

## A Wider View

### 16th century Italian drawings in the Kupferstich-Kabinett

A cataloging project on the Italian drawings of the 16th century, which is being subsidised by the Getty Foundation within "The Paper Project: Prints and Drawings Curatorship in the 21st Century" initiative, is currently taking place at the Kupferstich-Kabinett. In addition to works appearing in the exhibition „Anselmi to Zuccari“, individual sheets, with the current state of research, will be presented on a rotating basis.

## Pontormo! Pontormo?

The first series revolves around Jacopo Pontormo (Pontorme 1494–1557 Florence), one of the main representatives of Florentine Mannerism. With the powerful study of a kneeling man for the *Ruffillo Altar*, the Kupferstich-Kabinett possesses one of the early masterworks in the extensive graphic oeuvre of the artist. In addition, we are presenting two figural studies for which Pontormo's authorship has been questioned, or newly proposed, in recent times.

Among the works in the exhibition, the *Study of a Sitting Man* by Franciabigio (Florence 1484–1525) from the period around 1515/25, in particular, offers itself as a comparison (I.5). A decade older than Pontormo, the art of his friend and workshop companion, Andrea del Sarto (Florence 1486–1530), remained an important point of reference throughout Franciabigio's life. Pontormo, on the other hand, learned essential fundamentals in Andrea del Sarto's workshop although he increasingly distanced himself from his model during his later creative period.



JACOPO PONTORMO  
**Kneeling Man (recto)**  
**Standing Man (verso)**

Ca. 1514

Red chalk in two different shades

Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. C 80 | Early holdings

This is a study for the figure of Saint Alexius that Pontormo created around 1514 for the *Sacra Conversazione* in the – since demolished – San Ruffillo Church in Florence. Today, the painting – the first independent major commission for the young artist – is located in the Basilica della Santissima Annunziata in Florence. The reverse of the drawing also relates to this project. It shows Pontormo's preparation for the figure of Saint Michael.

An old hand added Pontormo's name to both the recto and verso and the sheet was included in the historical inventory from 1865 under this attribution. With only a few exceptions, research has since confirmed this attribution after the drawing had been listed under the name of Andrea del Sarto for a short time. Christel Thiem (letter, 1970), and Giulio Bora (note, 2011) suggested Giovanni Battista Naldini (Florence 1535–1591) who was an apprentice under Pontormo.



JACOPO PONTORMO, attributed to  
**Saint Bartholomew, after Fra Bartolommeo (recto)**  
**Standing Man, after Andrea del Sarto (verso)**

Shortly after 1512 (?)

Red chalk

Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. C 68 | Early holdings

This sheet has a chequered attribution history behind it – and it is still not over. An old inscription names Baccio Bandinelli (Florence 1488–1560) and the work is listed under his name in the inventory from the year 1865. It is a free reproduction of the figure of Saint Bartholomew from the Pala Pitti that Fra Bartolommeo (Florence 1473–1517) painted for the Dominican Church of San Marco in Florence. A figure from the Procession of the Three Kings, painted by Andrea del Sarto and his workshop in the Chiostrino dei Voti in the Santissima Annunziata, can be seen on the reverse, although this is not necessarily the work of the same artist.

According to a note in the files of the Kupferstich-Kabinett, Johan Shearman recommended attributing the work to Naldini in 1960. On the other hand, Janet Cox-Rearick attributed the recto to Pontormo; however, she does not mention the sheet in her publications on that artist. Heiko Damm (e-mail, 2020) considered Pier Francesco Foschi (Florence 1502–1567), a pupil of Andrea del Sarto who occasionally assisted Pontormo. Most recently, Bastian Eclercy suggested looking for the author among the later imitators of the style of Andrea del Sarto and the young Pontormo the second half of the 16th century (email, 2020).



ANDREA DEL SARTO, School of  
**A Male Nude Seen from Behind**

First half of the 16th century

Red chalk

Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. C 40 | Probably acquired in 1728 | Probably from the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

On account of the knife, this study of a naked man was, at times, interpreted as portraying Saint Bartholomew; however, the figure of the executioner after the decapitation of Saint John could also be considered. The drawing was originally thought to be the work of Fra Bartolommeo whose name is mentioned in an old inscription. In more recent times, the recommendations for the work's attribution circled around the school of Andrea del Sarto (Julian Brooks, verbal communication, 2018) or its environment. Chris Fischer named Franciabigio (note on mount, 2001), a suggestion that Hugo Chapman and Cristiana Romalli agreed with (verbal communication, 2018). Heiko Damm spoke in favour of Pier Francesco Foschi (e-mail, 2017). Paul Joannides entertained the idea that it could be a very early work by Pontormo (e-mail, 2011). Bastian Eclercy, in contrast, saw connections to Baccio Bandinelli (e-mail, 2021).

Silvia Massa/Gudula Metze

Illustrations, bibliographical references and further drawings by Pontormo or his circle can be found in the Online Collection of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden:

<https://skd-online-collection.skd.museum/>

**Read more?**

<https://kupferstich-kabinett.skd.museum/forschung/>

**Contact us?**

[kk.disegno@skd.museum](mailto:kk.disegno@skd.museum)