

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 subsidized 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.

Drawings for Prints?

The last round revolves around Jacopo Negretti, called Palma il Giovane (Venice, ca. 1550–1628), the most prolific draftsman in 16th-century Venice. Along with the soft chalk favored by the Venetian painters of the period, Palma explored a variety of graphic media including pen and ink. This was the result of the many impulses he received in Central Italy, especially in Rome where he also developed an interest in forms' plasticity, and in Venice, where he was schooled on Paolo Veronese (Verona 1528–1588 Venice) and Tiziano Vecellio (Pieve di Cadore um 1488/90–1576 Venice)

Initially attributed to other artists, the drawings presented here have recently been (re-)connected to Palma; they offer a wider view on his activity as a draftsman. While the exhibition includes individual figure and compositional studies, such as *Study for a Pietà* (V.11), the *Sketch with Saint Sebastian* (V.9), and the *Resurrection of Christ* (V.12) that were probably made in preparation for paintings, the drawings here are more or less directly related to prints. The – most likely Dutch – etching after one of these drawings shows how artists' compositions could migrate across countries and media.



JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE
Joseph and Potiphar's Wife
16th/17th century
Graphite pencil and red chalk
Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. C 232 | early holdings

This drawing depicts the wife of Potiphar as she grabs the garments of the slave Joseph, who rejects her advances. The story is told in the Old Testament. First mentioned in the 1865 inventory as a work by Giuseppe Cesari (Arpino 1568–1640 Rome), the drawing was then assigned to Palma by Philip Pouncey (passepartout note, undated). Herwarth Röttgen proposed Giovanni Baglione (Rome ca. 1570–1643; passepartout note, 2004). Heiko Damm endorsed Pouncey's proposal (passepartout note, 2017). Maria Aresin identified the inscription on the lower left as Palma's own handwritten note, which supports the attribution. The wife of Potiphar and the upper part of Joseph are very similar to a preparatory drawing made by Palma for the etching *Venus and Adonis* by Giacomo Franco (Urbino 1550–1620 Venice; Massa, note, 2022). The collaboration between the two artists was especially close in the first decade of the 17th century and resulted in the publication of a number of illustrated books, to which Franco's print could be connected.



JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (?)

Mars and Venus surprised by Vulcan

16th / 17th century

Pen in brown ink, brown wash, on preparatory drawing with graphite pencil

Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. C 7504 | early holdings

As told in classical literature, Venus betrayed her husband Vulkan with Mars. For revenge, Vulkan entrapped the two lovers with a net to mock them in front of the other gods. According to the inscription, the drawing is traditionally considered to be the work of Jacopo Palma il Giovane, whereas Iván Fenyő regarded it as a copy (passepartout note, undated). Heinrich Bodmer thought of Pietro Liberi (Padova 1605–1687 Venice; passepartout note, undated), while Maria Aresin supported the former attribution to Palma (note, 2021).



UNKNOWN ARTIST, after JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (?)

Mars and Venus surprised by Vulcan

Ca. 1600 (?)

Etching and engraving

Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. A 2021-54 | acquired in 2021 | from a private collection (Germany)

The inscription on the lower right corner declares Palma as the inventor of the subject. Perhaps the drawing discussed above could be preparatory for this rare print, described in 2010 by Dieter Beaujean on the basis of the Bautzen impression, to which the engraver added a balustrade and the landscape in the background. The noticeable etching spots speak for some technical problem having occurred during the making, something that might have caused the engraver to suspend the work without achieving the composition. Beaujean considered this to be the work of a Dutch master.



JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE

Monks in a Landscape; Christ as Gardener

Ca. 1621; last third 16th century

Red chalk

Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. C 1966-75; C 1966-76 | early holdings

These drawings were attributed to Andrea Sacchi (Nettuno 1599–1661 Rome) by Hans Posse (Posse 1912; passepartout note, undated). Hans Tietze and Erika Tietze-Conrat (for C 1966-75: Tietze/Tietze Conrat 1944) and Philip Michael Pouncey (for C 1966-76: inventory card note, undated) spoke in favour of Palma as the author. Recently, Maria Aresin confirmed both attributions (note, 2021), and C 1966-75 has been identified as the preparatory drawing for the first plate in Paolo Bozzi's devotional pamphlet *Tebaide Sacra* (Piai, 2021).

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Illustrations, bibliographical references, and further drawings by Jacopo Palma il Giovane and 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/>

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