Schwitters: Das literarische Werk*, vol. 5, Cologne, 2004, p. 362.



1. K. Schwitters, 'Merz' in *Der Ararat*, 1921, reproduced in R. Motherwell, *The Dada Painters and Poets*, New York, 1981, p. 55.



torn pieces of cloth to a variety of coloured wrapping papers, ripped envelopes and torn paper labels, is one that effectively builds through a spiral-like progression of sequentially layered forms that appears to originate in the top half of the picture and then radiate outwards towards the viewer in the lower half of the picture. The layered nature of this progression is most dramatically asserted by two pieces of red-and-white striped paper that derive from a specific brand of cooking chocolate clearly much favoured by Schwitters. Similar torn fragments of this same distinctive paper also distinguish several other highly-regarded Merz-collages from the period, including *Mz 334 Verbürgt rein* of 1921 in the Schwitters Estate, *Mz 378 français* 1922 (Folkwang Museum, Essen), *Mz 394 Pinakothek* 1922 (Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum, Hiroshima) and *Ohne Titel (1/2 Hektoliter YL)* of 1922 in the Sprengel Museum, Hannover.

Chocolate wrappers in general were evidently a favourite material for Schwitters during this first, revolutionary phase of Merz. Their use had begun with his Hans Arp-inspired collage *Hansi* of 1918 (now in the Museum of Modern Art, New York) and continued prominently throughout much of the 1920s. Along with contemporary fashion imagery and pictures of machine parts, they form part of an appropriation of commercial advertising products that prefigure Pop Art by nearly forty years.

Ultimately, however, it was less the content of his imagery that mattered to Schwitters in the creation of his collages than the way in which such content became subjugated to and integrated into the greater, collective entirety of the work of art itself. 'The material matters as little as I do myself,' Schwitters insisted. 'What matters is forming it. Since the material does not matter, I take, whatever material I like, if the picture requires it. Because I balance different kinds of material against one another, I have an advantage over oil painting, for in addition to evaluating colour against colour, line against line, form against form, and so on, I also evaluate material against material... I call the *Weltanschauung* from which this mode of artistic creation arose 'Merz.'"

Robert Brown

6 January 2023

4. K. Schwitters, 'Merz,' *Der Ararat* 1921, reproduced in Motherwell, op cit., 1981, pp. 55-65.

## 11. *Ohne Titel (Par Avion)*

Pen and ink, collage on paper  
233 x 188 mm

### PROVENANCE

Harry Pierce, Elterwater (Langdale), by descent from the artist in 1948 until 1967  
Sale: London, Sotheby's, 30 April 1969, lot 145  
Sale: London, Sotheby's, 3 July 1969, lot 290, where acquired by Barry Miller, London  
Galerie Melki, Paris  
Galerie Michel Couturier et Cie., Paris, by 1967, by descent  
Private collection

### LITERATURE

K. Orchard and I. Schulz, *Kurt Schwitters, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. 3, 1937-1948, Hannover, 2000, p. 629, cat. no. 3552, illustrated

### EXHIBITIONS

Hannover, Kestner-Gesellschaft; Bern, Kunsthalle; Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum; and elsewhere, *Kurt Schwitters, 1956*, cat. no 181, illustrated (upside down)  
Cambridge, Cambridge Arts Council Gallery; Swansea, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery; Sheffield, Graves Art Gallery; and elsewhere, *Kurt Schwitters 1887-1948, 1959-60*, cat. no. 119, illustrated



Kurt Schwitters

Opinion  
Par Avion  
Onion opinion  
Par Avion  
Herbert Read  
Naoum Gabo  
Tuntagrö  
Nelly  
My dear friend  
Par Avion  
I am so glad  
Par Avion  
Aa vee I ou ennenn  
I ou enn  
ou enn  
enn  
London!

Created while Kurt Schwitters was living in Ambleside in the Lake District, *Ohne Titel (par avion)* is an outstanding late Merz-collage from 1947 that provides an intriguing window into the life and times of the artist during this last, great phase of his career. It belongs to the climatic period of Schwitters's oeuvre when the artist, now, decidedly settled in England, was engaged with the creation of his last, 'magnum opus' and what he called 'the greatest sculpture of my life' in the form of the Merzbau (Merz-building) that he, with the help of his friend Harry Pierce, (the first owner of this collage), spent his last years creating in a disused barn in nearby Elterwater.<sup>2</sup>

As Schwitters had written to his wife, Helma, shortly before moving to England, he believed that, in the 1940s, his art (which since 1919 he had defined as 'Merz') now marked the fulfilment of his long career. 'I can see from the work I am doing now,' he wrote, 'that in my old age I will be able to go on developing Merz. After my death it will be possible to distinguish 4 periods in my Merz works: the *Sturm und Drang* of the first works – in a sense revolutionary in the art world – then the dry, more scientific search for the new possibilities and the laws of the composition and materials, then the brilliant game with skills gained, that is to say, the present stage, and ultimately the utilization of acquired strengths in the intensification of expression. I will have achieved that in around ten years.'<sup>3</sup>

As with all of Schwitters' Merz creations, *Ohne Titel (par avion)* is a work comprised of materials and fragments drawn directly from the ephemera of the artist's daily life, each autonomous element painstakingly reassembled in such a way as to collectively create a new and often surprisingly cohesive and harmonious pictorial order. As its title suggests, among the various elements that Schwitters has made use of in this 1947 work is a label from an air-mail envelope that reads 'par avion'. Schwitters, who had been living in England since 1940, was, in the aftermath of the Second World War, now – and for the first time in many years – in regular correspondence with his many international friends and colleagues in both Europe and America. Because of this, and as many of his Merz collages from this time attest, he regularly received air mail. One year prior to creating this work Schwitters had even composed a collage-poem (*Opinion*) in which the phrase

2. Schwitters was leased the Elterwater barn for the creation of his Merzbau (Merz-building) by the owner of the Cylinders Estate, Harry Pierce, a friend who also agreed to help Schwitters work on the project. Recognising a kindred spirit between himself and Pierce in their creative approach Schwitters said of Pierce, 'He's a genius... he lets the weeds grow, yet by means of slight touches, he transforms them into a composition as I create art out of rubbish. He wants to give me every assistance. The new Merz construction will stand close to nature, in the midst of a national park, and afford a wonderful view in all directions. (Kurt Schwitters, quoted in J. Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, New York, 1985, p. 221).

3. K. Schwitters, 'Letter to Helma Schwitters,' 23 December 1939, quoted in Schwitters in Britain, exhibition catalogue, Tate Britain, London, 2013, p. 56.



1. Kurt Schwitters: *Opinion*, 1946.

'par avion' was playfully deconstructed and reconstructed, like a collage, in a way that attested to old friends such as Naum Gabo and Nelly Van Doesburg who were then writing to him from the United States.<sup>4</sup>

Other detectible elements in *Ohne Titel (par avion)* are fragments of a letter from the Victoria Hotel in Lillehammer, Norway – the country to where Schwitters' son, Ernst had returned from in England in the immediate aftermath of the war, in June 1945; a fragment of a newspaper article on General Slim, former leader of the British Fourteenth Army in Burma; a local bus ticket and various labels and advertisements for food. These include a triangular Gerber cheese label and fragments of an advert for *Jacob's Cream Crackers* and for *Crosse and Blackwell's Meat and Fish paste*.



The increased incorporation into Schwitters' Merz-collages of this period of this sort of photographic advertising material for common foodstuffs, long before Andy Warhol's *Soup Cans*, is often cited as a significant precursor of Pop art. Indeed, Schwitters, always keen to draw upon all elements of the life around him as source-material for his work, eagerly sought out such 'popular' imagery, even writing to his friend Kate Steinitz in the United States requesting the latest advertising imagery for use in his Merz creations. And it would, of course, be the similar use of just such imagery, only a few years later, by artists such as Eduardo Paolozzi and Richard Hamilton, two young British admirers of Schwitters, that would lay the foundations for the Pop Art movement of the 1950s.



Kurt Schwitters, Edith Thomas (Wantee) and Bill Pierce (son of Harry) at Cylinders Farm Ambleside c 1947. (Schwitters has the air mail envelope confirming his grant of \$1000 from the MoMA for the building of his Merzbarn in the pocket of his jacket).



4. Naum Gabo had moved to the United States in 1946 and Nelly Van Doesburg, widow of Theo, had also travelled there that year to work on an American exhibition of her husband's work with Mies van der Rohe.

## 12. *Ein Paar Staemme*

Signed, lower right, *Klee*; and titled and dated on the artist's mount, lower left, 1935 *L1*, and lower right, *ein paar Staemme*  
Gouache, watercolour and ink, on the artist's mount  
180 x 275 mm (image); 350 x 500 mm (artist's mount)

### PROVENANCE

Lily Klee (1940–1946), Bern, by descent from the artist  
Klee Gesellschaft, Bern (1946)  
Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler (1884–1979), Paris  
Oscar Stern (1882–1961), Stockholm  
Galerie Michel Couturier and Cie., Paris, by 1967, by descent  
Private collection

### LITERATURE

The Paul Klee Foundation, ed., *Paul Klee: Catalogue Raisonné 1934–1938*, Bern, 2003, vol. 7, p. 164, cat. no. 6803, illustrated

### EXHIBITIONS

Stockholm, Svensk-Franka Konstgalleriet, 1947, *Beaudin, Gris, Kremadec, Klee, Lascaux, Léger, Manolo, Masson, Picasso, Roger, Roux*, cat. no. 56  
Stockholm, Svensk-Franka Konstgalleriet, *Paul Klee*, March 1949, cat. no. 52  
Stockholm, Moderna Museet, 1961; and Helsinki, Ateneum, *Paul Klee*, 1961, cat. no. 110

Executed in 1935.



Paul Klee

For Paul Klee, as his friend and biographer Will Grohmann noted, the years 1934 and 1935 were ones that marked 'a new start' for the artist that was 'then interrupted by illness for nearly 12 months.'<sup>1</sup> Dismissed from his post of professor at the Dusseldorf Academy and forced to leave Germany by the Nazis in 1933, Klee had returned to his native Switzerland to begin again from a small flat in his hometown of Bern. In spite of his difficulties, as he wrote enthusiastically to Grohmann in 1935, 'in my own field things aren't going too badly. The technical side of art is becoming second nature to me, my inventions don't fall over each other anymore but they haven't stopped, and I am venturing larger canvases despite my humble den.'<sup>2</sup>

Painted in 1935, *Ein Paar Staemme* (*A few Trunks*) belongs to a rare group of watercolour paintings from this year that mark one of these 'inventions' and the origins of a new direction in Klee's work. It is one in which unusually large and distinct individual forms and objects, all radiantly coloured and isolated from one another by thick outlines of black ink have been grouped together against a varying sequence of dark, earthy backgrounds to form an intricate and intriguing, semi-abstract whole. All based on natural forms deriving from elements found in a forest landscape, this notable series of works includes such 1935 pictures as *Der Tag im Wald*, *Der Edle Wald*, *Seltene Früchte*, *Landschaftsteile gesammelt* and *Ifenburg* (now in the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio).

Clearly defined by their combination of rich colours and clearly outlined shapes highlighting their autonomous, individuality and collective interaction with one another to form a cohesive landscape of parts, these paintings mark an extension of the abstract patterning of his magic-square paintings and mosaic pictures of the early 1930s back into the realm of nature and figuration. In so doing they also anticipate Klee's later translation of such object-landscapes into the linear hieroglyphs of his last years and more particularly the technique Klee was to employ in such late masterpieces as *Ausbruch der Angst III* of 1939 (Klee Zentrum, Bern) and even his *Das letzte Stilleben* of 1940.

From its title and subject-matter to the way in which it generates a new and exhilarating pictorial reality out of something so mundane as the disparate forms of tree roots, *Ein Paar Staemme* is a work that visually appears to echo and paraphrase the famous sentiments about the way in which a work of art grows like a tree from humble beginnings in a lecture he gave about his work and the purpose of art in Jena in 1924. 'I should like to compare the way in which the things in nature and life, this whole branched order of things, are arranged, to the roots of a tree.

1. W. Grohmann, *Paul Klee*, London, 1954, p. 312.  
2. P. Klee, 'Letter to Will Grohmann,' quoted in C. Hopfengart and M. Baumgartner, *Paul Klee, Life and Work*, Ostfildern, 2012, p. 276.



From it the lymph flows up into the artist and passes through him and through his eyes. So he finds himself in the place of the tree trunk. Held there by the force of this flow, and moved by it, he transmits what he has seen through his work. His work develops visibly in all directions, in time and space, as the leaves of a tree do. No one ever suggested that a tree's leaves should be formed like its roots. Everyone knows that there cannot be

an exact relationship between the bottom of a tree and the top... [the artist] merely collects and transmits what comes from above, in the place he has been assigned beside the tree trunk. He neither serves nor dominates – he transmits. So his position is a modest one. He himself is not the beauty of the leaves; that has merely passed through him.<sup>3</sup>

3. P. Klee, Lecture given in Jena, 1924, quoted in H. Jaffe, Paul Klee, London, 1971, pp. 27-28.



### 13. *Descente*

Signed with monogram and dated, lower left, *K/41*; with the artist's backing board, stamped, upper left, KANDINSKY, and his inscription with Handlist number, *No. 725 / 1941*  
Gouache and watercolour on paper  
495 x 310 mm

#### PROVENANCE

Galerie Maeght, Paris (Handlist)  
Galerie Michel Couturier & Cie, Paris (no. 354, photo no. 55.056), acquired from the above before 1970, thence by descent

#### LITERATURE

The artist's *Handlist, Watercolours, 1941, 725, Descente (Aq. + gs crème)*  
V. Endicott Barnett, *Kandinsky, Watercolours, catalogue raisonné, vol. II, 1922-44*, London, 1994, p. 525, cat. no. 1360, illustrated

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Galerie L'Esquisse, *Etapas de l'œuvre de Wassily Kandinsky*,  
7 November–7 December 1944 (*Handlist*)  
New York, Sidney Janis Gallery, 14 February–12 March 1949, *XX Century Painting*

Executed in 1941.

'Painting was a sacred ritual for Kandinsky. He never began a work before it had appeared in complete clarity to his mind's eye. He had a rare ability to visualize the world of his paintings in his head, with their colours and their shapes, exactly as he would carry them out on canvas later. His flashes of inspiration were like high-speed snapshots that appeared to him in a state of illumination, and he tried to get them down on paper immediately, using small, quick strokes'

Nina Kandinsky<sup>1</sup>

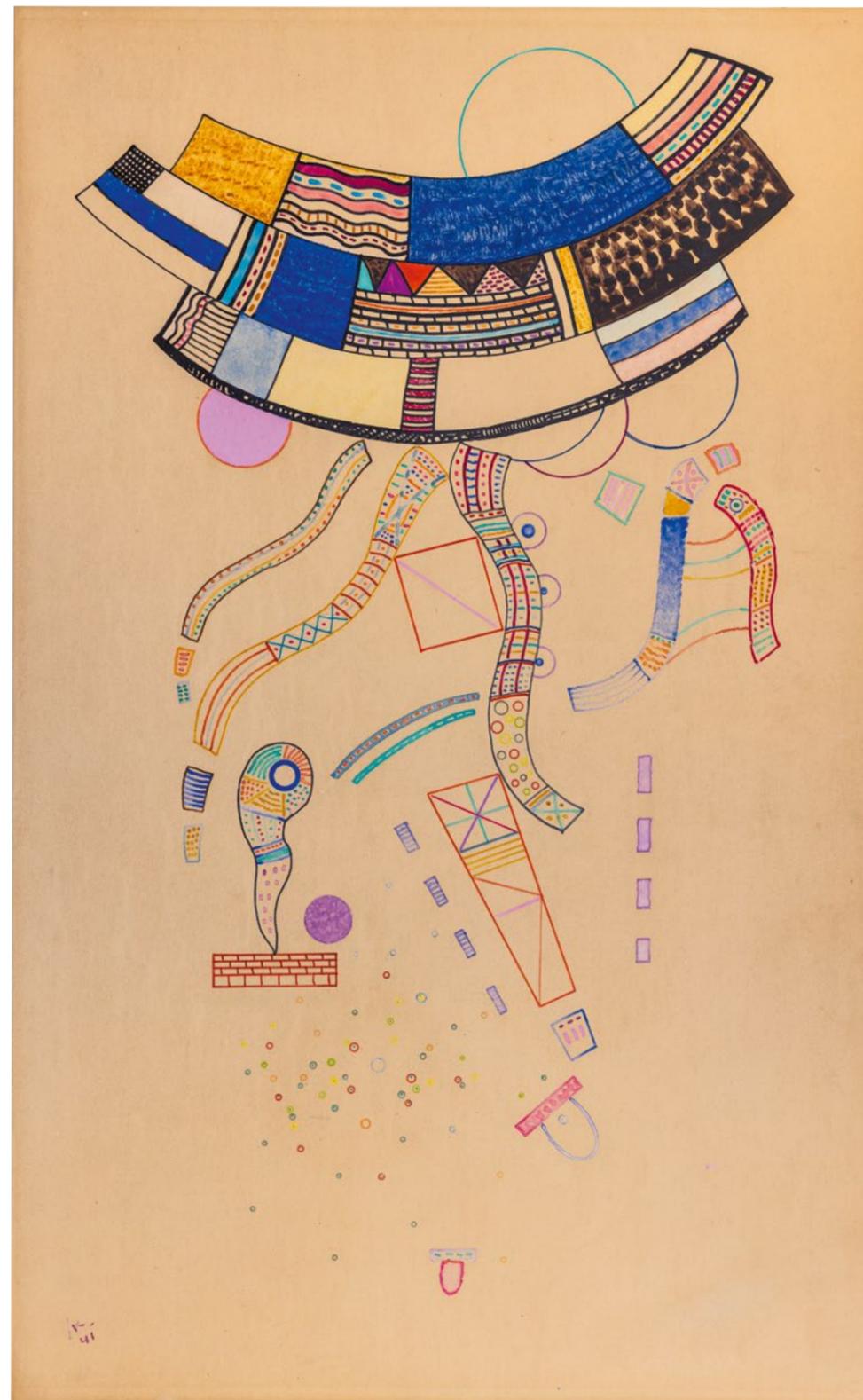


Wassily Kandinsky

**D**escente (*Descent*) is one of Wassily Kandinsky's very last works on paper. Executed in Paris, in 1941 in a combined technique of gouache and watercolour much favoured by the artist during these years, it presents a collation of colourful abstract forms in a manner that suggests they are either floating or suspended towards the top of the work and, as the picture's title suggests, then descending across its surface. Such suspended forms exude a strong sense of their deriving from either a mysterious cosmic realm or a strangely microcosmic world and are a typical feature of much of the work that Kandinsky produced during his last years living in Paris between 1933 and his death in 1944.

Functioning as a kind of synthesis of Kandinsky's first nature-based approaches to abstraction and the more rigorous and disciplined techniques he subsequently developed at the Bauhaus in the 1920s, Kandinsky's Paris paintings are works that mark the culmination of a thirty-year journey aimed at completely integrating abstract art and nature. In their embracing of the cosmic and amorphous entities, Kandinsky's Paris paintings are works that both deliberately hint at the workings of a mysterious, hidden or unseen nature and ones that are also very much a reflection of the spirit of the times in which they were made. Often mimicking embryonic shapes or, as here in *Descente*,

tiny, microscopic strands of bacilli or the soon-to-be-discovered DNA, the inspiration for Kandinsky's often complex abstract shapes and forms of these years comes from a multitude of contemporary sources. These ranged from photographs in scientific journals detailing tiny organisms and the strange metamorphosis of plants to the pages of the Surrealist magazine *Minotaure* with its equally unusual pictures of the amorphous forms found in the works of Jean Arp, and the 'involuntary sculptures' of Salvador Dalí.<sup>2</sup> All these varied sources combined in Kandinsky's vivid imagination to generate magnificent, mental images of an entirely new, abstract landscape of cosmic or microcosmic dimensions that Kandinsky believed underpinned the outward realm of everyday visual reality.



2. Favourite scientific sources include Ernst Haeckel's *Artforms in Nature*, Karl Blossfeldt's *Original Forms in Nature*, and Ena Wertheimer's patterns which he saw as *Urformen* or primordial forms. Kandinsky also drew inspiration from microscopic sea creatures he observed in the sand of the Normandy Coast where he holidayed with Nina during the summer of 1934.

1. N. Kandinsky, *Kandinsky und ich*, Munich, 1976, p. 168.

'Abstract painting', as Kandinsky said around this time, is an artform that 'leaves behind the "skin" of nature, but not its laws. Let me use the "big words" cosmic laws. Art can only be great if it relates directly to cosmic laws and is subordinated to them. One senses these laws unconsciously if one approaches nature not outwardly, but – inwardly. One must be able not merely to see nature but to experience it. As you see, this has nothing to do with using "objects". Absolutely nothing! ... If an artist has both an outwards and an inward eye for nature, she rewards him with "inspiration".'<sup>3</sup>

The majority of Kandinsky's paintings during his years in Paris were made in either gouache or watercolour and more often, as in *Descente*, created using a combination of both. 'I usually don't distinguish between traditional oil painting, gouache, tempera and watercolour,' Kandinsky noted, 'and I even simultaneously use the various techniques in the same work. What is essential for me is to be able to clearly convey what I want, to recount my dream. I consider both technique and form to be mere instruments of expression, and my stories, furthermore, are not narrative or historical in character, but purely pictorial.'<sup>4</sup>

3. W. Kandinsky, 'Interview with Karl Nierendorf,' 1937, reproduced in K. C. Lindsay and P. Vergo (eds.), *Wassily Kandinsky, Complete Writings on Art*, Boston, 1982, p. 471.

4. Kandinsky quoted in *Il lavoro fascista*, vol. XIII, 28 July 1935, p. 4. Kandinsky's very last painting on canvas, *Delicate Tension*, dates from the summer of 1942. Kandinsky appears to have been caught out by the shortages of canvas that accompanied the war and Occupation period. Since he worked from his small flat in Neuilly with little room for storage, he only bought his stretchers as the need arose. By 1941 he had completely run out of unused canvas and thereafter made all his paintings in watercolour and gouache on paper. He was not to solve the problem until 1943 when he managed to acquire a stock of German cardboard of medium format, and it was on this that he would go on to paint most of his final paintings.



## 14. *A Malgache resting, with a large Shell*

Signed and dated, lower right, *André / Maire 1959*  
Charcoal, pastel  
503 x 650 mm

### PROVENANCE

The artist's estate, by descent to his daughter  
Loredana Harscoët-Maire, Tonnerre

Born in the Marais in Paris, André Maire first trained at the École des Beaux-Arts and later became a pupil of Émile Bernard (1868–1941), who was to exert a great influence over his life and art. Drafted in the French Army in 1917, Maire served in Indochina from 1919 to 1921. During this time, he also taught drawing at the Junior High School Chasseloup-Laubat in Saigon. In 1920–21 he made several trips to Angkor, documenting its temples in China ink drawings made on site. As an early discoverer of the tourist route through Angkor's majestic ruins, Maire was fascinated by their grandeur and by the dialogue between natural setting and architecture. After leaving Indochina in 1921, Maire travelled to Italy with his mentor Bernard, whose daughter Irène he married in 1922. While in Venice, with Bernard, he divided his time between the study of the city's art and architecture, and the time spent working up his Angkor sketches into large format sepia ink drawings. Back in France he also produced monumental oil paintings based on his impressions of Cambodia and his work was shown in numerous exhibitions in the 1920s and '30s.

Maire's travelling artist years had only just started. Among the places that he would visit and capture in his drawings and paintings in the 1930s, are Egypt, India, Ceylon, and Africa. He returned to Indochina in 1948 and lived there for a decade holding the post of Fine Arts teacher first at the Hanoi School of Architecture, later moved to Da Lat and then Saigon. In 1950, he returned to visit Angkor's temples, including Angkor Vat and Angkor Thom.

All executed during Maire's second stay in Indochina in a combination of charcoal and coloured chalks, the large drawings presented here are all signed and dated. On the basis of initial sketches, the artist created these imaginative compositions that bring together architectural and decorative elements of the ruins he admired, amalgamated with the exuberant exotic vegetation. Having befriended the conservator Henri Marchal, Maire acquired exclusive access to the vestiges of the Khmer empire together with a deeper understanding of their significance and history. The effigies of Buddha, Vishnu and Ganesha that populate his scenes were no longer *in situ* but he was able to study them at the museum of Phnom Penh and in the repository of Siem Reap, in north western Cambodia.

Forced to leave in 1958, due to the political tensions in Indochina, Maire returned to Paris. The following year he travelled to Madagascar thanks to a bursary from the Société des Beaux-Arts de la France d'outre-mer. During a year-long stay, he documented Madagascar's daily life and nature in his vigorous charcoal and pastel drawings. He was fascinated by Madagascar's varied landscape, with its stunning beaches, impenetrable forests and baobab groves. His large studio portraits of Malgache women, such as the present, are striking in their sculptural observation of the female form.

Maire's highly personal interpretations of the culture, nature and civilization of both Indochina and Madagascar do not appear tainted by the ghost of colonialism. Although his travels coincided with these countries' liberation from French colonial power, Maire's unique perspective allowed him to focus on the poetic and mystical nature of his chosen subjects.



## 15. *Arbre*

Signed with monogram and dated, lower right, *J. D. 70*  
Drawn with black marker Pr22, cut out and laid down on Kraft paper  
540 x 270 mm

### PROVENANCE

Private collection, Paris, since 1971

### LITERATURE

M. Loreau, *Catalogue des travaux de Jean Dubuffet. Dessins 1969/1972*, Paris, 1975, cat. no. 127, illustrated

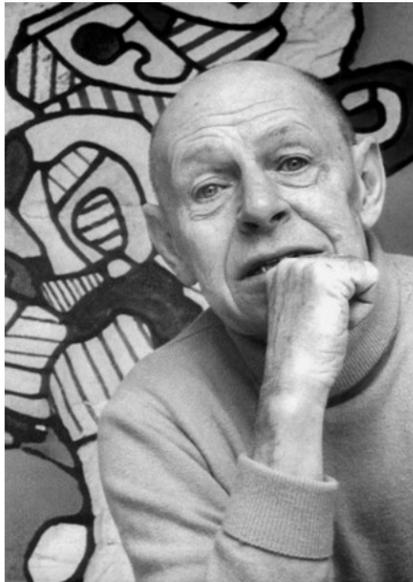
Executed on 5 December 1970.

**A** *rbre* is one of a playful series of cut-out drawings of trees, monuments and other stele-like vertical structures that Jean Dubuffet made repeatedly in December 1970 in his 'L'Hourloupe' style. Begun in 1963 as a series of semi-conscious doodles while talking on the telephone, Dubuffet's meandering 'L'Hourloupe' style of drawing was an ever-expanding graphic medium that came to dominate his creative output for longer than any other of his many shifts in style lasting from 1962 to 1974.

As this work illustrates, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, Dubuffet was heavily engaged in extending the playful possibilities of the 'L'Hourloupe' style into all areas of life and also into the realm of three dimensions. This expansion of 'L'Hourloupe' was ultimately to culminate in 1973 with the creation of an entire 'L'Hourloupe' environment in his theatrical extravaganza *Coucou Bazar*.

At the time that he created *Arbre*, Dubuffet was also engaged in a project for the creation of a vast, outdoor, 'L'Hourloupe' sculpture for the Rockefeller Center in New York. Completed in 1972, this sculpture was ultimately to take the form of four life-size 'L'Hourloupe' trees whose ambiguous meandering graphism would, the artist hoped, contrast directly with the austere logic and strict geometry of its architectural surroundings.

*Arbre* is one of series of playful, vertical 'L'Hourloupe' assemblages that Dubuffet drew, then cut out and laid down on paper in a manner that deliberately approximates sculpture and ancient, vertical standing monuments. It is a work whose lyrical,



Jean Dubuffet

building-block-like collation of black and white graphic forms, hovering on the edge of recognizability, is intentionally aimed at confusing the supposedly separate fields of abstraction and figuration in order to convey the idea of an entire, alternate, 'L'Hourloupe' nature. This whimsical and alternate 'L'Hourloupe' world was one that Dubuffet hoped would, by its very existence, throw into question our conventionally accepted ideas about what can be called real and what not.

As the artist explained at the inauguration of his L'Hourloupe tree sculptures for the Rockefeller Center in 1972, 'the works originating in [the 'L'Hourloupe'] cycle are in the form of sinuous graphisms responding with immediacy to spontaneous and, so to speak, uncontrolled impulses of the hand which traces them.

Within these graphisms, imprecise, fugitive, and ambiguous figures take shape. Their movement sets off in the observer's mind a hyperactivation of the visionary faculty. In these interlacings all kinds of objects form and dissolve as their eyes scan the surface, linking intimately the transitory and the permanent, the real and the fallacious. The result, (at least, this is the way it works for me) is an awareness of the illusory character of the world which we think of as real, and to which we give the name of the real world. These graphisms, with their constantly shifting references, have the virtue, (to me, I should add again) of challenging the legitimacy of what we habitually accept as reality. This reality is, in truth, only one option collectively adopted, to interpret the world around us – one option among an infinity of equally legitimate possibilities... Thus you can see

a philosophic humour presides over the works of the 'L'Hourloupe' cycle – introducing a doubt about the true materiality of the everyday world. It too may only be a mental construct."

1. J. Dubuffet, 'Remarks on the Unveiling of the Group of Four Trees,' New York, October 24, 1972, in M. Rowell and J. Dubuffet, *Jean Dubuffet A Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue, The Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1973, pp. 35-36.



**GARY ANDERSON**  
GLASGOW, B. 1960

## 16. *Brush and Paintbox*

Signed and dated, lower right, *Gary Anderson '97*.  
Pencil, watercolour, gouache  
230 x 230 mm

### PROVENANCE

Sir Jack Baer, London, by descent

Executed in 1997.

A characteristically colourful work by the Glasgow born painter Gary Anderson who studied Drawing and Painting at Glasgow School of Art in the early 1980s. From the 1980s onwards, Anderson won numerous awards and had several solo exhibitions including at the Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts. Over the past several decades he has exhibited widely in Glasgow, Edinburgh, London, Germany, and New York. Gary Anderson lives and works in Scotland.



## 17. *The Milk Bottle*

Charcoal *estompé*, Conté crayon on buff *Ingres* paper  
320 x 475 mm

### PROVENANCE

Sir Jack Baer (1924–2016), London, by descent

### EXHIBITIONS

London, The Fine Art Society, *John Sergeant. Recent Drawings*,  
October 2002 (ex-catalogue)

As a black-and-white draughtsman John Sergeant was supreme' was the unflinching judgement in the artist's obituary published in London's *Independent* in 2010.<sup>1</sup> One of the most admired draughtsmen of his generation, John Sergeant is best-known for his masterly *chiaroscuro* charcoal and *conté* crayon still-life drawings in which he combined realism and abstraction in a highly personal manner. Executed in the artist's favourite technique, which Sergeant shared with Seurat, the present sheet a particularly fine example of his highly finished drawings made in this manner.

Sergeant was born in London in 1937, and grew up in Faversham, Kent, where his family moved after the war. He studied at Canterbury College of Art from 1954 to 1957. The following year he met John Ward (1917–2007), a firm believer in the primacy of drawing, who soon became a mentor and friend. It was under Ward's encouragement that Sergeant entered the Royal Academy Schools (1959–62), where in his final year he won the Drawing Prize. In 1962 he married a fellow student, the painter Carolyn Sergeant, née Cann (1937–2018), today celebrated for her elegantly arranged botanical still-lives. Sergeant then taught drawing at Canterbury College of Art, and at the Art Schools at Dover and Folkestone, while pursuing his own commissioned work and occasionally assisting Ward. Inspired by the 1981 exhibition *Interiors* at Hazlitt's, for the following two years Sergeant concentrated on commissioned drawings of historic interiors, including those at Castle Coole, Stowell Park and Deene Park. It was while making these room-portraits that his attention began



John Sergeant in his studio

to focus more and more on the silent inhabitants of those spaces – a clock on a mantelpiece, an alabaster pot, a chair or water jug – which he would draw incessantly. As he would later put it: 'Unwittingly I found myself drawing still-life and loving it.'<sup>2</sup>

For his time-consuming finished works he went through a laborious process of preparation. Minute doodles on scraps of paper would be progressively built up to accomplished compositions. The guiding principles of his art were composition and light. As a result, his finished *chiaroscuro* drawings strike us for their painterliness and for the delicate balance between description and abstraction, simplicity and artifice. As Sergeant eloquently explained: 'Just as a composer of music so I compose the shapes, tones, rhythms, lights and darks in a completely abstract way. My priority is to turn the subject into a pattern. At the same time the viewer must be able to turn the pattern back into a pair of shoes, a box of buttons, or whatever it is I have drawn.'<sup>3</sup>



1. The *Independent*, 24 February 2010.

2. London, Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox, *John Sergeant. Drawings*, 1996 (introduction, n.p.).

3. London, Colnaghi, *John Sergeant. Recent Drawings*, 2006 (introduction, n.p.).

## 18. *A Cup*

Charcoal *estompé*, Conté crayon on buff *Ingres* paper  
240 x 160 mm

### PROVENANCE

Sir Jack Baer (1924–2016), London, by descent

### EXHIBITIONS

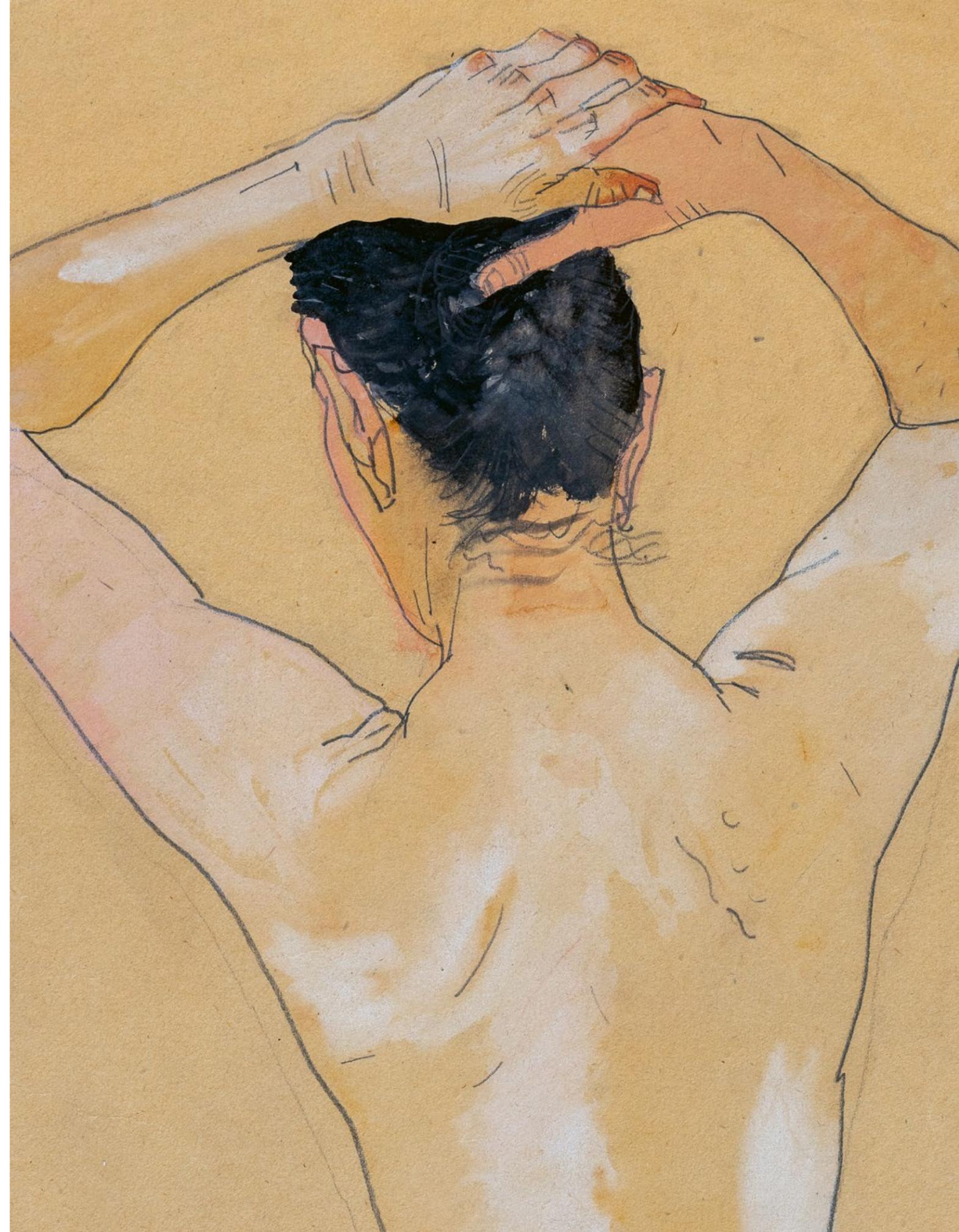
London, Hazlitt, Godden & Fox, *John Sergeant. Recent Drawings*, 2000, cat.  
no. 39, illustrated

See the previous catalogue number.



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HÄRB NUTI  
MASTER DRAWINGS  
LONDON