

Gallery

6

The High Renaissance in Venice and Northern Italy, 1500-1600

The Renaissance style is noted for its search for perfect form based on classical sculpture, drawing from the live model, and the ideal placement of the human figure through correct perspective. In Central Italy, including Florence and Rome, painters mastered the art of bold geometric compositions and frieze-like arrangements of modeled figures, confirming a fully developed classicism. This differed from the High Renaissance art of Venice and Northern Italy, which celebrated an aesthetic based on the relationships of color, light, and texture. Giorgione was the leader of this school, introducing new ways to work with the paint and his subject. Employing a looser brushstroke, he softened contours, merging forms within his compositions. Giorgione's follower Titian was equally inventive with his unusual palette and energized way of painting. To some observers his style seemed chaotic and unfocused, but his pictures were meant to be bold and illusionistic rather than subdued. In the next generation, Veronese excelled at creating a sense of movement and visual intensity with chromatic harmonies and luminescent lighting. The Bassano and Tintoretto families, who represented two thriving Venetian workshops, went even farther in crafting dramatically lit compositions built up with highlights and shadows formed by impasto and bravura brushwork. The Bassano family also created an international vogue for secular subjects, such as caravan scenes filled with travelers and animals, landscapes featuring peasant life, and modernized allegorical works.



Titian

Italian, c. 1488-1576, active in Venice

***La Sultana Rossa*, c. 1550**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 58

The 16th-century critic Giorgio Vasari described the sitter in Titian's painting as Roxelana, the wife of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, the longest-serving ruler of the Ottoman Empire. Her pointed headdress, traditionally worn by the Ottoman Sultana, is adorned with sapphires, pearls, diamonds, and rubies, anchored by a prominent sapphire above her forehead. A marten with a jeweled collar is attached by a leash to her bracelet, which is encrusted with the same stones that decorate her headdress. By virtue of his painterly style and poetic treatment of the female form, Titian was one of the most influential artists of the Italian Renaissance.



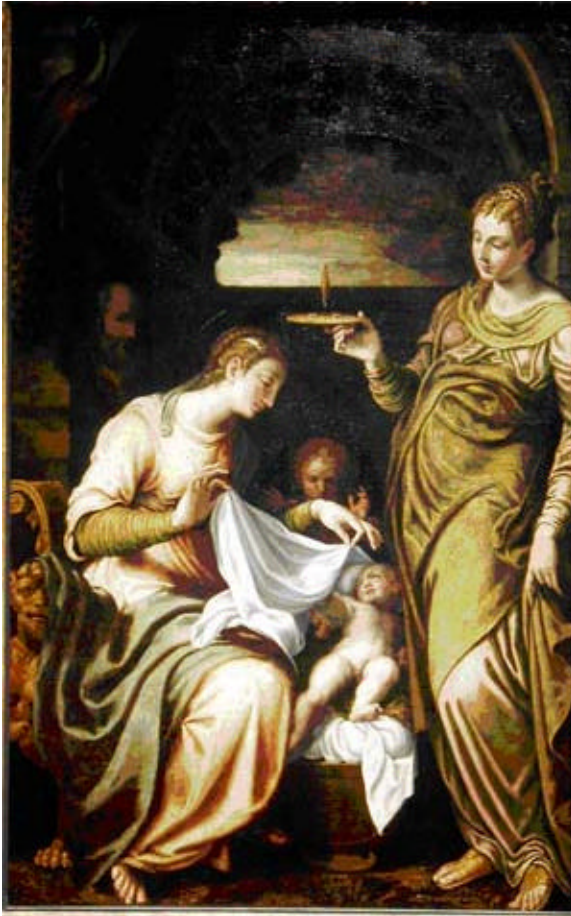
Leandro Bassano

Italian, 1557-1622, active in Bassano del Grappa and Venice

***A Man Holding a Knife*, c. 1585**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 90



Bernardino Campi

Italian, 1522-1595, active in Cremona and Milan

***The Holy Family with Saint Lucy*, c.**

1555-60

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 52

Campi shows the Holy Family in an arbor in the company of Saint Lucy, a 4th-century martyr from Syracuse. A version of her story in Dante's *Purgatorio* recounts that a suitor admired Lucy's eyes, and she tore them out in order to remain virtuous. Her sight was then miraculously restored, and she is often shown holding her eyes on a charger. The graceful poses and elongated proportions of the figures reveal the influence of central Italian Mannerist painting, while the chiaroscuro is typically northern Italian. At the height of his career in the 1550s, Campi executed a variety of altarpieces and frescoes throughout northern Italy.



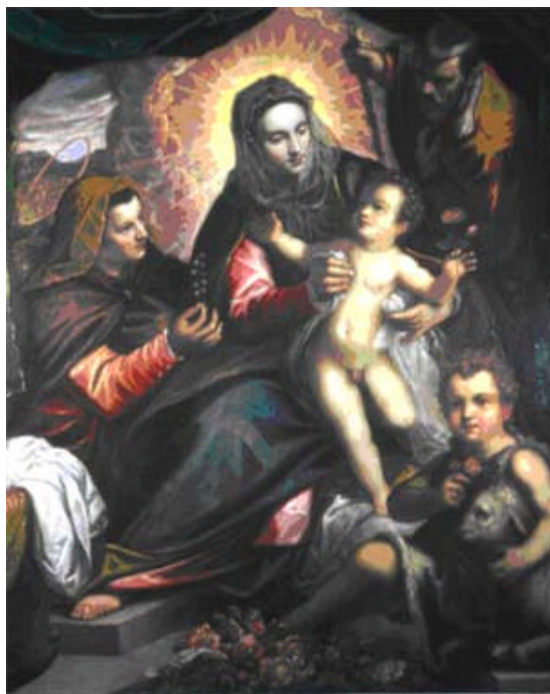
Mexican

18th century

***Table*, c. 1700**

Mahogany

Gift of John Devendorf, 1959, SN 1309



Domenico Tintoretto

Italian, 1560-1635, active in Venice

***The Holy Family with Saints Anne and John the Baptist*, c. 1595**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 79

Domenico Tintoretto often collaborated with his father Jacopo, a leading Venetian painter in the Mannerist tradition. Domenico at times employed a highly polished style, as seen here, rather than the broad brushstrokes and impasto of his father. His versatility attracted a variety of patrons, and he typically reserved this refined manner for commissions from the nobility. The Holy Family in a garden was a popular theme in Germany, and Domenico's choice of this subject may indicate an interest in Northern European art.



Giovanni Antonio de' Sacchis, called Pordenone

Italian, b. 1483/84, d. 1539, active in Northern Italy

***Salome with the Head of John the Baptist*, c. 1512-15, Oil on panel**

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 66

A prolific painter of illusionistic frescoes and large history and religious paintings, Pordenone worked in an idiosyncratic style that drew on Venetian and other northern Italian precedents. This panel was in fact believed to be by the Venetian painter Giorgione when it was in the collection of Queen Christina of Sweden in the 17th century. Pordenone based the figure of Salome on Titian's paintings of female beauties, depicting her as a femme fatale displaying the head of St. John the Baptist.



Jacopo Bassano

Italian, c. 1510-1592, active in Bassano del Grappa and Venice

***An Allegory of Water*, c. 1585**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 87

This painting and the adjacent *An Allegory of Fire* were part of a series representing the four elements. Such scenes incorporating groups of peasants and animals were a highly popular genre of the Bassano family workshop. Here Jacopo uses the conceit of a contemporary fish market to illustrate the allegory of water, showing the abundance that comes from the sea. Visible overhead is Neptune, god of the sea, in a chariot. As was the practice in the Bassano workshop, Jacopo was probably assisted by one of his sons – most likely Francesco – in the production of this work.



Jacopo Bassano, studio of

Italian, c. 1510-1592, active in Bassano del Grappa and Venice

***The Entombment of Christ*, c. 1585**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 93

Upon the death of his father, Francesco Bassano, Jacopo became the head of the family workshop, where his sons Francesco, Giambattista, Leandro, and Gerolamo were also active. Comprising one of the major artistic studios in northern Italy, the Bassano family and their assistants fulfilled numerous commissions for both paintings and decorative arts. This work, likely completed by studio hands, retains the Venetian style typical of the Bassano workshop. The heavy impasto, a hallmark of virtually all of their work, is evident throughout the painting.



Jacopo Bassano

Italian, c. 1510-1592, active in Bassano del Grappa and Venice

***An Allegory of Fire*, c. 1584-85**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 86

Like its pendant, *An Allegory of Water*, this metaphorical painting incorporates a reference to Greek mythology to elucidate the virtues of one of the four elements.

Here Jacopo Bassano invokes the idea of the blacksmith's forge to convey the utility and transformative power of fire. Hephaestus, the Greek god associated with fire and metallurgy, rides above. The subject is represented as a night scene punctuated with highlights, a technique prevalent in the works of the Bassano studio. Their unique style had a significant impact on Baroque painting in the following century.



Leandro Bassano

Italian, 1557-1622, active in Bassano del Grappa and Venice

***Portrait of a Man*, c. 1585**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 91

Leandro Bassano was a member of a family of artists working in the Veneto, the region surrounding Venice. Leandro, the son of Jacopo Bassano, trained in his father's workshop and adopted his style. In 1588 he moved to Venice, where he gained renown as a portrait painter and was made a knight of St. Mark. The intense directness and naturalism seen in this painting were an inspiration to later 17th-century painters, including Caravaggio and the Carracci family. The inscription at the right indicates that the unidentified sitter was 29 years of age at the time the portrait was painted.



Francesco Bassano

Italian, 1549-1592, active in Bassano del Grappa and Venice

The Adoration of the Shepherds, c. 1590
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 88

Before opening his own studio in Venice, Francesco collaborated with his father Jacopo on numerous commissions throughout northern Italy. He adopted his father's style, embracing naturalism, and painting with a loaded brush. The Holy Family is surrounded by an audience of everyday figures, some of which are delineated only by a few white highlights. The angel hovering above indicates the divine nature present in the scene, as does the intense light emanating from the Christ child. The polarization of light and darkness provides both a visual point and a theological one.



Italy (probably Castelli)
16th century

Pharmacy Vases, c. 1520-40
Tin-glazed earthenware

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 7161
and SN 7162



Francesco Bassano

Italian, 1549-1592, active in Bassano del Grappa and Venice

***Christ in the Garden of Olives*, c. 1585**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 89

Francesco was the son of Jacopo Bassano and continued the innovations of the entire Bassano studio. This vertical canvas allowed the artist to build his picture and narrative through a series of layers: the sleeping disciples, Christ praying, and presence of the angel. The use of light, as usual with the Bassano family, is dramatic. Here the scene is illuminated by the divine, miraculous light emanating from the Cup held by the angel as an offering to Christ. The chiaroscuro and abbreviated brushwork later influenced such painters as El Greco and Caravaggio.



Bartolomeo Schedoni

Italian, 1578-1615, active in Modena and Parma

***The Sleeping Christ Child with Mary and Joseph*, 1605-1607**

Oil on panel

Museum purchase, 1954, SN 674



Guiseppe Arcimboldi, follower of Italian, c. 1527-1593, active in Milan, Prague, and Vienna

An Allegorical Head Representing Autumn,
c. 1600-20

Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1954, SN 672

The 16th-century Milanese artist, Guiseppe Arcimboldi, spent most of his career in Vienna and Prague. It was there that Arcimboldi first imagined his trademark composite images. Using fruits, vegetables, and other objects, the artist created portraits, usually of fictional subjects. These whimsical paintings became a popular amusement at the Bohemian court, and this method of composing a face of vegetables and other objects spread throughout Europe. This work and its pendant, *Summer*, are copies after the original paintings by Arcimboldi.



Guiseppe Arcimboldi, follower of Italian, c. 1527-1593, active in Milan, Prague, and Vienna

An Allegorical Head Representing Summer,
c. 1600-20

Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1954, SN 673



Antonio Palma

Italian, c. 1510-1575, active in Venice

***Esther before Ahasuerus*, 1574**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 85

Esther was an Old Testament Jewish heroine who saved her people by appearing unsummoned before the Persian king Ahasuerus in order to expose the evil plan of Haman, the prime minister, who plotted to exterminate the Jews. Enraged by the deceit, Ahasuerus ordered Haman to be hanged and appointed the pious Mordechai, Esther's cousin, to be his prime minister. The figure of Esther may symbolize Venice beseeching King Henry III of France, represented as Ahasuerus, for military aid against the threat of Spain in 1574. The architecture in the background resembles the Piazza San Marco, the main square of Venice.



Paolo Veronese

Italian, 1528-1588, active in Venice and Verona

***The Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, c. 1580**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 82

A famed painter of large, magnificent works full of Venetian light, color, and splendor, Paolo Veronese rendered the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* with moving simplicity. Mary and Joseph are clothed in plain garments rather than sumptuous brocades, and the attending angels amusingly perform mundane household tasks, such as hanging garments to dry on the tree and gathering dates for the family's meal. The Flight into Egypt was often considered an opportunity to incorporate a vast landscape, but Veronese focuses instead on the figural grouping, offering only a glimpse of fanciful architectural scenery at the right.



Paolo Veronese

Italian, 1528-1588, active in Venice and Verona

Portrait of Francesco Franceschini,
1551

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 81



Northern European

16th-19th centuries

Pedestal Table

Walnut

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 1071

This table, along with two other pedestal tables and two chairs in this gallery, were part of the Émile Gavet collection that John Ringling purchased in 1928. In the late 19th century, the Parisian architect and medievalist Émile Gavet had assembled a significant collection of paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts. These tables were made to accommodate Gavet's collection, and inscriptions on their undersides designated which precious objects they were to display. They were likely constructed in the 19th century of various carved fragments dating to the 16th century.



Bernardino di Bosio Zaganelli

Italian, b. 1460/70, d. 1510/12, active in Ferrara

Madonna and Child with Saint Joseph, c. 1500

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 50

Bernardino was the younger brother of Francesco di Bosio Zaganelli, with whom he shared a workshop in the town of Cota, near Ferrara. The Holy Family is set before a typical central Italian landscape, with a river leading to a towering city in the distance. The Ferrarese interest in color is evident in the sleeve of the Virgin, which Zaganelli constructed in layers of vibrant blue, yellow, and red pigment. In a touching moment, Joseph kisses the foot of Christ. An otherwise playful gesture takes on a wistful mood as the expressions of Mary and Joseph betray their awareness of their son's fate.



Alfonso Lombardi, attributed to

Italian, c. 1497-1537, active in Ferrara, Bologna, Rome

Portrait Bust of an Unknown Man in Armor,

c. 1525-35

Terracotta

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5385



Marco d'Oggiono, studio of
Italian, c. 1467-1524, active in Milan,
Venice, and Savona

Christ the Redeemer, c. 1525
Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 38

This follower of Leonardo da Vinci has depicted Christ, identified by his wounds, standing atop a small slab of earth with an abbreviated landscape in the distance. Not representing any specific time or place, the work illustrates an abstract concept of Christ as the Redeemer of the sins of humanity. Yet the artist has taken pains to portray realistic plants, however small, beneath Christ's feet in the foreground, suggesting that the figure still has ties to the physical world. The large scale and somewhat skewed proportions of the figure of Christ indicate that the work was once placed high above the viewer's space.



Italian
16th century

Portrait Bust of a Man, c. 1500
Terra cotta

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5388



Bernardino Licinio

Italian, c. 1489-c. 1565, active in Venice

***Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1525**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 67

The subject of this painting is a man who, judging by the richness of his dress, is part of the upper class. His aquiline nose and thin lips are indicators of refinement and elegance. The pose is somewhat asymmetrical: the right shoulder turns inward, and the sitter's head tilts as he casts a sidelong glance beyond the viewer. This effect is part of a trend found in portraiture at the time, when artists sought to portray the character and inner life of their subjects by emphasizing the sitters' gaze. The highlights on the gold bands of the man's costume reflect a silvery light in a typical Venetian manner.



Giovanni Antonio Fasolo

Italian, 1530-1572, active in Venice and Vicenza

***Portrait of a Family Group*, c. 1561-65**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 83

Fasolo depended on precedents set by his teacher, Paolo Veronese, for the complex grouping in this painting. The impressive fur mantle and family dog, motifs first seen in portraits by Titian, are present in Veronese's *Portrait of Francesco Franceschini*, also displayed in this gallery. The young boy's attempt to control the eager canine adds a sense of spontaneity to the scene, though the poses of each figure are carefully arranged. Fasolo seems intent on revealing the emotional lives as well as the status of the privileged, probably noble, sitters. Unfortunately, nothing is known of the wealthy family represented in this ambitious portrait.



Giovanni Battista Moroni

Italian, c. 1525-1578, active in Bergamo

***Portrait of Mario Benvenuti*, c. 1560**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 106

According to the inscription on the marble pedestal, Benvenuti was a military commander under Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, but nothing more is known about his life. Moroni depicts him in full armor, though he has removed his helmet. Thick, strategically placed daubs of white paint create the gleam of light on the otherwise smooth texture of the armor, an economic use of paint that was typical of the Bergamo school. Moroni frequently included inscriptions

to identify his sitters, and the protruding brick wall was among his favorite devices for interrupting the neutral background that was still common in many 16th-century Italian portraits.



Giovanni Bastianini

Italian, 1830-1868

***Portrait Bust of Francesco di Piero di Jacopo Guicciardini*, c. 1865**

Terra cotta

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5387

Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540) was a prominent Florentine historian and statesman. Trained as a lawyer, his lifelong involvement in affairs of state provided him with a unique perspective on history and politics. A friend and colleague of Niccolò Machiavelli, he kept voluminous notebooks detailing his

turbulent times. Although Renaissance in style, this bust was made in the 19th century in imitation of earlier examples. Giovanni Bastianini was a clever imitator of Renaissance sculpture whose works deceived many collectors.



Gaudenzio Ferrari

Italian, c. 1470-1546, active in Milan

***The Holy Family with a Donor*, c. 1520-25**

Oil on wood panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 41

Gaudenzio Ferrari succeeded Bernardino Luini, Leonardo da Vinci's follower, as the principal painter in 16th-century Milan. His eclectic style was inspired by the naturalism of Leonardo and the emotional intensity of Late Gothic art, among other sources. He exhibited great talent for conveying emotion, reflecting Leonardo's precept that gesture and expression reflect the soul. Here the artist depicts the Virgin gazing tenderly at Christ while Joseph looks on in wonder. The cleric on the left was probably the patron who commissioned the painting, requesting to be shown in perpetual prayer.



Francesco di Bosio Zaganelli

Italian, c. 1470-c. 1532,
active in Ferrara and Ravenna

***Saint Sebastian*, c. 1510-15**

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 48

Saint Sebastian (d. 287) was a captain of the Praetorian Guard under the emperor Diocletian. Upon learning of Sebastian's devotion to Christianity, Diocletian ordered Mauritanian archers to execute him with a rain of arrows. The artist places the figure in an almost impossibly graceful pose that anticipates the contortion and hyper-refinement of Mannerism. His flowing hair echoes the motion of his billowing loincloth, creating an image of Apollonian beauty interrupted only by a single arrow through his elbow and side. The oversized eye is a trademark of Francesco's figures.



Bernardino Lanino

Italian, c. 1509-after 1581, active in Milan

***The Nativity with Saint Philip*, 1567**

Oil on panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 42

The Holy Family, along with St. Philip, a shepherd, and a serenading angel, adore the newborn Christ, while the Annunciation to the Shepherds is shown in the background. Lanino may have trained with Gaudenzio Ferrari, a Milanese master, and the composition of this work is similar to a depiction of the Holy Family painted by Ferrari, also displayed in this gallery. The crowded scene takes place indoors, with a window opening to reveal a fantastic mountainous landscape. The presence of penitenti in the Annunciation scene indicates that Lanino added this secondary grouping later.



Lodovico Mazzolino

Italian, c. 1480-c. 1530, active in Ferrara and Bologna

***The Adoration of the Shepherds*, c. 1524**

Oil on wood panel

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 46

Lodovico Mazzolino worked in a deliberately archaistic style. He placed this adoration scene in a somewhat abstract architectural setting, a device that is repeated throughout his oeuvre. Mary and Joseph are identified by their haloes, which are painted in a flat style reminiscent of Gothic and early Renaissance images. Recession into space is indicated by the diminishing size of the shepherds in the background, also a reference to pictorial traditions of earlier centuries. The puzzling setting seems to be a ruin, though the two freestanding columns appear intact.