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Northern Artists in Rome, 1600-1700

For centuries, Rome was the most important destination for artists, whether from other Italian cities, Spain, France, Germany, or the Netherlands. Visitors could see and study in the Eternal City the greatest examples of ancient sculpture and important masterworks of the Renaissance, as well as the architectural ruins in the surrounding *campagna*. In the early 17th century, Rome was a large international city and the center of a worldwide Catholic church with many opportunities for artistic contact, influence, and patronage. It was also the site of stylistic revolutions that ushered in a new artistic age known as the Baroque. Dramatic use of color, light, composition, and figural interaction was coupled with attention to the momentary, the moving, and the dynamic. Visiting artists absorbed these artistic currents and carried the influential experience back to their native countries, where they either replaced or co-existed with local traditions. The dissemination of the Baroque from its origins in Rome offered a surrogate experience to artists who never made the journey to Italy, and resulted in works throughout Europe characterized by their grandeur of both conception and execution.



Karel Dujardin

Dutch, 1626-1678, active in Amsterdam and Rome

Hagar and Ishmael in the Wilderness, c. 1662-65

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 270

Dujardin is considered one of the leading Dutch “classicists,” identified by his use of harmonic colors in contrast to shades of gray, brown, and black, and the introduction of idealized physical types for his figures. This successful large-scale work is an example of the classical strain of Dutch art indebted to the international artistic environment of Rome. In the Old Testament story, an angel appears to save the outcasts, Hagar and Ishmael (her son with Abraham), from death in the wilderness where they had been sent at the request of Abraham’s wife Sarah.



Johann Liss

German, 1597-1631, active in Antwerp, Rome, Venice

The Vision of Saint Jerome, c. 1625

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 311

This altarpiece may be the first of many versions of a famous painting by Liss, the best known of which is in the Venetian church of San Nicolò Tolentino. Saint Jerome, the 4th-century translator of the Bible into Latin, receives angelic messengers who point to the heavenly source of his inspiration, and guide his hand. Light streams down from above, as the palette changes from airy pinks, blues, and whites to earthy reds, browns, and blacks – all held together by the fluid brushwork and dynamic relationship of the figures.



Nicolas Tournier

French, 1590- c. 1660, active in Rome and France

Tobias Taking Leave of His Parents, c. 1623-25

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 110

The Vulgate Bible's book of Tobit tells the story of the young Tobias who leaves his parents for an adventure that brings trials, riches, a beautiful wife, and a cure for his father's blindness. Here, we see the first step of that journey, where a hesitant youth led forward under the guidance of the archangel Raphael glances back at his parents with a look of uncertainty. Each face conveys palpable emotion and humanity, the type of naturalistic effect Tournier adopted from the work of Caravaggio and his followers in Rome.



Gerard van Kuijl, attributed to

Dutch, 1604-1673, active in Rome and Gorinchem

Narcissus, c. 1645

Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1969, SN 885

According to the Greek myth, Narcissus was a beautiful youth who, after rejecting the nymph Echo, was made to fall in love with his own reflection. Unable to grasp the object of his love, and too captivated to draw himself away, Narcissus wasted away and died. He was changed into the flower that now bears his name. The tragic tone of the story is heightened by the restrained palette and dramatic use of light and shadow influenced by Caravaggio. Van Kuijl, a Dutch painter who lived in Rome from 1629 to 1631, may even have seen the Italian master's own *Narcissus* (Rome).



Lodovico David

Italian (b. Lugano), 1648-after 1709

***The Judgment of Paris*, c. 1690**

Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1998, SN 11033

This work is an excellent example of the High Baroque, characterized by ornate compositions, elaborate sculptural forms, sumptuous draperies, and unusual coloring and lighting effects. Here, the Swiss-born David depicts the mythological contest in which the shepherd, Paris, must choose the fairest of three goddesses whose prize was a golden apple. Each, in turn, attempts to bribe Paris before he ultimately chooses Aphrodite (with the green mantle) and her offer of any woman on earth, a decision ultimately leading to the Trojan War.



Nicolas Regnier (also called Niccolò Renieri)

Flemish, about 1590-1667, active in Rome and Venice

***Saint Matthew and the Angel*, c. 1625**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 109

Born in Flanders near the French border, Regnier studied in Antwerp under Abraham Janssens. He moved to Rome and then Venice, where he spent the remainder of his career. The influence of his Italian teacher, Bartolomeo Manfredi, himself a pupil of Caravaggio, is clear in the attention to strong passages of light and shadow. Regnier depicts the angel guiding Matthew's pen across the page, as if the apostle were a scribe taking dictation from the divine messenger. The composition is reminiscent of Caravaggio's rendering of the same subject.



Master of the Sarasota *Emmaus*
Dutch or Italian, 17th century

The Supper at Emmaus, c. 1620-25
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 116

As this work is the most exemplary of a distinctive group of paintings, the otherwise anonymous painter has been given the name “Master of the Sarasota *Emmaus*.” Though a place of birth or origin is unknown, it is certain that the painter had some familiarity with the artistic environment in Rome and the followers of Caravaggio. The half-length figures, dark background, deep shadows, and naturalistic faces are all characteristic of this famous and influential Italian master.



Johann Michael Rottmayr
Austrian, 1654-1730, active in Venice,
Salzburg, and Vienna

Ecce Homo, 17th or 18th century
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 321