Exhibition of the Kupferstich-Kabinett
12.9.2026–3.1.2027

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EN

In a new light

16th-century Italian drawings reconsidered

I
A wealth of gifts

In this cataloguing project, the museum team was able to count not only on the support of committed funders, but also on a dedicated network of colleagues, researchers and collectors. References, questions and objections often led to central findings – research of drawings is teamwork, after all: it lives from conversation, from shared knowledge and from the joy of seeing.

Once the context of a drawing is made accessible, it is almost as if it were being newly added to the collection. In this sense, the Kupferstich-Kabinett has been richly rewarded by the project. The museum also received precious gifts in concrete terms during this time: the collector Dr Henning Hoesch enriched the holdings with, among other works, a masterly study of the Emilian artist Parmigianino. This generous gift is appearing for the first time before the public in the exhibition and in the catalogue.

Information about the works in the exhibition
(for further information, please see the interactive display)





1

PARMIGIANINO (1503–1540)

Saint Andrew with the cross · Seated figure

Ca. 1524–30

Pen and brown ink, brown wash

Inv. C 2023-10 | Acquired in 2023 from Galerie de Bayser, Paris, with funds donated by Dr. Henning Hoesch

Drawings fascinate because they make creative thought and work processes visible. Parmigianino developed the figure of a bearded apostle on the front of this sheet with a few strokes and imparted it with volume, light and spatial depth with diluted ink. He quickly sketched a seated boy on the reverse. Both representations are linked by the idea of an arm raised above the head. While the artist occupies himself here with famous models of Raphael and Michelangelo, a free and autonomous pictorial language is revealed here at the same time.

II
Whose hand?

In the case of drawings of the 16th century, the question of the originator can only seldom be answered conclusively. Most sheets are neither signed nor mentioned in contemporary sources. The comparative view of style, technique and motif is all the more important. Because an artist's drawing style can change over the course of a life and even depending upon the artistic task, particular challenges arise here.

When an attribution can be made convincingly, more is won than a mere name. This opens up access to an understanding of the drawing and provides a foundation for revealing the purpose of its origination. In graphic collections, the determination of the artist – or at least the stylistic affiliation and era – also helps with the structuring of the holdings and their mediation.

Nosadella × 3

2



GIOVANNI FRANCESCO BEZZI, called Nosadella (ca. 1530–1571)

Angel of the Annunciation

1560s

Pen, brush and grey-brown ink, grey-brown wash

Inv. C 7434 | Early holdings, retrospectively inventoried in 1989

The Bolognese Giovanni Francesco Bezzi, called Nosadella, must have been highly successful during his lifetime. Nevertheless, his work has only taken on contour in research more recently. The attribution suggestion for this angel noted by David Lachenmann on the mount could be checked and confirmed in the context of the project. Characteristic for Nosadella's idiosyncratic manner are the deliberate use of grey wash to accentuate shadows, the differentiated mark thickness of the rapidly placed lines and the robust figure types.



3

GIOVANNI FRANCESCO BEZZI, called Nosadella (ca. 1530–1571)

Standing Virgin with Child

Ca. 1560–71

Pen and brown ink, grey-brown wash, over red chalk

Inv. C 7371 | Early holdings, retrospectively inventoried in 1989

The extent to which the drawing mainly served as a work instrument in the artist workshops of the 16th century is shown in exemplary form in this sheet: for the draughtsman, it was not about creating a pleasing end result, but rather to experiment with various possibilities for representing the standing Virgin Mary with child. Considering the thicket of lines and the superimposed poses, it is not surprising that the originator long remained in question. Francesco Grisolia ultimately had the intuition that it was also Nosadella here.

4



Attributed to GIOVANNI FRANCESCO BEZZI, called Nosadella (ca. 1530–1571)

Woman advancing, spreading out her arms

Third quarter of the 16th century

Pen and brown ink, grey wash, over black chalk or charcoal, on paper toned with red-brown wash

Inv. C 7362 | Early holdings, retrospectively inventoried in 1989

Stylistic references often speak in favour of an artist without enabling an unequivocal attribution. The degree of uncertainty can in some cases be delineated more precisely through various additions to the artist's name, for example, here through the qualifying "attributed to". The comparison with generally recognised works of Nosadella presents both congruities (e.g. the representation of the foot with a conspicuously splayed out big toe or the form of the face) and differences (e.g. the upwards-oriented energy of the figure, unusual for Nosadella's *œuvre*).

Still a mystery

5



Italian artist

Study of a man with his hands tied behind his back (flagellated Jesus or Saint Sebastian)

Late 16th or early 17th century

Black chalk or charcoal

Inv. C 1988-580

Acquired in 1988 from Dorothea Schiffner, née Ackermann (1903–1988), Dresden

This unadornedly realistic drawing of a man with arms bound behind his back is one of the most disputed sheets of the cataloguing project. It found its way into the collection in 1988 as a study for a Saint Sebastian with an untenable attribution to Federico Barocci. Subsequent attribution suggestions included the Zuccari brothers in Rome, a Florentine draughtsman from around 1600 and the Central Italian region of the 17th century. Joachim Jacoby thought of Ludovico Carracci in Bologna and interpreted the figure as Christ at the column.

Palma's line

6



JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (ca. 1548/50–1628)

Joseph and Potiphar's wife

Ca. 1610

Black and red chalk, pen and brown ink (partially covered with white opaque watercolour)

Inv. C 232 | Early holdings, documented in the collection since 1865

Unlike Nosadella, the Venetian Jacopo Palma il Giovane is well-documented as a draughtsman. The group of works in Dresden was redefined through the project and shows multifaceted aspects of Palma's artistic work in nine sheets by his own hand. In this drawing, the artist combines black and red chalk with a cursory pen and ink sketch. Maria Aresin also discovered traces of an inscription by Palma's hand to the bottom left. Together with the stylistic features of the representation, this confirms the attribution to the master.

7



JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (ca. 1548/50–1628) or his workshop

The Virgin between Saint Mark and an angel with a Doge's hat

Ca. 1625 (?)

Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over black chalk or charcoal

Inv. C 1975-196 | Acquired in 1774 from the estate of Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich (1712–1774), Dresden

The Virgin Mary is depicted here between two figures: the one on the right holds a Doge's hat, while the one on the left is identified as Saint Mark by the lion. Both motifs refer to Venice. Nevertheless, the sheet was long attributed to the German school, although Iván Fenyő had already proposed Jacopo Palma's name in a note on the former mount in 1963. It is presumably an early study for a painting executed around 1625 by Palma and his workshop for the Ducal Palace, honouring the Doges Antonio Priuli and Francesco Contarini (today in the church of Montegaldella).

8



JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (ca. 1548/50–1628)

Mars and Venus surprised by Vulcan

Ca. 1590–1610

Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over black chalk or charcoal

Inv. C 7504 | Early holdings, retrospectively inventoried in 1989

The drawing bears an old inscription with a reference to Jacopo Palma il Giovane; a rare contemporary etching of the same scene also names him as the inventor of the composition. But does the drawing really originate from Palma's hand, although its clear lines and light washes differ from the other sheets shown here? The difference can be explained from its function as a reference for the engraver: Palma concentrated on the principal contours of the composition, which he had presumably developed previously in other draft sketches.

(to no. 8)

8



Attributed to Giacomo Franco (1550–1620), after JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (ca. 1548/50–1628)

Mars and Venus surprised by Vulcan

Ca. 1600–10

Etching and engraving

Inv. A 2021-54 | Acquired in 2021 from Kunsthandlung H. H. Rumbler in Frankfurt am Main

While Palma left the location of events indefinite in his drawing, the copying engraver – presumably Palma's friend Giacomo Franco – added a landscape background behind a balustrade and other details. Adept engravers could add such details independently. However, the conspicuous corrosion stains here point to a technical problem that may have caused the engraver to discontinue the work. Correspondingly, only a few copies have been preserved. One of these could be acquired for the Kupferstich-Kabinett in 2021.

9



JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (ca. 1548/50–1628)

Design of a vessel, with a man crouching on it

1580s–90s

Pen and brown and black ink, brown wash

Inv. C 1980-91 | Early holdings, retrospectively inventoried in 1980

On the basis of an inscription on the reverse, this drawing was initially attributed to Jean Lepautre and thus assigned to the French school of the 17th century. Eric Pagliano recognised it in 2021 as one of the rare drafts of Palma il Giovane for the art of goldsmithing. Represented thereby are not various vessels, but instead different design alternatives for the same jug. On the basis of this drawing, clients could enter into a dialogue with a goldsmith about the specific design and execution of the work.

III

Beneath the surface

A drawing is more than what is visible on the surface. The paper itself also bears traces of its origination: its texture becomes recognisable in transmitted light, while watermarks sometimes provide information about the place and time of manufacture.

These are joined by traces of the work process. There are often preliminary drawings present that become visible to the naked eye or with the help of special light sources. They make considerations, corrections and plan changes comprehensible. In other cases, several drawings are found in layers on one sheet – traces of continued or repeated use.

The reverses often tell their own stories. Several works turned out to be more multifaceted in this respect than it at first seemed, whether through revealed representations or references to later revisions.

Watermarks

10



After JACOPO PALMA IL GIOVANE (ca. 1548/50–1628)

Lamentation of Christ

First quarter of the 17th century

Pen and brown and black ink, grey wash, heightened with white

Inv. C 1937-799 | Acquired in 1937 as part of the bequest of Johann Friedrich Lahmann (1858–1937), Bremen/Dresden

In transmitted light, this sheet shows a watermark with an imperial eagle, the letter "K" for Kempten and the initials "HS" of the papermaker Hans Schachenmayer, active in the early 17th century. However, when and where the paper was used remains uncertain: Schachenmayer supplied regions in South Germany, Tirol, Vienna and beyond, and paper could be transported further and be used long after being manufactured. The lamentation scene labelled with the name Jacopo Palma is comparable in terms of motif with works of the artist but does not apparently originate from his hand.

Rework, please!

11



After LUCA CAMBIASO (1527–1585)

Virgin and Child seated on clouds

First half of the 17th century (with later interventions)

Pen and brown ink; upper part silhouetted and made up, with additions in blue wash on the original drawing and on the made-up section

Inv. C 419 | Acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

Today, museums endeavour to preserve objects in their original condition whenever possible. Collectors, on the other hand, sometimes intervened strongly in the works in order to shape them in accordance with their conceptions. Such interventions are today themselves part of the object history. In the Kupferstich-Kabinett, a group of drawings has been preserved that shows intensive revisions and at the same time the instructions on the reverse of a previous German-speaking owner from the 17th century. In the present case, the figures were cut out, supplemented with paper and treated with blue wash, as specified in the inscription ("mitt blau zu schattirn"; to be shaded with blue).

Images upon images

12





Circle of ANNIBALE CARRACCI (1560–1609)

Head of a boy, a horse and other sketches · Head of a man, two standing male nudes and a smaller figure

Late 16th or early 17th century

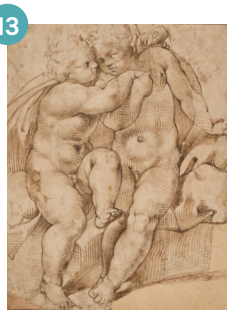
Black chalk or charcoal, heightened with white, on blue paper

Inv. C 8042 | Acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

At first glance, the large-format drawing shows the head of a youth, reminiscent of ancient sculpture. As Heiko Damm recognised, an earlier drawing is hidden beneath this: a rider on a horse. The artist turned the sheet 180 degrees and drew the head above the only partially erased sketch. The two motifs are thus surprisingly intertwined. Further superimposed studies on both sides of the sheet invite the viewer to explore the drawing's development more closely. The unusual work method points to the environment of the Bolognese Annibale Carracci.

Behind and between

13



Attributed to BARTOLOMEO PASSAROTTI (1529–1592)

Two nude boys

Second half of the 16th century
Pen and brown ink, over black chalk or charcoal

Inv. C 7979 | Early holdings, retrospectively inventoried in 2021

This drawing is more multifaceted than it at first seems: on the reverse is another study with three male nudes, possibly by the same draughtsman. It is only visible in transmitted light, as the sheet has long been glued onto a backing sheet, the removal of which would be too risky. However, this underlay also has interesting aspects: Here one finds fragments of a carnivalesque Italian poem about a hunchbacked person and the wish that imagination might become reality. This text also seems to originate from the 16th century.

Plans changed

14



Italian artist

Design for an Entombment of Christ and its frame

16th or first half of the 17th century (with later interventions)
Pen, brush and brown ink, brown and grey wash, heightened with white, over black chalk or charcoal, on blue-green paper; lower corners made up

Inv. C 270 | Acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

In this unusual representation of an entombment, initially conspicuous are the stones in the foreground, which flank the narrow path leading to the burial cave. Figures kneeling beneath them become visible in infrared light, possibly donors or saints. The drawing could to date neither be attributed to an artist nor to a concrete project, so that it also remains unclear why the original composition was changed. Apparently, the artist worked outside of the great art centres and combined traditional pictorial schemata with an at the same time ornamental and narrative pictorial language.

IV
Beautifully collected

Clues to earlier owners can be recognised in many drawings. They sorted and appraised the sheets, noted attributions and sometimes left behind special indicators to mark their collection – whether stamps or handwritten notes.

Some had special mountings or frames produced, which were meant to protect the works and show them to their best advantage. Collectors did not always remain strictly with the original form in the process: drawings were trimmed or added to, for example, to connect objects not originally belonging to one another into a harmonious whole.

Today, these features help to reconstruct and better understand the earlier collection contexts that guided the aesthetic preferences and strategies of drawing lovers of past centuries.

15



After POLIDORO DA CARAVAGGIO

Sacrifice to Jupiter

16th century or first half of the 17th century (with later interventions)
Pen, brush and grey-brown ink, heightened with white, over black chalk or charcoal, on grey-blue paper; upper corners cut

Inv. C 8015 | Acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

The draft of an entombment in a decorative frame (no. 14) apparently inspired an earlier owner to select two additional sheets as pendants (nos. 15–16). Provided with drawn frames in a comparable way, the originally unaffiliated drawings resulted in a representative tableau. With this copy after a wall painting by Polidoro da Caravaggio, the frame was directly drawn onto the sheet, which was also accompanied by a revision of the composition. The cloudy sky, the tree as well as the wash and the white heightening of the figures can probably be traced back to this.

16



Northern Italian artist

Salvator Mundi with two saints and God the Father

Late 16th or early 17th century (with later interventions)
Pen, brush and grey and brown ink, heightened with white, over traces of black chalk or charcoal, on grey-blue paper; central composition irregularly trimmed and made up to form a rectangle, with additions in brush and brown wash

Inv. C 219 | Acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

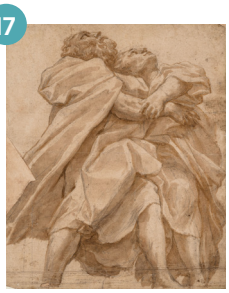
The central part of this sheet may have originally served as a study for an altarpiece with a Salvator Mundi. The drawing was trimmed and extended with paper on the sides and in the top corners. Additions by brush continued the composition, and leaf rosettes were added in the corners, as they are also found in the copy after Polidoro. The two sheets should probably flank the entombment scene (no. 14). The anonymous collector, who also processed further sheets in a similar way, was active in the second half of the 17th century.

V
Fragmented, reconstructed

Again and again, we encounter drawings that have only survived the ages as fragments. Trimmed, cut up or newly composed, these changes sometimes originated in the workshops of the artists, in some cases later with the collectors – and the knowledge of this was often lost.

Several of these fragments could be reunited again in the course of this project: Some within the collection, while others found their counterparts in the sheets of other museums. This makes it possible to reconstruct the contexts of bodies of work and acquire new insights into the origination and history of the drawings.

17



Attributed to Sisto Badalocchio (1585–after1629)
after CORREGGIO (ca. 1489–1534)

Two apostles looking upwards

First half of the 17th century
Brush and brown ink, over black chalk or charcoal; left side irregularly cut, missing section made up

Inv. C 1988-602 | Acquired in 1988 from Dorothea Schiffner, née Ackermann (1903–1988), Dresden

The two apostles are copies after figures at the base of the dome painted by Correggio in the Parma Cathedral. But why is there a peculiar missing section along the left edge of the drawing, made up with paper of the same colour? Carel van Tuyll van Serooskerken found out: here was the wafting coattail of another apostle, who is today preserved on a separate sheet in Oslo. Both drawings belonged to Padre Sebastiano Resta (1635–1714), who – probably correctly – attributed them to Sisto Badalocchio, the originator of the earliest etchings after Correggio's dome frescoes.

18



GIOVANNI BALDUCCI (1560–1631)

Crucifixion of twenty-three Franciscan Martyrs in Nagasaki

Ca. 1620 (?)
Pen and brown ink, over black chalk or charcoal, red chalk in places, blue wash; squared; cut at an unknown time; reassembled in 2023

Inv. C 8038 a-c | Acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

The large-format drawing shows the martyrdom of 26 Catholics, including 23 Franciscans, who were crucified in 1597 in Nagasaki. Although their veneration was first recognised by the pope in 1627, the first representations of the event had already originated prior to this. They also include this composition, in which one still sees the martyrs without haloes. Chris Fischer and Heiko Damm identified the Florentine Giovanni Balducci as the creator. The drawing was apparently already divided into several parts before it found its way to Dresden in 1728. Three fragments were united once again in 2023; one section remains lost.

19



DIRCK HENDRICKSZ, called Teodoro d'Errico (1542–1618)

Design for an altarpiece with saints, a donor and angels

Ca. 1594–95 (with later interventions)
Pen and brown ink, grey-brown wash; cut at an unknown time; partly gone over in dark brown ink and heightened with white; lower parts reassembled at an unknown time; lower half and upper parts reassembled in 2025

Inv. C 8070 a-c | Presumably acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

This drawing compiled from four fragments shows an altar with a central shrine. A previous owner obviously preserved the upper and lower parts separately. In 2023, the lower half with three saints and a donor was recognised as a draft for an altarpiece, which the Amsterdam-born painter Dirck Hendricksz painted in 1594–95 for the basilica in Santa Maria a Vico (Campania). In 2024, the two upper parts with angels making music were found among the sheets of the German school, so that the draft is now almost intact again.

VI
What for?

A large part of the drawings from workshops of the 16th century originated in connection with concrete projects. However, especially in the case of detail drafts or figure studies, it often remains unclear which decoration or composition they are in preparation for. When it can be determined what a drawing has been produced for, this not only opens up a new context for the individual sheet. At the same time, new impulses result for the research of the corresponding artistic projects.

20



Workshop of PERINO DEL VAGA (1501–1547)

Arabesque with putti

Early 1540s
Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over black chalk or charcoal

Inv. C 211 | Acquired at the Woodburn sale: London, Christie's, 4 June 1860

The drawing shows two putti in arabesques above a mascaron. The extensive underdrawing, sometimes diverting from the execution, points to its role as a preparatory study. It was already attributed to Perino del Vaga in the collection of Jonathan Richardson the Elder; today it is at least viewed as a work from his workshop. Marion Heisterberg was able to decisively classify it through the connection with the large thermal windows of the Sala Regia in the Vatican, the lost decoration of which was based on Perino's designs. A surviving copy drawing shows the two Dresden putti on the arched outer border.

21



BERNARDINO POCCETTI (1548–1612)

Seated man with a beard

Ca. 1595 – 96
Black chalk, traces of white chalk, on blue paper

Inv. C 1937-694 | Acquired in 1937 as part of the bequest of Johann Friedrich Lahmann (1858–1937), Bremen/Dresden

Probably owing to its sober realism, the sheet, worked on both sides, was long thought to be Dutch and to date from the seventeenth century, until Christoph Orth recognised its origin in the Florentine school. Heiko Damm subsequently attributed it to Bernardino Poccetti – correctly, as the comparison with the extensive work of the artist showed: the study of a seated man prepares Poccetti's *Birth of the Virgin* in the choir chapel of the Certosa di Pontignano near Siena. On the reverse is another study for this fresco, which shows a woman with child.

VII
Images preserved

When drawings reproduce the composition of another work, they may have served different purposes: as exercises in drawing, as engagements with a famous representation that the draughtsman thereby incorporated into his own visual vocabulary, or as graphic documentation of a completed work within the workshop.

Such copies are often of immense value for research: they show which works artists and collectors occupied themselves with at that time, which compositions were accessible, and they sometimes even preserve knowledge about lost originals.

22



GIOVANNI BATTISTA PAGGI (1554–1627) or his workshop

Annunciation of the Virgin

Early 17th century
Pen and brown ink, over black chalk or charcoal

Inv. C 1937-883 | Acquired in 1937 as part of the bequest of Johann Friedrich Lahmann (1858–1937), Bremen/Dresden

Heiko Damm was the first to notice that this drawing depicts a composition of the Genoese Giovanni Battista Paggi, and a corresponding painting was in fact found in private ownership. This once belonged to the Genoese monastery church of Santa Maria delle Grazie la Nuova, as is indicated by the inscription «alle monache di madonna di gratia» at the bottom edge of the drawing. The central features of the pictorial invention are captured for subsequent use with a schematic, controlled stroke. Valentina Frascarolo also suspected a planned translation into printing.

23



After GIOVANNI BATTISTA ZELOTTI (1526–1578)

Slaying of the first born in Egypt

Last third of the 16th century (?)
Black chalk, heightened with white, on blue-green paper

Inv. C 8037 | Acquired in 1728 with the collection of Gottfried Wagner (1652–1725), Leipzig

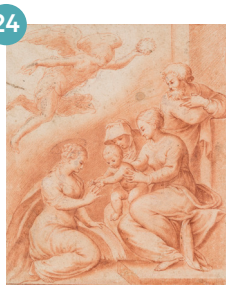
This drawing makes a composition visible that has been lost for centuries and that was to date only known through a description. The art author Carlo Ridolfi explained the biblical scenes and decorations with which Giovanni Battista Zelotti decorated the façades of the Monte di Pietà in Vicenza in 1562–63 in his *Maraviglie dell'arte* (1648). Ridolfi's description of the *Slaying of the first born in Egypt* corresponds precisely with this representation. The seated female figure with the bare shoulder on the reverse of the sheet is also mentioned in Ridolfi's text.

VIII
A beginning, not an end

Not every drawing that was ascribed to the Italian 16th century at the start of the project has found its way into the catalogue. In the course of the work involved, it has become apparent that some works better fit in a different chronological or stylistic context. However, who decides which artists apply as "Italian"? And where does the 16th century start or end? Particularly because artists often travelled and worked at various places, such boundaries cannot always be drawn so clearly. They are based on academic conventions – and sometimes also on pragmatic decisions.

The initially eliminated drawings provide the starting point for further research. The freshly catalogued works also invite renewed observation, questioning and discovery. This because research remains in motion – just like our perspective on art.

24





Italian draughtsman after a print after PARMIGIANINO (1503–1540)

The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria

17th century
Red chalk

Attributed to FRANCESCO PRIMATICCIO (1504–1570)

Fragments of figure studies

Ca. 1555 – 60
Red chalk, heightened with white

Inv. C 404 | Early holdings; documented in the collection since 1865

Tracings after prints were only included in the catalogue in exceptional cases – and yet, occupation with many of them proved fruitful. In this case, the initially hidden reverse turned out to be the more interesting side from a present perspective: here, a draft attributed to Francesco Primaticcio for graces or muses in the Galerie d'Ulysse in Fontainebleau was found. This draft also failed to find its way into the publication in progress, as a decision was made to treat Primaticcio's *œuvre*, closely affiliated with the school of Fontainebleau, separately.

25



VICENTE CARDUCHO (ca. 1576/78–1638)

Prior Boson resuscitating a stonemason

Ca. 1626–32
Black chalk, brown wash and white heightening, on blue paper

Inv. C 454 | Acquired at the Quandt sale: Dresden, Bautzmann, 1 October 1860

Vicente Carducho, born in Florence, to whom this draft for the Carthusian cycle in the monastery Santa María de El Paular near Madrid could be attributed, is viewed as a representative of the Spanish school due to his early move to Spain and his sustained impact there. Formerly, the sheet had been linked with Tuscan masters of the 16th and 17th centuries. The re-attribution in 2017 was the first greater discovery in the context of cataloguing. At the same time, the drawing was eliminated from the project for this reason – perhaps the starting point for a future catalogue.

Exhibition Credits

In a new light.
16th-century Italian drawings reconsidered
Exhibition of the Kupferstich-Kabinett in the „Studiolo“
(Dresden Castle, Renaissance Wing, 1st floor)

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Note
AI-assisted language tools, particularly ChatGPT, were used in some instances to support the editorial preparation of the interpretative texts and other exhibition-related materials.

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