

VISIBLE SPIRIT
THE ART OF
GIANLORENZO BERNINI

VOL. II

IRVING LAVIN



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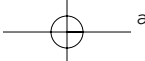
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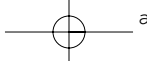


XXVIII

The Young Bernini

IN CERTAIN rare and delicate situations Richard Krautheimer was fond of recalling the words of one of the most distinguished French art historians of the preceding generation, Marcel Aubert, who, with a long beard and aulic dignity, began a grand, formal lecture to the general assembly of the Academie Française, of which he was a member, with the immortal declaration, 'Eh bien, je me suis trompé!' Speaking on this occasion on this subject in this city, I take a certain perverse pleasure in being able to join the august ranks of Marcel Aubert and Richard Krautheimer and proclaim 'Moi aussi, je me suis trompé!' In a lecture delivered over thirty years ago, January 1966, at the American Academy in Rome and published two years later in a long article in *The Art Bulletin*, I presented five new sculptures by Gianlorenzo Bernini, two of which I had discovered and the others newly identified (one of these by Marilyn Aronberg Lavin)¹. Four of the sculptures were securely dated by documents, and, as it happened, all belonged to the earliest period of Bernini's creative life (Fig. 1). One of these, the portrait of Giovanni Coppola in San Giovanni dei Fiorentini is a terrifying work, not only because of its stark and cadaverous portrayal, based on a death mask, of an old man who had recently died at age seventy-nine; the work is also terrific because it was commissioned in March and completed in August 1612, when Bernini was thirteen years old (he was born in December 1598). The discovery of the portrait and the relevant documentation pro-

¹ Lavin (Irving), 'Five Youthful Sculptures by Gianlorenzo Bernini and a Revised Chronology of his Early Works', *The Art Bulletin*, L, 1968, pp. 223–248; unless otherwise noted, the documentation referred to here will be found in that article. Unless otherwise noted, the translations are mine.



vided direct confirmation of the essential validity of the tradition reported by Bernini's early biographers and by the artist himself, that he was a veritable child prodigy who won early fame because of his uncanny ability to make likenesses and carve marble at an incredibly young age. Both Baldinucci and Domenico Bernini in their biographies of the artist, and Bernini himself, as recorded by Chantelou in his diary of the artist's visit to Paris in 1665, report that Bernini's first public 'commission' was a portrait bust, and that he won acclaim when he was brought before an incredulous Pope Paul V, for whom Gianlorenzo's father, Pietro, was then executing important commissions; the boy demonstrated his ability by drawing a head of St. Paul before the pope's very eyes.

Portraits

Baldinucci:

The first work to emerge from his chisel in Rome was a marble head that was placed in the Church of S. Potenziana. Bernini had then scarcely completed his tenth year. Paul V, greatly impressed by the acclaim aroused by such merit, wished to see the youth. He called for him and asked in jest, if he could sketch a head. Giovanni Lorenzo in reply asked which head he wished. 'If this is the case,' the Pope remarked, 'you know how to do everything,' and ordered him to sketch a St. Paul. This he did to perfection with free bold strokes in half an hour to the keen delight and marvel of the Pope.²

² Baldinucci (Filippo), *The life of Bernini*, translated from the Italian by Catherine Enggass, University Park, PA, 1966, p. 9. *La prima opera, che uscisse dal suo scarpello in Roma fu una testa di marmo situata nella chiesa di S. Potenziana; avendo egli allora il decimo anno di sua età appena compiuto. Per la qual. cosa maravigliosamente commosso Paolo V dal chiaro grido di cotanta virtù, ebbe vaghezza di vedere il giovanetto; e fattoselo condurre davanti, gli domandò, come per ischerzo, se avesse saputo fargli colla penna una testa; e rispondendogli Giovan Lorenzo che testa voleva, soggiunse il pontefice 'Se così, le sa far tutte' e ordinatogli che facesse un S. Paolo, gli diè perfezione in mezz'ora, con franchezza di tratto libero e con sommo diletto e maraviglia del papa.* (Baldinucci [Filippo], *Vita del Cavaliere Gio. Lorenzo Bernino*, 1st ed. Florence, 1682, ed. Sergio Samek Ludovici, Milan, 1948, p. 74.)

It is worth noting that the subject referred not only to the pope's namesake but also to the relic of the beheaded saint whose body, together with that of St. Peter, was divided between and Lateran and St. Paul's Outside the Walls. See Lavin (Irving), *Bernini and the Crossing of Saint Peter's*, New York, 1968, p. 1.

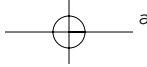
Domenico:

The pope, who by nature had a venerable aspect, wanted to test the courage of the youngster by frightening him further, and, turning to him with a grave voice commanded him there in his presence to draw a head. Gianlorenzo, boldly taking pen in hand and spreading the paper on the Pope's own table, hesitated at tracing the first line; modestly inclining his head toward the Pope he asked, 'What head he desired, a man, a woman, young, old, and in any case what expression, sad, happy, disdainful or pleasant? If this is so,' the pope observed, 'then you can do them all,' and he ordered him to do that of St. Paul. In a few strokes of the pen and with an admirable boldness of hand he finished it quickly with such mastery that the Pope was impressed and remarked to some cardinals who happened to be present, 'This boy will be the Michelangelo of his time.'³

Domenico:

This first, honorable entrance into the Apostolic Palace, the welcome accorded him by the Cardinal, and the praise received from the Pope, made him celebrated in Rome, universally acclaimed and pointed to by all as a young man of not ordinary promise. He had already begun to work at sculpture, and his first work was a head of marble situated in the church of S. Pudenziana, and such other small statues as his young age permitted, and they all appeared so masterfully executed that the celebrated Annibale Carracci, having seen some of them, said, 'He had

³ Il Pontefice, Venerabile per natura di aspetto, volle provar l'intrepidezza del Giovane, con affettargli ancora il terrore, & a lui rivolto con suono grave di voce gli comandò, che quivi in sua presenza disegnasse una Testa. Gio: Lorenzo presa con franchezza in mano le penna, e spianata sopra il Tavolino medesimo del Papa la Carta, nel dar principio alla prima linea, si fermò alquanto sospeso, e poi chinando il capo modestamente verso il Pontefice, richieselo, Che Testa voleva, se di Huomo, ò di Donna, di Giouane, ò di Vecchio, e se pur qualche una di esse, in quale atto la desiderava, se mesta, ò allegra, se sdegrosa, ò piaceuole? Se così, soggiunse all' hora il Papa, le sà far tuttee, & ordinatogli, che facesse quella di S. Paolo, in pochi tratti di penna, e con una franchezza ammirabile di mano la tirò subito a fine con maestria tale, che ne restò ammirato il Papa, e quanto sol disse ad alcuni Cardinali, che quivi all' hora presenti a caso si ritrovarono, Questo Fanciullo sarà il Michel' Angelo del suo tempo . . . (Bernini [Domenico], *Vita del Cavalier Gio. Lorenzo Bernini*, Rome, 1713, pp. 8–9).



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arrived in art at that young age, where others might vaunt to reach in old age.⁴

Chantelou:

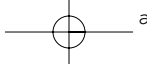
The Cavaliere (said that) at the age of eight (he) had done a head of St. John which was presented to Paul V by his chamberlain. His Holiness could not believe that he had done it and asked if he would draw a head in his presence. He agreed and pen and paper were sent for. When he was ready to begin he asked His Holiness what head he wished him to draw. At that the Pope realized that it was really the boy who had done the St. John, for he had believed that he would draw some conventional head. He asked him to draw⁵

Chantelou:

He said that at six years, he had done a head in a bas-relief by his father, and at seven another, which Paul V could hardly believe was by him; to satisfy his own mind, he asked him if he would draw a head for him. When the paper had been brought he asked His Holiness boldly what head he should do, so that he should not think he was going to

⁴ Questa prima entrata tanto onorevole, che egli hebbe nel Palazzo Pontificio, le accoglienze a lui fatte dal Cardinale, e la lode ricevuta dal Papa, lo resero così celebre per Roma, che da tutti universalmente era acclamato, e mostrato a dito, come Giovane di non ordinaria aspettazione. Haveva già egli dato principio a lavorare di Scultura, e la sua prima opera fu una Testa di marmo situata nella Chiesa di S. Potenziana, & altre piccole Statue, quali gli permetteva l'età in cui era di dieci anni, e tutte apparivano così maestrevolmente lavorate, che havendone qualcheduna veduta il celebre Annibale Caracci, disse, Esser egli arrivato nell' arte in quella icciola età, dove altri potevano gloriarsi di giungere nella uecchiezza. (Bernini, *Vita . . .*, *ibidem*, pp. 9–10.)

⁵ Chantelou (Paul Fréart de), *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*, ed. Anthony Blunt and George C. Bauer, Princeton, 1985, p. 102, August 5. *Le Cavalier a dit . . . qu'à huit ans même il avait fait un chef de Saint-Jean qui fut présenté à Paul V par son maître de chambre: que Sa Sainteté ne voulait pas croire qu'il l'eût fait, et lui demanda s'il pourrait dessiner une tête en sa présence: qu'ayanat répondu qu'oui, Sa Sainteté lui avaiat fair apporter une plume et du papier et que, prêt à commencer, il lui demanda quelle tête Sa Sainteté voulait qu'il dessinât; qu'à cela elle avait connue que c'était lui qui avait fait un chef de Saint-Jean, pensant auparavant qu'il allait dessiner quelque tête de manière; que le Pape lui demanda une tête de Saint-Paul qu'il dessina en sa présence.* (Chantelou [Paul Fréart de], *Journal du Cavalier Bernin en France*, ed. Ludovic Lalanne, Paris, 1885, p. 84.)



work from memory; then the Pope realized that it was indeed he who had done it and asked him to do St. Paul.⁶

All the documents concerning the Coppola bust were in the name of Pietro Bernini, who was indeed a marvelous sculptor, literally marvelous according to Baglione's account of his astonishing ability to carve complex statues directly in the marble, without a model:

Pietro handled marble with such assurance that he had few rivals in this respect. One day in Naples I myself saw him make a few marks with charcoal on a piece of marble and immediately set to work with his chisel; without any further design, he carved three figures from nature, creating a capricious fountain. It was amazing to behold the facility with which he worked. Had he been better at design, his technical facility would have brought him much further.⁷

In fact, this fabled technical facility of Bernini's father, which was surely what first brought him to the attention of Paul V, is in itself one of the strongest reasons to lend credence to the reports of the son's prodigious virtuosity. But, quite apart from the character and quality of the Coppola bust, there is ample historical evidence to indicate that the person who actually carved it was Gianlorenzo. In 1612 Pietro was 50 years old with a long record of accomplishments in Florence, Naples, and Rome, which continued until his death in 1629 and earned him Baglione's admiring, if quali-

⁶ Blunt-Bauer, *Diary* . . ., cited in note 5, p. 260, 6 October. *Il a dit qu'à six ans il fit une tête dans un bas-relief de son père, à sept ans une autre, ce que Paul V ne voulait pas croire quand il la vit: que pour s'en éclaircir il demanda s'il dessinerait bien une tête, qu'il répondit à Sa Sainteté qu'oui, et que lui ayant été apporté du papier, il demanda hardiment au pape quelle tête il voulait qu'il fit, afin qu'il ne crût pas qu'il en fit une de mémoire, qu'alors Sa Sainteté dit qu'il voyait bien qu'il l'avait faite, et lui dit de faire un saint Paul.* (Chantelou, *Journal* . . ., cited in note 5, p. 247.)

⁷ *Pietro con ogni franchezza maneggiava il marmo sì, che in ciò pochi pari egli hebbe. Et vn giorno in Napoli, io stesso il vidi, che prendendo vn carbone, e con esso sopra vn marmo facendo alcuni segni, subito vi messe dentro i ferri, e senz'altro disegno vi caud tre figure dal naturale, per formare vn capriccio da fontana, e con tanta facilità il trattava, che era stupore il vederlo. E se quest'huomo hauesse hauuto maggior disegno, per la facilità dell'operare si sarebbe assai auanzato.* (Baglione [Giovanni] *Le vite de pittori scultori et architetti dal pontificato di Gregorio XIII. del 1572. In fino a'tempi di Papa Urbino Ottovo nel 1642*, Rome, 1642; ed. Valerio Mariani, Rome, 1935, p. 305.)

fied, biography. In all this abundant documentation there is not a single record of Pietro Bernini ever having carved a portrait bust, not a single one, not in Florence, not in Naples, and never in Rome. Portraiture, after all, is not every artist's cup of tea; another well known sculptor who never made portraits was Michelangelo Buonarroti. Conversely, in the years immediately following the Coppola bust and continuing until Pietro's death, there are no less than four documented instances in which father and son worked together on commemorative monuments, and in every instance it was the father who carved the accompanying figures, while Gianlorenzo carved the portrait busts. The series begins in the Barberini chapel in Sant' Andrea della Valle, where documents for various works appear in Pietro's name beginning in 1614 and continue thus until Gianlorenzo's name appears early in 1619, when he received payments for the busts of Maffeo Barberini's mother (Fig. 2) and father (now lost); the busts were actually placed in the chapel but were soon removed for display in the Barberini palace. Subsequently, father and son worked together on three more such monuments, where exactly the same thing happened: Pietro created the accompanying figures, Gianlorenzo made the busts: Cardinal Dolfin in Venice (Fig. 3), Cardinal Escoubleau de Sourdis in Bordeaux (Fig. 4), and Cardinal Bellarmine in Rome (Fig. 5).

Mirabile dictu, the Coppola bust is not even the first work of this kind by Bernini. Baldinucci and Domenico report that Bernini's first public work was a marble head in S. Pudenziana, universally identified with the famous bust of Giovanni Battista Santoni (Fig. 6). I have always suspected that, perhaps owing to some misunderstanding, Chantelou's report that Bernini said he had made a head of San Giovanni at age eight, might in fact refer to the Santoni portrait. In any case, the dates assigned to the bust by the artist and his biographers were consistently dismissed by modern scholars, who neglected to follow the lead offered by the inscription on the tomb itself. The text states that Giovanni Battista Santoni had been Bishop of Tricarico in Calabria and died in 1592, and that the monument was commissioned by his nephew Giovanni Antonio, who was Bishop of Policastro. Giovanni Battista, in other words, had long been dead; what was the occasion that elicited the nephew's gesture of posthumous commemoration? The obvious explanation is that Giovanni Antonio was also commemorating his own elevation to the same high rank attained by his uncle. Giovanni Battista Santoni was made bishop in April 1610. Fifty years later Bernini misremembered or exaggerated when he said he was eight years old. But in

April 1610 he had indeed scarcely completed his tenth year, exactly as Baldinucci and Domenico report.⁸ The dates are incontrovertible and the only alternative to concluding that Bernini deserved his reputation as an astonishingly gifted prodigy, is to assume that the portraits of Coppola and Santoni were the work of the father, as some have done, despite the fact that one cannot point to another portrait bust by Pietro, either before or after, and despite the fact that the son began his career as a prodigious portraitist and went on to become one of the greatest portrait sculptors in the history of art.

In the final analysis, however, what makes the Coppola bust an unforgettable image is its extraordinary effect of somber, almost spectral antiquity. The quality has sometimes been 'explained' by the fact that, as we know from the documents, it was made from a death mask, as if the model made the task of portraiture in marble somehow 'easier,' more 'mechanical,' more 'realistic' than the living sitter. In fact, the work is a deliberate existential pun: it represents exactly what it is, a posthumous portrait of frail but heroic old age. Psychologically, the bust is a profound, one might well say mythic evocation of the dead past in the living present; typologically, it is an unprecedented evocation of classical antiquity in its revival of a pose and drapery arrangement familiar from Roman funerary portraiture (Fig. 7). The form and content together bespeak a new era, *in statu nascendi*.

Coronation of Clement VIII

Ironically, the first of the failings in which '*je me suis trompé*' is a lamentable oversight concerning one of Bernini's most egregious exaggerations, precisely in the domain of portraiture. I must say at the outset, however, that in the end the oversight turns out to be another confirmation of the essential truth of Bernini's claim to youthful prowess. Discussing Gianlorenzo's early portraiture I considered the one and only work by Pietro that does contain a portrait, his depiction of the coronation of Clement VIII on that pope's tomb in S. Maria Maggiore (Figs. 8, 9). I pointed out that the sharply individualized head of the pope is completely unlike those of the other fig-

⁸ My dating based on the inscription, which I offered in my original lecture (January, 1967), was followed by Cesare d'Onofrio, who was present in the audience! (D'Onofrio [Cesare], *Roma vista da Roma*, Rome, 1967 ['finito di stampare' December 1967, cf. p. 455], p. 116. A report was published in *Life*, LXII, no. 2, January 20, 1967, pp. 66-74.

ures in the relief, which instead bear a marked similarity to each other and to Pietro's generic repertory of male types. I tentatively suggested that the pope's head might actually be the work of the son. Much to my chagrin I failed to recall then the crucial passage concerning this very work recorded in the account, quoted above, that Bernini gave to Chantelou of his early encounter with Paul V: 'He said that at six years, he had done a head in a bas-relief by his father, and at seven another.'

Much more important than the age reported here, is the fact that the passage must indeed refer to the S. Maria Maggiore relief, and not just because this is Pietro Bernini's only relief containing a portrait. When Bernini speaks of executing *two* portraits in consecutive years, he was telling a truth that only he could have recalled, because the documents record the extraordinary fact that two reliefs were indeed actually carried out and installed, one after the other. On November 2, 1612, Pietro was paid 249 scudi:

*per rifare di novo da Pietro Eernino scultore la Historia
della Incoronazione della bo: me: di Papa Clemente Ottavo per servitio del
Deposito suo nella Capella che S. S.ta ha fato fare in S.ta Maria Maggiore*

And on January 19, 1614, he received 600 scudi:

*per resto et intiero pagamento delle due Historie di marmo
della Incoronatione della felice memoria di papa Clemente
da lui fatte una di quali posta nel Deposito di esso papa
Clemente in la capella che S. S. ha facto fare in S.ta
Marie Maggiore . . .⁹*

We have no idea why the first version was replaced, but it was certainly completed by November 1612, and the second by January 1614. While Bernini after 50 years may well have misremembered and, consciously or not, exaggerated his youth at the time, it would be unthinkably cynical to suppose that he would claim for his own the work of his father, and equally unthinkable that he could have imagined his listeners in Paris or posterity would realize that the work in question was the relief in S. Maria Maggiore,

⁹ The documents are cited after Muñoz (Antonio), 'Il padre del Bernini. Pietro Bernini scultore (1562–1629)', in *Vita d'arte*, IV, 1909, pp. 469–470.

much less that it was executed in two versions in the years 1612–1614. The portrait of Clement is thus certainly — not tentatively — by Gianlorenzo, and follows by a few months the bust of Antonio Coppola, for which Pietro received payments from March 8 through August 10, 1612. Gianlorenzo was then not six or seven, as he claimed, but between thirteen and fifteen — still young enough to be proud of, I would say! A similar and synchronous case is that of a now lost portrait of Alessandro Ludovisi (later Gregory XV) which Domenico Bernini (p. 20) reports his father made before Ludovisi left Rome to take up his new post as archbishop of Bologna. Writing a century later, Domenico cannot have expected his readers to recall that Ludovisi was elected archbishop in March 1612.

St. Sebastian and St. Lawrence

The discovery of the Coppola bust and the early date for that of Santoni led me to reconsider the dates traditionally assigned to other juvenile works by Gianlorenzo. For example, Italo Faldi had discovered the payment in 1615 for a pedestal for the *Capra Amaltea*, which established a *terminus ante quem* for that work (Fig. 10). But the same payment also includes a pedestal for a very similar, anonymous sculpture that was paid for much earlier, in 1609 (Fig. 11). If that was also the case with the *Capra Amaltea*, then Bernini was 10 years old when he made it. And why not? — especially since many scholars have suggested that it must have been among the ‘picciole statue,’ much admired by the celebrated painter Annibale Carracci, which Domenico Bernini says his father carved immediately after the Santoni bust.

What neither Bernini himself nor Domenico Bernini can have anticipated was that his readers would know that Annibale Carracci died in July 1609, when Bernini was ten. In my opinion, such a perfect coordination of independently determined dates, reported by the biographers and deducible from the facts — the date of the Santoni bust, that of the likely acquisition of the *Capra amaltea*, and the *terminus ante quem* established by the encounter with Carracci — cannot be simply fortuitous. Much more reasonable simply to assume that Bernini was indeed able to do certain kinds of things earlier, much earlier, than most people thought — and still think — credible!

On the other hand, the wonderful discovery by Patrizia Cavazzini of the payments to Pietro Bernini for two works by his son — the *Boy defeating a*

Marine Dragon now in the Getty Museum, listed in a Barberini inventory as an 'opera puerile' of Gianlorenzo, and the *St. Sebastian* — calls for a radical reformulation of other elements of the chronology I proposed for his early work (Figs. 12, 13).¹⁰ I placed both these sculptures earlier than had been assumed, about 1614 and 1615, respectively, whereas in fact Pietro Bernini received payment for them in December 1617.¹¹ The discovery is important for many reasons. What the discovery does not do, however, is invalidate the relative chronology and the claims to precocity of the young Bernini. Rudolph Wittkower emphatically maintained that the *St. Lawrence* preceded the *St. Sebastian*, dating them 1616–1617, 1617–1618 respectively. In recognizing that the *St. Lawrence* was earlier Wittkower was surely correct: the question is, by how much? It is significant that neither Baldinucci nor Domenico Bernini mentions a date for the *St. Sebastian*, but both record that Bernini made the *St. Lawrence* when he was fifteen, that is, in 1614:

Meanwhile, still in his fifteenth year, he carved the figure of St. Lawrence on the gridiron for Leone Strozzi, which was placed in the Strozzi villa.¹²

. . . at age fifteen he portrayed in himself the true torment of a St. Lawrence in to order carve a feigned one . . . and among the many per-

¹⁰ The discovery is reported by Sebastian Schütze in *Bernini scultore. La nascita del Barocco in Casa Borghese* (exhib. cat. Rome), Rome, 1998, p. 83. The documents were discovered by Patrizia Cavazzini, who also published them in *Effigies & Ecstasies. Roman Baroque Sculpture and Design in the Age of Bernini*, exhib. cat., Edinburgh, 1998, p. 90. The closely associated payments in themselves testify that the sculptures are by Gianlorenzo. Moreover, both Schütze and Cavazzini conveniently suppress the explicit attribution of the *Boy with the Marine Dragon* to Gianlorenzo by Niccolò Menghini in a 1632 inventory of the Barberini collection: 'Un putto qual tiene un drago alto palmi 2^{1/2} fatto dal Cavalier Bernini.' (Lavin, 'Five Youthful Sculptures', cited in note 1, p. 230). Menghini was himself a sculptor closely associated with Bernini, for whom he worked extensively at St. Peter's. He certainly knew whereof he wrote, and his attribution stayed with the sculpture when it became a diplomatic gift in 1702 from Cardinal Carlo Barberini to Philip V of Spain.

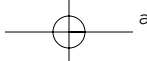
¹¹ *una Statuetta di Marmo bianco di un putto sopra un drago Marino 114.20; una Statua di Marmo bianco di un San Sebastiano 114.50.*

¹² Baldinucci, *The Life . . .*, cited in note 2, p. 12. *Correva egli intanto il quindicesimo di sua età quando e fece vedere scolpita di sua mano la figura di S. Lorenzo sopra la graticola per Leone Strozzi, che fu posta nella lor villa.* (Baldinucci, *Vita . . .*, cited in note 2, pp. 77 f.)

sons who convened, the most noble Leone Strozzi was so taken with it that he acquired it, and today it is to be seen in his delightful villa on the Viminal.¹³

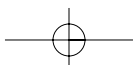
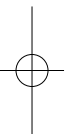
These statements also confirm the priority of the *St. Lawrence*. The sculpture was owned by Leone Strozzi, whose uncle, Cardinal Lorenzo (d. 1571), was buried in the Strozzi family chapel, across the nave in Sant'Andrea della Valle from the Barberini chapel, which covered the site where Saint Sebastian was supposed to have been thrown into the Cloaca Maxima, and which replaced an earlier church called San Sebastianello. According to Baldinucci Gianlorenzo made the *St. Lawrence* for Leone Strozzi, while Domenico suggests that Strozzi acquired it only after seeing it. In the latter case, Bernini may have begun the work as a play on his own name, or with the intention of 'selling' it to Strozzi as an avuncular commemoration for his family chapel; the two motivations are by no means incompatible. The altar wall of the Strozzi chapel displays bronze statues copied after Michelangelo, bearing the date 1616 (Fig. 14). If the *St. Lawrence* was intended for the Strozzi chapel, 1616 would then be a *terminus ante quem* and the sources' dating of 1614 may not be too far off. It can scarcely be coincidental that the two closely connected families should have closely similar and virtually contemporaneous works by the same artist at the same time that both families were creating family chapels across the nave from each other in the same church, one containing a commemoration of St. Sebastian, the other including the tomb of an important member of the family named Lorenzo. We know in fact that Maffeo Barberini withheld for himself a painting by Ludovico Carracci he had commissioned for the chapel, and that he actually removed two of the four cherubs (Fig. 15) as well as the busts of his mother and father, all made by Bernini and mounted in the chapel, to display them at home in the family palace; the Strozzi may have done the same. The most likely hypothesis is that the two saintly images were similarly intended for the patrons' respective chapels, but never actually installed.

¹³ . . . *in eta di quindici anni . . . ritrasse in se il tormento di un S. Lorenzo vero per iscolpirne un finto . . . e frà quegli innumerabili Personaggi, che vi concorsero, Leone Strozzi Nobilissimo Romano se ne invaghì in modo, che lo volle per se, e presentemente si vede nella sua deliziosa Villa del Viminale.* (Bernini, *Vita* . . ., cited in note 2, pp. 15 f.).



Payments

The relationship between father and son is extraordinary, indeed unique, to my knowledge, in another way. We now have a whole series of instances in which payments for works by the young Bernini were received by his father. This had been known to be the case with the bust of Coppola and the Angels in the Barberini chapel, and now we have the *Boy Defeating a Marine Dragon* and the *St. Sebastian*. In fact, no payments to Gianlorenzo are recorded from this early period and I do not believe it was simply a matter of greed or parental arrogance on Pietro's part. I suspect, rather, that it was a legal matter: Gianlorenzo could not sign contracts or receive payment for work as a professional sculptor until he had reached the age of maturity and entered the sculptors' guild as a master. Bernini is recorded as saying that he had become a master at an early age, at the time he was assiduously studying Michelangelo's Florentine *Pietà*, which was then in Rome. As I pointed out long ago, the effects of this study are clearly visible in the figure of *St. Sebastian*, for which Pietro received payment in December of 1617. At the Barberini chapel Pietro signed all the documents, including the contract in which he guarantees his son's participation in the execution, until Gianlorenzo began to receive payments in his own name, after which Pietro is never again mentioned. The hypothesis that Gianlorenzo came of age professionally in 1618 is consistent with his own report that he had become a 'maestro' early, since admission to the sculptors' guild normally took place between the ages of 20 and 25, and Bernini would have celebrated his twentieth birthday on December 7, 1618. (Bernini was in fact a member of the sculptors' guild, to which he made generous contributions during his lifetime.) The date is supported in the precedent chronology by the fact that Pietro took payment in 1617 for the *Boy defeating a Marine Dragon* and the *St. Sebastian* and continued to do so for the work at Sant'Andrea delta Valle until July 1618; the next payment, in April 1619, was to Gianlorenzo and included 'all the works that he may have made . . . together with his father up to the present day.' Heretofore unpublished documents dated December 5, 1618, and January 6, 1619, seem to be the first recorded payments to Gianlorenzo Bernini as an independent artist. On those dates he received a total of 250 scudi for another statue of *St. Sebastian*, commissioned by Pietro Aldobrandini, presumably for a niche above the entrance to the chapel dedicated to that saint in the left wing of the famous nymphaeum in the Villa Aldobrandini



at Frascati (Fig. 16).¹⁴ This *St. Sebastian* was instead kept in the Aldobrandini palace at Magnanapoli in Rome, where it is described in an inventory of 1682 and included in Baldinucci's list of Bernini's works.¹⁵

¹⁴ N.B.: These documents were first presented in my paper 'Bernini giovane' at the Villa Medici conference in February 1999; in the meanwhile, a series of parallel documents concerning the Aldobrandini *St. Sebastian* has been published, with similar observations and phraseology, by Laura Testa, 'Documenti inediti sullo scomparso "San Sebastiano" Aldobrandini del giovane Gian Lorenzo Bernini', in *Bollettino d'arte*, LXXXVI, 2001, pp. 131–135. Testa found important additional documentation that the following year Ippolito Buzio made another figure of St. Sebastian, which was in fact installed at Frascati (payment for transportation cited below), whereas that by Bernini remained in Rome. It seems likely that Bernini's figure was first intended for the niche at Frascati, but upon seeing it the patron decided to keep it at home, commissioning a substitute for the original location. The situation would thus astonishingly duplicate what happened at virtually the same moment with two of the four putti Gianlorenzo made for the Barberini chapel in Sant' Andrea della Valle: Maffeo removed them to his own house and commissioned substitutes for the chapel, evidently from Francesco Mochi. The coincidence also extends to Bernini's two *St. Sebastians*, not only in subject matter but in the fact that the Barberini figure must likewise have originated in relation to the Saint Sebastian commemoration adjoining the family chapel but was kept as part of the private art collection. (See above, and Lavin, 'Five Youthful Sculptures', cited in note 1, pp. 232–237.) One suspects a deliberate collusion and/or competition among the patrons (Barberini, Strozzi, Aldobrandini) for the work of the young prodigy!

Rome, Archivio Doria Pamfili; Fondo Aldobrandini (see Vignodelli Rubrichi [Renato], 'Il "Fondo Aldobrandini" nell'archivio Doria Landi Pamphilj', in *Archivio della società romana di storia patria*, no. XCI, 1969)

Busta 19, Reg. de' Mandati, Card. Pietro Aldobrandini 'H' 1618–1620

fol. 39 recto: *a di detto [5 xbre 1618] paga.ti a Gio: Lorenzo Bernini scultore sc. 100 m.a et sono a buon c.to duno S.to Bast.o di Marmo che ha fatto p. s.vitio di Casa n'ra—sc 100*

fol. 42 verso:

a di detto [8 di Genn.o 1619] pag.ti a Gio: Lorenzo Bernini scultore sc 150 m.a et sono a complim.to di sc 250 p.to [per resto] et intero pagam.to d'uno S.to Bast.o di marmo fattoci p. s.vitio di casa n'ra che rest.o sc 100 seli sono fatti pag.re sotto di 5 di xbre pass.to che con sua ric.ta vi si fan.o boni—sc 150

restino di

fol. 60 verso:

a di detti [x di Giug.no 1619] pag.a a Bern.do Carrettiere sc 18 m.a et sono p. la vett.ra di 12 cavalli che anno portato alla n'ra Villa di belv.re 2 statue di marmo che p.a S. bast.o e l'altra Venere a g.l [giulij] 15 p. cavallo—sc 18

fol. 63 verso:

et adi detti [p.o di luglio 1619] pag.ti a Bern.do Carrettiere sc 18 m.a et sono p. la vett.ra di 12 cavalli che anno p.tato a la n'ra Villa di belv.re dua statue di marmo che una di S.to Bast.no e la altra una Venere a g.li 15 p. cavallo—sc 18

in margin: *non ha hauto effetto che ha pag.to il monte*

¹⁵ Busta 30.a.1531–1682, Inventario di beni di Olimpia Aldobrandini Pamphilj, a. 1682 fol. 535 recto (Villa Belvedere, Frascati):

Putto Morsicato

'Je me suis trompé' also in another sense. By a remarkable coincidence there came to light at the same time as the Getty sculpture a closely related work, a sort of miserable alter ego of the graceful and smiling *Boy defeating a Marine Dragon* commissioned by Maffeo Barberini (Fig. 17), showing a Boy struggling in agony with a different kind of marine monster that takes a ferocious bite out of his leg (Figs. 18, 19).¹⁶ Taken together, as in some sense they must be, the sculptures seem to have been born together as contrasting offspring of the putti in the Bacchic group in the Metropolitan Museum, to be considered presently. They display Bernini's astonishing psychological precocity — emphasized in Domenico Bernini's description of the episode with Paul V and evident already in the *Capra Amaltea*. Absolutely without parallel in the work of Pietro Bernini, they foreshadow the high psycho moral drama of the *Anima Beata* and *Anima Dannata* that Gianlorenzo carved for a tomb monument in 1619, at age 21. I suggested that the sculpture now in Berlin was identical with one recorded in several inventories of the Ludovisi family collection, and described by Bellori. I cited three Ludovisi inventories:¹⁷

1623: *Un' Puttino di marmo bianco, qual' piange che una vipera l'a morsicato alto p.i 2¹/₂ in circa*

Al Teatro.

Nell'entrare nella Cappella di S. Sebastiano.

Una statua di Marmo di S. Sebastiano dentro la Nicchia, alto a proportione della medema nicchia, attaccato ad un tronco frezzato, descritta nell'Inventario sudetto del S.re Cardinale— foglio 651.

fol. 366 recto (palazzo a Magnanapoli):

Camera sopra la strada

Un S. Sebastiano di marmo legato ad un tronco, con armatura alto palmi otto, incirca, con piedestallo di legno bianco, e cornice dorata, come a detto Inventario a N.o 109).

Baldinucci, *Vita . . .*, cited in note 2, p. 178: *S. Sebastiano—Principessa di Rossano* (Olimpia Aldobrandini, Jr., deceased owner of the palace).

The sculpture was last mentioned in an inventory of 1709–1710 (Testa, cited in n. 14, p. 135, n. 38).

¹⁶ On this work see most recently *Bernini scultore . . .*, cited in note 10, pp. 96–101. The original complementarity of the sculptures may have been reflected in the fact that in the 1960s both were sold under temporary import licenses by the same Florentine dealer, Francesco Romano.

¹⁷ Lavin, *Five Youthful Sculptures*, cited in note 1, p. 232, note 67.

1633: *Un puttino di marmo piangente a sedere in una mappa di fiori morzicato da una vipera, sopra una base di marmo mischio — mano del Caval. re Bernino*

1641: *Un Putto moderno opra del Sig.r Cavalier Bernino, siede tra l'herba morso da un serpe.*

Since that time Jennifer Montagu has found the work in two later Ludovisi inventories. These new descriptions of the extraordinary motif add a crucial and unequivocal detail that identifies the work even more distinctly — the boy was bitten on the leg:

1665: *et altra sedente sopra fronde in atto languente con un serpe, che gli morde una gamba . . .*

1705: *Un puttino assiso sopra certi fiori, il quale vien'morsicato nella gamba da una Vipera lavoro originale del Cavalier Bernino.*¹⁸

There can be no reasonable doubt that the Berlin sculpture is indeed the one that belonged to the Ludovisi. The sinuous, indeed serpentine movement and strangely distorted expression recall Pietro's mannerisms and relate it closely to one of the putti in the Metropolitan sculpture. It may not be coincidental that in 1642 Baglione records certain statues and groups made by Pietro Bernini for Leone Strozzi to be seen in the garden of the villa which Strozzi had purchased from the Frangipani family,

*Alcune statue, a gruppi per il Signor Leone Strozzi al Giardino de' Signori Frangipani a Termini*¹⁹

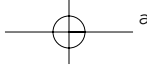
and that a sculpture similar in subject and size was recorded in a 1641 inventory of Mario Frangipani, the patron of Algardi:

*Un putto moderno che lo morde un serpe alto palmi due e mezzo in circa.*²⁰

¹⁸ Montagu (Jennifer), *Alessandro Algardi*, 2 Vols., New Haven, 1985, p. 419.

¹⁹ Baglione, *Le vite . . .*, cited in note 7, p. 305.

²⁰ Montagu, *Alessandro Algardi . . .*, cited in note 18, p. 239, n. 28.

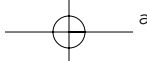


Apart from the attribution to Gianlorenzo, the importance of the identification of the Ludovisi sculpture lies in the explanation Bellori gives of its iconography, which he calls a representation of Fraud, or insidia, in contrast to which Algardi made one of his earliest sculptures, now lost, showing a boy riding on a tortoise:

Algardi made [for the Villa Ludovisi] a putto of marble seated on a tortoise, sounding a reed pipe, understood as Security, of which the tortoise is the symbol, and the innocence of the boy, who plays and sits securely. This was commissioned by the Cardinal to accompany another putto [characteristically for Bellori, no mention of Bernini!] who cries bitten by a serpent hidden in the weeds, understood as fraud and insidiousness. It is described here as one of the first things that Alessandro worked in marble, although it is wanting in excellence.²¹

This interpretation was doubtless inspired by the carnivorous action of the animal, and the conspicuous presence of the plant, described in two of the inventories as flowers, in the others and by Bellori as 'erba,' or weeds, suggesting the idea of a treacherous snake hidden in the vegetation, and hence the identification of the animal as a serpent or viper. In fact, the thick-leaved plant, part flower, part weed, is a botanical fantasy. And the appendages of the serpentine creature also suggest a marine animal, something like a dolphin, which is how modern scholars have identified it. But who ever heard of a dolphin biting people? Dolphins are, on the contrary, man's best marine friends. And who ever heard of a dolphin swimming on land, among flowers, weeds, or any other plants? Strange dolphin indeed, since the sculpture clearly refers with puckish irony to the famous story of the boy Arion, who was saved from the sea by a dolphin that transported him to shore on its back. An ancient sculptural group at the Borghese, restored in the sixteenth century and surely known to Bernini, recalls Arion

²¹ *Fecevi [Algardi for the Villa Ludovisi] d'invenzione un putto sedente di marmo, appoggiato ad una testundine, e si pone li calami alla bocca, per suonare, inteso per la sicurezza; di cui è il simbolo la testundine, e l'innocenza del fanciullo, che suona, e riposa sicuro. Questo gli fu fatto fare dal Cardinale, per accompagnamento di un'altro putto che duolsi morsicato da un Serpente ascoso frà l'erba, inteso per la fraude, e per l'insidia; e si è qui descritto per essere delle prime cose, che Alessandro lavorasse in marmo, benché fuori dell'eccellenza.* (Bellori [Giovanni Pietro], *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti moderni*, Rome, 1672, ed. Evelina Borea, Turin, 1976, pp. 401 f.)



(the figure has satyr's ears) as a smiling cavalier confidently leading his swift and obedient marine steed across the waves, dominating it by grasping its tail and mouth (Fig. 20). The classical work was aptly cited in relation to the motif of the Berlin *Putto morsicato* by Ursula Schlegel,²² but I believe it was the touchstone that inspired all three modern sculptures in a veritable paragone of Ovidian physical and psychological metamorphosis. At the Getty the animal is transformed into an ugly aero-amphibian beast (water at the front of the base, rocks behind), winged and with a fish's tail, and the happy boy hero, instead of grasping, tears apart the mouth of the squawking dragon. At Berlin the classical fish is transformed into an insidious and sinuous terrestrial (all rocks) aquatic beast, and the mouth becomes a terrible instrument of revenge against the temerarious would be dominator. The snake was indeed a traditional symbol of insidious deception and fraud, but to show a quasi dolphin in this role made the animal doubly insidious. One perceives the ingredients of a very sophisticated allegory, and it is impossible to resist the temptation to consider these three closely connected sculptures, made for closely interconnected, in this case often competing patrons, in relation to one another. Perhaps the sculptures were witty barbs in some political emblematic intrigue: Maffeo Barberini's happy boy victorious over the harmless little dragon (a Borghese symbol); the Ludovisi child betrayed by the swift but treacherous serpentine dolphin (a Barberini symbol); and, ten years later, the second Ludovisi putto, by Algardi, riding triumphantly upon a slow but dependable tortoise.

Sesto Fiorentino

Our knowledge of the relationship between the young Bernini and his father has been greatly increased in recent years by the discovery, or recovery, of an amazing series of sculptures all belonging to the period when Bernini was still officially an apprentice of his father. In the cases where the documents are preserved, Pietro received the payments regardless of who actually executed the work. Outstanding among these is the magnificent *Faun and Putti* now in the Metropolitan Museum, which was in Bernini's house when he died (Fig. 21).²³ The group is recorded in several successive

²² Schlegel (Ursula), 'Zum Oeuvre des jungen G. L. Bernini', in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, IX, 1967, pp. 274–294.

²³ First published by Olga Raggio ('A New Bacchic Group by Bernini', in *Apollo*, no. CVIII, 1978, pp. 406–417); see *Bernini scultore . . .*, cited in note 10, pp. 52–61.

inventories of his possessions, and, most tellingly, in a description by Nicodemus Tessin who knew Bernini personally and visited the house in 1673–1674, while the artist was still alive. In none of these documents is the work actually attributed to Bernini, nor is it mentioned by Baldinucci or by Domenico Bernini, both of whose biographies must rely heavily on the artist's own testimony. By contrast, *Veritas*, which was also in the house, is always attributed to him, in his own testament, in the inventories, and in the biographies. In fact, I have always believed that the sculpture was conceived and executed by Pietro Bernini, assisted in relatively minor ways by his son.²⁴ The virtuoso technique, and dynamic, expansive, perforated design were clearly among the important legacies of Pietro. Gianlorenzo, on the other hand, even in works closest to his father's, like the Aeneas and Anchises, sought to simplify and organize Pietro's upward striving, artificially contrived, awkwardly contorted and intertwining forms into relatively clear, simple, logical structures. Since its publication the Metropolitan sculpture has become like a brilliant sun encircled by a number of closely related works that fully justify Baglione's enthusiastic homage to Pietro Bernini's technical facility. There are the herms from the Villa Borghese now also in the Metropolitan, executed in the spring and summer of 1616, concerning which Giacomo Manilli, who published a description of the villa in 1650 and must have known the truth since he was Cardinal Scipione's household manager, said that Bernini assisted his father in executing the baskets of fruit (Fig. 22). There are the four Seasons at the Villa Aldobrandini at Frascati discovered and published by Zeri, concerning which no documentation has come to light (Fig. 23). There is the figure of Autumn in a private collection in New York (Fig. 24). There is a group once in the Palazzo Altemps, recorded in an early engraving (Fig. 25). Finally, there is in Berlin a fountain group with a satyr seated astride a panther and holding aloft a great mass of grapes (Fig. 26).²⁵ All these works are obviously by the same hand, as everyone who has dealt with them agrees. Taken together they constitute a coherent body of work, a veritable iron chain conceptually and stylistically, that holds the key to the relationship between Pietro and Gianlorenzo Bernini. Only in the Metropolitan sculpture, in my

²⁴ I said so in a letter to the Director of the Metropolitan when the museum was considering the sculpture for purchase.

²⁵ All these works are discussed in *Bernini scultore* . . . , cited in note 10, pp. 18–37, 52–61.

opinion, did Gianlorenzo's mind and hand intervene, and not in the basic conception, but in two secondary, yet interrelated and highly significant ways: in the delicate, pellucid rendering of different tones and textures in the treatment of the marble surfaces, and in the extraordinary psychological counterpoint played out between the smiling, impudent and terrified putti — the kind textural and tonal subtlety and intellectual and emotional psychodrama that have no counterparts in the work of Pietro but became defining characteristics of Gianlorenzo's art.

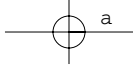
The whole issue of authorship and chronology is thrown into crisis by new evidence concerning the fountain in Berlin, which I offer here for the first time, as I offered the five new early works by Bernini in my lecture in Rome long ago. The Berlin sculpture was purchased in Florence in 1884 by the then Director of the Berlin Museum, Wilhelm Bode from the well known dealer Bardini. Frida Schottmüller in 1933 catalogued the fountain as the work of an unknown Tuscan sculptor of the early seventeenth century.²⁶ The matter rested there until Olga Raggio, in publishing the Metropolitan piece, related it to the Berlin fountain, which she also labeled as Tuscan, early seventeenth century.²⁷ Since then there has been an increasing tendency to attribute all these works, including the Berlin fountain, to Gianlorenzo.²⁸ They certainly are all inspired by the same guiding spirit. The fact is, however, that the Berlin fountain it is not a Roman work at all, but Florentine, that is to say precisely, it came from the Villa Corsi Salviati at Sesto Fiorentino, a once famous property of the Corsi bankers and still fairly well preserved. Quite by accident, on a visit to the villa some years ago, I discovered an exact copy of the Berlin fountain in an open loggia in the east wing of the garden façade (Figs. 27–30).²⁹ I have uncovered

²⁶ Schottmüller (Frieda), *Kaiser-Friedrich Museum. Die italienischen und spanischen Bildwerke der Renaissance und des Barock*, Berlin, 1933, p. 209.

²⁷ Raggio, 'A new Bacchic Group . . .', cited in note 23, p. 413.

²⁸ A notable exception is Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco, who attended my presentation of this paper at the Villa Medici (February 19, 1999) and adopted my attribution to Pietro Bernini of the Sesto fountain and the related sculptures in the exhibition he subsequently organized with Maria Grazia Bernardini: *Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Regista del barocco* (exhib. cat. Rome), Rome, 1999, p. 18, ill., 33, n. 19.

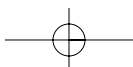
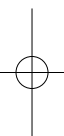
²⁹ Our Fig. 27 is part large album, preserved at the villa, consisting of Alinari photographs of the family and the villa, with an affectionate manuscript dedication by Bardo to his daughter Francesca, dated 11 November 1888; Alinari dates the photo 1885. I am greatly indebted to the veteran custodian of the villa, Bruno Bruscastelli, for his generous help with this and other matters. On our Figs. 28, 29, 30, a drawing by Giuseppe Zocchi for the



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1. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of Antonio Coppola*.
Rome, S. Giovanni dei Fiorentini
(photo: David Lees, Rome).

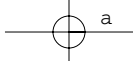




2. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of Camilla Barbadori*.
Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst.



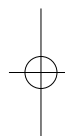
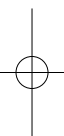
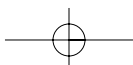
3. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of Cardinal Dolfin*.
Venice, S. Michele all'Isola (photo: Böhm, Venice).

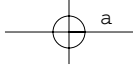


5. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of Cardinal Bellarmino*.
Rome, Church of the Gesù (photo: ICCD).



4. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of Cardinal Escoubleau de Sourdis*. Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts
(photo: Giraudon, Paris).

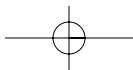
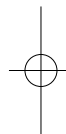
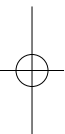


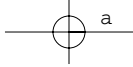


7. Roman portrait.
Rome, Museo delle Terme.

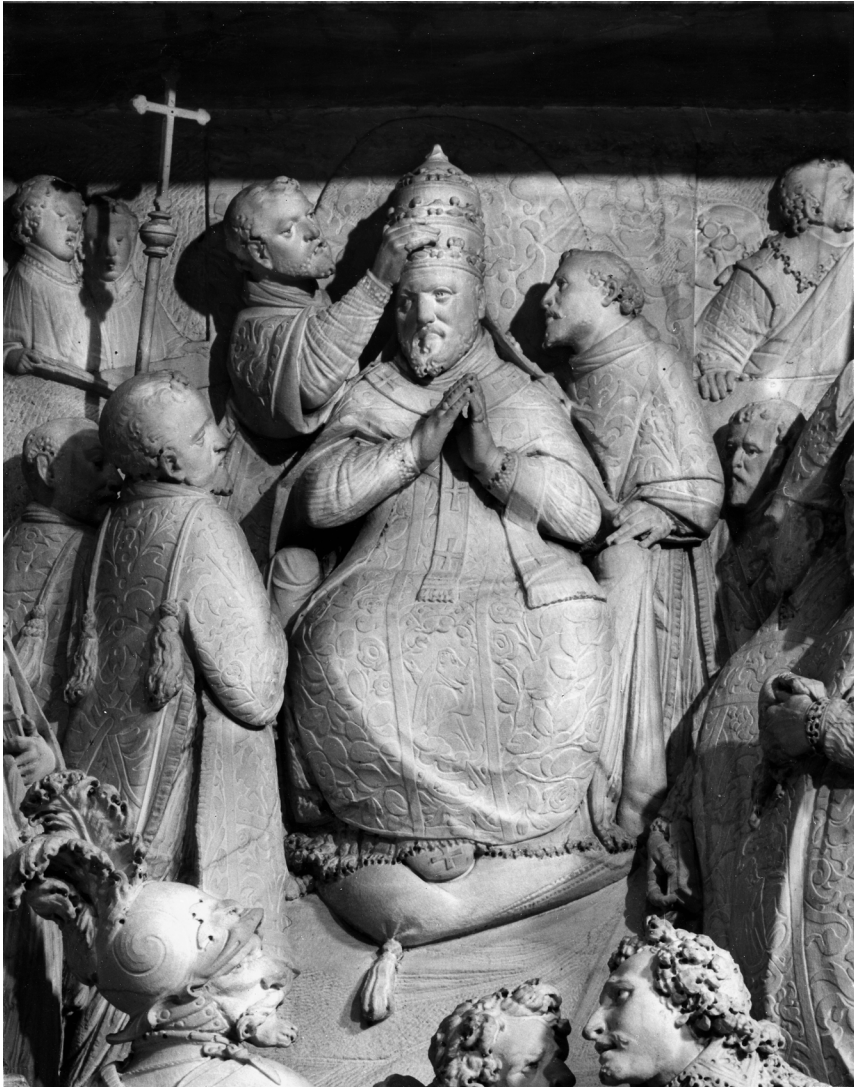


6. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Bust of Giovanni Battista Santoni*.
Rome, S. Prassede (photo: Foto Unione, Rome).

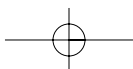


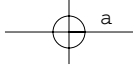


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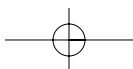
8. Pietro Bernini, *Coronation of Clement VIII*.
Rome, S. Maria Maggiore (photo: Alinari).

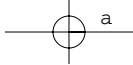




9. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Portrait of Clement VIII* (detail of Fig. 8).
Rome, S. Maria Maggiore (photo: Alinari).

10. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Amalthean Goat*.
Rome, Galleria Borghese (photo: Alinari).



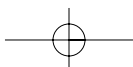


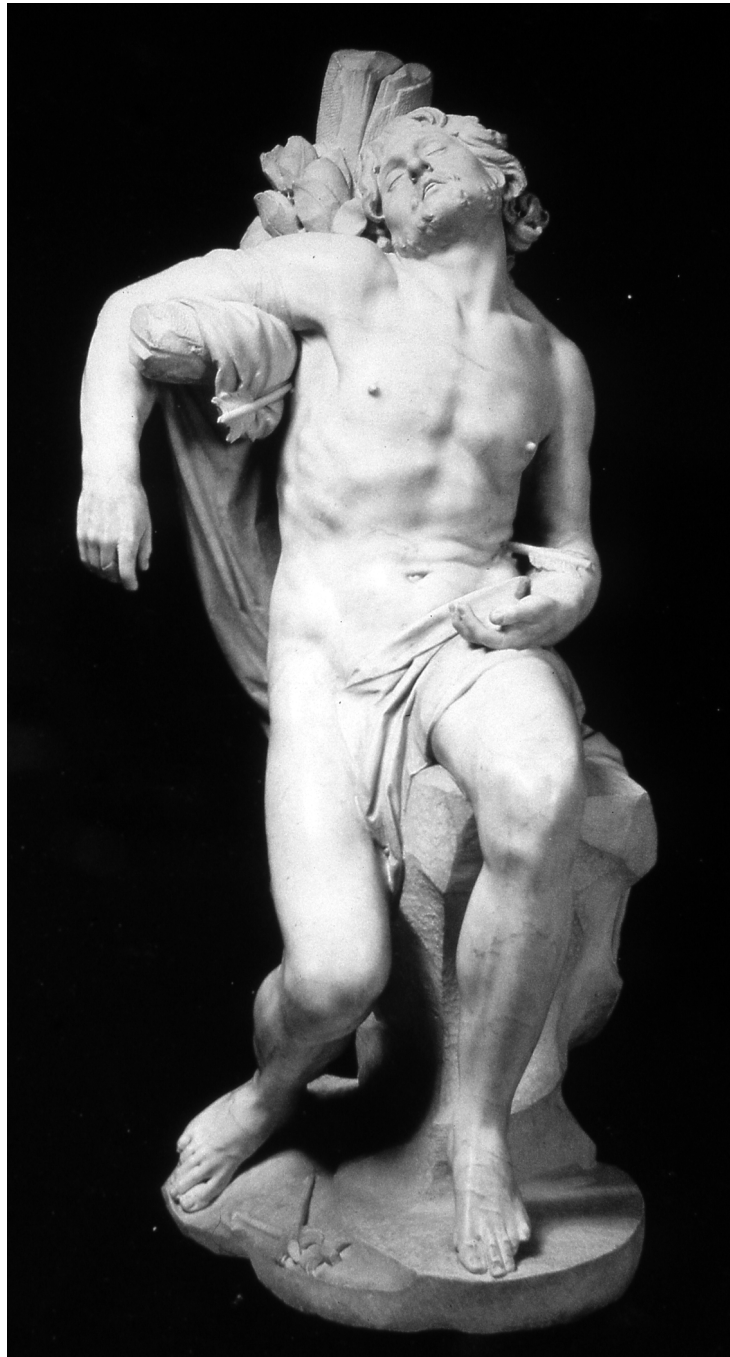
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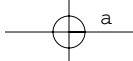
11. *Three Sleeping Putti*. Rome, Galleria Borghese (photo: Alinari).

13. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *St. Lawrence*. Florence, Contini-Bonacossi Collection (photo: ICCD).





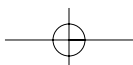
12. Gianlorenzo
Bernini,
Sz. Sebastian.
Lugano,
Thyssen-Bornemisza
Collection.

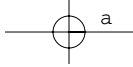


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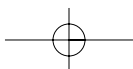


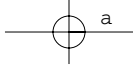
14. Strozzi Chapel. Rome, S. Andrea della Valle.





15. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Cherubs*. Rome, S. Andrea della Valle, Barberini Chapel.

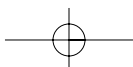


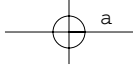


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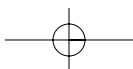


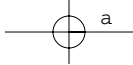
16. Giovanni Battista Falda, *Veduta e prospetto del gran'teatero dell'acque della Villa Aldobrandini di Belvedere à Frascati*, engraving, detail, entrance to the chapel of St. Sebastian of the nymphaeum (Falda [Giovanni Battista], *Le fontane nelle ville di Frascati nel Tuscolano*, Rome, 1684, pl. 6).





17. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Boy defeating a Marine Dragon*.
Los Angeles, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum
(photo: L. A. Foersterling, St. Louis).





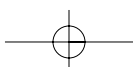
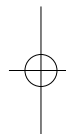
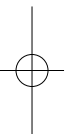
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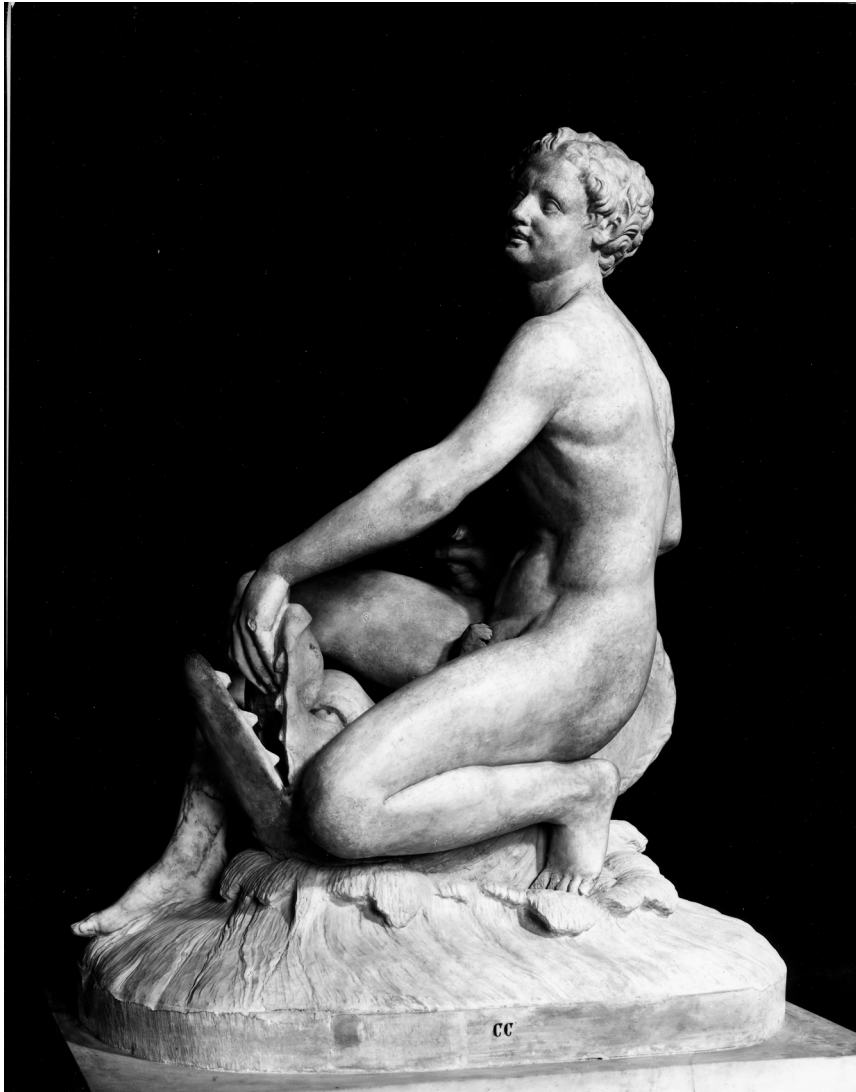
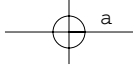


19. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Boy bitten by a "serpe,"* side view.
Berlin, Staatliche Museen.

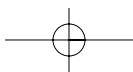
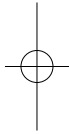
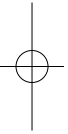


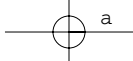
18. Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Boy bitten by a "serpe,"*
Berlin, Staatliche Museen.



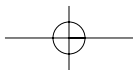
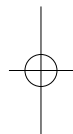
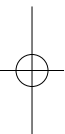


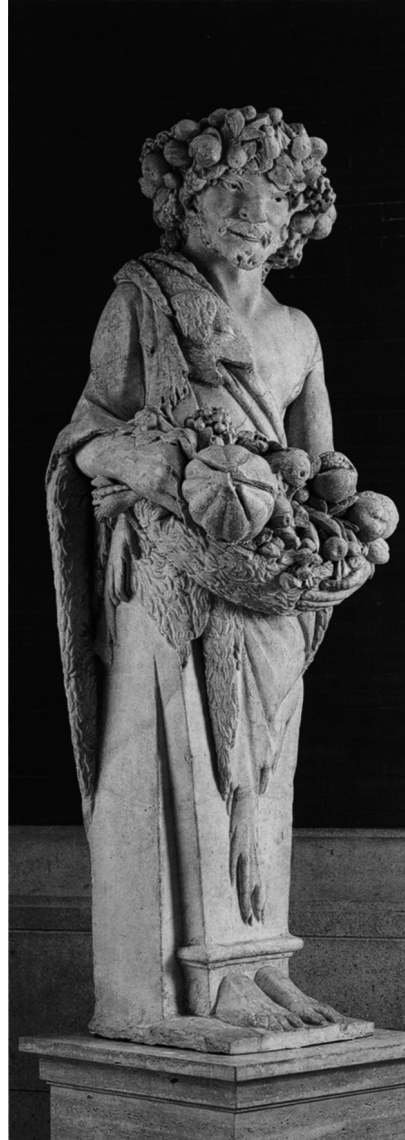
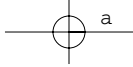
20. *Arion-Satyr riding on a Dolphin*. Rome, Galleria Borghese.



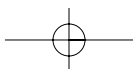


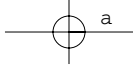
21. Pietro Bernini, assisted by Gianlorenzo. *Bacchic Group*.
New York, Metropolitan Museum.



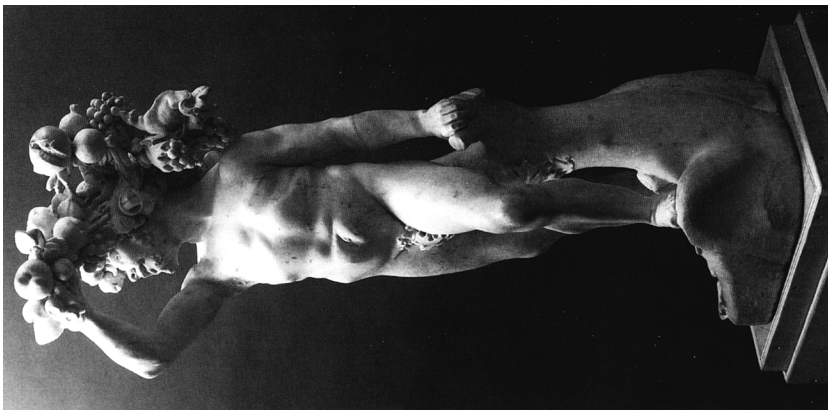


22. Pietro Bernini, *Herms*. New York, Metropolitan Museum.





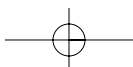
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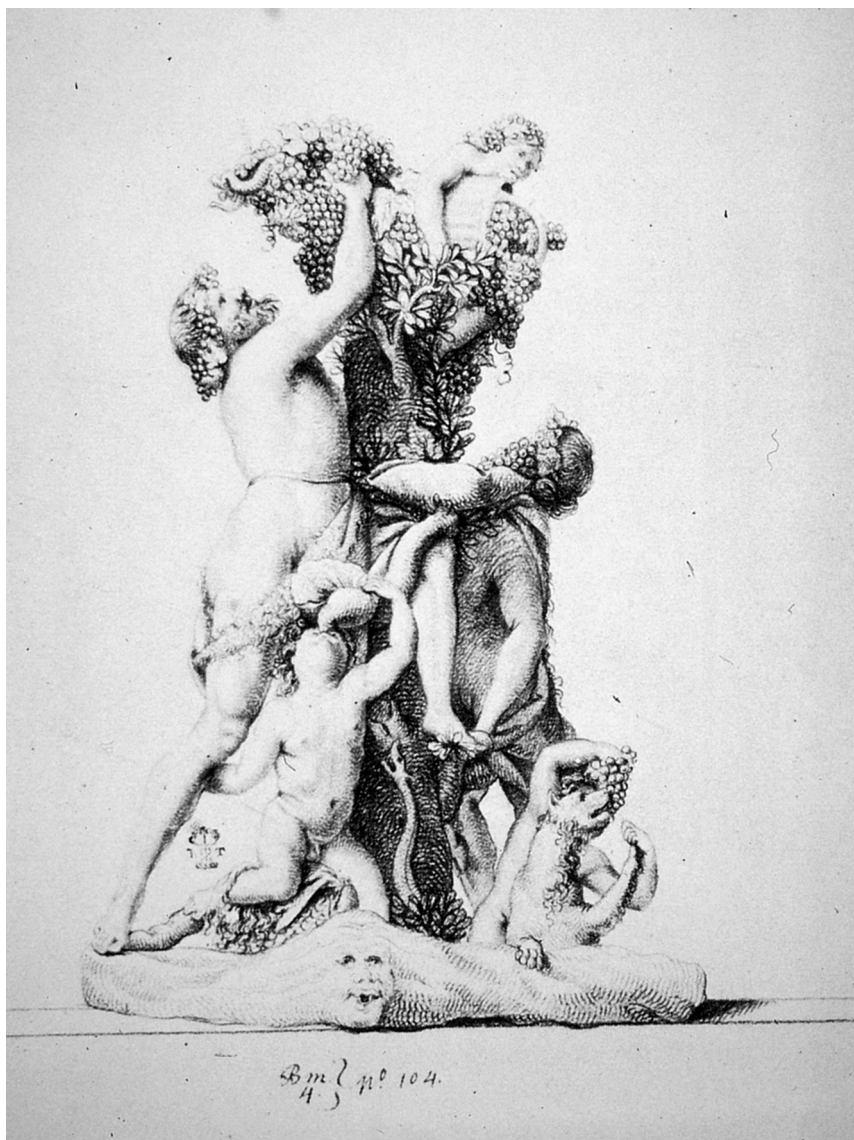


24. Pietro Bernini, *Autumn*. New York,
Private Collection.

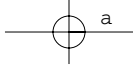


23. Pietro Bernini, *Autumn*. Frascati,
Villa Aldobrandini.





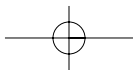
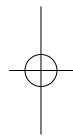
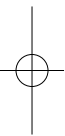
25. *Bacchic Group* from the *Palazzo Altemps, Rome*, drawing. Eton (Berkshire), Eton College Library.



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26. Pietro Bernini, *Satyr with a Panther*. Berlin, Staatliche Museen.

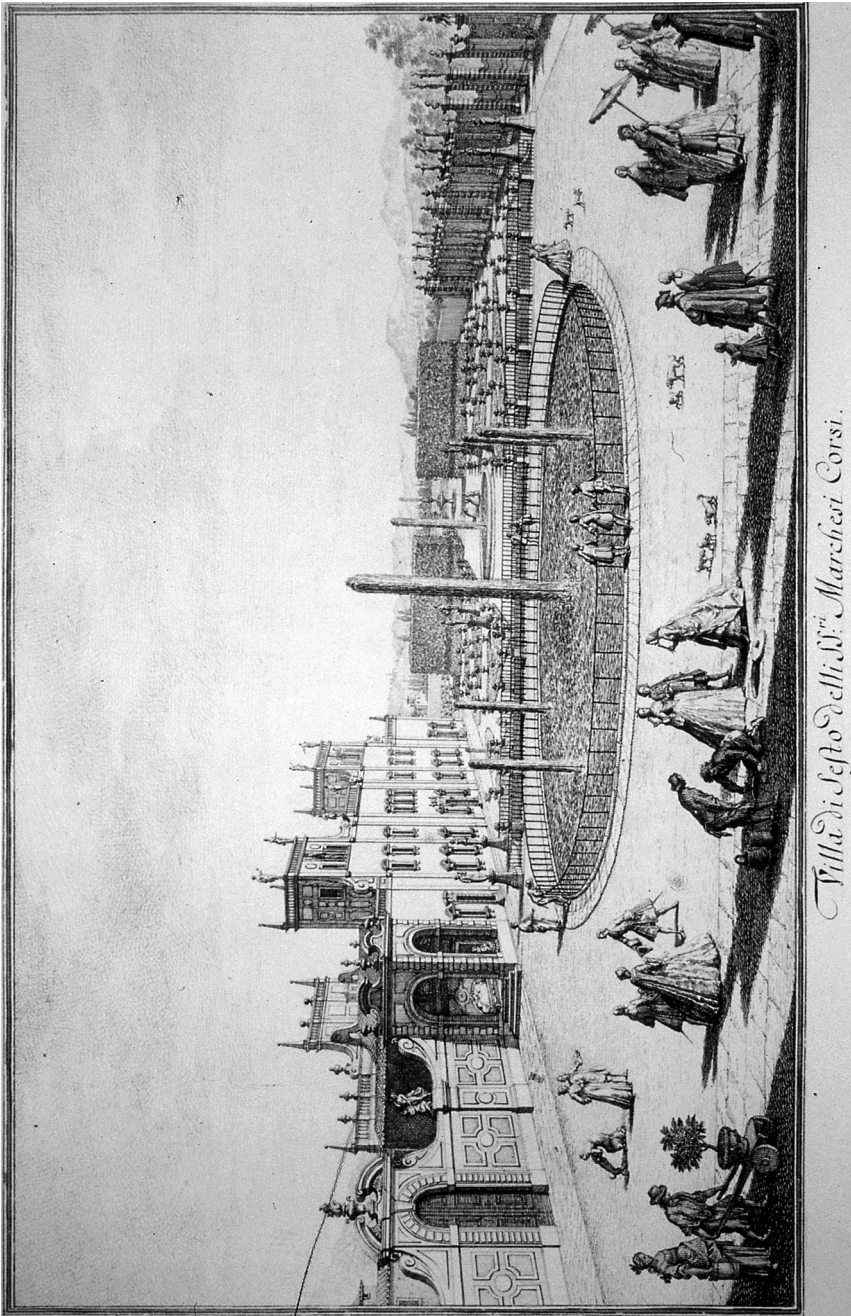
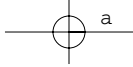




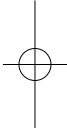
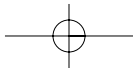
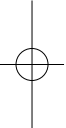
28. Copy after Fig. 26. Sesto Fiorentino, Villa Corsi Salviati (photo: Marilyn Lavin July 2005).

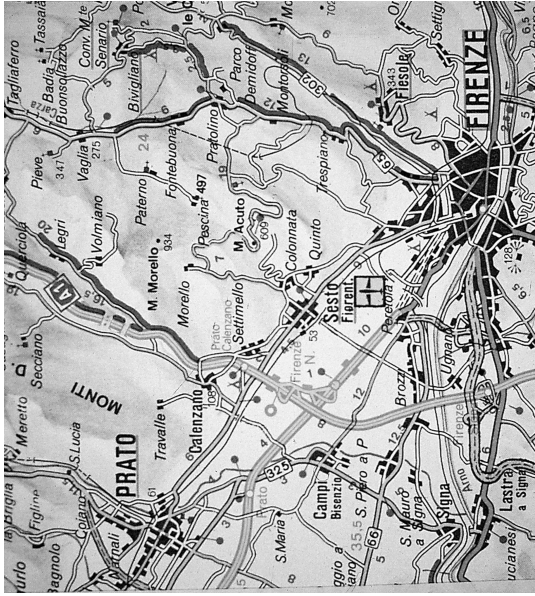


27. Copy after Fig. 26. Sesto Fiorentino, Villa Corsi Salviati (photo: Alinari No. 32494, dated 1885, detail).

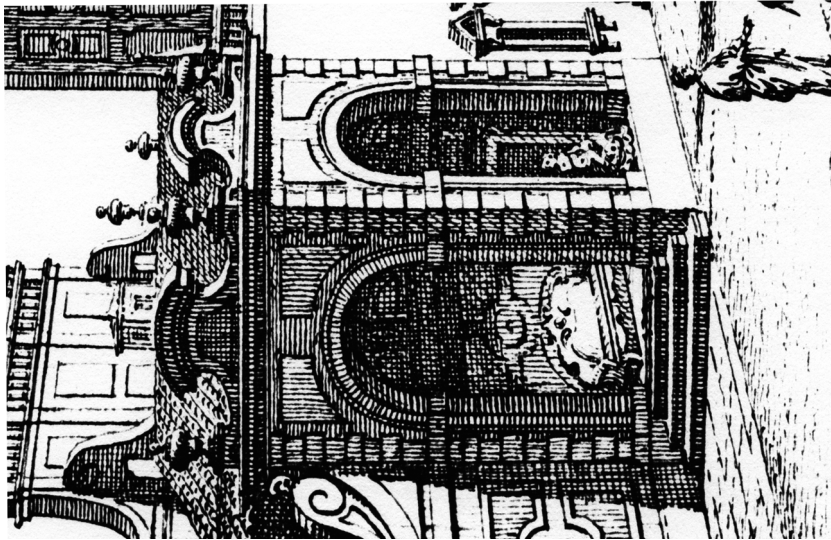


29. Giuseppe Zocchi, *Villa di Sesto degli SS.ri Marchesi Corsi*, drawing. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library.

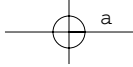




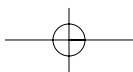
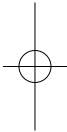
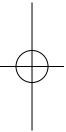
31. Map of the Prato Fiorentino.

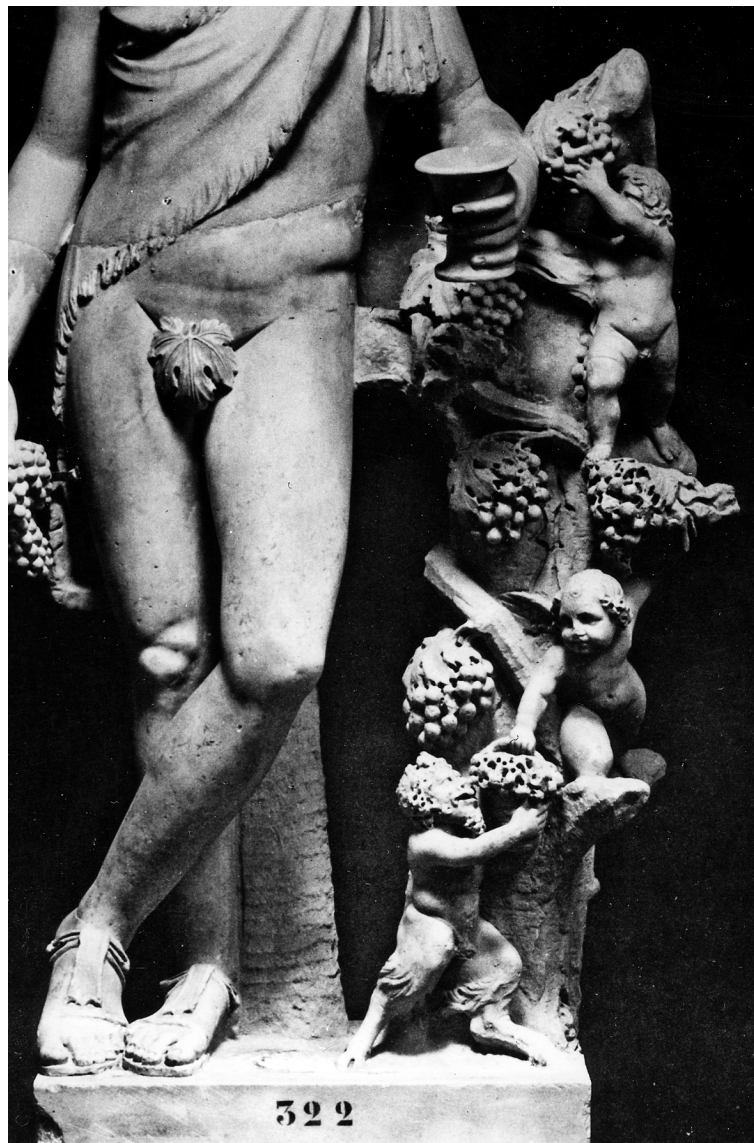


30. Detail of Fig. 29.



32. *Eros and Pan Vintaging*. London, British Museum
(photo: British Museum).





33. *Dionysiac group* (detail). Rome, Villa Albani
(photo: Deutsches archaeologisches Institut).

no record of the substitution as such, but we know that the Marchese Bardo Corsi sold some of his art (including a bronze Mercury by Zanobi Lastricati and Ciani Campagni in 1879) to finance a major renovation of the villa, most especially the garden, which was his passionate interest, before the turn of the century. This was the circumstance under which Bode acquired the piece for the Berlin Museum in 1884, and the replacement with a very accurate copy must have been part of the arrangement. Thanks to a recent publication of the fountain by Michael Knuth attributing the work to Gianlorenzo, we now know that that it was first mentioned in the records of the Berlin Museum on March 19, 1883, as actually belonging to Marchese Corsi.³⁰

Since Pietro Bernini was himself a native of Sesto Fiorentino, the provenance of the work in itself proves beyond any reasonable doubt that he was the sculptor. However, neither in the biographical record nor in the documents concerning his career in Naples, South Italy and Rome, where he settled definitively with his family in 1605–1606, is there any indication of his having received a commission from his native town. Much of the Corsi archive is preserved, and a very substantial monograph on the villa, built in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, was published in 1937 by the Marchese Giulio Guicciardini Corsi Salviati.³¹ But there are many lacunae and no record of our fountain has come to light. We know, however, that Pietro spent a brief interlude in Florence during 1594–1595 working with Giovanni Battista Caccini. In fact, the problem of the origin of the sculpture is resolved, happily or unhappily depending on your point of view, by a single, seemingly quite innocent document published by Pasquale Rotondi in 1933, and almost completely overlooked since then. The solution, in my opinion, radically alters the history of early Baroque

view of the villa in his *Vedute delle ville, e d'altri luoghi della Toscana*, Florence, 1757, see Dee (Elaine Evans), *Views of Florence and Tuscany by Giuseppe Zocchi. 1711–1767. Seventy-seven Drawings from the Collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library*. New York (exhib. cat.), New York, 1968, no. 47. The sculpture in Sesto is exactly the same size as that in Berlin, 138 cm. high, and must have been copied from the original by the mechanical technique of pointing off.

³⁰ Knuth (Michael), 'Eine Brunnen-Skulptur von Gian Lorenzo Bernini' in *Bildende Kunst*, IV, 1989, p. 58; his attribution was followed by Schütze, *Bernini scultore . . .*, cited in note 10, p. 58, with further references.

³¹ Guicciardini Corsi Salviati, (Giulio), *La villa Corsi a Sesto*, Florence, 1937; on the decorations of the villa, Manini, (Maria Pia), *Comune di Sesto Fiorentino. La decorazione in villa tra Sesto e Castello nel XVI e XVII secolo (grottesche, allegorie, emblemi)*, Sesto Fiorentino, 1979.

sculpture. Rotondi found a reference to a tax notice of August 1595, which reads:

*M.o Pietro di Lorenzo Bernino, lavora sul Prato di scultura, Angelica di Giovanni di Giovanni Galanti, l'anno 1595 in Gabella T. 5 Notif. 87.*³²

Rotondi, who makes no mention of the Berlin sculpture, understand-

³² Rotondi (Pasquale), 'L'educazione artistica di Pietro Bernini', in *Capitolium*, XI, 1933, p. 397. The document cited by Rotondi is a later abstract from the original tax records, which I have traced in the Archivio di Stato, Florence. Because he had been resident in Naples, where he married, and was unfamiliar with the laws of Florence, Pietro had submitted a petition, for a delay in the payment of taxes due on the dowry of his wife. The petition was rejected, but he was permitted to re-submit with proof of the size of the dowry.

Gabella dei Contratti, Suppliche e rappresentanze dirette al regio trono e risolte con rescritto sovrane.

Busta 1261 bis. fol. 46 recto:

Ser.mo Gran Duch.

Pietro di Lorenzo Bernini fiorentino schultore servo di V.A.S. con Reverenzia li espone come essendo stato circa, a hannj dieci a napoli dove a preso moglie oggi desidera impatriarsi, e non sapendo luso di questa citta non a pagato la Gabella della dote, dove, ne stato achusato, di sc 200 di dote li quali non ha hauto e p. cio ricorre a V.A.S. con pregarla gli faccia Grazia di dua Mesi di tempo, accio possi produrre fede hautentiche di Napoli della quantità che il d.o ebbe p. dote e di quel tanto pagarne la gab.a come, e il solito obligandosi a pregarle èl notro Sig.re Iddio.

p/ ogni sua Maggiore felicità.

19 di Ag. 95.

di à su.to di pagar il giustificato et presto glislel[?] il fra due mesi a fare le sue giustificationi.

Busta 1261 is, 1595-97, fol. 45 recto:

VS. Ser.mo gran duca.

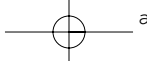
Piéro a L.zo bernini scultore, hà espoto a V.A. d'esser stato circa dieci anni à napoli, et havervi preso moglie, et come desidera rimpatriarsi, ma p. non havere saputo l'uso della città non hà pagato la gabella della dote essendo stato accusato p. sc. 200 che non hà havuto.

Supplica a V.A.S. à farli gratia di due mesi di tèmpo à poter p.durre fede autètiche di Napoli della vera qut.tà di d.a dote.

Per informazione diciamo a V.A.S. come sotto di 12 del p'nte mese di Ag.o d.o supplicante fu notificato da un notificatore segreto a libro V O/5 88 d'haver tolto moglie in Napoli con dota di sc 200, — che per essere egli fiorentino è obligato secondogli ordini a pagarne la gabella p. quella vera qtità che li sarà stata promessa secondo le giustificationi autètiche ch' egli deve fare venire di Napoli, e p.che da unimese in là ch'èpira alle 12 di settèmbr e può essere gravato, et nò se li può fare da noi dilatione alcuna però è ricorso à V.A. p. gratia di dua mesi di tempo et a quella humilmente ci raccomandiamo de' gabella.

il di 30 di Agosto 1595

Gio: ba con 2 di sett.bre 95.



ably took 'prato' to mean the quarter of Florence inside the city walls toward the Porta al Prato and he sought in vain to relate the document to the Palazzo Corsini located there. But the term in this case clearly refers to the vast area northwest of Florence from which the city of Prato takes its name. Sesto Fiorentino lies in the virtual center of this plain, and the villa Corsi is located on the Prato road just before Sesto (Fig. 31).³³ It is important to note that the fountain for Villa Corsi must have had a precursor in a similar sculpture, now lost, for which Pietro was paid in May 1589, while he was in Naples:

*una statua di marmo attaccata con un albero con un puttino sopra nome del bacco che fa il moto di spremere l'uva.*³⁴

So began a long series that continued through the works he made subsequently in Rome.

Apart from their common subject matter, two distinctive formal characteristics define these impassioned and awe inspiring sculptures: their intertwining, upward spiraling action, and their brilliant display of perforated, cantilevered forms. They are technically and psychologically 'mannered,' formulaic and repetitive in a way inconceivable for Gianlorenzo Bernini at any age, in my opinion. On the other hand, their qualities constitute a new departure in the history of Italian sculpture. The likes had not been seen since antiquity, and indeed they clearly depend upon the rediscovery of a particular phase of Roman art known to modern scholars as the 'Antonine Baroque' (Figs. 32, 33).³⁵ Works of this period provide the only real prece-

³³ Rotondi even speculated, but then rejected the thought that the reference could be to a work at Sesto: 'Infruttuose sono riuscite le nostre ricerche dei lavori che Pietro potè eseguire in quella parte di Firenze, che, per essere un giorno poco abitata, aveva appunto il nome di 'Prato'; ma dubitiamo che si tratti di opera di decorazione o di restauro, che l'ancor giovine scultore poteva fornire all'erigenda villa dei Principi Corsini, che si andava compiendo in quel tempo sotto la direzione dello stesso architetto della facciata di Santa Trinita: il Buontalenti'. Rotondi, *ibidem*, pp. 397 f., 392–398.

³⁴ Ceci (Giuseppe), 'Per la biografia degli artisti del XVI e XVII secolo. Nuovi documenti. II. Scultori', Napoli nobilissima, no. XV, 1906, p. 117, cited by Raggio, 'A new Bacchic Group . . .', cited in note 17, p. 417, n. 28.

³⁵ On the works illustrated here, see Strong (Eugenie Sellers), 'Antiques in the Collection of Sir Frederick Cook, Bart., at Doughty House, Richmond', in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, XXVIII, 1908, pp. 32 f., Muthmann (Fritz), *Statuenstützen und dekoratives Beiwerk an griechischen und römischen Bildwerken. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der römischen*

dents for Pietro Bernini's dramatic innovations, and it is important to realize that the father's appropriation of ancient models paved the way for his son's very different reprise of classical tradition. The Sesto fountain proves that Pietro Bernini, then 32 years old, was perfectly capable of designing and executing such works before his son was born. Gianlorenzo would retain his father's lessons, but from the beginning he would temper their excesses and subject them to a rigorous formal structure and emotional rationality. The relationship between Bernini father and son was curiously repeated in that between Mozart father and son, who composed creditable, and recognizable, music at age six. For both cases, Pietro Bernini gave the appropriate comment when, as Gianlorenzo later recalled, the future Pope Urban VIII warned the proud father that his prodigious child would surpass him: 'Your Excellency, in that game he who loses wins!'³⁶

Kopistentätigkeit, Heidelberg, 1951, pp. 86 f., Bol (Peter), ed., *Forschungen zur Villa Albani. Katalog der antiken Bildwerke III*, Berlin, 1992, pp. 363–366, with excellent details.

³⁶ *Sappi V. E. che in quel gioco chi perde vince* (Blunt-Bauer, *Diary* . . ., cited in note 5, p. 15, June 6, 102, August 5; Chantelou, *Journal* . . ., cited in note 5, pp. 18, 84).