

Jacopo Tintoretto in Process: The Making of a Venetian Master, 1540-1560

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ABSTRACT

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The *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf* in the Church of the Madonna dell’Orto in Venice are two of the tallest canvas paintings ever created, each measuring some 14.5 m (47.6 feet) high. At this scale these pictures are clearly statements, made by an artist accustomed to confrontation. Jacopo Tintoretto (c.1518-1594) executed the pair of paintings around 1558-60 for the choir of his neighborhood church, in a commission that he apparently initiated himself, asking payment only for materials. The novelty of their monumentality and indeed their preeminence within Tintoretto’s oeuvre were noted by early biographers. The paintings have received little attention in modern scholarship, however, which has tended to prioritize instead as his greatest accomplishments the *Miracle of the Slave* (1548) – Tintoretto’s first picture in a series for the Scuola Grande di San Marco – and the dozens of canvases for the Scuola Grande di San Rocco (1564-88). Moreover, the initial paintings for both of these *scuola* cycles have been regarded in the literature as among the artist’s most pivotal moments, overshadowing his work in the intervening decade of the 1550s, particularly the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf* and a group of important paintings leading up to them.

This dissertation argues that, far from being outliers in Tintoretto’s oeuvre, the choir paintings for the Madonna dell’Orto – in their scale, technique, iconography, and personal meaning – should be seen as key steps in the artist’s personal development and public

achievement. Moreover, they represent a critical moment of arrival, summing up, in a grand statement of self-promotion, his work of the 1540s and 1550s. These two paintings must also be viewed as Tintoretto's response to the adversity he endured in the first half of his career. Spurred by his own ambition, faced with the hostility of artistic rivals both old and new, and inspired by an enduring ambition to challenge Michelangelo, Tintoretto initiated the two gigantic choir paintings about the year 1558 to revive a career that had flagged since his triumphant debut with the *Miracle of the Slave* a decade earlier.

An examination of Tintoretto's biography, the intentions behind and reception of individual pictures, his stylistic and technical development, the influences of critics and fellow artists, together provide for the first time a detailed analysis of the painter's evolution in the period around the *Miracle of the Slave* and the dozen years that followed. This is the stage of his career that prepared Tintoretto to take on the challenges of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco and the massive commissions for the Palazzo Ducale. The turbulent decades of the 1540s and 1550s show an artist in process, on the verge of becoming the master who would dominate painting in Venice in the second half of the sixteenth century.

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152. View of the right nave of San Giorgio Maggiore featuring Jacopo Bassano's *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1590-1, oil on canvas). Photo courtesy of Ralph Lieberman.
153. Right wall of the Cappella Maggiore in San Giorgio Maggiore featuring Jacopo Tintoretto and Workshop's *Last Supper* (1592-94, oil on canvas). Photo courtesy of Ralph Lieberman.

PREFACE

In a 1845 letter to his father back in England, John Ruskin recounted how thrilling it was to study Tintoretto in Venice:

I have been studying Tintoret till I find I hav'nt studied him enough.... I have been quite upset in all my calculations by that rascal Tintoret – he has shown me some totally new fields of art and altered my feelings in many respects.... I can't see enough of him, and the more I look the more wonderful he becomes.

Although this dissertation on Tintoretto has been far too long in gestation, at least its author, like Ruskin, continues to find inspiration in its subject. The process of finishing this dissertation has taught me that there still remains much to be learned.

What began in 1996 as an exploration of Tintoretto's paintings for the church of the Madonna dell'Orto – and particularly a reassessment of Tintoretto's artistic relationship with Michelangelo's work in Rome and Florence – has, over the subsequent eighteen years, become far more Venetian in focus. Other influences and rivals, including Raphael, Titian, Pordenone, and Veronese, all receive substantial attention. Rather than begin with the choir pictures in the Madonna dell'Orto, the dissertation now concludes with them, focusing on the two decades leading up to their execution in the rich milieu of Venetian art at mid-century. These works and artists are analyzed through a variety of contextual approaches, especially period criticism, but especially through old-fashioned methods of biography, style, formal analysis, and connoisseurship. I feel I need not apologize for this traditional emphasis, not simply because of my occupation as a

museum curator. Despite the swelling bibliography on Tintoretto and his era in Venice, certain long-established approaches have been neglected. Moreover, while many individual paintings and other works of art are discussed in detail in these chapters, the overall aim has been to reconstruct the artistic personality of a painter and assess how the first two decades of his activity shaped the rest of his career – and the future of Venetian art.

This dissertation benefitted from five years of research in Venice, from 1996 to 2001, sponsored by a Fulbright grant, two Theodore Rousseau Grants from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and a Save Venice Art History Fellowship. I wish to thank Beatrice Guthrie particularly for creating the last for me. Those grants allowed me to live for an extended period close to Tintoretto's neighborhood, to walk in the same *calli* and row in the same *rii* that the painter did. A later grant from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation enabled some final technical examinations of specific paintings.

Before moving to Venice, I had the benefit of taking two wonderful seminars on Tintoretto, one with David Rosand at Columbia University in the fall of 1993, and the other with Paul Hills at the Institute of Fine Arts in the spring of 1995. In both courses I presented some of the key ideas that led to this dissertation. Later, while living in Venice, I learned much from two compact seminars on Venetian Renaissance art, organized by the Istituto Veneto and the Ecole du Louvre, and led by Gennaro Toscano. Early in my research I received particular help from Michael Douglas-Scott and Leo Steinberg. Both helped me frame key questions.

Above all, three great scholars transformed how I thought about my subject: my advisor, David Rosand, Roger Rearick, and finally Robert Echols. My debt to them is

enormous. While I had admired Professor Rosand even as an undergraduate, my understanding of his remarkable contributions to the study of Venetian art only became clear during the course of my time in Venice. My sense of appreciation and reverence has grown since 2004, when I joined the board of Save Venice and later came to serve as co-project director with him. Many of our best discussions of Tintoretto and his world occurred during long walks between major Venetian monuments. Similarly, my view of Tintoretto, and indeed the practice of art history, was deeply influenced by many lengthy conversations with Roger in the last seven or so years of his life. I miss him very much.

Since 2004 Bob and I have worked closely on many aspects of Tintoretto studies, jointly authoring a number of essays and catalogue entries, and both playing central roles in exhibitions in Madrid in 2007 and Boston and Paris in 2009-10. Like David and Roger before him, Bob has also answered hundreds of questions over the years. Given the close nature of our collaboration, and how so much of my work builds on his 1993 dissertation and subsequent articles, I have taken particular pains to indicate in the notes when a line of argument is based on his research or work jointly published with him.

Although I cannot thank all those who have generously helped me along the way, I must mention – in roughly chronological order – some of them. I am particularly grateful to Katherine Hoffman, Everett Fahy, Keith Christiansen, Enrica Abbate, Carlo Turchetto, Bronwen Wilson, Leila Whittemore, Christopher Mason, Daniela Chiara, Lisa Zeitz, Ralph Lieberman, Alexander Nagel, Deborah Howard, Bernard Aikema, Maximillian Tondro, Blake de Maria, Holly Hurlburt, Cindy Klestinec, Nadja Aksamija, Christopher Carlsmith, Una Roman D’Elia, Philip Cottrell, Miguel Falomir, Melissa Conn, Peter Humfrey, Stefania Mason, Linda Borean, Johanna Fassel, Benjamin Paul,

Christopher Atkins, Fabio Barry, Tracy Cooper, Susannah Rutherglen, Mary Frank, my colleagues at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and my family.

I am grateful to those stalwart friends who discussed the text and especially read with a careful eye large portions of the dissertation, including Victoria Reed, Barbara Lynn-Davis, Bob Echols, Emily Beeny, Lorenzo Buonanno, Jonathan Unglaub, Hope Stockton, and Elizabeth Saari Browne. Any errors that remain are of course my own. Finally, I am indebted to my dissertation committee for their close attention to my arguments and my words: David Rosand, David Freedberg, Patricia Fortini Brown, Jodi Cranston, and Michael Cole.

I wish that the extreme length of time I have taken to finish this dissertation somehow guaranteed a more profound or nuanced final product. At least I feel great humility yet can also take some pleasure in noting that its completion allows me finally to disprove an assertion, made on p. 189 of Paula Weideger's memoir, *Venetian Dreaming* (2002). There she used her nickname for me as the first half of the title of chapter sixteen, "Hares and Tortoises." Weideger wrote, "If he was fast and fleet in motion and speech, he was King Molasses when it came to writing. Year after year he was about to finish his dissertation. Well who could blame him for hanging on to his excuse to stay in Venice?" When I was living in Venice I had not yet realized that one should not cling to excuses to stay there. Rather, I have finally learned that Venice offers infinite reasons to return.

INTRODUCTION

In 1568, Giorgio Vasari produced a short biography of Jacopo Tintoretto (c. 1518-1594) as part of his *Vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*. Although tucked into the longer *Life* of Battista Franco, and full of opprobrium for a painter who did not seem to play by the rules – making him perhaps the worst of the Venetians in his mind – Vasari’s *Life* of Tintoretto is valuable since it captures the painter mid-career, at about age fifty. The critic was particularly impressed – or rather, perhaps, dismayed – by the painter’s freewheeling approach to pricing, and especially his volume of production. Indeed, as the Tuscan critic declared, Tintoretto was responsible for the majority of paintings then being created in Venice:

Ha dipinto quasi di tutte le sorti pitture a fresco, a olio, ritratti di natural, e ad ogni pregio; di maniera che con questi suoi modi ha fatto e fa la maggiore parte delle pitture che si fanno in Vinezia.¹

Vasari acknowledged that Tintoretto did not just produce an enormous number of paintings, but also pictures of enormous size. Many of these were canvas murals on the scale of the largest frescoes. In a few cases the biographer even made sure to record the dimensions of these huge paintings and emphasize their canvas supports. He was particularly struck by a pair of works in the choir of church of the Madonna dell’Orto showing the *Last Judgment* (fig. 1) and the *Making of the Golden Calf* (fig. 2). He began his description of these two paintings by noting their size: “Nella chiesa di Santa Maria dell’Orto... ha dipinto il Tintoretto le due facciate, cioè a olio sopra tele, della cappella maggiore, alte dalla volta insino alla cornice del sedere braccia ventidue.”²

Vasari was impressed that someone would paint canvases this towering, filling the entire available field in the church, up to the very vaults. At 14.5 meters high, these are the tallest canvas paintings of the Renaissance. If surprising to Vasari, they would have been unimaginable

to Venetian artists of earlier generations. The decades leading up to these pivotal paintings, and the reasons why the project was a critical juncture in Tintoretto's career form the subject of this dissertation.

The research, undertaken over many years and mostly in Venice, began with these paintings in the Madonna dell'Orto. The initial goal was to survey a short but crucial moment within the career of Tintoretto and to place it within the context of Venetian painting. The two paintings were to be seen as statements: one invoked the legacy of Michelangelo in a monumental *Last Judgment*; the other, which depicts the creation of an idol, was a comment on the decorum of religious images made at a moment of fraught discussions about their propriety.

Not surprisingly, the scope of my research expanded dramatically, and largely shifted to a new consideration of Jacopo Tintoretto and his oeuvre, his workshop and followers, and his important predecessors and rivals. My work has focused on the development of this artist and on basic questions of connoisseurship, down to trying to discern what he actually painted. Despite Vasari's claim regarding the artist's disproportionate share of Venetian painting, Tintoretto has been credited, often dubiously to be sure, with many works that he did not make. Numerous pictures have been assigned to him in the twentieth-century literature. Many of these so-called early works – often of poor quality or tentative in handling – supposedly show the incremental progress Tintoretto made as he gained skill and confidence on the way to executing the epochal *Miracle of the Slave* in 1548. Such weak paintings, while derivative of his style, were executed wholly by his followers.

My research builds upon and expands the fundamental clarifications to the complex problem of Jacopo Tintoretto's artistic origins and training made by Robert Echols. His analysis, initially influenced by a new approach to the artist formulated by W.R. Rearick, has informed

much of the recent scholarship on Tintoretto's early years. Prior to Echols, the dominant perspective on Tintoretto's first decade or so of activity was provided by Rodolfo Pallucchini in *La giovinezza del Tintoretto* (1950) and numerous subsequent publications, including the important, if seriously flawed, catalogue raisonné, co-authored with Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: le opere sacre e profane* (1982).³ Echols substantially revised Pallucchini's catalogue of paintings made in the first decade of Tintoretto's activity, offering a new evaluation of his career before the *Miracle of the Slave*.⁴ This view is becoming widely accepted today.

I have been fortunate to work closely on Tintoretto with Echols, and our collaboration has included significant contributions to two major exhibitions: *Tintoretto* at the Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (2007) and *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Musée du Louvre, Paris (2009). We plan to produce a new Tintoretto catalogue raisonné, and have already published many of our initial findings in these exhibition catalogues and in a series of articles, the most important of which is the essay, "Toward a New Tintoretto Catalogue, with a Checklist of revised Attributions and a New Chronology" (2009).⁵ Many of these ideas have been incorporated in my articles and contributions to exhibition catalogues. I have adapted some of the material previously published for this dissertation, always indicating the source(s) in the notes. Some of these publications were jointly written with Echols, and these collaborative texts are also designated.

The growth in the scope of my research should not diminish the importance of the choir pictures for the Madonna dell'Orto. They were painted for the artist's neighborhood church and the site of his tomb. According to Carlo Ridolfi, Tintoretto's mid-seventeenth century biographer – one far more sympathetic of his subject than Vasari – the painter initiated the project himself, asking payment only for materials. The novelty of the works' monumentality and their

preeminence within Tintoretto's oeuvre were noted by Vasari, Ridolfi, and other early sources. Since then, however, the paintings have received relatively little attention in modern scholarship. The Tintoretto literature has tended to prioritize instead those paintings that come both earlier and later in his oeuvre. These include the *Miracle of the Slave*, completed in 1548 as Tintoretto's first contribution to a series for the Scuola Grande di San Marco, as well as the dozens of canvases for the Scuola Grande di San Rocco that he and his workshop executed over a quarter century, from 1564-88. If the *Miracle of the Slave* makes an appearance in every college survey course, the immense achievement at San Rocco, still intact more than four centuries later, tends to overshadow everything else he produced.⁶

Furthermore, the initial paintings for both of these *scuola* cycles –the *Miracle of the Slave* and the pictures of *Saint Roch in Glory* (1564) and the vast *Crucifixion* (1565) –have long been regarded by scholars as representing the artist's most pivotal moments. These three paintings eclipse all of Tintoretto's work in the intervening fifteen or so years. Indeed, his work in the later 1540s and 1550s has been relatively neglected by scholars. The pictures he executed beginning around the time of the *Miracle of the Slave* and ending with the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf* have not received the attention they deserve.

Rather than explore the two choir paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto in detail, however, I discuss them here as a moment of arrival, a summation of all that he had learned in the previous decades. Thus the paintings themselves will be considered at the end of the dissertation. My primary focus will be on the trajectory of Tintoretto's career in the two decades leading up to them.

The first chapter uses a revealing *Self-Portrait* in the Philadelphia Museum of Art to lay out the terms of Tintoretto's artistic personality his process of becoming the mature artist who

dominated Venetian painting in the second half of the sixteenth century. The second chapter surveys the tenacious traditions in Venetian painting as well as Tintoretto's training and earliest works. Venetian art and social norms of the previous generation are essential to understand Tintoretto's innovations, which occurred in a fundamentally conservative artistic milieu. The rivalry between Titian and Pordenone in the 1520s and 1530s, which was an important influence on Tintoretto's own attitudes toward his artistic self-fashioning, is considered in depth. The third chapter discusses the achievement of the *Miracle of the Slave* and other pictures of that moment. Despite the public triumph of the picture's debut, however, I will argue that Tintoretto's position in Venice was not unassailable in the decade that followed. Faced with the hostility of artistic rivals both old and new, as well as a series of humiliating events, the painter seems to have lost his touch in the 1550s. In this period he rethought his engagement with sculpture, with Titian, and with Michelangelo. Both of these artists were crucial to his development, not just as halves of the famous motto supposedly inscribed on his studio wall – "Il disegno di Michel Angelo e'l colorito di Titiano" – but as rivals that Tintoretto made a point of engaging throughout his career. The analysis of the "difficult decade" of the 1550s, the subject of the fourth chapter, makes clear that ultimately, the painter felt he needed to initiate the two gigantic choir paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto in about the year 1558 to revive his flagging career. The final chapter discusses these two pictures as Tintoretto's bold wager to take his art to the next level, that is, as the culmination of what came before.

¹ Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* (1568), ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence: Sansoni, 1881), VI, p. 588. This edition of Vasari is hereafter abbreviated as Vasari-Milanesi. The same passage is translated in Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, translated by Gaston du C. de Vere, with an Introduction and Notes by David Ekserdjian, II (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), pp. 509-10: "He has painted almost every kind of picture in fresco and in oils, with portraits from life, and at every price, insomuch that with these methods he has executed, as he still does, the greater part of the pictures produced in Venice." This source is hereafter abbreviated as Vasari-de Vere.

² Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 590. The translation in Vasari-de Vere, p. 511 reads as follows: "In the Church of S. Maria dell'Orto... Tintoretto has painted – that is, on canvas and in oils – the two walls of the principal chapel, which are twenty-two bracci in height from the vaulting to the cornice at the foot."

³ Rodolfo Pallucchini, *La giovinezza del Tintoretto* (Milan: Edizioni Daria Guarnati, 1950) and Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: le Opere sacre e profane* (Milan: Electa, 1982).

⁴ Among his most important publications on this topic: "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian painting, 1538-1548" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1993); "'Jacopo nel corso, presso al palio': dal soffitto per l'Aretino al Miracolo dello Schiavo," in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte*, ed. Paola Rossi and Lionello Puppi (Padua: il Poligrafo, 1996), pp. 77-81; and "Tintoretto the Painter" in *Tintoretto*, ed. Miguel Falomir (exh. cat. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2007), pp. 25-62.

⁵ Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman, "Toward a new Tintoretto Catalogue, with a Checklist of revised Attributions and a new Chronology," in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Actas del Congreso Internacional*, ed. Miguel Falomir (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2009), pp. 91-150.

⁶ On the dominance of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco within the reception of Tintoretto's religious painting and his historiography more generally, see Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative," in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 63-94, especially 63-64, with further bibliography.

CHAPTER 1
CONFRONTATION

Just as a single peppercorn permeates and gradually overpowers ten bunches of poppies, thus precisely and exactly do you, cousin of the Muses; and you should be proud that, young as you are, you have been endowed with a great spirit, a light beard, a great intellect, a slender body and great heart, that you are young in years and old in judgement, and, in the short time that you were a pupil, you learned more than a hundred who were born masters.¹

Andrea Calmo, letter to Jacopo Tintoretto, 1548

A young man's shoulder and head emerge from an inky gloom (fig. 3). His head turns to face us, looking to his right. Bright light from the upper left plays over the features, revealing penetrating eyes set deep in their sockets, prominent eyebrows, a strong nose, a ragged moustache and beard, and tousled dark brown hair. Nothing around him distracts attention from the face and the intensity of the stare, practically a glower.

He seems to be immediately in front of us. In dim light, we might be initially fooled into assuming this is a real person and not a painting. The head dominates the pictorial field; it is the only bright area in the picture. The man's plain black tunic is easy to ignore; within the picture it seems to function less as an article of clothing and more as a strong triangular base for the head. The palette is limited, even austere, but otherwise the picture bears little sign of restraint. Upon closer inspection, we see evidence everywhere of the physical creation of the image. Visible brushstrokes shimmer across the surface, with many short curving touches of dark brown paint

depicting hair, moustache, and beard. These little curves record the motions of the knuckles as the hand that held the brush danced nervously above the canvas. The brushstrokes are spaced unevenly and overlap, appearing as natural as the locks of hair they delineate. These marks are not the precise hatching of a disengaged technician, but rather evidence of the care exerted by a self-conscious creator. It takes effort to appear unaffected.² These dark strokes blend in with the somber background of the painting, and thus seem to recede.

By contrast, the ruddy skin of the face – evoked with shorter marks of ocher, orange, pink, and cream – is bathed in light and therefore projects forward, toward the viewer. The face’s three-dimensional presence is emphasized by unblended impasto highlights that litter much of the upper face, including bold touches to the forehead, cheeks, and nose. These highlights make clear that the source of light is above and behind our shoulders. The impasto strokes that convey light striking – coupled with the nervous vigor of the marks that compose the hair, moustache, and beard – impart a sense of vitality and imminence. All these energetic marks reinforce the potent expression of the young man’s eyes, which by contrast to his forehead and cheekbones, are mostly in shadow cast by the deep brow. From this darkness the eyes seem to glow, even without impasto touches to serve as catch-lights. The subject of the painting is the stare. And this stare suggests something is about to happen. The sitter all but demands, “You looking at me?”³

The painting is a self-portrait by Jacopo Robusti, called Jacopo Tintoretto (c. 1518-1594), executed on canvas around 1546-47, and now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.⁴ Measuring approximately 45 x 38 cm., it is one of Tintoretto’s smallest portraits. But what it lacks in scale it more than makes up in intensity.⁵ Although the early sources mention several independent self-portraits by Tintoretto, and a weak replica of this painting on panel has stubbornly persisted as an authentic work in the literature (fig. 4), the Philadelphia canvas is the only surviving autograph

independent self-portrait from his early career.⁶ On the basis of his physiognomy the man appears to be in his mid-to-late twenties. More precisely and helpfully, comparisons to brushwork and three-dimensional modeling in works like the *Portrait of a Man Aged Twenty-Six* (fig. 5), dated 1547, and the heads of the apostles in the large canvas of the *Last Supper* in the church of San Marcuola, Venice (fig. 6), also dated the same year, suggest the Philadelphia picture was created around the time of those paintings or just before.⁷

The direct and studied gaze characteristic of a painter using a mirror to capture his own features confirms that this is Tintoretto's self-portrait, as does the sitter's physiognomic similarity to a *Self-Portrait* (fig. 7) of the elderly Tintoretto in the Musée du Louvre, painted around 1588.⁸ Although, in that painting, the sitter's skin sags and his beard and hair are white, both works represent the same individual.⁹ These two portraits depict the same sitter some forty years apart; Tintoretto appears about twenty-eight years old in the Philadelphia painting and about sixty-nine in the Louvre canvas, assuming that the painter was born about 1518.¹⁰ Although both heads are relatively closely cropped, the two pictures portray the sitter in vastly different ways. The bold impasto and strong chiaroscuro of the youthful portrait are replaced by softer, more blended strokes and a more generalized lighting, apparently coming from directly overhead, in the later image. The Philadelphia and Paris *Self-Portraits* do not quite bookend the painter's career, but they arguably show Tintoretto taking stock, at two key moments, of his own position in the story of Venetian art.¹¹

The moment of the first painting concerns us here. Tintoretto's Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* has no direct relatives in mid-cinquecento Venice. As a Renaissance self-portrait, it is atypical, if not unique, in its intensity. Most Italian Renaissance self-portraits lack the confident assertion and sense of challenge presented here. In the Venetian context – traditionally prioritizing social

harmony and the collective interest over the elevation of the individual, as will be discussed below – this self-assertion is particularly anomalous. Other self-portraits are reserved, such as the probable early self-portrait by Paolo Veronese (1528-88) in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg (fig. 8).¹² To be sure, the Philadelphia picture shares features with portraits (that are not self-portraits) by other artists. The painterly handling on the forehead, cheekbones, and nose is particularly close, in its dry impasto highlights, to similar passages in the imposing portrait of *Pietro Aretino* by Titian (c. 1488-1576), documented to 1545 (fig. 9), but the boldness of brushstroke seen in commissioned portraits by Tintoretto or Titian is rare in self-portraits.

In these very years, the upstart Tintoretto was jockeying for the favor of Aretino, an influential writer and tastemaker, who had moved to Venice in 1527 and immediately championed Titian.¹³ For nearly three decades, until Aretino's death in 1556, he and Titian were best friends; in the mid-to-late 1540s, Tintoretto must have yearned for similar support from this prominent critic. In these same years, both Titian and Tintoretto simultaneously introduced significantly broader paint application to their pictures.¹⁴ Tintoretto generally emulated Titian when creating portraits of others, adopting the older painter's mode of accentuating a sitter's rank and respectability.¹⁵ When painting himself in the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*, Tintoretto depicted a sitter bereft of attributes and lacking Titian's trademark projection of calm command. Rather, the figure in the Philadelphia portrait appears bold, self-aware, perhaps even a bit apprehensive or impatient. In this case, Tintoretto apparently eschewed the example of Titian's portraits in order to emphasize his own burning personality.

In its turning pose and confrontational stare, Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* seems to recall much earlier Venetian paintings, such as the *Self-Portrait as David* (fig. 10) by Giorgione (1477/78-1510), with its direct engagement of the viewer.¹⁶ The fixed stare and turn of the body

indicate that Giorgione also used a mirror to capture his own likeness, a typical procedure in producing self-portraits. On the other hand, Titian's self-portraits, as seen in examples in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin (fig. 11) and the Museo Nacional del Prado (fig. 12), which are both later than Tintoretto's Philadelphia picture, do not meet the observer's gaze and thus imply the use of two mirrors to capture the artist's own features.¹⁷

By contrast, single-mirror self-portraits invite a sort of confrontation between sitter and viewer. Yet where the expression of Giorgione appears plausibly introspective, moody, and preoccupied following his triumph over Goliath, Tintoretto's self-portrait displays something altogether different. First, it exhibits abundant evidence of its own manufacture. This is seen in the conspicuously visible brushwork describing the hair and facial features, as well as the pose; although cropped by the edge of the canvas, Tintoretto's right arm must be extended and executing the picture before us.¹⁸ Though the artist's head is uncannily present, the brushstrokes are not blended together to create the *sfumato* and palpable atmosphere central to the dreamy effect of Giorgionesque pictures earlier in the century. Tintoretto's strokes are the opposite of self-effacing. Instead, they show a young artist already conscious of the tension between visible brushstroke and mimetic illusion, as well as that between pictorial surface and notional depth. Tintoretto emphasizes the act of creation, and in doing so he reveals much about himself. The rough brushstrokes betray an energy and an impatience, literally marking the artist's claim to the canvas and asserting his personality on the surface.¹⁹

Moreover, the expression of the sitter is not that of someone plunged into doubt about events that have just happened, as in Giorgione's picture. Nor is the sitter an individual asserting a particular social status. In fact, the lack of precise attributes or identifying clothing underscores that this portrait makes no specific claim on the past and does not seem to allude to other roles.

That is, Tintoretto has not portrayed himself in the guise of another, more distinguished, persona. Unlike Dürer, Masaccio, Botticelli, or Rogier van der Weyden, among others, our young man does not show himself as an onlooker at a great sacred event, or as Christ, an Apostle, Apelles, Saint Luke, an aristocrat, or even an artist.²⁰ Rather, Tintoretto simply presents himself.²¹ Compared with the self-portraits of Tintoretto's predecessors, here his guise is stripped down, and his technique is played up.

It should be emphasized that the Philadelphia painting may be the first autonomous self-portrait in European art to be painted in a consciously rough style. In other words, this picture could be the earliest independent self-portrait where the signs of its facture as an oil painting are immodestly evident.²² The line that extends to the freely painted self-portraits of Rembrandt, Courbet, Van Gogh, and Cézanne starts here. In creating a self-portrait without attributes, omitting the trappings of wealth or success, and with scraggly hair and beard, Tintoretto also declares that he does not have time to pause for grooming; it is the first of many artfully unkempt images of the self. Although anecdotes abound of Italian artists, from Donatello to Michelangelo, who apparently did not mind presenting a disheveled appearance, to capture this insouciance in a self-portrait was new. Tintoretto's innovation has a fascinating descendant in Annibale Carracci's *Self-Portrait on an Easel*, c. 1595-1603 in the Hermitage (fig. 13), which also presents a scruffy appearance and a tightly-cropped format.²³ Yet compared to Annibale's picture, Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* distinguishes itself by emphasizing both its process of becoming and its bold expression. That is, is Annibale's self-image crucially shows a completed canvas within a workshop setting; by contrast Tintoretto's self-portrait is an image of process, and of becoming, strategically and forever unfinished.²⁴ Similarly, very few Renaissance self-portraits, including Annibale's, possess Tintoretto's sense of urgency. Often they seem introspective or passive, as

exemplified by those of Annibale and Giorgione. In his *David*, Giorgione depicts himself as a young man in a melancholy funk. Here Tintoretto paints himself as a young man in a hurry, eager to arrive.

Above all, in contrast with Giorgione's picture, Tintoretto's eyes face the immediate future, not the past or the uncertain present. In other words, it seems that Tintoretto does not just confidently look out, he also looks ahead. And what lies ahead? The viewer, of course, one of the targets of his scrutiny, lies in front of him, but so does the great professional success that Tintoretto could almost taste. The closely cropped format and the focus on his determined gaze project a disproportionately strong, even overpowering personality compared with his small body, as celebrated by the playwright Andrea Calmo in his letter of 1548, quoted at the start of this chapter. Calmo's letter had noted that Tintoretto had matured suddenly – “in the short time that you were a pupil, you learned more than a hundred who were born masters” – perhaps alluding to the story of Tintoretto's fleeting apprenticeship to Titian (and longstanding rivalry with the older master), to be explored in subsequent chapters.

Calmo's praise certainly reflected the overwhelming achievement of the *Miracle of the Slave* (fig. 14) at the Scuola Grande di San Marco, apparently unveiled in April of the same year, and praised extravagantly by none other than Pietro Aretino, who lauded the artist's superlative skill by asserting, “your art, which is surpassing.”²⁵ The miracle the painting depicts gave appropriate scope for an ambitious painter to display his talents. According to medieval legend, a Christian slave from Provence was to be punished by his pagan master for undertaking a pilgrimage to Venice, but all the implements of torture were mysteriously shattered by Saint Mark himself, to the astonishment of the tormentors and bystanders.²⁶ With the *Miracle of the Slave*, Tintoretto had similarly astonished the Venetian public, including his skeptics and

competitors. The painting announced his arrival on the Venetian scene and declared him an artist to be reckoned with. Later in the same year, Calmo went on to predict that Tintoretto would leave his rivals, both contemporary ones and even those of the ancient world, behind: “You may be sure that as your life proceeds, as all your friends hope, your name is destined to rebound throughout the world, as far as the discovered Indies and below the Antipodes... demonstrating that the ancients were mere doodlers in comparison with us....”²⁷

Yet the *Self-Portrait* is reasonably dated on stylistic grounds a little before the achievement of the *Miracle of the Slave* and the published praise of Pietro Aretino and Andrea Calmo. When he depicted himself in this painting, Tintoretto had not yet arrived at his public triumph. To be sure, by 1546, he had already completed several important private commissions, including fourteen wooden ceiling panels for Vettor Pisani’s palazzo at San Paternian (1541-42) and a canvas depicting the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* (fig. 15) (1544-45) for a ceiling in the home of Pietro Aretino, but he had yet to enjoy a public triumph with a major government, *scuola* (lay confraternity), or church commission.²⁸

Tintoretto’s seventeenth-century biographer, Carlo Ridolfi (1594-1658), offers an enormous amount of useful detail, much of it probably accurate, about this period. Based on extensive research and abundant oral tradition, Ridolfi first published a separate biography of Jacopo – *Vita di Giacopo Robusti* – in 1642, later incorporating this text, with almost no changes, into his much larger series of biographies of Venetian painters, *Le Maraviglie dell’arte*, issued in 1648.²⁹ In the biography Ridolfi makes clear just how hard it was, at the time of Tintoretto’s first years as a professional artist, to break into the upper level of Venetian painters without the prerequisite of a prominent institutional assignment:

Since at that time in Venice the only works that were praised were those by Palma Vecchio, Pordenone, Bonifacio, and, especially Titian, who usually got the most

important commissions, there was no way for Tintoretto to make his true worth known and gain public esteem except by working on public commissions with subject matter of greater import.³⁰

Even if the first two names on Ridolfi's list of establishment painters were dead by the mid-1540s – and thus no longer actual competitors – these four styles dominated Venetian painting, making it all the more difficult for new artists to insert themselves into the local scene. Not surprisingly these older painters would actively discourage younger competitors, as numerous anecdotes attest.

Was Tintoretto running out of time? In Renaissance Italy, many of the greatest names in art had achieved their breakthroughs in their early twenties. While numerous quattrocento artists seem to emerge as independent artists with a distinctive style only in their thirties (for instance Fra Angelico or Fra Filippo Lippi), there are equally many fifteenth-century artists who make their leap forward at a much younger age, such as Lorenzo Ghiberti, who won the 1401 competition with his relief of the *Sacrifice of Isaac* (Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence) at the age of twenty-three, or Donatello, whose marble *David* (Bargello) or *Saint John the Evangelist* (Opera del Duomo, Florence) were both undertaken when the sculptor was about twenty-two. Leonardo da Vinci, born in 1452, would have been about twenty-one years old when he painted his first important picture, the *Annunciation* (Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence), probably executed as early as 1472-73.³¹

Closer to Venice, Mantegna completed the frescoes in the Ovetari Chapel (Eremitani, Padua) by the age of twenty-six. In the Cinquecento, Raphael was about twenty-one when he painted the *Marriage of the Virgin*, dated 1504 (Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan), and Michelangelo's *Pietà* (Saint Peter's, Vatican City) was completed when the sculptor was only about twenty-five. Similarly, Andrea del Sarto and Pontormo were about twenty-four and twenty-two years old at

the time of their accomplished contributions to the frescoes in the atrium of SS. Annunziata, Florence. Correggio's innovative early altarpiece of the *Virgin of Saint Francis* (Gemäldegalerie, Dresden) of 1514-15 was produced when the painter was twenty-six, while Parmigianino's breakthrough, the frescoes at Fontanellato of c. 1523-24, came when the painter was about twenty-one.³² Lorenzo Lotto, born in Venice about 1480, created, if not a public breakthrough, a string of sophisticated small-scale works, including the portrait of *Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi* (Gallerie Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples) and the portrait's cover (*Allegory of Vice and Virtue* in the National Gallery of Art, Washington) by 1505, when he was about twenty-five.³³ Sebastiano Luciani, also born in Venice in about 1485, created important and innovative large canvases in the second half of the first decade of the 16th century. These included, by about 1510, the organ shutters for San Bartolomeo a Rialto. Although the chronology of Sebastiano's Venetian period remains unsettled, he was probably the most precocious of Venetian painters in the early Cinquecento.³⁴

Given that Sebastiano's early success led to an invitation from Agostino Chigi in Rome and the painter's subsequent departure from Venice in August 1511, the career of Titian offers undoubtedly the most germane comparison for Tintoretto, both in historical retrospection and in the mind of the younger artist. Even if Titian's string of conspicuous public commissions in Venice did not really begin until the unveiling of the *Assunta* (fig. 16) in 1518 when he was about thirty, during his twenties he had completed an important fresco cycle in Padua in about 1511 (Scuola del Santo), as well as many easel pictures for aristocratic patrons in Venice and the *terraferma*, confirming the esteem in which he was held by Italian elites. Moreover, in 1513 Titian had petitioned for and been awarded a major commission for the battle picture in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the Palazzo Ducale as well as the promise of a *sanseria* (a prestigious

sinecure) from the Venetian government, acknowledging his status as an official state painter.³⁵ Having reached the summit of local prestige by about the age of twenty-five, Titian offered a model to ambitious young painters of subsequent generations.

By contrast, those artists who had not made a breakthrough by the age of thirty were unlikely ever to rise above a certain local reputation or journeyman status. In Venice, examples in this category might include Polidoro Lanziani (c. 1515-1565), Giovanni De Meo (1510/12-c. 1570), many of the workshop assistants of Bonifacio de' Pitati (1487-1553), or Tintoretto imitators like Giovanni Gallizi (active 1540-1565).³⁶ Such painters toward the bottom of the market could rarely catch a break; many of them in all likelihood remain as anonymous today as they were invisible then. As Paolo Pino lamented in his dialogue, "Poverty is an assassin, I tell you; and a work is never so well paid that the money will suffice until the completion of the next one."³⁷ Thus by the mid-1540s, as Tintoretto moved into the second half of his twenties, he may well have wondered if he would suffer the same fate. Was he on the verge of being too old to insert himself into the top echelon of painters in Venice? In addition, might he have begun to worry about being surpassed by artists younger than he? Indeed, a future rival was already at work in nearby Verona, announcing his own breakthrough to important patrons and other artists through fresco and canvas paintings. Paolo Caliari, later known as Paolo Veronese, was born a full decade after Tintoretto, but was developing as a painter nearly as quickly.³⁸ By around 1548, Veronese was creating refined easel paintings and altarpieces, and his eventual move to Venice must have seemed inevitable. In the aggressive artistic climate of cinquecento Venice, even a successful painter must have always heard at his back challengers hurrying near, and felt the pressure of new waves of competitors.³⁹

The arresting and self-assured gaze of the *Self-Portrait* insists that Tintoretto will not allow such failure to happen. His stare is not merely directed at the viewer, or his rivals, or even posterity. Through this self-portrait, Tintoretto seems also to be challenging himself. He appears to be willing himself to make his artistic breakthrough. Perhaps by the time of this picture he already had begun the painting that would bring him renown, the *Miracle of the Slave* (fig. 14). This work was probably commissioned in 1547 when his future father-in-law, Marco Episcopi (or de Vescovi), was an important officeholder, the Guardian da Matin, of the Scuola Grande di San Marco.⁴⁰ The gaze of this *Self-Portrait* is thus both a prediction and a pledge.

Striking a Pose

Some readers may question the validity of such an expansive reading of the *Self-Portrait*. How much can a viewer truly know about a sitter or artist's frame of mind? Harry Berger has brilliantly critiqued the practice of interpreting a Renaissance portrait on the basis of biographical information.⁴¹ Berger notes how art historians too often declare that a painter has captured the "inner personality" of an individual sitter through the treatment of features and expression, often backing up the interpretation with archival facts about the sitter's personal triumphs or failures. To Berger, such claims make "the sitter's face an index of his or her mind," an interpretation overdetermined by information from the archive, which may or may not be accurate, or might even apply instead to a totally different individual.⁴² One of Berger's principal insights was that a portrait cannot simply be the outcome of an artist capturing, with various degrees of accuracy or success, the "true" personality of the sitter. According to Berger, an unfortunate result of this assumption is that often "the sitter is construed as the passive site of revelation, perhaps unaware that the painter is extracting the true nature from the appearance."⁴³

The standard art historical focus on praising the painter's skill tends to downplay or even ignore the role of the sitter.

Berger therefore offers an alternative model of interpretation: a sitter does not so much sit as pose. More specifically, Berger asserts that in the creation of a portrait both sitter and artist collaborate in the performance of a specific pose, a self-representation, which also takes into account the eventual viewer. In other words, the sitter presents a particular pose, and while “posing before the painter he or she was projecting the self-representation aimed at future observers.”⁴⁴ Even if it is the painter who understands the repertory of poses and makes many of the pictorial decisions, it is the sitter – the client – who initiates the process and whose agency must not be forgotten. Acknowledging the contribution of the sitter offers an important corrective to the often casual interpretations of early modern portraits.

In the case of Tintoretto's Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*, however, the collaboration between painter and sitter to affect a pose and reproduce it has now been replaced by a single actor who undertakes both tasks. By definition, in a self-portrait, the sitter and artist are one and the same; this allows a self-portrait to achieve a unique level of intention, with no need for either party to compromise, or play a role with which he is not comfortable.⁴⁵ Beyond these conditions, the sitter's facial expression in the Philadelphia portrait seems anything but neutral or generic; a specific attitude or stance must have been the plan from the start. The confident, even audacious young man that we see in the portrait is very likely the persona Tintoretto intended to present and simultaneously capture in his painting.

The specific pose that Tintoretto chose for this portrait is worthy of comment, since he presents himself not straight-on, in the manner he would with his Louvre *Self-Portrait* near the end of his career (fig. 7), but rather with a dynamic turn of the neck. This pose, with the glance

turning back over the shoulder, called a “*ritratto di spalle*,” is evident even in its modest bust-length dimensions, its intimacy implying a dialogue as if over the parapet often employed in early sixteenth-century portraits. Thus Tintoretto poses himself within the tradition of *ritratti di spalle* by Titian, as seen in his *Man with a Blue Sleeve* of c. 1512 (National Gallery, London).⁴⁶ The turning of the figure to confront the viewer offers an impression of dynamism or even confrontation. Even closer to the pose and the cropping of Tintoretto’s *Self-Portrait* is Raphael’s panel portrait of *Bindo Altoviti* of about 1516-18 (National Gallery of Art, Washington) (fig. 17).⁴⁷ This painting was long misidentified as a self-portrait based precisely on the self-conscious engagement of the pose and gaze, and its genteel nonchalance that seems to epitomize Castiglione’s *sprezzatura*, his apparent effortless nonchalance.⁴⁸ A comparison with the effete and courtly Altoviti and its exquisite finish certainly underscores the roughness, even robustness of Tintoretto’s manner of painting, an artistic self-identity appropriate for his family name.

Nor does this reading of a young artist’s declaration of ambition rely solely on the reasonable congruity of facial expression and the painting’s place in Tintoretto’s chronology. Rather, the traits that I see in this painting receive corroboration from numerous early sources: biographies, letters, and other textual accounts. Indeed, all sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers who discuss Tintoretto – including Aretino, Calmo, Giorgio Vasari, Ridolfi, Marco Boschini – emphasize his drive and even haste.⁴⁹ Dozens of examples bear these two characteristics out. For instance, in April of 1548, Aretino writes a letter to the sculptor Jacopo Sansovino apparently just before the unveiling of the *Miracle of the Slave*. Aretino discusses Tintoretto’s imminent success, employing terms redolent of aggressive rivalry, noting the artist’s promise within the artistic “combat of virtue pitting one virtuoso against another” and how the

painter was “near the winning post of the race.”⁵⁰ Vasari, who published his biographies in 1568, during Tintoretto’s lifetime, mentions repeatedly the artist’s insistence on equaling if not overtaking his rivals; Vasari praised a mural for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio as deserving to be “numbered among the best things that he ever did, so powerful in him was his determination that he would equal, if not vanquish and surpass, his rivals who had worked in that place.”⁵¹ Moreover, Tintoretto presented a disconcerting tendency to present sketches as finished works, “lasciato le bozze per finite,” suggesting a personality who refused to play by the rules.⁵²

Where the Tuscan Vasari was naturally suspicious or dismissive of achievement by the artists of Venice, the Venetian Calmo was wholeheartedly enthusiastic. Calmo’s letter, cited above, appearing just slightly later than the *Self-Portrait*, begins by employing an unusual sobriquet for Tintoretto, “the adoptive son of Apelles,” a status that suggests that the painter’s artistic talents were so great and his ambition so big that the greatest painter of the ancients decided to make the young Venetian artist his heir.⁵³ Such a sobriquet resonated with the tradition of the greatest of Roman emperors adopting sons to be their heirs, as in Caesar with Octavian or Trajan with Hadrian.⁵⁴ In the seventeenth century, Boschini again describes Tintoretto’s ambition and skills in military terms: “with his lightning brush he has struck so daringly that he has frozen and overcome the most acclaimed Champions of art.”⁵⁵ As we will see, these attributes of ambition and impatience arise repeatedly in both documented episodes and literary anecdotes corresponding to many stages of Tintoretto’s career. Yet the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* suggests that the young artist may have believed the stakes were particularly high at the moment he painted this picture.

A similar, fraught moment in the artist’s career would come just over a decade later, as he again faced a steep challenge and willed himself to succeed. As I will explain in detail in chapter

four, by the late 1550s Tintoretto's position in Venice, presumably assured in 1548, had slipped, and his future had become uncertain. Tintoretto apparently needed to make himself known as the most daring painter in the world: "farsi conoscere il più arrischiato Pittore del Mondo," as recounted in 1642 by Ridolfi.⁵⁶ This particularly strong formulation would seem a suitable caption for the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*. In fact, Ridolfi's striking phrase introduces the passage describing the two giant paintings in the choir of the church of the Madonna dell'Orto in Venice – the *Last Judgment* (fig. 1) and the *Making of the Golden Calf* (fig. 2) – that the conclusion of this dissertation will explore.

Comparing Self-Portraits

Let us turn to another self-portrait, perhaps not coincidentally created by an ambitious painter also about twenty-eight years old. In *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art*, Joseph Koerner considers Albrecht Dürer's famous *Self-Portrait* of 1500 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich) (fig. 18), with its unprecedented frontality and Christomorphic aspect, as both the index and the declaration of a new self-awareness on the part of its artist who was at the time twenty-eight years old.⁵⁷ The virtuosity, self-assurance, and declaration of social standing so obviously on display in Dürer's elegant *Self-Portrait* of two years earlier (Museo Nacional del Prado) (fig. 19) – with the extraordinary graphic emphasis on ringlets of hair and pleats and folds of clothing – has in the Munich portrait been raised to an entirely different level of technical brilliance and allusive profundity. As Koerner acknowledges, the art historian's own critical approach parallels the interpretive model established by Stephen Greenblatt, who argued that in the Renaissance, "there appeared to be an increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process."⁵⁸ In the preface to his own book, Koerner

observes that “Dürer constructs his self-portraits as *themselves* prefaces, announcing and projecting in them an idea of art, a regimen of vision, a history of reception, and an epoch of history.” Moreover, “Prepared for posterity, Dürer looks ready to serve as a frontispiece for some future biography or ‘collected works’.”⁵⁹

The Munich painting’s format and inscriptions detailing his monogram, name, citizenship, age, and, especially, the momentous year of the half-millennium enhance the overall effect, creating an announcement and an image charged with meaning. Dürer’s coordinated statement of text and likeness thus goes far beyond any earlier painter’s self-image, even that of Jan van Eyck’s *Man in a Red Turban* of 1433 (National Gallery, London) (fig. 20).⁶⁰ Van Eyck’s painting, often considered a self-portrait, includes a disarming stare, eye-catching headgear, and self-conscious inscriptions, including some Greek letters; together these elements seem to emphasize the artist’s craft. The frame, original to the painting, bears at the top the motto “Als Ich Kan” (“As I/Eyck can”) and, along the lower edge, fixes the achievement in time: “JOHES. DE. EYCK. ME. FECIT. ANO MCCCC 33 21 OTTOBRIS” (“Jan van Eyck made me on 21 October 1433”).⁶¹

Dürer’s *Self-Portrait*, however, does not simply call attention to the skill of its creator but rather aligns the powers of the artist with those of God. The Munich painting addresses important concepts that the artist and his contemporaries were rethinking at this very moment, including personal identity and the power of art, expressed through Dürer’s own mortal features at a specific point as well as an evocation of an image not made by human hands: the Holy Face imprinted on Veronica’s Veil.⁶² Koerner follows a long tradition of scholarship when he notes that the Munich *Self-Portrait* shows the artist at the height of his powers and more famous, thanks to the recent publication of the *Apocalypse* woodcuts, than any German artist had ever

been.⁶³ Under the circumstances, the extraordinary claims made by the painter in his *Self-Portrait* seem unassailable.⁶⁴

Among its many other assertions, Dürer's painting captures a moment of arrival, a stocktaking of supreme assurance. Although painted when its author was just about the same age, Tintoretto's Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* presents quite the opposite circumstance. It reveals an artist who has not yet arrived but who shows in his facial expression that he knows he will soon get there. Just as Dürer's *Self-Portrait* can be considered a preface to his future biography, one where the arc of success is already largely determined and a certain momentum might be enjoyed, Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* should be seen as a prologue to the rest of his career, to a story whose principal chapters remain to be written, and whose success will rely on the artist's willpower. In staring so directly at the viewer, and staring down his rivals, Tintoretto's portrait must also be read as a challenge to himself. It might appear surprising that the artist chose such a small canvas to assert these ambitions. Yet the closely cropped format enhances its impact; little can detract from the confident gaze. Furthermore, unlike an altarpiece or narrative canvas for a Venetian confraternity, here the small format implies an audience of few viewers, and occasionally just one. In grammatical terms, the Philadelphia painting encompasses simultaneously second person singular (the viewer), second person plural (his rivals and posterity), and first person reflexive (himself).⁶⁵

In this light, it seems likely that Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* was not intended to be sold or given to an acquaintance in his literary circle, nor made for a Venetian nobleman.⁶⁶ The Philadelphia painting lacks any of the status indicators or flashy costume or still-life details that might identify it as a demonstration piece designed to attract new clients. The picture is so spare that its intended audience must be in on the secret. Thus, perhaps like the famous motto that

Tintoretto was said to have inscribed on his studio wall – “Il disegno di Michel Angelo e’l colorito di Titiano” (“The drawing of Michelangelo and the Coloring of Titian”), which will be analyzed in subsequent chapters – the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* was intended for the young artist himself.⁶⁷ Like the motto, Tintoretto might have used the painting as a challenge to reach the next stage of his career, to help ensure his breakthrough. In this reading, Tintoretto was not only both the painter and sitter of the portrait, he was concurrently its artist and its audience.

Miguel Falomir has made a good case that Tintoretto created the Philadelphia picture for himself.⁶⁸ Certainly there is plenty of circumstantial evidence that the picture may have remained in the *bottega*. In December of 1678, Antonio Saurer, agent for the voracious Spanish aristocratic collector, Don Gaspar de Haro, Marquis of Carpio, compiled a list of the contents of the Tintoretto studio, then under the control of the final member of the *bottega*, Sebastiano Casser. The paintings Saurer mentioned included numerous portraits and self-portraits. Carpio eventually acquired everything of interest, and an inventory of 1682 mentions at least one picture that could be the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*.⁶⁹ In 1995, W. R. Rearick persuasively argued that the portrait on panel that Jacopo’s son Domenico had earlier bequeathed to his sister Ottavia in 1630 – “dal rittrato suo fatto in tavola, il qual lasso mia sorella Ottavia” – is the picture now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 4).⁷⁰ Rearick’s speculation that Domenico made the copy himself seems unconvincing given the generally higher standards of Domenico’s portraiture compared with its tentative character and “outside-in” manner of execution, characteristic of a copy.⁷¹ Thus another workshop hand may have been responsible here. In any case, the persistence of the Victoria and Albert Museum copy within the family studio presupposes the presence of the Philadelphia painting to serve as the starting point for a replica. That Jacopo apparently held on

to the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* supports the theory that the artist was always the intended viewer.

The bold self-portraits by Dürer (Munich) and Tintoretto (Philadelphia) suggest that painters sometimes create innovative self-portraits at crucible moments in their careers, devising simultaneously an image for the viewer and for themselves. Such readings are corroborated by a later example of genre-bending self-portraiture also produced at a crucial point in a painter's development: Rembrandt's *Artist in the Studio*, c. 1628 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) (fig. 21).⁷² This work depicts a diminutive painter at the back of a humble room, one devoid of the paraphernalia of a typical artist's studio, but where every surface is described in loving detail: plaster, brick, floorboards, doorframe. The young man seems to gaze both at the viewer and also at a large panel on an easel that dominates the foreground. The looming easel presents an intimidating presence, larger than the studio door. I would suggest that the implication is that the painter will not be able to leave the room until he completes the painting on the easel.

Rembrandt's picture, however, is not simply a genre scene of an artist at work. Indeed he is not actually working, but apparently about to begin. Moreover, the little artist possesses Rembrandt's features, at least his distinctive nose and eyebrows, and seems therefore to be a self-portrait of the painter, then about twenty-two-years old. The likeness is confirmed by a contemporaneous *Self-Portrait* on panel (fig. 22) in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, which in turn shares with the Philadelphia Tintoretto deep shadows, focus on the face, and a self-conscious facture—in Rembrandt's case hair curls scraped into the wet paint, perhaps with the point of the brush handle.⁷³ Although the Amsterdam panel is unusual in execution, appearing as a chiaroscuro exercise more than a straightforward portrait of an individual, it is, however, conventional in format. Moreover, since Rembrandt's face is largely in shadow and presents a

generally timid expression, it does not seem to offer the same kind of declaration as Tintoretto's painting does. Rembrandt seems to be studying his features and expression in dramatic chiaroscuro, in the manner of a *tronie* (a portrait-like head study of expression or a character type), rather than announcing the young artist's ambitions for his career.

It is worth underscoring that the Boston Rembrandt panel is remarkable in emphasizing the artist at work, or rather getting ready to start. The picture was painted very soon after Rembrandt had begun his professional career as a teacher. The artist in the room is rather elaborately dressed, and he shares Rembrandt's penchant for theatrical hats. The young man holds an unwieldy arsenal of painter's tools: a maulstick, palette, and at least six brushes. What to make of this unusual composition, which includes a full-length but miniature self-portrait? Rembrandt seems to be declaring his presence and his ambitions with what Simon Schama calls a "grandiloquent letter of introduction, nothing short of a pronouncement on the nature of Painting itself."⁷⁴ Of course some things are easier said than done. Thus it seems likely that the painting also expresses the pressures of beginning a task. But in this case it is not just the anxiety of starting an individual picture – the universal intimidation of the blank page or panel – but also the burden of an artist charting his path against the tradition of artistic giants. In the Boston painting, Rembrandt seems determined, though admittedly somewhat dwarfed by the magnitude of his goal and presumably by the reputation of those who came before.

Compared to Rembrandt's interior scene, the artist who stares back in Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* had been at his craft for at least five more years than Rembrandt at the moment he painted the *Artist in His Studio*, and the Venetian painter did not have ample conspicuous success in the public realm to show for it. Thus these three innovative self-portraits exemplify three different but key moments in the lives of their respective artists: Rembrandt just after the start of

his career, Dürer at the summit, and Tintoretto itching for his belated breakthrough, anxious to arrive.

Capturing a Moment

In the context of fierce artistic competition in mid-cinquecento Venice that will be evoked in future chapters, Tintoretto's Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* depicts a sitter aware of his present position and of the challenges ahead. These eyes have witnessed pressure and failure; a sense that his adversaries are numerous is not just in his head. Given the differences in their respective careers at the point of each self-portrait, Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* cannot serve as a statement of poise and mastery as Dürer's does. Nor can Tintoretto take consolation that he has only just begun his career, the moment Rembrandt seems to depict. The fabric dyer's son (Tintoretto, the artist's nickname, literally means "little dyer") had come a long way, but he was not there yet.⁷⁵ The Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*'s expression, in both senses of physical pose and painterly facture, offers testimony of yearning and becoming, a gaze and technique simultaneously confident and apprehensive, aware of the challenges. Within a year or two, however, the Venetian artist would paint his equivalent to Dürer's achievement in his *Self-Portrait*, not in Tintoretto's case a modest panel picture, an independent self-portrait, but instead a huge canvas with more than thirty figures. Tintoretto's equivalent to Dürer's *Self-Portrait* of 1500 is none other than the *Miracle of the Slave* of 1548 (fig. 14). As will be explained in the next two chapters, Tintoretto calibrated and choreographed this painting more carefully than anything else he produced in his career to provide indisputable proof of his skill to the public, to his critics and rivals, and to himself. The giant painting is a *summa* of his art, a doubling down on his bet in order to launch his reputation. The *Miracle of the Slave* is spectacular in scale,

effect, and ambition, multivalent in its allusions and quotations. It announces Tintoretto's arrival on the most public of stages. He put everything he knew on that canvas.

The Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* captures Tintoretto not long before this moment of triumph, and well before the worrisome slump in his career that would require an equally audacious gambit a decade later: the looming choir paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto, namely the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf* (figs. 1, 2), the two canvases that represent a point of arrival in Tintoretto's career and form the subject of the conclusion of this dissertation. Though far smaller than the *Miracle of the Slave* or especially those choir paintings, the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* represents Tintoretto in microcosm: conspicuously innovative, bold and impatient in personality and technique, and an artist/sitter aware of his body in space, the viewer, and his place in Venetian art. While the dark background, reductive treatment of clothing, and focus on the head crystallize a formula he would employ with great success in his later portraits, his own facial expression would not be easy to adapt for other sitters. In the demeanor of this portrait one can read the emerging personality of Tintoretto, enhanced by the particular moment of its painting. It is probably his greatest portrait, and, if ostensibly one of his simplest and smallest pictures, also one of his most revealing.

Considering not just the stylistic and contextual influences but also the personal motivations Tintoretto may have felt at the time he executed certain salient works in his career – particularly the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*, the *Miracle of the Slave*, the *Presentation of the Virgin*, and the two choir paintings of the Madonna dell'Orto – will lead to a more richly informed reading of the artist's oeuvre. Indeed, a fuller understanding of these crucial works in the first two decades of his activity – stepping stones, as it were, to his artistic maturity – will shed light on what is universally regarded as Tintoretto's *magnum opus*, the paintings of the

Scuola Grande di San Rocco, whose decoration he and his workshop undertook between 1564 and 1588. Given that this cycle is still largely intact and so extensive, with more than twenty-five major paintings on canvas and thirty smaller or single-figure subjects, the paintings for the Scuola have tended to overshadow every other aspect of his production.⁷⁶ Yet the confident young man staring out in the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* was not yet the artist who would decorate an entire confraternity, despite his burning ambition. To reach his prime required successful completion of these other crucial stages. By acknowledging the precursors to the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, we can place Tintoretto's accomplishment more accurately within the development of Venetian painting in the sixteenth century.

Although Tintoretto's uncommon drive and indeed personal motivations have often been cited or speculated upon by critics, from Ridolfi in the seventeenth century to Jean-Paul Sartre in the twentieth, this study will reflect on the painter's inspirations and impulses from the point of view of the art historian.⁷⁷ Crucial scholarly questions of connoisseurship, chronology, style, technique, iconography, and patronage, among others, will be addressed alongside reconstructions and speculations of Tintoretto's own intentions at various moments. Most historians of Venetian art have not attempted to explore this painter's motivations to any degree. This seems to be a mistake, since to a remarkable extent, Tintoretto's life and works are inextricably linked.

During his long career, Tintoretto produced an enormous oeuvre, with more than four-hundred surviving paintings.⁷⁸ Yet he signed very few of his works. One of the notable exceptions is the *Miracle of the Slave*, and its prominent signature should be read as an emblem of satisfaction, even relief. Overall, only about eight of the subject pictures and four portraits bear signatures, and a couple of these may in fact be later inscriptions, or the pictures themselves

may fundamentally be productions by assistants.⁷⁹ Tintoretto did not sign the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*, though his presence and handiwork within seem overwhelming. As will be discussed in the next chapter, a personalized manner of paint handling began in Venice in these years to serve as a surrogate signature.⁸⁰ Had Tintoretto signed the *Self-Portrait*, however, one can only imagine he would not have used the simple past *fecit*, but rather the imperfect *faciebat*, which he employed on only two occasions.⁸¹ Not “made it,” but “was making it,” in both senses of the phrase. That is, he was completing a picture and also challenging himself to be a success. In both meanings we see a young man becoming Tintoretto. Going forward, the stare seems to suggest, the products of this man’s brush will be more than paintings on canvas. They will be “Tintoretts.” This confrontational *Self-Portrait* marks the moment of this transformation.

¹ Andrea Calmo to Tintoretto, translated in Anna Laura Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed: A documentary survey of critical reactions from the 16th to the 20th century* (Ravenna: Longo Editore, 1983), pp. 17-18. The entire original can be found in Andrea Calmo, *Lettere*, ed. V. Rossi (Turin, 1888), pp. 132-33, as well as the Italian edition of Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto: Una storia del gusto attraverso i secoli* (Venice: Marsilio, 1998), pp. 15-16. The passage quoted above reads: “Cusi come un granelo de pevere sconfonde, bate e vadagna diese mazzi papavero, cusi proprio veramente e a quel muodo fè vu, consanguineo de le muse, e tegnive bon che per puoca vita che have, sè fornio de gran spirito, la barba chiara, spesso intelletto, menùo de carne e alto de cuor, zovene d’etae e vechio de consideration, e in breve tempo, che sè stao discipulo, havé imparao pi ca cento che xe nassui maistri.” The text is also quoted in a useful compendium by Linda Borean, “Documentation,” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Miguel Falomir (exh. cat. Museo del Prado, 2007), p. 419.

² In a Renaissance context this concept of effort to look effortless summons Baldessare Castiglione’s notion of *sprezzatura* from *Il Libro del Cortigiano* (1528). See David Rosand on “*Una linea sola non stentata*: Castiglione, Raphael, and the Aesthetics of Grace,” in Robert M. Stein and Sandra Pierson Prior, eds., *Reading Medieval Culture: Essays in Honor of Robert W. Hanning* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), pp. 454-479. Rosand explores notions of *sprezzatura* and the single unlabored (“non stentata”) line in Castiglione as a sign of the increasing sophistication of (non-artist) art critics. The essay also traces the concept’s subsequent amplification in the art theory of Giorgio Vasari and Lodovico Dolce, both of whom would be particularly relevant to the discourse of Venetian painting in the 1550s.

³ This question, an adaptation of a famous monologue in Martin Scorsese’s film *Taxi Driver* (1973), was used as a headline in the review of the exhibition “Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice,” written by Sebastian Smee, in *The Boston Globe* on March 13, 2009. The cover of the paper’s G section printed the text “You Looking at Me? A three-way Renaissance rivalry heats up a show at the MFA” over a reproduction of Tintoretto’s Philadelphia *Self-Portrait*. The implication was that the scowling Tintoretto possessed some of the powder-keg intensity of Travis Bickle. This seems a far more accurate observation than the journalist or editor may have realized.

⁴ The Philadelphia painting is discussed in Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: i ritratti* (Milan: Electa, 1982), cat. 101; Giovanna Nepi Scirè in *Le Siècle de Titien* (exh. cat. Grand Palais, Paris, 1993), cat. 191, Paola Rossi, *Jacopo Tintoretto: Ritratti* (exh. cat. Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, 1994), cat. 4, Miguel Falomir in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir (exh. cat. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2007), cat. 7, and Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice*, ed. Frederick Ilchman (exh. cat. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2009), p. 126 and cat. 9. Within this dissertation, life dates will be given for Venetian Renaissance painters, but not generally for other artists.

⁵ If one eliminates the portraits that are clearly fragments, cut down from larger paintings, or productions by workshop assistants or more distant followers, there are only a handful of

portraits that are smaller than the Philadelphia picture and can also be reasonably termed autograph. See Rossi, *Tintoretto: i ritratti*, cats. 3 (de Boer, Amsterdam); 33 (Detroit Institute of Arts); 29 (Cincinnati); 79 (Castel Sforzesco, Milan); and 136 (formerly Galerie Sanct Lucas, Vienna), though from a reproduction this last portrait has the appearance of a fragment.

⁶ The evidence for these early self-portraits is summarized by Falomir, in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 7, though he errs in asserting that the Philadelphia one is signed (he must have meant “autograph”). The superiority of the Philadelphia picture to the version on panel in the Victoria and Albert Museum was claimed by W.R. Rearick, “Reflections on Tintoretto as a Portraitist,” *Artibus et Historiae* 31, (1995), p. 52, who argued that the latter must be a copy. Although this conclusion should be evident on the basis of photographs, as well as the 1994 Venice and Vienna Tintoretto portrait exhibitions where the two were exhibited together, some still hold out that the London portrait is also autograph, a view taken by, for example, Tom Nichols, *Tintoretto: Tradition and Identity* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), pp. 20-21; Francesca Del Torre Scheuch (p. 157) and Luisa Attardi (cat. 23) in *Tintoretto*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Vittorio Sgarbi (exh. cat. Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome; Milan, Skira, 2012). The impossibility that Jacopo painted the Victoria and Albert portrait was confirmed by the present writer, “Tintoretto: Rome” (exh. review, Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome), *The Burlington Magazine*, 154 (June 2012), p. 445, within the Rome exhibition on the basis of the London picture’s poor comparison to the vibrant portrait heads present in the adjacent *Miracle of the Slave* (cat. 2), painted just a year or two later, in 1548. Katherine T. Brown confuses the issue by seeing both the Victoria and Albert and Philadelphia portraits as copies of a lost original, though she acknowledges that the features in the latter are “more pronounced, detailed, and defined.” Brown’s assumption that the Philadelphia portrait is a copy means that she discounts Tintoretto’s importance in her discussion of Venetian independent self-portraits as well as the influence it had, in both her fifth chapter and her conclusion. She also incorrectly states that the London work is on canvas. Katherine T. Brown, *The Painter’s Reflection: Self-portraiture in Renaissance Venice, 1458-1625* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2000), cats. 25, 26. Brown’s study was in press at the same time as W.R. Rearick’s long article, “The Venetian Selfportrait. 1450-1600” surveying much of the same material, in *Le metamorfosi del ritratto*, ed. Renzo Zorzi (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2002), pp. 147-180. On pp. 170-71 Rearick repeated his views expressed in “Reflections on Tintoretto” that the Victoria and Albert picture must be a copy of the Philadelphia original. On the other hand, Rearick’s insistence that the Philadelphia portrait was painted as early as 1542-43 is unconvincing. Similarly, this means that Rearick’s identification of the bearded man at the far right of the *Miracle of the Slave* is a self-portrait at a later age must also be unpersuasive, since the period between the execution of the Philadelphia picture and the *Miracle of the Slave* was at most a year or two, not six. Long ago Rodolfo Pallucchini wrote that, compared to the London portrait, the Philadelphia portrait (then in an American private collection) could be summed up as “più fiero, più spavaldo, invece quello Americano, risolto con una pennellata più mossa, con un gioco scattante di luci e di ombre, con un arruffio più impressionistico di segno nei capelli, nella barba e nei baffi.” Unfortunately, Pallucchini’s apt characterization of the boldness of touch and the greater movement of brushwork and contrasts of light and dark in the Philadelphia picture did not lead him to the obvious conclusion: that the two paintings were by different hands. Rodolfo Pallucchini, *La giovinezza del Tintoretto* (Milan: Edizioni Daria Guarnati, 1950),

p. 118. Finally, many case studies of autonomous self-portraits are thoughtfully analyzed by Joanna Woods-Marsden in her *Renaissance Self-Portraiture: the Visual Construction of Identity and the Social Status of the Artist* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), but she only mentions Tintoretto in passing. The Philadelphia and Victoria and Albert paintings, as well as the third self-portrait, in the Musée du Louvre, are all listed in a short four-sentence appendix, “Other Autonomous Self-Portraits” that she would have addressed “had there been space enough and time” (p. 265).

⁷ The arguments for the date of the Philadelphia painting are made by Echols and Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, p. 120. On the *Portrait of a Man Aged Twenty-Six*, see Paola Rossi in *Tintoretto: i ritratti*, cat. 104, and John Garton in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 201-3. On the San Marcuola *Last Supper*, see Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: le Opere sacre e profane* (Milan: Electa, 1982), I, cat. 127, and Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman, “Toward a new Tintoretto Catalogue, with a Checklist of revised Attributions and a new Chronology,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Actas del Congreso Internacional*, ed. Miguel Falomir (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2009), pp. 91-150, cat. 44 (hereafter referred to as “Checklist”). The fundamental discussion of the San Marcuola *Last Supper* remains Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 11, pp. 229-240.

⁸ The Louvre painting formerly contained an inscription, now mostly removed, that read, “IACOBUS. TENTORETVS. PICTOR. VENTUS/ IPSIVS F.” Both the approximate date and the identification of the sitter in the Louvre *Self-Portrait* are also confirmed by the contemporary engraving reproducing this portrait by Gijbert van Veen after a drawing by Ludovico Pozzoserrato and dedicated to Alessandro Vittoria (Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam) whose inscription says that Tintoretto painted the self-portrait on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, or in other words, about 1588. For the Louvre *Self-Portrait*, see Rossi, *Tintoretto: i ritratti*, cat. 108, Brown, *Painter’s Reflection*, cat. 27, Falomir in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 48, and Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 258-59 and cat. 56. For the print (reproduced and discussed in Falomir) see also Maria Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel, *Jacopo Tintoretto e suoi incisori* (exh. cat. Palazzo Ducale, Venice; Milan: Electa, 1994), cat. 6, pp. 29-30. The features are confirmed in the engraved frontispiece of Carlo Ridolfi’s *Vita di Giacompo Robusti detto il Tintoretto*, Venice, 1642, and also a later caricatured wooden sculpture of *Tintoretto as Painting* from the second half of the seventeenth century signed by Francesco Pianta the Younger (c. 1634-1692) in the Sala Superiore of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. For this wooden sculpture, see Paola Rossi, *Geroglifici e figure “di pittoresco aspetto”: Francesco Pianta alla Scuola Grande di San Rocco* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere, Arti), 1999. The particular wooden sculpture is cat. 25, fig. 29. A final piece of evidence, though not confirmed in person, is the existence of a northern copy, in a private collection in Paris, with an inscription identifying the sitter. The 1973 catalogue of the paintings in the Victoria and Albert Museum notes, “A Flemish copy of c. 1600 inscribed IACOMO TINTORET PINTOR VENECIANO (C. Benedict collection, Paris) provides a further measure of support for the identification of CAI. 103 as a self-portrait by Tintoretto.” See C.M. Kauffmann, *Victoria and Albert Museum: Catalogue of Foreign Paintings*, I (London: Victoria and Albert Museum,

1973), cat. 339, pp. 271-72. This copy could of course be based on either the London or Philadelphia painting.

⁹ Where the Philadelphia picture offers a dynamism in the turning head and tighter format, the painting in the Louvre shows Tintoretto frontally, recalling both icons and even perhaps Dürer's *Self-Portrait* of 1500 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich) (fig. 15), which is itself based on icons. On this comparison, see Falomir in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 376-78. The most thorough study of the Munich Dürer *Self-Portrait* is Joseph Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), and Koerner's analysis provides the starting point for much of the discussion below.

¹⁰ The precise year of Tintoretto's birth remains unsettled. A document of 31 May 1594 registers the painter's death at the age of 75 after a fifteen-day illness: "El magnifico messer Jacomo di Robusti detto el Tintoretto de anni 75 da febre giorni 15"; see Borean, "Documentation," p. 449. Even if seventy-five (with no months or days) may seem like too round a number to be accurate, all scholars have reasonably assumed that Tintoretto was born either in 1518 or 1519. This dissertation will use the formula "c. 1518" as the birth year, admitting a degree of uncertainty.

¹¹ For an autobiographical reading of the Louvre *Self-Portrait*, underscoring that with the death of first Titian in 1576 and then that of Veronese in 1588, on April 19, Tintoretto must have realized, with perhaps a sense of bewilderment, that he was the last one standing, see Rearick, "Reflections on Tintoretto as a Portraitist," p. 65, and Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, p. 258.

¹² This somewhat larger portrait on canvas (63 x 50 cm) in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg, is often acknowledged as a self-portrait by Paolo Veronese. This painting shares some of the candor and simplicity of pose and costume of the Philadelphia Tintoretto. On the other hand, it feels much more tentative, both in the brushwork and the expression of the sitter, with little sense of challenge or confrontation. John Garton, following the lead of a number of scholars, accepts the Hermitage painting as a Veronese self-portrait, noting that the buttons on the wrong side from typical practice in men's clothing indicate the use of a mirror. Based on paint handling and the youthful appearance of the sitter Garton reasonably places this at the beginning of Veronese's career, c. 1548. See Garton, *Grace and Grandeur: The Portraiture of Paolo Veronese*, (London: Harvey Miller, 2008), pp. 184-5. Garton's dating, which incidentally places it around that of the Philadelphia Tintoretto, is much earlier than that given by Terisio Pignatti and Filippo Pedrocco. They prefer around 1573, seeing stylistic analogies to the heads in the *Feast in the House of Levi* (Accademia, Venice) of that year. See Terisio Pignatti and Filippo Pedrocco, *Veronese: Catalogo completa dei dipinti* (Florence: Cantini, 1991), cat. 114 and Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese: L'opera completa*, (Milan: Electa, 1995), II, cat. 195. David Rosand accepts that the Hermitage painting is an early Veronese self-portrait, *Véronèse*, trans. Odile Menegaux and Renaud Temperini (Paris: Citadelles & Mazenod, 2012), p. 18 and fig. 14. The Hermitage painting is not analyzed by Rearick, "Venetian Selfportrait," whose discussion of Veronese instead focuses on potential self-portraits within great feast scenes.

¹³ The Titian literature is sprinkled with references to Aretino. See, for example, Charles Hope, *Titian* (London: Jupiter Books, 1980), pp. 66, 71-72, and Una Roman D'Elia, *The Poetics of Titian's Religious Paintings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). The standard biography is Paul Larivaille, *Pietro Aretino* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1997). See also Luba Freedman, *Titian's Portraits Through Aretino's Lens* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995).

¹⁴ For example, see Echols and Ilchman, "The Challenge of Tintoretto," in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 116-121, where we speculate that Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* could in fact predate Titian's *Pietro Aretino*, and thus in this case Tintoretto might have influenced the older painter. See also p. 275 n. 38. I also argue in Ilchman, "Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals," in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, p. 35, that Tintoretto's ceiling painting of the *Contest between Apollo and Marsyas* of 1545 (fig. 15 of this dissertation), painted for Aretino's home (and probably a gift of the artist), might have helped inspire the gradual loosening of Titian's technique in this very period. For the close contacts of Tintoretto and Titian, see Echols and Ilchman, "The Challenge of Tintoretto." For Titian's *Pietro Aretino*, see Harold E. Wethey, *The Paintings of Titian, II. The Portraits* (London: Phaidon, 1971), cat. 5, and Peter Humfrey, *Titian: The Complete Paintings* (Ghent: Ludion, 2007), cat. 143.

¹⁵ See Rearick, "Tintoretto as a Portraitist," and Ilchman, "The Titian Formula," in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 206-209.

¹⁶ For the comparison of Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* with Giorgione's alleged *Self-Portrait as David* (Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum), see Nepi-Scirè in *Le Siècle de Titien*, p. 599 and Falomir in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 210. For the Braunschweig painting itself, occasionally doubted as a true self-portrait, see *Giorgione: Myth and Enigma*, ed. Sylvia Ferino-Pagden and Giovanna Nepi Scirè (exh. cat. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, 2004; Milan: Skira, 2004), cat. 18, accepted as autograph and as a self-portrait by Ferino Pagden. See also Jaynie Anderson, *Giorgione: The Painter of 'Poetic Brevity'* (New York: Flammarion, 1996), pp. 306-307, where it is also given to Giorgione himself (as opposed to a copy), a reasonable attribution despite the significant damage the painting has suffered. W.R. Rearick believed the Braunschweig painting was a ruined original, to be dated c. 1509, as an emblem of victory at the demise of the League of Cambrai. See Rearick, "Venetian Selfportrait," pp. 158-60. Giorgione also painted a multi-figure *Self-Portrait as David with the Head of Goliath* (occasionally thought to be the full composition for which the Braunschweig picture is a fragment) as well as a picture of *Orpheus* that is likely a self-portrait; both are now lost and known from copies; see Anderson, *Giorgione*, pp. 201, 317-19. For the novelty of Giorgione's self-portrait as a character and related issues of self-identity and fashioning, see Joanna Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture*, pp. 116-19. All of these make direct eye contact with the viewer, but lack the assertive, even aggressive expression found in Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait*.

¹⁷ For the use of mirrors in creating self-portraits, as well as Titian's apparent preference to avoid engaging the viewer in these portraits, far different from the "aggressively confrontational stare of Tintoretto," see David Rosand, "Titian Draws Himself," *Artibus et historiae*, no. 59 (2009),

pp. 65-71. See also Jodi Cranston, "Designing the Self: Titian's Non-Autographic Self-Portraits", in *The Poetics of Portraiture in the Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 98-126. For Titian's Berlin and Prado self-portraits, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, II, cats. 104, 105 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cats. 244, 245. Both were featured in a recent monographic exhibition at the Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, and discussed in its catalogue, *Titian*, ed. Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa (Milan: Silvana, 2013), cats. 35, 39. See also Luba Freedman, *Titian's Independent Self-Portraits* (Florence: Olschki, 1990), pp. 159-67. Speaking of mirror self-portraits, it is worth remembering a painting by Paolo Veronese that Carlo Ridolfi claimed to see in the Caliaro house, then owned by Paolo's grandson, Giuseppe Caliaro. In his biography of Veronese (published in 1646), Ridolfi mentioned a picture "quello di Paolo fatto da lui medesimo dallo specchio" – "a self-portrait of Paolo made with a mirror. The standard modern edition is Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte* (1648), ed. Detlev von Hadeln, 2 vols. (Berlin: Grote'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1914-1924), hereafter abbreviated as Ridolfi-Hadeln. The mention of Veronese's self-portrait is Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 345.

¹⁸ Of course in a mirror and in this painting the arm that appears to extend in the foreground would be his left arm. Tintoretto's right arm – that painting the portrait – would be extending from his far shoulder, here hidden by the rest of his body and the abrupt cropping of the pictorial field. Michael Fried's recent book on Caravaggio discusses that artist's early *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* of c. 1595-6 (National Gallery, London) as a self-portrait, and explores a whole context of self-portraits in Renaissance and Baroque painting. He offers particular attention to the notion of the "right angle" self-portrait, given the evident employment of a mirror in this position to execute the painting. See Fried, *The Moment of Caravaggio* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), especially the first two chapters, pp. 6-67, and the extensive notes, pp. 246-61, which include much valuable discussion and bibliography on mirrors and self-portraits, as well as disguised self-portraits, by many Renaissance and later painters, and much on Courbet's self-portraits. The discussion of "right angle" self-portraiture encompasses most of Fried's first chapter, pp. 15-37, and Tintoretto's Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* is mentioned and reproduced on p. 19. Perry Chapman's work on Rembrandt is also fundamental for the question of the early modern self-portrait; see H. Perry Chapman, *Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

¹⁹ Issues of mark-making, such as that seen in Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* and in Venetian Renaissance painting of the Cinquecento more generally, have been explored in great subtlety by David Rosand. See, for example, Rosand, "Tintoretto e gli spiriti nel pennello," in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte*, ed. Paola Rossi and Lionello Puppi (Padua: il Poligrafo, 1996), pp. 133-37, Rosand, "The Stroke of the Brush," in *The Meaning of the Mark: Leonardo and Titian* (Lawrence, Kansas: Spencer Museum of Art, 1988), pp. 49-93, Rosand, "Titian and the Eloquence of the Brush," *Artibus et historiae* 2, 1981, pp. 85-96, and Rosand, "La mano di Tiziano" in *Tiziano: Técnicas y restauraciones. Actas del Simposium Internacional celebrado en el Museo Nacional del Prado los días 3, 4 y 5 de junio de 1999* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 1999), pp. 127-38. Jodi Cranston explores these issues with regard to Titian's later paintings; see her "Theorising Materiality: Titian's *Flaying of Marsyas*" in *Titian: Materiality, Likeness, Storia*, ed. Joanna Woods-Marsden (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007),

pp. 5-18. Cranston's discussion of how "Titian's variations in handling convey how the signs of facture, the physical materiality of the paint and canvas, and the subject express and transform one another" extends to self-portraits (pp. 5, 12-13, 15). Cranston explores facture and materiality much more fully in *The Muddied Mirror: Materiality and Figuration in Titian's Later Paintings* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2010), discussing the Berlin and Madrid self-portraits on pp. 9-11, and 61-73. For a summary of these issues, see also Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 29-32, 88-91. Finally, I have found inspiration in the scholarship on later painterly painters, especially Christopher D. M. Atkins on Frans Hals. See his recent book, *The Signature Style of Frans Hals: Painting, Subjectivity, and the Market in Early Modern Modernity*, Amsterdam Studies in the Dutch Gold Age Series (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

²⁰ See the evocative discussions of the relationship between artist as individual and the painted self-portrait in Pascal Bonafoux, *Portraits of the Artist: the Self-Portrait in Painting*, New York: Rizzoli, 1985. Renaissance self-portraits are also addressed in a section of the catalogue of a major recent exhibition, *El retrato del Renacimiento*, ed. Miguel Falomir (exh. cat. Museo Nacional del Prado, 2008), chapter 4, cats. 62-75, pp. 277-303, with English translations on pp. 486-92. In the Philadelphia portrait, the pose and presumption of the use of a mirror to create the picture does imply that Tintoretto is at work as he looks out. Yet neither brush nor palette is visible. Indeed, besides eschewing any attributes, the sitter's clothing is also essentially neutral; it does not signify social status or a particular trade, office, or even nationality.

²¹ The antithesis of the tight focus of Philadelphia self-portrait would be Baccio Bandinelli's large *Self-Portrait* (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston) on wood (1.422 x 1.128 m). It was painted about 1545-50, thus exactly contemporary with Tintoretto's. If Tintoretto's painting is a statement about the power of *colorito* within a modestly-scaled canvas, Bandinelli's grandiose full-length panel shows an elegantly dressed artist, brandishing a drawing and thus arguing for the importance of *disegno* and his own social status. For this painting, see Philip Hendy, *European and American Paintings in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum* (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 1974), p. 12.

²² Admittedly Albrecht Dürer's *Self-Portrait* of 1500 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich), to be explored below, is but one example of a self-portrait before Tintoretto prioritizing facture. Dürer's picture was surely intended as a virtuoso demonstration of the art of painting itself and the presence of its painter. At the same time, its precision and minute brushstrokes convey no sense of *sprezzatura*, and thus offer a completely different kind of mastery from Tintoretto's picture. Moreover, the extreme refinement present in Dürer's picture and iconic presentation, resembling the Holy Face, of course evokes the *vera icon* of Veronica and other acheiropoetic ("not made by human hands") images, including the mandylion (also known as the "Image of Edessa"). See Koerner's discussion of the Munich *Self-Portrait* in terms of this fundamental context: *Moment of Self-Portraiture*, pp. 80-126.

²³ The ungroomed impression and stark directness of Tintoretto's Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* finds a fascinating descendant in Annibale Carracci's *Self-Portrait on an Easel*, a panel of c. 1595-

1603 (State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg). The date is controversial, and either the move to Rome of 1595 or the death of Agostino in 1603 are both possible causes of the introspection that might have motivated such a self-portrait. For this picture, see *The Genius of Rome: 1592-1623*, ed. Beverly Louise Brown (exh. cat. Royal Academy of Arts, London, 2001), cat. 53, p. 158. Annibale, however, has tempered the confrontation with the viewer – and the implicit challenge to himself – by bringing the face of the sitter far back from the picture plane and instead placing the image as if a canvas on an easel inside a studio at some distance from the observer. This gesture seems surprisingly self-effacing for a painter of his talents, taking a step back from the viewer (as it were) and literally minimizing his presence. (The Hermitage *Self-Portrait* is not very big at all; at 42.5 x 30 cm the entire panel is already smaller than Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait*, 45.1 x 38.1 cm, and thus the likeness of Annibale becomes in fact tiny.) On the other hand, by minimizing the attributes within the portrait (with humble clothing), but expanding those outside – easel, palette, dog and cat, window, sculpture – Annibale is offering commentary on the world and practice of the artist. Depicting his likeness on a “canvas” within a painting made on wooden panel may be a clever statement on how a talented artist can control his materials. Finally, it is worth noting there are great similarities among the portraits, particularly smaller and intimate ones, produced by Jacopo Tintoretto and his workshop, notably by his son Domenico, and the early portraits of Annibale Carracci and his immediate circle. The attribution and chronology of these portraits offers a subject deserving more research, and it is likely that some unattributed portraits from the end of the sixteenth century deemed “Roman” are in fact “Venetian,” and vice-versa. A step toward resolving this problem was the article by D. Stephen Pepper, “Annibale Carracci's Venetian Portraits,” *Arte Documento* 13 (1999), pp. 198-203. On the Annibale Carracci *Self-Portrait*, see also Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture*, pp. 159-67, 241-53, which considers its commemorative significance after the death of Agostino; and Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-painting* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 212-15, on how this self-portrait, though the extended field that exposes the easel and the retired palette, ironically underscores the literal absence of the painter in the presence of his image, a truism that the typical self-portrait masks via the illusory presence of the artist.

²⁴ It is worth pointing out that because Annibale's picture is a portrait on an easel set within a *bottega* it does not display the signs of being in the process of being painted (as does Tintoretto's Philadelphia self-portrait). In other words, Annibale's face could have notionally been painted by someone else; a similar situation is Sofonisba Anguissola's “Self-Portrait” in which she shows her master Giulio Campi painting her (Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena). On Sofonisba and her self-portraits, see Mary D. Garrard, “Here's Looking at Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994), pp. 556-622.

²⁵ For the *Miracle of the Slave*, see Palluchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 132 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 46, as well as the exhibition catalogue, *Tintoretto*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Vittorio Sgarbi, cat. 2. The original phrase in Aretino's letter is “la vostra arte, che passa sì oltra.” For this letter, to be explored thoroughly in subsequent chapters, see Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, pp. 16-7, and for the original text, see Pietro Aretino, *Lettere sull'arte*, ed. Camesasca (Milan: Edizioni del Milione, 1957), II, CCXI, pp. 52-3.

²⁶ The narrative of the slave, Tintoretto's painting, and its critical reception will be explored in depth in chapters three and five. The most important textual source for the *Miracle of the Slave* is Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Reading on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), I, pp. 242-48. The narrative and Tintoretto's painting are analyzed in detail by Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 134-39.

²⁷ Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 18. The original Venetian reads: "perché siendene certo, che a viavando, come tutti i vostri amisi spiera, el vostro nome ha d'andar rebombando per tutte le provincie del mondo e per infine a le Indie trovae, e de soto da i antipodi... fagandoghe veder, che i antighi feva spezzagoni al par nostro..." Calmo, *Lettere*, p. 122-3. See also Borean, "Documentation," p. 419.

²⁸ For the ceiling panels for Palazzo Pisani at San Paternian, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, (Milan: Electa, 1982), I, cats. 21-34 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cats. 13-26, as well as Echols, "Titian's Venetian Soffiti: Sources and Transformations," in *Titian 500. Studies in the History of Art*, 45, ed. J. Manca (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1993), pp. 29-49; Stefania Mason, "Intorno al soffitto di San Paternian: gli artisti di Vettor Pisani, in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario*, pp. 71-75; and finally Antonio Foscari, "Le metamorfosi per Vettor Pisani" in *Tintoretto*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Vittorio Sgarbi, pp. 135-39, and as cats. 18, 19 (entries by Fausto Fracassi). For the *Contest between Apollo and Marsyas*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 82 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 34, as well as Echols and Ilchman, "The Challenge of Tintoretto," in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 116-121. The lost ceiling painting for Aretino, described in a letter by the writer, was an "Argus and Mercury"; see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, p. 260. Robert Echols was the scholar who first offered a coherent study of the period 1545-47 in Tintoretto's career and used arguments of connoisseurship to prove this was a critical moment in the artist's development. See Echols, "'Jacopo nel corso, presso al palio': dal soffitto per l'Aretino al *Miracolo dello Schiavo*," in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario*, pp. 77-81. Tintoretto's two surviving commissions for churches from the 1540s, altarpieces for San Gallo (heavily damaged and now Museo Diocesano di Arte Sacra, Venice) and the church of Santa Maria del Carmine (in situ) should neither be considered prominent paintings nor public triumphs. For these two canvases, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 43 and 40, and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cats. 30 and 31.

²⁹ Carlo Ridolfi, *Vita di Giacopo Robusti* (Venice: Guglielmo Oddoni, 1642) and Carlo Ridolfi, *Le Maraviglie dell'arte* (Venice: Giovanni Battista Sgava, 1648). As mentioned above, the standard modern edition is Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte* (1648), ed. Detlev von Hadeln, abbreviated as Ridolfi-Hadeln. This dissertation cleans up some typography found in Hadeln's edition. Another useful edition of Ridolfi *Life of Tintoretto* (including also the Lives of Marietta and Domenico, plus transcribing a number of wills and employing standardized and modernized typography) was published as *Vite dei Tintoretto da le maraviglie dell'arte overo le vite degl'illustri pittori veneti e dello stato* (Venice: Filippi Editore, 1994), hereafter abbreviated as Ridolfi-Vite. On Ridolfi's lives of the Tintoretto family, see Maria H. Loh, "Death, History, and

the Marvelous Lives of Tintoretto,” *Art History* 31, 5 (November 2008), pp. 665-690. Ridolfi’s reliability will be discussed further in chapter three, in the analysis of the motto Tintoretto supposedly inscribed on his studio wall. It is worth pointing out, however, that Ridolfi was a student of the Tintoretto workshop assistant Antonio Vassilacchi, known as Aliense, and that Ridolfi also knew Domenico Tintoretto, since he sat for a portrait by him. Through these contacts Ridolfi would have been well placed to record oral history and studio lore. Domenico portrait of Ridolfi is mentioned in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 216 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 121, where the list of the sitters of Domenico’s portraits includes, “Carlo Ridolfi scrittore della presente Historia.”

³⁰ Unless otherwise noted, translations of Ridolfi are taken from Carlo Ridolfi, *The Life of Tintoretto and of his children Domenico and Marietta*, translated and with an introduction by Catherine Enggass and Robert Enggass (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1984), pp. 18-19, hereafter referred to as Ridolfi-Enggass. The original passage reads, “Ma perche all’hora in Venetia solo si predicavano le opere del Vecchio Palma, del Pordenone, di Bonifacio, ma più d’ogni altro di Titiano, a cui per lo più concorrevano gli impieghi di considerazione, e non restava modo al Tintoretto di poter far conoscere esattamente il suo valore, perche lo esercitarsi in opere pubbliche da materia di studio maggiore....” Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 16. See also Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 10.

³¹ For a reconsideration of Leonardo’s early years, see David Alan Brown, *Leonardo da Vinci: Origins of a Genius* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998). Brown discusses the *Annunciation* on pp. 75-99.

³² Yet another example is Jacopo Sansovino. Born about 1486, Sansovino’s “arrival” pieces are the *Bacchus* (Bargello) and the *Saint James the Greater* (Duomo, Firenze), both begun 1511, when the sculptor was twenty-five.

³³ For Lotto’s works of about 1505, fundamentally his Treviso period, see David Alan Brown, Peter Humfrey, and Mauro Lucco, *Lorenzo Lotto: Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance* (exh. cat.: National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1997), cats. 1-4 and Peter Humfrey, *Lorenzo Lotto* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 7-25.

³⁴ For a recent reassessment of Sebastiano, see *Sebastiano del Piombo: 1485-1547*, ed. Claudio Strinati and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann (exh. cat. Palazzo Venezia, Rome and Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; Milan: Federico Motta Editore, 2008). Mauro Lucco’s essay, “Sebastiano del Piombo in Venice,” pp. 23-29, reviews the evidence and argues, somewhat tendentially, for the artist’s originality and precocity. See cats. 1-14. See also the discussion about Sebastiano and enthusiastic endorsement of the painter’s talents in Paul Joannides, *Titian to 1518: The Assumption of Genius* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 129-137. In discussing Sebastiano’s organ shutters for San Bartolomeo (which he dates to not long before the painter’s departure for Rome), Joannides claims the following: “They are triumphant masterpieces, the most powerful, unified and stately works painted in Venice in the period. They show a command of modelling and form, and a rich, dense and highly sensuous facture that

Titian must have found disturbing, for they embodied a kind of strength he never fully attained.” p. 133.

³⁵ For a discussion of Titian’s official employment and his role as a state artist, see Michelangelo Muraro, “Tiziano pittore ufficiale della Serenissima,” in *Tiziano nel quarto centenario della sua morte, 1576-1976* (Venice: Ateneo Veneto, 1977), pp. 84-100. For a corrective of the conventional view, espoused by Vasari and Crowe and Cavalcaselle, on the *sanseria*, see Charles Hope, “Titian’s Role as Official Painter to the Venetian Republic,” in *Tiziano e Venezia Convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia, 1976* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza Editore, 1980), pp. 301-305.

³⁶ Of Bonifacio de’ Pitati’s many assistants, of course Jacopo Bassano and Tintoretto (assuming he did in fact work for Bonifacio) managed to leave the shop having gained useful experience and launch their own successful careers. For Tintoretto and Bonifacio, see Echols, *Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting*, pp. 30-40, 55-60, and Philip Cottrell, “Painters in Practice: Tintoretto, Bassano and the Studio of Bonifacio de’ Pitati,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Actas del Congreso Internacional*, ed. Falomir, pp. 50-57.

³⁷ Mary Pardo, “Paolo Pino’s ‘Dialogo di Pittura’: A Translation with Commentary” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1984), p. 344. Pino’s original, *Dialogo di pittura* (Venice: Paolo Gherardo, 1548), p. 19, reads, “La povertà c’assassina dicovi, & non si paga tanto un’opera, che li danari suppliscano fino al fine dell’altra.”

³⁸ The opportunity to compare two early masterpieces by Tintoretto and Veronese in the exhibition “Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice” (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2009) made clear that both painters had already established distinctive and individual norms of figure types, settings, palettes, brushwork and so on by the late 1540s. In other words, the codification of their styles happened relatively early in their careers and even before Veronese had moved to Venice. This point was demonstrated by viewing on the same wall two contemporaneous paintings, Tintoretto’s *Esther before Ahasuerus*, c. 1547-48 (Royal Collection, Hampton Court), and Veronese’s *Christ and a Kneeling Woman (Christ and the Magdalene)*, c. 1548 (National Gallery, London). The two pictures have many compositional commonalities: the male protagonist standing toward the left edge surprised at sudden movement, a crowd leaning over a slumped woman in the center foreground, a man in a turban at right nearly breaking the picture plane to get a better look. The comparison made clear the vast differences in painterly treatment and how each work contained the kernel of their painter’s mature style. At the same time, however, while Tintoretto’s painting is clearly an impressive performance for a twenty-eight or twenty-nine year old artist, Veronese’s achievement by about a painter only the age of twenty is astonishing. The inevitable comparison with a new rival would have had to be alarming to Tintoretto, and he must have heard the gossip about the talents of this young artist. On these two paintings, see John Marciari in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, cats. 10, 11 and pp. 122-25, with further bibliography. On Veronese’s painting, see also David Rosand, “Veronese’s *Magdalene* and Pietro Aretino,” *Burlington Magazine* 153 (2011), pp. 392-94. The confusion of the identity of the kneeling woman in the London painting is explored in the thorough catalogue

entry by Nicholas Penny, *National Gallery Catalogues: The Sixteenth Century Italian Paintings, Volume II: Venice 1540-1600* (London: National Gallery Company, 2008), pp. 334-43. Based partially on Rosand's arguments, the recent exhibition in London at the National Gallery has returned to titling the painting as the "Conversion of Mary Magdalene"; see Xavier F. Salomon, *Veronese* (exh. cat., London: National Gallery Company Limited, 2014), cat. 3 and pp. 52-55.

³⁹ On the competitive climate of Venice in the sixteenth century, see Ilchman, "Age of Rivals," in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 21-39, as well as the "Curator's Introduction," pp. 10-12. The thesis that artistic competition was a central spur to the creativity of Tintoretto, Titian, and Veronese was explored through a sequence of case studies in that catalogue. The goal of the specific juxtapositions was to reveal the relative priorities of each artist and how an earlier painting may well have offered an opportunity for a pointed response. Naturally these arguments depended on a range of important studies about Renaissance art, including that of W.R. Rearick and especially Rona Goffen in her brilliant book, *Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), 2002. More recently, the centrality of competition with one's contemporaries as a spur to artistic creativity is a central theme in Michael Wayne Cole, *Ambitious Form: Giambologna, Ammanati, and Danti in Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

⁴⁰ Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, p. 157. For biographical notes about Faustina Episcopi, Tintoretto's wife (including the uncertain date of their marriage), see Melania G. Mazzucco, *Jacomo Tintoretto & i suoi figli: storia di una famiglia veneziana* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2009), pp. 142-43.

⁴¹ Harry Berger, Jr., "Fictions of the Pose: Facing the Gaze of Early Modern Portraiture," *Representations* 46 (Spring 1994), pp. 87-120. Although the discussion is weighted to the portraiture of Rembrandt, Berger's later book offers a much expanded treatment of his critique and his alternate method: *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

⁴² See Berger, "Fictions of the Pose: Facing the Gaze," especially pp. 88-89. On page 91, Berger surveys some fanciful commentary on Mantegna's portrait of *Cardinal Ludovico Trevisan* (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) and asks a key question, "If we had the same face and different archival data could we adjust our reading of the face to accommodate a different physiognomic story?"

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 99.

⁴⁵ Another important critique of the interpretation of portraiture has been the work of Jodi Cranston, who advocates for the open nature of portraits: "This project considers how such a dialogue with the beholder locates the portrait in the present moment of viewing and the effects of such a shift: the sitter seeming to interact with the viewer, emphasizes the portrait image as a surrogate for the person represented and, consequently, encourages the beholder to perceive the

portrait as incomplete, always open and responsive, rather than as a fixed commemoration of the past.” Cranston, *The Poetics of Portraiture*, p. 1.

⁴⁶ For Titian’s portrait in London, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, II, cat. 40 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 24. Berger examines Titian’s portrait as a prototype for Rembrandt; see *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt*, pp. 463-73.

⁴⁷ For Raphael’s *Bindo Altoviti*, see *Late Raphael*, ed. Tom Henry and Paul Joannides (exh. cat., Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2012), cat. 77.

⁴⁸ On Bindo Altoviti, the misidentification of both the sitter and artist in the portrait, as well as the *ritratto di spalle* convention, see David Alan Brown and Jane Van Nimmen, *Raphael and the Beautiful Banker: the Story of the Bindo Altoviti Portrait* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005) and Jodi Cranston, “Desire and Gravitas in the Portraits of Bindo Altoviti” in *Raphael, Cellini, and a Renaissance Banker: The Patronage of Bindo Altoviti*, ed. Alan Chong (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2003), pp. 115-31.

⁴⁹ As Robert Echols describes, these are the “two interrelated personality traits noted by all the early biographers and commentators, ambition and impatience.” See his “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian painting, 1538-1548” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1993), p. 12. On Tintoretto’s reputation for haste, see Tom Nichols, “Tintoretto, *prestezza* and the *poligrafì*: a study in the literary and visual culture of Cinquecento Venice,” *Renaissance Studies*, 10, 1 (March 1996), pp. 72-100.

⁵⁰ “... che la guerra che in gara della virtù fa l’uno virtuoso contro l’altro...” and “Iacopo nel corso è si può dir’ presso al palio...” Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, CDVIII, pp. 209-10, Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 13, and Borean, “Documentation,” p. 420.

⁵¹ Translation from Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, trans. Gaston du C. de Vere [Everyman’s Library, 1927] (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992) II, pp. 510-11, hereafter referred to as Vasari-de Vere. The original is “E che ella merita di essere fra le migliori cose, che mai facesse, annoverata: tanto potè in lui il disporsi di voler paragonare se non vincere e superare, i suoi concorrenti, che avevano lavorato in quel luogo.” Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* (1568), ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence: Sansoni, 1881), VI, pp. 589, hereafter abbreviated as Vasari-Milanesi. This passage is also included in Borean, “Documentation,” p. 428.

⁵² Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 587, Borean, “Documentation,” p. 428.

⁵³ Maria H. Loh has discussed this notion of an artistic heir in relation to Padovanino’s *Self-Portrait* c. 1625-30 (Museo Civico, Padua), which features the artist in a room with a bust of Titian (or perhaps the painter’s father Dario Varotari, or both implicitly). See her *Titian Remade: Repetition and the Transformation of Early Modern Italian Art* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007), pp. 1-7, 103-25.

⁵⁴ I thank Fabio Barry for this observation.

⁵⁵ “...con il suo fulminante pennello ha colpeggiato così fieramente, che ha fatto arrestare ed atterrire i più generosi Campioni dell’Arte.” Marco Boschini, “Breve instruzione” in *Le ricche minere della pittura Veneziana* (1674), in *La Carta del navegar pitoresco*, ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice-Rome: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1966), p. 730. Boschini’s critical language is thoroughly explored within a rich context by Philip Sohm, *Pittoresco: Marco Boschini, his critics, and their critiques of painterly brushwork in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Boschini’s military rhetoric – employed throughout his writings when discussing Tintoretto – has been recently analyzed in Nicola Suthor, *Bravura: Virtuosität und Mutwilligkeit in der Malerie der Frühen Neuzeit* (Munich: Wilhelm Funk, 2010). As indicated in her title, Suthor offers a full analysis, often philological (and in this aspect similar to Sohm), of the aspects of “virtuosity” and “mischief” in later Renaissance and baroque painting (there is relatively little on sculpture). She discusses how visual artists in this era make a point of showing off their individual manners of painting. She draws attention to Tintoretto as a “bravo” – swordsman – in Boschini’s extended analogy, p. 74.

⁵⁶ Ridolfi-Hadeln, p. 19 and Ridolfi, *Vite dei Tintoretto*, p. 14.

⁵⁷ Koerner, *Moment of Self-Portraiture*.

⁵⁸ Koerner, *Moment of Self-Portraiture*, p. 67, quoting and discussing Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 2.

⁵⁹ Koerner, *Moment of Self-Portraiture*, p. xv.

⁶⁰ In terms of pictorial claims, Dürer’s Munich *Self-Portrait* must also be read in light of his earlier 1498 *Self-Portrait* (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid), which was significantly painted in the wake of his 1496 trip to Italy. The Prado *Self-Portrait* represents the epitome of the artist’s self-portrayal in terms of social ambition. By comparison the Munich portrait expounds the painter’s creative ambition on an entirely higher order through its elision with the miraculous icon of the Holy Face.

⁶¹ Jan van Eyck’s *Man in a Red Turban* of 1433 (National Gallery, London), presents an interesting case as a possible self-portrait, given the sitter’s direct stare and the motto “Als Ich Kan” (“As I/Eyck can”) inscribed on the engaged frame. The tradition that this is a self-portrait has met some doubt, e.g. Anne Hogopian van Buren in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 10 (New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, 1996), p. 714, since in the author’s opinion the sitter in the picture seems too old compared to the assumed age of Van Eyck in 1433. Van Buren’s view of course depends on when Van Eyck was born; the birth date of c. 1395 that she assigns is somewhat later than the preference for c. 1390 or even 1380s used by other scholars. The National Gallery agrees that this panel might be, but does not insist that it is, a self-portrait. At the same time, even if we assume that the London picture is a self-portrait, the showy red

chaperon lends it a theatrical aspect, as if he has donned a guise, marking it in a different category from Tintoretto's unadorned Philadelphia picture. The first record identifying Van Eyck's London painting as a self-portrait is the 1655 inventory of Alatheia Talbot, the widow of its first recorded owner, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. For a thorough discussion of the identity of the sitter, see Lorne Campbell, *National Gallery Catalogues: The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings* (London: National Gallery Company, 1998), pp. 212-17. Campbell argues that the London panel may be a self-portrait based on the lack of another person's name appearing in the inscription on the frame ("the prominent motto must identify the sitter as Jan van Eyck himself") and the particular appearance of the eyes ("The man cranes his neck forwards to examine himself more closely in his mirror; each eye has been scrutinized in isolation from the other"), p. 216.

⁶² Koerner's exhaustive analysis of the Munich portrait in *Moment of Self-Portraiture* explores many avenues, including the sense of self and period inaugurated by a set of turning points corresponding to his self-portraits (Ch. 2), its Christomorphic aspect (Ch. 4), analogies with Veronica's Veil and other images not made by human hands and the godlike powers of the artist (Ch. 5), to discussions of the implications of the attention paid to hands (Ch. 7) and hair (Ch. 8).

⁶³ Koerner, *Moment of Self-Portraiture*, pp. 64-5.

⁶⁴ Although not as multifaceted as Dürer's claim in his *Self-Portrait* or as subtle as Van Eyck in his *Man in a Red Turban*, Dizzy Dean, an outstanding pitcher for the St. Louis Cardinals in the 1930s, offers a similar statement of mastery in his favorite aphorism, "It ain't bragging if you can back it up."

⁶⁵ For an articulate use of grammatical analogies, see Alexander Nagel, *Michelangelo and the Reform of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 25-33, who borrows the framework from Meyer Schapiro. Further useful discussion on the relationship between the sitter of a Venetian portrait and the viewer ("a shift toward the transitive mode which, when selected, could allow the viewer a more engaged relationship with the subject") is offered by John Shearman, *Only Connect...Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1988) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 140-48.

⁶⁶ For Tintoretto's literary circle, see Nichols, "Tintoretto, *prestezza* and the *poligrafia*."

⁶⁷ Ridolfi is the source that mentions the motto that Tintoretto supposedly inscribed on the wall of his studio and describes the young painter's self-study syllabus. Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 14 and Ridolfi-*Vite dei Tintoretto*, p. 7. As will be discussed in chapter three, the formulation was first published in 1548 (though significantly not mentioning Tintoretto) by Paolo Pino in his *Dialogo di Pittura*, presumably codifying aesthetic discussions of the day. See Pino, *Dialogo di Pittura* (1548), p. 24r and 24v. Also see a modern edition of Pino within *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, ed. Paola Barocchi, (Bari: G. Laterza, 1960), I, p. 127.

⁶⁸ *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 209.

⁶⁹ On Saurer and Carpio, see Falomir, “Tintoretto and Spain: From El Greco to Velázquez,” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, especially pp. 164-65, as well as cat. 7 from the same catalogue, pp. 209-10.

⁷⁰ Rearick, “Reflections on Tintoretto as a Portraitist,” p. 52 and Falomir, in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 209. Domenico’s 1630 will is transcribed in Ridolfi-*Vite*, pp. 132-4. A letter by Saurer from earlier in 1678, on October 1st, also refers to a portrait of “Jacome Tintorero” on panel, as noted by Falomir, p. 209. This must be the Victoria and Albert picture.

⁷¹ Although Domenico Tintoretto’s best portraits, such as the 1586 *Portrait of a Man* (Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel, inv. GK 497) or the *Portrait of a Sculptor* (Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. 965), do not possess the subtlety in rendering skin or fabric of his father’s portraits, and rely upon obvious and repetitive shortcuts, these pictures display technical refinement and a certain elegant polish that is completely lacking in the Victoria and Albert portrait. Nearly every stroke in the London painting is tentative, rendering the description of the volume of the face and the facial expression lamentably rigid and compact.

⁷² Rembrandt’s thoughts on the artistic process and his own place in the artistic tradition seem to be at the forefront of the Boston *Artist in his Studio*. Among the large bibliography on this painting, see for example Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: his life, his paintings* (New York: Viking, 1985), p. 55; Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch, and Pieter van Thiel, eds., *Rembrandt: the Master & his Workshop* (exh. cat. National Gallery, London, 1992), cat. 3, pp. 130-33; and Simon Schama, *Rembrandt’s Eyes* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), pp. 12-23. All of these analyses touch upon the fascinating arguments of Ernst van der Wetering, including that the painting represents Rembrandt’s adoption of imagination (*idea*) as a working method (beginning a work only after contemplation), rather than beginning with chance (*fortuna*) and improvising while painting or by artistic practice (*usus* or *exercitation*), relying upon techniques formed by years of training. See also Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image*, pp. 237-40, who considers the work in the context of other authorial insertions, and discusses the implied dynamics of the creative act, and the contradictions in scale and ambition, about to unfold.

⁷³ Of a number of Rembrandt’s self-portraits that present interesting analogies to Tintoretto’s Philadelphia picture, the earliest, that in the Rijksmuseum, c. 1628 (fig. 22 in this dissertation) is the most relevant. This painting, largely unknown until 1956 (and thus not included in the catalogues of Hofstede de Groote or Bredius) shares with Tintoretto’s Philadelphia painting the focus on the head and direct gaze, not to mention conspicuous signs of its making, such as the prominent curls of hair accentuated by incisions made by the point of the brush, truly bravura touches. But it lacks the insistence or earnestness of Tintoretto’s *Self-Portrait* and thus does not make the same kind of strong statement.

⁷⁴ Schama, *Rembrandt’s Eyes*, p. 15. Schama goes on to associate the strongly lit edge of the panel with on the easel with the perfectly refined lines painted in competition between Apelles and Protogenes, as recounted by Pliny, pp. 22-3, the greatest example in the history of art of the

perfection of the individual mark. Finally, it is worth pointing out that the *Artist in the Studio* correlates chronologically with Constantijn Huygens's predictions of greatness for the young Rembrandt and Jan Lievens, offering a further parallel with Tintoretto's 1547-8 *Self-Portrait* being painted at the same time as the early literary appreciations of the artist by Calmo and Aretino cited in this chapter. The section of Huygens's autobiography, c. 1630, where he compares Rembrandt and Lievens, each at the start of their careers ("both beardless") and notes their relative strengths as well as their mutual reluctance to travel to Italy, is included in Schwartz, *Rembrandt*, pp. 73-76.

⁷⁵ Tintoretto's family name and nickname deserve further explanation. His father Battista Robusti, who came from Brescia, was given the name "Robusti" for the robust fight he and his brother put up defending Padua in 1509. See *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 22, 181. Tom Nichols has argued that Jacopo's choice of a "professional nickname suggesting an explicit connection with Venetian artisan life" was unusual in his day. Moreover it represented a gesture of solidarity with the "culture of the workshop," quite the opposite of many Renaissance artists who tried to "adopt the manners and values of their social superiors." See Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 17-18, as well as his earlier essay placing this presumed gesture of solidarity within a larger context, "Tintoretto's Poverty," in *New Interpretations of Venetian Renaissance Painting*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis (London: Birkbeck College, University of London, 1994), pp. 99-110. At the time of the 2007 Tintoretto exhibition in Madrid, much attention was paid to the assertion, based on a variety of much later documents, including a "Genealogy of the Tintoretto Family," that the Tintoretto family name was not originally "Robusti" but actually "Comin" (also Venetian dialect for the spice cumin.) The discussion of family identity is summarized in Falomir, "Jacopo Comin, alias Robusti, alias Tintoretto: An Exhibition and a Catalogue" in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp.17-24, especially on 22-23. Tintoretto's family and specific relatives are discussed in detail in Mazzucco, *Jacomo Tintoretto*, beginning on p. 40. All the same, Jacopo himself never seems to have employed the name "Comin," and this term is best relegated to family lore.

⁷⁶ On the dominance of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco in the reception of Tintoretto's religious painting and his historiography more generally, see Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative," in Falomir, *Tintoretto*, pp. 63-94, especially 63-64, with further bibliography.

⁷⁷ The first – and best known – of the three main texts on Tintoretto is Jean-Paul Sartre, "Le séquestré de Venise," *Les temps modernes* 13 (1957), pp. 761-800, with one English translation as "The Venetian Pariah," in Jean-Paul Sartre, *Essays in Aesthetics*, ed. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1963), pp. 1-45. The second is "Saint Georges e le dragon," *L'Arc* 30 (1966), pp. 35-50. The third is "Saint Marc e son double," *Obliques* 24-25 (1981), pp. 171-202. For Tintoretto and Sartre, see also Michael Scriven, *Sartre's Existential Biographies* (London: MacMillan, 1984), esp. pp. 85-94.

⁷⁸ The estimate of far more than 400 pictures begins with the revised total of 313 subject pictures published in the Echols and Ilchman "Checklist," a total substantially reduced from the 468 included by Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I. It then assumes that about ten of the

27 furniture paintings (the list with “F” numbers in the Echols and Ilchman “Checklist,” also known as “Supplemental list 1”) are autograph. To these subject pictures, it also assumes that even if Paola Rossi’s Tintoretto portraits monograph (Rossi, *Tintoretto: i ritratti*), which accepts 163 portraits, is not nearly discriminating enough and embraces too many spurious works, about half can be assigned to Jacopo, and to these should be added about ten of the fourteen newly discovered portraits were published with “R” numbers (for additional “Ritratti”) Pallucchini and Rossi’s *Opere sacre e profane*, I, pp. 235-37. Finally, in the past two decades numerous portraits and several subject pictures have come to light in private collections and on the art market, and some of these are reasonably assigned to Jacopo.

⁷⁹ The subject pictures that are signed are listed first with the Pallucchini and Rossi *Opere sacre e profane*, I, catalogue numbers and then with the Echols and Ilchman “Checklist” nos. in parentheses: 11 (4), 132 (46), 233 (92), 283 (123), 357 (172), 358 (209), 381 (199), 463 (300). The portraits are Rossi, *Tintoretto: i ritratti*, cats. 1, 7, 108, and 113, though from a photograph of the last the signature itself is not visible.

⁸⁰ Ilchman, “Age of Rivals,” esp. 29-35.

⁸¹ The two Tintoretto paintings using the signature and the form “faciebat” are the *Crucifixion* in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 283 (“Checklist,” cat. 123) and the *Assumption* in the church of San Polo, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, 358 (“Checklist,” cat. 209).

CHAPTER 2

THE CHALLENGE OF TRADITION

There was no way for Tintoretto to make his true worth known and gain public esteem except by working on public commissions with subject matter of greater import. Thus in order to overcome those difficulties which commonly impede unknown beginners he undertook all sorts of laborious tasks. There is no path more difficult to follow than that of virtue, strewn as it is with stones and thorns; and at the end the prize for such noble effort is approbation, which does not nourish and quickly fades away.¹

Carlo Ridolfi, *Life of Jacopo Tintoretto*

The almost aggressive expectancy broadcast in Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* (fig. 3), as well as the impatience and determination recounted by the painter's early biographers, to be investigated in this chapter, together reveal a personality somewhat at odds with the essential conservatism of Venetian society and artistic practice during the sixteenth century. The unfolding of the first half of Tintoretto's career, from his earliest works at the end of 1530s to the monumental canvases of unprecedented height of the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf* in the late 1550s, took place in the context of this resilient tradition, one that was only beginning to accommodate the implications of an artistic revolution.

This revolution entailed the technological shift to oil-on-canvas painting that happened, in Venice before anywhere else, at the end of the Quattrocento and the start of the Cinquecento. Tintoretto was born around 1518, well after the first generation of Venetian painters had already made the transition, completed by the first years of the century, to this new combination of

medium and support. Yet even as a member of the second generation of painters who worked principally on canvas, Tintoretto nevertheless played a crucial role in the 1540s and 1550s in exploring the possibilities and indeed furthering the repercussions of this new manner of painting. In other words, the process of Tintoretto's own development to artistic maturity fueled a broader investigation into the implications of the innovative Venetian painterly manner. Tintoretto's achievements in painterly practice – namely the assertion of the artist's physical presence on the very surface of the canvas, a success in reconciling opposing stylistic ideals, and the fundamental rethinking of religious narrative painting in Venice – must be understood against the tenacious background of Venetian tradition and a highly competitive artistic milieu, full of artists unwilling to allow a newcomer to break through.

The Revolution at the Turn of the Century

Although Venice's mercantile economy had declined in the later fifteenth century and her military strength, particularly on the *terraferma*, was checked by the nearly successful invasion by the forces of the League of Cambrai in 1509, the city remained enormously wealthy, among the largest and richest in Europe.² Venice was able to ensure a steady demand for paintings and support a large number of painters. The city was also the center of the European publishing and printing industry, and its wealth and relatively large upper-middle class provided a broad base of art patronage, unlike that in almost any other cultural center.³

In the brief period of the final years of the Quattrocento and the first decades of the Cinquecento, Venetian artists and clients transformed the notion of painting, challenging assumptions about materials, style, and subject matter.⁴ The most dramatic transformation was in the material substance of a picture, as the standard support of wood panel and medium of egg

tempera were superseded by canvas and oil paint. This novel combination of materials encouraged experimentations toward a style of softer contours, complex sequences of paint layers, and newly expressive brushstrokes. New approaches toward the rendering of light and atmosphere, as well as new subject matter – independent landscapes, portraiture in innovative formats, and erotic nudes – spread gradually from a small circle of sophisticated artists and patrons to Venetian culture more broadly. Demand for the services of specific painters gave these artists newfound status and a level of self-determination impossible to imagine a generation earlier.⁵ Buyers began to acquire pictures not simply as aids to religious devotion but for their beauty, that is, as aesthetic objects. Often people purchased these paintings from sources other than the artists who had produced them. Thus the collector of paintings and the secondary art market, in a form we would recognize today, emerged in Venice in those decades, soon spreading across Italy.⁶

These radical changes coincided with the last twenty years of Giovanni Bellini's career before his death in 1516, as well as with his pupil Titian's training, emergence as an independent artist, and triumph on the Italian stage. The overlap and exchange between two extremely talented generations – Bellini's and Titian's – help explain how the extraordinary artistic ferment around 1500 could take place in a fundamentally, and indeed, self-consciously serene, society. The older generation of painters – the protagonists of the Age of Carpaccio to be described below – comprised Gentile Bellini (c. 1435-1507) and Giovanni Bellini (c. 1438?-1516), Vittore Carpaccio (c.1465-c.1525), Giovanni Mansueti (active 1485-c.1526), and Cima da Conegliano (1459/60-1517/18). The rising generation included Giorgione, Sebastiano Luciani (1485-1547, later known as Sebastiano del Piombo), and Titian – all three pupils of Giovanni Bellini – as well as Palma il Vecchio (c.1490-1528), Lorenzo Lotto (c.1480-c.1556), and Giovanni Antonio de

Sacchis, called Pordenone (c.1483-1539). Somewhat less talented but enormously productive painters, like Bonifacio de' Pitati (1487-1553) and Paris Bordone (1500-1571), were also part of the mix. Creativity and innovation became integral to Venetian painting in these years, preparing the way for a true innovator like Tintoretto.

One of the biggest influences on Venetian painting was independent of these varied personalities. This was the city's physical setting in a saltwater lagoon. The context of humidity and salinity meant that fresco painting – that is, painting in fresh or wet plaster – did not always set properly and often disintegrated rapidly. Venetian artists thus turned to canvas as an alternative to fresco. Canvas was not a novel support – it had long been employed in Italian contexts for certain functions that required a lightweight surface, such as processional banners or organ shutters – but became widespread in Venice only in the last quarter of the Quattrocento. The telltale sign of this shift came in 1474, when the Venetian Senate decreed that the fresco cycle of great events in Venetian history that covered the walls in the Palazzo Ducale's Sala del Maggior Consiglio would be replaced by paintings on canvas.⁷ This ruling acknowledged that canvas was henceforth the standard support for large mural decorations in Venice. Enormous canvas paintings, such as Gentile and Giovanni Bellini's *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria* (fig. 24), became common.

Besides its resilience in the Venetian climate, canvas provided other advantages, being economical, relatively lightweight, and thus transportable. Canvas also permitted a conceptual breakthrough in how paintings were created, since a large painting could be executed in one place, namely the artist's studio, and conveyed to its ultimate destination, such as a wall in a church, government building, or private palazzo. In other words, unlike the traditional mural media in Venice of mosaic or fresco, the use of canvas meant that a wall decoration did not need

to be executed *in situ*. This offered Venetian painters more than simple convenience; the portability of canvas made it easier for painters to remain in Venice and ship all kinds and sizes of pictures to clients rather than working under their employer's noses. As physical distance between the painter and client became the norm, patrons gradually came to expect less leverage, and painters came to enjoy proportionally increased freedom.⁸ Moreover, as will be described in chapter five, unlike other supports, canvas was essentially unlimited in size; an artist could expand the pictorial field simply by sewing on another section of cloth. Painters had employed very large canvases in horizontal formats starting in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, but it took longer to understand the vertical scale implications of canvas. Just after the middle of the Cinquecento, in the choir paintings for the church of the Madonna dell'Orto, Tintoretto made a subsequent breakthrough with enormously tall canvas paintings.⁹ Mural decoration would never be the same.

The use of oils presented the second condition for the transformation of Venetian painting. The binder favored by fifteenth-century Italian painters – tempera, made with egg yolk – dries quickly and needs to be built up in many thin layers, precluding raised or expressive brushstrokes. As such, the medium of tempera conditioned the message, generating a consistent stiffness and crispness of forms as well as emphasis on local color. Although Giovanni Bellini and others in Venice had employed oil experimentally in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, typically in paintings on panel, oil fully supplanted tempera by the early sixteenth century, and consistent use unlocked its many advantages.¹⁰ As seen in mural paintings like Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (fig. 25) of 1534-38, slow-drying oil paints could be blended together over a longer period of time and mixed to varied viscosities, permitting effects from thick, opaque textures (*impasto*), to thin, translucent glazes. Suddenly, new possibilities of

intense colors, shading, and detail – not to mention flexibility during execution and ease of correcting errors – were possible. Such features were tricky or impossible with tempera or fresco painting. Summing up the situation a half-century later, Paolo Pino cited these advantages as he insisted on oil painting's merits: "I esteem painting in oils to be the most perfect way and the truest practice."¹¹

The real turning point in pictorial technique occurred soon after 1500, when Venetian artists united oil and canvas. As canvas supports became common for functions besides murals, particularly altarpieces and paintings for private devotion, Venetians seem to have been the first to understand the expressive implications of this combination.¹² By employing a thin gesso preparation, these painters retained much of the uneven surface of the cloth weave and exploited this rough surface as they played with the texture of the oil medium. In David Rosand's words, "Paint stroked over the woven support left a broken, interrupted mark, lending a new vibrancy to the surface itself."¹³ These fragmented lines could depict certain aspects of the real world – such as bulky, high-pile fabrics, or skin or human hair catching focused light (e.g., Titian's *Pietro Aretino*, fig. 10), or the palpable atmosphere of the damp Venetian climate, as seen in Giorgione's *Tempest* (fig. 26), now in the Accademia, Venice – with astonishing conviction and efficiency. Overall, in this new approach, forms were created not with taut contours, the mainstay of Florentine *disegno*, but through the caressing strokes of Venetian *colorito*. Moreover, thick applications of oil paint allowed brushstrokes to display three- dimensionality, direction, and energy.

It is not possible to pinpoint which painter or painters made this breakthrough in technique and conception. In the words of Edith Wharton, "The hurrying traveller does not ask the name/ Of him who points him on his way."¹⁴ It seems certain that those regarded as the

greatest innovators –Giorgione, Sebastiano, and Titian – had built upon developments initiated by older Venetian artists, Bellini and Carpaccio in particular, toward the end of the Quattrocento.¹⁵ The younger three artists were among the first to understand fully the repercussions of this Venetian revolution. Giorgione, Sebastiano, and Titian were in the right place at the right time to exploit the new combination. By the end of the century’s first decade, the younger artists were displaying remarkable confidence in handling these possibilities. For example, in his painting of *Saint Louis of Toulouse* of c. 1510 (part of the organ shutters for the church of San Bartolomeo di Rialto; fig. 27), Sebastiano took advantage of the tackiness of the oil medium and a variety of brushstrokes to render diverse textures and in doing so usher in a new era, one completely at home with the oil-on-canvas combination. Sebastiano skillfully used thick paint to suggest the heavy embroidery of deep red and golden threads decorating the saint’s bulky vestments, the glow of mosaic tesserae in the semi-dome of the niche, and the blurred sheen of the long highlight that defines the cylindrical volume of the saint’s crozier.¹⁶ The touch of the artist, his personality, is now evident in these visible brushstrokes, even immodestly so.

Tintoretto, born a generation after Sebastiano, pushed these expressive possibilities considerably further in his *Philadelphia Self-Portrait* (fig. 3). Much of that painting’s impact today rests on its aggressive brushwork and deep chiaroscuro, qualities only feasible with oil on canvas and not previously associated with self-portraits. When Tintoretto soon turned to work on a much larger scale, as in the *Miracle of the Slave*, he was able to retain the expressive possibilities of oil on canvas while also exploiting this combination’s capacity for speedy execution. As noted in Pino’s *Dialogo di Pittura*, published in 1548, the very year that Tintoretto unveiled his *Miracle of the Slave*, oil on canvas permitted great flexibility by allowing major alterations during the painting process: “Besides, things may be redone many times in order to

give them more finish and better unify the tonalities. This artifice cannot be applied in the other media.”¹⁷ The greater flexibility of oil painting permitted a painter to dramatically reduce the need for numerous preparatory drawings on paper before taking up his brush. These developments were crucial to Tintoretto’s *Miracle of the Slave* and particularly the Madonna dell’Orto paintings. The reverberations of the oil-on-canvas revolution at the turn of the century made Tintoretto’s innovations possible five decades later.

The Eyewitness Style

When this school was at its height, at the end of the fifteenth century and the start of the sixteenth, leading Venetian painters – most prominently Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio, Mansueti – created cycles of narrative paintings, what contemporaries called *istorie*, for the walls of *scuole* and government buildings. These canvas murals created by painters born two and three generations before Tintoretto privileged decorum and a wealth of details. These paintings emphasized harmony and collective stability. Stately and measured groupings of figures, generally arranged parallel to the picture plane, processed solemnly or bore pious witness to the lives of the saints and the results of miracles. The populous compositions were supplemented by myriad minutiae of costumes, still-life objects, and architectural settings, compiled almost like a written inventory, an approach termed the “eyewitness style” by Patricia Fortini Brown. The “eyewitness style” characterizes the period eye of the Age of Carpaccio.¹⁸ As Brown persuasively argued, the presence of so much apparently incidental detail in paintings such as Carpaccio’s *Healing of the Possessed Man at Rialto* (fig. 28) of 1494 served to guarantee to the viewer the veracity of the miracle that was the ostensible subject of the picture.¹⁹ The loving detail that Carpaccio lavished on chimney pots, drying laundry, shop signs and window

boxes, gondolier costumes, and the like not only provided visual pleasure, but was also introduced as evidence, persuading the observer that the painter had diligently recorded the miracle, which in this case was somewhat isolated at the upper left of the composition. Even when the setting of the story was foreign and thus could not be corroborated by the majority of Venetian observers, as in Gentile and Giovanni Bellini's vast *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria* (fig. 24) of c. 1504-8 for the Sala dell'Albergo (boardroom) of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, the numerous details and the inclusion of multiple portraits of confraternity members as witnesses enhanced the overall verisimilitude of the depiction.²⁰ Although commissioned by different patrons to decorate different buildings, it is telling how similar Carpaccio's painting is in composition, figure type, palette, and overall busyness to the canvas produced by Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, two painters of an older generation.

By hewing closely to a common style, even groups of different painters could create uniform mural cycles. Seen today in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, the eight surviving canvases that originally decorated the Sala dell'Albergo of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, including Carpaccio's *Healing of the Possessed Man at Rialto*, display a remarkable uniformity. They initially appear as the work of a single artist or workshop, despite being the products of five different painters.²¹ The prevailing attitude toward Venetian mural decoration promoted artistic as well as civic harmony. In Venetian Renaissance practice, no single painter was allowed to monopolize the decoration of a room, let alone a building; in this way patronage was broadly distributed and personal artistic monuments were discouraged.²²

Such an attitude was part of a larger code, often termed the ideal of *mediocritas*, promoting the state and institutions while eschewing individual claims for glory or even conspicuousness.²³ These painted narrative commissions, and the "eyewitness style" in general,

were motivated by ideals of composure, self-control, collective action, and social harmony. Such values were enshrined by the institution of the Venetian *scuole*, civic organizations that promoted ideals of the Serenissima by keeping social peace and encouraging charity.²⁴ At the same time, while these principles surely reinforced and celebrated the stability of Venetian institutions like the government and the *scuole*, they must have frustrated ambitious artists as time went on. Adhering to the “eyewitness style” forced an artist to minimize or even eradicate his personal approach in the name of greater harmony.

Painters may have noticed a certain tension, or even hypocrisy, in this emphasis on stability, consensus, and devaluing the individual, whether artist or patron; after all, a salient and pervasive example of rivalry in Renaissance Venice was the self-glorification and competition among the *scuole* themselves. The attitudes of confraternities, particularly a perceived willingness to decorate their meeting houses rather than give to charity, often prompted debate and drew criticism.²⁵ For example, Alessandro Caravia’s lengthy poem, *il sogno dil Caravia* of 1541, satirized the *scuole grandi*’s obsession with lavish art patronage at the expense of actual charity to the poor. A single example from the poem makes clear how cutting Caravia’s charge of *scuola* hypocrisy was:

Four-score thousand ducats they happily spend
Where no more than six would achieve the same end.
The rest they hang on to: it’s pointless to send
Cash for the shoeless, the naked, befriend
All those groaning with hunger, for whom life is rough.²⁶

Caravia must have been speaking for many when he asserted that conspicuous spending on construction had seemed to eclipse the original charitable and devotional aims of the *scuole*. Moreover, new construction and decoration by these institutions was typically in response to the actions of peer institutions. The five Scuole Grandi, and the more than two hundred *scuole*

piccole, did not want to be outdone by their rivals in patronage, construction, donations, or processions.²⁷

The constant pressure to surpass other institutions – and a persistent comparison of new buildings and decorations to earlier ones at rival *scuole* – must have inspired some artists to question the ethos of *mediocritas* and encouraged them to assert their own individuality. In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, however, Venetian painters do not appear to have prioritized individualism in terms of their personal style, even if public recognition and a steady flow of commissions were obvious goals. Fitting in was more important than standing out.

Despite the imposing scale of some early murals – Gentile and Giovanni Bellini’s *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria* (fig. 24) measures an enormous 3.47 x 7.7 meters – these are not heroic pictures. The compositions of the Age of Carpaccio are fundamentally conservative, massing large but decorous and essentially passive crowds in each picture’s foreground, parallel to the picture plane. Indeed, in these paintings the witnessing of an event often seems at least as important as the action taking place. Sometimes the actual subject of the picture is difficult to discern amidst the dozens of portraits of confraternity members and the abundance of quotidian details that clutter the pictorial field. While these elements were central to the “eyewitness style” and its claims of veracity, they also may have impeded the telling of the miraculous story. As will be described below, such ideas must have occurred to the young Tintoretto as he began to move beyond assisting other artists in their commissions and to contemplate the creation of his own compositions.

Titian's Rival

Titian began to cast his shadow over Venetian painting in the second decade of the sixteenth century. Many of the eyewitness painters were still active in these years, although they probably appeared increasingly outmoded in the face of Titian's innovations. Titian continued to dominate painting in Venice during the course of Tintoretto's early career, in the 1530s and 1540s, and indeed the younger artist was 58 years old before the older artist finally died and Tintoretto could claim his mantle. Many of Tintoretto's early independent paintings are closely based on and try to rival works by Titian: for example, the overall composition and many details of the Washington *Conversion of Saint Paul* (fig. 29) are impossible to imagine without Titian's *Battle of Spoleto* of c. 1536 for the Palazzo Ducale, destroyed in a fire in 1577 but known today through engravings (fig. 30).²⁸ As will be discussed more fully in chapter four, the pose of Venus within Tintoretto's *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* of c. 1545 (fig. 31) in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich, cites Titian's contemporaneous *Danaë* (Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples; fig. 32), lampooning the over-the-top eroticism of the prototype; this painting also makes a pointed reference to Michelangelo's sculpture, in the form of the sleeping Cupid.²⁹

Although the young Tintoretto was surely on Titian's radar as a rival by the early 1540s, in an earlier period, that is, in the later 1520s and throughout the 1530s, a far greater challenger to Titian appeared in the form of Giovanni Antonio de Sacchis, known by the name of his birthplace in Friuli, Pordenone. Born around 1484, and thus a few years older than Titian, Pordenone spent the majority of his final decade – from 1528 until his death in 1539 – based in Venice. His extensive experience as a fresco painter – including commissions in his hometown of Pordenone, as well as in Spilimbergo, Mantua, Cremona, and Piacenza – would have allowed him to claim an advantage over any Venetian painter for such commissions. Pordenone's

distinctive style, uniting the tonal variety of Giorgione and the musculature and the brash three-dimensionality of Michelangelo, was enormously influential on Venetian art. Moreover, this artist's presence on the Venetian scene would have been impossible for the young Tintoretto to ignore. Tintoretto's mature figural style, career strategy, and perhaps even competitive personality seem to have been shaped by the rivalry between Titian and Pordenone in those two decades.

Many of Pordenone's most prominent works have been lost to the ravages of time. These included the façade frescoes commissioned by Ludovico Talenti for his palazzo on the Grand Canal at San Beneto, the Ca' Talenti d'Anna. As in the case of Titian's destroyed *Battle of Spoleto* for the Palazzo Ducale, the loss of the façade frescoes should not lead us to underestimate the profound impressions such works undoubtedly made on the young Tintoretto. Early sources, like Dolce and Vasari, held these façade frescoes up as outstanding and universally admired works.³⁰ Something of these lost frescoes' effect can be gleaned from such literary descriptions but particularly by a preparatory drawing for the whole composition (fig. 33), generally regarded as autograph and dated to c. 1530-35 (Victoria & Albert Museum, London).³¹ Within a marvelous arrangement of flying figures of classical gods and battle scenes in the spaces between windows ("molte storie a fresco... oltre a molte altre cose tutte ingegnose," as described by Vasari), the most-discussed element of the entire ensemble was a figure of Marcus Curtius on horseback.³² This figure was a tour de force, as if horse and rider were jumping straight into the Grand Canal: in Vasari's words, "Marcus Curtius on horseback shown in foreshortening, which seems to be completely three dimensional." Although that equestrian figure has long crumbled, it was particularly conspicuous for decades, capturing attention, inspiring copies, and sparking discussion. Typically hyperbolic, Vasari's account goes

on to describe this fresco and its author as the talk of the town: “That work pleased the whole city of Venice beyond measure, and Pordenone was therefore extolled more highly than any other man who had ever worked in the city up to that time.”³³

Such praise for a recent arrival – exactly the kind of admiring commentary that would have rattled Titian – directly precedes a remark that Pordenone’s motivation for working particularly hard was precisely to compete with Titian: “Among other reasons that caused him to give an incredible amount of effort to all his works, was his rivalry with the most excellent Tiziano.”³⁴ In 1538, soon after the frescoes were completed (and not long before Pordenone’s death), the Flemish immigrant Martino d’Anna bought the palace.³⁵ It is worth noting that Martino’s sons, Zuanne and Daniele, who lived in a palace with a façade decorated by Pordenone, selected his great rival, Titian (by now elderly) – rather than a painter of a younger generation – when they sought an artist in around 1560 to supply the altarpiece for their family chapel in San Salvador.³⁶ A fragment of this painting, apparently neither finished by Titian nor ever delivered, is the *Christ on the Cross with the Good Thief* (fig. 34), now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna. Thus while the ambition of the d’Anna family to obtain a painting by Titian were thwarted, this rivalry between the two artists seems to have continued, at least in the minds of Venetian patrons, into the next generation.

Even if the Ca’ Talenti d’Anna frescoes are long lost, we can glean a good impression of their confidence and potency – notably the standout Marcus Curtius – from the equestrian figure in Pordenone’s *Saint Martin and Saint Christopher* on panel (fig. 35). This pair of paintings formed the doors to a cabinet for silver high up on the wall inside the nave of the church of San Rocco, and were painted just a few years earlier than the façade fresco, probably in 1528.³⁷ The subject of the two saints could have been conventionally treated, by standing them at ease in

complementary *contrapposto* poses and by having both saints make eye contact with the viewer.

But Pordenone was not a conventional painter. Instead, his strapping figures of *Saint Martin and Saint Christopher* radiate an extraordinary power; the effect is not conveyed just by their taut musculature, as if their bodies were overinflated with an air pump, but also by their poses, which twist with coiled energy, causing them to dominate the pictorial field to an almost claustrophobic extent. The torsion of Pordenone's brawny *Saint Christopher* takes as its starting point Titian's powerful fresco of the same subject in the Palazzo Ducale of only a few years earlier (fig. 36).³⁸ Not surprisingly, Pordenone's adaptation exaggerates several aspects of Titian's prototype: now the body is greatly swollen, the pose more lunging, the facial expression more alarmed. The final product, a superhuman figure worthy of Michelangelo, is much grander than Titian's mere athlete, and thus makes a pointed criticism of its model.

Pordenone's two saints in the church of San Rocco do not acknowledge our presence; rather they are so thoroughly absorbed by their actions that only Martin's horse meets our gaze. The picture plane is no barrier to their lunging forms. Pordenone has taken advantage of the smooth wooden surface of the support to emphasize the firm contours, indeed the Michelangesque *disegno*, of his muscular figures. If Pordenone knew Michelangelo's art only second-hand, he had absorbed its heroic nature and added his own ingredient, an even greater pictorial dynamism. Even a painting as vigorous and energetic as Titian's *Assunta* might have seemed staid in comparison.

This rivalry, which had evidently caught the popular imagination, went back at least to 1520, when Pordenone first frescoed the walls and cupola of the Cappella Malchiostro in the Duomo of Treviso. This chapel was dedicated to the Virgin Annunciate and Saint Andrew, and within the next year or two, Titian added the chapel's altarpiece of the *Annunciation*.³⁹ In the

cupola fresco of *God the Father* of 1520 (destroyed in World War II; fig 37), Pordenone created a restless, swirling cluster of angels supporting a mighty bearded figure who sternly surveys (or looks down on, in both senses of the phrase) the other artworks in the chapel and the worshippers below him. Although this swarm of figures around the Padre Eterno is shaped to conform to the curves of the hemispherical field, the individual figures seem to defy the surface and indeed project into real space, with the same confident foreshortening that so impressed Venetians in the case of the Ca' Talenti façade a decade later. Pordenone's cupola also proved he could successfully incorporate specific quotations from the works of other top artists, including Titian's *Assunta* (fig. 17), unveiled just two years earlier.⁴⁰ By citing and fully digesting Titian's *God the Father* and other motifs from his rivals, Pordenone could claim his own place among them.

In turn, Titian's altarpiece of the *Annunciation*, painted soon after Pordenone's cupola and walls, makes its own statement within the same chapel (*in situ*; fig. 38). The composition displays a deep perspectival setting of contemporary Renaissance architecture, defying the flatness of its support. More importantly, it overturns the convention of *Annunciation* iconography, which preferred a processional, left-to-right motion of the two main figures, arranged parallel and close to the picture plane. Instead, Titian has substituted a vector of great depth, from background to foreground, underscored by the rushing orthogonals of the chessboard paving that draw the eye from the left foreground to the right background. Titian placed the Virgin Annunciate, the dedicatee of the chapel, in the left foreground, thus relating her to the viewer's space and making her easily the focal point of the entire painting. Titian's striking departure from iconographic tradition was not made solely for novelty's sake, but rather to allow his composition – one featuring heavenly light emerging from the back and right sides of the scene –

accommodate the actual light sources in the chapel: two windows in the chapel wall to the viewer's right, one at the level of the altarpiece and the other above the cornice (fig. 39). The shadows across the wall and upon the paving in the background of the altarpiece's composition are not the result of the divine light in the painting, which emerges from the cloud, but rather from these two windows.⁴¹ Titian inserted the Archangel Gabriel at the right edge, but set into the middle ground. His surprising news is directed towards the Virgin near the picture plane, and ultimately into the real space of the chapel. Through this device, the viewer looking into the setting mirrors Canon Broccardo Malchiostro, co-patron of the chapel (along with the Scuola della Santissima Annunziata), who looks out as he kneels at the edge of the architecture, before the landscape.⁴² Titian pointedly did not include in his composition an element common in Annunciation paintings, God the Father, implicitly acknowledging the presence of that very figure in Pordenone's nearby fresco.⁴³ In other words, Titian's sensitivity to setting means he adapted his altarpiece both to the natural illumination and to a rival's painting already present.

Decades later, Tintoretto would join this game and play a further card. Although Tintoretto's famous contest winner, the *Saint Roch in Glory* of 1565 for the ceiling of the Sala dell'Albergo in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco (fig. 40), has been said to rework the upper section of Titian's *Assunta*, in fact the figure of God and the putti around him are closer to Pordenone's example.⁴⁴ In the first painting of the massive cycle that collectively constitutes his *magnum opus*, Tintoretto did more than put one of Titian's masterpieces in its place; he has simultaneously cited and thus co-opted Titian's leading rival and critic of those years.

Naturally, the most public skirmishes between Titian and Pordenone took place in Venice itself. Before the premature end of Pordenone's career, both painters had worked in the most visible and prestigious site in Venice, the Palazzo Ducale, including the Sala del Maggior

Consiglio. There the two artists in fact contributed adjacent murals for the cycle of the story of Pope Alexander III, canvases destroyed by fire in 1577.⁴⁵ Venetian authorities had even used Pordenone's presence on the Venetian scene as a goad to incite Titian to fulfill his obligations. Indeed, to the government's frustration, for years Titian made little progress on his painting of the *Battle of Spoleto*, a commission he had been awarded in 1513. Only in 1537, when he was warned that the picture would be assigned to Pordenone, did Titian spring into action and finish the *Battle* by the next year.⁴⁶ Yet the sense of head-to-head competition was somewhat diluted since these up-to-date paintings were part of a cycle that included many works by painters of the older generation, such as Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio, and Alvise Vivarini.

In smaller arenas, the rivalry could therefore be more pointed. For example, Vasari's *Life of Titian* includes back-to-back descriptions of Pordenone vying to upstage Titian in two different ecclesiastical sites, the church of San Giovanni Elemosinario at Rialto and the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli on the island of Murano. According to Vasari:

Having returned to Venice, Titian found that a number of gentlemen, who had taken Pordenone into their favour, praising much the works executed by him on the ceiling of the Sala de' Pregai and elsewhere, had caused a little altar-piece to be allotted to him in the Church of S. Giovanni Elemosinario, to the end that he might paint it in competition with Tiziano, who for the same place had painted a short time before the said S. Giovanni Elemosinario in the habit of a Bishop. But, for all the diligence that Pordenone devoted to that altar-piece, he was not able to equal or even by a great measure to approach to the work of Tiziano. Next, Tiziano executed a most beautiful altar-picture of an Annunciation for the Church of S. Maria degli Angeli at Murano, but he who had caused it to be painted not being willing to spend five hundred crowns upon it, which Tiziano was asking, by the advice of Messer Pietro Aretino he sent it as a gift to the above-named Emperor Charles V, who, liking the work vastly, made him a present of two thousand crowns; and where that picture was to have been placed, there was set in its stead one by the hand of Pordenone.⁴⁷

In the first of these examples, Vasari concludes that Pordenone's altarpiece for the church of San Giovanni Elemosinario, *Saint Sebastian*, *Saint Catherine*, and *Saint Roch*, probably dating to the second half of the 1530s (fig. 41), did not measure up to Titian's painting of *Saint John the*

Almsgiver in the same church (fig. 42), though not for lack of trying.⁴⁸ In the second anecdote, Vasari also implies that Pordenone was a better-priced alternative to Titian, and his work was seen as a reasonable substitute for that of the far more famous, but potentially prickly, master.⁴⁹

The first of the anecdotes recounted by Vasari, the showdown in the church of San Giovanni Elemosinario, presents a fascinating comparison, given the striking divergences in approach, each an extreme – presumably deliberate – of its creator’s style. Pordenone’s painting presents swollen, almost pneumatic figures, who press against the outer edges of the field. The bound arms of Sebastian and the tilted head of Catherine gracefully echo the painting’s curved top edge. The four figures, including the angel who looks up at Saint Roch, jostle for space, their overlapping forms contribute to a sense of claustrophobia. The setting, however, is empty and airless, without any architectural features. Catherine wears a bright red mantle over a green dress, both articles of clothing defined by vigorous folds, and her hip projects into the center of the composition; by these means she balances the hulking men, if she does not quite manage to dominate the pictorial field. In general, the painter has made coloring subservient to dramatic shading. Pordenone has emphasized chiaroscuro to create powerful three-dimensional effects, seen above all in Sebastian’s swimmer’s body and Roch’s mighty legs. The artist has chosen to focus nearly entirely on strong contours, with heroic figures defining the setting. Overall the forms within the painting appear as smooth as the painting’s fine canvas surface. Pordenone’s altarpiece offers a confident and unshirking display of *disegno* for a Venetian setting.

By contrast, Titian’s canvas of *Saint John the Almsgiver* presents a rich paint surface with a great variety of expressive brushwork. The attention paid to various textures of clothing, the wooly beard, and particularly the palpable damp atmosphere – this last effect very much in the tradition of Giorgione’s *Tempest* (fig. 26) – show off Venetian *colorito* at its best. Even if the

architecture is understated, never upstaging the central figure of Saint John and his distribution of charity, Titian has given enough clues – curtain above, cloudy sky behind, marble steps below – to create a believable setting. If Pordenone’s painting is a *dimostrazione dell’arte*, invoking a *terrafirma* version of weighty, bulging Michelangelism, Titian’s altarpiece recreates nature in a characteristically Venetian manner. These two paintings exemplify the stylistic poles of the two most influential painters in Venice in the 1530s. There seems something almost unblinking in these two pictures; within the confined setting of a humble parish church, Pordenone and Titian each produced a showpiece, here making no effort to accommodate the aesthetic of the rival.

Pordenone’s paintings in Venice garnered notice and were praised by the most influential critics for their three-dimensionality. For example, Aretino in 1534 wrote, “Here is Pordenone, whose works make one doubt if nature gives relief to art or art to nature” (“Ecco il Pordenone, le cui opere fan dubitare se la natura dà rilievo all’arte o l’arte alla natura”).⁵⁰ Dolce’s 1557 dialogue *L’Aretino* notes that other painters always admired Pordenone, particularly for his taste in foreshortenings and powerful figures: “Similarly painters have always looked with great esteem on the works of Antonio da Pordenone; he too was an experienced and fluent master, and was fond of foreshortenings and fearsome figures.”⁵¹ Such comments make clear that forcing comparisons with other artists, and thus impressing them, was a constant goal of painters.

Not only Venetian painters and critics respected Pordenone. Venetian patrons continued to do so as well. A revealing document is the decision on March 6, 1538 by the officers of the Scuola della Carità to continue the decoration of their Sala dell’Albergo immediately after the completion of Titian’s *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (fig. 25). Perhaps in the Venetian tradition of “equitable distribution of economic opportunity,” or more likely in the newer practice of encouraging rivalry among painters to bring out each artist’s best, the next artist

summoned to contribute to the room's decoration was Pordenone.⁵² Although his suitability for this task was clearly justified in their minds – the document bestows upon Pordenone the superlatives of the most ingenious and wise man of their times (“lo ingeniosissimo, et prudentissimo homo miser Zuan Antonio da Pordenon alli tempi nostri homo di grandissimo ingegno”) – the officers of the Scuola della Carità must have envisioned for their sala dell'albergo a similar showdown between the two great rivals.⁵³

Such was their deference to Pordenone that even after the painter's death in 1539 the Scuola insisted that the painter chosen to execute the next picture in the cycle adopt not the subject initially preferred by the *banca*, namely the Assumption of the Virgin, but rather Pordenone's choice for the space, the Marriage of the Virgin. Pordenone had persuaded the *confratelli* that the wedding of Mary and Joseph was better suited to fit the horizontal format of the intended space, that the story followed appropriately in the narrative sequence of the life of the Virgin, and that a painting of the Assumption already existed within the Scuola in the adjacent room, rendering a second depiction redundant. The eventual painting for the Sala dell'Albergo, Gian Pietro Silvio's *Marriage of the Virgin* (fig. 43), even if tardy in its completion and uninspired in its rectilinear composition, is the fulfillment of Pordenone's iconographic plan.⁵⁴

The rivalry between Titian and Pordenone continued at the Scuola in the next generation, when in 1557 a final painting for the cycle was executed by Girolamo Dente, a favored member of Titian's *bottega* who often signed works as “Girolamo di Tiziano.” This canvas of the *Annunciation* (fig. 44) was offered to the Scuola to replace an extremely old painting that now looked out of place in the context of the newer works in the room: “uno quadro antiquissimo deforme dali altri che hora s'atrova nel detto albergo.” The officers found the terms of

Girolamo's offer favorable, since when the painting was already finished the Scuola could decide whether to accept it or not – “in liberta dela scuolla nostra dappoi finitto di accettarlo & non accettarlo” – and they agreed to his proposal, making a final payment in 1561.⁵⁵ When seen on the wall of the Sala dell'Albergo for which they were intended (fig. 45), the two pictures, despite being executed nearly two decades apart, evince a certain harmony of consistent figure scales, uniform palettes, and similar architectural forms with compositional recessions at their centers.⁵⁶

At the same time, it is telling that Girolamo's painting, with its setting of imposing arcades and groupings of onlookers and confratelli placed close to the picture plane, conforms more closely to his master's much earlier *Presentation of the Virgin* than to Silvio's adjacent canvas. It is clear where Girolamo's allegiances lay, though the swirling cloud of angels transporting the Heavenly Spirit surely owes something to Pordenone's cupola frescoes in Treviso's Malchiostro Chapel. In the end, although the Scuola della Carità would have been gratified to have the decoration of the room completed, there must have been some disappointment that the face-off between Titian and Pordenone had not materialized as intended. Furthermore, we can speculate that Tintoretto might have wished for the opportunity to be part of this cycle, where his art could have been compared to Titian's. As we shall see later in this chapter, Girolamo was the very same who, according to Ridolfi, had served as Titian's bouncer, tossing the young Tintoretto out of the master's *bottega*.⁵⁷ Finally, without a doubt, Tintoretto had also taken note of Girolamo's proactive – and successful – no-strings-attached offer of a painting to the institution.

Yet despite Pordenone's formidable presence, Titian seems to have won most of the confrontations in Venice. One of these seems to have been an actual contest, promoted by the Scuola di San Pietro Martire to determine the painter of an altarpiece for its chapel in the

Dominican basilica of SS. Giovanni e Paolo. The topic of the Death of Saint Peter Martyr was of interest not just to this order or scuola, but to Venice as a whole, since the saint himself was local. Peter of Verona (c. 1203-52), prior of Como, was killed by a hired thug, Carino, on the road from Como to Milan. At the time of his assassination his jurisdiction included Venice.⁵⁸ Although no documents specifically mention a contest for the altarpiece, and some scholars including Patricia Meilman have doubted that a competition happened at all, there is plenty of circumstantial evidence.⁵⁹ A letter of 1525 from the Scuola to the Capi dei Consiglio di Dieci describes a proposed special assessment that would enable the hiring of a much better painter than the kind that a *scuola piccola* might typically have engaged for such a commission. The letter states the plan to “have paint and complete said altarpiece by one of the finest in this art of painting” (“far depenzer et compir dicta palla ad uno deli primi de dicta arte che ne parera”).⁶⁰ Early sources, including Paolo Pino’s *Dialogo di Pittura* (1548) and Ridolfi’s *Vita di Titiano* of 1648, refer to a competition. Ridolfi’s account specifies that Titian beat out both Pordenone and Palma Vecchio for the commission by devising a better composition, though Palma’s losing *modello* was still to be found in a private collection in Venice:

It is said in the disposition of this work, he competed with Pordenone and Palma il Vecchio, whose small model is conserved in the Contarini home in San Samuele; Titian’s merits nevertheless prevailed, and the reputation of his talent spread far and wide, inspiring both heaven and his fellow man to favor him.⁶¹

Palma was in fact a member of the Scuola and for that reason alone may have seemed the front runner.⁶² There may have been other local painters in the mix. Lotto was in Venice starting in December 1525, and in fact living for those first six months in the Dominican convent of SS. Giovanni e Paolo itself.⁶³ According to Vasari, Lotto was a friend of Palma Vecchio and knew many Venetian painters.⁶⁴ Lotto also cultivated a specialty in painting altarpieces, and had probably completed as many altarpieces as Titian had by 1524. In any case, the short list of

Titian, Palma, and Pordenone described by Ridolfi would have ensured a competition that must have been thrilling to bystanders.

Pordenone's presumed entry in the competition was an astonishing grisaille *modello* (fig. 46), preserved in the Gabinetto dei Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, Florence. This *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* employed a huge range of technique, including black chalk, pen, gray and blue wash with brush, heightened with white lead, to a remarkable degree of finish, almost worthy of an illuminated miniature while still employing the Venetian preference for gray-blue paper. Rearick claimed that the members of the Scuola had never seen anything like this.⁶⁵ If the patrons had been expecting an entry that looked anything like Giovanni Bellini's easel picture of the *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* (fig. 47) of c. 1507 (National Gallery, London), Rearick is almost certainly correct.⁶⁶ Although Bellini ingeniously echoed the violence of the martyrdom of foreground with the woodcutters chopping trees in the background, there is nothing particularly terrifying about the narrative taking place in this panel. The overall composition appears crowded and even picturesque; it is hard to see the murder for the trees. Attackers and woodsmen alike seem to perform a slow ballet. The lack of focus, characteristic of Carpaccio and his contemporaries, makes the assassination less chilling. In Bellini's picture, the friar's murder by a heretic is just one of many activities going on that day, along with watching sheep or goats, herding cattle down a dusty road, and chatting by a country well.⁶⁷

In contrast to Bellini, Pordenone has extracted the assassination from such a crowded context. The isolation of the main motif and the particular point of view – the viewer, like the assassin, towers over the supine friar, further dramatizing the victim's plight – work together to pack a punch, generating great sympathy for Peter.⁶⁸ A key visual source for Pordenone's composition, apparently overlooked in the literature, may have been an early work by one of the

other competitors for the commission, namely Titian's *Miracle of the Jealous Husband* (fig. 48), a fresco from 1511 on the upper floor meeting room of the Scuola del Santo, Padua.⁶⁹ Titian's painting shows a desperate woman splayed on the ground, looking up at her husband who wields a dagger. In turn, her pose was based, in reverse, on Michelangelo's Eve from the *Temptation of Adam and Eve* in the Sistine Chapel, painted just slightly before Titian's fresco (fig. 49). In his presentation drawing, Pordenone has in effect placed each of Titian's two main figures, assassin and victim, on his or her own revolving tray, a sort of lazy susan for *disegno*, and rotated the standing one to the right (clockwise), and the prostrate one to the left. The largest difference between the figural grouping in Titian's fresco and Pordenone's drawing is that while the wife in *Miracle of the Jealous Husband* weakly extends her right hand to defend herself, Peter needs to raise his left in a vain attempt to ward off the attacker; Peter's right hand is of course occupied with writing in blood the phrase, "Credo..."⁷⁰

When Rearick cited the revolutionary appearance of this drawing, he was speaking largely of its technique, which was radical for Venice. In his words, "The result is a surreal image of lunatic intensity, cold and compulsively minute in its obsessive detail, and rigidly immobile in its automaton-like figures."⁷¹ Indeed, there is something almost chillingly clinical about the smooth technique and the odd luminosity. Moreover, the grisaille technique means Pordenone's figures evoke sculpture far more than any drawing by Titian. What made this drawing truly revolutionary, however, was its combination of almost bizarrely smooth surfaces in the drawing with its simplified composition of two main figures, emphasizing to an unprecedented extent the cold-blooded nature of this murder.

As it happened, Titian must have impressed the Scuola more thoroughly with his conception. He won the competition and painted the altarpiece, delivering the panel in the spring

of 1530.⁷² Although the painting was destroyed by fire in 1867, Titian's celebrated composition is known from painted copies and prints, such as an engraving by Martino Rota of c. 1560 (fig. 50) and a full-scale painted copy on canvas by Carlo Loth of 1691 (fig. 51), now in the church on the original altar, second on the left.⁷³ Even when considered through these intermediaries, Titian's compositional brilliance is obvious. Daring asymmetries, vigorous poses linking together the lower section of the pictorial field, and figures coordinated with the expressive landscape of towering trees: together these elements endow the event with a grandeur and tragedy that makes previous Venetian altarpieces, even narrative ones like Titian's own *Assunta*, seem tame. In winning the competition, Titian's cause may have been aided by the fact that Pordenone's entry was so very strange. If a *modello* is supposed to provide an accurate glimpse of how the finished work will appear, it is hard to interpret Pordenone's presentation drawing. What would the landscape or setting or indeed the palette of the final painting be? At the same time, Pordenone deserves credit for his attempt. For Titian, the mere presence of Pordenone on the scene must have galvanized his own work, giving him the spur needed to produce a breakthrough altarpiece of unprecedented energy and terror.

Titian's altarpiece was perhaps his most admired and frequently copied picture.⁷⁴ In the decades after its unveiling, *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* received greater praise than his other paintings, evidently serving as the gold standard of violent narrative pictures in Venice, if not Italy. For example, Aretino's 1537 letter to the sculptor Tribolo extols the overwhelming power of the painting, which he calls "la più bella cosa in Italia," employing *contrapposti*, or antitheses, in his description.⁷⁵ One brilliant rhetorical passage in the letter describes how the viewer cannot help but be overcome with emotion as he surveys the contrasts within the painting:

"... you would comprehend all the living terrors of death and all the true agonies of life in the face and the flesh of the man on the ground, and you would marvel at the chill and

the flush of which appear in the tip of his nose and the extremity of his body; and being unable to restrain your voice you would let yourself exclaim, when you contemplated the companion in flight, what you could perceive in his appearance the pallor of vileness and the whiteness of fear.”⁷⁶

According to Aretino, Titian’s great painting does not exist in a vacuum, but achieves its power through the effect on the spectator. Aretino’s letter is a marvelous ekphrasis, not merely an impassioned description of the painting as much as a digest of the stages of the extreme reaction the work causes on the viewer, as well as a tribute to the godlike power of Titian to bring the details of nature to life: “...what grassy pebbles are bathed by the stream which springs from the brush of the divine Titian!”⁷⁷ For Aretino, Titian’s art reveals the essence of nature.

Titian’s altarpiece continued to generate admiration in Venice, marking it as a model to be emulated by aspiring artists. The painting famously provides the opening example for Dolce’s *L’Aretino*, and the whole dialogue championing Venetian painting unfolds from this masterpiece.⁷⁸ Any young painter must have read such glowing commentary and ached for the same. A century later, Ridolfi’s *vita*, which can often be a dry list of commissions, describes this painting with great enthusiasm. Following the lead of Aretino’s letter to Tribolo, Ridolfi lauds the details of the natural setting and particularly the expressions of the individual figures:

Here the saint, fallen to the ground, is overcome by the wicked murderer, who, seizing him by the hem of his cape, savagely redoubles his blows while the glorious martyr, even though he is dying, dipping his finger in his own blood, writes upon the earth: “I believe in God the Father Almighty,” bearing witness until his last breath to the Christian faith. In the meanwhile, his frightened companion, also struck on the head, tries to save himself by fleeing, since the fear of death causes us to abandon our friends for our greater self-interest, and in his pallid face terror reigns....⁷⁹

Ridolfi even refutes Vasari’s claim that Titian had never studied celebrated ancient works, since in fact the Venetian knew them well, having proven in the putti at the summit of the altarpiece’s composition that he was equally a master of *disegno* and coloring: “essendo que’ bambini condotti nel colorito non solo, mà nel disegno à termini di maraviglia.”⁸⁰ Thus the painting that

vanquished Pordenone was testimony of the validity of Titian's practice, and by extension, Venetian practice.

Learning from Role Models

Having examined in some detail the rivalry between Titian and Pordenone, we may now turn back to Tintoretto. Certainly the timing was perfect for Tintoretto to pay rapt attention the the activities of these giants of Venetian art. The informal and formal competition between Titian and Pordenone described above took place in the very decade, the late 1520s to the late 1530s, when it would have the greatest impact on an impressionable young artist born about 1518. In the manner that a young person can remember decades later certain particularly newsworthy events – like political assassinations or air disasters – it seems likely that the young Tintoretto would remember distinctly the first time he saw, for example, Pordenone's altarpiece in the church of San Giovanni Elemosinario, *Saint Sebastian, Saint Catherine, and Saint Roch* (fig. 41), soon after its unveiling, when the young artist was in his upper teens. Tintoretto would likewise have been stunned at the news of Pordenone's sudden death in Ferrara in January 1539.⁸¹ More than many Venetians at the time, Tintoretto would have realized what a huge loss Pordenone's death was for Venetian painting, and what another fortunate turn of events for Titian. At the same time, Pordenone's death may have seemed auspicious for Tintoretto himself, since his first independent works seem to appear right at that moment. According to S. J. Freedberg, "As Pordenone vanished from the Venetian scene, Tintoretto emerged upon it: it was he who was to resolve the problem Pordenone's later style had proposed."⁸²

Almost certainly, Tintoretto would have paid attention to these two stylistic alternatives as he forged his own style. Perhaps Tintoretto even saw that a synthesis of the manners of

Pordenone and Titian could offer another formula for artistic success in Venice in the 1540s, one with potentially greater local relevance than “The drawing of Michelangelo and the Coloring of Titian,” the motto that Tintoretto supposedly inscribed on his studio wall, discussed in the previous chapter. This alternate motto could have been “Pordenone’s *disegno* and Titian’s *colorito*.” Putting it differently, Tintoretto might have agreed that a more compelling kind of painting would result from combining Pordenone’s figures with the broader, more expressive and diffuse brushwork of Titian, or, describing the synthesis from the other direction, invigorating Titian with stronger contours, bolder poses, and greater energy. The *disegno* of Pordenone and the *colorito* of Titian quite neatly define a number of Tintoretto’s strongest paintings from the middle and later 1540s, including the *Miracle of the Slave* (fig. 15) and *Esther before Ahasuerus* (fig. 52) in the Royal Collection.⁸³ In such works, the muscular figures strike powerful and vehement poses, but the surfaces are created through a noteworthy range of efficient brushstrokes, conveying subtleties of surface texture and lighting through bravura shortcuts. But Tintoretto noticed much more than alternate stylistic possibilities in these two artists.

In the spirit of the face-off between Titian and Pordenone at the Malchiostro Chapel in Treviso, Tintoretto would later paint a response to Pordenone’s *Saint Martin and Saint Christopher* with his own cupboard doors for a second “armario” located directly across the nave of the church of San Rocco. Documented to 1559, Tintoretto’s *Christ at the Pool of Bethesda* (fig. 53) seems to take a cue from Pordenone in the sense of physical tension inherent in the muscular figures. Although Tintoretto respects the setting of the gospel narrative calling for five porticoes, the “quinque porticus” of John 5:2, by employing a loggia of Ionic columns, the Biblical account of the healing of the paralytic would seem to call for a sedate backdrop of

infirm bodies to serve as witnesses to Christ's command to "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Instead, Tintoretto has crammed the tight setting with a pulsing group of interlocked figures in energetic poses and bold foreshortening. Ridolfi recognizes this sense of showdown in the church's nave, declaring that Tintoretto's painting was made in competition with the similar one by Pordenone facing it: "in concorrenza del Pordenone, che un simile nel dirempetto haveva dipinto."⁸⁴

Even if some of Tintoretto's most pointed citations of Pordenone, such as *Saint Roch in Glory* or *Christ at the Pool of Bethesda*, come in the middle of his career, long after the *Miracle of the Slave*, it seems unthinkable that the young painter was inspired only by the Friulian artist's deliberately shocking style. Indeed, it has been convincingly argued that in addition Tintoretto modeled his own career on Pordenone's forward and unflinching personality.⁸⁵ Following the death of Giorgione in 1510 and the departure of Sebastiano Luciani for Rome in 1511, only Pordenone had successfully challenged Titian's hegemony in Venice. To the young Tintoretto, adopting aspects of Pordenone's style, including both his brand strategy and business model, as it were, may have appeared the best strategy to achieve success in Venice as long as Titian was alive.

The conclusion that Tintoretto deliberately modeled his career on Pordenone is crucial to understand the young artist's development, both in the decade leading up to the *Miracle of the Slave*, and in his subsequent work. The lessons learned deserve to be itemized and examined in greater detail. For a start, Tintoretto surely would have been emboldened by Pordenone's purposefully aggressive figural style, one based more on Michelangelo than Titian. Tintoretto must also have been encouraged to aim high with his visual citations and deliberate confrontations; after all, past a certain point in his career, was there anything to be gained by

borrowing a figure from the conservative painter Bonifacio de' Pitati? Moreover, Tintoretto would have seen in Pordenone the benefits of adopting a similarly hard-hitting personality, and an example of an artist who left behind great achievement in the provinces for the opportunity to challenge Titian head-on in Venice itself.

Other tips that might be credited to Pordenone were more specific. The older artist had used façade frescoes to advertise his skills broadly to potential clients, and Tintoretto sought out many such commissions while a young painter to boost his reputation.⁸⁶ Another decisive lesson from Pordenone, imperative in the case of the *Miracle of the Slave*, was that one should try to unveil major works when Titian was out of town. Finally, Tintoretto may well have examined in person Pordenone's *modello* on paper for the *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* (fig. 46). Yet even if he had only heard about this extraordinary drawing, one brought to a level of finish far beyond his own capabilities as a draftsman, he must have realized that he should beware of artistic competitions that required polished submissions on paper. Better to circumvent a contest by offering instead a work in which he held a comparative advantage: namely the quickly executed oil on canvas painting. As Tintoretto's later career attests, this strategy of avoiding presentation drawings paid off handsomely both at the Madonna dell'Orto and the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.⁸⁷

The general tenacity of Venetian artistic tradition and the specific competition in the 1520s and 1530s described above provide important contexts for understanding the period of Tintoretto's training. We must now turn to the early sources, the few relevant documents, and his earliest paintings to reconstruct his artistic and personal development in his first decades.⁸⁸ In this light, Tintoretto's triumph with the *Miracle of the Slave* in 1548 and his colossal choir pictures for the Madonna dell'Orto a decade later emerge as the products of an ambitious, but

also a clever and resourceful mind, one shaped by his competitive environment and a deep longing to surpass his greatest predecessors.

Nacque in Venetia, Teatro d'ogni maraviglia

Jacopo, the son of the cloth dyer (*tintore*) Battista Robusti, was born either in 1518 or 1519, based on the document that records his death on May 31, 1594 at the age of 75.⁸⁹ Ridolfi was off by about six years when he said that Tintoretto came into the world in 1512, but the critic was certainly correct that the painter was born into “Venice, theater of all marvels.”⁹⁰ On the surface, it is hard to imagine a better context in which to develop as a painter than Venice in the second quarter of the Cinquecento, given the broad base of patronage, the pace of artistic innovation, and the city’s status as a cultural hub.

According to tradition, the very young Tintoretto, as a *garzone* in Titian’s workshop, quarreled with the master, three decades his senior and one of the most famous artists in Italy. Ridolfi’s biography is the first to relate the story of this apprenticeship in Titian’s studio. If we assume that apprenticeships began no earlier than age twelve, Tintoretto would have entered the Titian *bottega* about 1530-32.⁹¹ While this might seem like promising start, Tintoretto’s stint as a pupil of the great master apparently lasted only ten days. According to Ridolfi, when Titian saw some accomplished drawings by Tintoretto, the master feared that the precocious youth could eventually supplant him:

But Titian foresaw that from these beginnings the boy might become a man of great merit. Scarcely had he climbed the stairs and laid aside his mantel than he impatiently called his pupil Girolamo (thus does the worm of jealousy affect the human heart) and ordered him to send Jacopo from the house as soon as possible. And so, without knowing why, Tintoretto was left without a master.⁹²

Adding insult to injury, Titian did not even explain the decision for the expulsion personally, but had his workshop assistant Girolamo Dente deliver the message. Suddenly dismissed, Tintoretto was now without a teacher, and thus, according to Ridolfi, although still a child he began to think for himself how he might complete the training he had begun, “girò nella mente sua il modo di condurre a fine l’incominciata impresa.”⁹³

Ridolfi’s anecdote of Tintoretto’s expulsion from Titian’s *bottega* might seem like a fabrication, something invented by the biographer to link two great names in Venetian painting. The twist, of course, is that the connection Ridolfi describes was not the beneficent bond of teacher and pupil – a staple of art history from Vasari to Alfred Barr – but rather the more unusual malevolent relationship of bitter rivals, instigated by this incident. Moreover, the anecdote sets up Tintoretto as an underdog at the very beginning of his professional life. It offers the first of many obstacles to be overcome in the course of a long career. For the biographer’s purposes, such an anecdote provides a satisfying narrative arc as the artist triumphs over adversity, in the end becoming, at least in Venice, the Titian of his day.⁹⁴

Ridolfi’s anecdote neatly parallels a tale told by Dolce in 1557 that similarly linked two giants of Venetian painting of different generations, in this case, the young Titian and his unsuccessful apprenticeship to Gentile Bellini. According to Dolce, Gentile decided that Titian drew with too much vigor and speed for this taste, and was thus unteachable. This difference of opinion gave the apprentice license to leave behind the manner of this master and to study instead under his brother Giovanni:

But Titian, propelled by nature as he was to greater heights and the perfecting of his art, could not bear to follow that arid and labored line of Gentile’s. Instead he made designs boldly and with great rapidity. When Gentile saw, therefore, that Titian was diverging considerably from his own track, he told him that there was no prospect of his making good as a painter. This gave Titian occasion to leave that clodhopper Gentile and attach himself to Giovanni Bellini.⁹⁵

The parallels to Ridolfi's account of the young Tintoretto are striking, down to the incriminating evidence in the form of drawings, though the decision for Titian to leave Gentile Bellini seems to have been mutual. Tintoretto, according to his biographer, had no say in his expulsion from Titian's workshop.

Several classic studies explore such topoi of artists' lives, including fabricated stories of an artist's "discovery" by another, the stereotypes of artistic temperament, and associated ideas of obsession, eccentricity, madness, and melancholy. These tales seem common to many artists in the Western tradition, or at least as recounted in their biographies. In particular, Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, in their *Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist* (1934), and Rudolf and Margot Wittkower, *Born Under Saturn* (1963), both investigate the common stories about artists, noting similarities and duplications, allowing the debunking of numerous anecdotes as exaggeration or fabrication.⁹⁶ These studies caution us to be wary of biographical details that seem pat or formulaic, or simply too good to be true.

On the other hand, there is a surprising amount of evidence, much of it admittedly circumstantial, in the early sources about Tintoretto's quarrel with Titian. There are also many other anecdotes, often documented, of analogous behavior by the individuals involved that reinforce Ridolfi's story. For a start, Ridolfi is at least internally consistent, repeating at the end of the *Vita* a version of the story in verse form.⁹⁷ A few pages after the initial description of the expulsion from the workshop, the biographer recounts an anecdote that Titian hurried to the Rialto markets to see a multi-figure narrative painting ("un'istoria con molte figure") that the young Tintoretto had displayed on the street to advertise his talents. Despite his enmity to his former student, Titian had to admit the picture's quality: "As soon as he got word of it Titian hurried over to see it and was unable to restrain his praises though the old rancor toward his

despised pupil remained.”⁹⁸ The tale of the expulsion from the *bottega* is also echoed by Boschini’s poem of 1660, *La Carta del Navagar Pitoresco*, which mentions that Tintoretto’s presence drove Titian crazy through his “spiritoso” personality, one evidently incompatible with that of the older painter.⁹⁹ The implication of a grating personality would be the other side of the coin to Calmo’s enthusiasm for Tintoretto’s potent character, like a single peppercorn that overpowers ten bunches of poppies, as expressed in the 1548 letter discussed in the previous chapter: “Cusì come un granelo de pevere sconfonde, bate e vadagna diese mazzi papavero....”¹⁰⁰ Calmo’s letter also acclaims Tintoretto’s rapid development as an artist, noting how in the brief period of his apprenticeship, the painter learned more than a hundred who are masters at birth.¹⁰¹ This comment also supports Ridolfi’s version of events. Calmo’s observation that Tintoretto possessed a certain inevitable aura helps explain Titian’s jealous behavior.

As will be shown in greater detail, Titian did have something to fear from the young Tintoretto’s sudden appearance on the stage of the “Teatro d’ogni meraviglia.” In a later biography of Tintoretto, the *Ricche minere*, Boschini similarly cites professional jealousy, claiming the reason for the expulsion was that Titian viewed the young man “to be so bold, unconventional and headstrong in his very youth” (“per averlo veduto così ardito, bizzaro, capriccioso nella sua verde età”).¹⁰² In other words, Titian banished the young Tintoretto because he feared both a personality clash and an eventual dangerous artistic rival. Further anecdotes and artistic slights dating to the 1550s, to be explored in subsequent chapters, reinforce this idea of antipathy between the two artists.

It seems probable that the growing fame and earnings accorded to artists in the sixteenth century – as well as increasingly stressful competition – fomented greater rivalries and jealousy. Venice was, of course, not the only artistic center in the Cinquecento with cutthroat competition.

For example, Giovanni Battista Armenini's 1587 treatise on painting, *Dei veri precetti della pittura*, bemoaned the jealousy and greed of established painters in Rome in the 1550s that had made lives miserable for young artists, hindering their progress at the start of their careers and leading to aesthetic degradation.¹⁰³ Armenini, a retired painter, laments the increased competition among young artists and the resulting financial deprivation, the lack of finish and the recent increase in the speed of execution of paintings, all of which had driven him, as well as countless other youths who had tried to make it in Rome in the early 1550s, out of the profession.¹⁰⁴

Yet despite the proverbial serenity of the Venetian social order, rivalry among artists was a constant, and artists were quick to claim their due. As we have seen, Titian's own aggressive pursuit in 1513 of a *sanseria* (the sinecure guaranteeing an annual income) had opened up a generational divide in Venetian painting, as he seemed to jump in the queue ahead of much older painters – such as Carpaccio or even Cima – who must have felt that they were next in line. In 1514 the Council of Ten reversed their earlier decision benefiting Titian because it would not be fair to those before him who held a “spettativa,” a promise that the next available *sanseria* would be assigned to a particular individual. Titian blamed this delay on the shrewdness of rivals: “la astutia et arte de alcuni che non voleno vedermi suo concorrente.”¹⁰⁵ Whether this setback was specifically due to his competitors or to Venetian societal preference for stability, Titian had seen how threatening a challenger (in this case Titian himself) could appear to artistic harmony. The young artist had apparently come off as unmanageable, or even intimidating, to Gentile Bellini, after all. As Titian rose in the hierarchy of painters in Venice – an arrival confirmed in 1516 as he began work on the *Assunta* at the high altar of the church of the Frari, a painting commissioned a year or so earlier, as well as a new agreement to paint the *Battle of Spoleto* for

the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, and the death of his own teacher Giovanni Bellini – he must have increasingly seen the wisdom in curtailing opportunities for newcomers.¹⁰⁶

Thus Titian's fear of Tintoretto's potential as recounted in Ridolfi and Boschini should not be seen as a unique response to another artist, nor solely as an invention of later historians. If perhaps suspect in its some of its particulars, Ridolfi's account nevertheless embodies an essential truth about the heated artistic competition in Cinquecento Venice. Contemporary letters – the best surviving records of the conversations of the day – also suggest that the young Tintoretto may have appeared formidable to established artists. Pietro Aretino's letters, including that celebrating the unveiling of the *Miracle of the Slave*, more than once comments admiringly on Tintoretto's energy and accomplishment, while Calmo writes that Tintoretto's winning qualities and success pleased everyone as they simultaneously crushed the illiterate, the evil, and the envious (“far apiaser a tutti per far crepar i agrafi, i maligni e invidiosi”).¹⁰⁷ In the face of such evidence, the description of a personality clash between an upstart Tintoretto and a jealous Titian, as described by Ridolfi and Boschini, has some substance, and perhaps finds confirmation in the precedent of a similar generational difference between Gentile and the young Titian as expressed by Dolce.

W.R. Rearick devised a somewhat different interpretation of the anecdote in Ridolfi and Boschini, one that shifted the agency of the abrupt departure from Titian to Tintoretto.¹⁰⁸ Rearick based this reading on Vasari's claim that Titian gave little instruction to his pupils, and exploited their labor on his own production. According to Rearick, realizing that Titian wouldn't readily reveal the secrets of the art of painting, Tintoretto left in a huff. Tintoretto's proclivities for “ambition and impatience,” noted by all the early sources and in modern scholarship, make the scenario of the young artist brusquely quitting Titian's *bottega* at least plausible.¹⁰⁹

Furthermore, there seems to have been little incentive for Titian to have been particularly disposed to taking on a headstrong protégé, and there is independent evidence that Titian was reluctant to aid potential rivals.

A case in point is the chilly treatment received by Paris Bordone. Arguably Titian's best pupil of the 1510s (and his closest imitator, according to Vasari: "quegli che più di tutti ha imitato Tiziano"), Paris abandoned Titian's studio out of frustration when it became clear that he was being taught little. Vasari recounts a story similar to Ridolfi's and Boschini's accounts of Tintoretto's unhappy stay in Titian's *bottega*, but specifies that the master was not inclined to offer his students more instruction: "non essere molto vago d'insegnare a' suoi giovani."¹¹⁰ Ridolfi describes in his *Life of Titian* the detail, partially unflattering, that the painter would lock his paintings away from the eyes of others during the prolonged process of execution: "He was also in the habit of keeping his paintings for a long while at home, concealing what he had worked on, and, after some time had passed, he examined them again and more often than not brought them to perfection."¹¹¹ The implication is that a process that benefitted Titian's art was not collaborative and indeed detrimental to his assistants. Moreover, Titian even went on to punish this young artist who emulated him so successfully by requisitioning an altarpiece commission in the church of San Niccolò della Lattuga (San Niccolò ai Frari) that had originally been assigned to the younger painter.¹¹² Whether Titian was motivated by jealousy of Bordone's burgeoning prowess, or whether he simply coveted the money and prestige of the commission for himself, or both, the anecdote reflects poorly on Titian's reputation as a mentor, and hints at a distrust of rivals that would come into play with Tintoretto.¹¹³

Thus, Ridolfi's description of Tintoretto's expulsion from Titian's studio may have more than a kernel of truth. The subsequent passages in the biography, however, by which the young

artist trained himself, without a teacher, are much harder to take seriously.¹¹⁴ To be sure, the motto “Il disegno di Michel Angelo e’l colorito di Titiano,” has aesthetic validity for Tintoretto’s manner by the time of the *Miracle of the Slave*. The story that Tintoretto did not have a master, and was instead an autodidact (as some artists, including Michelangelo himself, would claim), would have been very flattering in the course of a biography but is extremely unlikely to have been true.¹¹⁵ Training under an established master would have been needed to transmit many aspects of the painter’s trade. Moreover, an apprenticeship would have been required in order for Tintoretto to join the Venetian guild. It may well be that he trained with a minor, if card-holding, member of the guild, and decided not to advertise this fact later on.¹¹⁶ At a minimum, by alluding to more than one major influence in his training, namely Titian, Michelangelo, and Schiavone (all described as sources of inspiration by Ridolfi), Tintoretto could prevent appearing as a slave to a single master.

According to Ridolfi, the young Tintoretto reacted to the dismissal from Titian’s studio by putting emotion behind him. The young artist admitted the excellence of Titian and resolved to study his works as well as the reliefs of Michelangelo, the acknowledged father of *disegno*, in order to become a painter: “conoscendo il valore di Titiano... pensò in ogni modo con lo studiare dalle opere di quello e da rilievi di Michel’ Angelo Buonaroti, riputato padre del disegno, divenir Pittore.” To this end, Tintoretto amassed a collection of casts after ancient sculptures, as well as sculptural *modelli* copied from Michelangelo’s Medici tomb figures. He drew these “continuamente” and, furthermore, copied systematically Titian’s paintings in order to base his manner of good coloring, “sopra le quali stabili il modo del ben colorire.” Besides the commonplace study of living models and dissections of corpses, Ridolfi relates that Tintoretto more unusually constructed dioramas of tiny wax and clay figures, in order to plan compositions,

and used tiny lamps to experiment with light and shadow (“lumi e le ombre”). He suspended other figural models from ceiling beams to test imaginative foreshortenings: “per formar gli scorci posti ne’ soffitti, componendo in tali modi bizzarre inventioni.”¹¹⁷ Thus in training to be a painter, Tintoretto became, in a modest way, a sculptor too.¹¹⁸

As described by Ridolfi, Tintoretto’s curriculum of independent study is in itself reasonable, though it may echo later studio practice, even perhaps Ridolfi’s own education as a painter under Antonio Vassilacchi, called Aliense (1556-1629) in the first decade of the Seicento, rather than Tintoretto’s first steps in the 1530s.¹¹⁹ Certainly there was precedence in Florence, starting as early as the first quarter of the Cinquecento, for young artists to revere cartoons and other large drawings by Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael and to employ them as a kind of alternative syllabus to studying within the *bottega* of a master.¹²⁰ The specific list of actions that Tintoretto undertook is useful rhetorically to Ridolfi since it emphasizes an earnestness and thoroughness in the young artist’s artistic preparation. Thus the description offers a handy rebuttal to Vasari’s earlier contention that Tintoretto “worked arbitrarily and without *disegno*, practically showing that art is a joke.”¹²¹ There is also something poignant, and thus appealing to Ridolfi, in the idea of the bewildered young Tintoretto picking himself up and moving ahead.¹²² More directly pertinent to Tintoretto’s training, Armenini’s *Dei Veri Precetti* offers a similar curriculum, though based on Roman paragons. Armenini recommended that young artists start with the study of the façades of Polidoro da Caravaggio, then move on to Raphael and Perino del Vaga, and then to ancient and modern sculpture. Eventually young artists should tackle drawing after the Sistine Chapel and simultaneously the rigorous study of anatomy.¹²³ The larger point is that if Ridolfi’s biography may have exaggerated the specifics of his program for dramatic effect, the zeal and self-discipline implied are both consistent with

Tintoretto's personality as described by the early sources and Italian Renaissance artistic training more broadly.

Also worthy of consideration is what Ridolfi does not mention. He does not describe a sustained period within a particular Venetian painter's *bottega*. This may be due to Ridolfi's wish to present his hero Tintoretto as an autodidact (or to avoid linking his name with that of a minor painter). Or this omission may mean simply that Tintoretto had spent so little time in any single *bottega* that concrete information was lacking a century later, even in the stories of the last members of the Tintoretto workshop, when Ridolfi began to compile his biography. Ridolfi also does not state that the young Tintoretto copied prints; perhaps this was so common as not to merit attention. Ridolfi does note that Tintoretto learned from colleagues, including "painters of modest success" ("pittori di minor fortuna") who decorated furniture.¹²⁴ More specifically, Ridolfi singles out Andrea Meldolla, called Schiavone (c.1515-63), as an important figure in Tintoretto's development, particularly in the techniques of fresco painting. The fledgling painter apparently chose to work with Schiavone for free in order to learn from the slightly older artist: "He preferred, however, the painting of Schiavone, whom he willingly assisted without any recompense in order to learn that master's method of handling colors."¹²⁵ It is striking, however, that nowhere in the passages in Ridolfi that correspond to Tintoretto's youth and early works do we find a mention of Pordenone's influence.¹²⁶

Most significantly, Ridolfi never mentions a trip to Rome by Tintoretto as part of his curriculum of study. The question of Tintoretto's possible visit to Rome – the simplest explanation according to some scholars, particularly Mary Pittaluga and Rodolfo Pallucchini, for the apparently sudden improvement in Jacopo's art in the late 1540s – is worth treating in greater detail.¹²⁷ The purported evidence for this trip, which would have followed Titian's visit to Rome

of 1545-46 by only year or so, is exclusively visual. For example, there are parallels in the overall composition and the figure-to-field relationships in the *Miracle of the Slave*, as well as similarities in the architectural setting and details of figures grasping columns to Francesco Salviati's fresco of the *Visitation* (fig. 54) of 1539 in the Oratory of San Giovanni Decollato in Rome.¹²⁸ Other scholars have noted the overall resemblance of the composition to the semicircular construction of Michelangelo's fresco of the *Conversion of Paul* (fig. 55).¹²⁹ The relationships in either case, however, are not so close that Tintoretto would have had to study these Roman frescoes in person, and the resemblance may be coincidental. If Tintoretto intended to evoke Roman precedents in his breakthrough painting, drawings, prints, or even detailed written descriptions would have furnished sufficient information.

Complicating the matter are the striking compositional similarities, first noted by Simon Levie, between Tintoretto's *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, originally part of the organ shutters in the church of the Madonna dell'Orto and completed by 1556 (fig. 56), and Daniele da Volterra's fresco of the same subject (fig. 57) in the Rovere Chapel in the church of Trinità dei Monti, Rome.¹³⁰ To explain the resemblance, Levie assumed a visit by Tintoretto to Rome, and went as far as to propose that this trip happened in the summer of 1552, in the gap between payments for these organ shutters on March 23 and November 5.¹³¹ This hypothesis, however, encounters at least two further impediments. First, a trip in 1552 implies that Tintoretto made two separate trips to Rome, one in about 1547 and the other in 1552. If the 1552 trip was the only visit to Rome, then an earlier visit was clearly not necessary to explain the sudden apparent improvement in Tintoretto's art in time for the *Miracle of the Slave*. Moreover, Daniele da Volterra's fresco in Rome may not have been executed in time for the proposed 1552 visit. The paintings in this chapel are generally dated to 1550-53, with the caveat that they may not have

been finished until later in the decade.¹³² A specific borrowing of these motifs by Tintoretto – let alone a visit in person – is thus harder to pin down.

Although scholars have noted the presence of various motifs that seem Roman in origin in Tintoretto's paintings beginning in the later 1540s, recent studies have rejected that the artist traveled to Rome, or that he needed to do so to enable his breakthrough. Such a conclusion need not apply to Tintoretto alone. Even Italian painters who learned deeply from their time in Rome did not need an initial visit there to become mature artists. For example, Correggio's first accomplished altarpiece, the *Virgin of Saint Francis* of 1515 (Gemäldegalerie, Dresden), displaying confident figures and accurate classical architecture, was created without the benefit of a trip to Rome. Two generations later, Annibale Carracci produced his breakthrough altarpiece, the *Lamentation with Saints Francis and Claire* (Galleria Nazionale, Parma) of 1585 – hailed by Denis Mahon as Italy's "first Baroque picture" (and itself an homage to Correggio's style) – also before visiting Rome.¹³³ Indeed, the notion of Tintoretto's trip to Rome was needed primarily to justify the abrupt maturation in the young painter's production by 1548 in light of the large quantity of conspicuously weak paintings assigned to the period 1545-47 in the literature, particularly in the 1982 monograph on Tintoretto's religious and historical subjects by Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi.¹³⁴ Removing these derivative works from his oeuvre, as most scholars now do, solves this problem.¹³⁵ Moreover, time spent in Rome would have been a feather in a young artist's cap, and a credential that Ridolfi, always seeking to rebut Vasari, would have cited if he could.¹³⁶ Given all the stress placed on Tintoretto seeking out the most eminent artists as models for his style, Ridolfi would have proudly mentioned a trip, had one occurred, in order to emphasize the young artist's enterprise in pursuing educational opportunities.

Moreover, there is no compelling visual evidence within Tintoretto's paintings to prove a visit to Rome in the period from about 1545 to 1547, as has often been proposed.¹³⁷ Arguing against a voyage to Rome is the utter lack of citations of ancient monuments within Tintoretto's oeuvre. It seems unlikely that a Venetian painter who witnessed first-hand the Colosseum or Forum would subsequently omit such remarkable structures in his art. Moreover, as is now largely accepted, Tintoretto's work demonstrates no evident familiarity with Central Italian art that could not have been obtained through the surrogates of drawings, prints, or models. Finally, a general skepticism about the necessity of a trip to Rome for a young artist may have enjoyed currency in Venice during the period of Tintoretto's training. In 1557 Dolce's *L'aretino* made the point that Titian achieved the remarkable early triumph of his *Assunta* thirty years earlier without needing to study the antiquities of Rome; he instead built upon the innovations of Giorgione:

And certainly one can speak of a miracle at work in the fact that, without having yet seen the antiquities of Rome, which were a source of enlightenment to all excellent painters, and purely by dint of that tiny spark which he had uncovered in the works of Giorgione, Titian discerned and apprehended the essence of perfect painting.¹³⁸

Vasari and Dolce both note that Titian refused an invitation from Pope Leo X (reg. 1513-21) to move to Rome.¹³⁹ According to Vasari, this rebuff was symptomatic of a larger problem of Venetian artists. Near the start of Vasari's *Vita* of Titian, the Tuscan critic insists on the importance of *disegno* by noting that many Venetian painters had not traveled to Rome, and thus needed deceitful *colori* to hide the flaws of their art.¹⁴⁰

Had Titian felt that he needed the experience – or greater fame – as a young man, he could easily have undertaken a Roman holiday. His confident petition to the Council of Ten to paint in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, however, makes clear that he felt he had no competition in Venice in those years. Venetian collections of classical antiquities, as well as the casts of

sculpture, drawings, and prints owned by many artists, meant that in a sense the best of Rome, and in fact the rest of Italy, was already available in Venice.¹⁴¹ Certainly the members of Titian's intellectual circle were in constant correspondence with other artistic centers.¹⁴² In this light, Titian probably thought a trip to Rome would be more of a distraction than a boon. Once again, the example of Titian's career would not have been lost on the young Tintoretto, and a trip to Rome would not have seemed a prerequisite to achieve artistic maturity.

Similarly, although the city of Florence certainly could offer an extraordinary visual feast to a young artist, particularly one fascinated by sculpture in general and Michelangelo in specific, there is no evidence that Tintoretto travelled there either. No report of a journey to the Tuscan city appears in any of the early biographies. Moreover, the many surviving drawings by Tintoretto or his workshop after Florentine monuments, such as those after Michelangelo's statues of *Crepuscolo (Dawn)*, *Giorno (Day)*, *Giuliano de' Medici* (fig. 58) – all part of the Sagrestia Nuova of the church of San Lorenzo – show the figures without clothing or studied from angles impossible to view in the original setting, such as from directly above, or at eye level, from mere inches away.¹⁴³ These sheets thus record the practice of drawing from small-scale replicas in Tintoretto's shop, not from close examination of Michelangelo's sculptures *in situ*, undertaken during a trip to Florence. There is no evidence that Tintoretto made such a journey; in fact he had no need to leave home. For nearly any curious artist, Venice had it all.

Having determined that the accounts of Tintoretto's early years provided by Ridolfi and other biographers have some truth to them, and concluding that trips to Rome and Florence probably never happened, we still must survey the fixed points of Tintoretto's early career. As noted above, there are almost no relevant documents for his first decade, and none referring to his apprenticeship.¹⁴⁴ Tintoretto is recorded as renting a house and studio at San Geremia in

1538, and he witnesses a will in 1539, claiming in the document the status of an independent painter and an address in San Cassiano.¹⁴⁵ But by the end of the 1530s, the period of his training was long past. Tintoretto's first paintings are not particularly indebted to either Titian or Michelangelo, though the interest in the latter would crest a full decade later at the end of the 1540s and the early 1550s, that is, the years on either side of the *Miracle of the Slave*.¹⁴⁶ In the absence of documents, a number of prominent painters have been proposed as Tintoretto's teacher on the basis of stylistic similarities: for example Schiavone, Paris Bordone, and, above all, Bonifacio de' Pitati. Tintoretto's early works share points of visual contact with all of these older artists.

Schiavone, probably born several years before Tintoretto, in particular pioneered a painting style featuring exceptional brevity and sketchiness in its brushwork, energetic and flowing drapery, and supple and elongated body types, often in twisting poses. Schiavone's confident painterly technique in works like the *Conversion of Paul* of c. 1542-44 (Fondazione Querini-Stampalia, Venice) (fig. 59) and the somewhat later *Adoration of the Magi* of c. 1547 (Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan) (fig. 60) – both works exemplifying the painter's idiosyncratic manner – would seem to be ideal models for Tintoretto as he developed his own style of great freedom in handling. An important printmaker himself, Schiavone also played an important role in Venice in translating the style of Parmigianino's etchings to oil on canvas pictures. Tintoretto seems to have been receptive to Schiavone's examples, as seen in his own version of the *Conversion of Saint Paul* of c. 1544 (National Gallery of Art, Washington) (fig. 29), which is markedly similar in its flowing surface patterns and long, loose brushstrokes.¹⁴⁷

Using a system of citations that he would perfect within the decade by the time of the *Miracle of the Slave*, Tintoretto's picture of the *Conversion of Saint Paul* can be read as a

confrontation of important contemporaries and predecessors, including Raphael's design for a tapestry of the *Conversion of Saint Paul* (cf. fig. 61), where the fallen protagonist with his arms outstretched and scattering horses provided the germ of Tintoretto's composition. Raphael's tapestry in the Vatican would have been enormously prestigious and influential in those years. More pertinent is that the tapestry's cartoon, now lost, was then in Venice in the collection of the Grimani family starting in 1521.¹⁴⁸ Tintoretto's canvas also cites works by Titian, such as a huge canvas mural of the *Battle of Spoleto* of 1538 in the Palazzo Ducale, mentioned earlier. This painting for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio was destroyed by fire in 1577 but known through prints (e.g. fig. 30) and Titian's own preparatory drawing (fig. 62).¹⁴⁹ These make clear that key elements within Tintoretto's Washington painting – including the curving bridge, figures floundering in the water, and billowing clouds and smoke – derived from Titian's lost prototype. Overall, Tintoretto's picture should be seen as the combination of a number of ingredients, including motifs and stylistic borrowings from Titian, Schiavone, and others.¹⁵⁰ The relevant examples by Schiavone, however, were coeval with Tintoretto's works, painted well after the latter's apprenticeship. Thus they do not reflect what Tintoretto was studying in the 1530s, and in fact the influence may well have gone the other way.¹⁵¹

Given this circumstance, it is not surprising that the two artists were often linked. For example, Aretino, in a list of artists in poem from about 1551 praising the French queen, Catherine de' Medici, had Tintoretto and Schiavone together depict her self-restraint.¹⁵² Moreover, early critics, biographers, and even later art historians often have confused the works of the two painters. An example of the convergence of styles is seen in Tintoretto's *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* (Santa Maria del Carmine, Venice) (fig. 63). In 1568, during Tintoretto's lifetime, this altarpiece was described by Vasari as by Schiavone. Ridolfi corrected this, noting

that Tintoretto's picture was "believed by many to be by Schiavone since he [Tintoretto] occasionally took on that manner."¹⁵³ Guidebooks a century later, such as Giustiniano Martinioni's revision of Sansovino's *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* of 1663, perpetuated this idea by noting how Tintoretto's painting in the Carmine was still thought by many to be by Schiavone.¹⁵⁴ Still later guidebooks, such as Giovanni Battista Albrizzi's *Forestiero illuminato* of 1765, stated that the resemblance to Schiavone in this altarpiece was intentional on Tintoretto's part.¹⁵⁵ Finally, Antonio Maria Zanetti's *Della pittura veneziana* of 1771 repeated this point of Jacopo deliberately resembling Schiavone's style, adding that his imitation was so successful that it had fooled Vasari, and concluded by noting that one here sees Tintoretto beginning to work at a new level and reap the fruits of his considerable labors.¹⁵⁶

Yet there is other evidence of early contact between Schiavone and Tintoretto and how both painters had to undertake, for lack of other work, assignments that would be considered less than prestigious. Early in the biography, Ridolfi recounts that Tintoretto resorted to learning techniques of furniture decoration from lesser painters, "pittori di minor fortuna." This must have been the low point of Jacopo's fledgling career. The ignominy of needing to take on such trifling commissions was lamented widely, as seen in Pino's *Dialogo di Pittura* of 1548. As noted in the previous chapter, Pino declared that "poverty is an assassin" and that many painters were unable to extricate themselves from the bottom of the market:

Poverty is an assassin, I tell you; and a work is never so well paid that the money will suffice until the completion of the next one. Anyone's request will do, and worse, for at times one must stoop to painting furniture, there being no other profitable way to support oneself, since ours is not a necessary art.¹⁵⁷

Right after describing Tintoretto's work with "painters of modest success," Ridolfi identifies a savior in the form of a much better-regarded painter, namely Schiavone. The biographer explains that Tintoretto undertook tasks, presumably exterior frescoes, alongside Schiavone without pay

in order to absorb the skills of the slightly older artist. Among the frescoes undertaken jointly were those for the exterior of Palazzo Zen at the Crociferi, long destroyed, but which included by Tintoretto a “Conversion of Paul,” which may have resembled, and perhaps inspired, the easel paintings by Schiavone and Tintoretto.¹⁵⁸

While Ridolfi’s story appears reasonable – and is born out in the similarities between paintings by the two artists throughout the 1540s noted earlier in this chapter – it does not answer the question of Tintoretto’s master. Rather, based on a number of visual comparisons as well as the arguable presence of Tintoretto’s hand within productions of the Bonifacio de’ Pitati *bottega*, scholars have recently proposed that Tintoretto served as a sort of “junior partner” within Bonifacio’s studio for a brief spell in the late 1530s. Bonifacio’s workshop was a busy one, perhaps the busiest in Venice in the 1530s, and employed many assistants who were past the age of pupils, such as Jacopo Bassano, who had worked as a journeyman there in about 1533. Given the pace of work in his studio, Bonifacio would have welcomed the help of an enterprising young painter like Tintoretto.¹⁵⁹

The plausibility of this association is reinforced by Tintoretto’s earliest signed and dated painting, a large *sacra conversazione* showing the *Holy Family with Saints* (fig. 64) of 1540. This picture, in a private collection, includes a Saint Francis at right, directly quoting the same figure in a Bonifacio painting of c. 1530s (fig. 65) now in the De Young Museum, San Francisco.¹⁶⁰ Not surprisingly, Tintoretto did not limit himself to Bonifacio for inspiration.

If the *sacra conversazione* format was relatively conventional, Tintoretto’s individual citations went far beyond the Venetian lagoon. The 1540 painting broadly reflects the style of Francesco Salviati (1510-63), and the Virgin’s face is based on that in an altarpiece by Salviati executed just the year before. Salviati came to Venice the summer of 1539, bringing the up-to-

date *maniera* of Rome and Florence with him, having just completed the fresco of the *Visitation* (fig. 54) in the Oratorio of San Giovanni Decollato in Rome. The comparison is consistently cited in the literature as evidence of a visit by Tintoretto to Rome.¹⁶¹ Tintoretto's picture also included quotations from Michelangelo – the vigorous old man at left cites the *Prophet Ezekiel* (fig. 66) in the Sistine Ceiling, and the cross-legged Virgin is based on her counterpart in marble in the Medici Chapel (fig. 67), the so-called *Medici Madonna*. Thus in this earliest signed and dated picture, Tintoretto announces his syllabus of influences and makes clear that he has fully assimilated the work of some of the most important non-Venetian artists.¹⁶²

Other visitors to Venice included Salviati's assistant Giuseppe Porta, known as Porta Salviati (c.1520-c.1575), who remained behind even after Salviati left in 1541, and Giorgio Vasari himself (1511-73), who spent less than a year in Venice in 1541-42, arriving after Salviati's departure. Although Vasari's paintings in Venice were not for public locations, and included a ceiling of wooden panels for the Palazzo Corner Spinelli (portions in the Gallerie dell'Accademia), his *buona maniera* was influential in promoting both elegant figures and also an emphasis on lapidary surfaces and strong *disegno*. These artists followed by about a decade two key figures who had come to Venice and settled there in the wake of the Sack of Rome in 1527. The first was the sculptor and architect Jacopo Sansovino, and the second was the enormously influential writer and critic Pietro Aretino. Both became dear friends of Titian, together forming a "triumvirate" that enjoyed throwing around its weight on aesthetic matters in Venice and keeping rivals at bay. Their personal presence in Venice of course supplemented artistic ideas that flowed freely up and down the Italian peninsula in the form of paintings and sculptures by the most innovative artists, as well as prints and drawings after their works, and in the stories recounted by other travelers. In the sixteenth century, the world came to Venice.

Titian's Precedent

Even the most innovative artists could only push Venetian tradition so far. The most important *scuola* mural in the decade before Tintoretto's *Miracle of the Slave* was Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (fig. 25), created between 1534 and 1538 for the Sala dell'Albergo of the Scuola della Carità (and still *in situ*: now room XXIV of the Gallerie dell'Accademia, fig. 68).¹⁶³ Titian's huge canvas, with its emphasis on the picture plane, calmly massed spectators, even lighting (though with a subtle distinction made between natural light from the windows and divine light emanating from the Virgin), carefully rendered architectural details, and presence of genre incident, is essentially a perpetuation of the narrative art of the previous generation.

Even if the figures now possess a High Renaissance grandeur and the specifics of the narrative have been literally foregrounded, nearly all individual figures are self-contained in their poses and groupings.¹⁶⁴ Their stances are mostly static, and while the majority of figures gaze at the precocious Mary climbing the steps of the Temple by herself, only the woman in deep pink at the foot of the steps who points to the (viewer's) right side of the painting and the High Priest in golden vestments who throws out his hands exhibit a sense of astonishment or gestural acknowledgment of the portentous moment. Although as David Rosand has argued, numerous pictorial devices focus the viewer's attention on the Virgin Mary, more than a dozen of the adults in the crowd on the ground level of Titian's composition look elsewhere.¹⁶⁵ This variety of glances does make the task of the viewer more difficult. While such a diffused compositional focus within a picture may be typical of Venetian practice, as seen in earlier depictions of the *Presentation of the Virgin* by Giotto, Jacopo Bellini (c. 1400-c.1470), Carpaccio, and Cima da

Conegliano, it must be admitted that Titian does not employ the poses and reactions of the figures in this painting as much as he could have in order to rally attention to the event itself.¹⁶⁶ Earlier in his career, Titian had created impressive multi-figure compositions with greater unity, such as the *Assunta*, the *Bacchus and Ariadne* of 1520-23 (National Gallery, London; fig. 69), and the *Entombment* of c. 1520 (Musée du Louvre, Paris).¹⁶⁷ That Titian chose not to emphasize such unity in the *Presentation* suggests both a general accommodation to Venetian *scuola* tradition and perhaps also some specific instructions by the *banca* to take into account the drawing that Pasqualino Veneto had used to win the 1504 competition for a *Presentation of the Virgin*.¹⁶⁸ Although Pasqualino's early death prevented him from carrying out the finished canvas, his *modello*, clearly judged superior at the time to all the others ("el disegno avemo avuto da lui a mostrato molto meglio di li altri"), may have retained considerable authority over the artistic decisions when the commission was resumed a whole generation later.

If the distribution of gazes within Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin* appears dispersed, the architectural setting is strikingly unified. The surroundings seem to nod to the plunging Serlian perspective featured in the slightly earlier *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge* (Gallerie dell'Accademia) painted by Paris Bordone for the corresponding board room of the Scuola Grande di San Marco (fig. 70).¹⁶⁹ There the architecture shows an unprecedented *all'antica* setting for a Venetian narrative painting, a fantasy of apparently numberless loggias and staircases; at the same time, these capricci were very much of the moment, based on Sebastiano Serlio's unpublished books on architecture, and including, at the summit of the composition, a portrait of Andrea Gritti as the trecento Doge Gradenigo. Gritti would have been known to any viewer as the proposer of renovations to the Palazzo Ducale.¹⁷⁰ Titian developed the architecture in his painting with an equally evocative set of allusions.¹⁷¹ Through its much lower viewpoint,

however, Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin* rejects Bordone's dominance of deep recession to emphasize instead a strong compositional structure and planarity, with much of the painted architecture set parallel to the picture plane and thus also corresponding to the actual wall of the Sala dell'Abergo.¹⁷² The weight Titian gave to balance and order, an emphasis so reminiscent of Carpaccio's much earlier compositions, arguably came at the expense of emotion or urgency.

This is not to say that Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin* was uninspired. On the contrary, his invention was leagues ahead of the narrative art of Carpaccio and Gentile and Giovanni Bellini through its sophisticated pictorial structure and multiple learned allusions. Moreover, Titian's handling of oil paint – with its new dynamism in coloring and an unprecedented variety of brushstroke – was unimaginable a generation earlier. Close examination of the painting's surface enabled by the 2011-12 conservation treatment revealed to what extent and just how carefully Titian reworked the placement of figures and especially the forms of the architecture and the perspectival system (in part to accommodate the natural light of the setting). The examinations also suggested that Titian painted the canvas *in situ* and that there were three alternative versions of the staircase, each time raising its height.¹⁷³ Thus the composition's conservative appearance should not merely be seen as adherence to the Venetian tradition of narrative painting, but rather as the result of many decisions and meticulous execution. Indeed, the canvas in the Accademia is a *summa* of pictorial intelligence. Despite Titian's compelling willingness to improvise and experiment, however, his painting seems to have sustained Venetian tradition rather than challenged it.

By contrast, when he achieved his breakthrough with the *Miracle of the Slave*, Tintoretto decisively overturned Venetian convention. He had exploited the advantages of oil-on-canvas painting to a degree unimaginable fifty years earlier. He calibrated his style and quoted motifs

brilliantly in order to engage with the greatest of his predecessors, especially Michelangelo, Titian – and Pordenone. The resulting picture explodes with energy. Through the vehemence of their gestures, the muscular figures make clear to the viewer that something remarkable is happening.

Compared with the narrative paintings for Venetian *scuole* by Carpaccio, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, or, for that matter, by Titian, Tintoretto's mural is clearly novel. The figure scale is far larger, the bodies, truly massive, and their poses more emphatic. The observers are not restrained but rather lean in to peer at the miracle taking place. Tintoretto's painting marks a watershed in Venetian art, declaring a break between his achievement and all that came before. A generation earlier, in 1518, Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin* had signaled a disruption in Venetian art, relegating Giovanni Bellini's altarpiece of the same subject (fig. 71), less than ten years old (now church of San Pietro Martire, Murano), and other paintings of that ilk to an archaic status.¹⁷⁴ Likewise, Tintoretto's breakthrough mural for the Scuola Grande di San Marco in 1548 instigated a similar break with confraternity decoration, causing Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin*, only a decade old, to look somewhat outmoded.

Tintoretto of course did not suffuse his composition with energy solely to set it apart from those of his Venetian predecessors. Rather, the dynamism and immediacy of his work were intended to convey, more effectively than any previous *scuola* narrative, the gripping drama of the event depicted. As Patricia Fortini Brown concluded, Tintoretto's new art clearly depicts a "supernatural event"; in short, "it is a miracle that looks miraculous."¹⁷⁵ The *Miracle of the Slave* marks the transition in Venetian narrative painting from the Age of Carpaccio to the Age of Tintoretto.

¹ Translation from Ridolfi-Enggass, pp. 18-19. The original is found in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 16 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 10. “E non restava modo al Tintoretto di poter far conoscere esattamente il suo valore, perche lo esercitarsi in opere pubbliche da material di studio maggiore, per avanzarsi nel commune concetto, onde intraprese ogni laboriosa fatica per superare quelle difficoltà, che per ordinario s’interpongono à principianti non conosciuti. Non è sentiero il più malagevole da calarsi, che quello di Virtù, seminato di sassi e di spine; ed il premio di nobili sudori è un aura in fine, che non nutre e tosto sparisce.”

² For a summary of Venice’s wars in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, including the War of the League of Cambrai, see Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. 225-49. In those same years, there was a decisive shift in Venetian architecture, including the replacement of gothic style with the Renaissance style exemplified by Mauro Codussi; see Deborah Howard, *The Architectural History of Venice*, rev. ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 132-59. Also see Ennio Concina, *Tempo Novo. Venezia e il Quattrocento* (Venice: Marsilio, 2006), pp. 245-388.

³ For an overview of art patronage in Renaissance Venice and in particular the role of immigrant Cittadini families, see Blake de Maria, *Becoming Venetian: Immigrants and the Arts in Early Modern Venice* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010). It is also telling that one of the outstanding intellectuals of the entire Italian Renaissance, Pietro Bembo (1470-1547), came from a Venetian patrician family and spent some of the most productive years of his life (1522-1539) in the university city of Padua, on the Venetian *terraferma*. Bembo’s extraordinary life, artistic and humanist connections, and influence are explored in a recent exhibition (Palazzo del Monte di Pietà, Padua, 2013). See the exhibition catalogue, *Pietro Bembo e l’invenzione del Rinascimento*, ed. Guido Beltramini, Davide Gasparotto, and Adolfo Tura (Venice: Marsilio, 2013).

⁴ Parts of the following paragraphs are adapted from material previously published in Ilchman, “Prologue: The Transformation of Venetian Painting around 1500,” in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 85-91. For a broader look at these issues in Venice, and many more examples, see also the following: *Bellini, Giorgione, Titian and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting*, eds. David Alan Brown and Silvia Ferino-Pagden (exh. cat. National Gallery of Art), (Washington, 2006); Humfrey, *Painting in Renaissance Venice*, New Haven and London, 1995; Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, and especially two surveys based on the collection of the National Gallery, London, which are informative about Renaissance materials and working methods: Jill Dunkerton, Susan Foister, Dillian Gordon, and Nicholas Penny, *Giotto to Dürer: Early Renaissance Painting in the National Gallery* (London: National Gallery, 1991), and Jill Dunkerton, Susan Foister, and Nicholas Penny, *Dürer to Veronese: Sixteenth-Century Painting in the National Gallery* (London; National Gallery, 1999). Another ambitious attempt to chart the technological and conceptual shifts is Arthur Steinberg, “Blurred Boundaries, Opulent

Nature, and Sensuous Flesh; Changing Technological Styles in Venetian Painting, 1480-1520,” in *Titian 500*, ed. Manca, pp. 199-220.

⁵ See the telling anecdotes about Isabella d’Este’s attempts to acquire a Giorgione and to commission a work from Giovanni Bellini, Ilchman, “Transformation of Venetian Painting,” pp. 85, 91.

⁶ See Ilchman in “Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals,” in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, p. 33.

⁷ The documents can be found in Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 272-73, docs. 1a, 1b. For the official adoption of canvas, see also Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 11-12. Although the new cycle in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio was destroyed by fire in 1577, echoes of its appearance can be seen in surviving decoration of Venetian *scuole* in the Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan, and the Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice, including examples discussed in this dissertation, e.g. figs. 23, 24, and 27.

⁸ For example, beginning in 1494 Isabella d’Este, marchioness of Manua, was continually frustrated in her attempts to commission a work from Giovanni Bellini while insisting on dictating the subject matter. The artist refused to paint against his inclinations and persisted in taking his time, delaying progress for five years. Finally, in 1501, Isabella’s agent advised her to “give him the liberty to do what he pleases.” Her wish to own a work by Bellini forced her to accept the artist’s terms. As Rona Goffen put it, Bellini had obtained “the kind of artistic license that Leonardo and even Michelangelo perhaps dreamed of but rarely achieved in commissioned works.” For the details of this correspondence, see Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, pp. 11-19. The loss of leverage by patrons as important as Isabella represented a distinct advantage for painters, and this shift accelerated in later generations.

⁹ Tintoretto’s role in the development of extremely large-format paintings in Venetian art will be addressed in the final chapter of this dissertation. The ideas were first explored in Ilchman, “Tintoretto: pensare e disegnare in grande,” in *Settimo e ottavo incontro in ricordo di Michelangelo Muraro*, ed. Giuseppina Menin Muraro and Daniela Puppulin (Sossano: Biblioteca Comunale di Sossano, 2000), pp. 49-75.

¹⁰ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 11-13. For early oil painting in the broader Italian context, see the section “Oil Painting in Italy” in Dunkerton, Foister, Gordon, and Penny, *Giotto to Dürer*, pp. 197-204.

¹¹ Pardo, “Paolo Pino’s ‘Dialogo di Pittura,’” p. 346. The passage continues to enumerate the advantages over fresco, “The reason is evident: for [with oils] one may more specifically simulate all things, since certain kinds of pigments lend themselves more fully to variations in hue (so that things [done] in oils appear much more diversified than those [done other ways]), and besides, things may be redone many times in order to give them more finish and better unify the tonalities. This artifice cannot be applied in the other media. Coloring on walls with fresco is

less perfect for the just-named reasons, and because it requires a swift resolution....” The original passage can be found in Pino, *Dialogo* (1548), p. 19v.

¹² To be sure, canvas replaced panel much more quickly with pictures for private devotion and indeed the whole category of private gallery pictures, the so-called “quadro da portego,” than it did for altarpieces. Although canvas altarpieces in Venice go back at least as far as Carpaccio’s *Glorification of Saint Ursula*, dated 1491 (originally painted for the Scuola di Sant’Orsola, now Gallerie dell’Accademia), they only appear with any frequency in the second decade of the sixteenth century, in examples like Giovanni Bellini, *Lamentation over the Dead Christ* of c. 1510 (Santa Maria dei Servi, now Gallerie dell’Accademia), Francesco Bissolo’s *Coronation of Saint Catherine of Siena* of 1513-5 (originally San Pietro Martire, Murano, and now Gallerie dell’Accademia), Carpaccio’s *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand Christians on Mount Ararat*, dated 1515 (originally Sant’Antonio di Castello, now Gallerie dell’Accademia) or Titian’s *Madonna di Ca’ Pesaro*, begun in 1519. These altarpieces are treated in Humfrey, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), cats. 41, 74, 83, 85, 90. For the development of the “picture gallery picture,” see Monika Schmitter, “The *Quadro da Portego* in Sixteenth-Century Venetian Art,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 64, 3 (2011), pp. 693-751. For an argument that the “modern concept of the painting was born in Venice in the first years of the sixteenth century,” see Ilchman, “Transformation of Venetian Painting,” pp. 90-91.

¹³ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 11-13. See also the sensitive analysis of the Venetian development of oil-on-canvas painting in “The Stroke of the Brush,” in David Rosand, *Meaning of the Mark*, pp. 49-89. Finally, also very useful is the chapter “Original Developments” in Dunkerton, Foister, and Penny, *Dürer to Veronese*, pp. 265-91.

¹⁴ Edith Wharton, “Vesalius in Zante (1564),” in *Selected Poems*, ed. Louis Auchincloss (New York: The Library of America, 2005), pp. 35-43.

¹⁵ Among these innovations is Carpaccio’s decision to use much thinner preparation layers to expose the texture of the canvas. This is noted in Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 13.

¹⁶ Describing this painting in a 2009 publication, I claimed greater use of prominent impasto in Sebastiano’s *Saint Louis* than in any other Italian painting of that date, “Indeed, Sebastiano’s bravura brushwork seems to have been unprecedented in Italy.” *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, p. 88.

¹⁷ Pardo, “Paolo Pino’s ‘Dialogo di Pittura,’” p. 344. The original passage can be found in Pino, *Dialogo* (1548), p. 19v.

¹⁸ Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, particularly the introduction, pp. 1-6, and also 125-132. She tidily justifies the cluttered compositions on p. 125 by noting that “every element that the artist included in the composition was put there for a purpose: to confer upon a particular version

of an event a look of documentary authority. So if we balk at the ‘trivial detail’ or irrelevancy in one of those works we may be missing the point.”

¹⁹ For Carpaccio’s painting, a masterpiece of the genre and its place within the cycle of the Albergo of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, see Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, pp. 282-6 and Claudia Cremonini in *Carpaccio, Pittore di storie*, ed. Giovanna Nepi Scirè (exh. cat. Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice), 2004, pp. 67-68.

²⁰ For Gentile and Giovanni Bellini’s *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria* and the decoration of the Sala dell’Albergo at the Scuola di San Marco, see Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, pp. 291-95, and Peter Humfrey, *La pittura veneta del rinascimento a Brera* (Florence: Cantini, 1990), pp. 88-94. In her analysis of the composition, Brown (pp. 203-206) concluded that the painting is largely by Gentile, who created the entire setting and most of the figures, leaving the portraits of many of the confratelli and minor details unfinished. Giovanni then reworked Saint Mark and the adjacent scribe, simplified the number and rooflines of the buildings on both edges of the composition (editing, it must be noted, that would probably never have occurred to Mansueti), and added the foreground cube to accentuate the prominence of the Evangelist. These conclusions, prompted particularly by technical analysis undertaken by conservator Maria Marcella Sorteni during the 1984 treatment, were accepted by Humfrey (pp. 93-94) and are easily confirmed by close examination of the painting itself in the Brera. Despite Giovanni’s improvements, it is interesting that in 1515 the members of the Scuola saw the painting as fundamentally Gentile’s, Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, p. 293.

²¹ For the cycle, see Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, pp. 282-86.

²² As summed up by David Rosand, “The idea of a ‘monument’ to such individualism, particularly in the Ducal Palace, the seat of distributive justice, was anathema to the Venetian state – whether on the level of doges or of painters. For the sake of the internal stability of the republic, it was best to avoid such a monopoly by a single *bottega* and to ensure a more equitable distribution of economic opportunity....” *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 4. The same could be said of the entire guild system of the city, which emphasized social harmony through a division of labor, and thus the sharing of profits. This is explicitly stated throughout guild documents, especially when defending against someone encroaching on their territory.

²³ For *mediocritas* and the various related ideals, often termed “The Myth of Venice,” enshrined in Gasparo Contarini’s *De Magistratibus et republica Venetorum* (1538) see, for example, De Maria, *Becoming Venetian*, pp. x-xi. Manfredo Tafuri earlier discussed the importance of *mediocritas* in the context of architectural patronage in *Venice and the Renaissance*, transl. Jessica Levine (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1989), pp. 3-5. The iconography of the Venetian ideals of government and citizenry is evocatively explored in David Rosand, *Myths of Venice: The Figuration of a State* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

²⁴ “Yet the Serenissima had earned its title by maintaining internal equilibrium and concord as well as independence from foreign domination, and this required offering compensations to the

disenfranchised segments of society. Institutions such as the guilds and confraternities afforded the means by which the average Venetian citizen found his place within the structure of the state, for they were, in effect, extensions of that structure.” Rosand continues by citing Francesco Sansovino’s claims that that *scuole* functioned as surrogate Republics and their important role in providing charity. Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 95-96. See also a similar preference for stability in the functioning of the Arte dei Depentori, p. 7. Brown offers a broader survey of Venetian attitudes in *Venetian Narrative Painting*, pp. 9-30. See also Rosand, *Myths of Venice*, and Brian Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 7-8, 12.

²⁵ As described by Brian Pullan, Venetian confraternities needed to “decide how far to praise God through splendid architecture and elaborate ceremony, and how far to minister to Christ in his own image, the poor man.” *Rich and Poor*, p. 125. A parallel development in terms of legislating ostentation was the promulgation of further sumptuary laws in the sixteenth century, particularly those regulating jewelry, female costume, banqueting, and domestic decoration. Such decrees were typically justified to maintain morality and social stability. See Patricia Fortini Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice: Art, Architecture, and the Family* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 150-153, with further bibliography.

²⁶ Allesandro Caravia, *Il sogno dil Caravia* [1541] in David Chambers and Brian Pullan, ed., *Venice: A Documentary History, 1450-1630* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), pp. 213-16, translated by Richard MacKenney. The original passage can be found in Caravia, *Il sogno dil Caravia* (Venice: Giovanni Antonio di Nicolini da Sabbio, 1541), p. ff. D v: “Ducati ottantamila spenduto hanno/ Che gli bastava ben spenderne sei/ Il resto sparagnar, che spesi e in vano/ Per scalci, nudi, che gridano obime/ Di fame, e de la vita ogniun mal sano.” An important point about Caravia’s long poem – noted by Tafuri, *Venice and the Renaissance*, p. 83 – was that its very publication had been sanctioned by the Council of Ten. As argued by de Maria, the implications of this fact have not been fully appreciated, particularly in regard to the critique of the lavish spending advocated by the naturalized citizens who dominated the administration (*banca*) of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco and other *scuole*: “It appears that the Ten allowed Caravia, whose own identity as foreigner and merchant put him in the same social and professional milieu as members of the *banche*, to criticize the confraternities in a language and form impossible for the Ten to undertake themselves.” *Becoming Venetian*, p. 63. For de Maria’s discussion of Caravia and *scuole*, see pp. 61-63.

²⁷ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 66.

²⁸ For Titian’s lost *Battle of Spoleto*, assigned to the artist as early as 1513 (connected to the awarding of the *sanseria*), see Harold E. Wethey, *The Paintings of Titian, III. The Mythological and Historical Paintings* (London: Phaidon, 1975), L-3, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 117. See also Patricia Meilman, “Historical tradition and political strategy: Titian’s *Battle* painting,” in *Titian: Materiality, Likeness*, Istorica, ed. Woods-Marsden, pp. 97-112, who has argued that Titian and his clients deliberately avoided indicating a specific battle.

²⁹ For Tintoretto's painting, see Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 5, Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 155, and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 36. For Titian's *Danaë*, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, III, cat. 5, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 144.

³⁰ Mark W. Roskill, *Dolce's Aretino and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento* (New York: College Art Association, 1968; repr. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), pp. 182-83; Vasari-Milanesi, V, p. 115.

³¹ For this commission, see Blake de Maria, *Becoming Venetian*, pp. 99-103 and Caterina Furlan, *Il Pordenone* (Milan: Electa, 1988), p. 329 and cats. D73 (the sheet in the Victoria & Albert Museum), D74, D76, D77, D78, with further bibliography. The sheets are also discussed by Charles E. Cohen, *The Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone: Between Dialect and Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), are reproduced as figs. 587, 589, 592, 591, and 590, and treated under cat. 79.

³² "...un Curzio a cavallo in iscorto, che pare tutto tondo e di rilievo." Vasari-Milanesi, V, p. 115.

³³ Vasari-de Vere, I, p. 876. The original, "la quale opera piacque sopra modo a tutta la città di Vinezia, e fu per ciò Pordenone più lodato che altro uomo che mai in quella città avesse insino allora lavorato," is found in Vasari-Milanesi, V, p. 115.

³⁴ Vasari-de Vere, I, pp. 876-77. "Ma, fra l'atre cose che fecero a costui mettere incredibile studio in tutte le sue opere, fu la concorrenza dell'eccellentissimo Tiziano." The original is found in Vasari-Milanesi, V, p. 115. Vasari's biography of Pordenone is sprinkled with references to competition with Titian, and Vasari's *Vita* of Titian mentions Pordenone as a rival as well. Their reputation for competitiveness had clearly lasted long past Pordenone's premature death.

³⁵ See de Maria, *Becoming Venetian*, p. 104, who notes that Martino d'Anna, by buying the palace soon after the completion of the façade fresco, inadvertently gets credit as a patron of a cutting-edge cycle even though he had nothing to do with commissioning Pordenone.

³⁶ The efforts of first Martino and then his sons Zuanne and Daniele d'Anna to purchase a chapel (concluded successfully in July 1559) in San Salvador and construct and decorate it are summarized by de Maria, *Becoming Venetian*, pp. 70-75. She confirms the assumption that the fragmentary canvas in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna is both the painting Vasari saw in Titian's studio in 1566 – "una gran tela, dentro la quale è Cristo in croce con i ladroni ed i crucifissori a basso, la quale fa per messer Giovanni d'Anna" (Vasari-Milanesi, VII, p. 457) – and that commissioned by the d'Anna family, but left unfinished by Titian. Blake de Maria also argues persuasively that this commission was coordinated with two other altarpieces by Titian for this church. In her analysis she goes beyond the archival discoveries by Lorenzo Finocchi Gheri, "Artisti e committenti a San Salvador" *Arte Veneta* 53 (1998), pp. 115-22. For the Bologna painting, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 30, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 258 (who both date the picture to the middle or second half of the decade, substantially later than the c.

1560 employed by de Maria). Also see as the recent exhibition catalogue, *Titian*, ed. Giovanni Villa, cat. 37 (entry by Luisa Attardi).

³⁷ Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. 64, and Cohen, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, cat. 51, figs. 345-51. The paintings were studied at the time of the restoration in 1998-2000 sponsored by Save Venice Inc. Before that time, the picture's true dimensions (134 x 236 cm) had not been recorded. A publication, *Il Pordenone 2000: una nuova luce*, Quaderni de "Il Caffè" no. 1 (Pordenone: Banca di Credito Cooperativo Pordenonese, 2000), placed the painting in the context of Pordenone's career and Venetian and Veneto art. See also *Save Venice Inc.: Four Decades of Restoration in Venice*, ed. Melissa Conn and David Rosand (New York: Save Venice Inc., 2011), pp. 124-25. Pordenone is mistakenly referred to as bearing the last name "Licinio" in a number of early sources, including Vasari and Ridolfi.

³⁸ This connection is analyzed in Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, p. 302, within a rich account of the competition between Pordenone and Titian, pp. 297-306. She writes, "As Titian and Pordenone continued their rivalry, both directly and indirectly, each sought to outdo the other in his Michelangelism. Michelangelo had defined the terms of their battle, though he himself was absent from the field of combat and unconcerned with the outcome." For Titian's fresco of *Saint Christopher* in the Palazzo Ducale, a commission of Doge Andrea Gritti and thus reasonably dated to c. 1523-25, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 98 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 80.

³⁹ For Pordenone's frescoes in the chapel, see Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. 23 and Cohen, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, cat. 32 and figs. 192-205; for Titian's altarpiece, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 8, Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, cat. 91 and pp. 311-4, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 61.

⁴⁰ S. J. Freedberg, *Painting in Italy: 1500-1600*, rev. ed. (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 294, discusses Pordenone's figure of God the Father in a swarm of angels, "The idea is a critique of God in the *Assunta*, and it refers to Michelangelo's God in the Sistine *Creation of Adam*, and perhaps to the God in the oculus of Raphael's Chigi Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo, but these sources are exploited towards a sensationally novel end."

⁴¹ For this observation, see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 53, where he also discusses divine illumination of Christ and the symbolic cloud of the Virgin.

⁴² For the patronage of Titian's painting, and the contemporary controversy about the unseemly prominence of the patron, see Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, cat. 91 and pp. 311-14.

⁴³ Humfrey offers evidence for both coordination and resistance by Titian to Pordenone's existing paintings in his *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, p. 314. To be sure, earlier painters had dispensed with half of the equation of an Annunciation, showing in a small format just an Archangel Gabriel directly addressing the viewer (Leonardo da Vinci, c. 1503) or only the Virgin Annunciate (Antonello da Messina, mid-1470s), who looks out but does not make eye contact with us, implicating the observer either as the bearer of news that she cannot quite process, or the

witness to this seminal moment. Although Titian's painting is not nearly as radical as either of these much smaller easel pictures, given the constraints placed upon altarpieces intended for specific locations, and the ingenious accommodation he makes for the chapel's natural illumination, he more than seems to rise to Pordenone's challenge. On these two examples of the "transitive mode" of the Annunciation, Leonardo's lost painting known through a copy in Basel and Antonello's panel in Palermo, see Shearman, *Only Connect*, pp. 33-36. For Antonello's painting, also see *Antonello da Messina: l'opera completa*, eds. Mauro Lucco and Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2006), cat. 35.

⁴⁴ Tom Nichols may have been the first to see the upper section of the *Assunta* as a source for Tintoretto's painting; see Nichols, *Tintoretto*, p. 158-60. "The central ceiling panel which caused so much controversy is, paradoxically, particularly assiduous in its conformity to precedent. Tintoretto astutely adopted a conventional Titianesque palette (golds, creams, yellows and reds) to express a composition which knowingly pastiched the upper part of the famous *Assumption of the Virgin* hanging nearby in the Frari. The freely painted cherubic heads inscribed 'wet-on-wet', along with St. Roch's uncanonical colours (he wears the blue and red of the Virgin), were intended to make the connection explicit."

⁴⁵ For a summary of evidence for the lost murals, see Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, cat. XIII, esp. p. 277 and Wetthey, *Paintings of Titian*, III, pp. 225-32.

⁴⁶ The story and the resulting painting are also summarized in Charles Hope, *Titian*, pp. 110-12.

⁴⁷ The passage is translated in Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 788. The original passage reads: "Tornato Tiziano a Vinezia, trovò che molti gentiluomini, i quali avevano tolto a favorire il Pordenone, lodando molto l'opere da lui state fatte nel palco della Sala de' Pregai ed altrove, gli avevano fatto allogare nella chiesa di San Giovanni Elemosinario una tavoletta, acciò che egli la facesse a concorrenza di Tiziano, il quale nel medesimo luogo aveva poco inanzi dipinto il detto San Giovanni Elemosinario in abito di vescovo. Ma per diligenza che in detta tavola ponesse il Pordenone, non potè paragonare, nè giugnere a gran pezzo all'opera di Tiziano; il quale poi fece, per la chiesa di Santa Maria degli Angeli a Murano, una bellissima tavola d'una Nunziata. Ma non volendo quelli che l'aveva fatta fare spendervi cinquecento scudi, come ne voleva Tiziano, egli la mandò, per consiglio di messer Piero Aretino, a donare al detto imperatore Carlo V, che gli fece, piacendogli infinitamente quell'opera, una presente di due mila scudi; e dove aveva a essere posta la detta pittura, ne fu messa in suo cambio una di mano di Pordenone." Vasari-Milanesi, VII, pp. 440-41. Milanesi explains that Titian's *Annunciation* was given to Empress Isabella, and not to Charles V, as confirmed by a letter from Aretino to Titian of 9 November 1537, p. 441, n. 3. Vasari restates the first anecdote, stressing both spirit of competition and the superiority of Titian's work, in his *Vita* of Pordenone, Vasari-Milanesi, V, pp. 116-17.

⁴⁸ Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. 91 and Cohen, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, cat. 64 and figs. 497-99. Although Pordenone's painting in San Giovanni Elemosinario has the obvious *terminus ante quem* of the artist's death in 1539, Vasari, quoted above, implies that it came after Titian's altarpiece for the same church and failed to measure up to the prototype. Humfrey offers reasonable stylistic arguments – the "broad pictorial execution and the dusky palette undeniably

resemble Titian's works of the late 1540s much more than those of a decade earlier" – for dating Titian's painting in the same church. See Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 125. At the same time, Humfrey admits Hope's arguments are "strong" that the painting predates both Pordenone's death and Vasari's visit to Venice in 1541-42. See Hope, "The Early Biographies of Titian," in *Titian 500*, ed. Manca, pp. 173-74. Humfrey tries to address this dilemma by listing the Titian in his monograph immediately after the pictures of the late 1530s and employing the loose formulation of "c. 1535-40(?)" in the entry's caption, while still arguing for a date of the later 1540s on stylistic grounds. If in fact Titian's painting comes after Pordenone's then it offers a particularly fascinating case study; it would be a response sometime after Pordenone's death, acknowledging the continued potency of the Friulan's example, and moreover, should be seen as a freely-painted Venetian response to a Central Italian-influenced challenge.

⁴⁹ This altarpiece, still *in situ* in the church on Murano, may be the painter's last completed work. Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. 102 and Cohen, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, cat. 82 and figs. 670-75.

⁵⁰ Pietro Aretino, *Commedie, nuovamente riv. e corrette, aggiunta L'orazia* (Milan: Sonzogno, 1888), pp. 117-18, cited in Furlan, *Pordenone*, p. 34.

⁵¹ The translation is from Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* p. 183. The original text, on p. 182, reads as follows: "Così hanno i Pittori sempre molto stimate le opere di Antonio di Pordenone: il quale fu ancora egli pratico e spedito maestro, e diletto di scorti e di figure terribili." The same speech in the dialogue then mentions the commissions for the Ca' Talenti façade frescoes and the frescoes inside the church of San Rocco, pp. 182-85.

⁵² The phrase is Rosand's, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 4.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 104. The document is transcribed as number 19 on p. 173.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-5. The document recalling Pordenone's persuasive testimony on subject matter is number 20 on p. 173, and those related to Silvio's tardy execution of the paintings are numbers 21, 22 on pp. 173-74.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105-6 and documents 23-26, pp. 174-75. For Girolamo Dente, see Sergio Claut, "All'ombra di Tiziano," *Antichità Viva* 5-6 (1986), pp. 16-29. For a more recent approach to Dente within the broader context of Titian's assistants, see the sections by Giorgio Tagliaferro in Giorgio Tagliaferro, Bernard Aikema et al., *Le botteghe di Tiziano* (Florence: Alinari 24ORE, 2009), esp. pp. 84-109.

⁵⁶ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 219 n. 181 offers a brief comparison of the two paintings by Gian Pietro Silvio and Girolamo Dente.

⁵⁷ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 13; Ridolfi-Vite, p. 6.

⁵⁸ For the historical figure of Saint Peter Martyr and his cult, see Patricia Meilman's study, *Titian and the Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 67-70. See also Jacobus de Voragine, *Golden Legend*, pp. 254-66. As mentioned on p. 259 it is worth noting that Jacobus was in fact writing within a decade of the saint's death.

⁵⁹ Una Roman D'Elia sides with Meilman, though she acknowledges that among the artists, "informal comparisons would have been natural." See D'Elia, *The Poetics of Titian's Religious Paintings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 61. D'Elia's third chapter, on "Christian Tragedy," opens with Titian's altarpiece and draws interesting parallels between tragic and violent subjects in art and high style Renaissance rhetoric, pp. 56-83.

⁶⁰ The documents and early sources on Titian's altarpiece of the *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* are gathered and well analyzed in Meilman's study, *Titian and the Altarpiece*. Meilman doubts the existence of an official competition, and claims that the great rivalry between the two painters began in the 1530s. See her arguments on pp. 84-9, with the letter from the Scuola to the Council of Ten on pp. 185-6. For an alternate view, deciding on balance that there was an actual competition, see, for example, Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, pp. 314-6; W.R. Rearick, "Pordenone and Venetian Draftsmanship in 1528," in *Il Pordenone 2000: una nuova luce*, pp. 35-44, especially pp. 36-37; Rearick, *Il disegno veneziano del Cinquecento* (Milan: Electa, 2001), pp. 76-82; as well as Delieuvin and Habert, "Le Concours de Peinture à Venise," in *Titien, Tintoret, Véronèse... Rivalités à Venise*, ed. Vincent Delieuvin and Jean Habert (exh. cat. Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2009) (Paris: Hazan and Musée du Louvre, 2009), pp. 50-53.

⁶¹ The translation is from *The Life of Titian by Carlo Ridolfi*, ed. and transl. by Julia Conaway Bondanella, Peter Bondanella, Bruce Cole, and Jody Robin Shiffman (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), p. 78, hereafter cited as Ridolfi-Bondanella. The original is found in Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 167: "Dicesi, che nella disposizione di quell'opera vi concorressero il Pordenone e'l Palma vecchio, di cui conservasi in casa Contarini di San Samuello un piccolo modello; non dimeno prevalse il merito di Titiano essendo, che il grido del suo valore estendevasi per ogni parte spirando à suo favore il Cielo e gli huomini insieme."

⁶² For Palma's standing in the scuola, as well as his contemporaneous altarpiece of the same subject for a church in Alzano Lombardo near Bergamo, see Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, pp. 315-6. For Palma's pen drawings perhaps related to the completion, see the two fragments in the Musée du Louvre, inv. nos. 5517, 5517bis. Although often attributed to Titian, an opinion starting with Mariette, Rearick insists the two drawings in the Louvre are not by the same hand as the three fragments in the Musée des Beaux Arts, Lille (inv. nos. 552a, 552b, 552c) – and to me this seems to be a sound conclusion – and instead by Palma. See Rearick's entry in *Da Pordenone a Palma Giovane: Devozione e pieta nel disegno veneziano del Cinquecento*, ed. Caterina Furlan and Vittoria Romani (exh. cat. church of San Francesco, Pordenone; Milan: Electa, 2000), cat. 9.

⁶³ Lotto's residency in Venice was presumably to undertake the Saint Antoninus altarpiece (church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo), which was not finished until 1541-42. For Lotto in Venice, see

Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, pp. 77-78 and Humfrey, *Lorenzo Lotto* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 87-89 and 137-39.

⁶⁴ Lotto was also involved with the Arte de Depentori and had connections with sculptors (Sansovino) and architects (Serlio). See Humfrey, *Lotto*, pp. 111-14.

⁶⁵ Rearick offers a good analysis of the Uffizi sheet in *Il disegno veneziano*, p. 80. He writes, “I modelli o i disegni di presentazione che si eseguivano a Veneziana in quegli anni ci sono pervenuti in numero talmente esiguo che non è facile trarre conclusioni, ma si può essere certi che i commissari non avevano mai visto un disegno come quello.” For this sheet, see also Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. D18. The presentation drawing is extraordinarily more polished than the rough red chalk study for the central grouping of assailant and victim, formerly at Chatsworth and now in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. For this sheet, see Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. D16 and Cohen, *Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 262 and 316 n17, as well as Furlan’s entry in *Dal Pordenone a Palma il Giovane*, cat. 17.

⁶⁶ For Bellini’s painting, see for example, Rona Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 181 and Anchise Tempestini, *Giovanni Bellini*, trans. Alexandra Bonfante-Warren and Jay Hyams (New York: Abbeville Press, 1999), pp. 174-76. Meilman brings into the discussion other Venetian / Veneto paintings of the same subject, including a similar painting by Bellini’s workshop in the Courtauld Institute Gallery, a later canvas attributed to Bernardino da Asolo from the 1540s in the National Gallery, London, as well as altarpieces by Moretto da Brescia (Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan) and Giovanni Battista Moroni (Castello Sforzesco, Milan). See Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece*, pp. 90-94 and 105-107.

⁶⁷ Such a feeling of daily life going on and thus disregarding the presence of an extraordinary event is brilliantly evoked in W. H. Auden’s famous poem, “Musée des Beaux Arts” (1939), a meditation on the *Fall of Icarus*, attributed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder, in the museum in Brussels.

⁶⁸ The preparatory drawing for Peter’s head, a strongly foreshortened study viewed from the chin (and probably from life), emphasizes the victims’s precarious position and terror. For this sheet, in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi (inv. n. 1740F), see Furlan in *Da Pordenone al Palma il Giovane*, cat. 18, and Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. D17.

⁶⁹ For Titian’s fresco in the Scuola del Santo, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 95 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 15c. This fresco is studied within an interesting article by Creighton Gilbert, “Some Findings on Early Works of Titian,” *Art Bulletin* 62, 1980, pp. 36-75.

⁷⁰ Regarding Pordenone’s ‘sculptural thinking’ and the pivoting of figures described here, the observation by Laurie Fusco, “The Use of Sculptural Models by Painters in Fifteenth Century Italy,” *Art Bulletin*, 64 (1982), pp. 175-194. On p. 177 she states that, “Pivoting the figure especially demands attention since the concept involves treating the figure three-dimensionally.” If “reversal presentation basically involves thinking in two dimensions,” then “pivotal

presentation is basically thinking in three dimensions.”

⁷¹ Rearick, “Pordenone and Venetian Draftsmanship,” p. 37.

⁷² The relevant documents, including Titian’s petition complaining for lack of payment, are in Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece*, pp. 188-191. The concise analysis of the painting’s genesis in Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, pp. 314-6, is convincing. See also the recent entry on the work by Carlo Corsato and Santiago Arroyo in Giuseppe Pavanello ed., *La Basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo* (Venice: Marcianum Press, 2013), pp. 230-33.

⁷³ For prints after Titian in general (though not this specific engraving), see Maria Agnese Chiari, *Incisioni da Tiziano: catalogo del fondo grafico a stampa del Museo Correr* (Venice: La Stamperia di Venezia, 1982). The copy on canvas by Loth now in the original frame in the church is still an impressive painting; the frame seems to open up the nave of the church to this momentous event, one taking place just on the other side of the picture plane. While the essentials of the composition remain compelling, the painting of course lacks the painterly touch of the original, and this is admittedly a devastating loss. When gazing upon this copy from the nave of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, a visitor today is tempted to take up the plea of Aretino and burst out three or four times with: “Oh Titian, where are you now?” See Robert Klein and Henri Zerner, *Italian Art 1500-1600: Sources and Documents* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989). Klein and Zerner’s translation uses the letter from Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, ed. Camesasca, II, CLXXIX, pp. 16-18.

⁷⁴ Vasari’s glowing praise is indicative of the picture’s extraordinary esteem three decades after its unveiling; he calls it the “most finished, the most celebrated, the greatest, and the best conceived and executed that Tiziano has as yet ever done in all his life.” Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 787. The original, in Vasari-Milanesi, VII, p. 439, reads, “la più compiuta, la più celebrata, e la maggiore e meglio intesa e condotta che altra, la quale in tutta la sua vita Tiziano abbia fatto ancor mai.” Meilman includes a useful list of extant and lost copies of the *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* in *Titian and the Altarpiece*; see her appendix IV, pp. 201-205.

⁷⁵ See the analysis of this important letter in Hope, *Titian*, pp. 70-72 and Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece*, pp. 135-37.

⁷⁶ The translation is from Hope, *Titian*, p. 71. The original reads: “... comprendeste tutto I vivi terrori de la morte e tutti I veri dolori de la vita ne la fronte e ne le carni del caduto in terra, maravigliandovi del freddo e del livido che gli appare ne la punta del naso e ne l’estemià del corpo, nè potendo ritener la voce, lasciate exlamarla, quando nel contemplar del compagno che fugge, gli scoreste ne la sembianza il bianco de la viltà e il pallido de la paura.” The text of the letter can be found in Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece*, on p. 192, as well as in Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, ed. Camesasca, I, XLIV, p. 73.

⁷⁷ The translation is from Hope, *Titian*, p. 72. The original passage, again Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece*, p. 192, reads: “...che sassi erbosi bagna la acqua, che ivi fa corrente la vena uscita dal pennello del divin Tiziano!”

⁷⁸ Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* pp. 84-85.

⁷⁹ Ridolfi-Bondanella, p. 78. The original passage, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 167 and Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece*, pp. 194-5, reads: "Quiui il Santo caduto à terra è sopraffatto dall'empio homicida, che afferandogli il lembo della cappa, radoppia fieramente il colpo, mentre il Martire glorioso tigeendo il dito nel proprio sangue scrive in terra, benche si muora, "Io credo in Dio Padre onnipotente," auenticando fin nell'estremo punto la Christiana Fede. In tanto il Compagno intimorito, percosso anch'egli sopra della testa, tenta con la fuga salvarsi, poiche il timore della morte fà, che si abbandoni nel maggior vopo l'amico, nel cui pallido volto campeggia il timore...." Ridolfi then justifies his admiration by noting the accuracy of Titian's command of musculature and expression: "ò pur considerisi la figura del Santo Martire, ne cui volto si ammirano i pallori della morte ò la fierrezza del barbaro homocida, non men dotto per l'intelligenza della parti e de' muscoli à luoghi loro rassegnati" Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 168.

⁸⁰ Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 168.

⁸¹ See the relevant documents collected in Furlan, *Pordenone*, pp. 366-67.

⁸² Freedberg, *Painting in Italy*, p. 301.

⁸³ For Tintoretto's *Esther before Ahasuerus*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 129 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 45. The painting is discussed more fully by Lucy Whitaker in Lucy Whitaker and Martin Clayton, *The Art of Italy in the Royal Collection: Renaissance and Baroque* (exh. cat. Queen's Gallery, London: Royal Collection Publications, 2007), cat. 75, and John Marciari in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 112-24.

⁸⁴ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 26 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 29. For Tintoretto's painting, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 226 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 75.

⁸⁵ "Although there is no indication that the young Tintoretto had any personal or professional relationship with him, the ambitious youth many have seen in Pordenone's career a strategy that he himself could emulate, setting himself up as the anti-Titian, whose works challenged, surprised and shocked." Echols, "Tintoretto the Painter," p. 32. Echols, writing jointly with Ilchman, repeated this proposal in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, p. 112.

⁸⁶ Echols, "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting," pp. 82-92, offers an excellent analysis of Tintoretto and façade frescoes, including connections with those of Pordenone and Schiavone. See also Hochmann, "Tintoret au Palais Gussoni," and Diana Gisolfi, "Tintoretto e le facciate affrescate di Venezia, in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario*, pp. 111-114.

⁸⁷ As is well known, Tintoretto won the 1564 contest for the central ceiling painting for the Sala dell'Albergo in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco by submitting to the judges not the requested *modello* on paper, but instead installing a finished canvas painting in its intended position in the room. One of Tintoretto's motivations for this aggressive tactic was surely that he knew he could

not compete with the other finalists (Giuseppe Porta Salviati, Federico Zuccaro, Veronese) in providing refined and detailed drawings. See Ilchman, “Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals,” pp. 25-27, for the conclusion that “the most famous drawing in his career is one he didn’t actually make.”

⁸⁸ The difficult problem of Jacopo Tintoretto’s artistic origins and training has been clarified by Echols, whose analysis has informed much of the recent scholarship on this topic; see particularly his “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting,” especially pp. 18-60, “Jacopo nel Corso,” and the synthesis, “Tintoretto the Painter,” esp. pp. 31-38, and pp. 181-85 also in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir. Prior to Echols, the dominant perspective on Tintoretto’s early career was provided by Pallucchini, *La giovinezza del Tintoretto* and the catalogue raisonné, *Opere sacre e profane*. Echols substantially revised the catalogue of Tintoretto’s early works and sketched in a new approach to Tintoretto’s career before the *Miracle of the Slave*. The discussion in the remainder of this chapter adopts the fundamental approach to the catalogue first proposed by Echols and expanded in the “Checklist” that we wrote together, and builds upon and explores more fully many of the points Echols initially raised in his early publications. Moreover, the studies by Echols listed in this note (that is, his dissertation and other writings in the 1990s), focused primarily on catalogue issues and concentrated on isolating the hands of various imitators of Tintoretto’s youthful style. Echols did not explore the issues of Tintoretto’s career in depth, particularly in the years beyond the *Miracle of the Slave*, which is a goal of this dissertation.

⁸⁹ See Borean, “Documentation,” p. 449: “Adi 31 mazo 1594 El magnifico messer Jacomo di Robusti ditto el Tentoretto de anni 75 da febre giorni 15 San Marcilian.” This document is also listed in the digest of Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, p. 125. Given that 75 seems a bit suspiciously a round number, with no additional months or days specified, the present author thinks that concluding that Tintoretto was born in May of 1519 (as some scholars do) is risky. Thus for the purposes of this dissertation the birth year is considered “c. 1518.” Similarly, although documents and early sources spell both his first name and his family name in a variety of ways, with little consistency, these earliest records use Jacomo, Iacomo, Giacomo, rather than Jacopo, which seems to have become the standard form through the use of Vasari and Ridolfi. Melania Mazzucco in her impressively researched biography, *Jacomo Tintoretto*, insists on “Jacomo,” given that this was what the painter himself used, but she then allows “Tintoretto” as a last name, although most contemporary documents in fact employ “Tentoretto.”

⁹⁰ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 13 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 5.

⁹¹ A summary of the evidence, including the gaps in documents of the *fraglia dei pittori* (painter’s guild) that would help place Tintoretto’s joining the guild, is discussed in Echols, “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting,” pp. 18-19. Venetian guild regulations are discussed in Elena Favaro, *L’Arte dei pittori in Venezia e i suoi statuti* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1975), though this study covers regulations over a much longer chronological scope than just the sixteenth century. She discusses on pp. 55-66 the rules and norms for apprentices. She notes that in general *garzoni* could not begin service younger than twelve years old (p. 57), though she cites an example of an apprentice furniture painter who began as young as eight in 1575. Furthermore,

an apprenticeship needed to last a minimum of six years, though examples existed of masters agreeing to shorter periods (p. 58). Favaro surveys guild entrance requirements, including fees and a test (*prova*), pp. 59-60. See also Valentina Moncada, "The Painters' Guilds in the Cities of Venice and Padua." *Res* 15 (1988), pp. 106-121.

⁹² The translation comes from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 15. The original reads: "...e presagendo Titiano da que' principij, che costui potesse divenir valent'huomo & apportarle alcuna molestia nell'arte, impatiente, salite a pena le scale e posato il mantello, comisse a Girolamo allievo suo (così può ne' petti umani un picciolo tarlo di gelosia d'honore,) che tosto licentiasse Iacopo di sua Casa. Onde senza saper la cagione, privo di maestro rimase." Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 13 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 6.

⁹³ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 13 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 6.

⁹⁴ Titian of course would have learned this lesson at an early age since his own precocious success with his frescoes at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi precipitated his break with Giorgione, who had also feared being artistically usurped. For this episode as discussed by Vasari, see Ilchman, "Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals," pp. 24-25.

⁹⁵ The translation comes from Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* pp. 185, 187. The original Italian, found on pp. 184, 186 reads: "Ma Titiano, essendo spinto dalla Natura a maggiori grandezze, & alla perfettione di quest'arte, non poteva sofferir di seguitar quella via secca e stentata di Gentile, ma disegnava gagliadamente e con molta prestezza. Onde gli fu detto da Gentile, che egli non era per far profitto nella Pittura, veggendo che molto si allargava dalla sua strada. Per questo Titiano lasciando quel goffo Gentile, hebbe mezzo di accostarsi a Giovanni Bellino...."

⁹⁶ Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, *Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist*, translated by Alastair Laing and Lottie M. Newman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), and Rudolf and Margot Wittkower, *Born Under Saturn; The Character and Conduct of Artists: A Documented History from Antiquity to the French Revolution* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963). Of particular interest for Tintoretto's dismissal from Titian's *bottega* is chapter 2 of Kris and Kurz, "The Heroization of the Artist in Biography," especially the subheading on "The Artist's Youth," pp. 13-26. Kris and Kurz discuss the story of the painter Cimabue discovering the talent for drawing of the shepherd boy Giotto, and their book offers many parallels with autodidacts beginning with Lysippus. On page 24, they dismiss the personal connection between Cimabue and Giotto: "The story has long been recognized for what it is – history faking. Here as elsewhere, the popular imagination has tried to link glamorous figures from the past with one another. Such a process of linking, which leads directly to the formation of sagas and legends, makes Cimabue into Giotto's teacher. It springs from the urge to provide a genealogy for the achievement of the great man who revived Italian art." The authors continue, "It is far more critical that the artist's talent already strove for expression in childhood, revealed itself early, and attracted the attention of others. It is this motif that again and again constitutes the central point in the innumerable variations of the theme." p. 26. Supplementing these two books is a highly engaging essay about competition and craft secrecy in artistic biographies, particularly in the

nineteenth century. See Marc Gotlieb, "The Painter's Secret: Invention and Rivalry from Vasari to Balzac," *Art Bulletin* 84, no. 3 (September, 2002), pp. 469-490.

⁹⁷ Ridolfi's poem, "Tintoretto Ritratto" appears at the end of the *Vita*. The first stanza begins: "Nacqui in Venetia, e da fanciullo osai/ De l'egregio Titian l'orme seguire./ Ma nel Liceo de la virtù provai/ L'invidia germogliar, e server l'ire." Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 76.

⁹⁸ The translation is Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 18. The original, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 16 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 10, is as follows: "Pose anco un'istoria con molte figure in Rialto, che volatone l'aviso a Titiano cola trasferitosi in fretta, non puote contenere le lodi, tutto che bene non sentisse del vilipeso scolare."

⁹⁹ Echols, "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting," p. 22, renders "spiritoso" as "fresh." Boschini, *Carta del Navegar*, ed. Anna Pallucchini, pp. 226-7: "El Tentoreto è un sprito divin,/ Che viense al Mondo con un torzo in man,/ El qual lume dè impazzo al gran Tician;/ Né el lo volse con lu per so vesin./ No savemio l'istoria co' l'è sta?/ Che stando da Tician el Tentoreto,/ Per esser spiritoso, in gran sospeto/ El messe el Mistro; e lu el bandì de ca'?"

¹⁰⁰ Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 15. Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 17, "Just as a single peppercorn permeates and gradually overpowers ten bunches of poppies...."

¹⁰¹ Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 15: "...in breve tempo che sè stao discipulo, havé imparao pi ca cento che xe nassui maistri."

¹⁰² See Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 46 and Boschini, *Ricche minere* in *Carta del Navegar*, p. 730.

¹⁰³ The following paragraph adapts material previous discussed by the author in "Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals," pp. 21-38, with the example of Armenini on p. 23. Giovanni Battista Armenini, *Dei veri precetti della pittura* [1587], ed. M. Gorreri (Turin: Einaudi, 1988). See also the excellent analysis of Armenini's lament of the state of the art and the pressures on young artists by Robert Williams, "The Vocation of the Artist as Seen by Giovanni Battista Armenini," *Art History* 18, no. 4 (1995), pp. 518-36.

¹⁰⁴ Williams, *Vocation of the Artist*, passim. The thesis of Williams's argument (p. 518), is as follows: "The *Veri Precetti* presents a comprehensive theory of painting, but it is unlike other texts of its kind in the image it offers us of painting as a vocation and as an activity shaped at every level by economic and social pressures."

¹⁰⁵ Giambattista Lorenzi, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo Ducale di Venezia*, (Venice: Visentini, 1868), no. 344, p. 160f.

¹⁰⁶ Even if Titian was not personally threatened by the young Tintoretto, he may have wanted to clear the way for his own assistants and family members, who, although generally mediocre, would eventually take over the Titian family business.

¹⁰⁷ Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 16.

¹⁰⁸ Rearick asserted this view in a number of his publications, including *Il disegno veneziano del Cinquecento*, p. 118. It is interesting that although Vasari does not tell this story of Tintoretto's dismissal, there isn't any evidence in his biography of Tintoretto that the two met in 1566 during the Tuscan critic's brief visit to Venice. Vasari is well informed on Tintoretto's recent work, however, listing paintings for the Palazzo Ducale, paintings in ten different churches or scuole, and the story of the recent ceiling competition in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

¹⁰⁹ On Tintoretto's "ambition and impatience," see, for example, Echols, "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting," esp. p. 12.

¹¹⁰ Vasari-Milanesi, VII, p. 461: "... [Paris Bordone] andò a stare con Tiziano: ma non vi consumò molti anni; perciocchè vedendo quell'uomo non essere molto vago d'insegnare a'suoi giovani, anco prega da loro sommamente ed invitato con la pacienza a portarsi bene, si resolvè a partirsi..." Ridolfi repeats that Paris did not stay long with Titian, "fù posto in pratica con Titiano, nella cui casa per non molto tempo si trattenne." Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, pp. 229-30. It seems fair to declare that no talented painters emerged from Titian's studio in the 1520s or 30s, the period in which Tintoretto would have studied there. Of the pupils that can be identified, even the most prominent, Girolamo Dente, who was allowed to sign pictures "di Tiziano," was consistently weak; he remained a shop assistant for decades and despite producing a large canvas of the *Annunciation* for the Scuola della Carità discussed above (fig. 44 in this dissertation), never developed beyond a cursory understanding of Titian's middle style. In this light, it seems that Titian did not have an impressive track record in producing competent painters despite his status as the most famous artist in Venice, if not Europe. Tintoretto may have concluded that Titian had no interest in being a mentor to someone who could threaten him. Titian reserved his support for mediocre artists, for example his own son Orazio Vecellio, or those even younger than Tintoretto, such as Veronese, as will be discussed in chapter four.

¹¹¹ The translation is from Ridolfi-Bondanella, p. 137. The original is Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 209: "Era anco solito à tener le pitture à lungo in casa, ricoprendole come lavorato vi haveva, e dopò qualche tempo quelle rivedendo le riduceva in più volte à perfettione." Ridolfi's description is of course far condensed compared to the famous account of Titian's working methods included by Boschini in *Le Ricche minere*. This report, which supposedly came straight from Palma il Giovane, includes the following celebrated passage of Titian scrutinizing incomplete paintings, after a pause of some months, before continuing work (p. 711) : "Dopo aver formati questi preziosi fondamenti, rivolgieva i quadri alla muraglia, e ivi gli lasciava alle volte qualche mese, senza vederli; e quando poi da nuovo vi voleva applicare i pennelli, con rigorosa osservanza li esaminava, come se fossero stati suoi capitali nemici, per vedere se in loro poteva trovar difetto."

¹¹² Vasari-Milanesi, VII, p. 462. After being spurned by Titian, Paris then saw his first public commission snatched from him by his erstwhile master: "E così datosi a lavorare ed a contrafare dell'opere di colui [Giorgione], se fece tale che venne in bonissimo credito; onde nella sua età di

diciotto anni gli fu allogata una tavola da farsi per la chiesa di San Niccolò de'frati Minore. Il che avendo inteso Tiziano, fece tanto con mezzi e con favori, che gliel tolse di mano, o per impedergli che non potesse così tosto mostrare la sua virtù, o pure tirato dal desiderio di guadagnare.” For Titian’s altarpiece, now in the Vatican Pinacoteca, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 63; Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 78; and Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, cat. 96.

¹¹³ Not surprisingly, Vasari does not mention this anecdote in the life of Titian proper, but discusses it only within the section on Paris Bordone appended to the end of the Life of Titian (Vasari-Milanesi, VI, pp. 461-66). This story, which reflects badly on Titian, was certainly one of the topics that the old master would have skipped over during Vasari’s interview with him in the house in the Birri Grande in 1566.

¹¹⁴ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, pp. 13-14 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 6-7.

¹¹⁵ It could be risky to claim that an artist was an autodidact. One is reminded of the following story in Ascanio Condivi’s *Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti* (1553), clearly the mouthpiece of the great artist. Condivi asserted that the artist had no teacher, denying the claim in Vasari’s first edition of three years earlier that Michelangelo had been apprenticed to Ghirlandaio and later studied in the sculpture garden of Lorenzo de’ Medici under the tutelage of the sculptor Bertoldo di Giovanni. Vasari’s second edition (1568) rejects Condivi’s assertion and quotes in full the document of 1488 of apprenticeship to Ghirlandaio. Vasari then goes on to describe in some detail Michelangelo’s years of training, settling the matter in his mind.

¹¹⁶ Echols, “Tintoretto the Painter,” p. 32.

¹¹⁷ The examples of Tintoretto’s curriculum are listed in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, pp. 14-5 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, pp. 7-8.

¹¹⁸ Although unusual enough to mention in a biography, this detail about using tiny sculptural models to develop his spatial skills seems plausible. Similar training is recorded in the biographies of other painters, such as Veronese; Ridolfi notes that before his apprenticeship to the painter Antonio Badile, the young Paolo became accustomed to modeling in clay through instruction by his father: “Fù il di lui Padre Gabrielle Caliarì, Cittadino Veronese e scultore, che gli insegnò da fanciullo i principij dell’Arte sua, avezzandolo à far modelli de creta.” Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, pp. 297-98. An excellent analysis of Tintoretto and sculpture is found in Roland Krischel, “Tintoretto e la scultura veneziana,” *Venezia Cinquecento* n. 12 (1996), pp. 5-54. Krischel convincingly demonstrates Tintoretto’s study of the natural foreshortenings of sculptures he would have seen in Venice. Later in his career, Veronese also displays his knowledge of the stonemason’s craft when he provides the designs for the marble high altar structure in the church of San Sebastiano.

¹¹⁹ See Echols, “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting,” pp. 27-28, for this interesting suggestion.

¹²⁰ David Franklin described what was novel about this situation: “These large drawings were copied by many artists, local and foreign, in the city – a practice that marked a pivotal moment in the history of art in Florence, when young artists bypassed the traditional workshop in favour of direct instruction from the example of masters who were not their own.” See his essay, ““Revealing Magnificence and Grandeur’: Florentine Drawing in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century” in *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence* (exh. cat., National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 2005), p. 18.

¹²¹ The original (“ha lavorato a caso e senza disegno, quasi mostrando che quest’arte è una baia”) is found in Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 587.

¹²² Tintoretto’s syllabus reminds one perhaps of the “SCHEDULE” and “GENERAL RESOLVES” for self-improvement inscribed in the end papers of a children’s book; these were the resolutions by which the young Jimmy Gatz vowed to transform himself into Jay Gatsby. See F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, pref. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Scribner Classics, 1996), pp. 148-49.

¹²³ Armenini, *Veri precetti*, pp. 73-74, 76-79. “This itinerary, certainly not Armenini’s invention, probably reflects widespread practice.” Robert Williams, *Vocation of the Artist*, p. 523.

¹²⁴ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 15 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 9.

¹²⁵ The translation comes from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 17. The original, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 15, and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 9, is as follows: “Piacevale nondimeno più il colorire dello Schiavone, quale coaiutava volentieri ne’ suoi lavori, senza veruna mercede, per impadronirsi di quella bella via di colorire.”

¹²⁶ In fact, there are only three references to Pordenone within the *Life of Tintoretto*; these mention that Pordenone was one of the few artists highly regarded in Venice at the time of Tintoretto’s youth (Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 16; Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 10), Pordenone’s work in fresco in the church of San Rocco (Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 25; Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 27), and how Tintoretto’s painting of *Christ at the Pool of Bethesda* (fig. 53 in this dissertation) was made for the nave of the church of San Rocco “in competition with Pordenone” (“in concorrenza del Pordenone”) (Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 26; Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 29). Ridolfi may have assumed that Pordenone’s example to the young Tintoretto was so obvious as not to merit discussion.

¹²⁷ For example, a trip to Rome before the *Miracle of the Slave* was declared certain by Mary Pittaluga: “Prima di tal opera, Jacopo era stato certamente a Roma, perchè già in essa si rivelano influssi michelangeloeschi: la donna col bimbo, che volge il dorso; l’uomo, ritto fra colonne; e, più ancora il desiderio di conservar la personalità ad ogni figura, e un senso nuovo, ovunque diffuso d’eroica grandezza e d’amore del tipo umano, indicano palese l’ispirazione al Buonarroti.” Pittaluga, *Il Tintoretto* (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1925), p. 58. Following this line of argument, the case for a trip to Rome is also weighed and affirmed by Pallucchini in *La giovinezza del Tintoretto*, pp. 97-98, with the wording both memorable but artfully hedged, “... non è improbabile che questa strada di Damasco passasse a Roma, anche se la tradizione non

ricorda tale viaggio.” Pallucchini notes that Nikolas Pevsner was the first to assert a trip to Rome, assigning it to the period of 1547-48; *Barockmalerei in den romanischen Ländern. Die italienische Malerei vom Ende der Renaissance bis zum ausgehenden Rokoko*, I (Wildpark-Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1928), p. 63. More than three decades later, Pallucchini maintained the validity of the trip to Rome in Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, pp. 33-34, where he noted that this belief was also shared by Arnold Hauser, who devotes a number of pages of his grand survey to Tintoretto. See his *Mannerism: The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art*, 2 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965). Hauser is unequivocal that Tintoretto went to Rome, citing this as fact on pp. 219, 223-34 and deriving key changes in his style from the trip, though he offers no evidence. For example, on p. 219, Hauser writes, “The most important event in Tintoretto’s early period takes place at the the end of the forties when, no doubt under the influence of a visit to Rome, he drops his early Parmigianinesque manner, characterized by a sympathy for Pordenone, Bonifazio, and Schiavone....” Finally, Pallucchini implies a certain competition between the two painters when he notes that Tintoretto would have travelled to Rome not long after Titian’s visit of 1545.

¹²⁸ The parallel with Salviati’s fresco was first proposed by Edoardo Arslan, “Argomenti per la cronologia del Tintoretto,” *Critica d’arte*, 2, 1937, p. xxvii. Pallucchini in Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, p. 34, agreed with Arslan’s assertion that Tintoretto must have visited the Sistine Chapel.

¹²⁹ See Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der italienischen Kunst im Zeitalter der Renaissance*, II (Munich: Piper, 1928), p. 145, and David R. Coffin, “Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs,” *Art Bulletin*, vol. 33, no. 2 (June 1951), p. 122.

¹³⁰ See Simon H. Levie, “Daniele da Volterra and Tintoretto,” *Arte Veneta* 7 (1953), pp. 168-170. He notes as well that there are no known period reproductions of this fresco: “Per quanto sappiamo, l’affresco di Daniele non è mai stato riprodotto nel cinquecento” – thus requiring a visit in person, p. 170. See also Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat.159.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 170. Paola Rossi acknowledges that this hypothesis is appealing but may not square with the generally accepted timing of the trip to Rome before the *Miracle of the Slave*. These documents are also listed in Borean, “Documentation,” p. 422.

¹³² For Daniele’s frescoes in the Rovere Chapel, see Paul Barolsky, *Daniele da Volterra: A Catalogue Raisonné* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1979), pp. 82-86. Barolsky dates the frescoes, “c. 1550-53 and later” and add the following, “But it not improbable that, although partially completed in 1553, the decorations lagged through the 1550’s” (p. 83).

¹³³ Denis Mahon, *Studies in Seicento Art and Theory* (London: Warburg Institute, 1947), p. 274.

¹³⁴ Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, 2 vols.

¹³⁵ See especially Echols, “Jacopo nel corso,” and Weddigen, *Jacomo Tentor F.: Myzelien zur Tintoretto-Forschung: Peripherie, Interpretation und Rekonstruktion* (Munich: Scaneg, 2000),

pp. 217-230. According to Echols, a lingering reason for Pallucchini and Rossi to require a trip to Rome to explain the sudden improvement in Tintoretto's production by 1548 was the large quantity of conspicuously weak paintings assigned to the period 1545-7 in the literature. As Echols argues in "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting," p. 161 n. 169, "Of the 43 works catalogued in this period by Pallucchini and Rossi 1982, only one, in my view, the Dresden *Christ and the Adulteress*, has any plausible claim of being a work by Tintoretto from these years...." Deleting these works from Tintoretto's oeuvre solves this conceptual problem. For an analysis of attribution issues in Tintoretto, see the pages devoted to "The Fundamentals of Tintoretto's Style" (pp. 26-31) and "What is a Tintoretto?" (pp. 60-62) within the essay by Echols "Tintoretto the Painter" in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir. A more thorough examination of specific connoisseurship problems in Tintoretto's oeuvre can be found in Echols and Ilchman, "Toward a new Tintoretto Catalogue," with its appended "Checklist." The "Checklist" lists the subject pictures the authors believe Tintoretto painted in the years 1545-48 on pp. 121-22.

¹³⁶ See Echols, "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting," pp. 158-61.

¹³⁷ The scholars that argue for or assume a visit to Rome before the *Miracle of the Slave* include Pevsner, Pittaluga, Palluchini, Levie, Rossi, Arslan, Coffin, and Hauser, as mentioned above.

¹³⁸ The translation appears in Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* p. 189. The original, on p. 188, reads as follows: "E certo si puo attribuire a miracolo, che Tiziano senza haver veduto alhora le anticaglie di Roma, che furono lume a tutti i Pittori eccellenti, solamente con quella poca favilluccia, ch'egli haveva scoperta nelle cose di Giorgione, vide e conobbe la Idea del dipingere perfettamente."

¹³⁹ Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* p. 193.

¹⁴⁰ "... o ad avere a nascere sotto la vaghezza de' colori lo stento del non sapere disegnare; nella maniera che fecero molti anni i pittori viniziani, Giorgione, il Palma, il Pordenone, ed altri che non videro Roma nè altre opere di tutta perfezione." Vasari-Milanesi, VII, pp. 427-28.

¹⁴¹ On Venetian collections of antiquities, see Irene Favaretto, *Arte antica e cultura antiquaria nelle collezioni venete al tempo della Serenissima* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1990); Marcella De Paoli, *Opera fatta diligentissimamente: restauri di sculture classiche a Venezia tra Quattro e Cinquecento* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2004). For the Grimani collection and palazzo, see Marilyn Perry, "Cardinal Domenico Grimani's Legacy of Ancient Art to Venice," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978), pp. 215-44, and "A Renaissance Showplace of Art: The Palazzo Grimani at S. Maria Formosa," *Apollo* 113 (1981), pp. 215-21.

¹⁴² On this topic, see the helpful summary within appendix B, "On artistic relations between Venice and Central Italy, 1500-1557," in Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* pp. 75-9.

¹⁴³ For a pioneering discussion of this topic, see Coffin, "Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs," pp. 119-25. For the drawings themselves by Tintoretto and his *bottega* after Michelangelo's Sagrestia Nuova sculptures, see Paola Rossi, *I disegni di Jacopo Tintoretto* (Florence: La Nuova

Italia Editrice, 1975), figs. 10-21 and 38-40. More recently some of these drawings were studied by Catherine Loisel in *Le Paradis de Tintoretto: Un concours pour le palais des Doges* (exh. cat. Musée du Louvre; Milan: 5 Continents, 2006), cats. 15-17, and *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cats. 52-54.

¹⁴⁴ As before, perhaps the best sifting of evidence on Tintoretto's early years, and influential to the present writer's conclusions, appears in Echols, "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting," pp. 18-60 and his "Tintoretto the Painter," especially pp. 25-38.

¹⁴⁵ Borean, "Documentation," p. 419.

¹⁴⁶ Echols, "Tintoretto the Painter," p. 33. In the same catalogue, see also Ilchman and Saywell, "Michelangelo and Tintoretto: *Disegno* and Drawing," in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 385-393.

¹⁴⁷ For the relationship between the two artists' paintings of the same subject, see Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 3.

¹⁴⁸ For the Grimani collection and palazzo, see Perry, "Cardinal Domenico Grimani's Legacy" and "A Renaissance Showplace".

¹⁴⁹ For the preparatory drawing of the whole composition, as well as two other sheets related to equestrian figures, see M. Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel, *Tiziano: Corpus dei disegni autografi* (Milan: Berenice, 1989), cats. 24-26.

¹⁵⁰ For these citations within Tintoretto's *Conversion of Saint Paul*, see the catalogue entry in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 3.

¹⁵¹ Echols speculates, "By this point in their respective careers, however, Schiavone may have taken as much inspiration from Tintoretto as the younger artist did from the elder." See the catalogue entry in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 3. Echols goes on to speculate that Schiavone's version may be indebted to Tintoretto's earlier rendering of the subject, a fresco on the façade of Palazzo Zen, where the two painters had worked side-by-side. For Tintoretto's *Conversion of Saint Paul*, also see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 79 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 32. On Schiavone's paintings, see Francis L. Richardson, *Andrea Schiavone* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), cats. 296 and 236.

¹⁵² "il Tintore ed Andrea la Continenza." Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 14.

¹⁵³ Besides the confusion over the attribution, the painting's subject is often described as a "Circumcision." See Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 596. The original sentence in Ridolfi is "Nel Carmine quella della Circoncisione, creduta da molti dello Schiavone, trasformandosi tal' hora in quella maniera." See Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 17; Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 11.

¹⁵⁴ Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* (1581), rev. ed. Giustiniano Martinioni (Venice: Stefano Curti, 1663), p. 262.

¹⁵⁵ “... e del Tintoretto; di cui vi ha una tela con la Circoncisione del Nostro Signore, nella quale ha talmente imitato la mano di Andrea Schiavone, che da molti viene creduta dello stesso Schiavone.” Giovanni Battista Albrizzi, *Forestiero illuminato intorno le cose piu rare, e curiose, antiche, e moderne, della città di Venezia* (Venice: G. Albrizzi, 1765), p. 236.

¹⁵⁶ “Nel primo altare alla dritta evvi la tavola con la Circoncisione del Signore, cui fece il Tintoretto a imitazione dello Schiavone; e tanto bene ne contraffecce il carattere che il Vasari la credette opera di questo secondo. Ma niente più di ciò. Si cominci a vedere il Tintoretto a farsi grande; e a produrre quei frutti che dal sugoso alimento di molto studio s'erano in esso formati.” Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana e delle opere pubbliche de' veneziani maestri libri V* (Venice: G. Albrizzi, 1771), p. 131.

¹⁵⁷ The translation can be found in Pardo, “Paolo Pino’s ‘Dialogo di Pittura’,” p. 344. The original is from Pino, *Dialogo di pittura* (1548), p. 19, which reads, “La povertà c’assassina dicovi, & non si paga tanto un’opera, che li danari soppliscano fino al fine dell’altra. Soleciti chi può, & peggio, ch’alcune fiate vi convien dipingere ino alli sedeli, non havendo con qual altra utilità intratenerli, per non esser tal arte necessaria. This bleak view of painting as a profession is similar to that of Armenini’s *Dei veri precetti*, explored by Robert Williams in “The Vocation of the Artist.”

¹⁵⁸ “Piacevale nondimeno più il colorire dello Schiavone, quale coaiutava volentieri ne’ suoi lavori, senza veruna mercede, per impadronirsi di quella bella via di colorire.” Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 15-16 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 9. For the lost frescoes, see Richardson, *Andrea Schiavone*, pp. 176-77, who notes that Pallucchini had first connected the Washington canvas to the fresco; Pallucchini, *La Giovinezza del Tintoretto*, p. 86.

¹⁵⁹ For this view of the association between Tintoretto and Bonifacio, see the section from the dissertation by Echols, “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting,” pp. 30-40, 55-60, as well as a more recent conference paper by Philip Cottrell, “Painters in Practice: Tintoretto, Bassano and the Studio of Bonifacio de’ Pitati,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Actas del Congreso Internacional*, ed. Falomir, pp. 50-57. For Jacopo Bassano and Bonifacio, see W.R. Rearick, “The Life and Works of Jacopo dal Ponte, called Bassano c.1510-1592,” in *Jacopo Bassano* (exh. cat. Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, 1992), p. 48.

¹⁶⁰ For Tintoretto’s 1540 *Holy Family*, see the catalogue entry by Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 1, as well as Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 11 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 4.

¹⁶¹ In this dissertation I generally dismiss Pallucchini’s notion of Tintoretto’s “mannerist crisis” and instead agree with the views on the relevance of “mannerism” and *maniera* to Tintoretto as laid out by Echols in his “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting,” pp. 16-17. Echols writes, “However, mannerism is such a loaded term that wherever possible I shall avoid it, to refer specifically to its various manifestations as they concern us: the individual styles of the north Italians Lotto and Pordenone, the Emilian elegance of Parmigianino, and the Tuscan-Roman

maniera of Salviati and Vasari. Indeed, distinguishing between mannerism in the sense of a “mannered,” decorative, calligraphic, anti-natural, “stylish style” and *maniera* as a generalized, synthetic version of the art of Raphael and Michelangelo is central to an understanding of Tintoretto’s response to extra-Venetian stimuli.” Echols goes on to cite the standard work, John Shearman, *Mannerism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), which has helped inform the present writer as well. Other points relative to the Venetian milieu at the time of Tintoretto’s youth discussed here are based on a paper by Echols, “Venetian Painting in Transition: Romanizing Currents and Responses in the 1540s,” delivered at the conference, “Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese” at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2007.

¹⁶² These gestures are summarized by Echols, *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 1, “Tintoretto is already seeking to place himself on an equal footing with the great masters of Central Italy, attempting not merely to imitate but to re-create their accomplishments in his own way.”

¹⁶³ For Titian’s painting and its place within the tradition of Venetian narrative painting, see particularly the chapter “Titian’s *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* and the Scuola della Carità” in Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 62-106. He argues that Titian’s work retained a conservative element reflecting the concerns of the Scuole Grandi; thus, the painting is “certainly a major monument in what may be considered the extended life of an older Venetian pictorial tradition,” demonstrating its “still vital potential.” p. 97.

¹⁶⁴ By “High Renaissance grandeur” I intend to evoke the sense of overall harmony and classical poise found in much innovative Florentine art starting in the first decade of the Cinquecento, but largely absent in contemporary paintings in Venice, such as Gentile and Giovanni Bellini’s *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria* or the murals of Carpaccio. That it takes until the 1530s for *scuola* narratives to catch up with the figure types of Central Italy of two decades earlier – and that the compositions are not unified in, for example the manner of the Raphael’s early Roman work – says something about the resilient conservatism of Venetian aesthetic preferences.

¹⁶⁵ See Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, esp. pp. 77-96, for analysis of the coordination of the colors of the Virgin’s clothing with the Sala dell’Albergo’s ceiling, the mandorla of golden light that she casts, her position on the staircase, the backdrop reminiscent of the Palazzo Ducale (and its associations with the Temple of Solomon), and so on.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, figs. 68, 63, 65, 66.

¹⁶⁷ For these paintings, see Harold Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 14, I; III, 14; I, cat. 36; and Peter Humfrey, *Titian*, cats. 52, 59C, and 64. One can reasonably object that the demands of a *scuola* narrative painting are fundamentally different from those required (for example) by a prominent altarpiece or a mythological subject needed for a cycle for an aristocratic patron outside Venice. At the same time, however, Titian had painted *scuola* narratives, namely the frescoes for the Scuola del Santo in Padua of 1511; here his *Miracle of the New-Born Infant* displays a tight, interlocking composition with a central focus of glances not at all evident in the later *Presentation of the Virgin*. On the Padua fresco, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 93 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 15A.

¹⁶⁸ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 66-67. Rosand transcribes the document awarding the commission to Pasqualino as Document 13, pp. 170-71.

¹⁶⁹ Besides the up-to-date architecture recalling the Piazza San Marco featured in both Bordone's and Titian's paintings, there are many other points of comparison, particularly in the left-to-right progression of the action, the placement of the main characters, the portraits of confraternity officials standing at the far left. For the decoration of the Sala dell'Albergo in the Sala dell'Albergo, see Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, cat. XIX, pp. 291-5 and Peter Humfrey, "The Bellinesque Life of St Mark Cycle for the Scuola Grande di San Marco in Venice in its original arrangement," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 48 (1985), pp. 225-42. For Paris Bordone's painting, see Sandra Moschini Marconi, *Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia: Opere d'Arte di secolo XVI* (Rome: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato, 1962), cat. 117 and Giordana Mariana Canova, *Paris Bordone* (Venice: Edizioni Alfieri, 1962), pp. 93-94. Patricia Fortini Brown has correctly noted the painting's "clear subordination of parts to the whole for a more dramatic narrative focus," *Venetian Narrative Painting*, p. 239.

¹⁷⁰ These points are summarized in Corinne Mandel, "Bordone, Paris" in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 1996), 4, pp. 398-99.

¹⁷¹ See the chapter on the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* in Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 62-106, especially pp. 93-96.

¹⁷² "The entire composition respects the integrity of the mural surface in a number of ways: the isocephalic procession, the parallel architectural planes, the deemphasis and even masking of receding orthogonals." Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 75. To these space-controlling elements he lists we can add another fundamental one: the volume of the crowd of onlookers on the left half, which balances the imposing bulk of the masonry staircase and maintains the foreground emphasis.

¹⁷³ See "Tiziano: *La presentazione della Virgine al tempio* (Analisi riflettografiche eseguite dal Centro LANIAC-Dipartimento TeSIS, Università degli Studi di Verona)," *Dossier n. 1*, ed. Enrico Maria Dal Pozzolo, Verona, 2012. The author of this dissertation is grateful to discussions in 2011-12 with Maria Chiara Maida, Giulio Bono, Erika Bianchini, and David Rosand in front of the painting itself, both in the Scuola Vecchia della Misericordia during the treatment and after the painting's return to the Sala dell'Albergo as part of the complete restoration of that room funded by Save Venice Inc.

¹⁷⁴ This panel of c. 1510 includes substantial intervention by assistants. Originally destined for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli on Murano (the same church where the nuns refused to pay the price for Titian's *Annunciation* and thus had to settle for Pordenone's version instead), this painting has not been in the church of San Pietro Martire for some decades, but stored in the San Gregorio laboratory. The picture is discussed in Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, cat. 73, pp. 248-50, and Rona Goffen and Giovanni Nepi Scirè, *Il colore ritrovato: Bellini a Venezia* (exh. cat. Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice; Milan: Electa, 2000), cat. 21. The subject of

the altarpiece has often been considered the Immaculate Conception (e.g. Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini*, pp. 179-183, and Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 40) or even the “Meditation of Eight Saints on the Marian Mystery” (Tempestini, *Giovanni Bellini*, cat. 115), each of which makes some sense considering the lack of narrative action and the fact that only three of the saints in the composition were actually present at the Assumption. On the other hand, Humfrey reasonably counters that inference: “But the inclusion of anachronistic saints in narrative altarpieces was, as we have seen, perfectly normal; and confirmation that Bellini’s picture is indeed an Assumption – or rather, a Virgin of the Assumption with saints... is provided by the fact that its original altar in the nun’s church of S. Maria degli Angeli in Murano was dedicated to this mystery.” Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, p. 250.

¹⁷⁵ As Brown writes about Tintoretto’s new narrative mode, “Big figures, dramatic actions and great sweeping brushstrokes have replaced the collective casts, the solemn ceremonious movements and the earnestly rendered details of the eyewitness artists. In the *Miracle of the Slave* we have no doubt that what we are witnessing is a supernatural event.” *Venetian Narrative Painting*, p. 239.

CHAPTER 3

OVERTURNING TRADITION

Since the voice of public praise accords with the opinion I myself gave you on the great painting of the Saint in the Scuola di San Marco, I am no less delighted with my judgement, which sees so deeply, than with your art, which is so superlative.¹

Pietro Aretino, letter to Tintoretto, April 1548

What a way to make a splash. The unveiling of Jacopo Tintoretto's *Miracle of the Slave* (fig. 15) in April of 1548 was the most-talked about artistic event in Venice that decade.² The huge single-subject canvas, measuring 4.15 x 5.41 meters, made an equally big impression on its contemporary audience. Aretino's earlier smug prediction of future success had come true, reaffirming simultaneously his own skill at spotting talent. Several years before, Aretino had praised Tintoretto's ceiling canvas of the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* (fig. 16), for the writer's own "camera" or bedroom at his home. In this letter of February 1545, addressed to Tintoretto, Aretino admired the fresh and lively beauty of the picture and its companion, "belle e pronte e vive in vive," and found pleasure in how the brevity of Tintoretto's handling – which could often lead to sloppy execution – here instead attained excellence, since the painter had in mind exactly where to model with light and dark:

Often one finds that haste and imperfection go together, so that it is an especial pleasure to find speed in execution accompanied by excellence. Certainly the brevity of the execution depends on knowing exactly what one is doing; so that one sees, in the mind's eye, exactly where to place the light colors and where the dark.³

As a ceiling painting, the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* would certainly have been granted freer execution than a small-format easel painting, where a greater level of finish would have seemed essential. All the same, Aretino's enthusiasm for Tintoretto's control of the brush is a bit surprising, given how painterly and indeed improvisational the picture actually appears: simple draperies, barely finished faces, and many obvious pentimenti in the size of Apollo's *lira da braccio* and the hands of two contestants.⁴ Such praise must have been partially a *quid pro quo*, that is, public acclaim as payment for paintings that Tintoretto provided for free.

Aretino knew the value of good publicity, and he used his publications to reward friends and repay favors. His letters, published to wide acclaim in collections starting in 1538, were enjoyed throughout the Italian peninsula for their witty and irreverent commentary and sense of the pulse of contemporary culture. His praise for Tintoretto's *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* would seem extravagant if it had been a costly work; rather, the tribute he offers in print seems just right as repayment for a gift. Aretino also used his letters to punish those who had left his good graces – or had refused to give him presents of artworks. Aretino famously attacked Michelangelo for theological improprieties in the fresco of the *Last Judgment* (1536-41) in the Sistine Chapel – a painting he had never seen in person – largely because he had been earlier rebuffed by the Florentine. Given that Aretino had offered, with a heavy hand, iconographical suggestions for the fresco and had also requested the gift of Michelangelo's own drawings, the artist's reluctance to engage with the writer does not seem surprising.⁵ Stung by Michelangelo's snub, Aretino, in a further letter of November 1545, condemned the *Last Judgment* and its artist in the most caustic terms.⁶ After withering censure of Michelangelo's apparent blasphemy, even the postscript is ominous: "And you should remind yourself that I am such that even kings and emperors answer my letters."⁷

By contrast, Aretino was full of enthusiasm for Tintoretto in his letter of February 1545. Significant in this letter is his vision of still greater accomplishments from the brush of Tintoretto, always provided that the painter show proper gratitude to God: “My son, now that your brush bears witness with the present works to the fame that future ones are bound to acquire for you, let no time pass before you thank God, the goodness of whose mercies inclines your soul to the study of righteousness no less than to that of painting.”⁸ By 1548, Aretino’s prediction was fulfilled. The fabric dyer’s son had come a long way in just three years. The *Miracle of the Slave*, Tintoretto’s inaugural picture for the *Sala Capitolare* or large meeting room of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, an exceptionally prestigious lay confraternity, was the most triumphant public debut by a painter in Venice in a generation, and an announcement of arrival as conspicuous as Titian’s *Assunta* (fig. 17), thirty years earlier.⁹

Those three decades – corresponding to the years of Tintoretto’s youth and early career – were not fallow ones artistically in Venice by any means. They witnessed major artistic statements by the principal Venetian painters, as well as an influx of new ideas and artists from Central Italy, addressed in the previous chapter. Even within this mélange of styles and continuous activity, however, Jacopo’s painting for the *scuola* – a brilliant composition filled with lunging, muscular figures, violent gestures, aggressive foreshortenings, and tossed salads of visible brushstrokes – offered more than a new direction. The *Miracle of the Slave* represented a fundamental rupture in the more than a century-long tradition of religious narrative painting in Venice.

Tintoretto's Breakthrough

If the intended setting for the painting was a prominent one – the Sala Capitolare of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, the specific wall for his canvas was fraught with difficulty. The *Miracle of the Slave* was intended for the short wall of the *sala grande*, between two south windows overlooking Campo SS. Giovanni e Paolo; these windows frustrated easy reading of the composition, forcing one to gaze at the painting *contre-jour*, with some natural lighting coming from the viewer's right in partial compensation.¹⁰ Tintoretto used this actual light, from the windows overlooking the Rio dei Mendicanti, to create the internal lighting of the picture.¹¹

Some of the most eventful public commissions in Renaissance Venice were complicated by architectural idiosyncrasies of their sites or implicit comparisons they drew to great works already present in situ. Titian's 1513 petition to the Council of Ten to paint for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio attests that some challenges of site were more difficult to surmount than. He noted that the position for the battle painting was a particular test because it was to go on the south wall, between windows overlooking the Molo, and pointed out that, thus far, other painters had been unwilling to undertake the commission.¹² Titian's painting (cf. fig. 30) clearly surmounted the challenges, since descriptions before the 1577 fire describe the composition of battle and storm with distinct admiration. For example, Vasari lauds the picture as remarkably lifelike and the finest work in the cycle: "a battle with soldiers in furious combat, while a terrible rain falls from Heaven; which work, wholly taken from life, is held to be the best of all the scenes that are in that Hall, and the most beautiful."¹³ Dolce is equally enthusiastic about the *Battle*, and picks out individual figures for commendation.¹⁴ Certainly the *Miracle of the Slave* presented a comparable assignment, both in terms of the difficult lighting and the prestige of the painters already present in the Scuola di San Marco, albeit in an adjacent room. Tintoretto's

eventual pictorial solution to surmount the challenge of the site seems also to have profited from the example of Titian's triumph, under similarly poor lighting conditions in the Frari, with his altarpiece of the *Assunta*. Titian overcame the difficulties through the massive scale of his painting, a composition coordinated with existing architecture, and a composition emphasizing strict geometrical simplicity.¹⁵

In his brief biography of Tintoretto in *Le Ricche minere* (1674), Boschini recounts how the artist as a matter of course would scout out the intended locations for his paintings before beginning work: "Every time he had to paint a work for a public place, Tintoretto first went to observe the site where it was to be placed, to estimate the height and distance of the eye...."¹⁶ Titian's attentiveness to setting, displayed particularly in his altarpieces for the Frari, must have taught Tintoretto vital lessons about adapting paintings to their site, and indeed transforming the space in the process¹⁷. Tintoretto developed the lessons he had learned from Titian and employed in the *Miracle of the Slave* further in his canvases for the Madonna dell'Orto and then later in those for the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.¹⁸ Tintoretto's at times tempestuous rivalry with Titian, noted particularly by Ridolfi's anecdote of the aborted apprenticeship, helped shape the first half of Tintoretto's career and often encouraged the younger painter to adopt an opposite tack. At the same time, Tintoretto was certainly wise enough to know when to heed the lessons of the older artist. Thus, like Titian in the *Assunta*, with the apostles strongly delineated against the sky, in the *Miracle of the Slave* Tintoretto created a composition with some of the key figures isolated or strongly silhouetted against or contrasting with the background.¹⁹ These include both the slave and Saint Mark, the astonished nobleman at the upper right, and of course the turbaned tormenter in green raising his arms to show the pieces of the broken mallet.

As seen in other violent *istorie* that clearly echo the composition of the *Miracle of the Slave*, not all of Tintoretto's contemporaries or successors possessed his pictorial acumen. Some of these responses, like the *Martyrdom of Saint Theodore* (fig. 72) in the church of San Salvador, are inept imitations of Tintoretto's prototype, neither conveying the story effectively nor including the portraits of *scuola* members with sufficient dignity.²⁰ More successful examples include Veronese's fresco of the *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* in the monk's loft of about 1558 (fig. 73) or his canvas *laterale* of the same subject (fig. 74) for the presbytery of c. 1565 (both in the church of San Sebastiano). While far more artfully configured than the painting in San Salvador, both of Veronese's paintings display crowded compositions of largely overlapped figures. In the fresco, Veronese silhouetted three weapons, yet the grouping around the victim is still hard to decipher, and the painting lacks the left-to-right flow of energy and directional clarity of Tintoretto's prototype. In the later canvas of the same subject, which is even busier, Veronese neglected to isolate any gestures against the sky.²¹ In a sense, Veronese adopted the wrong elements of Tintoretto's breakthrough, simultaneously leaving out those that made it so successful.

The challenge facing Tintoretto as he began the *Miracle of the Slave* in 1547 encompassed more than the difficult site and the intimidation he faced trying to break into the top echelon of the competitive Venetian market. The subject itself of the *Miracle of the Slave* presented Tintoretto with both a challenge and an opportunity. There was one immediate precedent in the bronze relief by Jacopo Sansovino (1486-1570), completed in the first half of the 1540s, that decorated the north choir stall near the high altar of the Basilica di San Marco (fig. 75). While this sculpture was Tintoretto's starting point for his composition, as will be discussed more fully below, we must remember that the theme was not one that Venetian

painters had previously used as a proving ground. As described in the first chapter, by the second half of the 1540s, Tintoretto must have grown ever more anxious to break into the top rank of Venetian painters as he progressed through his twenties. He would have particularly hungered for the kinds of prestigious public commissions readily assigned in those days, according to Ridolfi, only to Bonifacio and Titian.²² Given Tintoretto's yearning for a prestigious public commission, he undoubtedly would have settled for whatever subject was required.

At the same time, it is striking that Tintoretto accomplished his creative leap forward and made his statement of public arrival with a subject outside the standard repertoire of earlier generations of Venetian painters. By contrast, the assignment to depict for example, the *Presentation of the Virgin*, the *Assumption of the Virgin*, the *Coronation of the Virgin*, or the *Baptism of Christ*, would have allowed Tintoretto to engage with one or more famous Venetian predecessors and with a broader tradition. The similarity of subject would have made implicit the comparison with the earlier work and allowed him to attempt to surpass the prototype. Tintoretto must have acknowledged that painters of earlier generations, including Giovanni Bellini, Cima, Titian, Sebastiano, and even Giorgione had used *Sacra Conversazione* altarpieces to put themselves on the map. Working even within such a conservative format as these groupings of saints, the opportunity to convey technical mastery and choreograph subtle variations in setting, pose, composition, and lighting were often enough to impress the public.

The *Miracle of the Slave* was the opposite of a common subject for Venetian painters; it was a blank slate on a monumental scale. While denying Tintoretto an occasion for one-upmanship, this choice provided him with a different prospect: the opportunity to make the subject his own. Furthermore, since he would be undertaking the first painting for a new cycle at the Scuola di San Marco – Bordone's *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge* (fig. 70) being the

concluding painting of the ensemble in the adjacent room – Tintoretto would enjoy a fresh start in another sense. Thus with this initial picture Tintoretto could put his stamp not just on a relatively unexplored narrative topic, but on the eventual decorative campaign of the room.²³

The incident Tintoretto depicted – Saint Mark rescuing from torture a slave of Provence whose pilgrimage to San Marco in Venice had enraged his master – is one of about two dozen distinct episodes or miracles, mostly posthumous, associated with the saint in the *Golden Legend*, the widely known thirteenth-century compendium of lives of the saints assembled by Jacobus de Voragine.²⁴ Versions of the story must have circulated widely in Venice, since despite a lack of artistic depictions, earlier textual compilations, such as the *Golden Legend*, as well as later textual sources, like Giovanni Stringa's *Vita di San Marco Evangelista, Protettor invittissimo della Sereniss. Republica di Venetia* (1610), correlate closely to each other and to Tintoretto's painting.²⁵

According to the legend, a Christian slave or servant devoted to Saint Mark was determined to visit the relics of the saint, despite the express prohibition of his master, a Provençal nobleman. When the slave returned from Venice, the irate master ordered harsh physical punishment for the pilgrim, claiming that Saint Mark himself would not be able to intervene. As the slave called to Mark for deliverance, each stage of a series of tortures – blinding his eyes with a stake, severing his legs with a hatchet, striking his mouth with a hammer – was miraculously blocked, the implement in question shattered or rendered ineffective. Faced with Mark's power, the astonished master repented. He and the servant then travelled to Venice to express their devotion to Saint Mark.²⁶

Central to Tintoretto's reading of this story is the combination in a single composition of several consecutive episodes of the unsuccessful torture: the stripping of the slave's garments,

Saint Mark's intervention causing the failure of various implements in sequence (stake, hatchet, hammer), the astonishment of the master, and finally the master's conversion to Christianity and the cult of the saint. Rather than repeat the same figures several times in the same pictorial field to express a series of events in time in a continuous narrative, as might have been done in late medieval painting, Tintoretto "created a narrative structure that unfolds in time," in Rosand's words.²⁷ In the *Miracle of the Slave* the painter was developing a technique used later to great effect in his enormous *Crucifixion* of 1565 in Sala dell'Albergo of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco (fig. 76). There the procession to Calvary, including the successive raising of each of the three crosses, is brilliantly conveyed, collapsing separate episodes and also unfolding each in time. Tintoretto makes a distinction between Christ's cross, already vertical, that of the Good Thief, which is being raised (fig. 77), and that of the Bad Thief, which is still on the ground, as his body is lashed to it. Moreover, the specific activities of many bystanders are conveyed as distinct events that seem to unfold simultaneously. These events include the casting of lots to divide Christ's clothing, the ridicule of the soldiers, the offering of the sponge of vinegar, and the fainting of the Virgin Mary.²⁸

The notion of "reading" is important here. Although Tintoretto was attentive to anecdotal details even in his largest paintings, he did not merely illustrate a text, or group of texts, but arguably depicted his own interpretation of the story, making numerous mental adjustments and interpolations to the narrative long before he put brush to canvas or chalk to paper.²⁹ Certainly the *Miracle of the Slave* – with its numerous sub-incidents and allusions to other works of art, to be explored below – seems to be based more on Tintoretto's personal reading of and involvement with the story than any single text. When it came time to work on a still larger scale than the *Miracle of the Slave*, for example in the choir paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto,

Tintoretto brought to bear his new expertise in organizing separate episodes into sweeping, single-field compositions.

Although the story of the *Miracle of the Slave* would seem to be a perfect Hollywood treatment, ready to be painted, it bears repeating that it was not at all a commonly depicted event among the many miracles of Mark. Indeed, it seems to have taken Tintoretto's painting to put this particular story on the map, a thought that the painter must have relished.³⁰ The specific episode does not appear, for instance, in the long entry on Saint Mark in George Kaftal's volume that treats the *Iconography of the Saints in the Painting of North East Italy*.³¹ Nor is the event depicted anywhere in the mosaics of the Basilica di San Marco, although many depictions of Mark and stories from his life are present. It is not included either among the seven episodes devoted to the story of Mark in Paolo Veneziano's 1345 *Pala Feriale*, the horizontal panel painting that served as the cover of the Basilica's precious Pala d'Oro altarpiece. Thus these "sourcebooks" for Venetian artists were not of help to Tintoretto as he planned his painting.

The immediate compositional prototype was, as mentioned earlier, Sansovino's bronze relief of c. 1541-44 in one of the choir stalls near high altar of San Marco (fig. 75).³² Sansovino's relief – a horizontal rectangle similarly proportioned to Tintoretto's canvas – established the fundamental design of the composition: a tightly packed crowd of onlookers, the furious master decreeing the punishments from his throne at the right edge, and a strong vertical constituting the center axis, with the prostrate slave suffering the tortures at the center bottom edge and the interceding Saint Mark directly above in the sky. The three distinct tortures or tools (stake, axe, hammer) mentioned in the text are clearly identifiable in the relief. Certainly the crush of the crowd produces a claustrophobic effect, underscoring the plight of the slave – and the timely intervention of Mark.

Tintoretto improved upon his model by slightly opening up the tight grouping of interlocked figures covering the entire lower two-thirds of the pictorial field. This created a stronger left-to-right effect in the painting, leading the viewer through the composition, isolating more effectively the three tools, and presenting a clearer sequence of events. Tintoretto's composition is characterized by a powerful directional pull, from the left, where heads of bystanders first look straight down, observing the thwarted tortures. The next groups of onlookers gaze towards the upper right, drawing the viewer's own eye counterclockwise towards the turbaned man in green, who holds the shattered fragments of the mallet up to the astounded master at the upper right. Faced with such evidence, the cruel master throws out his hands in astonishment, evidently converted.³³ According to Tintoretto's composition, the closer a figure is placed to the composition's right edge, the more accepting of the miracle the witness is.³⁴ Following the visual clues in the painting, the viewer also reads the composition scanning from left to right.

Tintoretto's oil painting also enjoyed a number of expressive advantages over the material constraints of bronze relief. The most obvious was a sophisticated system of color unity across the composition's surface, particularly the chords of honey yellow, deep red, and cerulean blue; the broad fields of red, largely drapery or clothing, seem to orbit around the complementary color of olive green worn by the central tormentor.³⁵ The inherent possibilities of painting over sculpture also permitted greater pictorial depth, and this allowed in turn a higher viewpoint. The painting is presently displayed in the Gallerie dell'Accademia relatively close to the floor, presumably about the same height as it was in the studio when Tintoretto executed it. At this height, the viewer gazes into a stage set, one clearly defined by a patterned floor below and an ivy-covered trellis above, and columns at left and a platform for the Provençal nobleman at

right.³⁶ The implied placement of the viewer is high enough that we look down on the action, as if we are standing nearby, at the same elevation of many of the onlookers, and close the picture plane. This higher viewpoint offers a situation far closer to that in Paris Bordone's *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge* (fig. 70) than in Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (fig. 25) or Sansovino's relief (fig. 75).³⁷ By this raised viewpoint in the Tintoretto painting the observer also looks down upon the figure of the slave; thus his expanse of naked flesh appears all the more vulnerable to the wielded weapons. Even in its original, higher position, above the wainscoting in the Scuola di San Marco's Sala Capitolare, the composition's open foreground would have allowed an unimpeded view of the slave and torturers, as if this is happening just in front of the viewer.³⁸

A major difference, however, with these other works – particularly the carefully calibrated classical architecture, clearly based on Sebastiano Serlio, of Bordone's picture for the same *scuola* – was the relative inattention Tintoretto paid to the specifics of the three-dimensional setting. Compared to Titian, Bordone, and certainly Paolo Veronese, Tintoretto often took a casual approach to delineating the settings of his pictures, preferring instead to use clusters of muscular bodies to define the space.³⁹ The massive figures of the *Miracle of the Slave* so dominate the setting that it is hard to imagine the details of this stage set in their absence, despite the glimpses of brick pavement or column base. It is important to emphasize that these vigorous figures are also life-size, and thus engage with the viewer through the parity of scale, inviting him to join the onlookers – or participants. As we stand before Tintoretto's breakthrough work, we experience an immediacy and magnetism not unlike that exerted by his private *Self-Portrait* painted just about two years earlier. Perhaps this was the very painting that those eager eyes in the portrait were envisioning.

Opening a Door

To a greater degree than any of his Venetian – and perhaps even Renaissance contemporaries – Tintoretto enjoyed a remarkable capacity for self-invention, entrepreneurial insight, and even marketing. He appears frequently to have offered discounts, presented free pictures, and agreed to deadlines that he could not meet in order to obtain commissions.⁴⁰ These skills were central not only to his artistic achievement but also to the way that he approached potential clients and rival artists. It seems likely that Ridolfi had Tintoretto's notoriety in mind when he praised Veronese, at the end of the artist's biography, not just for the excellence of his art, but for the "qualities of his soul" ("le qualità dell'animo suo"), meaning in this case his reputation as an evenhanded businessman.⁴¹ Ridolfi emphasizes how Veronese "was always very honest in his business; he never went out of his way to obtain any commission; nor did he degrade his position with low dealings; he always observed his promises and in every action he obtained praise."⁴²

By contrast, Tintoretto eagerly exploited any advantages – particularly personal or family connections – he might hold over his competitors. When his position was not obviously favorable, he would endeavor to manufacture an edge for himself. Tintoretto's resourcefulness will be discussed later in this study, especially in relation to the unusual self-generated commission for the choir paintings at the Madonna dell'Orto, and how the success he created there led produced the opportunity for his greatest accomplishment, the decoration of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. For the moment, it is worth noting that Tintoretto's life is distinguished by the number of times he was able to prise open a door – and stick his foot in.

In times when his career seemed to be at low ebb, Tintoretto would have been particularly keen to press any advantages at hand. As described above, in the second half of the 1540s, he was still waiting for a conspicuous opportunity to announce himself on the public stage. He must have been worried that such a moment would pass him by, although he had shown a knack for absorbing new artistic styles in a personal way and had produced a string of imaginative works for private citizens, some of which presumably produced a certain degree of buzz.⁴³ As we have already noted, a number of influential writers, including Pietro Aretino and Andrea Calmo, approved of his work and would soon make their favorable opinions known in print. The same year that *Miracle of the Slave* was unveiled, these writers published what must have been received wisdom on Tintoretto: that he was a particularly speedy worker. Such a trait was not wholly undesirable to *scuole* officers who served under term limits and would have appreciated completion of a project during their tenures.

Despite his curriculum vitae, Tintoretto still needed an inside track to obtain the commission for the *Miracle of the Slave*. As clarified by Roland Krischel, the door for Tintoretto at the Scuola Grande di San Marco seems to have been opened by Marco Episcopi, son of a pharmacist and a leading member of the *scuola*, with the help of Calmo himself, a *confratello* who joined the same year as Episcopi, in 1534.⁴⁴ Like Tintoretto, Calmo was the son of a cloth dyer, and, according to Krischel, both shared a fascination with the theater, and a love of puns. In the context of the *scuole*, an obvious play on words involved Marco Episcopi – that is, Bishop Mark – since the patron saint of the institution was of course Saint Mark, Bishop of Alexandria. Marco Episcopi might very well, in his role as *scrivan* (secretary) of the *scuola*, have been the person who recorded in November 1542 the decision to continue the painted decoration of the institution.⁴⁵ In 1547, Marco served in a higher capacity as the *guardian da matin*, in effect the

third most powerful officer, and one who would have been able to influence the choice of artists, and Calmo was elected *decano*.⁴⁶ Tintoretto and Marco Episcopi must have hit it off personally, sharing individual ambition as well as modest roots from Brescian families that had immigrated to the metropolis of Venice. A dozen years later, between the end of 1559 and the start of 1560, Tintoretto would marry Marco's daughter, Faustina.⁴⁷

Tintoretto was not the only artist to seek inside help to secure a commission. Networking of this kind was apparently business as usual for the *scuole*. Although artists traditionally submitted finished drawings for the scrutiny of the *scuole*'s officers, even artistic competitions could be swayed by influential voices.⁴⁸ This may have happened with an open competition at the Scuola di San Marco in 1534 to select an artist for the final painting in the Sala dell'Albergo cycle. As pointed out by Peter Humfrey, Paris Bordone's finished painting for the Scuola di San Marco, the *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge* (fig. 70) deserved to win on its merits, particularly in the way it mediated between the old-fashioned pictures already in the room by Mansueti and the Bellini and the most up-to-date work, Palma il Vecchio and Paris Bordone's *Burrasca (Storm at Sea)* (fig. 78); Bordone's finished *Consignment* was more skillful in this generational negotiation, for example, than one of the other submissions, the presentation drawing of the *Consignment* (fig. 79) by Pordenone.⁴⁹ At the same time, it surely did not hurt Bordone's cause that the current Guardian Grande of the *scuola* was a relative by marriage.⁵⁰

Pushing Buttons

The *Miracle of the Slave* owes much of its public success to its carefully calibrated composition. The picture must have particularly impressed Tintoretto's critics and rivals, however, through the number of allusions to other works of art. As discussed above, the

relatively unusual topic allowed Tintoretto something of a *tabula rasa*, whereby he might engage a range of disparate references rather than an overlapping group of prototypes, as would have been the case with more commonly depicted subjects. To cite self-consciously works of art by great predecessors and to incorporate them into a totally new composition is to demonstrate one's mastery over the source material.⁵¹ These references are brilliantly handled, allowing Tintoretto to take his part in the most sophisticated conversations about art of the day.

Although the *Miracle of the Slave* makes a nod to Venetian *scuola* tradition – for example, the number of conspicuous bystanders in supposedly Ottoman or Mamluk garb, recalling the much earlier murals of the Bellini (e.g. fig. 24) – Tintoretto's painting opens a pointed dialogue with avant-garde works by the most innovative Italian artists of the older generation. These citations included a strong allusion to Michelangelo's fresco *Conversion of Saint Paul* (fig. 55) from 1542-45 in terms of the overall disposition of muscular figures with a divine messenger and a Christian recipient occupying a vertical axis down the center. Michelangelo's painting lacks both the foreground immediacy and coordination of elements we see in Tintoretto's canvas.⁵² For these qualities, Tintoretto looked to Michelangelo's great rival, the other giant of Central Italian art, Raphael, an artist famous for his skill at arranging cohesive groupings of figures. As Echols has persuasively argued, the cartoon for the *Sacrifice at Lystra* (fig. 80) of c. 1515-16 provided a compositional base that the Venetian painter invested with the added dynamism of twisting poses and a strong diagonal from the lower left corner to the upper right.⁵³ Just about a year earlier Tintoretto had employed Raphael's cartoon as the template for the composition of his *Esther before Ahasuerus*, a canvas now in the Royal Collection (fig. 52). In Tintoretto's *Esther* the placement of the protagonist Ahasuerus upon a step in the left third of

the pictorial field, the crouching and huddling figures in the right two-thirds, and even the relatively high point of view all find their counterparts in Raphael's prototype.

In the *Miracle of the Slave*, a slightly later and more sophisticated composition, the exploitation of Raphael's model is nearly as direct. Particularly relevant is the similarity in figure type. Those who populate the *Sacrifice at Lystra* are athletic figures with broad shoulders, far closer in type to those Tintoretto utilized in his works of the later 1540s, including the *Miracle of the Slave*, than the muscle-bound titans, whose hips are often wider than their shoulders, seen in Michelangelo's later frescoes like the *Conversion of Saint Paul*. Neither do Tintoretto's figures express the exaggerated, elongated, and supremely elegant proportions of Central Italian *maniera* artists in the 1540s. Indeed Tintoretto's figures seem largely immune to the style of those painters in the circle of artists around the Grimani family of Santa Maria Formosa, specifically Francesco Salviati and Giuseppe Porta Salviati, whose Venetian variant of post-Raphael Central Italian *maniera* was noted in the previous chapter. Instead, Tintoretto's figures in the moment of the *Miracle of the Slave* are dynamic and muscular, rather than self-consciously graceful.

Similarly, the proportional relationship of Tintoretto's figures to the size of the pictorial field is also much more indebted to Raphael's example than Michelangelo's; in the Cappella Paolina fresco, Michelangelo's figures each only take up a third of the field's height. They do not dominate the setting, but are rather dominated by it. In contrast, the cast of figures in a Raphael cartoon, all proportionally larger compared to the overall pictorial field, defines their setting through their volumes. Finally, Raphael's cartoon is replete with poses and gestures, such as the overlapping figures straining for a closer look, and even the stance of the priest, about to strike

the ox with his axe, that Tintoretto took up with enthusiasm when he designed his breakthrough painting.

While Tintoretto's knowledge of Raphael's design for the *Sacrifice of Lystra* is speculative, and assumes the circulation of drawings and prints by other artists recording the overall composition and specific motifs, the Venetian painter undoubtedly knew first-hand the cartoon for Raphael's *Conversion of Saint Paul* tapestry (cf. fig. 61). During Tintoretto's formative years this cartoon was in the possession of the Grimani family. Their palazzo at Santa Maria Formosa featured the most up-to-date *maniera* artists from Rome and a remarkable collection of classical sculpture.⁵⁴ Though Tintoretto seems to have largely ignored the stylistic innovations of the *maniera* painters, he fixated upon Raphael. Tintoretto also adopted the figure scale, close to life size, of the cartoon.⁵⁵

Another compelling Raphael prototype for the *Miracle of the Slave* might be the somewhat earlier fresco of the *Expulsion of Heliodorus* (fig. 81) of 1511-12 from the Stanza di Eliodoro, Vatican Museums.⁵⁶ There are a number of general analogies, such as the vertiginous perspectival construction and elevated point of view (which Tintoretto shifts off axis in his painting), dynamic airborne divine agents (the flogging angels), a prone, foreshortened protagonist (Heliodorus), and an elevated overseer (in this case Pope Julius II at the left). Beyond these similarities, a more significant resemblance is the group of emphatic, careening witnesses at the left. In fact, it seems probable that Tintoretto's figure grasping the column and the twisting woman seen from behind are painted in direct homage to Raphael's fresco, both in pose and their alignment in the composition.

Similarly the strong left-to-right force of Tintoretto's composition and its foreground emphasis were surely indebted to Venetian tradition, including Titian's *Presentation of the*

Virgin in the Temple, though the poses and gestures were now far more energetic and expressive than any previous Venetian *scuola* painting. We have come a long way from the composition of a Carpaccio narrative.

Besides energizing the overall compositions of illustrious prototypes like Michelangelo and especially Raphael, Tintoretto's *Miracle of the Slave* also made a series of deliberate, bold quotations to place this painting – and thus its author – squarely in the tradition of the greatest artists of the day. For example, the turbaned man in green brandishing the shattered mallet is a reversal of the apostle in red with outstretched arms in the lower left of Titian's *Assunta* of 1516-18. This prominent figure in the *Assunta* had already been borrowed by Sansovino for the central figure in his *Miraculous Apparition of Saint Mark*, another relief in the choir stalls at San Marco (fig. 82).⁵⁷ Thus Tintoretto used the pose of one of the most conspicuous individuals in the *Miracle of the Slave* to cite, and indeed challenge, both Titian and Sansovino simultaneously. The elegant touch of Mark's fluttering cape, suspended high above the figures on the ground, recalls the floating drapery of Bacchus in Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* (fig. 69) of 1520-23.⁵⁸ Krischel has argued that the man in chainmail with his back to the spectator, at the right edge of the painting, was meant to invoke a similar conspicuous figure in the lower right corner of Titian's *Crowning with Thorns* (fig. 83), an altarpiece on panel made in 1540-42 for Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan (now in the Louvre).⁵⁹

Meanwhile, the two reclining figures on the stone block at right reflect Michelangelo's sculptures of the *Times of the Day* from the Medici Tombs in the New Sacristy of San Lorenzo, Florence, largely finished by the sculptor's departure for Rome in 1534, if not properly installed within the chapel until 1546 (fig. 84).⁶⁰ The pose of Tintoretto's cross-legged man with a pink turban – and the distinctive motif of the bent wrist and right hand resting on the thigh –

specifically recalls Michelangelo's statue of *Dusk (Crepuscolo)*. There is abundant evidence, both painted and drawn (e.g. fig. 85, Gabinetto dei Disegni, Uffizi), that Tintoretto was deeply familiar and in fact impressed with these particular sculptures. It is also worth noting that the clay versions he chose to study lacked the draperies of Michelangelo's original marbles or early copies such as Niccolò Tribolo's terracottas (Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence), and thus emphasized musculature and the rhythm of limbs, rather than their allegorical character or actual position on the curved sarcophagi.⁶¹ Selecting audacious angles to view these models, such as from directly above, Tintoretto's drawings show a desire to manipulate Michelangelo's inventions and use them to his own ends.

More loosely, the reclining figures at right in the *Miracle of the Slave* also recall in their languid muscularity the *Ignudi* from the Sistine Ceiling, especially the thinner and more relaxed ones painted earlier in the decoration of the vault, such as the *Ignudo* above and to the right of the *Prophet Joel* (fig. 86). The general position of Tintoretto's seated nobleman – the one whose decree sets the punishment into motion – with his proper right knee pushed forward and his left leg trailing beside the seat, and indeed the whole pyramidal structure of grouping at the right edge of the painting, all evoke the marble statues of the *Capitani* on their thrones from Michelangelo's New Sacristy. The specific citation of Michelangelo's Medici Tomb sculpture is far more significant than the loose evocation of the figure types in the Sistine Chapel ceiling. The quotations from these sculptures are so explicit as to be undeniable, and they reflect relatively up-to-date work, from the 1530s, if not quite contemporary art. More importantly, by transforming these sculptures into paintings, Tintoretto achieved a distinct three-dimensionality in his figures, and could simultaneously claim the superiority of his medium over sculpture in terms of the debate of the relative merits of painting and sculpture, known as the *paragone*, a

subject for the next chapter. Finally, the choice of Michelangelo's tomb sculptures may also have given Tintoretto scope for some gentle mocking of his Florentine predecessor; the very serious statues of the *Times of the Day* and *Capitani* no longer commemorate a dead nobleman. Rather, these figures at the right side of the painting are now shown respectively focused on, or astonished by, the miracle taking place. In effect, Tintoretto has brought Michelangelo's stones to life to witness his breakthrough.

Sansovino is quoted not only for the general composition of his bronze relief of the same subject, mentioned above, but in the looming architectural structure with paired columns at the far left of Tintoretto's painting. This building recalls Sansovino's recently completed Loggetta in front of the Campanile on Piazza San Marco, surely an ideal setting for observing a public spectacle (fig. 87).⁶² Such allusions to some of the most prominent works of Italian art by artists of the older generation would surely have registered with many of the members of the Scuola Grande di San Marco and above all with a crucial audience: Tintoretto's fellow artists.

These numerous, pointed citations were part of a larger project, one necessary at this very stage in Tintoretto's career. The density of allusion in Tintoretto's *Miracle of the Slave* proclaims both a breakthrough and an arrival. As argued by Echols, "These quotations... probably represented not so much an homage to Michelangelo, Sansovino, Raphael and Titian as an announcement that the name of Tintoretto now belonged among theirs."⁶³ Moreover, if there is any substance to the intriguing suggestion of Erasmus Weddigen that the slave is a self-portrait, the *Miracle of the Slave* could be read as a statement both of Tintoretto's invulnerability to the threats and injuries from his professional rivals and a votive offering to Venice's patron saint for his personal success.⁶⁴ In this light, Tintoretto's canvas can be considered his equivalent of Dürer's Munich *Self-Portrait* (fig. 18), a declaration, in artistic and religious terms, of arrival.⁶⁵

Indeed, by citing specific works by famous predecessors and contemporaries, with this painting Tintoretto issued a three-part challenge: to the past, present, and future. He declared to his rivals that he belonged alongside the greatest of earlier generations, that he was equal to any Italian artist of his day, and that from that moment forward, Venetian artists would need in turn to cite Tintoretto.⁶⁶

“La voce de la publica laude”

In the *Miracle of the Slave* there was apparently something for everyone, including Tommaso Rangone, the wealthy social-climbing physician from Ravenna who seems to have financed the commission, who is portrayed entering the scene at the lower left edge.⁶⁷ Rangone’s privileged position within the painting is noteworthy, since he plays a more important role than a conventional donor portrait, which in earlier Italian painting was often a smaller-scale or marginalized figure (sometimes just a head at a lower corner) who stands for the patron’s financing of the commission. Here Rangone’s specific placement is liminal, his function twofold. That is, Tintoretto has cast Rangone as an eyewitness, although perhaps the most reserved one, to the miracle taking place. While others bend their bodies toward the center of the composition and the prone slave, or gesture excitedly with their hands, Rangone watches the action in a more detached manner. From the angle of his head, he seems to gaze not at the nude slave or the efforts to harm him, but rather at the fragmented weapons strewn in the foreground. These objects, as much as the inviolate body of the slave, prove the efficacy of Mark’s intervention, as Rangone is his witness.

At the same time, Rangone is also nearly in our space. He serves a surrogate for the beholder standing in front of the picture. None of the figures within the painting seems to notice

the presence of the flying saint, perhaps not even the slave, whose eyes seem to be closed and may only comprehend his rescuer in the form of an interior vision. The composition is remarkably self-contained. Not a single figure comes even close to making eye contact with the viewer. The onlookers miss Mark above and take in only the failed tortures below. To be aware of the saint, that is, to be omnivoyant, one needs to be placed just beyond the edge of the composition, in other words in our space.

From outside the painting one can take in both the saintly intervention and, even more importantly, Tintoretto's painterly achievement. Rangone's position seems to afford him a similar perspective; he was, presumably, the viewer Tintoretto was most eager to please. It is worth dwelling, then, as the first viewers, including Aretino and Vasari, did on the remarkable attention to surfaces and textures within the picture. These range from the gleams on metal to the dense folds of crumpled clothing, painted with impasto as thick as cake frosting. Such confident brushstrokes make this picture a high point of the haptic impulse in Tintoretto's art.⁶⁸ The viewer outside the picture and Rangone, perched on the boundary between the pictorial space and real space, seem invited to run not just our eyes but also our fingers across the fictive three-dimensional surfaces, hard and soft, smooth and irregular – an armor plate, a length of rope, a man's heel. The foreground implements of torture seem presented for the taking. And although our hands would not be rewarded with the touch of actual three-dimensional objects, the powerfully tactile presence of the paint surface itself continuously calls out for our touch. Tintoretto's mediation of this tension is another index of the work's sophistication.

Rangone's admiration for both painting and painter is evident, since he ordered at his expense further canvases from Tintoretto to continue the room's decoration. Rangone announced the commission in 1562 when he began the first of his two terms as the Scuola's *Guardian*

Grande.⁶⁹ Although Rangone does not figure in the documents of the Scuola until the 1560s, he was well known for self-promoting efforts elsewhere in Venice as early as 1553, when he boldly applied to install a statue of himself on the façade of the church of San Geminiano, right on Piazza San Marco, facing the basilica. Rangone's attempts at social aggrandizement in this and other cases were usually frustrated by officials who disliked his upstart attitude, which violated the Venetian emphasis on *mediocritas*. The physician, however, generally found alternative outlets for his art patronage, nearly as brazen, such as rebuilding the façade of San Zulian with a life-size bronze of Rangone himself, originally assigned to Sansovino but ultimately made by Alessandro Vittoria, above the main portal (fig. 88).⁷⁰ In this example and many others Rangone was able to have the last word. In such a way, he may have provided another example for Tintoretto, as an outsider who would not take no for an answer and triumphed in the end.

The three further paintings for the Scuola di San Marco that Rangone sponsored make him one of Tintoretto's most important patrons in the 1560s. In these later paintings, for example the *Theft of the Body of Saint Mark* of c. 1564 (fig. 89), Rangone's presence was far more than an onlooker at the composition's margins. Rather he became an active, and controversial, participant in the depicted afterlife of Saint Mark.⁷¹ In the *Theft of the Body of Saint Mark*, Tintoretto more than adequately repaid Rangone's faith in him by featuring the patron no longer in a marginal position but rather in the center of the composition. Rangone in fact holds the head of the Saint in a pose reminiscent of Joseph of Arimathea in the *Entombment of Christ*.⁷² It would be hard to imagine a more flattering identification with a New Testament figure for a wealthy Renaissance patron than the pious man who donated his own tomb, provided the shroud, and assisted at the burial of Christ after the Crucifixion.⁷³ Although the additional paintings for the San Marco cycle, and such gestures on the part of Tintoretto toward his client, were more

than a decade away at the time of the *Miracle of the Slave*, the painter had shown already that he knew how to please and even flatter his admirers.

Even Tintoretto's timing for the unveiling of his painting could not have been better. In the spring of 1548, Titian was far away in Augsburg, painting for Charles V.⁷⁴ In the absence of Titian and his proximate and pervasive influence on tastemakers, Tintoretto and his allies were well positioned to choreograph the reception of this new work. It is much harder to imagine Aretino composing his letter in praise of Tintoretto and the new picture's debut if the critic's dear friend Titian had been just a short walk away. As will be discussed below, Tintoretto was indeed something of a prisoner of Venice, travelling outside of the lagoon very little in his long career. The success of the unveiling of the *Miracle of the Slave* in the absence of his greatest rival must have illustrated to him the perils of departing the Venetian scene, even temporarily. It seems reasonable that Tintoretto understood that if he left town a still-younger painter could "pull a Tintoretto" and become the next big thing.

Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century critics understood how brilliantly Tintoretto had succeeded with this painting. For example, Calmo's 1548 letter dedicated to Tintoretto is more than a general celebration of the personality and abilities of a dear friend.⁷⁵ Rather, his letter seems prompted by the specific public triumph of the unveiling of the *Miracle of the Slave*. Calmo alludes to the communal acclamation for the work and details how this painting had thwarted his envious rivals, pleasing Calmo to no end: "...[you] give me as much satisfaction by pleasing everyone, making the miserly, the wicked and the envious explode."⁷⁶ Moreover, the bizarre structure of Calmo's letter, full of headlong phrases in Venetian dialect, piled up on each other with very few sentence breaks, might reflect in its very structure the overlapping clamor of admiring verbal comments made, in the immediate aftermath of the unveiling, by men in the

street. Calmo argues that such an accomplishment would have been impossible if one so young had not been blessed, despite his youth, with the wisdom of an older man (“zovene d’etae e vechio de consideration”) and also with unusually quick working methods, whereby Tintoretto was able to depict a figure from life in only half an hour (“fè una fegura retrata dal natural in meza hora”). Although Calmo’s letter is unusually meandering, it praises the variety of elements that Tintoretto could handle skillfully (and by implication, in a single work): “You know that you have as fine a method of presenting gestures, motions, front-faces, profiles, shadows, distant views and vistas as anyone astride the modern Pegasus.”⁷⁷ Calmo’s index of pictorial abilities confirms his reference is not to refer to Tintoretto’s work of the preceding decade as a whole – where such successful execution of a range of pictorial tasks was not always evident, and certainly not in the same picture – but rather this single watershed painting.

Aretino’s letter of April 1548 offers the most vivid and most specific commentary about the unveiling of the *Miracle of the Slave*. He praises some of the same artistic traits as Calmo but zeroes in on the painting in question. First, Aretino indicates that this letter both summarizes general acclamation for the work and also follows up on praise he had conveyed personally to the artist. Aretino emphasizes how he himself was ahead of the curve, spotting Tintoretto long before the rest of the public voiced their praise, “Since the voice of public praise accords with the opinion I myself gave you on the great painting of the Saint in the Scuola di San Marco” (“Da che la voce de la publica laude conferma con quella propria da me datavi nel gran quadro de l’istoria dedicata in la scola di San Marco”).⁷⁸ He then argues how he deserves to receive credit for his own *giudizio*. Above all, he recognizes that Tintoretto has made a major leap forward in *disegno* with the *Miracle of the Slave* and how this technical mastery sweeps up the viewer, who is indeed powerless to ignore the artist’s achievement:

Just as there is no nose, however incapacitated, which does not get a faint scent of the smoke of incense, similarly there is no man so little instructed in the virtue of design that he would not marvel at the relief of the figure who, quite naked on the ground, lies open to the cruelties of his martyrdom. The colours are flesh, indeed, the lines rounded and the body so lifelike that I swear to you, on the goodwill I bear you, that the faces, airs and expressions of the crowd surrounding it are so exactly as they would be in reality, that the spectacle seems rather real than simulated.⁷⁹

Although the claim that a work of art has equaled reality is a rhetorical topos that goes back at least as far as Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* (and suffuses Vasari's *Vite*), Aretino uses his breathless praise to involve the reader in the sense of discovery. That is, his literary style encourages not only readers to share in the spreading sense of amazement provoked by the painting, but also to recapitulate the astonishment of the onlookers *within* the painting – “the faces, airs and expressions of the crowd surrounding it” (“le cere, le arie e le viste de le turbe, che la circondano”) – as they come to understand the miracle happening before them.

Of course Aretino is too astute a critic to merely be swayed by the picture's overall impression or mood; rather, he understands that one measure of quality in a painting lies in specific technical achievements. Thus he calls attention to the three-dimensional rendering of the slave as a signal accomplishment, one obvious both to the expert (i.e. Aretino) and also available to all. He emphasizes that this achievement in conveying relief was something that no man, no matter how ignorant, could ignore: “non è uomo sì poco istrutto ne la virtù del disegno che non stupisca nel rilievo.”

Aretino ends the letter with an admonition for the painter to slow down and temper his *prestezza* with patience and careful finish, warning him that excessive pride may get in the way of “rising to an even higher level of flawlessness” (“salire in maggior grado di perfezione”). Of course in any period there are critics who feel the need to add a dig along with broad praise. But the ensuing reproach of Tintoretto and insistence that he rein in his youthful carelessness – “a

raffrenare il corso de la trascuratezza” – suggests that Aretino was voicing a larger criticism, not just his own.⁸⁰ Later writers, including Vasari, take up this thread of complaint, and the comparative success of Tintoretto’s competitors in the 1550s, that is in the aftermath of the *Miracle of the Slave*, implies that many other individuals in Venice found something lacking or irresponsible in Tintoretto’s first public triumph.

The final point of Aretino’s letter – the criticism of the picture’s “trascuratezza” (negligence) – may seem puzzling to us, given the evident effort employed on almost every inch of the canvas surface. Such condemnation might have been nearly unfathomable to the artist. The *Miracle of the Slave* is among the most highly finished works in Tintoretto’s entire oeuvre. It was certainly his most refined work to date, as well as the most polished mural painting from any part of his career. Even especially bravura passages declare impressive control and diligence. Consider the glinting highlights on the armor man, leaning over to look more closely at left, or the busy silvery folds – all long strokes – that constitute the gray sleeve of the sharply bent arm of the next man over (fig. 90). Note the blue stripes in the white turban of the man holding the broken mallets aloft, or the shimmering chainmail on the blue-capped man at the painting’s bottom right corner. Tintoretto executed these and other sections with particular precision and coherence. Each in an exercise in mimesis, swift but assured. Although he loved shortcuts and was in the process of developing a speedy working process that would allow an unprecedented rate of production, these detailed portions were carefully thought out in order to capture the essential volumes and surfaces of the forms described. The brushstrokes are not merely for effect or to create a lively surface, a trap into which in later years many of his assistants and followers fell.⁸¹ Rather, the poise and control of these areas allow other passages in the painting to remain less finished and indeed sketchy. These bold and confident strokes declare the presence of the

painter and the process of creation on the very surface of the canvas.⁸² Tintoretto was a magician unafraid of revealing the secret to his tricks.

This *Miracle of the Slave*, laden with passages of aggressive impasto, marks a stage of artistic growth and technical handling far beyond the works of Tintoretto's twenties, those heavily influenced by Schiavone, for example. Although one could easily imagine Tintoretto executing Schiavone's *Conversion of Paul* (fig. 59), perhaps even with one hand tied behind his back, it is impossible to conceive that Schiavone could have pulled off the *Miracle of the Slave*. In such light the uneven critical reception was probably particularly frustrating to Tintoretto. It must have been far from clear what else he could do to please his denigrators. In this painting, he had already slowed down and learned to temper his haste. Further gloss and smaller or more measured brushstrokes would not only have invalidated the attempt at recreating "il colorito di Tiziano," such a manner would also have been untrue to Tintoretto's artistic personality.

Ridolfi's account of the initial reception reinforces Aretino's enthusiastic but ultimately mixed verdict. Even the greatest achievements have their skeptics, and some of the *confratelli* apparently wished to reject the painting after its installation, naturally infuriating the painter. Tintoretto called their bluff and removed the picture, only returning it after the patrons had realized their error. In Ridolfi's words:

But since virtue always encounters difficulties it came about that differences of opinion arose among the members of the Confraternity, with some wanting the painting to remain on display and the others not. Hence Tintoretto became angry and had the picture taken away and brought back to his house. Finally the uproar died down, and the adversaries, seeing themselves jeered, and realizing how much they were giving up through the loss of that painting, which was universally acclaimed as a marvel, were forced to ask him to bring it back. And in the end, after keeping them in suspense for some time he replaced it.⁸³

The plausibility of the controversy is reinforced by the radically different appearance of the *Miracle of the Slave* compared to any of the earlier narrative paintings for the Scuola, even Paris

Bordone's relatively up-to-date contribution of a few years earlier (fig. 70). For a client who expected something along the lines of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini's *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria* (fig. 24) in the adjacent room, or even Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin* across town (fig. 25), Tintoretto's pulsing, emphatic composition would have come as a shock. As a number of scholars have noted, the picture's technique exacerbated the effect, challenging expected notions of finish with unblended brushstrokes; these might have implied to some viewers that the artist had not made an effort.⁸⁴ Some members of the Scuola must have bristled at Rangone's aggressive patronage and considered the picture a pawn in their struggle with his massive ego. Despite the misgivings of some *confratelli*, the quality of the painting itself, "acclamata dall'universale per maravigliosa," not to mention the unceasing competition among the *scuole* to possess the most splendidly decorated meetinghouse, would have made permanently losing the picture intolerable.

It is worth pointing out, however, that although on other occasions Tintoretto caused dissent within groups of his clients, notably at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, the account bears similarities to that previous shock to Venetian artistic sensibilities, Titian's *Assunta* (fig. 17), a picture so beyond the expectations of the patrons that they were initially reluctant to accept it.⁸⁵ Given Ridolfi's championing of Tintoretto, anecdotes that fashioned the younger artist as a second Titian would have aided his case rhetorically. Whether or not these anecdotes were literally true and the paintings were in danger of permanent removal from their intended settings, the important point is that consensus soon settled over these provocative paintings, inserting them into the Venetian cannon and establishing with them a new standard that later artists would need to follow.⁸⁶

For his own part, Ridolfi's mid-seventeenth-century biography of Tintoretto is wholly enthusiastic about the picture. He concisely describes the painting and the tale behind it (which he presumably knew from the texts included in Jacobus de Voragine and Stringa), but, like Aretino, Ridolfi also focuses attention on the specific qualities and passages within the painting that impress him:

The subject deals with a servant of a knight of Provence who against his master's will departed to visit the relics of St. Mark. On his return the knight commanded that in expiation for his transgression his eyes should be put out and his legs broken. Here then Tintoretto painted the servant amid broken pieces of iron and wood prepared for the torture; and in the air we see, brilliantly foreshortened, St. Mark coming to his aid, and he remained unharmed since the saints do not fail to protect in their tribulations those devoted to them. Bearing witness to this great miracle are many people dressed in robes with barbaric ornaments, and also soldiers and functionaries in attitudes of amazement. One of them shows the hammers and splintered wood to his lord who is seated above, overcome with wonderment. There are also some people clinging to columns, and among the marvels of that marvelous composition is a woman leaning against a pedestal and bending back in order to see the action, who is so alert and vivacious that she seems alive.⁸⁷

Ridolfi's account, emphasizing the physical evidence of the saint's intervention, praises particularly the accomplished foreshortening of Saint Mark swooping from above – “uno scorcio maraviglioso” – and on the variety of onlookers within the painting, echoing Aretino's earlier approval.

Ridolfi's acclamation seems to take specific cues from both the list of beautifully rendered elements noted in Calmo's letter – “gestures, motions, front-faces, profiles, shadows, distant views and vistas” (“i gesti, maniere, maiestae, i scurci, perfili, ombre e lontane e prospetive”) – but also particularly from Vasari's 1568 account of the painting in his *Vite*: “and in that scene is a great abundance of figures, foreshortenings, pieces of armor, buildings, portraits, and other suchlike things, which render the work very ornate.”⁸⁸ Vasari's biography of Tintoretto, sandwiched inside the life of Battista Franco (c. 1510-61), is famous in Renaissance

historiography for its disapproving tone. Vasari disparaged Tintoretto for “working haphazardly and without *disegno*, almost showing that art was merely a joke”) (“ha lavorato a caso e senza disegno, quasi mostrando che quest’arte è una baia”).⁸⁹

On the other hand, Vasari’s account does offer grudging praise for certain features of Tintoretto’s achievement, such as his skill in rendering the human body, particularly in foreshortening, but misses other elements presumably worth admiration. A telling example is his description of *Saint Roch Cures the Plague Victims* (fig. 91) for the right wall of the *cappella maggiore* of the church of San Rocco, completed a year after the *Miracle of the Slave*. In his account of this work, Vasari ignored Tintoretto’s deftly handled horizontal composition, featuring a cluster of figures at either side of the pictorial field and a plunging recession at center with Saint Roch himself as the focal point. Moreover, the critic made no comment about what was truly novel here, namely the strong chiaroscuro effects in a gloomy setting and the concomitant analogy between powerful light and miraculous healing. Instead, Vasari merely noted the large size of the painting and endorsed the variety of figures and the number of nudes within a hospital setting, admiring particularly a foreshortened corpse:

He therefore painted, for places below the work of Pordenone in the principal chapel of S. Rocco, two pictures in oils as broad as the width of the whole chapel – namely, about twelve braccia each. In one he depicted a view in perspective as of a hospital filled with beds and sick persons in various attitudes who are being healed by S. Rocco; and among these are some nude figures very well conceived, and a dead body in foreshortening that is very beautiful.⁹⁰

Although a painter himself, Vasari was most taken with individual instances of technical skill within a picture, not the overall aesthetic achievement or any novelty in its treatment of illumination.

As we saw with Ridolfi’s descriptions, the focus on specific details within a painting was not exclusively a Tuscan predilection. For example, the Venetian Paolo Pino also championed

variety, particularly of textures afforded by skillful coloring, in a painting.⁹¹ Another Venetian contemporary, Lodovico Dolce, made a point to praise foreshortening, acknowledging in his dialogue *L'Aretino* that a well-executed example confirmed a painter's skill and wisdom: "Instances also occur where the figures are foreshortened, either totally or partially – something which cannot be done without great judgment and discretion."⁹² Perhaps in a taunt at Vasari, Dolce then had the Florentine speaker in his dialogue, Fabrini, remark on the desirability of as many foreshortenings as possible to earn praise: "I have been given to understand that foreshortenings constitute one of the leading problems in art. I should have thought, therefore, that the more often a man put them into operation, the more he would deserve praise." ("Ho inteso, che gli scorti sono una delle principali difficoltà dell'arte. Onde io crederei, che chi piu spesso gli mettesse in opera, piu meritasse laude.") The character of Aretino, who naturally takes a Venetian point of view, rejects this attitude, and insists that bold foreshortenings should be employed sparingly, since just one instance of foreshortening can get the point across; "a single figure which is foreshortened expediently is sufficient indication that the painter could have foreshortened all of his figures supposing he had wanted to do so." ("Et una sola figura, che convenevolmente scorti, basta a dimostrare, che'l Pittor volendo, le saprebbe fare iscartar tutte.")⁹³

All the same, no critic denied the importance of foreshortenings within paintings. Furthermore, the vast editing project of Vasari's *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, with many of the lives cobbled together from his own notes and many submissions from reporters in the field, as it were, also probably favored singling out the telling detail in individual paintings over a nuanced analysis of the whole work.⁹⁴ Although Ridolfi's biography of Tintoretto was intended as a corrective to Vasari's distinct anti-Venetian, and especially anti-

Tintoretto bias, notably both critics admired the same features, including the complex foreshortenings and diversity of observers. According to the views of both Vasari and Ridolfi, and indeed Aretino, Pino, and Calmo, an abundance of such features allowed viewers to judge quality in a painting.⁹⁵

It is significant that both those predisposed to liking Tintoretto, such as Aretino, and those who considered the entire Venetian approach to painting suspicious and unsatisfactory, as did Vasari, nevertheless found something to agree upon: the importance of well-executed foreshortenings of the human figure and a variety of depicted individuals to create a lively and heterogeneous composition. In this way, Tintoretto certainly knew his audience. He realized that those he most wanted to impress, namely current tastemakers, other artists, and potential patrons, valued these criteria above others. Thus he structured his breakthrough painting to include not just one but two strongly foreshortened figures; together these constitute a vertical axis displaced slightly to the left of the picture's center: the slave on the ground and Saint Mark swooping through the air. Although both are muscular, bearded men, these figures are themselves varied, with the slave's head pointing to the picture plane and the saint shown with his feet toward the viewer. Moreover, the slave is nude – the most impressive test of drawing, with no concealing drapery to disguise flaws in *disegno* – while the saint is clothed. Finally, most of the slave's body is brightly illuminated, while the saint is mostly in shadow. Employing such a *contrapposto* of figures, Tintoretto unified the composition and sets up a formal strategy that he would use throughout his career in narrative paintings, namely paired opposite figures.⁹⁶ Most importantly, Tintoretto was safe to assume that these two figures in the picture would attract deep admiration, from both his immediate audience and viewers generations later.

In his *Carta del navagar pitoresco* (1660) Marco Boschini goes further than Ridolfi in championing Venetian painterly style and rejecting Vasarian preferences. The authority of the *Carta* derives partly from the infectious style of the text, an extravagant 681-page poem with a galloping rhythm composed in dialect, and partly from the author's insight into the sensuous power of painting.⁹⁷ Boschini also eschews the biographical priorities of Vasari and Ridolfi. Within a long and rhapsodic passage on the *Miracle of the Slave*, Boschini seems to echo Aretino and other earlier writers by acknowledging the impressive three-dimensionality of the painting and suggesting that it rivals sculpture through the artist's skillful *disegno*:

This is the Treasure that has no
equal in the entire world
this truly is a painting in three dimensions!
Altogether it's a twenty-five carat one
You can well see, that the concept is true
that Art is superior to Nature.
In drawing there is none like it,
thanks to the great worth of Tintoretto.⁹⁸

According to Boschini, Tintoretto's painting truly conveys three dimensions ("un quadro xe ben de tuto tondo"), an achievement so remarkable that it rivals gold of 25 carats, that is, beyond the purest. The emphasis that these writers place on the convincing three-dimensionality of the *Miracle of the Slave* is more than a commentary on the *paragone*, the rhetorical comparison between painting and sculpture, a much-discussed topic in sixteenth-century Italy, to be addressed in the next chapter. Indeed, Tintoretto's painting used conspicuous foreshortened figures to impress his audience and achieve an even more astonishing effect. His technique in painting these figures, with an unprecedented variety of bravura brushstrokes, indicates that the *scorti* were only a means to a more sophisticated end.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the public reception of the *Miracle of the Slave* is that these early adulatory texts contributed to a still-young discourse, a specific formula for

artistic greatness. This was the combination of opposing aesthetic poles – Michelangelo’s drawing and Titian’s paint handling – that circulated in Venetian artistic circles, and presumably far beyond, in the 1540s and 1550s.⁹⁹ Indeed in 1548, the very year his painting was unveiled, Paolo Pino published his *Dialogo di Pittura*, claiming, “If Titian and Michelangelo were a single body, if the drawing of Michelangelo were added to the color of Titian, then we would be able to call him the supreme god of painting.” (“Se Tiziano e Michiel Angelo fussero un corpo solo, over al disegno di Michiel Angelo aggiuntovi il colore di Tiziano, se gli potrebbe dir lo dio della pittura.”)¹⁰⁰ In his dialogue, Pino’s discussion of this formula followed a listing of many “talented painters” (“valenti pittori”) of the day, including Tintoretto. This mention offers another indication of the artist’s arrival on the Venetian and indeed Italian scene that year.¹⁰¹

Part of the force of Pino’s equation rested in the dual significance of *disegno*. The term meant both a physical drawing, as in marks on a sheet of paper, and the imaginative concept held in the mind of the artist, an idea to be expressed on a flat surface through contours. Pino’s comment makes clear that Venetians in the middle of the sixteenth century viewed Michelangelo as supremely talented in both senses of *disegno*. In other words, he was noted both for his drawings and for his complete poise in depicting volumetric human form. As Echols summarizes, these contrasting artistic concepts embody distinct modes of perception: “*disegno* is conceptual, based on the apprehension of ideal form; *colorito* is sensuous, based upon direct perception through the senses.”¹⁰²

In the context of sixteenth-century Italian artistic practice, the two notions also implied divergent working procedures, with *disegno* prizing draftsmanship and typically involving many preparatory drawings in order to plan the painting before touching a brush. By contrast, *colorito* privileged the process of coloring through the application of successive layers of paint, a

potentially far more spontaneous approach.¹⁰³ Artists active in Florence and Rome saw *disegno* as the most important quality in any work of art, and Vasari made sure to stress its unique role as the basis for all artistic training and the unifier of painting, sculpture, and architecture. According to this view, setting down on paper a mental conception was the first step in the execution of any picture, statue, or building. Vasari also regarded Venetian coloring as fundamentally deceptive, a crutch used to conceal poor drawing. This trickery was employed even by the most famous Venetian painters, as he noted in an aside within his *Life of Titian*: "...being obliged to conceal beneath the glamour of colouring the painful fruits of your ignorance of design, in the manner that was followed for many years by the Venetian painters, Giorgione, Palma, Pordenone, and others, who never saw Rome or any other works of absolute perfection."¹⁰⁴

By contrast, Venetian critics, following the lead of Giorgione and Titian, cherished subtlety and variety in coloring. *Colorito* allowed painters to convey the world as it really appeared. For example, the voice of Aretino within Dolce's *Dialogo della Pittura* made clear that approaching nature was a crucial goal for a painter. For him the very definition of painting depends on reproducing nature:

"To put it briefly, then, I say that painting is none other than the imitation of nature; and the closer to nature a man comes in his works, the more perfect a master he is." ("Dico adunque la Pittura, brevemente parlando, non essere altro, che imitation della Natura: e colui, che piu nelle sue opere le si avvicina, è piu perfetto Maestro.")¹⁰⁵ According to the Venetian point of view, the natural world, after all, is hardly composed of outlines delineating forms; rather, patches of warm coloring far better conveyed three-dimensional reality in two dimensions. Venetians would insist for generations that *disegno* could only reach perfection when combined with *colorito*. As

Boschini declared in 1674, in effect refuting Vasari, “Sì che, senza il Colorito, non resta perfezionato il Dissegno.”¹⁰⁶

Directly relevant for our case, during Tintoretto’s lifetime, the Florentine critic Raffaello Borghini published *Il Riposo* (1584), in part as an update on art in Florence and Venice since the publication of Vasari’s *Lives* in 1568. Borghini asserted in his discussion of Tintoretto’s principal works that the artist took as his “principal maestro” Michelangelo and had acquired many sculptural models after his work, resolving to champion Florentine standards, but for *colore* he said he looked to nature, and especially to Titian:

And then he took for his principal master the works of the divine Michelangelo, not concerned with any expense in collecting [Michelangelo’s] figures from the sacristy of San Lorenzo and equally all the good models of the best statues that were in Florence. Therefore, he himself acknowledged that he did not recognize any except the Florentine craftsmen as masters in the things of drawing. But in color he said he imitated nature and then, particularly, Titian.¹⁰⁷

First appearing in 1642, and then republished as part of a much larger group of artist biographies in 1648, Ridolfi’s life of Tintoretto echoed Pino’s formula for artistic greatness and Borghini’s statement of Tintoretto’s artistic allegiance. Ridolfi amplified the discussion, however, by going for the sound bite. Ridolfi reported that Tintoretto had as a young painter inscribed a version of this formula on the wall of his studio: “Il disegno di Michel Angelo e’l colorito di Titiano.”¹⁰⁸

Although the existence of the motto has been disputed as Ridolfi’s rhetorical fabrication, or seen as a concept that needs to be taken with a large grain of salt, the veracity of the biographer should not necessarily be doubted.¹⁰⁹ As an acquaintance of Jacopo’s son Domenico, and a pupil of the Tintoretto collaborator Aliense (1556-1629), Ridolfi would have been the recipient of Tintoretto studio lore passed down orally, including anecdotes such as this.¹¹⁰ It must be admitted that Tintoretto’s earlier paintings have little in common with the specific paint handling of Titian.¹¹¹ Rather, pictures from the first half-decade or so of his activity seem indebted more

to Bonifacio and particularly Schiavone. By the late 1540s, however, Tintoretto's artistic experiments have crystallized to a degree that they embody the larger truth of the motto.

Indeed, the *Miracle of the Slave* exemplifies Pino and Ridolfi's formula through the combination of confidently rendered anatomy and strong contours and the skillful layering of varied brushstrokes. This lively and heterogeneous paint surface features abundant touches of unblended color in most sections of the composition. Within the painting, Tintoretto's prominent signature, JACOMO TENTOR F. – placed amidst the Michelangelesque reclining figures and passages of remarkably showy and free brushwork – seems to underscore the validity of this combination. Nearly all early commentators on the *Miracle of the Slave* cite the power of Tintoretto's relief effects, and such references show an innate sensibility for and appreciation of sculpture on Tintoretto's part.¹¹² For example, right around the time of the *Miracle of the Slave*, the Florentine humanist Benedetto Varchi delivered two lectures at Santa Maria Novella in Florence in 1547, subsequently publishing them as *Due lezioni* in 1549, with an appendix of letters collected from artists of his day. The final statement in the volume was Michelangelo's, who not surprisingly argued that that quality in painting was proportional to its three-dimensionality: "Io dico che la pittura me par più tenuta buona quanto più va verso il rilievo."¹¹³ The very same year the writer – and friend of Tintoretto – Anton Francesco Doni expressed the same sentiment in his treatise *Disegno*, published in Venice, noting the "bella sentenza disse Michel Angolo, tanto è piu buona la Pittura quanto piu approssima al rilievo."¹¹⁴ Thus Michelangelo's comment about painting's excellence increasing in proportion to its resemblance to relief was voiced by many of Tintoretto's critics cited in these pages, but could just as easily have served an alternate motto for the painter himself. Tintoretto's breakthrough painting demonstrates as much.

Even if the strong contours creating the relief of muscular figures were not exactly those of Michelangelo (e.g., fig. 85), and even if the vigorous appreciation of paint application was somewhat different from that found in the caressing brushwork of Titian's mature style (e.g., fig. 32), the *Miracle of the Slave* seemed to value equally strong *disegno* and confident *colorito*, with Michelangelo and Titian as metonyms for the best in Florentine and Venetian aesthetic systems, even standard bearers for two opposing artistic ideals. This conspicuous fusing of two paradigms could even function as a kind of signature for the painter.¹¹⁵ Moreover, the careers of these two famous artists represented appealing exemplars to a young artist finding his way; both Michelangelo and Titian enjoyed prestigious commissions from foreign princes, fame far beyond their respective cities, and an ability to dictate their terms to a greater extent than artists of previous generations could ever have imagined. They may have appealed to Tintoretto as professional role models as well as stylistic *exempla*.

The next year in fact, Tintoretto's altarpiece of *Saint Martial in Glory with Saints Peter and Paul* (fig. 92), originally for the high altar of the church of San Marziale and now in a side chapel, seems to be another attempt, also successful, at resolving these two opposing ideals. Tintoretto's work on the altarpiece seems to have overlapped with his completion of the *Miracle of the Slave*. He received the commission immediately before unveiling the *Miracle of the Slave*, collecting 20 ducats for initial work on the *Saint Martial in Glory* on the 8th of March, 1548 and a final payment on the 12th of December of 1549.¹¹⁶ Thus the San Marziale commission, coming on the heels of that public success, may have helped bring Tintoretto to the attention of the Canons of San Giorgio in Alga, the order that controlled the nearby church of the Madonna dell'Orto.

The painting at San Marziale employs both Titianesque and Michelangelesque elements. The form of the garment of the central saint, Saint Martial, and the painterly treatment of the pleated white lawn fabric, are very close to Titian's slightly earlier altarpiece of *Saint John the Almsgiver* (fig. 42) in the church of San Giovanni Elemosinario. Tintoretto's figure should be seen as specific citation or homage to his counterpart in Titian's altarpiece, and offers a particularly close approximation of the older artist's *colorito*.¹¹⁷ Meanwhile, the bulky figures of the seated saints Peter and Paul, who hold enormous tomes on either side of Saint Martial, are reminiscent of Michelangelesque types – particularly the prophets and sibyls of the Sistine Ceiling – and they are convincingly rendered with sculptural solidity.

Such stylistic choices represent more than Tintoretto's passive absorption of influential trends. Rather, paintings such as the *Miracle of the Slave* and *Saint Martial in Glory* show a painter deliberately forging a synthesis, but one whose blend is wholly his own. Tintoretto's later pictures – above all several paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto – continue to emphasize both these formal characteristics as well as pointed references to Michelangelo and Titian. Even if the motto itself was not actually painted on Tintoretto's wall, an ambition to combine the drawing of Michelangelo with the coloring of Titian was surely ingrained in the painter's mind and hand. Critics from Aretino to Vasari to Boschini understood, as did Tintoretto himself, that the *Miracle of the Slave* was a conspicuous declaration of the maturing painter's abilities at a new level of proficiency, a sort of masterpiece.¹¹⁸

¹ This translation is from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 17. The original, found in Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 13 and Aretino, *Lettere sull'arte*, ed. Camesasca, II, CDII, pp. 204-205, reads, "Da che la voce di la publica laude conferma con quella propria da me datavi nel gran quadro de l'istoria dedicata in la scola di San marco, mi rallegro non meno con il mio giudizio, che sa tanto inanzi, ch'io mi facci con la vostra arte, che passa sì oltra." For the letter in the context of other records from 1548 and 1549, see also Borean, "Documentation," p. 420.

² Leo Steinberg brilliantly captured the buzz of an important new painting with these opening lines of a famous article about Michelangelo: "Michelangelo's Last Judgment fresco, unveiled on October 31, 1541, opened like a hit show. All Rome, it is said, flocked to the Sistine Chapel, to gape at the spectacle – the grandest of pictures, the most lavish of incident, the most urgent in advertising the perpetual immanence of the Last Day. The City shuddered in awe and stupefied admiration." "Michelangelo's 'Last Judgment' as Merciful Heresy," *Art in America* 63 (Nov.-Dec. 1975), pp. 49-63. The immediate and longer-term impact of Michelangelo's painting on sixteenth-century artists, including Tintoretto, will be discussed in the final chapter.

³ Translation from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 16. For the original text of the full letter, see Aretino, *Lettere sull'arte*, ed. Camesasca, II, CCXI, pp. 52-53, and Borean, "Documentation," p. 419, *Ma se ne le cose che si disiderano il presto e il male è nel loro compimento desiderato, che piacere si sente poi che il tosto e il bene le dà ispedite? Certamente la brevità del fare consiste ne lo intendere altri quel che si fa, nel modo che lo intende il vostro spirito intendente il dove si distendono i colori chiari e gli oscuri.*"

⁴ For Tintoretto's *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 82 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 34. The painting is also discussed by Echols and Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 116-19. For the broader iconographical theme, see Edith Wyss, *The Myth of Apollo and Marsyas in the Art of the Italian Renaissance: An Inquiry into the Meaning of Images* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996). In Wyss's book, Tintoretto's painting for Aretino is discussed on pp. 114-15.

⁵ The Aretino-Michelangelo correspondence has been analyzed extensively; for a good summary, see, for example, Linda Murray, *Michelangelo: his life, work, and times*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), pp. 159-63.

⁶ The key letters in this exchange are collected in *Il carteggio di Michelangelo*, ed. Paola Barocchi, Giovanni Poggi, and Renzo Ristori (Florence: S.P.E.S. Editore, 1979), IV, letters CMLII, CMLV, MXLV, pp. 82-84, 87-88, 215-19. The final letter is the famously scathing criticism of the fresco and condemnation of its painter.

⁷ The last letter was rewritten, now addressed to Alessandro Corvino, a secretary to Ottavo Farnese and nephew of the pope, and published (under the date of July 1547), in the 1550 volume of the collected letters. The original letter directed to Michelangelo, in the Archivio di Stato of Florence, is published in Giovanni Gaye, *Carteggio inedito d'artisti dei secoli XIV. XV. XVI* (Florence: Giuseppe Molini, 1840), II, letter CCXXXV, pp. 332-35. The menacing

postscript reads, “e risolvete pur, chio son tale che anco e’ Re e gli imperadori respondan a le mie lettere.” p. 335.

⁸ The translation is from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 16. The original text, which can be found in the sources listed above in note 3, is as follows: “Ora, figliuol mio, che il pennel vostro testimonia con l’opre presenti la fama che vi denno acquistare le future, non comportate che varchi punto che non ne ringraziate Iddio, la pieta de le cui misericordie non meno vi addata l’animo a lo studio de la bontà che a quello de la pittura.”

⁹ To be sure, Titian’s *Assunta* was not truly his public debut, having earlier created exterior frescoes for the Fondaco dei Tedeschi and an altarpiece of *Saint Mark Enthroned* for the church of Santo Spirito in Isola (now Santa Maria della Salute, Venice). As described above, Titian had also been awarded the *sanseria* in 1513, acknowledgment by the government of his rank. The high altar of the Frari, however, was so much more conspicuous, proof that his early promise would be fulfilled in the most dramatic way possible. In the thirty years after the *Assunta*, Titian had created major, groundbreaking altarpieces like the *Madonna di Ca’ Pesaro* (church of the Frari, Venice) (1519-26) and the *Death of Saint Peter Martyr* of 1530, and narrative history paintings such as the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (1534-48) (fig. 25 in this dissertation) and the *Battle of Spoleto* (finished 1538) for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio (destroyed 1577; cf. fig. 30), one of the greatest battle paintings of the Italian Cinquecento (and one of the few martial mural masterpieces actually finished by the artist in question). Similarly, Pordenone’s muscular productions included the cupboard doors of *Saint Martin and Saint Christopher* of 1528-9 (fig. 35 in this dissertation), an altarpiece for the Madonna dell’Orto (now Accademia) of c. 1532-5, and numerous frescoes, both interior and exterior. Francesco Salviati, Lorenzo Lotto, and even Paris Bordone (his *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge* of c. 1534-5 (fig. 70 in this dissertation) all must have made big impressions on the public and fellow artists (to judge from the reactions in other works of art), but no single painting, and certainly no debut, was as prominent or offered as much of a break from tradition as Tintoretto’s canvas. For the Scuola di San Marco and its decoration, see Pietro Paoletti, *La Scuola Grande di San Marco* (Venice: *Rivista di Venezia*, 1929); *Le scuole di Venezia*, ed. Terisio Pignatti (Milan: Electa, 1981), esp. pp. 129-49; Philip L. Sohm, *The Scuola Grande di San Marco, 1437-1550: The Architecture of a Venetian Lay Confraternity* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1982); and Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, pp. 291-95.

¹⁰ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 136. Roland Krischel offers many excellent observations in *Jacopo Tintoretto, Das Sklavenwunder: Bildwelt und Weltbild* (Frankfurt am Main, Fischer, 1994). This book, cited below as *Sklavenwunder*, is condensed from his own dissertation, published as *Jacopo Tintoretto’s “Sklavenwunder”* (Munich: scaneg Verlag, 1991). Krischel’s dissertation will be cited as here *Tintoretto’s Sklavenwunder*. Krischel makes a revealing point about the difficulty of viewing paintings on that wall. This is offered by an anecdote about the French writer and painter Vivant Denon. In the summer of 1791 Denon petitioned the Venetian authorities to take down the *Miracle of the Slave* temporarily to make an engraving from it, the light coming from the windows on either side was too challenging to make a copy. Denon’s request to move the painting was refused. In a great irony, within a decade Denon became the first director of the Louvre, and, when Tintoretto’s picture was brought to

Paris, the official in charge of this painting. Krischel, *Sklavenwunder*, p. 23. Guillaume Cassegrain, *Tintoret* (Paris: Hazan, 2010) also analyzes the painting alongside other major narratives, pp. 142-52.

¹¹ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 136. Krischel, *Sklavenwunder*, p. 24, argues that the coordination of the internal lighting of the painting and the actual illumination from the windows facing the *rio* would be particularly effective in the late afternoon, at the time of the meetings of the whole membership of the *scuola*. For the inspiration of Titian's *Assunta* to Tintoretto's solution at the Scuola Grande di San Marco, see Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative," p. 69.

¹² Titian's petition begins, "dal teller nel qual e quella battaglia de la banda verso piazza ch e la piu difficile et che homo alcuno, fin questo di non ha volute tuore tanta impresa." For the 31 May 1513 document, see Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, p. 275. The evidence for the lost painting is summarized by Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, III, L-3, pp. 225-32.

¹³ The translation is from Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 787. The original, found in Vasari-Milanesi, VII, p. 439, reads, "una battaglia e furia di soldati che combattono, mentre una terribile pioggia cade del cielo: la quale opera, tolta tutta dal vivo, è tenuta la migliore di quante storie sono in quella sala, e la più bella." Despite erring on the subject of the painting, Vasari's admiration for the picture is evidently deep.

¹⁴ Dolce's praise is similarly effusive, noting that Titian received the commission when "ancora molto giovane," and the critic singles out a detail as particularly noteworthy: "dall'altra parte della detta Sala una battaglia; ove ci sono diverse forme di soldati, cavalli, & altre cose notabilissime, e fra le altre una giovane, che essendo caduta in un fosso, uscendo si attiene alla sponda con uno isporger di gamba naturalissimo, e la gamba non par, che sia Pittura, ma carne istessa." Roskill, Dolce's "Aretino," p. 190. Roskill, p. 191, translates the passage as, "And on the other side of this same Sala he did a battle scene, in which there appear soldiers and horses in a variety of forms, and other extremely notable features. The latter include a young woman who has fallen into a ditch as is climbing out: she uses the bank for support with a stretch of the leg which is highly natural, and the leg gives the impression not of painting, but of actual flesh."

¹⁵ In brief, as Titian began work on the *Assunta* somewhat before c. 1516 (the date inscribed on the frame and indeed the year of death of his teacher Giovanni Bellini) he was faced with a particularly difficult assignment in executing the high altarpiece of the church of the Frari. This was even beyond the pressure of the conspicuous site and the presence of superb altarpieces in situ by previous generations of important Venetian painters, including Bartolomeo Vivarini, Giovanni Bellini, and Alvise Vivarini and Marco Basaiti (For these paintings in the context of Venetian altarpieces, see Peter Humfrey, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), cats. 18, 35, 38, and 56). Particularly daunting would have been the need to conquer first a huge space – the cavernous apse of the Franciscan church – and second solve the difficult lighting conditions with its south-facing windows directly behind the altarpiece, pouring light on either side and above the painting. In order to surmount these two additional challenges, Titian designed and produced the largest panel painting in the world (at

6.9 meters tall), proportionate with the scale of the apse; the size and shape of both frame and panel must have been Titian's decision. Moreover, he devised a composition of such geometrical simplicity as to be visible in unfavorable light and from a great distance, taking into account an ideal viewing point from midway down the nave where the observer would see the altarpiece aligned within the arch of the existing choir screen dating from the early 1470s. Titian's brilliant composition included a circle (itself a perfect form) representing the heavenly realm, with the upper half of the circle congruent with the curved arch of the frame and the lower half delineated by the clustered putti. This circle has approximately the same diameter as the height of the second tier of gothic windows in the apse. The Virgin Mary, as she is taken up to Heaven, serves as the radius of the circle, with her head its center. The circle is also a hemisphere, bathed in golden light, thus evoking actual Byzantine mosaic apses, like that depicting the hovering Theotokos at Torcello, and, pointedly, those expertly simulated in Bellini's great altarpieces as a showpiece of the mimetic capacity of oil painting. In essence, Titian exploits the power of the brush to literalize what these real and fictive hallowed spaces merely symbolized, the dome of heaven (as Rosand has observed). The second shape, the earthly realm, consists of the astonished apostles who create a strong rectangle occupying the bottom third of the height of the pictorial field. The top edge of the rectangle is at the same elevation as the top of the lowest tier of lancet windows. These two shapes, circle and rectangle, are bridged by a third shape, namely a tall isosceles triangle formed largely of figures wearing red (with the handsome young man gesturing toward his chest serving as the left side and the man his back to the viewer reaching up with both arms serving as the right edge). Thus the Virgin Mary is both the center of the circle and the apex of the triangle. The shape of the triangle, the reaching arms of the apostles, and the fact that nearly all figures look up toward God the Father, together combine to persuade the gaze of the viewer to rise almost involuntarily along the central axis of the composition. In other words, the eyes of the observer recapitulate the very subject of the painting; that is to say, like the Virgin Mary, our eyes are taken up toward God. Rarely has a pictorial composition been so sophisticated and yet so simple, perfectly accommodating the difficult challenges of its site. Since the subject of the painting, as is frequently pointed out, also the Coronation of the Virgin, Titian's watershed altarpiece was simultaneously contending with the strong Venetian traditions of both Assumption and Coronation altarpieces and also upending them. (Indeed, one might go so far as to say that in with this work Titian crowns himself the greatest painter in Venice, finally realizing in the public realm the promise implicit in receiving the *senseria* in 1513) Tintoretto's vast *Paradiso*, even if executed by his son Domenico from 1588-1592 for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the Palazzo Ducale, by far the largest painting in Venice (and commonly considered the largest Old Master painting in the world) is of course also a Coronation of the Virgin; this gave Tintoretto the last word in Venice in both scale and in this key subject matter. For the *Paradiso*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 465 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 298. These observations on *Assunta* build upon the fundamental studies about the painting in Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 38-45 (first published in Rosand, "Titian in the Frari," *Art Bulletin* 53 (1971), pp. 196-213); Johannes Wilde, *Venetian Art from Bellini to Titian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 133-34. Humfrey, "The Prehistory of Titian's *Assunta*," in *Titian 500*, ed. Manca, pp. 223-43; Humfrey, *Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice*, pp. 301-304 and cat. 86; and Joannides, *Titian to 1518*, pp. 288-97. Finally, see Claudia Terribile, "Una storia in controtuce: le vetrate dei Frari e l'*Assunta* di Tiziano," *Art e dossier* 22 (2007), pp. 38-43, for a summary of the problematic lighting of the site. For

arguments, partially convincing, for the iconography of the painting as simultaneously invoking the doctrine Immaculate Conception, see Rona Goffen, *Piety and Patronage in Renaissance Venice: Bellini, Titian and the Franciscans* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 91-94.

¹⁶ The translation is from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 47. The original is found in Boschini, “Breve instruzione” in *Le Ricche minere della pittura Veneziana* (1674), in Marco Boschini, *La Carta del Navegar Pitoresco* [1660], ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice and Rome: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1966), p. 731. See also Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 49. The passage reads as follows, “Il Tintoretto ogni volta, che doveva far un’opera in publico, prima ad osservare il sito, dove doveva esser posta, per veder l’altezza, e la distanza....”

¹⁷ For Titian’s accommodation of his two altarpieces in the Frari to their setting, see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 38-51.

¹⁸ A number of particularly good observations are found in Józef Grabski, “The group of paintings in the ‘Sala Terrena’ in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco in Venice and their relationship to their architectural structure, *Artibus et historiae*, I (1980), pp. 115-31. Grabski’s insights are developed and augmented in Ilchman, “Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative,” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 63-94, especially pp. 70-4. For an excellent examination, corroborated with much archival research, of how Tintoretto adapted compositions to sites, see Thomas Worthen, “Tintoretto’s Paintings for the Banco del Sacramento in S. Margherita,” *Art Bulletin* 78 (1996), pp. 707-732.

¹⁹ Paul Hills makes the clever observation that the particular effect of Tintoretto’s figures set against brighter light, that is *contre-jour*, may derive from the effect of mosaics. *Venetian Colour: Marble, Mosaic, Painting and Glass 1250-1550* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 47.

²⁰ The *Martyrdom of Saint Theodore* was painted in 1552 – the date on the pilaster of the arch revealed during the 1985 restoration – for the Scuola di San Teodoro in the church of San Salvador, Venice. The picture, often attributed to Paris Bordone, does show some of Bordone’s figure and facial types, though the execution completely lacks the polish of Bordone himself or even likely that of a workshop assistant. Alternate suggestions include an unidentified Bonifacio follower, and W. R. Rearick (oral communications) discussed both Stefano dell’Arzere, and Stefano Cernotto. “Stefano dell’Arzere” was the attribution assigned by Ettore Merkel at the time of the picture’s 1985 restoration. This attribution was followed in the subsequent publications, *Venice Restored, 1966-1986*, (Milan: Electa, 1991), p. 157, and, with appropriate caution, in *Save Venice Inc.: Four Decades of Restoration*, ed. Conn and Rosand, pp. 382-83. I would argue that there is a striking similarity of the group of lithe warriors dressed *all’antica* and the king on the throne at the left of the composition in San Salvador and the central grouping in the tondo of *Prisoners Taken Before a Judge* in the Museo Civico, Padua, whose attribution to Stefano dall’Arzere is endorsed by Elisabetta Saccomani’s entry in *Da Bellini a Tintoretto: Dipinti dei Musei Civici di Padova dalle metà del Quattrocento ai primi del Seicento*, ed. Alessandro Ballarin and Davide Banzato (exh. cat. Museo Civico degli Eremitani, Padua) (Rome: Leonardo-

De Luca Editore, 1991), cat. 83. Cernotto is less well known, but there is a signed *Saint Paul* in SS. Giovanni e Paolo, dated 1536, but he may have died too early to be responsible for the *Martyrdom of Saint Theodore*. See Thieme-Becker, *Algemeines Lexikon*, VI (Leipzig: Seemann, 1912), p. 296. In contrast, Krischel assigns the picture to “Alessandro Spiera (?),” an almost unknown painter who was a member of the *scuola*, *Sklavenwunder*, pp. 62-64. Leaving aside the attribution question, Krischel also notes how closely certain details in the picture in San Salvador match Tintoretto’s prototype, including the kneeling assailants, the figure of the king on his throne (now on the left of the composition), and background screen of buildings with the Torre dell’Orologio of Piazza San Marco, underscoring that Tintoretto’s Venetian updating of the story had been understood. The key point about this picture is that it both jumbles the gestures and presents a passive “class photograph” of *confratelli*, less imaginative than the works of half a century earlier at the height of the Age of Carpaccio. For this painting, see also Bruno Bertoli and Giandomenico Romanelli, *Chiesa di San Salvador: arte e devozione* (Venice: Marsilio, 1997), pp. 34-36.

²¹ For Veronese’s painting of the *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* fresco and the *laterale* of the same subject, see Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese: Catalogo completa*, I, cat. 84 and cat. 174. For a rich account of Veronese’s work at San Sebastiano, see David Rosand, *Véronèse*, trans. Odile Menegaux and Renaud Temperini (Paris: Citadelles & Mazenod), pp. 79-107. Veronese’s pictures display a similar scale of figures to Tintoretto’s, and he too places in each picture onlookers clambering among columns at the left edges. The muscular back at the bottom right corner of Veronese’s canvas probably echoes his counterpart in chainmail in Tintoretto’s painting. Moreover, as in Tintoretto’s picture, the torturers and aggressive onlookers crowd a supine victim to a claustrophobic extent. But Veronese too misses the point of isolating key gestures against the sky or background. Veronese’s figures overlap significantly, and the artist evidently relied on local color to keep the individuals distinct. The result appears as a far more tangled mess than the similar crowd in Tintoretto’s picture. Thus Veronese reduces the legibility of the painting and the possibility of expanding the temporal scope of the painting and express a sequence of actions. The sky, a smalt blue now turned a coppery brown, appears largely as a void in occupying much of the upper half of the composition. One can imagine how much more legible the overall composition would be if this sky had been used as a field to offset the limbs of dramatically gesturing figures. Finally, within this climate of rivalry and dialogue, it is worth noting that to Veronese’s credit, the angle of the figure of Saint Sebastian, being tied down before his fatal beating, offers a knowing and completely appropriate allusion to his counterpart in Titian’s great *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*. To Veronese, perhaps competing with Tintoretto meant calling in the heavy artillery: namely a citation of Titian. The connection between the two figures – Sebastian and Lawrence – was noted by Richard Cocke, *Veronese* (London: Chaucer Press, 1980), pp. 84-85. For Titian’s painting in the church of the Gesuiti, originally painted for the altar of Lorenzo Massolo on the right wall of the predecessor church of Santa Maria dei Crociferi, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 114 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 217.

²² Ridolfi-Hadeln, p. 16 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 10.

²³ For the previous cycle in the Sala dell’Albergo, see Humfrey, *Bellinesque Life of St. Mark* and also *Scuole di Venezia*, ed. Pignatti, pp.145-49. For the impact this earlier cycle may have had on

Tintoretto, see Elaine M. A. Banks, "Tintoretto's Religious Imagery of the 1560's" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1978), pp. 22-25.

²⁴ Jacobus de Voragine, *Golden Legend*, trans. Ryan, I, pp. 242-48.

²⁵ For analysis and further bibliography on textual sources, including Jacobus de Voragine and Stringa, see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 234-36 nn. 11-21.

²⁶ The full account of this specific miracle, according to the *Golden Legend* (trans. Ryan, I, pp. 246-47), reads as follows: "A man who was temporarily in service to a certain provincial noble had made a vow to visit the body of Saint Mark but could not obtain his master's permission to do so. In time, however, he put the fear of the Lord ahead of the fear of his master in the flesh and, without a word of farewell, devoutly went off to visit the saint. The master felt resentment at this and, when the servant came back, ordered his eyes put out. The ruffians who waited on him, more cruel than their master and ever ready to do his bidding, threw the servant of God to the ground as he invoked Saint Mark, and set about poking his eyes out with sharp-pointed sticks; but try as they might, they got nowhere with the sticks, which simply went to pieces. Their master then ordered them to break the man's legs and cut off his feet with hatchets, but the hard iron of the tools melted into lead. "Well, then, smash his mouth and knock out his teeth with iron hammers!" But the iron forgot its strength and by God's power was blunted. The master, seeing all this, was taken aback, begged God's pardon, and with his servant visited the tomb of Saint Mark with earnest devotion."

²⁷ Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p.136.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 137: "Instead of coordinating the several attempts of the torturers into a dense unity of action, Tintoretto maintains the relative independence, the separateness of the individual acts. Time manifests itself in a distinction of moments."

²⁹ Paolo Berdini has proposed a useful interpretive model relative to the larger issue of illustrating texts. Using Jacopo Bassano's religious paintings as his vehicle, Berdini contests the conventional word-image relationship in art-historical analysis. Rather he claims that paintings do not specifically illustrate texts but instead readings of a text, and that a painter will augment a conception by engaging other readings and images in a procedure Berdini labels "visual exegesis." See Paolo Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano: Painting as Visual Exegesis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), especially the "Introduction: From Text to Artist," pp. 1-35.

³⁰ For example, the inclusion of "St Mark rescuing a slave" as one of four separate incidents in the entry on Saint Mark in a popular iconographic handbook stems specifically from Tintoretto's picture; James Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 199.

³¹ George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art: Iconography of the Saints in the Painting of North East Italy* (Florence: Sansoni, 1978), pp. 668-87.

³² For Sansovino's relief and its relation to Tintoretto's canvas, see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 136-8, with further bibliography, who also notes how Stringa in 1610 was the first to link Tintoretto's painting of the subject and Sansovino's sculpture. See also Erasmus Weddigen, "Il secondo pergolo di San Marco e la Loggetta del Sansovino: Preliminari al *Mircolo dello schiavo* di Jacopo Tintoretto," *Venezia Cinquecento* I, no. 1 (1991), pp. 101-29. Many of the following observations are indebted to a most detailed and thoughtful analysis of the *Miracle of the Slave*, namely Krischel's *Sklavenwunder*.

³³ An ingenious suggestion offers that the prominence of the hammer also reflects the etymology of Mark in the *Golden Legend*; see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 235 n. 18.

³⁴ This observation relates to the figures that constitute the main group of onlookers surrounding the slave. It does not pertain to the observers, likely identified as portraits, at the very margins of the composition who play a role similar to the viewers outside the painting.

³⁵ For analysis of the composition and its colors ("das farbliche Programm des Bildes" in Krischel's phrase), see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 135-36, Krischel, *Sklavenwunder*, pp. 9-10, and Robert Echols, "Tintoretto the Painter" in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 37-38.

³⁶ Krischel, *Sklavenwunder*, p. 6-7.

³⁷ For Sansovino's reliefs, see Deborah Stott, "Fatte a Sembianza di Pittura: Jacopo Sansovino's Bronze Reliefs in San Marco," *Art Bulletin* 64 (1982), pp. 370-387. Stott examines how the intended point of view from below in the choir was factored into the relief technique and the compositions themselves.

³⁸ The 2012 exhibition at the Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, *Tintoretto* (23 February – 10 June) was the first to move the *Miracle of the Slave* from the Accademia for exhibition in many years, and presumably the first time that it had left Venice since the Napoleon seizures of 1797. The installation of the painting on the lower floor of the two-story exhibition hall meant that it could be viewed head-on in the first gallery (with the bottom edge of the frame only about two feet from the floor) but also from above as well, as the conclusion of the visitor's route. This provided a vantage point higher than it would have had originally in the Scuola Grande di San Marco, and much higher than its more recent height permitted in the Gallerie dell'Accademia. The upper level catwalk offered thus something approaching the viewpoint of Mark himself within the painting, high above the slave and his torturers. For the 2009 exhibition, see Frederick Ilchman, "Tintoretto: Rome," *Burlington Magazine* 144 (June 2012), pp. 445-6.

³⁹ As noted in the chapter one of this dissertation, the 2009 exhibition *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese: Rivals in Renaissance Venice* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) offered a telling comparison of Veronese's *Christ and Kneeling Woman* (*Christ and the Magdalene*) (National Gallery, London) and Tintoretto's *Esther before Ahasuerus* (Royal Collection, Hampton Court) (fig. 52 in this dissertation), two contemporary paintings with fundamentally the same

composition. Besides the obvious differences of figure types, lighting, palette, and paint handling, there was a striking divergence in attitude toward architecture. While Veronese carefully rendered architectural details, including meticulously chipped fluted columns and plotted a receding chessboard perspective pavement, Tintoretto casually described his setting with an unconvincing pavement and a forest of columns as a screen in the distant background. Instead, Tintoretto used the spatial relationships of his massive human figures to create the depth of the foreground grouping. Both painters would largely maintain their individual compositional practices for the rest of their careers. For Tintoretto's *Esther*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 129, Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 9; Lucy Whitaker in Whitaker and Clayton, *The Art of Italy in the Royal Collection*, cat. 75; Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 45.

⁴⁰ Although Tintoretto's penchant for self-promotion is often mentioned in passing, see the thorough studies by Paul Hills, "Tintoretto's Marketing," in *Venedig und Oberdeutschland in der Renaissance*, eds. Bernd Roeck, Klaus Bergdolt, and Andrew John Martin (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1993), pp. 107-20, and Tom Nichols, "Price, 'Prestezza' and Production in Jacopo Tintoretto's Business Strategy," *Venezia Cinquecento* 12 (1996), pp. 207-33. Nichols's essay is indebted both to Hills and particularly to Paul F. Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World, 1530-1560: Anton Francesco Doni, Nicolò Franco & Ortensio Lando* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

⁴¹ See Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p.347.

⁴² Translation is from Xavier F. Salomon, *Lives of Veronese by Giorgio Vasari, Raffaele Borghini, and Carlo Ridolfi* (London: Pallas Athene Ltd, 2014), p. 181. The original, found in Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, pp. 347-8, reads as follows: "Fù egli molto ingenuo ne' suoi trattati; non fece officio giamai per ottenere alcuno impiego; nè avvili lo stato suo co' bassi trattamenti; osservò sempre la promessa e procurò in ogni sua attione la lode."

⁴³ The best analyses of Tintoretto's early years and development remain studies by Robert Echols, especially his dissertation, "Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting," as well as his contributions to *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 31-38, 181-85.

⁴⁴ See Krischel, *Sklavenwunder*, pp. 17-23. Krischel first published this material in *Tintoretto's Sklavenwunder*, pp. 151-66, where he also corrected the mistaken idea that Episcopi was *guardian grande*.

⁴⁵ Krischel, *Sklavenwunder*, pp. 21-2.

⁴⁶ Besides an assumed friendship, there must have been a number of official interactions between the two; on January 20, 1548 Tintoretto received payment from Marco Episcopi of the Scuola di San Marco for "the painting in cinnabar of twelve lamps." See Borean, "Documentation," p. 420.

⁴⁷ Many details of the respective biographies can be found in Mazzucco, *Jacomo Tintoretto*, pp. 140-4.

⁴⁸ For the competitions in 1504 and 1538 at the Scuola Grande della Carità, see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 103-106. For the subject more generally in Venice, see Vincent Delieuvin and Jean Habert, “Les concours de peinture à Venise au XVI^e siècle,” in *Titien, Tintoret, Véronèse... Rivalités a Venise*, ed. Vincent Delieuvin and Jean Habert (exh. cat. Musée du Louvre, 2009), pp. 44-101.

⁴⁹ Humfrey, *Bellinesque Life of St. Mark*, pp. 238-40. For Pordenone’s drawing in the Musée du Louvre, see Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. D55; Cohen, *Art of Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone*, I, pp. 350, 352-58, 485, II, p. 692, fig. 529. See also the entry by Furlan in *Dal Pordenone a Palma il Giovane: devozione e pieta nel disengo veneziano del cinquecento*, ed. Caterina Furlan (exh. cat. San Francesco, Pordenone) (Milan: Electa, 2000), cat. 20.

⁵⁰ Humfrey, *Bellinesque Life of St. Mark*, p. 240.

⁵¹ In the broad literature about literary imitation in the Renaissance, two now-classic studies offer models for the concepts of imitation and emulation in the visual arts. When a visual allusion is made effectively – citing the source and then transforming it – the later artist is able to triumph over his prototype. See G.W. Pigman III, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 33 (1980), pp. 1-32, and Thomas M. Green, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). See also, David Quint, *Origins and Originality in Renaissance Literature: Versions of the Source* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983). Though the principal case study is later, there is an excellent theoretical overview of these issues in Elizabeth Cropper, *The Domenichino Affair: Imitation, Novelty and Theft in Seventeenth-Century Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), esp. pp. 99-127; and also later but in a Venetian context, Maria Loh, *Titian Remade*. Rona Goffen’s *Renaissance Rivals* endorses such analysis to distinguish among the varieties of references used by sixteenth-century artists; see p. 2 and passim.

⁵² Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 136. For Tintoretto and Michelangelo, see Frederick Ilchman and Edward Saywell, “Michelangelo and Tintoretto: *Disegno* and Drawing,” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 385-393 and Cassegrain, *Tintoret*, passim. Hans Tietze, who saw fundamental differences between Michelangelo’s Cappella Paolina fresco and Tintoretto’s canvas, sums up the latter’s achievement well, “The essential feature in it seems to me to be, as Thode so aptly expressed it, the creation of a monumental style for wall-paintings in Venetian art, whereas even the largest works of Titian were conceived and executed as panel-paintings.” *Tintoretto* (New York: Phaidon, 1948), p. 40.

⁵³ Echols, “Tintoretto the Painter,” pp. 37-8, and earlier his dissertation, *Tintoretto and Venetian Painting*, pp. 210-211, 228. Although the link between Raphael’s *Sacrifice at Lystra* and Tintoretto’s *Esther before Ahasuerus* (Royal Collection, Hampton Court) had been pointed out earlier by John Shearman, *The Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen: The Early Italian Pictures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), cat. 255, pp. 238-41, Echols clarified that the cartoon was an important source for a number of paintings by Tintoretto of those years, including the *Miracle of the Slave*. Echols also make the valuable point that the

greater similarity of the *Esther* to the *Sacrifice of Lystra* suggests it was the first of Tintoretto's major paintings to be inspired by it. With the plunging perspective, agitated onlookers (including column huggers), and the deus ex-machina energy evident in the *Miracle of the Slave*, Raphael's *Expulsion of Heliodorus* might also have been an important prototype.

⁵⁴ Raphael's cartoon was in the possession of the Grimani beginning in 1521. As mentioned in the previous chapter, for the collection of the Grimani family of Santa Maria Formosa, see Perry, "Cardinal Domenico Grimani's Legacy" and "The Palazzo Grimani at S. Maria Formosa."

⁵⁵ Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 37-38. "A decade after coming to know Raphael's cartoon of for the Conversion of Saint Paul in the Grimani collection, and now performing on the same monumental scale as that work, Tintoretto recreates the heroic idiom of High Renaissance Rome in terms of his own slashing virtuosity." Although the cartoon itself does not survive, its composition is of course known in reverse through the tapestry still in the Vatican.

⁵⁶ I owe this suggestion to Jonathan Unglaub, who reminded me that we should keep in mind the "missing name" in the motto inscribed on Tintoretto's studio wall. Tintoretto's response to Raphael may be more transformed or absorbed than the more overt quotations of Michelangelo and Titian, but it is no less powerful. Raphael, after all, is the paragon for Renaissance narrative painting, which was, to a great extent, the focus of Tintoretto's career.

⁵⁷ Erasmus Weddigen, *Jacomo Tentor F. Myzelien zur Tintoretto-Forschung. Perpherie, Interpretation und Rekonstruktion* (Munich: Scaneg, 2000), pp. 65-66. Weddigen also links this pose to ancient sculpture.

⁵⁸ For Titian's painting (National Gallery, London), which remained in Ferrara until 1598 when it passed to the Aldobrandini family in Rome, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, III, cat. 14 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 59C.

⁵⁹ Krischel, *Sklavenwunder*, p. 34. For Titian's painting in the Louvre, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 26 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 128.

⁶⁰ For Tintoretto's use of the Medici Tomb figures, see *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cats. 52-4. As will be discussed in the next chapter, within a few years of the *Miracle of the Slave*, namely 1550-2, Tintoretto makes particularly specific quotations from these sculptures in his frescoes for the façade of Palazzo Gussoni, now destroyed, but known from engravings by Anton Maria Zanetti (*Varie pitture a fresco de' principali maestri veneziani*, Venice, 1760, figs. 8,9). Ridolfi's mention of the frescoes clarifies that it was common knowledge that these figures were based on Michelangelo: "Sopra il gran canale, dunque, nelle case de' Gussoni, ritrasse in sua gioventù due delle figure di Michel'Angelo, l'Aurora e'l Crepuscolo." See Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 42 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 60. For the date of these frescoes, see Roland Krischel, *Tintoretto und die Skulptur der Renaissance in Venedig* (Weimar: Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 1994), p. 40 and Michel Hochmann, "Tintoret au Palais Gussoni," in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario*, pp. 101-107. The strong foreshortenings of these frescoes suggests that Tintoretto was not working just from drawings but from sculptural models. Note that the writer

Andrea Calmo also refers to these frescoes in a punning letter to Tintoretto of 1552; see Borean, "Documentation," pp. 421-22.

⁶¹ See the catalogue entry by Eike D. Schmidt in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 54. Schmidt writes, on p. 401, "By contrast to Tribolo's copies, the lost models after which Tintoretto drew showed the single figures stripped of their draperies, and were probably created as anatomical study pieces."

⁶² These observations have been made by a number of scholars, for example, Krischel, *Skalvenwunder*, Echols, *Tintoretto and Venetian Painting*, pp. 227-30, Ilchman and Saywell, "Michelangelo and Tintoretto," p. 387 and summarized in the entry by Margaret Binotto in *Tintoretto*, ed. Sgarbi and Morello, cat. 2. For a sustained examination about the reconstruction and indeed reinterpretation of the Loggetta and Campanile following its collapse (1902-12), see Nadja Aksamija, "The Loggetta's Skin," in *Reflections on Renaissance Venice: A Celebration of Patricia Fortini Brown*, ed. Mary E. Frank and Blake de Maria (Milan: 5 Continents Editions, 2013), pp. 231-47.

⁶³ Echols, *Tintoretto and Venetian Painting*, p. 230.

⁶⁴ See Erasmus Weddigen, *Jacomo Tentor F.*, pp. 99-103. Although this proposition may seem far-fetched, the head of the slave is roughly compatible in physiognomy with the Philadelphia *Self-Portrait* of only a year or two earlier. Weddigen slightly muddies his argument by switching the captions to his figs. 74a and 74b.

⁶⁵ In a Venetian context, the relevant Durer would be the self-portrait pointing to the inscribed cartellino of authorship in the *Madonna of the Rose Garlands*. On contextual self-projection, see Stoichita, *The Self Aware Image*, pp.198-206.

⁶⁶ Underscoring the ambition of this claim is that two of the four great artists specifically cited were non-Venetians, and in fact none of the four was born in Venice, Tintoretto's hometown. The geographically diverse roll-call of great predecessors and contemporaries present in the *Miracle of the Slave* has a parallel in the earlier list of great Italian artists in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, Canto XXXIII: "Leonardo, Andrea Mantegna, Gian Bellino/ duo Dossi, e quel ch'a par sculpe e colora/ Michel, più che mortale, Angel divino/ Bastiano, Rafael, Tizian che'onora/ non men Cadore che quei Venezia e Urbino."

⁶⁷ Binotto in *Tintoretto*, ed. Sgarbi and Morello, cat. 2, offers a useful summary of various identifications of the portrait heads within the picture, noting how Vasari had admired the number of *ritratti*. Erasmus Weddigen, in *Jacomo Tentor F.*, pp. 80-84, argues for the identification of a number of portrait heads, including Jacopo Sansovino at the left edge emerging from the loggia, directly above the woman holding the child, and his counterpart at the far right, portrayed as the astonished master of Provence, Michele Sanmicheli. Weddigen then makes an extended series of observations about these two architects and their relevance to Tintoretto. According to Weddigen, there were ample opportunities for Tintoretto to cross paths

with Sansovino, who in fact had worked for the Scuola di San Marco, and Sanmicheli, who had worked at Palazzo Gussoni, starting in 1548.

⁶⁸ For definitions of the haptic mode of perception as it applies to the visual arts, see Riegl, *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973), pp. 23-28. Also see Jodi Cranston, “The Touch of the Blind Man: The Phenomenology of Vividness in Italian Renaissance Art,” in *Sensible Flesh: Touch in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), pp. 224-42.

⁶⁹ On Tommaso Rangone and his self-promoting ways, see Erasmus Weddigen, “Thomas Philologus Ravennas: Gelehrter, Wohltäter und Mäzen,” *Saggi e memorie de storia dell’arte* IX (1974), pp. 7-76; Jill E. Carrington, “Rangone, Tommaso,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, 1976, 25, pp. 888-889; and Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 137-45.

⁷⁰ For the bronze statue of Rangone, see most recently Victoria Avery, *Vulcan’s Forge in Venus’ City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press / The British Academy, 2011), pp. 124-26; also see Bruce Boucher, *The Sculpture of Jacopo Sansovino* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 113-18, 338-39.

⁷¹ A visit to the Gallerie dell’Accademia today offers a vivid example of the growing power and self-confidence of the patron between the fourteenth century and the sixteenth. In Room I, Paolo Veneziano’s *Coronation of the Virgin* altarpiece, a polyptych painted c. 1350 for the church of Santa Chiara, comprises eight smaller panels recounting the life of Christ and six still smaller ones depicting the life of Saint Francis. The panel with the “Death of Saint Francis” includes a tiny figure of a kneeling and praying nun in the lower left corner. She is out of scale with the others, the smallest figure in that panel, yet almost certainly the donor of the overall altarpiece. By the first half of the Quattrocento, the scale of the depiction of the donor, and thus the attention given to the patron, had begun to rise. In the same gallery at the Accademia, the large *pala* that served as the high altar of the Duomo of Ceneda (present-day Vittorio Veneto) attributed to Lorenzo da Venezia or the so-called Master of Ceneda, also depicts the *Coronation of the Virgin*. The patron, presumably Bishop Antonio Correr, is still diminutive and in fact smaller than the Evangelists, saints, and angels who sit below and to the sides of the Virgin and God the Father. Yet he is much larger than his counterpart in Paolo Veneziano’s polyptych. Moreover, he is now more conspicuous and nearer the center of the composition, kneeling by himself on the grass at the bottom edge of the field. For the Ceneda painting, see *Four Decades of Restoration in Venice*, ed. Conn and Rosand, pp. 66-67. As seen in Tintoretto’s paintings for the Scuola Grande di San Marco, now housed in the Accademia’s Room 10, Rangone is shown at the same scale as the protagonists in the *Miracle of the Slave* (1548), though he is placed at the edge of the composition. Fifteen years later Rangone enjoys greater, even astonishing, prominence as one of the protagonists in the *Theft of the Body of Saint Mark* (1562-6, probably c. 1564, fig. 89 in this dissertation). Such a role at the center of the action, where Rangone is playing himself – as well as perhaps simultaneously Joseph of Arimathea – should be distinguished from the earlier tradition of endowing of figures within a religious painting with portrait-like faces. For example, in Room 2, Cima da Conegliano’s *Dragan Altarpiece*, executed

c. 1499 for the church of Santa Maria della Carità, includes a figure of Saint George in armor with very specific, and not generic features. This is probably the face of Giorgio Dragan, a shipowner, who commissioned the altarpiece for his family chapel. Although this saint is portrayed as large as the other figures in the painting, he is still fundamentally a Saint George, rather than a donor. See *Four Decades of Restoration in Venice*, ed. Conn and Rosand, pp. 76-77. The donor's father may have had a sense of humor in naming his son since the family name was so close to the monster than Saint George famously subdued; the Venetian word for dragon is "dragón" according to Lodovico Pizzati's *Venetian-English, English-Venetian* (Bloomington, Indiana: AuthorHouse, 2007), p. 94.

⁷² See David Rosand's review of Pallucchini and Rossi's *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* in *The Burlington Magazine*, 126 (1984), pp. 444-45, Nichols, *Tintoretto*, p. 143, and Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative," p. 81.

⁷³ Joseph's role in the burial of Jesus is cited in all four Gospels: Matthew 27:57-60; Mark 15:42-46; Luke 23:50-55; John 19:38-42.

⁷⁴ Titian was called away from Venice on 6 January 1548 and remained in Augsburg until October. See (for example) Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, II, p. 8. The "Comparative Chronology" by Francesco Valcanover in the exhibition catalogue *Titian: Prince of Painters* (Venice-Washington 1990-91), p. 411, says that he was back "in Venice at least by October."

⁷⁵ Calmo's letter is reprinted and discussed in Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, pp. 17-19 and *Davanti a Tintoretto*, pp. 15-16.

⁷⁶ The translation comes from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 18. The original, found in Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 16, reads, "...si me fè tanto bon prò a far apiaser a tutti per far crepar i agrafi, i maligni e invidiosi...." The letter is also reprinted in Borean, "Documentation," p. 419.

⁷⁷ The translation is from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 18. The original, found in Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 15, reads: "Savevu che havé cusì bela idea intel presenter de i gesti, maniere, maiestae, i scurci, perfili ombre e lontane e prospective, quanto altro che cavalca el Pegaseo moderno."

⁷⁸ The translation of this sentence comes from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 16; the original is from Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 13.

⁷⁹ The translation comes from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, pp. 16-7. The original is found in *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 13: "E, sì come non è naso, per infreddato che sia, che non senta in qualche parte il fumo de lo incenso, così non è uomo sì poco istruito ne la virtù del disegno che non stupisca nel rilievo de la figura che, tutta ignuda, giuso in terra, è offerta a le crudeltà del martiro. I suoi colori son carne, il suo lineamento ritondo, e il suo corpo vivo, tal che vi guiro, per il bene ch'io vi voglio, che le cere, le arie e le viste de le turbe, che la circondano, sono tanto simili agli effetti ch'esse fanno in tale opera, che lo spettacolo pare più tosto vero che

finto.” By contrast, Ridolfi does not employ this complicated rhetorical strategy, but rather supplies straightforward description. Even when Ridolfi makes a particularly interesting observation, like that of the sword blade grasped in self-sacrifice by a mother in Tintoretto’s *Massacre of the Innocents* in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, he doesn’t invite the reader or viewer to feel the emotions. For the passage in Ridolfi – “Altre sono cadute nel piano; e trà quelle una generosamente stringendo la spada del feritore, cerca col proprio danno salvare dalle mani crudeli un tenero suo bambino, che si tieni in collo.” See Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 32, Ridolfi-Vite, p. 41. Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 36, provides a translation: “Others have fallen to the ground, and among them is one who in an act of self-sacrifice grasps the sword of the executioner in an attempt, by wounding herself, to save from his cruel hands the tender young child she holds to her breast.” Considering the poignant observation he makes, Ridolfi’s tone is strangely matter-of-fact.

⁸⁰ See Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, pp. 13-14. A translation of Aretino’s entire letter can be found in Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, pp. 16-17: “Since the voice of public praise accords with the opinion I myself gave you on the great painting of the Saint in the Scuola di San Marco, I am no less delighted with my judgement, which sees so deeply, than with your art, which is so superlative. And just as there is no nose, however incapacitated, which does not get a faint scent of the smoke of incense, similarly there is no man so little instructed in the virtue of design that he would not marvel at the figure who, quite naked on the ground, lies open to the cruelties of his martyrdom. The colours are flesh, indeed, the lines rounded and the body so lifelike that I swear to you, on the goodwill I bear to you, that the faces, airs and expressions of the crowd surrounding it are so exactly as they would be in reality, that the spectacle seems rather real than simulated. But do not indulge in pride, if this is the case, because that would be tantamount to turning your back upon the attainment of an even higher degree of perfection. And blessings be upon your name, if you can temper haste to have done with patience in the doing. Though, gradually, time will take care of this; since time, and nothing else, is sufficient to brake the headlong course of carelessness, so prevalent in eager, heedless youth.”

⁸¹ One thinks of the unfortunate decorative patterns of stylized, zigzag drapery folds in many of the portraits and subject pictures of Domenico Tintoretto, for example any of the draperies in the kneeling figures in the foreground of his huge *Apparition of Saint Mark* (Scuola Grande di San Marco, Venice), probably from the first decade of the seventeenth century (see *Four Decades of Restoration in Venice*, ed. Conn and Rosand, p. 170). Such vivid patterns ensure that Domenico’s paint surfaces are lively and calligraphic, to be sure, but there is little correlation with plausible forms of fabric. In comparison, the drapery patterns of his father much more successfully mediate between the forms depicted and a bravura effect in the paint surface.

⁸² On the expressive quality of brushwork beyond mimesis in Titian and Tintoretto, see for example, Rosand, “Tintoretto e gli spiriti nel pennello,” “The Stroke of the Brush,” “Titian and the Eloquence of the Brush,” and “La mano di Tiziano.” Jodi Cranston has explored these issues of facture and a consideration of the role of the viewer using examples from Titian’s late career in the essay “Theorizing Materiality” and her book, *The Muddied Mirror: Materiality and Figuration in Titian’s Later Paintings* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010). Such discussions specific to the meaning of the painting handling in a single Venetian

artist should be understood within a broader critical and rhetorical context. See the broader exploration of artistic virtuosity and its criticism in the early modern period in Suthor, *Bravura*.

⁸³ The translation can be found in Ridolfi-Enggass, pp. 25-6. The original, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, p. 22 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 24, is as follows: “Ma perche la Virtù incontrò sempre nelle difficoltà, avvenne che nato disparere trà confrati, volendo alcuni & altri nò, che il quadro vi rimanesse, per le loro ostentationi: perloche sdegnato il Tintoretto, lo fece distaccare dal luogo posto, & à casa il riportò. Finalmente quietato il rumore, vedendosi quelli dalla fattione nemica scherniti, pensando à quando di perdita si faceva con la privatione di quella Pittura, acclamata dall’universale per maravigliosa, si ridussero à ripregarlo, che la riponesse; ed egli sospendendone per qualche tempo gl’animi loro, in fine ve la remisse.”

⁸⁴ For a persuasive reading of the picture’s aggressive paint handling, see Philip Sohm, *Pittoresco: Marco Boschini, his critics, and their critiques of painterly brushwork in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 7-8. Discussing the interpretive challenge of discrete strokes of paint constituting a single arm in the painting, Sohm writes, “Each stroke contains a distinct hue that has not been blended into the flesh and hence sits on top of the flesh without pretending to correspond to anatomical form.” p. 7.

⁸⁵ According to Ridolfi, the prior Fra Germano found the figures too large and he and other friars complained to Titian. Their objection is easy to understand when examining the panel up close, but any sense of disproportion is of course resolved when seen it from the intended viewing distance within the church, as Titian tried to explain to his clients. Apparently only when an ambassador for the German emperor made an offer to buy the painting did the friars realize the masterpiece they would be giving up. Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 163. Dolce’s *Aretino* corroborates the criticism described by Ridolfi. Dolce emphasizes how the *Assunta* so surpassed the “dead and cold things” of the older generation of painters that viewers automatically denigrated the new work, only later coming to accept it. The original text, in Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino”*, pp. 184, 186, reads, “Con tutto cio i Pittori goffi, e lo sciocco volgo, che insino alhora non havevano veduto altro, che le cose morte e fredde di Giovanni Bellino, di Gentile, e del Vivarino (perche Giorgione nel lavorare a olio non haveva ancora havuto lavoro public; e per lo piu non faceva altre opere, che mezze figure, e ritratti) lequali erano senza movimento, e senza rilievo: dicevano della detta tavola un gran male. Dipoi raffreddandosi la invidia, & aprendo loro a poco la verità gliocchi, cominciarano le genti a stupir della nuova maniera trovato in Vinegia da Titiano.”

⁸⁶ As Leo Steinberg pointed out, “No art seems to remain uncomfortable for very long.” See his “Contemporary Art and the Plight of its Public” in *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 5. Although dealing fundamentally with Modernism, from Henri Matisse to Jasper Johns, many of Steinberg’s comments are equally applicable to Renaissance art.

⁸⁷ The translation comes from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 25. The original, printed in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 22 and also in Ridolfi-Vite, pp. 22-4, reads as follows: “... in cui rappresentò un miracolo di San Marco, avvenuto nella persona del servo d’un Cavaliere di Provenza, il quale contro il volere

del Padrone partitosi per visitare le reliquie di San Marco, ritornato ch'egli fù, comandò il Cavaliere, che in emenda della trasgressione gli fossero tratti gl'occhi e spezzate le gambe. Qui dunque il Tintoretto dipinse quel servo frà le rotture de' legni e de' ferri allestiti per lo tormento; & in aere si vede comparir San Marco in suo aiuto, in uno scorcio maraviglioso accommodato, mediante che quegli rimase illeso; poiche non mancano i Santi del loro patrocinio nelle tribulationi à suoi devoti. Assistono à tanto miracolo molti personaggi vestiti con zimarre & ornamenti barbareschi; soldati e ministri in atto di ammiratione, un de' quali dimostra al suo Signore che siede in alto, ripieno di maraviglia, i martelli e le fratture de' legni. Sonovi alcuni aggrappati à colonne, e frà gli stupori di quel maraviglioso componimento è una donna appoggiata a un piedestallo, che si lancia in dietro per vedere l'attione, così pronta & vivace, che viva rassembra." It is striking that Ridolfi focuses on the Raphaelesque features, perhaps further indication that Tintoretto indeed took inspiration from the *Expulsion of Heliodorus*.

⁸⁸ The translation comes from Vasari-de Vere, II, pp. 512-3. The original, in Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 592, is as follows: in questa è gran copia di figure, di scorti, d'armadure, casamenti, ritratti, ed altre cose simili, che rendono molto ornata quell'opera." A classic study of Vasari's descriptions of works of art, and his criteria for excellence in art, including *invenzione* and *disegno*, remains Svetlana Alpers, "Ekphrasis and Aesthetic Attitudes in Vasari's Lives," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 23, nos. 3-4 (1960), pp. 190-215.

⁸⁹ Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 587.

⁹⁰ The translation is from Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 511. The original, found in Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 590, reads, "Onde in Santo Rocco, nella cappella maggiore, sotto l'opera del Pordenone, fece duoi quadri a olio grandi quanto è larga tutta la cappella, cioè circa braccia dodici l'uno. In uno finse una prospettiva come d'uno spedale pieno di letta e d'infermi in varie attitudini, i quali sono medicate da Santo Rocco, e fra questi sono alcuni ignudi molto ben intesi, ed un morto in iscorto, che è bellissimo." For the painting of *Saint Roch Cures the Plague Victims*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 134 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 50. Echols discusses the painting as a touchstone for Tintoretto's development in "Tintoretto the Painter," pp. 39-40.

⁹¹ Paolo Pino's *Dialogo di Pittura* (1548) also held that variety was the spice of painting; within its defense of *colorito* he advocated for diversity of textures "...as in varying the flesh tints according to the age, the complexion and the rank of the person depicted; in distinguishing linen from wool or silk draperies; differentiating between gold and copper, polished steel and silver; imitating fire convincingly (which I esteem a difficult thing), distinguishing water from air..." See Mary Pardo, "Paolo Pino's 'Dialogo di Pittura': A Translation with Commentary" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1984), p. 338. A new analysis of Pino's dialogue with particular reference to its indebtedness to Pliny can be found in Sarah Blake McHam, *Pliny and the Artistic Culture of the Renaissance: The Legacy of the Natural History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 265-68.

⁹² The translation is from Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* p. 147. The original, on p. 146, reads, "Aviene anco, che le figure o tutte, o alcuna parte di esse scortino. Laqual cosa non si puo far senza giudicio e discretione."

⁹³ *Ibid.* pp. 148-50.

⁹⁴ There is a huge bibliography on the methodology and genesis of Vasari's *Vite*, but a good starting point is Patricia Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), esp. pp. 106-285.

⁹⁵ Ridolfi, however, had little tolerance for details that did not impress his seicento taste with their virtuosity and thus seemed merely clutter; for example, he denigrated the setting of Mansueti's *Saint Mark Healing Anianus* from the Scuola di San Marco cycle. See Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, p. 125 and Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 50.

⁹⁶ For Tintoretto's use of figures set off as paired opposites, particularly in contrasting lighting conditions, see Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative," p. 69.

⁹⁷ Marco Boschini, *La Carta del Navegar Pitoresco dialogo tra un senator venetian deletante, e un professor de Pittura soto nome d'Ecelenza e de Compare Comparti' in oto venti...* (Venice: per li Baba, 1660). This poem in the original edition runs to 681 pages. The 1966 critical edition, Boschini, *La Carta del Navegar Pitoresco*, ed. Anna Pallucchini, counting introductory matter as well as the brief biographies of Venetian artists from the "Breve istruzione" (preface to his *Le ricche minere della pittura Venezia*), totals well more than 900 pages.

⁹⁸ Translation kindly provided by Lorenzo Buonanno. The original, in Boschini, *Carta del Navegar Pitoresco*, ed. Anna Pallucchini, pp. 284-85, reads as follows: Questo xe quel Tesoro, che no gh'e/ Da far el paragon in tuto el Mondo;/ Questo un quadro xe ben de tuto tondo!/ Vinti cinque carati in suma el xe./ Se vede ben che è vero quell conceto,/ Che l'Arte ala Natura tiol el vanto./ Int' el dessegno no ghe xe altrettanto./ Mercè del gran valor del Tentoreto. This telling passage emphasizes Tintoretto's skill in *disegno* and also manages a taunt against Titian, invoking the motto on Titian's *stemma*: "Ars potentior natur."

⁹⁹ See Fredrika H. Jacobs, "Aretino and Michelangelo, Dolce and Titian: *Femmina, Masculo, Grazia*," *Art Bulletin* 82, no. 1 (March 2000), pp.51-67, for an ingenious study of how the rhetoric of opposites responded to the competition between the two artists. Moreover, Jacobs argues that mid-*cinquecento* ideas of perfection in art could embody a supplementary fusion of masculinity and femininity, a notion of seduction implied by Castiglione's "certain circumspect dissimulation" ("una certa avvertita dissimulazione"). Beyond the masculine-feminine duality sometimes associated with *disegno* and *colorito*, it is worth considering similar parallels between Alois Riegl's two modes of perception of the objective world, the haptic or tactile (*haptisch*) and the optic (*optisch*). See his definitions in *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie*, pp. 23-38. Riegl's terms are analyzed in Michael Gubser, "Time and History in Alois Riegl's Theory of Perception," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 66, no. 3 (July 2005), pp. 451-74.

¹⁰⁰ The translation and original of this passage from Pino can be found in Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 19, and *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 16, respectively.

¹⁰¹ To understand the formula within the context of Pino's dialogue, where it comes after a list of many esteemed painters, see *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, ed. Paola Barocchi, I, Bari, 1960, p. 127. A thorough discussion of Pino in the context of Italian art theory of the mid-Cinquecento can be found in Pardo, "Paolo Pino's 'Dialogo di Pittura.'" The formula appears in her translation of Pino on p. 358, following the long list of admired painters ("valenti pittori." For a discussion of the terms of the formula, see also Ilchman and Saywell, "Michelangelo and Tintoretto," p. 385. It is worth noting that Pino's long list of celebrated painters which includes Tintoretto is not particularly selective, and indeed includes artists deemed relatively minor by posterity. Tintoretto comes after Giulio Clovio and Savoldo and before Paris Bordone, Domenico Campagnolo, and Stefano dell'Arzere: "...Don Giulio Miniator, Giovan Gerolamo Bresciano, Giacobbo Tintore, Paris, Domenico Campagnolo, Stefano dall'argine giovane Padovano...." See Borean, "Documentation," p. 420, and Pardo, "Paolo Pino's 'Dialogo di Pittura,'" pp. 357-58.

¹⁰² Echols, *Tintoretto the Painter*, p. 32. Rosand makes a vital clarification, not always observed in later scholarship: "It is important to note that the Venetians generally do not use the term *colore* but rather *colorito* or *colorire*, not the noun but a form of the verb. They are not concerned with color *per se*. Pino and Dolce agree that the quality of *colorito* does not reside in the physical properties of the colors themselves, which are beautiful even in their boxes, but in the matter in which these colors are applied: *Colorito* is an active, constructive concept." *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 20. Thomas Puttfarcken offers an interesting reading of both Dolce and Pino, along with a speculation that the true response from Venice to Vasari's criticism of Venetian artistic practice was not in the form of a treatise but indeed in Titian's late painting. See Puttfarcken, "The Dispute about *Disegno* and *Colorito* in Venice: Paolo Pino, Lodovico Dolce and Titian," in *Kunst und Kunsttheorie: 1400-1900*, ed. Peter Ganz et al., (Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek, 1991), pp. 75-99. Finally, see also S. J. Freedberg, "*Disegno* versus *Colore* in Florentine and Venetian Painting of the Cinquecento," in *Florence and Venice: Comparisons and Relations*, Acts of two Conferences at Villa I Tatti in 1976-1977, Organized by Sergio Bertelli, Nicolai Rubenstein, and Craig Hugh Smyth, II (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1980), pp. 309-322. This essay, published before the first edition of Rosand which made the *colore-colorito* distinction, offers useful observations with Wölfflinian comparisons, many involving Tintoretto. Freedberg's refined prose – often recalling culinary writing – also reminds us that Tintoretto's skills are not just in storytelling but also in weaving an aesthetic spell: "The energies of rhythm expand and turn into one another; the surfaces – of draperies and bodies, and even architecture – respond to the mobility of light; as in the *Miracle of the Slave*, color articulates and lends still higher energy to the design. By means which are now more urgent as aesthetic powers than as powers of narration, we are compelled to be involved in this excitement." p. 317.

¹⁰³ A good overview of the issues can be found in Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 10-25.

¹⁰⁴ The translation is from Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 781. The original, in Vasari-Milanesi, VII, pp. 427-28, is as follows: “avere a nascere sotto la vaghezza de’ colori lo stento di non sapere disegnare, nella maniera che fecero molti anni i pittori viniziani, Giorgione, il Palma, il Pordenone, ed altri che non videro Roma nè altre opere di tutta perfezione.” Vasari’s inclusion of Pordenone within this list is surprising given that he worked regularly and systematically with drawings to prepare his paintings, and since the confidence of contour in his drawings on paper as well as his paintings would seem to have been up to Florentine standards. Moreover, placing this comment within the *Life of Titian* seems careless, since Titian, Michelangelo, and Vasari famously met in Rome in 1546, as described below.

¹⁰⁵ For the translation and original, see Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino,”* p. 97 and 96.

¹⁰⁶ Boschini, *Ricche minere in Carta del Navegar*, p. 748.

¹⁰⁷ The translation comes Raffaello Borghini, *Il Riposo*, ed. and transl. Lloyd H. Ellis Jr, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), p. 261, hereafter abbreviated as Borghini-Ellis. The original is found in Raffaello Borghini, *Il Riposo* (Florence: Giorgio Marescotti, 1584; repr., Hildesheim: Olms, 1969), p. 551, and reads as follows: “...e poscia si prese per principal maestro l’opere del divino Michelagnolo, non riguardando a spese alcuna per aver formate le sue figure della sagrestia di San Lorenzo, a parimente tutti i buoni modelli delle migliori statue che sono in Firenze. Laonde egli stesso conferma non riconoscere per maestri nelle cose del disegno, se non gli artefici fiorentini, ma nel colore dice havere imitato la natura, e poi particolarmente Titiano...” Ellis’s recent edition, although deleting about 40% of the original text, includes a long introduction and useful notes, as well as an appendix comparing the amount of attention given to individual artists in the first edition. Ellis’s table makes clear that the six most-discussed artists were, in order of attention, Andrea del Sarto, Raphael, Vasari, Alessandro Allori, Tintoretto [!], and Michelangelo.

¹⁰⁸ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 14, and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 7. In 1557, Dolce uses a similar formula to praise the synthesis in Titian’s *Assunta*, supposedly a tripartite combination of “la grandezza e terribilità di Michel’Agnolo, la piacevolezza e venustà di Rafaello, & il colorito proprio della Natura.” Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino,”* p. 186. On this fusion, see Puttfarken, “Dispute about Disegno and Colorito,” pp. 82-83. Although Puttfarken does not discuss Pino’s formula in conjunction with Tintoretto, he justly observes about Titian, “And Dolce can avoid the dangerous issue of eclecticism which Pino’s statement implies, because when he painted the *Assunta*, Titian had not yet been to Rome to see Raphael’s and Michelangelo’s work. He had equaled them in their own fields of excellence, even as a young artist, by relying entirely on his own innate resources, his own genius.” This comment could be applied as well to Tintoretto’s work at the time of the *Miracle of the Slave*, since it is very likely that he had not seen any autograph paintings or sculptures by Michelangelo. He may well have seen in person Michelangelo’s drawings, that is “disegni di Michelangelo,” but this is not certain. By this analysis, Tintoretto’s youthful achievement with the *Miracle of the Slave* – more or less the same age as Titian was when he executed the *Assunta* – was an equally impressive accomplishment.

¹⁰⁹ Some scholars dismiss the literal existence of the motto without considering the possibility of a larger truth. For example, Anna Forlani Tempesta writes, “That he took his drawing from Michelangelo and his color from Titian is one of those simplifications destined more to be repeated than to be taken seriously by scholars.” *The Robert Lehman Collection V, Italian Fifteenth- to Seventeenth-Century Drawings* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 132. Taking a somewhat different tack, Rearick wanted to reverse the formula, since he thought Tintoretto produced drawings in technique and style far closer to those of Titian than those of Michelangelo, which on the surface is true. Rearick opens an essay with the witty statement that “*Il colorito di Michelangelo ed il disegno di Tiziano*” should have been the motto Tintoretto affixed to studio wall as his ideal....” But this literal interpretation largely considers *disegno* in the sense of a drawing on paper rather than its (more relevant) theoretical sense as the expression through strong contours of three-dimensional form held in the mind. W.R. Rearick, “From Drawing to Painting: The Role of ‘Disegno’ in the Tintoretto Shop,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario*, p. 173. Rearick continued to use this rhetorical point in later publications, e.g. *Il disegno veneziano del Cinquecento*, p. 121.

¹¹⁰ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 216 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 121, notes in list of the sitters of Domenico’s portraits, “Carlo Ridolfi scrittore della presente Historia.” Echols observes that Ridolfi credits Domenico with passing on the family story that his father admired the work of the painter Andrea Schiavone; see Echols, *Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting*, p. 22, with the original citation being Boschini, in *Carta del Navegar*, p. 724. All this suggests that Ridolfi was the beneficiary of abundant oral tradition, presumably much of it accurate. If the motto were in fact inscribed on the studio wall (and had not been removed by the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries), either Aliense or Ridolfi would likely have seen it. According to Lorenzo Buonanno, the copy of Ridolfi’s *Le maraviglie* owned by Michelangelo Muraro (now Casa Muraro, Columbia University, Venice) contains a handwritten dedication to the heirs of Veronese; clearly the author knew this family well too.

¹¹¹ See the analysis in Echols, “Tintoretto the Painter,” p. 33.

¹¹² The key studies on Tintoretto and sculpture, incorporating much bibliography and many excellent observations, are by Krischel, *Tintoretto und die Skulptur der Renaissance* and “Tintoretto e la scultura veneziano,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 12 (1996), pp. 5-54.

¹¹³ Varchi is quoted in Paola Barocchi, *Trattati d’arte del cinquecento*, I (Bari: Laterza, 1960), p. 82.

¹¹⁴ Anton Francesco Doni, *Disegno* (Venice: Giolito, 1549), p. 40v. The sentence continues, “& tanto è piu cattiva la scoltura quanto s’accosta alla Pittura.” On Doni’s biography and literary context, see Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, pp. 49-69.

¹¹⁵ For an argument that distinctive and personal paint application began in mid-Cinquecento Venice to function as a surrogate way of signing a painting (and replace the prominent *cartellini* in pictures of the later Quattrocento and early Cinquecento), see Ilchman in “Venetian Painting

in an Age of Rivals” in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 29-32 (“The brushstroke as signature”).

¹¹⁶ The documents make clear that Tintoretto received payments for the high altar of San Marziale on 8 May 1548 and 4 December 1549, and a final payment on 12 December 1549 “di haver fatto la palla de San Marcilian.” See Borean, “Documentation,” p. 420. In the English edition of the Prado exhibition catalogue, the summary at the top of the heading was incorrectly translated; “1548 adi 8 mazo” is March 8th, not May 8th.

¹¹⁷ Tintoretto’s painting is now on the second altar of the right. For the painting, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 133 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 49. The connection to Titian’s painting has been convincingly made by Echols, “Tintoretto the Painter,” p. 39. “Indeed, the San Marziale altarpiece may be as close to the *colorito* of Titian as Tintoretto comes, outside of portraiture. Thus, only a year after the maxim ‘Michelangelo’s *disegno* and Titian’s *colorito*’ first appeared in print, Tintoretto had executed a painting that could be described in precisely those terms.” For Titian’s painting in San Giovanni Elemosinario, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 113, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 125, who discusses the difficulty of resolving the picture’s place in Titian’s chronology. Whereas, according to Hope, the altarpiece seems to have been in place for Vasari to see it in 1541-42, Humfrey reasonably notes that “the broad pictorial execution and the dusky palette undeniably resemble Titian’s works of the later 1540s much more closely than those of a decade earlier.” To this discussion of the date of the Titian, Tintoretto’s painting of 1549 can thus serve as an important *terminus ante quem*.

¹¹⁸ Rosand puts it well in concluding many observations on Tintoretto’s use of local color: “Indeed in its clarity, and intelligence of chromatic construction, the *Miracle of St. Mark* is something of a demonstration piece – not so much a tour de force as, literally, a quite finished “masterpiece,” the public announcement of a young painter’s ambitious control of his art.” *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 136. Earlier Rosand notes the picture’s pivotal nature, “*The Miracle of St. Mark* does indeed represent a moment of arrival in the art of Tintoretto. Summarizing all the forces present in his youthful work, of which it is the culmination, its still greater energies announce the course of his future development.” p. 134.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE DIFFICULT DECADE

There is no doubt that every profession is enhanced by decorum and reputation, and this is true in particular of painting. Nor is it likely that the works of any painter, though they may be excellent, can attain the level of the sublime if they are debased by their author. Applause converges on the finest outward show, and the world deems the height of perfection to be found where the treasures are most lavish, since it is our nature to be tyrannized by desire. But Tintoretto did not know how to profit from this practice. As a result the ground he sowed with great labor yielded but a small harvest, though by right it should have brought him comfort and fame.¹

Carlo Ridolfi, *Life of Jacopo Tintoretto*

Ridolfi's biography of Tintoretto is replete with comments about motive or emotion, representing both the painter's point of view and attitudes of his patrons and competitors. The observations about the painter quoted above, concluding that the artist seems to have undercut his own success by not taking seriously issues of decorum ("decoro") and reputation ("riputatione"), are vague and not particularly easy to understand, but they undoubtedly represent a lament by the biographer for a perceived personality flaw in his subject. Moreover, the comment's placement in the biography is curious; this paragraph on Tintoretto's inability to profit from his efforts is sandwiched between accounts of how Tintoretto boldly secured the commission for the choir paintings in the Madonna dell'Orto and detailed descriptions of the finished paintings themselves. What does Ridolfi mean by this aside?

Ridolfi's insinuation that Tintoretto may have been his own enemy finds corroboration in other early sources. As we remember, Boschini's *La Carta del Navagar Pitoresco* describes how Tintoretto's "spiritoso" personality irritated Titian enough to drive the young apprentice from the *bottega*.² Similarly, Calmo's famous 1548 letter to Tintoretto describes a strong personality, like an overpowering peppercorn, that might well have aggravated others.³ Furthermore, an artist who possessed remarkable skill at marketing would surely, over the years, rub some competitors and patrons the wrong way.

Thus it is worth considering a broader interpretation of Ridolfi's observation cited above. That Tintoretto only secured a meager harvest ("una poca raccolta"), rather than the success Ridolfi felt he deserved, should not be solely applied to the moment where it appears in the biography, that of painting the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf*. On the contrary, it seems to sum up a circumstance that may have lasted as long as a decade. This reading – that the comment pertains to Tintoretto's situation throughout much of the 1550s – can be ventured despite the fact that Ridolfi seemed to make an effort to reconstruct the proper sequence of events in Tintoretto's biography. Ridolfi placed more emphasis on chronology than either of the two earliest biographers of Tintoretto, Vasari and Borghini, both writing during the painter's lifetime. Neither of these writers attempt to construct a coherent timeline of Tintoretto's career.⁴

By contrast, Ridolfi, composing his *vita* a half-century after his subject's death, took pains to present at least a loose sense of the painter's chronology, making a special point to distinguish the activities at the beginning and end of Tintoretto's career.⁵ Moreover, at the middle of his text, Ridolfi offers an aside and insists that his approach has been largely

chronological thus far. Before several long lists of lesser commissions in Venice, Ridolfi announces a change of tack, one away from chronological order:

But since up till now we have spoken of many of his principal works, discussing them to the best of our ability in chronological order, we will now deal with a large group of paintings and altarpieces scattered throughout the churches of Venice that he painted during his most vigorous period.⁶

Despite such protestations, however, the numerous events presented out of sequence, the formulaic introduction to the *Life*, and the many anecdotes and sayings that take up the last section of the biography together make clear that Ridolfi believed in larger truths that could be applied to his subject. One such observation seems to be the conclusion that Tintoretto had badly stumbled in the ten years following the triumph of the *Miracle of the Slave* in 1548. The supporting evidence is hard to dispute.

This chapter surveys the “Difficult Decade” of the 1550s, in which Tintoretto’s promising future in Venice was badly disrupted in the face of renewed pressure from Titian, returned from Augsburg and apparently furious about what had happened in his absence. At Titian’s instigation, Aretino’s vocal support dried up, and the senior painter tried other methods to thwart his young rival. Faced with such pressures, to further his career Tintoretto painted a monumental canvas of the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (1551-56, probably c. 1556, fig. 56), the first of a number of works in his neighborhood church, the Madonna dell’Orto.⁷ This commission not only allowed him to begin to take over this personally important space through his paintings, it also offered the opportunity to challenge Titian with the very subject that the older artist had seemingly perfected a generation earlier (fig. 25).

Simultaneously, Tintoretto had to endure the arrival in Venice of the astonishingly talented Paolo Veronese, a foreigner who went from strength to strength in this decade. From his first Venetian commission of about 1551 until his unofficial but public coronation as Titian’s

successor in 1557, Veronese produced a sequence of breakthrough pictures in various prestigious settings: government offices, churches, and private homes. In this way he both snatched prominent commissions that might have gone to Tintoretto, and further advertised his suitability for the next great opportunity. Moreover, Veronese worked fluently in an enviable range of media: paintings in oil on canvas and panel, paintings in fresco, and a whole array of apparently effortless drawing techniques, from the roughest *primo pensiero* sketch to the most finished chiaroscuro drawing.

Finally, in these years and under these pressures, Tintoretto also became the victim of consistent critical opprobrium. “La voce de la publica laude,” which had acclaimed the unveiling of the *Miracle of the Slave*, soon became sparse in its praise and, in fact, frequently negative. These misfortunes came to a head during the crisis year of 1556-7, when nearly simultaneously Tintoretto was excluded from a prestigious civic commission, one which vaulted Veronese to new prominence, and was also condemned in several publications for a lack of diligence or propriety. As the decade came to a close, it might seem that Tintoretto had lost his touch, and needed to double his bet. He managed to turn such criticism on its head and indeed resurrect his sagging career through a daring wager. This bet, which Ridolfi said Tintoretto undertook in order to be known as “the world’s most daring painter” (“il più arrischiato Pittore del Mondo”), was the execution of the giant choir paintings for the Madonna dell’Orto.⁸

Eroding Support

As emphasized in the previous chapter, the *Miracle of the Slave* was both Tintoretto’s first great public success and simultaneously controversial; the acclaim that greeted its unveiling was not wholly positive. Aretino, whose letter of April 1548 to Tintoretto best summed up the

heady mood, also took pains to admonish the painter to not get a swelled head. Equally important, Aretino instructed Tintoretto to take his time when executing a picture and abandon *prestezza* in favor of careful execution. Aretino ends the letter by warning that if Tintoretto does not follow this advice willingly, the painter will eventually be forced to swallow his pride, slow down, and forsake recklessness. According to Aretino, Tintoretto would surely learn these vital lessons over time, the hard way:

But do not indulge in pride, if this is the case, because that would be tantamount to turning your back upon the attainment of an even higher degree of perfection. And blessings be upon your name, if you can temper haste to have done with patience in the doing. Though, gradually, time will take care of this; since time, and nothing else, is sufficient to brake the headlong course of carelessness, so prevalent in eager, heedless youth.⁹

Although other writers soon took up this theme of carelessness, Tintoretto must have been particularly worried when Aretino's generous and public support suddenly dried up. After all, his earlier letters mentioning Tintoretto had asserted the young painter's promise. The letter of February 1545, commending the ceiling picture of the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* (fig. 16) for Aretino's own house, was more than a *quid pro quo* for the painting, very likely a gift. On the contrary, the letter made clear both the evident qualities of this painting and its pendant, both executed impressively quickly by such a young artist – “you, so young and have practically painted something in less time than others take in merely considering what to paint” – was not merely his opinion.¹⁰ Rather, Aretino declares that his esteem was shared by anyone who could judge good painting: “da ogni uomo ch'è di giudicio.”¹¹ It comes as no surprise that praise for a Venetian artist other than Titian happened while the latter was away from Venice.¹² In 1545 and early 1546, Titian was in Rome, painting for the Farnese family and immersing himself in the culture of both contemporary artists and classical buildings and sculpture; as Titian famously wrote to Charles V, “I'm learning from these marvelous ancient stones.”¹³ From this experience,

Tintoretto must have concluded that the reception would be far more favorable, particularly from Aretino, if he unveiled a major painting when Titian was occupied far from Venice.

Tintoretto may have viewed the ceiling pictures for Aretino as both a prerequisite and a rehearsal for an even more important debut, the *Miracle of the Slave*. In April 1548, presumably shortly before the unveiling of the picture – and perhaps recording his impressions of the nearly finished painting as seen in Tintoretto’s studio – Aretino wrote another letter discussing Tintoretto. It is tempting to think that although this painting was intended for the Scuola Grande di San Marco rather than Aretino’s house, the painter gave the critic another “gift,” namely a sneak preview. This was an opportunity to view an important picture in process and before anyone else. Aretino’s letter to Sansovino notes that Tintoretto was on the verge of something big. The critic here vividly observes that Tintoretto was “near the winning post,” as it were, and was about to win the battle.¹⁴ Such a prediction was of course soon confirmed by Aretino’s famous letter to Tintoretto himself, hailing both the debut of the *Miracle of the Slave* and its painter.

A puzzling silence from Aretino then followed. This was particularly surprising since Tintoretto had hardly used up his ammunition. Right at this time the painter was executing other impressive commissions for public settings in Venice, such as the imposing *Christ Washing the Feet of his Disciples*, originally for the church of San Marcuola (now Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid) of 1548-49 (fig. 94) or the even larger *Saint Roch Cures the Plague Victims* of 1549 (fig. 91). Both of these massive canvases would have been executed and unveiled in the triumphant aftermath of the *Miracle of the Slave*’s unveiling. In those same months Tintoretto was creating equally ambitious canvases probably intended for prestigious private settings, e.g. *Esther before Ahasuerus* (fig. 52), dating from about 1547-48, and thus probably completed not

long before the *Miracle of the Slave*. These were the kinds of paintings that might well have elicited praise from Aretino.

Based on the themes and tone of his April letter saluting the *Miracle of the Slave*, one can easily imagine that Aretino would have also hailed the astonishing foreshortening and *disegno* in the *Christ Washing the Feet* or in *Saint Roch Cures the Plague Victims*; as Aretino had earlier written about the *Miracle of the Slave*, “There is no man who is not astonished by the three-dimensionality of the figures.”¹⁵ Moreover, Aretino, who loved contrasting pairs and rhetorical comparisons, might have been delighted by how the latter picture was in essence a nocturnal version of the former. Similarly, based on his earlier enthusiasms, Aretino very possibly would have acclaimed the jostling crowd of onlookers around the protagonist in the *Esther* using the terms employed to praise the throng around the slave, “the faces, airs and expressions of the crowd surrounding it are so exactly as they would be in reality, that the spectacle seems rather real than simulated.”¹⁶ Tintoretto’s paintings in the “Decisive Years” on either side of the *Miracle of the Slave* would seem to have been very much to Aretino’s taste.¹⁷

Instead, something kept Aretino from praising these conspicuous pictures. Aretino’s next mention of Tintoretto in a letter, less than a year after celebrating the *Miracle of the Slave*, indicates frustration with the artist. In this letter to a certain Boccamazzo, Aretino seems to be shaking his head in response to some embarrassing gaffe by the painter, “Tintoretto, out of wickedness or folly, has broken his promise.”¹⁸ Although Tintoretto’s “broken promise” seems enigmatic, there may be a straightforward explanation: a force more compelling than Tintoretto’s quality, namely Titian’s enmity.

As we have seen, Titian was crucially out of town when Tintoretto unveiled the *Miracle of the Slave*. If Tintoretto had not planned this circumstance (and many anecdotes from across his

long career suggest such a scenario is plausible), the young artist certainly knew to take advantage of the opportunity. Titian was called away from Venice on the 6th of January 1548 to paint what would become an astonishing number of portraits for Emperor Charles V, other members of the Imperial family, and the Fugger family. With the expectation of so many commissions to execute upon arrival in Germany, the word presumably got back to Venice that Titian would be out of town for at least six months. In fact, Titian's first Augsburg sojourn lasted until October.¹⁹ The *Miracle of the Slave* thus revealed not just Tintoretto's skill in painting, but also in timing.

Although there is no surviving record of Titian's reactions upon his return to the *Miracle of the Slave* or Aretino's letter, the older artist's likely emotions can be reconstructed in light of the abundant evidence of their closeness. The painter had journeyed from Venice in 1548 with his friendship with Aretino seemingly in strong shape.²⁰ Let us survey some of the testimony of this bond. Five years earlier, in 1543, Titian had flattered Aretino by including his features in the figure of Pontius Pilate in the huge canvas of *Ecce Homo* (fig. 95) painted for Zuane d'Anna, the same family that lived in the palazzo whose façade had been frescoed by Pordenone (cf. fig. 33) and who had attempted to acquire an altarpiece by Titian (fig. 34) for their family chapel in San Salvador, discussed in Chapter Two. The strong resemblance of the figure of Pilate to Aretino within the large painting was noted first by Ridolfi, "in the figure of Pilate he painted a portrait of Aretino."²¹ This detail was not just repayment for the public relations efforts Titian had enjoyed over the years. The portrayal also acknowledges an appealing theological current in Aretino's very influential book, *La Umanità di Cristo* (1535), an interpretation of the life of Jesus that was sympathetic to Pilate's dilemma in the Passion narrative.²²

The next year, in May of 1544, Titian was the recipient of a particularly flattering letter, in which Aretino described a sunset over the Grand Canal as seen from the window of his home near the Rialto Bridge. Here Aretino reversed the customary praise of a painter whereby the painter's powers of creation are compared to those of God. Rather, according to Aretino, the glorious range of colors present in the clouds seems to show Nature painting as if using the brushes of Titian:

I was astonished at their varied colors, the nearer clouds blazed with the flames of the sun, the further away reddened with a lesser flame. Oh how beautifully did the brushes of Nature push away the atmosphere, distinguishing the sky from the palaces as Vecellio does in his landscapes!²³

A year later, in 1545, Titian presented Aretino with a magnificent portrait (fig. 10), which endowed the sitter with a physical grandeur commensurate with the writer's massive ego.²⁴ Finally, just before his departure for Germany, Titian gave Aretino a religious picture, an *Ecce Homo*, a replica of the same subject earlier presented to both Charles V (fig. 96) and Pope Paul III, putting Aretino as recipient of this composition in very good company indeed.²⁵ Aretino and Titian had thus publically and privately demonstrated their affection and loyalty on a continual basis.

Upon his return to Venice by October of 1548, after less than a year abroad, Titian must not have believed what had gone on behind his back. Tintoretto – previously only an annoyance – was now a formidable competitor. The older painter probably understood that his own turn toward foreign patronage had left him vulnerable at home. By spending so much time engaged on pictures for destinations outside of Venice, and by leaving the lagoon city to undertake commissions, Titian had allowed his rivals to obtain prestigious opportunities in Venetian public settings. The *Miracle of the Slave* marked a watershed in Venetian painting every bit as impressive as Titian's similar accomplishment in painting the *Assunta*, now thirty years old

(coincidentally more or less the age of each painter at the time of their respective triumphs).

Tintoretto's mural also suggested that Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin*, the greatest Venetian narrative painting of the previous generation, might now be considered outmoded or staid. The older man must have felt uneasy, and perhaps even jealous, as he realized that some younger artists would look now toward Tintoretto, rather than Titian, as the model to emulate for *scuole* and government commissions.

Finally, it was surely sobering for Titian to read Aretino's letter to Tintoretto and realize that the staunchest of friends could appear conditional in his loyalty. Yet a bit like a businessman who makes donations to opposing candidates for political office, Aretino's praise of Tintoretto should be seen as more than a critic fulfilling his own predilections, but also an arbiter of taste hedging his bets. Although Tintoretto had now risen to become a professional threat to Titian, in the mind of the latter, Aretino had probably made the greater transgression. In other words, Titian was probably irritated by Tintoretto's success, but he must have been furious at Aretino's betrayal. With friends like these, who needs critics?

Although no biographer of Titian recounts the painter's anger at Aretino, it is tempting to reconstruct the scene by recapitulating the anecdote at the start of Ridolfi's *Life of Tintoretto*. This is the story whereby Titian returned home, found himself facing the intimidating talent of a precocious young artist, and consequently ordered the expulsion of this apprentice from the studio. In Ridolfi's words, "Titian had barely climbed the steps and put down his cloak when he commanded his assistant Girolamo (thus does the little worm of jealousy live in human hearts) to expel Jacopo from the house immediately."²⁶ If we change the particulars to Titian's return to Venice in 1548, *mutatis mutandis*, we have a vivid and plausible description of Titian absorbing

what has happened in his absence, confronting Aretino, and, after delivering a browbeating, securing from the writer a promise never to do this again.

The evidence for this rift seems unambiguous and is born out in the paper trail: it seems reasonable that once Titian had made his displeasure clear, Aretino ceased to write at all about Tintoretto – let alone praise him – and resumed publications that flattered Titian.²⁷ Those in Aretino’s circle shared this revised view. Dolce’s *L’Aretino* of 1557 is a celebration of Titian’s preeminence, and uses character of Aretino as the persuasive and sagacious voice in the dialogue. By contrast, there is no praise of Tintoretto within Dolce’s text, despite the number of public commissions the painter had completed in the previous ten years. It seems highly likely then that Titian had given Aretino a choice of whom to support, and the writer prudently abandoned Tintoretto and returned to Titian’s camp.²⁸

Although this seems a sensible analysis of the evidence, Mark Roskill refuted this scenario and doubted the severity or even existence of a rupture. Nevertheless, a number of subsequent scholars have confirmed a falling-out.²⁹ Roskill had based his determination on a number of points which individually he admitted were not conclusive, but, “cumulatively they tend to reinforce one another.”³⁰ Yet nearly all the evidence Roskill musters is unconvincing, and the simplest explanation – that there was an estrangement between Aretino, almost certainly prompted by Titian – seems convincing.³¹

Roskill does mention one piece of evidence that may be relevant: a portrait Tintoretto painted of Aretino. By September 15th, 1551, Tintoretto had executed a portrait of Aretino, according to a letter from the printer Francesco Marcolini to Aretino.³² Marcolini was in fact Aretino’s publisher, notably for the various collections of letters, and the recipient of his affection, since letters address him as “fratello” or “compare.” Marcolini had been in Cyprus and

thus absent from Venice from 1545-50, precisely the years when Aretino and Tintoretto had first grown close and then had their falling-out.³³ Although it is not clear who was the eventual recipient of the painting, and it is now lost in any case, the portrait itself and the letter by a mutual friend describing it perhaps were intended as an attempt to regain Aretino's favor, using Marcolini as an intermediary. Or this episode may simply mean that Tintoretto had painted a picture of Aretino. By this point in time – and considering that the sitter's features had been recorded in almost every medium – Tintoretto would not have needed to arrange sittings with Aretino, nor be on good terms with him, to create his portrait.

Another portrait now in a private collection, the so-called *Caterina Sandella* (fig. 97), has more dubiously been inserted into the discussion of Aretino and Tintoretto. Although lacking any contemporary evidence, this portrait has been published by several scholars as Tintoretto's likeness, c. 1552-53, of Aretino's mistress. Thus it has been employed as evidence of Tintoretto's attempt to smooth over their differences.³⁴ This unappealing portrait, however, has little in common with Tintoretto's work of the early 1550s, or indeed any period of his activity. Instead, the work appears more likely to be the product of a Venetian painter in Schiavone's orbit, sometime in the third-quarter of the sixteenth century, given the enormous arms, swelling abdomen, and swirling drapery that seem to derive from his style.³⁵ At a minimum, even if the painting could conceivably have been executed by Tintoretto, it is hard to see how this unflattering effort would have helped butter up Aretino.³⁶

In any case, given that Aretino ceased to write about Tintoretto while resuming praise of Titian, any attempts by Tintoretto to help his own case were not successful. We can thus conclude that soon after Titian's return to Venice in 1548, Tintoretto was abandoned by one of his most enthusiastic advocates, and certainly his most influential. Moreover, Titian, the most

celebrated artist in Venice, was now on guard against Tintoretto and could be expected to thwart him when possible. Although the veracity of specific anecdotes of enmity between Titian and Tintoretto, previously noted by Ridolfi and Boschini, may be questioned, they stand for a larger point and are corroborated by the documentary record.

The evidence includes a number of moves made by Titian at the start of the 1550s that were probably as much directed against Tintoretto as they were intended to help himself. For example, in 1552, Titian became a member of the *zonta*, an additional board of officers, at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. His move makes sense in the context of the many commissions in that institution that were about to be allocated. The Scuola had envisioned an enormous new meetinghouse near the Frari as early as 1491, although only in 1516 was the needed land acquired. The next year Pietro Bon was appointed *proto*, or architect, and construction began. The project was revised and enlarged in 1524 and 1527, with the faction that favored greater expense prevailing both times. A new and ambitious *proto*, Antonio Abbondi, known as Scarpagnino, an influx of funds following the plagues of 1527-29, and the election in 1535 of Alvise da Noal and Contantino di Todaro Marcora, *confratelli* who favored grander plans, as additional building supervisors, together shaped the decision for the construction of a magnificent structure, one sparing little expense.³⁷ In the 1540s and early 1550s, as various construction milestones were met (for example, construction began on Scarpagnino's grand staircase in 1545, and the ceiling of the Sala dell'Albergo was installed by 1546), this structure must have appeared a glittering prize to Venetian painters.³⁸ Artists knew that the interiors would, in the manner of other Venetian *scuole grandi*, require decorations in the form of canvas murals.

In this context, Titian suddenly decided to focus attention on this building, even though his efforts for some time had been directed to patrons outside of Venice. In 1553, the year after he joined the Scuola's *zonta*, the painter made an offer to the Scuola "to paint the big picture in the boardroom above where the council sits" ("far quello quadro grande dello Albergo sopra dove stanno quelli della Banca").³⁹ This space above the long desk of the officers met was among the most prominent in the entire Scuola, and the opportunity to create a "quadro grande" would have allowed him to create a sequel to his mural of the *Presentation of the Virgin* (fig. 25) of some two decades earlier. Moreover, a new painting could confirm Titian's stature as the number one painter in Venice and perhaps ensure further commissions. At a minimum, an initial picture could serve as the keystone to the room's subsequent decoration, much as Titian's mural in the Scuola Grande della Carità had governed the appearance of much later paintings by Silvio and Dente in the same space. As it happens, Titian's proposed painting was intended for the very spot that Tintoretto eventually filled with his *Crucifixion* (fig. 76). Though Titian's proposal was easily accepted and the funds were readily available, no picture was ever produced, suggesting that Titian's main goal was less to decorate the meetinghouse of his scuola than to block Tintoretto.

Titian's gambit ultimately failed, although it may have helped turn some members away from offering opportunities to Tintoretto. For example, on May 22, 1564, not long before Tintoretto won the competition to begin decorating the Sala dell'Albergo (fig. 98) with his ceiling canvas of *Saint Roch in Glory* by deceptive means, one of the members of the Scuola made an interesting offer, one revealing an anti-Tintoretto faction within the institution.⁴⁰ Gian Maria Zignoni, in that year an officer (specifically a *degano*), offered to pledge fifteen ducats toward the decoration of the Sala dell'Albergo's ceiling – rather than the more typical donations

of two or five ducats made by other members to the fund drive – on the specific condition that the job go to someone other than Tintoretto. If Tintoretto got the commission, Zignoni would give nothing: “promette ducati 15 facendo ditta pittura per altra mano chel Tentoretto, et facendo il Tentoretto non vol dar niente.”⁴¹ Only the Scuola’s Guardian Grande offered a larger donation to the campaign. Zignoni’s curious proposal may be another instance of someone else turned off by Tintoretto’s sometimes grating personality – or an example of Titian maneuvering behind the scenes to thwart the younger artist.

Titian’s offer to execute “quello quadro grande,” which came after his promotion to an officer, must have stung Tintoretto. After all, the younger painter had completed the ambitious mural of *Saint Roch Cures the Plague Victims* (fig. 91) for the church of San Rocco in 1549 and then applied for admission to the Scuola. Despite his impressive painting for the church’s main chapel, Tintoretto’s request for membership was ignored.⁴² On March 11, 1565, when he was finally admitted to the Scuola by the wide margin of 85 to 19 votes, the document notes that Tintoretto’s much earlier petition “had been overlooked” (“è stata dismentigata”).⁴³ The special treatment that major institutions continued to give Titian, from the Venetian government in the case of paintings for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio to the Scuole Grandi, must have been another warning bell for Tintoretto.

In His Corner

As forces appeared to marshal against Tintoretto, it must be recalled that the painter still had allies in Venice. In the early 1550s, Tintoretto received new commissions from the Procuratia and the churches of San Marziale, the Madonna dell’Orto, Santa Maria del Giglio, and, as will be discussed below, the Council of Ten for his own large picture for the Sala del

Maggior Consiglio.⁴⁴ A few prominent supporters remained in his corner, including Episcopi and Rangone at the Scuola Grande di San Marco. In 1562, Rangone, then Guardian Grande of the Scuola, would request permission from the members to allow him to commission three major canvases to continue the cycle of the posthumous miracles of Saint Mark. These were, of course, *Theft of the Body of Saint Mark* (fig. 89), *Finding of the Body of Saint Mark* (fig. 99), and *Saint Mark Rescues a Saracen* (fig. 93).⁴⁵ But such conspicuous opportunities were far in the future.

A few writers, evidently not in the Aretino camp, continued to publish favorable notices about Tintoretto in the years following the *Miracle of the Slave*. A number of these writers were part of a loose group of literary types, called *poligrafì*, who were forced to earn a living by producing at great volume original texts in the vernacular as well as churning out translations, editions, and paraphrases.⁴⁶ The *poligrafì*, who celebrated their lower-class origins, made a virtue of this pressure to publish or perish by cultivating a reputation for efficiency and *prestezza*; Tintoretto has been viewed as their colleague and, given his criticized hasty manner of execution, a painterly counterpart of the *poligrafì*.⁴⁷

The most influential of the *poligrafì*, and the only one who successfully challenged Aretino, was Anton Francesco Doni. Beginning in the early 1550s, he made a point to praise Tintoretto publicly in his writings. In 1552, Doni published a collection of letters, redirecting an earlier letter (1543) to a new recipient, “Messer Jacopo Tintoretto eccellente pittore.”⁴⁸ The following year, on March 5, 1553, Doni dedicated his *Rime del burchiello commentate dal Doni* to Tintoretto to thank him for a portrait, “Al Mirabile Messer Jacopo Tintoretto Pittore unico” and includes much flattery in the preface.⁴⁹ That Tintoretto, rather than a potential aristocratic supporter, received the honor of the dedication for the volume suggests not just gratitude for the

portrait, for which a published letter might have sufficed, but that the writer was making a conspicuous effort to promote his friend.

By this period, Doni ceased to produce generous and affectionate commentary about Titian. To be sure, in the mid-1540s Doni had published letters praising Titian, and in his *I Marmi* (1552) he included both Titian and Tintoretto in a list of notable Venetians. Yet he seems to have called off his support of the older artist before the second half of the 1550s.⁵⁰ A first shot may have been his publication of his dialogue *Disegno* in 1549, which argued for the supremacy of sculpture as the greatest art and Michelangelo as the consummate artist, certainly a polemical position for an adopted Venetian to publish in Venice.⁵¹ Although Tintoretto is not named in this text, it is tempting to see Doni's assertion of Michelangelo's superiority over Titian as not just as the end of detailed arguments for the particular qualities of each of the arts, but also as a rebuff to both Aretino and Titian for their treatment of Tintoretto just the year before.⁵² Doni's near-complete termination of praise of Titian in the mid-1550s was related to his feud with Aretino, culminating in a vicious published attack on the critic in the *Teremoto...contro M. Pietro Aretino* (1556). In this book Titian is mentioned only once.⁵³ Besides a surplus of insults directed at Aretino, Doni's book also famously, and correctly, predicted that Aretino would die in 1556.⁵⁴

Aretino of course may have deserved much of the blame for this hostility from Doni. Aretino was never shy about starting feuds with his dear friends, even with someone as famous as Michelangelo. As discussed in Chapter Three, in 1537 Aretino had irked the artist when a letter written in Venice presumptuously tried to dictate the composition for the *Last Judgment* fresco, begun in Rome the previous year. While Michelangelo's response was non-committal, the dispute came to a head in 1544-45 when the artist refused to send him drawings. Aretino became at first sarcastic and then enraged, sending as revenge a particularly vituperative letter

accusing the finished fresco of improprieties and the artist of impiety.⁵⁵ Aretino's letter, with a new recipient, a well-connected figure in the Vatican hierarchy, was included in the *Quarto libro de le lettere* (1550), thus bringing his denunciation of Michelangelo to a wide readership. This publication also emphasized to other writers and artists, including presumably Doni and Tintoretto in Venice, that Aretino remained a force to be reckoned with and how his influence ranged across the Italian peninsula.⁵⁶

Aretino's dispute with Doni played out in this take-no-prisoners context. For his dispute with Aretino and other altercations, Doni was forced to make an abrupt departure from Venice the next year. After a decade of exile, he returned to Venetian territory only by 1567, living out a semi-retirement in Monselice. Doni's exit therefore had deprived Tintoretto of an influential supporter. An earlier supporter of Tintoretto, Calmo, the author of the boisterously enthusiastic "peppercorn" letter of 1548, also seems to have maintained his loyalty to the younger painter, as shown in a letter of 1552.⁵⁷ Calmo lived until 1571, yet he was never as forceful a public voice as Aretino, Doni, or Dolce. Thus it is doubtful that he would have been able to sway public opinion or generate commissions for Tintoretto.

Staking his Claim

Despite the growing aggression of Aretino and Titian, and the eventual departure of his ally Doni from the Venetian scene, Tintoretto could take some comfort in his continued activity as a painter as he received a number of public commissions in the early 1550s. If most of these opportunities were far less prominent than the *Miracle of the Slave*, they nevertheless helped the painter earn his living, further the development of his art, and engage with his contemporaries and rivals. For example, as discussed in Chapter Three, Tintoretto's altarpiece of *Saint Martial in*

Glory with Saints Peter and Paul (fig. 92), was an especially successful attempt at reconciling the opposing ideals of “il disegno di Michelangelo e il colorito di Tiziano,” executed the year after Pino’s *Dialogo di Pittura* first published this formula for greatness in painting. In the following decade, as painter trying to maintain momentum in Venice, it is notable that Tintoretto regularly drew attention in his paintings to an artist outside of the lagoon, namely Michelangelo.

Tintoretto painted a cluster of works at the end of the 1540s and the first half of the next decade with striking foreshortenings, bold contours, and muscular types, in other words, paintings that displayed the “disegno di Michelangelo.” Yet beyond a certain consistency of style, Tintoretto also took pains within these paintings to include specific citations from Michelangelo’s works.⁵⁸ Within the group of works alluding to Michelangelo motifs are a number of façade frescoes, an important component of Venetian Renaissance artistic production, and Tintoretto’s oeuvre, now almost entirely lost to the saline climate of the lagoon city.⁵⁹

Such exterior commissions were crucial to Tintoretto at the start of his career since they furthered three aims. One, they allowed him to develop his painting techniques and the very building blocks of his compositions in order to work successfully on a large scale, permitting individual figures to be life-size or greater. The undertaking of exterior frescoes thus provides a fundamental step in his development from a painter of easel pictures (e.g. figs. 29, 31) in the early 1540s to massive mural commissions by the end of the decade (e.g. figs. 15, 91). Second, given that the scale of façade frescoes could verge beyond the capacity of a single painter, such commissions often provided opportunities for Tintoretto to work as an assistant or collaborator, learning from the other artist in the process. According to many anecdotes in Ridolfi (and backed up by documents), especially early in his career Tintoretto considered that low wages or even working for free were preferable to not painting at all.⁶⁰ Third, Tintoretto was motivated to

accept these lower priced commissions to get his name out, particularly since frescoes possessed a visibility to advertise his skills to wide segments of the public. Early in the century the frescoes on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi had been extremely influential in spreading the fame of Giorgione and Titian, two painters who had up to that time executed mostly small-scale works for an elite group of aristocratic patrons.⁶¹

Ridolfi, Tintoretto's most important biographer, confirms these aims. Ridolfi recounts several anecdotes toward the beginning of his biography noting how Tintoretto made a point to find himself wherever painting was happening and then join in, "di ritrovarsi in ogni luogo, ove si dipingesse." This led Tintoretto to decorate, for example, the face of a clock in the *terraferma* city of Cittadella. Other stories show how he worked without pay alongside Schiavone to absorb his manner of coloring, "whom he willingly assisted without any recompense in order to learn that master's method of handling colors."⁶² Several pages later Tintoretto seized an opportunity when he noticed a house whose construction was nearing completion. Knowing that the masons often were allowed by the client scope to select a painter, he offered them his services for free, charging only for the pigments. Despite the evident bargain, they were only reluctantly persuaded by his insistence:

Since a house was being built at the Angelo bridge it seemed to Tintoretto to present an opportunity to demonstrate his ideas. Talking it over with the masons, to whom was often given (as we touched upon in the *Life of Schiavone*) the charge of providing the painter, he was told that the owners did not want to spend anything on it. But he, who, in any case, was determined to paint it, decided to do it for the cost of the colors alone. When that was reported to the owners they with some further difficulty agreed. Thus does unhappy virtue find no resting place.⁶³

It is important to note that Tintoretto's proposal, one of the specific examples of his "expenses-only" business model, was not immediately accepted. Perhaps the offer seemed too good to be true, or possibly his piquant personality, noted by Calmo, may have gotten in the way. Despite

the obstacles, Tintoretto persevered, and the owners of the house relented. This negotiation over a heavily discounted offer underscores just how competitive the market for painters was in Venice in the sixteenth century, and particularly for a young artist awaiting his breakthrough. These frescoes on a façade on the Rio Sant'Angelo, however, realized the artist's aims, drawing the attention of contemporary Venetians and his biographer. The frescoes even survive, in fragmentary form, to the present day.⁶⁴

The most important of these exterior commissions were frescoes Tintoretto painted about 1550-52 on the facade of Palazzo Gussoni at Santa Fosca, a palazzo on the Grand Canal at the intersection of the Rio Noale. Krischel has speculated that the architect of the building, Michele Sanmicheli, may have chosen Tintoretto for the commission, since architects or builders often had such latitude, as mentioned above in Ridolfi's anecdote about the house at the Ponte dell'Angelo.⁶⁵ The two frescoes at Palazzo Gussoni, lost but known from engravings by Anton Maria Zanetti (figs. 100, 101) published in 1760, were clear quotations from Michelangelo's sculptures of *Aurora (Dawn)* (fig. 102) and *Crepuscolo (Dusk)* (fig. 103) in the Sagrestia Nuova of San Lorenzo, Florence.⁶⁶ These frescoes displayed Tintoretto's admiration of Michelangelo in an especially public setting. Whereas the earlier emulation of *Crepuscolo* had been somewhat disguised within a busy composition – namely the figure of the reclining man with the red turban in the *Miracle of the Slave* from a couple of years earlier (fig. 104) – now the quotations were more starkly presented.

These clear citations of Michelangelo at Palazzo Gussoni registered in the early biographies of Tintoretto. Immediately after the famous passage describing the motto Tintoretto applied to his studio wall, “Il disegno di Michel Angelo e'l colorito di Titiano,” Ridolfi records how Tintoretto accumulated at some expense a collection of statuary to help him with his art,

implying, perhaps misleadingly, that the collection of casts dated from the start of his career. Ridolfi notes particularly that Tintoretto ordered a set of small replicas by Daniele da Volterra after Michelangelo's originals (figs. 94, 95) from the Sagrestia Nuova. These sculptural reductions then formed the basis of his curriculum to create powerfully modeled figures in two dimensions:

Next he set out to gather from many places, and with quite an outlay of money, plaster models of antique marbles. He had brought from Florence the small models that Daniele da Volterra had copied from the Medici tomb figures in San Lorenzo, that is to say, Dawn, Dusk, Day, and Night. These he studied intensively, making an infinite number of drawings of them by the light of an oil lamp, so that he could compose in a powerful and solidly modeled manner by means of those strong shadows cast by the lamp.⁶⁷

This and other passages in Ridolfi underscore the importance of sculpture to Tintoretto, and help account for the dozens of drawings by the artist, and those by particularly his workshop assistants, after Michelangelesque sculptural subjects.⁶⁸ In summary, according to his most important biographer, Tintoretto employed replicas of famous sculptures by the Florentine master himself to acquire *disegno* in general, and the “*disegno* of Michelangelo” in specific.

It seems likely that Tintoretto found inspiration not just in Michelangelo's bold and innovative treatment of the human body but was also spurred by a sense that emulating the great Florentine would set him apart from his Venetian rivals. Tintoretto may have felt that an art clearly indebted to Michelangelo would offer an effective strategy to compete with Titian, beyond the personal enmity he felt for the older painter. In this light, the attention granted to Michelangelo in Doni's treatise of 1549 and Tintoretto's frescoes of about 1550-52 should not just be viewed as examples of Venetian admiration for Michelangelo at mid-century, but more specifically might be seen as pointed responses to the hostility of Titian and Aretino scant months earlier. Indeed, praising Michelangelo, in paint or prose, offered two for the price of one.

Michelangelo was both the only Italian artist who could challenge Titian's preeminence, and emphatically the one who had snubbed Aretino.

Writing a quarter century after Ridolfi, Boschini himself witnessed the contents of Tintoretto's studio, noting the presence of "all the most admired statues on the world, that is plaster versions of them, made straight from the originals, or based more loosely on them, including the *Dusk* and *Dawn* of Michelangelo that one sees above the sarcophagi of the princes of Tuscany."⁶⁹ Boschini also makes clear that the sculptures of *Aurora* and *Crepuscolo* by Michelangelo helped inspire the frescoes on Palazzo Gussoni. The young Tintoretto transformed these statues with his brush by adding coloring and shading: "And to confirm this truth, I saw that on the façade of the Palazzo Gussoni, facing the Grand Canal, Tintoretto executed in his youth *Dusk* and *Dawn*, adding grace to them through coloring and artificial shadows and lights."⁷⁰ Boschini's comment proves his attentiveness as an art historian as he notes the link between models in the studio and frescoes on a façade, even if Tintoretto's work on the Palazzo Gussoni frescoes may have been based on other sculptural replicas after Michelangelo rather than those spotted in the *bottega*.⁷¹ Equally relevant, Boschini's point recapitulates the importance of sculpture to Tintoretto's creative process as described by Ridolfi near the start of the biography (and directly after mentioning the motto).

As recorded by Zanetti's engravings, the two subjects suggested themselves for façade decoration by an ambitious *frescante* in terms of their appealing *contrapposto* – a young woman shaking off her sleepiness, a muscular older man tired at the end of the day after his labors – but at the same time it is interesting that the two do not constitute a symmetrical pair. Although decorative work, whether exterior or interior, typically presupposes mirror poses, the figure of *Aurora* is in fact posed in the same direction as the *Crepuscolo*. She is not arrayed to the right of

the central axis as she is in the Tomb of Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence (fig. 84). Note how she rests on her left elbow and forearm, with her right arm raised, in Michelangelo's original and sculptural reductions after the marble, but the opposite occurs in Zanetti's print.⁷² The figure in the engraving seems to be intended as the left bookend of a pair or larger ensemble arrayed horizontally; that is, they are not mirror images, but would appear to line up on the façade. The orientation of these figures offers further evidence that Tintoretto did not see the figures in the original nor did he undertake a journey to Florence.⁷³

The lighting is consistent, coming from the left side in both cases, though from the lower left in the case of the *Aurora* and the upper left for the *Crepuscolo*. It is further striking that the two frescoes emphasize deep foreshortening – in both figures the kneecap of the lower leg seems to point straight at the viewer and project into our space – and are not seen from below, indicating that these frescoes were generated from sculptural reductions and not from drawings of the original statues. Finally, the engravings display a marked emphasis on shading to convey vivid relief, confirming Boschini's observation of Tintoretto's transformation, via his paintbrush, of the sculptural motif, “con l'artificio d'ombre e di lumi.” The weight given to effects of light and shade to describe the volumes of the figures corroborates Ridolfi's description of the painter's use of lamps to obtain exaggerated light effects. Tintoretto has taken famous motifs, from the most celebrated Florentine sculptor no less, and made them his own. And the setting could not be more conspicuous: Venice's Grand Canal.

In conclusion, even via Zanetti's prints we can discern much about Tintoretto's lost Michelangesque frescoes and their inherent vitality. Although the figures are ostensibly at rest, their coiled poses brim with dynamism, impinging upon real space. By thoroughly understanding and adapting Michelangelo's motifs, Tintoretto's frescoes broadcast his mastery of sculpture as

well as his absorption of the great Florentine artist. Yet these works also seem designed to invoke other points. The audacious three-dimensionality of the figures, their bold contours and swelling forms, and their defiant projection into fictive space engage with the viewer dramatically. In these effects they go far beyond the calmly posed figures on the façade frescoes by Giorgione and Titian on the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, which seem restrained and self-contained in comparison.⁷⁴ Indeed, by expressing so conspicuously these formal qualities, Tintoretto's paintings for Palazzo Gussoni might be seen as intended to rankle Titian not just by quoting Michelangelo, but also by emulating the famous and provocative façade by his other great rival, Pordenone, at Palazzo D'Anna (fig. 33), just one bend further down the Grand Canal.

Although work for major institutional clients was still lacking in the wake of the *Miracle of the Slave*, in the very same years as the Palazzo Gussoni frescoes, Tintoretto also seized the opportunity to express his allegiance to Michelangelo through work for a smaller *scuola*. This was a commission for five canvases, which Tintoretto executed from 1550-53, as part of a Genesis cycle for the Sala dell'Albergo of the Scuola della Trinità.⁷⁵ This *scuola*, located on the eastern tip of Dorsoduro, was destroyed in the seventeenth century for the construction of Santa Maria della Salute. As described in Chapter Two, in Venetian practice, large decorative schemes for religious or civic institutions were typically divvied up among several workshops, often allocating only one or two canvases per painter, so as not to favor one artist over another and thus preserve social harmony. This practice was pervasive in Venice both before Tintoretto's birth, in examples such as the Sala dell'Albergo in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista (e.g. Carpaccio's *Healing of the Possessed Man at Rialto* of 1494, fig. 28) and also during Tintoretto's youth, as seen in the Sala dell'Albergo for the Scuola Grande di San Marco (e.g. Paris Bordone's *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge*, c. 1533-35, fig. 70).

Although Tintoretto's five paintings did not constitute the complete cycle for the Scuola della Trinità – three or four canvases had already been completed by Francesco Torbido by 1547 – the opportunity to undertake the lion's share of a decorative commission must have struck him as immensely appealing.⁷⁶ As Tintoretto painted his canvases, including the *Creation of the Birds, Fish, and Animals* (fig. 105), the *Temptation of Adam and Eve* (fig. 106), and *Cain Killing Abel* (fig. 107), it is easy to envision him yearning to undertake the mural decoration of entire rooms, not sharing the walls with any other painter.⁷⁷ Further we can speculate that the experience of executing the paintings for the Scuola della Trinità, where he had to complete a scheme started by Torbido, would have inspired him to seek out opportunities where he could initiate and then complete himself the pictorial decoration.

As for Tintoretto's canvases themselves, the *Creation of the Birds, Fish, and Animals* used rapid and energetic brushwork to generate an irresistible impression of the process of creation, one happening in an instant. God, shown flying, his windswept form parallel to the picture plane, has commenced a grand race, as fowl and fish speed toward the left as if from the starting gate. The sense of dynamism and humming energy in Tintoretto's painting may well find a parallel with Pietro Aretino's breathless writing, specifically his vernacular account of *Genesi*, published in 1539.⁷⁸ Both painter and writer seem to celebrate their own rapidity even as they convey God's similar performance at the start of time.⁷⁹ The figure of God the Father in Tintoretto's canvas, in his strict profile pose and extended right arm is of course based on Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam* fresco in the Sistine Chapel (fig. 108).

By contrast, Tintoretto's *Cain Killing Abel* does not quote a specific Michelangelo prototype, but rather invokes more generally the power of the figures created by the Florentine artist, as first argued as early as 1923 by Erich von der Bercken and August Mayer. They rightly

saw the bulky proportions of the figures and the evidence of careful study of the nude as characteristic of Tintoretto's admiration of Michelangelo and his *terribilità* ("awe-inspiring grandeur"). If an unusual allegiance for a Venetian painter, this adherence was characteristic of Tintoretto.⁸⁰ In turn, perhaps the most poignant and heartfelt of the cycle, the *Temptation of Adam and Eve*, features a distinctly unheroic male, clearly not up to the task of renouncing Satan's enticement. The striking figure is instead a fleshy and seductive Eve, a female who recalls Titian's erotic nudes. In other words, depending on the requirements of the subject, Tintoretto seems to have decided to incline to one or the other of the poles of his motto.

In the middle of the 1550s, Tintoretto produced a painting, perhaps originally a horizontal altarpiece, with a particularly assimilated ideal of Michelangelism. This was the imposing canvas of the *Deposition of Christ* (fig. 109) originally painted for the church of the Umiltà on the Zattere.⁸¹ Here Tintoretto created an emphatic suggestion of sculpture by focusing on the massive bodies, to the exclusion of any attention to setting, and overlapping these large figures. Their interlocking bodies seem confined by the claustrophobically tight space, far too small to hold their forms. Tintoretto's proclivity to endow poses – rather than facial expressions – with emotions and meaning runs through his career.⁸² Yet here this tendency seems to reach an extreme, with emphatic gestures and expressive bodies, and by contrast the faces have been left comparatively blank.⁸³ The meaning of this painting seems to lie in the poignancy of heroic bodies unable to undo the tragic events. The masterly use of chiaroscuro, with bold spot lights and plunging shadow, plays over the foreshortened limbs which appear to project confidently into the viewer's space. Tintoretto's light thus alternately emphasizes the solidity of forms and also causes their relative absence through darkness.

In executing the Umiltà *Deposition*, it has often been suggested that Tintoretto was familiar with the composition of the fresco of the *Deposition of Christ* (fig. 110) painted about 1541-45 by Daniele da Volterra in the Cappella Orsini in the church of SS. Trinità dei Monti, Rome.⁸⁴ To be sure, that painting depicts an earlier moment in the Passion story, with the body of Christ still held by those on the ladders and not yet resting on his mother's lap; moreover, in Daniele's work the format is expressly vertical and not horizontal. All the same, there are a number of similarities in pose, including the body of Jesus, the figure of the Magdalene (though her pose seems to conflate a second female mourner with arms outstretched behind her), and the collapsing Virgin cradled in the arms of an attendant (in reverse). Indeed, it almost seems if Tintoretto used the bottom left of Daniele's fresco to begin his composition for the Umiltà. These resemblances may indicate Tintoretto's interest in up-to-date Roman painting, though the parallels are not so close as necessarily to be quotations.

On the other hand, there does seem to be one direct quotation in Tintoretto's painting, namely the slumped body of Christ. This figure does not come from Daniele's fresco, but rather a sculpture. That the figure of Christ, the central one in the picture's composition, derives closely from the Vatican *Pietà* (fig. 111) – particularly seen in the limp proper right arm, the twist of the torso, and the similar upper legs – underscores how deeply Tintoretto had studied the sculpture of Michelangelo and transformed these three-dimensional sources into his own paintings.

A couple of years later, in 1557, Tintoretto produced another bold and bulky figure, this of the Evangelist Mark, for a painting of *Saint Mark and Saint John* (fig. 112), part of the inner organ shutters of the church of Santa Maria del Giglio (known in Venetian dialect as Santa Maria Zobenigo).⁸⁵ The saint's sprawling pose, with a large tome in each hand and a muscular right leg braced against a cloud, evokes the prophets and sibyls from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel

ceiling of 1508-12. Tintoretto, whose business strategy involved taking on overlapping commissions to ensure steady work – and missing deadlines as necessary – seems to have been unusually tardy in delivering this painting and its mate, one depicting *Saint Luke and Saint Matthew*. In April of 1552, the painter had signed a contract with the Procurator Giulio Contarini to produce the shutters for twenty ducats. Despite an additional payment that autumn, Tintoretto appears to have made no progress even after several years.

Evidently this delay strained the patience of the patrons, and on March 6, 1557, Tintoretto agreed to complete the paintings in two weeks, or suffer substantial penalties. These consequences included restituting all the payments he had received to date in addition to surrendering the unfinished paintings, plus a fine of 25 ducats to enable some other painter to undertake the commission.⁸⁶ Jacopo presumably acquiesced to these harsh terms since he needed to save face – and he needed the money. Tintoretto evidently made the tight deadline, as corroborated by the simple compositions and abbreviated technique of the finished paintings, particularly when compared to another set of organ shutters he had undertaken concurrently, those for the *Madonna dell'Orto* (fig. 56). It is telling, however, that when the painter found himself in a jam, he opted for his sketchiest, most speedy style – and again looked to Michelangelo for inspiration.

The *Saint Mark and Saint John* prompts two further observations. First, the prolonged completion of the Santa Maria del Giglio organ shutters was almost certainly not the result of the painter's inherent laziness or lack of interest. On the contrary, his biographers and the documentary record, not to mention to enormous extent of his oeuvre, testify to his industrious personality. Unlike certain Renaissance artists, and Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci in particular come to mind, Tintoretto had no trouble letting go. Rather, the delays rather seem to

have been caused by the punishing pace of work in the middle years of the decade, and the pressure of numerous overlapping assignments. In the absence of prestigious major commissions – the cluster of imposing paintings completed in the years around the *Miracle of the Slave* (e.g. figs. 15, 52, 91, 94) does not really have a counterpart in the middle of the 1550s – Tintoretto seems to have taken on many minor commissions, presumably largely unsatisfying ones. Second, despite all these citations and emulations of Michelangelo, both those quoting the letter of his works through a deliberate borrowing and those invoking the spirit, it is worth repeating that Tintoretto probably had never seen a painting or large-scale sculpture by Michelangelo in person. Instead, his reference material was almost certainly more easily circulated objects, such as drawings, prints, or written descriptions after Michelangelo, with any “originals” limited to drawings and sculptural models by the master himself that had been transported to Venice.

Paragone with Sculpture

As noted above, Tintoretto’s engagement with Michelangelo was only an element of his preoccupation with sculpture. Right around the time he finished the Palazzo Gussoni façade, recreating so successfully in fresco Michelangelo’s three-dimensional forms, a new commission gave Tintoretto scope to tackle head-on two of the most challenging and intertwined topics in Venetian painting, namely the rendering of reflective surfaces and the *paragone*, or the rhetorical argument over the relative merits of painting and sculpture.⁸⁷ His statement on both themes came in the form of a painting depicting *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess* (fig. 113), completed in 1552. Now in the Gallerie dell’Accademia, this canvas was originally painted for the room of the Magistrato del Sale, a state office responsible for revenues from a salt tax, within the Palazzo del Camerlenghi, a building housing various financial offices of the Venetian state at

Rialto. The commissions to decorate the various rooms of this palazzo with canvases had been, starting in 1529, the monopoly of Bonifacio de' Pitati and his workshop. Tintoretto's *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess* should thus be understood in a triple context of the challenge of depicting reflections, the *paragone*, and specific rivalry with Bonifacio. As we have seen, Tintoretto may have worked in the Bonifacio *bottega* in the late 1530s, as a kind of "junior partner" or subcontractor. Tintoretto would have been one of a number of painters, young and not so young, to have spent time assisting Bonifacio before attempting to set up an independent shop.

Bonifacio had a nose for business opportunities, and by offering a derivative version of Titian's style for low prices, he managed to reserve the whole Palazzo dei Camerlenghi for himself, repudiating the Venetian ideal of spreading opportunities among a number of artists. Thus assured of steady commissions, Bonifacio took on many assistants and produced paintings "at what can only be described as bargain-basement prices," in the words of Philip Cottrell.⁸⁸ The paintings were intended to commemorate the terms of magistrates, usually overlapping terms of sixteen months; two or three officials would jointly pay for a single canvas, many of which show the patrons' name saints standing on a platform with their coats of arms below. The shape of the canvases, with arched tops, was dictated by the vaulted ceilings of the rooms in the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi (fig. 114), which created a series of blind arcades that ran along the walls. In this way the canvases covered the entire available field in a manner akin to fresco decoration. Bonifacio's paintings generally depicted the saints in relaxed poses like those in a traditional *sacra conversazione* altarpiece. Cottrell notes the decline in quality of Bonifacio's paintings in the late 1540s and early 1550s, as more of the execution was delegated to assistants, perhaps owing to the master's failing health in the years before his death in 1553. Despite the

efficiency of a well-organized *bottega*, the final painted product became “increasingly arthritic and less animated.”⁸⁹

In 1552, Tintoretto took advantage of Bonifacio’s vulnerability. The younger artist’s first painting for the Camerlenghi cycle (fig. 113) pulses with energy, and Saint George’s bold gesture of raised arms contrasts sharply with the sleepy poses in Bonifacio’s work for the Camerlenghi (e.g. fig. 114).⁹⁰ Although Tintoretto’s figures stand against a cloudy sky, they also seem posed like statues in a shallow niche, crowding each other in a tight space. And although commissioned for two magistrates, Giorgio Venier and Alvise Foscarini (Alvise being the Venetian form of Louis), and thus depict their onomastic saints, there are four, or even five figures within Tintoretto’s composition. The figure of the princess astride the slain dragon (and the soldier’s horse behind them) together function as a sort of composite attribute for George, albeit a provocatively busy and disproportionately large one. The lively poses of princess and dragon, who appear about to spill into the viewer’s space, and the vigorous impasto brushstrokes defining the dragon’s scaly body and the princess’s shimmering dress seem intended to show up Bonifacio as predictable and old-fashioned. In Tintoretto’s picture, so many elements press up against or even appear to break through the picture plane that the two patrons’ coats of arms, along the fictive stone platform, are not prominent but rather marginalized. Since later officeholders commissioned further paintings by Tintoretto for the cycle, this picture must have been favorably received by Venier and Foscarini. With this bold effort Tintoretto was able to replace Bonifacio as the primary supplier for the Camerlenghi, an important break for his career in the middle of a difficult decade.

Several key points revolve around the successful episode of the *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess*. First, Tintoretto, who had presumably learned much about workshop

organization, delegation, and quality control within a high-volume production schedule when he was working for Bonifacio, was finally able to supplant his former employer. Second, as in the case of the *Miracle of the Slave* from four years before, the artist had proven once again how a self-assured painting could stand out positively against existing conservative decoration in a large ensemble. Third, he must have noted the unusual arrangement whereby Bonifacio had monopolized the decorative cycle of an entire building and probably coveted this privilege for himself in a different setting. Finally, the practice at the Camerlenghi of shaping canvases to cover entire pictorial fields, filling up the space between architectural members in the manner of a fresco – and not assuming a rectangular shape for paintings – may have influenced his attitudes to mural decoration.

Most importantly, however, the episode of his first commission for the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi reminded Tintoretto that a single painting could accomplish multiple goals, in the manner of the *Miracle of the Slave*. Although he surely was concerned about obtaining steady work, Tintoretto did not waste the opportunity to challenge his greatest predecessors and contemporaries and also to further the art of painting; this aim is substantiated in anecdotes in the early sources and within many of his paintings whereby the citations appear intended to paintings to quote and transform the work of other artists. In other words, while he needed to please Venier and Foscarini in order to secure further work at the Camerlenghi, his sense of pride required him to impress other painters – and sculptors. Thus we must also consider the *Saint George*, *Saint Louis*, and *the Princess* within the context of the *paragone* in midcentury Venice – noting that Pino's *Dialogo di Pittura*, with its telling anecdote about a painting that successfully rivaled sculpture, was published just a few years earlier, in 1548.

It seems undeniable that the painters in Venice relished the task of depicting reflections, a preoccupation reinforced by the city's watery setting and strong traditions of glass and mosaic. By the end of the Quattrocento, as Venetian taste abandoned gold grounds on panel paintings, painters tried to replicate the reflective surface of gold, as well as other costly shiny surfaces including marble, porphyry, glass, mirrors, and mosaic, within their oil-on-canvas pictures.⁹¹ Virtuoso depictions of light reflecting in mirrors and armor were recognized as hallmarks of proficiency by the leading Venetian painters. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, numerous pictures produced in Venice featured such elements, including examples by Giovanni Bellini, Giorgione, and Titian.⁹² Painters used these pictures to flaunt their skill at depicting tricky objects and simultaneously surpass other artists in rendering these motifs.

It should not be surprising that Tintoretto wanted to be part of this elite conversation, even in his early works, such as those that came as much as a half-dozen years before he executed the *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess*. For example, consider his *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* (fig. 31) of about 1545, now in Munich. This picture's virtuoso depictions include light refracted through window panes or gleaming on a glass vase on the window sill, the shiny helmet worn by the embarrassed Mars hiding under the table, and, most importantly, the large circular mirror against the back wall reflecting a rear view of the foreground action. There is an additional clever contrapposto, whereby the viewer can see the front of the female and – through the mirror – the back of the male. These details together confirm the picture as a youthful showpiece, a statement introducing Tintoretto's voice into a well-established dialogue.⁹³

It is relevant that Tintoretto probably created the *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* at the same moment as the ceiling canvas for Pietro Aretino (fig. 16). The two are quite different in

surface finish; the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* is much more broadly painted, as befits a mural decoration. The overtly bawdy tone of the Munich painting, including Vulcan's almost gynecological examination of his unfaithful wife and the absurdity of Mars, the God of War, cowering under the table and trying to silence the barking dog, suggests Aretino's crude appetites. The writer may even have helped formulate the composition for Tintoretto, employing first an engraving by Enea Vico (fig. 116) but substantially augmenting himself the slapstick quality of the situation.⁹⁴ If not inspired by Aretino himself, the cheeky character in the painting may reflect the lowlife humor of the *poligrafi*, allies of Tintoretto in the Venetian literary scene, as discussed previously.⁹⁵

Crucially, Tintoretto's Munich picture makes pointed commentary about his two most important artistic contemporaries. The figure of Venus appears to be based – note the body propped up on series of cushions, the expanses of swirling bed linens, the position of her right arm and hand on a smaller pillow and the white cloth across her thigh – on Titian's *Danaë* (fig. 32). Titian's painting was finished and left in Rome in 1546, but begun in Venice in 1544, not long before Tintoretto executed his canvas.⁹⁶ Tintoretto's farcical take on the female nude mocks the dignified tradition of erotic painting that his older rival had seemingly perfected; if the *Danaë* is about surrender at its most sensual, here Venus suffers in a humiliating manner. Titian's painting celebrates sexuality by raising it up to the realm of the gods, while Tintoretto lowers it to the level of the most hapless of humans, taking a swipe at Titian in the process. David Coffin saw the reclining pose of Tintoretto's Venus as similar to that in Michelangelo's *Aurora* (fig. 102) in the Medici Chapel, though the resemblance is rather generic. Moreover, citing one of Michelangelo's times of the day would not have the benefit of ridiculing the lovemaking of the Gods, so central to the meaning of the Munich painting.⁹⁷

Once again, however, the most telling quotation within a Tintoretto painting comes from a Michelangelo sculpture. In the *Venus and Mars surprised by Vulcan*, the figure of Cupid asleep seems to be based on a sculpture of the same subject by the young Michelangelo, executed in 1496 and perhaps intended by the artist to emulate an ancient work. The original, once owned by Isabella d'Este, is lost. A marble in Corsham Court, Wiltshire (fig. 117) is thought to reproduce Michelangelo's sculpture, and it is identical to the figure in Tintoretto's painting.⁹⁸ Again, this quotation seems a deliberate choice because the figure of Cupid is not in Vico's print and his presence is not required by the narrative of Vulcan ensnaring the lovers. Rather Tintoretto, by including not just Cupid, but a sleeping one, has offered a witty gloss on the story; the child may appear to have his eyes closed, but given the commotion, he is probably is awake and aware of what is happening. Like the conspicuous mirror, he is a silent witness to the farce. Tintoretto's two citations of Titian and Michelangelo within the Munich painting also beautifully complement each other, since their poses are themselves reversed; Cupid has extended his right arm over his head, whereas his mother raises her left. In this picture Tintoretto went on record, so to speak, several years before he achieved public fame, and declared that both Titian and Michelangelo are more than points of reference, they are also his rivals.

Finally, Tintoretto in the Munich picture offered a display of complicated optics and the play of a prominent mirror to show that he too was thinking of ways that a painting could outdo sculpture, and that he wanted to be considered a voice in this larger dialogue. Within the *Miracle of the Slave*, of course, Tintoretto continued this game of citations at a far more complex level. The mural celebrates his skill at depicting light reflecting off of armor through the inclusion of three prominent soldiers in the composition (fig. 15): two in gleaming plate armor, and one wearing shimmering chain mail at far right, adjacent to the artist's signature. These reflective

surfaces were also bound up with the larger question of the *paragone* between painting and sculpture.

The most famous Venetian Renaissance painting about the *paragone* no longer survives, yet Tintoretto seems to have been aware of its status as an archetype, since a number of his works respond to it. Giorgione's lost painting is described in detail in Pino's *Dialogo di Pittura* and Vasari's *Vite*. According to Pino, "to the perpetual confusion of sculptors," Giorgione had depicted Saint George in armor, standing at the edge of a pool that reflected, in foreshortening, nearly his entire body. Giorgione also included within the painting a mirror propped against a tree, reflecting the back of the saint, and another mirror opposite, showing the figure's side.

According to Pino, this *summa* of painting was easily able to shut up the sculptors:

...I will silence those who seek to defend sculpture – just as they were confounded with different means by Giorgione da Castelfranco, our most celebrated, no less worthy of honor than the ancients. To the perpetual confusion of sculptors, he painted a picture of an armed Saint George, standing and leaning on the shaft of a spear, with his feet at the very edge of a limpid and clear pool – which [pool] was transfixed by the entire figure, foreshortened as far as the crown of the head; in addition he had feigned a mirror leaning against a tree trunk, in which the entire figure was reflected from the back and one side. He depicted a second mirror opposite this, in which was visible the entire other side of the Saint George. And this he did in support [of the argument] that a painter can show an entire figure at a single glance, which a sculpture cannot; and this work of Giorgione's was perfectly conceived in all the three parts of painting, that is, design, invention and coloring.⁹⁹

This picture proved that a painter is able to convey entire figures in such a way that the viewer can comprehend them in a single glance. This was a feat impossible for sculptors, since the viewer must circle around statuary to see all sides. Giorgione's clever representation of mirrors and reflective surfaces allowed the flat plane of a painting to surpass sculpture.

Since this painting works so well rhetorically within Pino's dialogue, and neither the original nor a copy closely approaching the description survives, some scholars have doubted if Giorgione's picture existed at all.¹⁰⁰ There is a good argument to be made, however, that

Giorgione's picture did in fact exist, since it was given credence by two period sources, and because works by later artists seem to be based on it. A *Self-Portrait* by Pino's teacher Giovanni Savoldo, previously thought to be a portrait of Gaston de Foix, (fig. 118), of about 1525, with its ambitious dialogue of mirrors and reflections, seems to respond to Giorgione's prototype. Also relevant to the discussion is Titian's *Saint George* holding a spear (fig. 119) of about 1517, whose pose, as Goffen suggested, may replicate that of Giorgione's lost picture of the same subject. These paintings were created long before the publication of Pino and Vasari and probably are based not on an earlier work, likely Giorgione's original.¹⁰¹ Surviving works by Giorgione also show a careful study of shiny surfaces and even mirrors. For example, his portrait of *Boy with the Helmet (Francesco Maria della Rovere?)* in Vienna (fig. 120), uses the curved surface of the helmet as a convex mirror, reflecting the underside of the youth's head, showing distinctly from below his chin, lips, and nostrils.¹⁰² It should be emphasized Giorgione did not invent *ex novo* the idea of cleverly placed mirrors within a painting; rather he must have been responding himself to quattrocento prototypes.¹⁰³ Finally, that the lost painting of Saint George depicted Giorgione's name saint only added to the ingenuity of his conception.

Vasari bolstered Pino's account by discussing Giorgione's picture twice in his book, first in the "Promo di tutto l'opera," the general preface to the entire work, and then within the *Life* of Giorgione.¹⁰⁴ Vasari clearly viewed Giorgione's painting as a particularly successful salvo in the *paragone* debate. In Vasari's report the picture is now a more generic male nude, presumably a soldier given the armor he has just removed, rather than specifically a Saint George. The overall description and the conceptual triumph over sculpture is similar to Pino's account.

Vasari, however, adds a significant detail: that the painting came out of arguments between painters and sculptors that took place when Andrea del Verocchio was creating the

Equestrian Monument of Bartolommeo Colleoni (fig. 121) in Venice. Verrocchio was in Venice from about 1481, when the model was brought to the city, until his death there in the summer of 1488. The bronze statue was cast by Alessandro Leopardi and finally unveiled on March 21, 1496.¹⁰⁵ Thus the disputes recorded in the *Vita di Giorgione*, which presumably involved the assistants on the *Colleone* commission rather than Verrocchio himself or even Leopardi, might have happened as late as 1496. If Giorgione was born c. 1477/8, which Vasari asserts and has seemed reasonable to later scholars, the quarrels about the *paragone* in 1496 would have happened at the start of Giorgione's career and the painting, the young artist's response to this debate, was produced soon after.¹⁰⁶ As Vasari recounts in a particularly long description of a single painting:

It was related that Giorgione, at the time when Andrea Verrocchio was making his bronze horse, fell into an argument with certain sculptors, who maintained, since sculpture showed various attitudes and aspects in one single figure to one walking around it, that for this reason it surpassed painting, which only showed one side of a figure. Giorgione was of the opinion that there could be shown in a painted scene, without any necessity for walking round, at one single glance, all the various aspects that a man can present in many gestures – a thing which sculptors cannot do without a change of position and point of view, so that in her case the points of view are many, and not one. Moreover, he proposed to show in one single painted figure the front, the back, and the profile on either side, a challenge which brought them to their senses; and he did this in the following way. He painted a naked man with his back turned, at whose feet was the most limpid pool of water, where he painted the reflection of the man's front. At one side was a burnished cuirass that he had taken off, which showed his left profile since everything could be seen on the polished surface of the piece of armor; and on the other side was a mirror, which reflected the other profile of the naked figure....¹⁰⁷

The specificity of detail in this description seems designed to underscore just how clever this painting was, and how, going forward, painting could readily surpass sculpture through the use of mirrored surfaces. Vasari's strong Tuscan bias also lends plausibility to Giorgione's feat. In other words, why would Vasari, generally suspicious of Venetian artistic achievement, credit a Venetian with such an ingenious picture if the truth had not compelled him to do so? As a

painter as well as a writer, it must have vexed Vasari that the particularly shrewd artist in question was not a fellow Tuscan.

The more important point for our discussion of Tintoretto is that surviving canvases like Savoldo's *Self-Portrait* and published texts such as Pino's and Vasari's record the conversations about the *paragone* between painting and sculpture that must have continued in Venice for decades. Tintoretto's paintings such as the *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* and *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess* make clear that the artist was already engaged with ways in which painting might surpass sculpture. Moreover, these works show Tintoretto's willingness to challenge his competition – both sculptors and other painters.

In light of the discussion of Giorgione's lost painting, it is worth summarizing how Tintoretto's *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess* for the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi can be seen as a response to the prototype and, in fact, the start of a new round in the *paragone*. First, there is the prominence given to the figure of George within the painting. Given this figure is the onomastic saint of Giorgio Venier, of one of the two patrons, this figure's presence was required by the commission. At the same time, well more than half of the pictorial field, indeed about three-quarters, is given to Saint George and his companions / attributes. Four tightly locked figures – Saint George, his horse, the princess, and the dragon – out of a total of five are devoted to George's story. They are further self-contained, since the princess and the saint stare at each other, while the horse and the dragon seem both to look out at the viewer. Despite this network of glances, the figures appear to jostle with energy. Bold highlights on armor, the scales of the dragon, the mane of the horse, and especially the swirling drapery of the princess's dress all further enliven the scene. This dynamism and the agitation of the poses recalls Hans Tietze's apt characterization; Tintoretto's figures do not stand "on a firm stage, but on the rolling deck of a

ship in a rough sea.”¹⁰⁸ Saint Louis, by contrast, seems pushed to the right margin. His clothing displays a minimal amount of virtuoso brushwork, and his pose is relatively static, appearing to reduce his surface area further. The disparity of these figures suggests that Tintoretto’s intended that we focus on George and the princess.

Moreover, the picture’s full-length figures, which take up almost all of the arched pictorial field, recall statuary in a niche. Tintoretto has emphasized a three-dimensional and indeed sculptural effect though strong foreshortening of many elements, including the forearms and hands of George, the projecting left arm of the princess who holds the leash, her right hand pressed down on the dragon’s wing, and much of the dragon’s body, especially the neck and head. And like statues, parts of the ensemble seem to jut out into the viewer’s space: the tail and head of the dragon, the knee of the princess, the foreshortened shattered lance, and of course the coats of arms of the clients. These elements all break the picture plane provocatively, challenging repeatedly the assumption that this painting is flat. It is also worth noting that the robust, even heroic physical type of Tintoretto’s princess, with her broad shoulders and muscular arms, seems worthy of a Michelangesque prototype, either in painting, such as one of the sibyls in the Sistine Chapel, or in sculpture, for example the statues of *Aurora* (fig. 102) or *Notte (Night)* from Sagrestia Nuova of the church of San Lorenzo. In the mid-sixteenth century, a painting recalling Michelangelo could almost automatically appear to challenge sculpture.

Finally, by any standard, and particularly for a painter criticized by contemporaries for carelessness, the foreshortened and distorted image of the princess in the breastplate of George’s armor (fig. 122) is a remarkable achievement and the most striking passage in the work. Through the power of painting, Tintoretto shows her face both in profile and frontally, and thus the viewer can take two sides of the same element in a single glance, “in una sola occhiata,” in Vasari’s

words. Like Giorgione's lost painting, the clever use of a reflective surface allows painting to trump sculpture, but in this case Tintoretto has added an ingenious twist: George is the reflector, not the reflected. The princess's facial expression emphasizes this accomplishment; as she gazes at the mirror-like armor, she seems spellbound by her own image and possibly even by the talents of the painter who depicted her. Tintoretto uses this dazzling detail to proclaim himself not just superior to Bonifacio but also very much part of the discourse of reflections and mirrors in Venetian painting that render his chosen medium superior to sculpture. Thus the *Saint George*, *Saint Louis*, and *the Princess* should be seen as the next statement in the Venetian debate on the *paragone*. As the picture was installed in the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi, Tintoretto must have felt that he had in this one painting affirmed the validity of his art to his clients, other painters and sculptors, and perhaps most importantly, to himself.

As if inspired by the tension of the principal figures who jostle for space in the cramped Camerlenghi picture, within a year or two Tintoretto, not wasting time, seems to have extracted the narrative from the earlier painting and produced one of his finest small paintings.¹⁰⁹ This was the *Saint George and the Dragon*, probably a small altarpiece and perhaps originally made for a Venetian palazzo (fig. 123). Now in the National Gallery, London, the picture is plausibly dated c. 1553.¹¹⁰ Although the original patron is not known, Tintoretto's composition is unorthodox when compared to Venetian tradition, as exemplified by Carpaccio's painting of the same subject within the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavone (fig. 124), painted in the first few years of the sixteenth-century.¹¹¹ In Carpaccio's mural, George's attack on the dragon takes place very near and strictly parallel to the picture plane, and the setting is an arid wasteland.

In Tintoretto's version of the story, the main action of the battle between the mounted knight and the monster is set well inside a lush landscape of great depth. This setting recedes in

several distinct zones alongside a body of water, finally ending at a huge castle or walled town in the distance. This displacement of the central event to the middle ground is a device that Tintoretto would come to use frequently in his later work, such as the *Baptism of Christ* in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco (fig. 125), and it has been argued that the painter employed such unorthodox compositions to engage the viewer more fully in the narrative.¹¹² In Tintoretto's *Saint George and the Dragon*, a spectral God the Father, shown half-length, hovers above in a series of luminous concentric clouds; the concentric clouds are in turn surrounded by roiling cumulous clouds, offering the brightest white in the entire composition. God oversees the action below, and like the painting's beholder, is another omnivoyant viewer. Similarly, our view of the painting is largely what the Princess would enjoy had she turned fully around in her flight.¹¹³

The most striking departure from Venetian tradition is the figure of the princess in the foreground. She is the largest figure in the pictorial field, appearing much bigger than the dragon who had terrorized her, and her gestures, including her beautifully foreshortened right arm and hand, seem to extend the plunging depth of the composition forward into the space of the viewer. The poses of the horse, rider, and dragon – full of foreshortenings and twisting shapes – present a far more dynamic effect than the dragon and mounted knight pressed up against the picture surface in Carpaccio's example. With the exception of the corpse in the midground, all elements of the composition, even the foliage in the landscape, appear to be in motion.¹¹⁴ Overall, Tintoretto employs echoing curving forms and repeated colors to unify the receding zones of the composition. For example, the princess's dress – of dark blue with shimmering white highlights – and her billowing pink mantle are repeated above and behind her in the blue drapery that curls around the body of the victim and, above and behind him, in the pink trousers of George. By repeating colors to connect the figures, Tintoretto also links the stages of the narrative; in the

absence of Saint George to drive away the dragon, the princess might well have suffered the same fate as the corpse.

Continuing the play with sculpture, the dynamic grouping of Saint George on his horse driving a lance into the twisting neck of the dragon was taken from a stone relief of the same subject by Pietro da Salò (fig. 126) from the façade of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavone, reconstructed in 1551-52, and thus installed shortly before Tintoretto created his painting.¹¹⁵ Tintoretto took more from the sculpture than simply the impressive torsion of the bodies. The painter also borrowed from the relief the motif of the lance placed to the right of the horse, that is, behind the head of the horse. (Carpaccio, for example, put the lance on the left, that is the viewer's side, of the horse's head). This allowed the clever suggestion that Tintoretto conceived the weapon as if not borne by George but by his horse, who in fact thus resembles a unicorn, a Christian symbol, and thus offers further divine sanction for this victory.¹¹⁶ Similarly, the surviving preparatory drawing of the dragon's victim (fig. 127), now in the Louvre, presumably made from a live model, is especially sculptural.¹¹⁷ Indeed, the figures of the princess, corpse, and the interlocked group of George on his horse and the dragon all seem to rest on the surface of the painting, in the manner of a sculptured relief, rather than to be set convincingly within the depth of the carefully constructed landscape. In other words, even with paintings lacking reflections, Tintoretto engaged with the *paragone*.

A final example from this decade will suffice to make clear how seriously Tintoretto considered the *paragone*. In this case, however, his painting does not revolve around male figure – as we saw with Giorgione's prototype, either a Saint George or a nude man, depending on the textual source – but rather a female nude. The picture in question, *Susannah and the Elders* of about 1555-56 (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), is also an exception within Tintoretto's

largely masculine oeuvre, since it shows a conspicuously beautiful female nude (fig. 128).¹¹⁸

Within a lush garden of trellises and rose hedges, Susannah sits on the edge of a pool, with toilet articles and her clothes strewn about her. She is shown full length, and possesses a glowing body of sculptural solidity. Susannah appears transfixed by her own beauty as she gazes at the mirror propped against the hedge or trellis. So absorbed by the image in the mirror, she ignores the two lecherous men who creep up toward her, one from the lower left corner, the other from the far end of the hedge, along the central axis of the composition. There are two reflective surfaces within the painting, the mirror and the still pool into which Susannah's leg dangles, yet both are angled away from our own eyes. Similarly, the elder in the left corner is frustrated as he attempts to get around the tree to enjoy more or less the same view of Susannah's body that she herself sees in the mirror. The elder lurking in the background, however, has a clear view of the woman from behind, but it is at some distance: a viewpoint akin, perhaps, to the round mirror on the end wall in *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* (fig. 31). Finally, the observer of the painting – perhaps unwittingly cast in the role of a third dirty old man – appears to complete the series of viewpoints, and survey the oblivious Susannah from all angles. Thus painting once again has triumphed over sculpture. Clever poses and reflective surfaces have enabled a “painter can show an entire figure at a single glance,” in Pino's words.¹¹⁹ Although the subject of mirrors and gazes allowed Tintoretto's painting to take part in the dialogue with sculpture, the central figure, a strikingly beautiful female nude, also gave scope to the artist to challenge his greatest Venetian competitor, Titian, on his home field.

Paragone with Titian

To recap Tintoretto's activity in the years after the *Miracle of the Slave*, he executed the Palazzo Gussoni frescoes, a high point of Michelanglism in his style, around 1551. Between March of 1548 and December of 1549 he had also painted the high altarpiece for the nearby church of San Marziale (fig. 92), the work which fuses "Il disegno di Michel Angelo e'l colorito di Titiano" better than perhaps any other in his oeuvre, as discussed in Chapter Three. In 1551, Tintoretto was executing other work for the "capela grande" of San Marziale, now lost, and payments extend from October 11 through November 29.¹²⁰ On 20 April 1552 – namely a week before the organ shutters for the Madonna dell'Orto were due to be finished – the painter signed a contract with the Procurator Giulio Contarini to paint the organ shutters for Santa Maria del Giglio, comprising *Saint Mark and Saint John* (fig. 112) and *Saint Luke and Saint Matthew*. As we recall, this commission was so late by 1557 that Tintoretto was forced to sign a new agreement with heavy penalty clauses if he did not finish the commission in two weeks. Undoubtedly there were other projects that were also behind schedule in this difficult period, and the artist must have felt it more important to accept new commissions than complete his outstanding obligations. Which commission then was his priority? It should not be surprising that Tintoretto used the organ shutters for the Madonna dell'Orto as both an opportunity to get his foot in the door of this important church, and also to respond to his rival Titian, by painting his own version of the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* (fig. 56) that challenged the famous prototype in the Scuola Grande della Carità (fig. 25).

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, many Venetian painters undertook commissions to decorate canvas shutters for church organs.¹²¹ Tintoretto painted enough sets, including those for Santa Maria del Giglio discussed above, the Madonna dell'Orto, San Benedetto, and the

church of San Rocco, that the format could be considered one of his subspecialties.¹²² Because shutters were composed of canvas paintings, they were lightweight enough to be doubled sided, thus offering to the viewer different pictures depending whether the doors were opened or closed. When the instrument was silent, the shutters would be closed to protect the pipes from dust. The two outer doors would typically join to form a single picture, and the inner doors, visible when the doors were opened, often presented discrete scenes.

Sometime in 1548, presumably around the frantic completion of the *Miracle of the Slave* or soon after its unveiling, Tintoretto signed a contract for the organ shutters for the church of the Madonna dell'Orto. This date is derived from a new contract of 6 November 1551, which refers to the unfulfilled contract of 1548. Evidently his work on some of the projects previously discussed had slowed him down considerably. Thus in November of 1551 he promised anew to execute “una presentazione di donna di fora et dentro doi figure” – meaning a depiction of the “Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple” for the outer doors, constituting a single image when the shutters are closed, and two figures, likely single saints, for the inner panels, to be visible when the shutters were open. The paintings were to be complete by Easter, that is April 27, of the next year.¹²³ The church of the Madonna dell'Orto was becoming a site of great importance for the painter, as will be explored in the final chapter, since he would soon come to live around the corner and eventually be buried there. He would decorate this church with a number of paintings, including two of the pivotal works of his entire oeuvre, the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf*. Although the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* took much longer to complete than even the new contract allowed, this was a decisive painting in Tintoretto's relationship with this church and, through its direct engagement with Titian, marked a key moment in his career.

The two canvases constituting the *Presentation of the Virgin*, now joined together to form a single canvas, originally did serve as the outer shutters decorating the organ that was destroyed in 1865, though the paintings seems to have been detached from the instrument at the start of the century. This organ was located in the right aisle's sixth bay, above the door to the sacristies as seen in the plan of the church (fig. 129), in other words, fundamentally where Tintoretto's *Presentation* hangs today, though the organ was slightly higher than its present location.¹²⁴ The inner shutters have long since been moved to the apse of the church. They are now also somewhat different in format, since the two paintings of the *Apparition of the Cross to Saint Peter* (fig. 130) on its left edge, and the *Beheading of Saint Paul* (fig. 131) on its right, originally had notches cut out at the top and bottom where each joined, with presumably sizeable hinges, the organ case. Sometime after the shutters were removed from the instrument, the *Apparition of the Cross to Saint Peter* and the *Beheading of Saint Paul* were extended in the corners to make them standard rectangular paintings. The agreement of 6 November 1551 specifies that Tintoretto was to be paid thirty ducats on top of that already disbursed to him: a barrel of wine, a portion of flour, and five scudi in gold.¹²⁵

For this desirable commission, Tintoretto may have come to the attention of the church through Marco Episcopi, who, as we recall, had helped the painter receive the commission for the *Miracle of the Slave* when he was serving, starting in 1547, as the Scuola's *guardian da matin*. Although the date of Tintoretto's marriage to Marco's daughter Faustina is not known, Mazzucco has speculated that it may have been as late as about 1560, and thus well after the organ shutters had been completed in 1556.¹²⁶ Marco Episcopi bought the rights to a tomb in the Madonna dell'Orto in April 1555, and the wording of the agreement suggests that there had been friendly relations between Marco and the church for some time.¹²⁷ The relevance of one sentence

within this concession for the tomb will become clear below, “La qual sepoltura sera per lui et tutti gli suoi morti.” Moreover, as discussed previously, Tintoretto had already been engaged with the high altar of the nearby church of San Marziale, in whose parish the Madonna dell’Orto was located.

The organ shutters had as their immediate artistic context Tintoretto’s production of the late 1540s and early 1550s discussed previously, including the *Miracle of the Slave*, the *Saint Roch Cures the Plague Victims* (fig. 91), the altarpiece for nearby San Marziale, and the first decorations for the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi.¹²⁸ Although this cluster of commissions would have been Tintoretto’s starting point, the prolonged gestation of the shutters – the final payment is not recorded until 14 May 1556, some eight years after the first contract was signed – means that their precise place in Tintoretto’s stylistic evolution is disputed.¹²⁹ A number of scholars, led by Luigi Colletti in 1940, have argued that the inner shutters exhibit a richer and livelier chromatic treatment than the *Presentation of the Virgin*, and thus they must have been executed at a different moment. Based on this conclusion, Colletti dated the *Presentation*, that is the outer shutters, to about 1552-53. He then declared that the paintings of Saint Peter and Saint Paul displayed a clear contrast and therefore were both more mature stylistically and also products of a “Veronesian period” in Tintoretto’s career that occurred about 1555. By this view, he concluded that these inner shutters were completed last, just before the final payment in 1556.¹³⁰

To be sure, there is a distinction between the sunny golden palette of the inner shutters and the much deeper tones of the *Presentation*; indeed, half of this later composition is in deep shadow, which adds considerable drama to the scene. The shade within the painting respects the actual light source in the oculus of the Pisani Chapel to the left of the presbytery, as pointed out by Douglas-Scott.¹³¹ Yet this contrast in lighting can be explained by the subject matter of the

paintings, since the protagonists of both the inner shutters are bathed in heavenly light streaming through clouds.¹³² Moreover, the blast of radiant light would have been an appropriate visual accompaniment to the music that emanated from the organ. Otherwise, the figure types, poses, and festively decorative passages – the curving patterns in the risers of the staircase and the pearls in the hair of women in the *Presentation*, the cope of Saint Peter, the cuirass and gilt helmet on the ground next to Saint Paul – seem stylistically consistent. With no compelling evidence to separate by several years the execution of the outer and inner shutters, it seems most logical that Tintoretto completed both sets more or less in one campaign right before he received the final payment in 1556.¹³³ It is hard to imagine the artist waiting so long to be paid if he had already finished the far more complex and ambitious subject of the *Presentation* and only had to complete the simpler inner shutters.

Although the subject of the left inner shutter has been consistently identified as the *Vision of the Cross of Saint Peter*, there has been scholarly disagreement over the subject of its counterpart. The earliest sources, beginning with Ridolfi, called the subject of the right inner shutter the *Beheading of Saint Christopher*. Ridolfi writes, “On the other wing is the kneeling St. Christopher awaiting the blow of the executioner’s sword. Pieces of armor or are the ground and a very joyful angel with palm in hand descends from the sky.”¹³⁴ When the painting was engraved by Andrea Zucchi, after a drawing by the young Giovanni Battista Tiepolo and published in Domenico Lovisa’s *Il Gran Teatro di Venezia* c. 1720, the print was captioned “Decolazione di S. Cristoforo” (fig. 132), and this helped confirm this understanding of the title.¹³⁵

The error in the early sources is perhaps understandable since Christopher was martyred by beheading. More importantly, the original dedication of the church of the Madonna dell’Orto

was in fact to Saint Christopher, and in Tintoretto's day a number of prominent images of the saint could be found on the façade and in the interior. The presence in the late fourteenth century of a miracle working statue of the Madonna and Child had caused both a rebuilding of the fabric of the church and a new de facto dedication to the Virgin to overshadow the earlier cult of Christopher.¹³⁶ In Tintoretto's painting, however, the figure about to be martyred is no giant, as Christopher was, but rather an older man whose armor has been removed, showing a nude upper body. This man kneels awaiting his fate, as Paul is traditionally depicted. Moreover, the pairing of Peter and Paul has ancient sanction, whereas there is no special precedent for matching Peter with Christopher. Despite the correct identification of Paul going back at least as far as Berenson in 1894, a few scholars have continued to call the figure Christopher, evidently privileging the early sources.¹³⁷

Stylistically, the inner shutters, particularly the *Vision of Saint Peter*, maintain the continuities with a number of Tintoretto's works from the late 1540s and early 1550s, particularly his altarpiece for San Marziale. The figure of Peter seems particularly close to the Titianesque Saint Martial in the altarpiece in his pyramidal form and clothing. Now, however, Peter's pose – a seated figure dramatically leaning back to look up – has been said to resemble Michelangelo's figure of *Jonah* (fig. 133) above the corbel in the center of the west wall of the Sistine Chapel.¹³⁸ Tintoretto also seems to be quoting himself; the heavy seated figure of Peter with his knees spread, right arm pushing down on something solid, and the profile head looking up, resembles closely the princess riding the dragon in the *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess* (fig. 113).¹³⁹ Not surprisingly, as a recycled figure, Peter does not display the same dynamism as the prototype, nor does he relate as tightly to those around him as does the princess does in the livelier Camerlenghi painting. The dominant feature of this shutter, the four muscular

angels who carry aloft the large cross that diagonally divides the vertical field, was linked in 1938 to a similar, if larger, group of angels bearing a cross at an angle in the upper left lunette of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* (figs. 134 and 135).¹⁴⁰ This resemblance to Michelangelo seems close enough to have been a deliberate quotation and has been repeated in the literature.¹⁴¹

Scholars have argued that the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*'s striking low viewpoint (fig. 56), recumbent figures loitering on steps, the progress of the Virgin up these steps on the right, and especially the massive forms of the tall steps themselves like a wedding cake or circular ziggurat, must be based on first-hand examination of Daniele da Volterra's fresco (fig. 57) of the same subject in the church of Trinità dei Monti in Rome, which was executed not long before Tintoretto painted his version.¹⁴² Following Simon Levie, as discussed in Chapter Two, Paola Rossi has maintained that this putative trip to Rome could have happened between the 23rd of March and the 5th of November, 1552, an apparent gap of activity in Venice in the documentary record. Although Rossi admits that Daniele's fresco in Rome might not have been far enough along in its execution for Tintoretto to learn much from it, surviving documents for the organ shutters for Santa Maria del Giglio (fig. 112) on April 20th, as well as payments for other commissions in Venice make clear that the painter was regularly, and probably in fact constantly in Venice in the spring, summer, and early autumn of 1552.¹⁴³ This documentary evidence is on top of the many commissions he needed to complete in or around that year, presumably including the Palazzo Gussoni frescoes (figs. 100, 101), the Genesis cycle for the Scuola della Trinità (figs. 105, 106, 107), and his first paintings for the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi (fig. 113). It seems a stretch to insert a trip to Rome into this already overburdened datebook.

Given the persistence of these theories in the scholarly literature, and acknowledging the strong general resemblance between Daniele's fresco and Tintoretto's canvas painting – though

only the High Priest at the summit of the stairs shows an identical pose – it is worth underscoring that in the sixteenth century drawings and prints after major examples of contemporary art circulated freely up and down the Italian peninsula. For example, the huge mass of drawings, prints, and paintings from the Cinquecento after Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel that survive today suggests that many images after important monuments could be easily found within a decade of a work's unveiling.¹⁴⁴ Some images must have circulated immediately, and others seem to have been based on preparatory drawings or on the work at an intermediate stage of execution.¹⁴⁵ Thus it would not have been difficult at all for an artist working in a center like Venice to have a choice of images of a major painting undertaken elsewhere, like Daniele da Volterra's fresco, to study. One did not need to leave Venice to keep up with artistic trends.

Tintoretto may have found inspiration closer to home; another possible source is Lotto's fresco of the *Presentation and Marriage of the Virgin* (fig. 136). This fresco, signed and dated 1525, for the chapel of the confraternity of the Virgin in the church of San Michele al Pozzo Bianco in Bergamo, also has a low viewpoint, an enormous set of concentric circular steps, and a tapering obelisk drawing the viewer's eye to the diminutive Virgin who ascends purposefully.¹⁴⁶ Although there may have been a specific visual source for the composition, perhaps Daniele or Lotto, it seems clear that Tintoretto here respected textual tradition, particularly the number of temple steps. According to Jacobus de Voragine, who codified stories in the Greek apocryphal gospels in his *Golden Legend*:

When the Blessed Virgin was three years old, and was weaned from the breast, her parents brought her with gifts to the Temple of the Lord. Around the Temple there were fifteen steps, one for each of the fifteen gradual Psalms; for, since the Temple was built upon a hill, one could not go up to the altar of holocaust from without except by the steps. And the Virgin, being placed upon the lowest of these steps, mounted all of them without the help of anyone, as if she had already reached the fullness of her age.¹⁴⁷

Tintoretto's outer organ shutters show an architectural setting with precisely fifteen steps. Many Venetian and Veneto painters did not make a point of portraying fifteen steps in their depictions of the *Presentation of the Virgin*; some artists did not even come close.¹⁴⁸ It is evidently difficult to accommodate so many steps in a composition and not present an absurdly steep rise, particularly without the benefit of a horizontal format in which to extend the composition. Thus it seems notable that Tintoretto, recorded by his contemporaries as characterized by an "arrischiato" temper, one "stravagante, capriccioso" and tending toward "trascuratezza," is in this matter neither hasty, unpredictable, nor careless. That is, the supposedly radical artist, appears to be, in this aspect of heeding a text, completely conventional. By contrast, the establishment figure of Titian, who moreover had enjoyed the chance to work with a distinctly horizontal format for his mural, and took pains to rework the profile of the steps more than once during execution, decided not to commit to the sanctioned number of steps. Rather than understanding the composition in the *Madonna dell'Orto* as possibly indebted to Daniele da Volterra or to Lorenzo Lotto, we should give more credit to Tintoretto's agency, and specifically to his burgeoning rivalry with Titian.

In other words, if Tintoretto had decided that he wanted to contradict Titian's model in as many ways as possible in order to surpass him, he might have arrived at the composition that now hangs at the *Madonna dell'Orto*. Tintoretto repeats a few motifs to indicate to the viewer that the mural in the *Scuola Grande della Carità* was his starting point. These include Titian's High Priest, down to the tassels on his costume, the figure of the Virgin clutching her skirt, and an almost-identical obelisk surmounted by a sphere.¹⁴⁹ Otherwise, almost every feature is decidedly different. Where the mural in the *Scuola Grande della Carità* (fig. 25) employs an extended horizontal format, with a strictly planar composition in the foreground moving from

left to right in the Carpaccio mode, Tintoretto's picture (fig. 56) presents a square format, a deep recession, and two strong diagonal vectors – the astonished bystanders on the steps at the left and the steady progress of the Virgin Mary on the right – converging at the High Priest on the top step. The figure of the High Priest throws out his arms in amazement, a bit like the astonished feudal lord confronting the shattered mallet, at the end of the counterpart chain of rapt witnesses, within the *Miracle of the Slave*.

Where Titian's architectural setting, down to the careful treatment of the stone blocks that surround the actual door in the room, is conceived at right angles to the picture plane, Tintoretto employs a strong diagonals and a much steeper staircase of curved steps. Indeed, Tintoretto's setting magnifies the achievement of the Virgin in ascending all the steps by herself. Titian's *Presentation* presents a gentle staircase with a forgiving landing in the middle for the Virgin to pause; the later painting's much steeper incline, if not quite a black diamond slope, does correspond to a more astonishing achievement.

Tintoretto must have decided that Titian's architecture simply got in the way of the storytelling, since he makes a major change in the depiction of the two key figures, the Virgin Mary and the priest. Within Titian's architectural setting, they are hard to distinguish. In Tintoretto's *Presentation*, both Mary and the priest are near the upper edge of the pictorial field and mostly silhouetted against the sky. Titian's obelisk has been moved between them to focus attention on them and emphasize their importance. Besides the gesticulating man at the lower left corner, Tintoretto used other figures to corroborate the message recounted by the architecture. For example, the heroic woman with her back to us in the immediate foreground (the viewer looks up at the sole of her foot) points out the Virgin as an paragon of virtue to her daughter;

meanwhile, the adjacent mother on the steps turns her back on the scene, neither understanding nor transmitting to her daughter the event taking place behind them.

Such improvements on Titian's prototype have not gone unnoticed. Vasari thought it Tintoretto's most carefully-finished painting in the church and thus the most satisfying one there: "a highly-finished work, and the best- executed and the most gladsome picture that there is in that place."¹⁵⁰ Boschini, evidently admiring the forced perspective of the setting, declared that that the architecture in this painting fairly seemed to gallop.¹⁵¹ Tintoretto's most eloquent nineteenth-century critic, John Ruskin, understood Tintoretto's pointed comparison and declared him the winner:

The figure of the little Madonna in the "Presentation" should be compared with Titian's in his picture of the same subject in the Academy. I prefer Tintoret's infinitely: and note how much finer is the feeling with which Tintoret has relieved the glory round her head against the pure sky, than that which influenced Titian in encumbering his distance with architecture.¹⁵²

Also contributing to the painting's success are the painstaking manipulation of other elements, including the illumination and the types and distribution of the figures, to a degree not always present in his larger-format works.

Where the lighting in Titian's picture is generally even – though it subtly makes a distinction between the actual illumination of the room from the window at left and the divine illumination emanating from the Virgin – Tintoretto by contrast employed a dramatic shadow over the left two-thirds of his composition. This difference of strong chiaroscuro emphasizes the compositional focus on the feat of the three-year-old Mary and forces a distinction between those left in darkness and those who realize her importance. For example, the man wearing the yellow mantle at the lower left corner has clearly leapt from his perch on the shaded steps and sprung toward the observer for a better view. As he throws out his right arm in a gesture of wonder,

breaking the picture plane, his body comes into the light and his mind is filled with new comprehension.

This figure in particular exemplifies the more heroic cast of Tintoretto's painting. The *Presentation* in the Madonna dell'Orto is populated with Michelangelesque types, with the gesticulating man a variant on the facial type, costume, and bold gesture of Michelangelo's *Ezekiel* (fig. 66). Tintoretto's women here are strapping figures in the manner of the sibyls in the Sistine Chapel. These frescoes were more than two decades old when Titian began his mural, yet as discussed in Chapter Two, the painting for the Scuola della Carità perpetuates the measured gestures and calm mood of Venetian narrative tradition. Tintoretto has built upon his earlier paintings by continuing to energize his composition with muscular individuals, employ emphatic gestures, indebted to Michelangelo. It seems likely that Tintoretto believed that reconfiguring a Titian composition in the manner of Michelangelo offered a better path for Venetian painting. These aesthetic decisions may also been intended to irk both Titian and Aretino. As we saw earlier in this chapter, the caustic exchange of letters between Aretino and Michelangelo from 1537-45 caused the final rupture of the friendship between critic and artist. At the same time, Tintoretto's carefully executed picture would seem to answer Aretino's earlier warnings about the artist's recklessness. And the use of real gold leaf to depict the mosaic patterns on the risers of the stairs displays a brilliant nod to Venetian tradition in an otherwise cutting-edge picture. As in the *Miracle of the Slave*, Tintoretto left nothing to chance when devising the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*.

Paragone with Veronese

Although Tintoretto may have felt, with the completion of the *Presentation of the Virgin*, that he had met at least temporarily the challenge of Titian, he still was adjusting to the disconcerting arrival in Venice, and continued success, of a fabulously talented younger artist from the *terraferma*.¹⁵³ This newcomer was Paolo Caliari, called Veronese, who had been able to transcend his provincial origins in part through the mentor of the architect Michele Sanmicheli, who took the younger painter under his wing and introduced him to the works of Giulio Romano and other artists from outside the Veneto. Sanmicheli's own classicizing architecture was undoubtedly an influence as well. As a result of this far-ranging experience and what was obviously an extremely precocious talent, at a very early age Veronese developed a style based primarily on Central Italian models, far more sophisticated than anything being achieved by his hometown colleagues.¹⁵⁴

Unlike the young Tintoretto, whose early paintings are filled with specific borrowings and quotations from Central Italian sources, incorporated into a highly idiosyncratic and constantly changing style, Paolo's early works show that he had assimilated elements from Parmigianino, Giulio, Francesco Salviati, and Raphael, among others, while revealing few specific influences. Tempering the more manneristic aspects of these styles was a sense of decorum and repose that may be in part derived from the classicism of Sanmicheli but was undoubtedly intrinsic to Veronese's own temperate personality as well. Based on this confident foundation, and probably aided by a congenial personality, he had begun to receive major commissions in Venice by the start of the 1550s. Thus Veronese was in his early twenties he had enjoyed public success not just in his hometown but also in the capital, and at a level far beyond what Tintoretto had achieved a decade earlier at the same age.

Veronese's first church commission in Venice was an altarpiece, completed about 1551, for the aristocratic Giustiniani family chapel in the church of San Francesco della Vigna (fig. 137). This *Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist, Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint Catherine* presented a variant on the traditionally symmetrical *sacra conversazione* by placing the Virgin and Child in front of massive columns at the upper right to create a strong diagonal from the lower left. The seated Virgin has turned slightly to her right, and she holds an unwieldy standing Christ Child. Veronese also constructed a sophisticated network of gazes among the figures, with Saint Anthony Abbot making contact with the viewer and drawing us into the composition. The handling of sumptuous colors is particularly effective, with most fabrics possessing a specific sheen as it catches the light. Of course, Veronese's composition, as well as certain details and effects, take as their points of departure Titian's *Madonna di Ca' Pesaro* (fig. 138) in the church of the Frari, executed 1519-26. Indeed, Veronese's first altarpiece for Venice is more than an homage to Titian. It is also a pledge of his artistic allegiance and a declaration that he wished to appear as Titian's successor.¹⁵⁵

Veronese's gesture may also have been made in response to a move by Tintoretto. When Tintoretto painted his first altarpiece for a *terraferma* setting, *Saint Augustine Healing the Lame* (fig. 139), just a couple of years earlier, about 1549-50, for the church of San Michele in Vicenza (now Musei Civici, Pinacoteca dei Palazzo Chericati, Vicenza), he did not give a nod to his Venetian rival, that is Titian. Instead, the foreground of Tintoretto's altarpiece painting is full of Michelangesque figures, who reveal in their monochromatic coloring a sculptural appearance. Moreover, they resemble closely the types and poses of the lost *Battle of Cascina* cartoon. It is as if this painting served as Tintoretto's calling card on the *terraferma*, an early declaration on the mainland of his abilities, with Michelangelo as his point of departure.¹⁵⁶ Such a gesture may

have only reinforced Veronese's wish to follow, and flatter, Titian, and simultaneously distinguish himself from Tintoretto.

These tactics were so successful that with his next Venetian commission, Veronese rose to the highest level of patronage: in 1553, he was invited to participate in the decoration of the ceilings of three rooms in the Palazzo Ducale, including the great central oval on the subject of *Jupiter Expelling the Vices* in the Sala of the Council of Ten (fig. 140). Veronese's painting combined the dramatic illusionism of Giulio Romano with a monumental classicism and radiant color and light. These elements created an up-to-date triumph that moreover avoided the troubling lack of finish that some critics found in many of Tintoretto's paintings.¹⁵⁷

Then, beginning in 1555, Veronese began to decorate the church of the Hieronymite monastery in Venice, San Sebastiano. The prior of this monastery, Bernardo Torlioni, was a native of Verona and apparently inclined to hire a native son of such talent. Veronese finished the ceiling of the sacristy quickly, dating the final compartment the 22nd of November, 1555. Veronese's work there must have impressed Torlioni, since within days, by December 1555, he entrusted the painter with the much more public commission for the ceiling of the church's nave. The stakes were far greater, since this ceiling was much farther than the floor than in any of his previous ceiling decorations, requiring compositions legible from a great distance. The subject, that of the story of Esther, was demanding since it was relatively unusual on this scale, and the three canvas paintings that constituted the central axis of the ceiling needed to convey a cohesive narrative. Moreover, unlike his previous ceiling canvases, this story did not take place in heaven or a similar cloudy setting, but needed to unfold in a human context, amid classical architecture.

Despite these challenges, the three main paintings and a host of subsidiary ceiling decorations that Paolo executed between the end of 1555 and October of 1556 (fig. 141) more

than repaid the prior's confidence. The most impressive of the large scenes was the *Triumph of Mordechai* (fig. 142), which included prancing horses, gleaming armor, rich coloring, and bold foreshortenings aplenty, from limbs to architecture. The overall composition also proved that Veronese had perfected a new kind of ceiling painting, as if the viewer is watching the action happening up a steep flight of steps. This approach must have made pictures in the *quadro riportato* format, including that Tintoretto had used in the ceiling for Aretino (fig. 16), seem old-fashioned indeed. The 2008-10 restoration campaign for the entire ceiling, and the exhibition of the three main canvases at eye level in Palazzo Grimani at Santa Maria Formosa, made clear the extraordinary level of execution, down to individual deft brushstrokes. The restoration and exhibition also proved just what a breakthrough these paintings were for Veronese, and what a leap forward they represented for Venetian painting.¹⁵⁸ In many realms of the art of painting, including that of rendering fabrics, Veronese was on par, if not superior, to any other artist in Venice.¹⁵⁹ Veronese and his workshop then went on to cover nearly all the surfaces of San Sebastiano, with decorations on panel and canvas and in fresco.¹⁶⁰ Tintoretto must have watched in frustration as his new rival turned San Sebastiano into exactly the kind of unified monument that he probably yearned to create himself.

Titian undoubtedly played a role in a humiliating slight that Tintoretto suffered at exactly this moment, in 1556.¹⁶¹ After a prolonged period of construction, the ceiling of the reading room of Jacopo Sansovino's Libreria Marciana was finally ready for decoration.¹⁶² Seven painters were awarded commissions, for three canvas roundels each, that would be set into the elaborate gilded framework of the ceiling. Tintoretto was notably not among them. Those selected were exponents of Central Italian *maniera* in which Tintoretto had his roots; the chosen artists included his rising rival Veronese, his former colleague Schiavone, Giuseppe Porta

Salviati, and several others who were far less prominent – and far less talented – than Tintoretto.¹⁶³ Ridolfi even discloses in his *Life* of Tintoretto that Titian made sure that Tintoretto was specifically excluded from the group of artists offered commissions:

Just about the same time work began on the paintings of the vault of the Libreria of St. Mark's. Titian had from the procurators the charge of distributing the paintings amongst Schiavone, Paolo da Verona, Battista Zelotti, Giuseppe Salviati, Battista Franco, and other young men who were considered to be talented, but Tintoretto was excluded.¹⁶⁴

It must have stung to have been left out of a group of “young men who were considered to be talented,” and the unveiling of the completed ceiling (fig. 143) would have made Tintoretto's precarious position all the more evident. Moreover, Titan and Sansovino, arbiters of taste in Venice in those days, had the honor of choosing one artist as the best contributor to the project. Not surprisingly they awarded a golden chain, for the cycle's most distinguished painting, to Veronese. Vasari describes admiringly and at length Veronese's canvas of the *Allegory of Music* (fig. 144), and how this prize was richly deserved.¹⁶⁵ The painting is surely attractive and lucid, but it lacks the boldness and dynamism of his San Sebastiano ceiling canvas – or any of Tintoretto's recent work. Indeed, Vasari used the description of Veronese's triumphant contributions to the room's decoration as the conclusion of his brief biography of the artist. The warm reception that Veronese received in aftermath of the Libreria's unveiling must have been a bitter pill for Tintoretto.

Finally, as Veronese went from strength to strength, he did not avoid opportunities to challenge Tintoretto, choosing as targets the older painter's most accomplished works and . In 1559-60, just few years after the victory in the Libreria, he painted the organ shutters for the church of San Geminiano, right on Piazza San Marco. One of the figures was a splendid figure of a knight in armor, *Saint Menna* (fig. 145). The date of the painting finds confirmation in a document of 1558 pledging funds for a new organ.¹⁶⁶ The elegant standing figure dominates his

niche with a markedly sculptural effect. Although the canvases for the shutters were rectangular, Veronese may have deliberately chosen the rounded arch format as a pictorial field to emphasize the impression of three-dimensional statues in niches – yet another round in the *paragone* – and draw attention to the comparison with Tintoretto's *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess* (fig. 113) of 1552.

Moreover, the painter may have helped pick which saints were to be included. There are many examples in Cinquecento Venice of patrons deferring to the artist's expertise and judgment, from Pordenone's persuasion of the Scuola della Carità discussed in Chapter Two to Titian's correspondence with Philip II of Spain. Saint Menna, a soldier in the Roman imperial army who was martyred about the year 300, is almost unknown in Renaissance art. According to tradition, the church of San Geminiano originally shared a dedication to "Menna cavaliere" (Menna the Knight).¹⁶⁷ Choosing a figure in armor would have offered Veronese scope to surpass Tintoretto's painting for the Camerlenghi, one that, as we shall see, had recently been the subject of specific published criticism.

All aspects of *Saint Menna* display Veronese at the top of his game. Menna's right elbow and left foot project into the viewer's space convincingly, with a believable shadow cast in the niche. The heavy folds of red drapery and particularly the cold gleam of metal flaunt Veronese's skill at rendering varied textures with feathery and efficient brushwork. Above all, by refusing to engage Tintoretto in another complex reflection in armor, Veronese seems to assert that he understands the limits of mimesis in painting. That is, if the princess in Tintoretto's painting can see her own reflection in Louis's armor, then viewers should be able to see themselves as well. Veronese evidently preferred not to break the spell of pictorial illusion, rendering instead vague patches of reflected light rather than specific forms. The self-assured *Saint Menna* may be seen

as both an explicit critique of Tintoretto and a broader claim of Veronese's own arrival. The pose and expression have even been read in an autobiographical key. According to Rearick, the saint's "dashing confidence suggests the self-image of the thirty-two-year-old painter, by 1560 an established figure on the Venetian scene."¹⁶⁸ If so, the *Saint Menna* would be an even more personal rejoinder to Tintoretto, and a statement not of an artist who is arriving, but one who has arrived.

The Crisis Year

As if Veronese's swift ascent in 1556-57 was not alarming enough, damaging comments about Tintoretto were making their way into print. Francesco Sansovino (son of the architect who had awarded, along with Titian, the golden chain to Veronese) published a guidebook in 1556 using the name Anselmo Guisconi. This volume, *Tutte le cose notabili che sono in Venetia*, uses the format of a dialogue between a foreigner and a local to survey the sights of the city. The section on artists active in Venice ends with the following exchange, which denigrates Tintoretto for excessive speed and a lack of diligence in the execution of his pictures, to the overall detriment of his work.

The Venetian begins:

I must not omit Giacomo Tintorello, all dash and verve. There is a painting by him in the Consiglio and many works in the rest of the city; one might wish for greater diligence in him, but for the rest he is an excellent painter.

And the foreigner concurs:

You speak the truth; I too have considered his picture, it seems unfinished; I think this is the result of his great speed.¹⁶⁹

The criticism Tintoretto's haste and a lack of finish first mentioned by Aretino back in 1548 had evidently been taken up by others in the intervening years. Moreover, it must have hurt that the

object of this disparagement was the most prestigious commission he had received thus far: a large mural in the Sala del Maggior in the Palazzo Ducale (probably depicting the *Excommunication of Barbarossa by Alexander III*). The painting, documented to 1553, was destroyed in the 1577 fire, but with this assignment Tintoretto was finally present in the same room as Titian, Pordenone, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio, and others.¹⁷⁰ It seems he could not catch a break.

Troubles continued to mount the next year, in 1557, with the publication of Lodovico Dolce's *Aretino*. This Venetian response to the Tuscan bias of Vasari's first edition praises Raphael over Michelangelo, and then argues that Titian is superior to both. Given how closely Tintoretto had adopted and thoroughly synthesized the styles of all three artists, his omission from the dialogue is telling. Moreover, Dolce cites the work of many other Central Italian and Venetian artists, and those active in Venice named in the text including Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Pordenone, Lotto, Sansovino, but not Tintoretto, whose activity in the previous ten years was hardly inconspicuous. Tintoretto has been connected, however, with two paintings in the dialogue that come in for censure. The first is a *historia* of the "Excommunication of Barbarossa" in the Palazzo Ducale. This picture, next to Titian's *Battle*, that displayed "improprieties" and seemed illogical in its inclusion of so many Venetian senators:

And since the truth ought not to be hushed up, I should not refrain from saying that, as regards historical subject matter, the man who painting in the Sala I mentioned before, next to Titian's battle picture, the history of the excommunication of the Emperor Federico Barbarossa by Pope Alexander, and included in his invention a representation of Rome exceeded the bounds of propriety in a serious way – in my opinion – when he put in so many Venetian senators, and showed them standing there and looking on without any real motivation. For the fact is that there is no likelihood that all of them should have happened to be there simultaneously in quite this way, nor do they have anything to do with the subject. Titian, on the other hand, respected propriety suitably (and divinely too)

in the painting which shows the same Federico bowing down and humbling himself before the Pope, whose sacred foot he kisses.¹⁷¹

Such a reproach targeted one of Tintoretto's strengths – engaged bystanders within a painting, so effective in his *Miracle of the Slave* or the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* – as pointless and inappropriate in this case. By contrast, Titian is credited as creating a picture full of propriety, and doing so “divinamente.” The putdown of Tintoretto with the concurrent praise of Titian must have seemed very pointed to contemporary readers. Might these comments be payback for Tintoretto's dig at Titian with his *Presentation of the Virgin* for the Madonna dell'Orto of the previous year?

Just a bit later in the dialogue, Tintoretto is attacked again, also not by name, and the subject of reprimand is another of his most successful works, the *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess*. The voice of Aretino is again the assailant, and the message is that the man who depicted Saint Margaret astride a serpent showed no sense of decency: “There is still another case, where he failed to demonstrate any real care: his depiction of St. Margaret riding on the serpent.”¹⁷² Tintoretto's painting for the Camerlenghi – although it does not feature a Saint Margaret, but rather the princess saved by Saint George – must be the one in question, since it is nearly impossible to imagine another picture in Venice where there would be a sexual current between a female saint and a dragon. Describing the female as “Margaret” must be a simple iconographic mistake on Dolce's part. His attack on this picture now adds another criticism to a list that already includes excessive haste and illogical compositions, a mistreatment of religious subjects, and the creating of pictures that are borderline sacrilege.

Nichols has recently analyzed well the tension, even absurdity, present in the painting for the Camerlenghi cycle; Tintoretto emphasized a beautiful young woman with bare arms and shoulders, and depicted her “astride a writhing and recalcitrant snake-like creature whose face

peers out at the viewer knowingly from between her legs. While St George throws up his arms in excitement, Saint Louis gathers his skirts about him in a moment of instinctive pious revulsion.”¹⁷³ Although the comments of Dolce or Nichols perhaps seem puritanical, they do point out a larger truth. Tintoretto’s showpiece may have trumped Bonifacio and impressed other painters, but the broader Venetian public – and certainly his enemies – may have found such works mystifying and even offensive. Such censure also reminds us that the erotic frisson in the painting – and the emphasis on clever reflections – brings this picture closer to the world of the *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* than to any previous work for the Camerlenghi.

Dolce has subjected Tintoretto to the worst kind of censure; he has not dignified the painter by name – which would put him before the broader public – but attacked him obliquely, in a way that insiders would recognize. At this moment, Tintoretto must have felt besieged. He would have realized that he must resurrect his floundering career with a bold gambit. He needed to obtain the commission to create the colossal paintings of the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf*. Vasari was nearly right when he dismissed the *Last Judgment* as appearing as a prank or practical joke, “ella pare dipinta da burla.” Tintoretto’s great painting, however, was not a prank, but rather a wager.

¹ The translation comes from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 22. The original passage, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, pp. 19-20 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, pp. 15-6, reads, “Ne vi è dubbio, che ogni professione prende argomento dal decoro a dalla riputatione e la Pittura in particolare, ne le opere giamai d’alcun Pittore, benche eccellente, pervennero, che difficilmente à sublime concetto, avvilete dal suo Autore. Gli applausi concorrono, ove le apparenze sono maggiori, e stimasi dal Mondo il ritrovarsi il sommo della perfettione, ove si profondono i tesori, poiche il genio nostro vuol esser tiranneggiato dal desiderio. Ma il Tintoretto però non seppe profittarsi di quella practica, si che fece una poca raccolta delle tante seminate fatiche, che dovevano di ragione apportarle commode e fortune di conseguenza.”

² Echols renders “spiritoso” as “fresh,” *Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting*, p. 22. Boschini, *Carta del Navegar*, ed. Anna Pallucchini, pp. 226-27: “El Tentoreto è un sprito divin,/ Che viense al Mondo con un torzo in man,/ El qual lume dè impazzo al gran Tician;/ Né el lo volse con lu per so vesin./ No savemio l’istoria co’ l’è sta?/ Che stando da Tician el Tentoreto,/ Per esser spiritoso, in gran sospeto/ El messe el Mistro; e lu el bandì de ca’?”

³ Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 15. Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 17, “Just as a single peppercorn permeates and gradually overpowers ten bunches of poppies....”

⁴ Borghini’s *Il Riposo* occasionally groups the mention of commissions that are located in nearby buildings, as if he his notes record simply the order in which he visited the works. Vasari’s biography of Tintoretto does at least appear to end with Tintoretto’s most recent works, and those that would have been particularly talked about during his quick visit to Venice in 1566: the second group of canvases in Scuola Grande di San Marco (though for reasons of continuity the earlier *Miracle of the Slave* is lumped in) and the competition for the central ceiling canvas for the Scuola Grande di San Marco and the resulting paintings for the compartments in the Sala dell’Albergo’s ceiling. See Vasari-Milanesi, VI, pp. 592-4 and Vasari-De Vere, II, pp. 512-4.

⁵ Ridolfi’s biography opens memorably with the rejection from Titian’s bottega, the self-study curriculum based on “Il disegno di Michel Angelo e’l colorito di Titiano,” a description of his working methods, and learning the trade from “Pittori di minor fortuna” (essentially furniture painters), before beginning a vaguely chronological account of important commissions. The “early” part of Tintoretto’s career can be found in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, pp. 11-16 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, pp. 3-10. Ridolfi’s biography also winds down in something of chronological order, with descriptions of clearly late commissions (e.g. for San Giorgio Maggiore and the church of the Redentore) and sustained attention to the *Paradiso*, the commission by which he sealed his great oeuvre: “della grand’opera del Paradiso, ch’egli fece nel maggior Consiglio, con la quale suggellò con glorioso fine le grandi sue operationi.” The account of the *Paradiso* is then followed by several pages of anecdotes and *detti* about art attributed to him before concluding with his illness, death, and burial. See Ridolfi-Haldeln, II, pp. 60-72 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, pp. 89-107.

⁶ The translation is found in Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 42. The original, reprinted in Ridolfi-Hadeln, p. 37 and Ridolif-*Vite*, p. 49, reads, “Ma perchè fino à quest’hora abbiamo ragionato di molte opere sue principali, registrate (per quello si è potuto venire in cognition) per l’ordine de’ tempi,

raccogliamo ancora un buon numero di quadri & di tavole sparse nelle Chiese della Città, operate da lui nella età più virile.”

⁷ For this painting, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 159 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 68.

⁸ The sobriquet is, of course, from the start of Ridolfi’s description of the choir paintings of the Madonna dell’Orto; see Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 19 and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 14.

⁹ The translation comes from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 17. For the original passage, see Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 13 and Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, ed. Camesasca, II, CDII, pp. 204-5 and Borean, “Documentation,” p. 420. “Ma non insuperbite, se bene è così, ché ciò sarebbe un non voler salire in maggiore grado di perfezione. E beato il nome vostro, se reduceste la prestezza del fatto in la pazienza del fare. Benché a poco a poco a ciò provvederanno gli anni; conciosia ch’essi, e non altri, sono bastanti a raffrenare il corso de la trascuratezza, di che tanto si prevale la gioventù volonterosa e veloce.” A translation of Aretino’s entire letter can be found in Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, pp. 16-7.

¹⁰ See Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 12, “da voi, così giovane quasi dipinte in meno spazio di tempo che non si mise en pensare al ciò che dovevate dipingere.”

¹¹ Aretino’s full letter in Italian is included in Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, CCXI, pp. 52-3, Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 12, and Borean, “Documentation,” p. 419.

¹² The “Comparative Chronology” by Francesco Valcanover in the exhibition catalogue *Titian: Prince of Painters* (Palazzo Ducale, Venice and National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1990-91), p. 410, says of the painter, “In September, with his son Orazio, guest of Guidobaldo II, Titian stays in Pesaro and in Urbino, traveling then by 9 October to Rome....” He remains there through at least the 19th of March 1546.

¹³ Titian’s letter to Charles V of 8 December 1545 includes the following: “Io sono hora qui in Roma, chiamatoci da Nostra Signore, et vado imparando da questi maravigliosi sassi antichi...” The full letter is included in the modern edition, Lionello Puppi, ed., *Tiziano. L’epistolario* (Florence: Alinari 24 ORE, 2102), doc. 81.

¹⁴ “Per non essere la piu laudabile pace, che la guerra che in gara della virtù fà l’uno virtuoso, contra l’altro: quella del Tintoretto, et ciascuno pittore... se bene Iacopo nel corso è si può dir’ presso al palio...” For the whole letter, see Aretino, *Lettere sull’Arte*, II, CDVIII, p. 209 and Borean, “Documentation,” p. 420.

¹⁵ “Che non si stupisca nel relievo de la figura.” Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 13 and Borean, “Documentation,” p. 420.

¹⁶ Ibid. The original portion of the letter reads, “che le cere, l’arie e le viste de la turbe, che la circondano, sono tanto simili agli effetti ch’esse fanno in tale opera, che lo spettacolo pare più tosto vero che finto.” Translation from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 17.

¹⁷ The phrase “The Decisive Years” was employed by Miguel Falomir, the lead curator of the 2007 Tintoretto exhibition at the Prado, to describe the period of 1547-1555, marking Tintoretto’s breakthrough and first moment of full maturity. The section in the exhibition catalogue, *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, is treated under pp. 213-285. Although the *Miracle of the Slave* was not lent to Madrid, cats. 9, 11, 12, and 14, all large-format history paintings, offered admirable surrogates.

¹⁸ Translation in Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 17. “Tintorello per tristizia o pazzia fusse mancato a la promessa.” Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, XDIII, p. 273. The editors of the 1957 edition, Fidenzio Pertile and Ettore Camesasca, speculate that the recipient of this letter may have been Domenico Boccamazza, who was a member of the papal household.

¹⁹ For the chronology, see, for example, Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, II, p. 8. Valcanover’s “Comparative Chronology” in *Titian: Prince of Painters*, p. 411, says that the painter was back “in Venice at least by October.” For Titian in Augsburg, see for example, Sheila Hale, *Titian: His Life*, New York: HarperCollins, 2012, pp. 489-508 and the chapter by Andrew John Martin, “La Bottega in Germania,” in Giorgio Tagliaferro, Bernard Aikema et al., *Le botteghe di Tiziano*, (Florence: Alinari 24ORE, 2009), pp. 133-47.

²⁰ Jaynie Anderson has also recently discussed the fascinating situation that Titian and Aretino both shared the same confessor, the Franciscan Fra Curado of San Niccolò della Lattuga. This would be of course another bond between the painter and writer and potentially a topic of conversation whenever the two met. Fra Curado had been Aretino’s confessor for some sixteen years when he was apparently accused of Lutheran heresy in 1549. See “Titian’s Franciscan Friar in Melbourne: A portrait of the Confessor to Aretino and Titian?,” in *Titian: Materiality, Likeness*, Istoria, ed. Joanna Woods-Marsden (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), pp. 71-82. On p. 78, Anderson notes, “That the confessor to Aretino and Titian was a Franciscan with Lutheran sympathies has previously never been discussed in writing either about Titian or Aretino.” She concedes that there is very little trace of this man in Venetian documents. The evidence Anderson employs in making the identification are Ridolfi’s biography of Titian and Aretino’s letters. Ridolfi notes the existence of a portrait of Titian’s confessor in the collection of Girolamo Gambarato, though the sitter is described as a Dominican: “e del suo Confessore dell’Ordine de’Predicatori”; see Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 169. Aretino’s letters of October 1549 about their confessor include one to Titian; see Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, DXXX, p. 309. Her identification of a portrait in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, as a painting by Titian seems reasonable, but she admits that this cleric’s habit appears to be too dark for Franciscan gray or brown. For the painting in Melbourne, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, II, x-41 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 203.

²¹ Titian’s *Ecce Homo* is discussed by Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 21 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 138. Ridolfi identifies Aretino’s features in the face of Pontius Pilate and describes

the painting in his life of Titian; “nella figura di Pilato haveva ritratto Partenio,” see Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 172. An analysis of the creative collaboration between Titian’s portraits and Aretino’s writings about them can be found in Freedman, *Titian’s Portraits Through Aretino’s Lens*.

²² For Titian’s *Ecce Homo*, the family of the patron, and especially convincing identification of Zuane d’Anna with the pilgrim dressed in Brown, see de Maria, *Becoming Venetian*, pp. 133-43. For more on Aretino, see Rosand, “Veronese’s *Magdalene* and Pietro Aretino.”

²³ “Mi stupij certo del color vario, di cui essi si dimostravano: i più vicini ardevano con le fiamme del fuoco solare, e i più lontani rosseggiavano d’uno ardore di minio non così bene acceso. O con che belle trattetteggiature i pennelli naturali spingevano l’aria in là, discostandola da i palazzi con il modo che discosta il Vecellio nel far de i paesi!” This is of course the famous letter that ends with the writer lamenting out loud Titian’s absence: “...che io, che so come il vostro pennello è spirit de i suoi spiriti, e tre o quattro volte esclamai: ‘O Tiziano, dove sete mo?’” See Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, CLXXIX, pp. 16-7.

²⁴ For this portrait, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, II, cat. 5 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 143. It is revealing about Aretino (as well as the diplomatic necessities of his social milieu) that the critic first praised the portrait in a letter of April 1545 to Paolo Giovio (“miracolo uscito dal pennello di sì mirabile spirit”). Soon afterwards, he re-gifted it to Cosimo de’Medici, to whom he apologizes in a letter of October for its sketchy and unfinished appearance – a rare indication in print of anything other than great enthusiasm for Titian. Aretino claims that the unsatisfying level of finish, one not truly replicating the costume of the sitter, happened because Titian was insufficiently compensated (“E se più fossero stati gli scudi che gliene ho conti, invero i drappi sariano lucidi, morbidi e rigidi, come il senno raso, il velluto e il broccato.”). Aretino seems to have assumed that the Florentine recipient, accustomed to portraits like those of Bronzino, might not understand the innovations of loose Venetian brushwork. A letter to Titian himself that same month also slighted the portrait’s sketchy quality, “il mio ritratto più tosto abbozzato che fornito,” a criticism the writer would level also on Tintoretto. For these three letters, see Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, CCXVIII, pp. 60-1, CCLXV, pp. 107-8, and CCLXIV, pp. 106-7. For this portrait within the context of contemporary images of Aretino, see Freedman, *Titian’s Portraits*, pp. 35-67.

²⁵ The *Ecce Homo* Titian gave to Aretino is thought to be picture in Chantilly; see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 33 (under “Replica”) and Humfrey, *Titian*, under cat. 163. Note that the work for Charles was painted on the unusual support of slate. For this picture in the context of religious art produced during the Council of Trent and Titian’s later career, see Marcia B. Hall, *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 145-71. This group of paintings is also discussed by Christopher J. Nygren, “Vibrant Icons: Titian’s Art and the Tradition of Christian Image-Making” (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2011), especially pp. 266-86. Humfrey incorrectly titles the various versions of Titian’s picture as a “Man of Sorrows,” given that Christ’s body reveals none of the wounds of the Crucifixion and the moment depicted is more accurately described as an “Ecce Homo” or a “Christ Mocked.” For a rich iconographic study of the subject of the “Man of Sorrows” in

Venetian art, see *Passion in Venice: Crivelli to Tintoretto and Veronese*, ed. Catherine Pugliesi and William Barcham (exh. cat. Museum of Biblical Art) (New York: Museum of Biblical Art, 2011).

²⁶ “Salite a pena le scale e posato il mantello, commisse Girolamo allievo suo (così può ne’ petti umani un piccolo tarlo di gelosia,) che tosto licestiasse Iacopo di sua Casa.” The original is in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 13 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 6.

²⁷ As noted by Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 17, about 1551 Aretino does include Tintoretto as one of dozens of artists and writers who extol Queen Catherine of France by representing some aspect of her many qualities. This brief citation offers no special praise and thus does not indicate any thaw. It is interesting, however, that Aretino links Tintoretto’s name with Schiavone, and that both, perhaps paradoxically, are entrusted with portraying her continence: “Il Tintore ed Andrea la continenza.” The long poem can be found in Aretino, *Lettere sull’Arte*, II, under DCIV, pp. 373-81. For evidence of the resumption of flattery of Titian, see example, Aretino’s letter of July 1550 “al Todesco che intaglia” (“to the German who cuts”), lauding a printed version of Titian’s *Self-Portrait*. Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, DLXV, p. 340. Although Titian’s portrait is lost, the likeness is presumably recorded in Giovanni Britto’s woodcut, dated by Aretino’s letter; see Michelangelo Muraro and David Rosand, *Titian and the Venetian Woodcut* (exh. cat. National Gallery of Art), Washington DC: International Exhibitions Foundation, 1976, cat. 45, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 178. Many other fawning letters from Aretino in the early 1550s are addressed to the Titian himself, or are addressed to “compare” (likely meaning Titian), or praise Titian by name within a letter to another recipient. These show the critic making a considerable effort and suggest that the friendship between Aretino and Titian was once again on strong footing. Among many, see for example, Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, DCXXVII, p. 401; DCXXIX, p. 402; DCXXXII, pp. 404-5; DCXXXIV, pp. 406-7; DCXLI, pp. 415-417; DCXLV, p. 421; DCLIII, p. 427; DCLVIII, pp. 431-2; DCLIX, p. 433; DCLX, p. 433-4; DCLXV, p. 438; DCLXVIII, pp. 440-1; DCLXIX, pp. 441-2; DCLXX, pp. 442-3; DCLXXI, p. 444; DCLXX[II], p. 445; DCLXXVII, pp. 448-9.

²⁸ See the eight-page pamphlet by Giulio Lorenzetti issued for the 1937 Tintoretto exhibition, *Il Tintoretto e L’Aretino*, Venice, 1937.

²⁹ For example, Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 260, n. 10 and Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 70-1.

³⁰ Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino,”* pp. 31-32.

³¹ Roskill’s evidence that “the 1549 rupture (if there was one) was only short-lived” (pp. 31-32) includes the following points. First, Marcolini said that in 1551 Tintoretto produced a portrait of Aretino, yet this picture, now lost, may have been intended as a peace offering. (For this portrait, see Borean, “Documentation,” p. 421.) Secondly, Tintoretto made in the late 1540s or early 1550s a drawing (Ringling Museum, Sarasota) after a sculptural *modello* by Michelangelo that was owned by Aretino. Roskill bases this point on the discussion of the drawing by Creighton Gilbert, “Tintoretto and Michelangelo’s ‘St Damian,’ *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 103, no. 694 (Jan 1961), pp. 16+19-20+21. Yet this sheet is clearly not by Tintoretto’s hand, as pointed out by

David Rosand, "Palma Giovane as Draughtsman: The Early Career and Related Observations," *Master Drawings*, vol. 8, no. 2 (summer 1970), pp. 148-161, 210-23. The discussion of the Sarasota drawing is on p. 154, and Rosand notes how the this sheet lacks the "broad patterns of light and dark, establishing a definite compositional organization of primarily surface relations," characteristic of Tintoretto. Rosand's conclusion receives ample confirmation in autograph sheets by Tintoretto showing studies after sculptured heads; see for example, the drawings in Munich, Christ Church, and the Uffizi, discussed by Ilchman and Saywell in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cats. 50, 52, 53. Thirdly, Roskill cites the tradition that Aretino is shown as a bystander with a pink cape on horseback on the right side of the *Crucifixion* in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco (fig. 76 in this dissertation). The resemblance to this generic bearded head is only approximate, however, and not particularly close to the painted portraits of Aretino by Titian or the engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi. Moreover, this traditional identification seems to be casually cited by some scholars without textual evidence, e.g. Roskill, pp. 31, 56, n. 191 or Philipp P. Fehl, "Tintoretto's Homage to Titian and Pietro Aretino," in *Decorum and Wit. The Poetry of Venetian Painting: Essays in the History of the Classical Tradition* (Vienna: IRSA, 1992), pp. 167-80, discussing this putative homage on p. 381. Yet even if the figure in the *Crucifixion* is Aretino, the writer had died some nine years earlier, and Tintoretto's gesture could just as easily represent an attempt to rewrite the past as confirm a steady friendship. Finally, Roskill notes an anecdote in Ridolfi describing how Tintoretto invites Aretino to his studio "after there had been friction between them." This famous story recounts how the painter threatened Aretino by "measuring" his height using the length of a weapon as the unit of measurement ("un pistolese"), thus putting the critic in his place. The two then apparently patch things up as friends following Aretino's resolutino never to slander Tintoretto again: "Mà non hebbe più ardire di sparlàr di lui, e gli divenne amico." (Ridolfi-Hadeln, II. P. 68, Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 101). The story may well be apocryphal, and moreover it is one in a string of many tales toward the end of the biography that are not assigned to any specific chronological moment in the artist's life, but rather try to sum up Tintoretto's colorful personality. The friendship described may have nothing to do with the rupture noted in Aretino's letters. In sum, Roskill's evidence is tenuous at best. Moreover, it is worth introducing to the discussion that when Aretino moved house in 1551, exchanging his rooms at Ca' Bollani for more luxurious quarters at Ca' Dandolo, he apparently left the two ceiling paintings by Tintoretto behind; Norman E. Land, "Aretino, Pietro," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, II, 1996, pp. 387-88. This suggests that Aretino was willing to turn the page on the Tintoretto chapter in his life.

³² See Borean, "Documentation," p. 421.

³³ For Marcolini, see D'Elia, *Titian's Religious Pictures*, pp. 176-7, with further bibliography, and Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, pp. 6-7, 58-9, 179. Also see Mazzucco, *Jacomo Tintoretto*, who discusses Marcolini and Aretino and Marcolini and Tintoretto often in her biography, e.g. pp. 87-9, 93-6, 110-11, 116-9. The lost portrait for Aretino painted by 1551 may be the same as that recorded by Ridolfi as appearing to speak, "di quello dell'Aretino, che pareva favellasse." Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 51, and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 77.

³⁴ A portrait in a private collection in Venice, now Bellizona, was identified as Caterina Sandella and published with great confidence by Anna Pallucchini ("Che il ritratto sia un autografo di

Jacopo non mi sembra si possa dubitare”), “Il ritratto di Caterina Sandella di Jacopo Tintoretto,” *Arte Veneta* 25 (1971), pp. 262-4. The author rehearses Roskill’s arguments for denying “animosità” between Aretino and Tintoretto, but adds no new evidence, except for this painting. Despite the lack of any evidence in documents or early sources, this portrait was later included in Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: I ritratti*, 1982, cat. 124, figs. V, 84. Although the scenario that this is Tintoretto’s portrait of Sandella is given some credence by Falomir (*Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 96) and I have not examined the picture in person, in reproduction it appears almost certainly not by Tintoretto. It bears little comparison when compared to any of the few female portraits regarded as autograph, e.g. *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 16 or *Tintoretto Ritratti* (exh. cat. Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice and Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), Milan: Electa, 1994, cat. 16. Nor does it bear comparison to Tintoretto’s autograph portraits of male sitters of the early 1550s, such as the *Jacopo Soranzo* of c. 1550 (see *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 15) or in fact of any stage of his career. Rearick does not find the picture to be a true portrait, but rather an “allegorical image” perhaps based on an actual woman; he also dismisses a connection to Tintoretto himself, calling it instead “an inferior work by a Tintoretto follower.” Rearick, “Reflections on Tintoretto as a Portraitist,” p. 68, n. 48. I also do not find that the identification of the sitter is particularly conclusive when compared to the portrait medals Aretino commissioned from Alessandro Vittoria, the only evidence that Pallucchini can muster (A. Pallucchini, figs. 364-6). Besides the generically fleshy face with double chin and hairstyle, the main point of comparison would be the nose, but these are not particularly similar. The nose in the “Sandella” painting is basically a Roman nose, while that in the medals is closer to a ski-jump nose. This face in the medal is closer to that in a painting (oil on canvas, 118.5 x 94cm, private collection, Bellizona) supposedly by Titian and discussed by Lionello Puppi, “Tiziano e Caterina Sandella,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 32, 2006 pp. 133-67. Puppi has assigned the sitter to Sandella and the painter to Titian, and noted the comparison to the “Tintoretto” of Sandella (pp. 138-43). I am not convinced that they show the same sitter, and the latter painting is in any case not by Tintoretto.

³⁵ Based on its style, this portrait seems far closer to Andrea Schiavone than Tintoretto. Even if there are no documented portraits by Schiavone and perhaps only a very few can be identified (e.g. Richardson, *Schiavone*, cat. 326, p. 19, or Rearick, “Reflections on Tintoretto as a Portraitist,” pp. 55-6), the so-called *Caterina Sandella* and its restless, swelling, and even sloppy drapery forms seem very much to derive from Schiavone’s work at the end of the 1550s, such as the altarpiece of *Christ and His Companions on the Way to Emmaus* in the church of San Sebastiano or his *Philosophers* in the Libreria Marciana (see Richardson, *Schiavone*, cats. 243, 294-5).

³⁶ Only Mazzucco has grappled with the problem of the portrait’s fundamental ugliness. Mazzucco argues that its matter-of-fact appearance was at least honest: “Jacomo la dipinse come forse era: una donnone triviale, le cui carni umide e molli trasudano un erotismo greve.” *Jacomo Tintoretto*, p. 118. In the end, the sitter is depicted with so little grace – she looks more like a linebacker than a mistress – that even if the “Caterina Sandella” could possibly be by Tintoretto, the portrait is so awkward and unflattering that it would not aid Tintoretto’s cause with Aretino in any way.

³⁷ For a summary of construction of the Scuola, see Maria Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel, *The Scuola Grande di San Rocco and its Church* (Venice: Marsilio, 2009), pp. 14-17.

³⁸ For Scarpagnino's work at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, and the relation, officially sanctioned, to precedents at the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, see Ralph Lieberman, *Renaissance Architecture in Venice: 1450-1540* (London: Calmann and Cooper, 1982), plates 81-89.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31. The following paragraphs are based on material originally published in Ilchman, "Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals," pp. 26-27, and Ilchman, "The Major Pictorial Cycles: 1555-1575," in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 287-293. For the patronage of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, see Maria Elena Massimi, "Jacopo Tintoretto e i confratelli della Scuola Grande di San Rocco: Strategie culturali e committenza artistica," *Venezia Cinquecento* V, 9 (1995), pp. 5-107, with Titian's offer to the Scuola listed on p. 96, n. 81. For a helpful alphabetical listing of the office holders at Scuola di San Rocco in the Cinquecento, see Massimi, "Indice alfabetico dei confratelli di governo della Scuola Grande di San Rocco, 1500-1660," *Venezia Cinquecento* V, 9 (1995), pp. 109-169, with Titian's 1552 term on the *zonta* listed on p. 162 (and Tintoretto's many terms of office, beginning in 1565, listed on p. 158).

⁴⁰ For a summary (among many) of the famous San Rocco competition, see Ilchman, "Venetian Painting in an Age of Rivals," pp. 25-27. For Tintoretto's winning canvas, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 261 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 101.

⁴¹ A thorough study can be found in Maria Elena Massimi, "Jacopo Tintoretto e i confratelli della Scuola Grande di San Rocco: Strategie culturali e committenza artistica," *Venezia Cinquecento* V, 9 (1995), pp. 5-169, with Zignoni's offer discussed on pp. 32-33.

⁴² For Titian on the Scuola's *zonta* and Tintoretto's petition for admission in 1549, see Massimi, "Jacopo Tintoretto e i confratelli," pp. 35, 162.

⁴³ See Borean, "Documentation," p. 426 and Massimi, "Jacopo Tintoretto e i confratelli," p. 35.

⁴⁴ See Borean, "Documentation," pp. 420-23.

⁴⁵ In each canvas Rangone was featured prominently, even blatantly, as a participant in the events, dressed as a "Cavalier aurato," a title conferred by Doge Girolamo Priuli in March of 1562. For the three paintings, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 243-5. The paintings are conventionally dated to 1562-6, based on the terminus post quem of the pledge of Rangone of 21 June 1562 to fund further pictures and the terminus ante quem of 1566, when Vasari, who describes the paintings in the second edition of his *Lives* (1568), would have seen them during his visit to Venice. For a speculation on a more precise date for the three pictures, see Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," under cat. 96, which notes, "It seems reasonable that the San Marco paintings would have been completed before Jacopo began the massive *Crucifixion* of 1565." The documents of Rangone's pledge, first published by Paoletti in 1929, are summarized in Pallucchini and Rossi, I, under cat. 243. Subsequently, in 1568, Tintoretto and

Rangone agree to a contract for additional paintings. See Pallucchini and Rossi, I, cat. A122 and p. 127, and Borean, "Documentation," p. 429.

⁴⁶ The fundamental study of the *Poligrafì* remains Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*.

⁴⁷ See Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 69-99 as well as his "Price, 'Pretezza' and Production."

⁴⁸ See Borean, "Documentation," p. 421. The recycled letter describes Paolo Giovio's museum.

⁴⁹ Borean, "Documentation," p. 422.

⁵⁰ Doni's list comprises many prominent aristocrats as well as leading literary and artistic figures in contemporary Venice, some connected with the Accademia Pellegrina, such as Dolce, Sansovino, "il Celeste Titiano," Aretino, Salviati, Tintoretto, and his publisher Marcolini. See Anton Francesco Doni, *I Marmi*, Venice: Francesco Marcolini, 1552, p. 69. The dialogue of *I Marmi* takes place at Florence's duomo and thus the title that can be translated as "things overheard on the marble steps"; see Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, p. 60.

⁵¹ The penultimate speech of the final dialogue in Doni's *Disegno* includes this pronouncement of Michelangelo's preeminence, "Io dico con Michel Agnolo che è intelligente della Scoltura della Pittura & del disegno perfettamente, che gl'è differenza tanto dalla Pittura alla Scoltura, quato è da l'ombra al vero. Et io parimente dico che gl'è piu nobile assai la Scoltura che la Pittura." p. 44r. For Doni and Tintoretto, see for example Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 48, 76-81, 93-5.

⁵² One might also view the praise of Michelangelo – arriving before either Vasari's first edition (1550) or Condivi's biography of Michelangelo (1553) – as straightforward *campanilismo*, a testimony of Doni's opinion in the superiority of his hometown of Florence over that of his adopted home of Venice. Yet Doni he expressed great affection for Venice, claiming in a 1550 letter that he was happier with a single room in Venice than with a villa in Ferrara. See Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, p. 58.

⁵³ See D'Elia, *Titian's Religious Pictures*, pp. 172-3. D'Elia notes that Titian is only cited once in the *Teremoto*, and that Doni leaves him out entirely in *Le Pitture* (1564). On Doni, see also Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, pp. 49-65.

⁵⁴ See Grendler, *Critics of the Italian World*, p. 62. Grendler also sheds some light on Doni's precipitous yet mysterious fall from popularity, his travels, and his quarrel with Aretino on pp. 62-3.

⁵⁵ Aretino's vanity and quick temper is well played out in the tempestuous correspondence between Venice to Rome from 1537-45, though his caustic criticism of the fresco seems especially hypocritical since he never saw the painting in person. For the most important letters, see *Il carteggio di Michelangelo*, ed. Paola Barocchi, Giovanni Poggi, and Renzo Ristori, Florence: S.P.E.S. Editore, 1979, IV, letters CMLII, CMLV, MXLV, pp. 82-4, 87-8, 215-9.

⁵⁶ Aretino's last, most scathing letter of November 1545 was later redirected to Alessandro Corvino, secretary of Duke Ottavio Farnese, nephew of Paul III, and then published in 1550, thus implying Vatican approval of his opinions and reaching a huge audience (see under MXLV, pp. 218-9; originally published in Aretino, *Il quarto libro de le lettere*, Venice: Barolomeo Cesano, 1550, pp. 83r-84v.). The Aretino-Michelangelo correspondence has been analyzed extensively; for a good summary, see for example, Linda Murray, *Michelangelo: his life, work, and times* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), pp. 159-63.

⁵⁷ Calmo's 1552 letter is to Marco Gussoni, whose façade, now destroyed, Tintoretto decorated with frescoes quoting Michelangelo's sculptures. See Borean, "Documentation," pp. 421-2. For this commission, see also Hochmann, "Tintoret au Palais Gussoni."

⁵⁸ The following paragraphs are adapted and expanded from the essay by Ilchman and Saywell, "Michelangelo and Tintoretto: *Disegno* and Drawing." See also the discussion in chapter one, "Tintoretto, Titian, and Michelangelo," in Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 29-67. The early reception of Michelangelo in Venice is surveyed by Caterina Furlan, "La 'Fortuna' di Michelangelo a Venezia nella prima metà del cinquecento," in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario*, pp. 19-25.

⁵⁹ One of the few surviving frescoes is that in the Sottoportego della Pasina, near the San Samuele vaporetto stop in the San Polo *sestiere*. This lunette, depicting the *Virgin and Child with Saint Francis and Saint Nicholas of Bari*, was executed by a mid-sixteenth-century painter and is thus roughly contemporary with Tintoretto's activity. The fresco was somewhat protected from the elements since it was on a wall inside the entrance to a *sottoportego*, or street that runs through a building as a sort of tunnel. The fresco, restored in 1990 and 2012 by Save Venice Inc., has been tentatively attributed to Battista Franco; brief discussion and an extraordinary "before restoration" photograph can be found in *Save Venice Inc.: Four Decades*, ed. Conn and Rosand, p. 145. The topic was surveyed by Michelangelo Muraro, "L'affresco a Venezia: dall'intonaco allo stile," in *Tecnica e stile: esempi di pittura murale del Rinascimento italiano*, ed. Eve Borsook and Fiorella Superbi Gioffredi, Villa I Tatti: Harvard University and the Getty Trust, 1986, pp. 124-30.

⁶⁰ Again, see the studies on Tintoretto's business strategies by Hills, "Tintoretto's Marketing" and Nichols, "Price, 'Pretezza' and Production."

⁶¹ On Giorgione's fame as derived from his frescoes, see Adriano Mariuz, "Giorgione pittore di affreschi," in *Da Bellini a Veronese: Temi di Arte Veneta*, ed. Gennaro Toscano and Francesco Valcanover (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2004), pp. 299-324.

⁶² The translation is from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 17. The original, from Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, pp. 15-16 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 9, reads, "quale coaiutava volentieri ne' suoi lavori, senza veruna mercede, per impadronirsi di quella bella via di colorire." Ridolfi specifies that one of the façade fresco commissions where Tintoretto worked with Schiavone was at the Palazzo Zen at the Crociferi (now Gesuiti).

⁶³ The translation comes from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 21. The original is found in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, pp. 18-9 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 13. “E fabricandosene una al ponte dell’Angelo, parve al Tintoretto opportune occasione al suo pensiero, ragionandone co’ Muratori, à quali spesso veniva (come nella vita dello Schiavone toccammo) dato il carico di provvedere del Pittore; e n’ebbe in risposta, che i Padroni non volevano farvi veruna spesa. Mà egli, che haveva terminato dipingerla ad ogni maniera, propose di farla con la recognitione de’ soli colori; il che referito à Padroni, con difficoltà ancora (così l’infelice virtù non trova luogo da collocarsi) se ne compiacquero.” The more prominent and sophisticated frescoes for Palazzo Gussoni are discussed much later in Ridolfi’s *Life*: Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, pp. 42-3 and Ridolfi-Vite, pp. 60-2.

⁶⁴ These are the frescoes of Ca’ Soranzo, discussed by Michelangelo Muraro, “Affreschi di Jacopo Tintoretto a Ca’ Soranzo,” in *Scritti in onore di Mario Salmi*, ed. Filippa M. Aliberti (Rome: De Luca, 1963), III, pp. 103-16; Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 17-20 and p. 261; and most recently by Gisolfi, “Tintoretto e le facciate affrescate.” The date proposed in Pallucchini and Rossi of c. 1541 is far too early; Muraro’s date of 1546, which Gisolfi appears to support, is more reasonable given the stylistic evidence of Zanetti’s engravings and the surviving detached fragments. These show poses and confident anatomy much more advanced than Tintoretto’s dated 1540 *Holy Family with Saints* (fig. 64). For these fragments, see Gisolfi’s illustrations on pp. 315-6.

⁶⁵ Roland Krischel, “Tintoretto and the Sister Arts,” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 125. Krischel further notes that Erasmus Weddigen had identified Sanmicheli among the portraits within the Miracle of the Slave. See Weddigen’s, *Jacomo Tentor F.*, pp. 81-84.

⁶⁶ The date of the frescoes on Palazzo Gussoni was established by Krischel, *Tintoretto und die Skulptur*, p. 40 and Hochmann, “Tintoret au Palais Gussoni,” pp. 101-2. See Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 54 for their place in Tintoretto’s chronology. For Tintoretto’s use of the Medici Tomb figures, see also *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cats. 52-4. Tintoretto’s lost frescoes were engraved and described in Anton Maria Zanetti (*Varie pitture a fresco de’ principali maestri veneziani*, Venice, 1760, figs. 8, 9). The discussion of the frescoes by Ridolfi makes clear that the citations of Michelangelo were widely recognized: “Sopra il gran canale, dunque, nelle case de’ Gussoni, ritrasse in sua gioventù due delle figure di Michel’Angelo, l’Aurora e’l Crepuscolo.” See Ridolfi-Hadeln, p. 42 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 60. The extreme foreshortenings of the figures in Tintoretto’s frescoes make clear that Tintoretto was not working just from drawings but from sculptural models, presumably ones that he had, at least temporarily, in his possession. See particularly Eike Schmidt in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 54. Finally, it should be noted that Coffin ventured identifications for the two figures, given that neither Ridolfi nor Zanetti gives them titles; Coffin speculates that they may have been part of a Neoplatonic cycle of the Four Elements, with the other two not recorded by Zanetti. Thus *Aurora* with her crown and more solid base may represent *Earth*, and *Crepuscolo* on his cloud may be *Air*. See Coffin, “Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs,” p. 121.

⁶⁷ The translation is in Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 16. The original, found in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 14 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 7, reads as follows: “Indi si mise à raccorre da motli parti, non senza grave

dispendio, impronti di gesso tratti da marmi antichi, si fece condur da Firenze i piccolo modelli di Daniello Volterano, cavati dalle figure delle sopolture de' Medici, poste in San Lorenzo di quella Città, cioè l'Aurora, il Crepuscolo, la Notte & il Giorno, sopra quali fece studio particolare, traendone infiniti desegni à lume di lucerna, per comporre mediante quelle ombre gagliarde, che fanno que' lumi, una maneira forte e rilevata."

⁶⁸ On sculpture, see also Roland Krischel, "Tintoretto and the Sister Arts," pp. 115-38, especially 116-22. A more detailed study can be found in his "Tintoretto e la scultura veneziana," *Venezia Cinquecento* 12, pp. 5-54. For the attribution problem of the numerous "Tintoretto" drawings after sculpture, see Ilchman and Saywell in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 391.

⁶⁹ The original, found in Boschini, *Ricche minere*, p. 749, reads, "...tutte le Statue più perfette del Mondo, cioè del gesso, formate sopra le originali, e alcune modellate da quelle, come a dire il Crepuscolo e l'Aurora di Michel Angelo, che si vedono sopra i Sepolcri dei Serenissimi di Toscana." These reduced scale sculptures were evidently prized more for their utility in instruction than as artistic objects, since they would have fallen under the category of crucial workshop apparatus that must be passed to his son Domenico, as described in the painter's will of May 30, 1594, "quelle che appartengono al studio di essa mia professione." *Tintoretto-Vite*, p. 127.

⁷⁰ The original is in Boschini, *Ricche minere*, pp. 749-50. "E per autenticare questa verità, dico che sopra la facciata del Palazzo Gussoni, posta sopra Canal grande, il Tintoretto si compiacque nella sua gioventù di rappresentare il Crepuscolo e l'Aurora pontualmente, aggiundovi la grazia del Colorito, con l'artificio d'ombre e di lumi."

⁷¹ It is not clear if Tintoretto used these models for the Palazzo Gussoni frescoes, since there is no evidence that documentation that Daniele da Volterra did not make his casts until 1557. See Vasari-Milanesi, VII, p. 63. See also W.R. Rearick in *Le Siècle de Titien*, cat. 239. Yet the existence of the Palazzo Gussoni frescoes offers a *terminus ante quem* of c. 1550 for Tintoretto to have had some access to three-dimensional reproductions, even if he did not own them. Schmidt explores this question in his entry on the terracottas by Tribolo now in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence (*Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 54), where he notes that, "By contrast to Tribolo's copies, the lost models after which Tintoretto drew showed the single figures stripped of their draperies, and were probably created as anatomical study pieces. Tribolo's terracottas, however, remain the earliest known extant copies after Michelangelo's *Times of the Day*...." p. 401.

⁷² Whether this is a mistake on the part of Zanetti – who did not reverse his drawing before making the engraving – or whether Tintoretto desired a particularly eccentric effect is not known. It does not seem logical that Tintoretto would have rotated the figure of Aurora in order to conceal her origin in Michelangelo's prototype. In examples where Zanetti's accuracy can be tested with surviving fresco fragments (Giorgione's *Female Nude* or Titian's *Judith/Justice* from the Fondaco dei Tedeschi), it seems that the engravings were indeed presented in the same direction as the frescoes, and not reversed. Thus the same may be assumed for the prints after

Tintoretto's Palazzo Gussoni frescoes. For the Fondaco dei Tedeschi fragments, see Anderson, *Giorgione*, pp. 304-306 and fig. 176.

⁷³ That the two figures face the same direction perhaps argues that there were originally other frescoes, as Coffin speculates, not depicted by Zanetti. Such frescoes might have presumably been oriented with their heads at the left and their feet toward the right.

⁷⁴ For the Fondaco dei Tedeschi frescoes, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, III, cat. 18 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 7 as well as *Giorgione a Venezia*, ed. Adriana Augusti Ruggeri et al. (exh. cat. Gallerie dell'Accademia), Milan: Electa, 1978, pp. 130-1 (reconstruction of Titian's work on the south façade by Francesco Valcanover). Giorgione's role in the same catalogue is discussed by Giovanna Nepi Scirè (pp. 117-26) and Valcanover (pp. 130-42).

⁷⁵ For Tintoretto's four surviving paintings, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 149-52 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cats. 55-58. The fifth painting is lost; see Pallucchini and Rossi, p. 266. This canvas depicted the "Creation of Eve," is lost and known through a drawing by Paolo Farinati in the collection of Janos Scholz, now in the Morgan Library and Museum, New York.

⁷⁶ For a summary of the documents of this commission (none of which mention's Tintoretto by name) as well as Torbido's role, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, under cat. 149.

⁷⁷ For these three paintings from the cycle, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 149, 151, 152 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cats. 55, 57, 58.

⁷⁸ See Pietro Aretino, *Il Genesi...con la vision di Noè nela quale vede i misterii del Testamento Vecchio le del Nuovo* (Venice: Francesco Marcolini, 1539). See the ingenious argument of Una Roman D'Elia, "Tintoretto, Aretino, and the speed of creation," *Word & Image*, vol. 20, no. 3 (July 2004), pp. 206-218. As Roman D'Elia notes, the passage within Aretino's text that parallels, and may have informed, Tintoretto's painting can be found on pp. 3-5.

⁷⁹ Roman D'Elia, "Tintoretto, Aretino, and the speed of creation."

⁸⁰ Erich von der Bercken and August L Mayer, *Jacopo Tintoretto* (Munich: R. Piper, 1923) I, p. 56: "Michelangelesk ist die Größe der Figuren, das sorgfältige Studium des Nackten, das Suchen nach Monumentalität. Man spürt indes doch, wie ungewohnt solche Bemühungen selbst einem Venezianer waren, der so sehr zur Terribilità im Sinne des Michelangelo neigte: deutlich ist noch ein Rest von Einfluß Giorgiones, der erst in späterer Zeit eine Umbildung erfährt und dann eine ganz andere Bedeutung gewinnt." They also note, p. 173, that the composition is indebted to Titian's painting of the same subject in the sacristy of the church of Santa Maria della Salute. For this painting, executed c. 1548, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cat. 82 and Humfrey, *Titian*, cat. 176b.

⁸¹ The monastery and church of the Umiltà, located on the Zattere, between the Rio della Salute and the Dogana da Mar, was suppressed in 1806 and torn down in 1821. For Tintoretto's painting, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 227; Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 66; Echols and Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 140-42, who note suggestions made by Thomas Worthen about the painting's original setting, p. 178 nn. 37, 39. See particularly the entry by Ilchman and Echols in *Masterpieces Restored, The Gallerie dell'Accademia and Save Venice Inc.*, ed. Giulio Manieri Elia (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 2010), pp. 182-88. Although Echols and Ilchman were correct that the conservation treatment of 2008-9 had transformed the appearance of the work and permitted its release from the Accademia's storeroom and that its inclusion in major exhibitions in 2009-10 in Paris and Boston won it many new admirers, they were wrong to assert that the painting was "largely ignored by modern scholarship" (p. 182). It is true that the postwar Tintoretto literature was skimpy, but the *Deposition of Christ* does figure in two esteemed works of twentieth-century art history: Heinrich Wölfflin, *Principles of Art History*, trans. M. D. Hottinger (New York: Dover Publications, 1950), p. 211, where it is called "one of his mightiest pictures," and Cecil Gould, *An Introduction to Italian Renaissance Painting* (London: Phaidon Press, 1957), p. 226, where it forms a revealing comparison with Titian's *Entombment* in the Louvre, each painting shown to be characteristic of its maker. Findings during the 2008-9 restoration treatment and observations on the *Deposition's* technique and condition are discussed by Giulio Manieri Elia and Giuio Bono, with abundant photographic documentation, in *Masterpieces Restored*, pp. 189-99.

⁸² For a consideration of the human figure as the building block of Tintoretto's art, and the painter's focus on "the way the body works – the body in motion, the body as energy," see Echols, "Tintoretto the Painter," in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, esp. pp. 28-9.

⁸³ This analysis follows Gould, *Introduction to Italian Renaissance Painting*, pp. 226-27. Some of Gould's conclusions are perceptive, such as his point about Tintoretto's faces where he writes "where we can seem them clearly they are masks as impassive as Parmigianino's." Gould's overall conclusion, however, that Tintoretto cannot relate to either the Renaissance conception of man ("noble creature") or the Baroque ("a hero, bigger, stronger and more vigorous than life") seems impossible to reconcile with the heroic types that populate all of his paintings and the individuality in his portraiture. Gould thus tries to sum up Tintoretto unconvincingly and even a little bizarrely: "But to Tintoretto, man is of no consequence.... He is merely one of a nameless herd of puppets who carry out the destiny imposed on them by God."

⁸⁴ For this discussion, see Tietze, *Tintoretto*, p. 42 (who assumes its validity) and Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, cat. 227. Rossi, however, also sees a source in the Virgin (in reverse) in Pordenone's giant *Crucifixion* fresco in the Duomo of Cremona of 1520-1. For Pordenone's fresco, see Furlan, *Pordenone*, cat. 25. On Daniele da Volterra as an inspiration for Tintoretto, see Simon H. Levie, "Daniele da Volterra and Tintoretto," *Arte Veneta* 7 (1954), pp. 168-70. For Daniele's painting, see Barolsky, *Daniele da Volterra*, cat. 6.

⁸⁵ For the inner organ shutters for Santa Maria del Giglio (still in situ), see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 165 and Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 71. The outer shutters depicted (when closed) the "Conversion of Saint Paul" as recorded in the early sources.

See for example, Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 38 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 50, and the entry in Pallucchini and Rossi.

⁸⁶ See Borean, “Documentation,” pp. 422-23, under 20 April 1552, 18 October 1552, and 6 March 1557.

⁸⁷ The following pages are adapted and augmented greatly from pages by the author on “Armored Saints and Reflective Surfaces,” in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 137-39. I am grateful for discussions on the paragone with Estelle Lingo. For a recent survey of the theme, see Sefy Hendler, *La guerre des arts: le paragone peinture-sculpture en Italie XVe-XVIIe siècle* (Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 2013). Also see a new edition and German translation of Varchi with much up-to-date bibliography and analysis: Benedetto Varchi, *Due lezioni*, eds. Oskar Bätschmann and Tristan Weddigen (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges., 2013).

⁸⁸ See the sympathetic analysis of the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi, with an appendix listing extant paintings from the cycle in Philip Cottrell, “Corporate Colors: Bonifacio and Tintoretto at the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi in Venice” *Art Bulletin*, 82, no. 4 (December 2000), pp. 658-78. This article is based on his dissertation, “Bonifacio’s Enterprise: Bonifacio Veronese and Venetian Painting (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Saint Andrews, 2000) and the topic is further developed with regard to Tintoretto in his “Painters in Practice.” The characterization of Bonifacio’s *modus operandi* quoted above is on p. 661 of the *Art Bulletin* article, where Cottrell also argues that Bonifacio’s employment of many “semi-independent” young painters permitted his *bottega* to dominate a single government commission, normally discouraged in favor of equitable distribution of opportunities to different workshops. On the Venetian disapproval of monuments to single artists, see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 4.

⁸⁹ Cottrell, “Corporate Colors,” pp. 667-68.

⁹⁰ Although Bonifacio’s narrative paintings can rise to a certain level of quality, many of the paintings he produced to celebrate office-holders with pairs or trios of saints display monotonous poses and a distinct lack of energy. Among many examples of these listless works, see his *Saints Matthew and Saint Louis IX, King of France*, c. 1538-39 (fig. 115 in this dissertation), now on deposit at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice.

⁹¹ Sensitive observations of Venetian visual culture and predilections for certain materials can be found in Paul Hills, *Venetian Colour: Marble, Mosaic, Painting and Glass, 1250-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). See Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, pp. 29-30, for the connections between the settings within Giovanni Bellini’s altarpieces and Venetian church interiors. His altarpieces for San Giobbe, the Frari, and San Zaccaria all employ virtuoso recreations of mosaics domes. See Tempestini, *Giovanni Bellini*, cats. 58, 67, 106.

⁹² Bellini’s pictures with mirrors include the allegorical figure holding a convex mirror (variously identified as Truth, Prudence, or Vainglory) from the so-called “Restello of Vincenzo Catena” in the Gallerie dell’Accademia) and the *Nude with a Mirror*, signed and dated 1515 (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). See Tempestini, *Giovanni Bellini*, cats. 77 and 122. For

the *restello*, see Patricia Fortini Brown in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (exh. cat. Victoria and Albert Museum) (New York: Harry N. Abrams), 2006, pp. 188-9 and Susannah Rutherglen, "Ornamental Paintings of the Venetian Renaissance" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2012), pp. 10-18, 156-8, 272-7. For the *Nude with a Mirror*, see Rona Goffen, "Giovanni Bellini's *Nude with Mirror*," *Venezia Cinquecento I* (1991), pp. 185-202, and Sarah Blake McHam, "Reflections of Pliny in Giovanni Bellini's *Woman with a Mirror*," *Artibus et Historiae* 29, no. 58 (2008), pp. 151-171. Giorgione's works with reflective armor include of course the Castelfranco Altarpiece, the profile *Young Soldier with his Retainer*, the *Youth with a Helmet, said to be Francesco Maria della Rovere*, and the *Young David with the Head of Goliath*, and (all three of these in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, with the last almost certainly a copy after Giorgione). See Anderson, *Giorgione*, pp. 292-3, 304, 314, and 313. Titian's early paintings with mirrors include the *Young Woman with a Mirror* ("Vanitas") in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich and the *Young Woman with a Mirror in the Louvre*. See Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, II, cat. 37 and III, cat. 22, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cats. 38-9. Titian's paintings of armor include the fragment of a *Saint George* (Cini private collection, Venice), the three-quarter-length *Sacra Conversazione* showing the *Virgin and Child with Saints Dorothy and George* in the Prado, and of course the standard bearer within the *Madonna di Ca' Pesaro* Altarpiece in the Frari. For these pictures, see Wethey, *Paintings of Titian*, I, cats. 102, 65, 55, and Humfrey, *Titian*, cats. 51, 54, 77. The subject of reflections in Venetian painting, including some of these examples, and others discussed below, is surveyed by Diane H Bodart in *Titien, Tintoret, Véronèse*, ed. Delieuvin and Habert, pp. 216-59. David Rosand discusses the more specific topic of beautiful women and mirrors in "Specular Exchange: The Nude and the Mirror," in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 184-7. Cranston explores mirrors and inexact reflections in Venetian Renaissance and also later painting in *The Muddied Mirror*, pp. 21-45.

⁹³ For the painting in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich, now convincingly dated to the mid-1540s, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 155, Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cat. 36, Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 5, and Ilchman in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 138, 277 n. 14. Two important essays on this painting can be found in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte*: Beverly Louise Brown, "Mars's Hot Minion or Tintoretto's Fractured Fable," pp. 199-205, 347-8 and Erasmus Weddigen, "Nuovi percorsi di avvicinamento a Jacopo Tintoretto. Venere, Vulcano, e Marte: L'inquisizione dell'informatica," pp. 155-61, 335-38. Weddigen's essay uses computer-aided design technology to support a recondite argument with mirrors playing central role in disclosing the activities of the adulterous couple to Vulcan. By this theory, Apollo reveals the commotion in the bedroom to Vulcan at his forge, seen through the open door at the painting's upper right corner, by means of rays of sunlight that penetrate the window and the glass vase and reflect through two different mirrors, one visible behind the table and another in the foreground outside of the picture (scarcely visible in the first mirror).

⁹⁴ See Echols, "Jacopo nel Corso," pp. 77-8 and Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 5. Both these discussions make a good case for Enea Vico's print after Parmigianino (dated 1543) of the same subject as a source for Tintoretto, given the very similar interior setting in both engraving and painting. See the *Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. XXX, n. 12.

⁹⁵ See Brown, “Mars’s Hot Minion” and Nichols, *Tintoretto*, pp. 88-90.

⁹⁶ See for example, *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 202.

⁹⁷ Coffin, “Tintoretto and the Medici Tombs,” p. 122.

⁹⁸ See Charles de Tolnay, *Michelangelo: Sculptor, Painter, Architect* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 221-2. Another copy of Michelangelo’s lost original, lacking wings and with the positions of the arms reversed from the Corsham Court sculpture, is a marble in the Galleria Estense, Modena, attributed to Prospero Sogari (1515-1584). See Giorgio Bonsanti in *The Genius of the Sculptor in Michelangelo’s Work* (exh. cat. Montreal Museum of Fine Arts) (Montreal, 1992), cat. 33.

⁹⁹ The relevant passage is translated in Pardo, *Paolo Pino’s “Dialogo di Pittura,”* p. 367. The original is taken from the modern edition, Paolo Pino, *Dialogo di Pittura*, ed. Rodolfo and Anna Pallucchini (Venice: Edizioni Daria Guarnati, 1946), pp. 139-40, “... chiuderò la bocca à questi , che voranno diffendere la scultura, come per un’altro modo furno confusi da Georgione da castel franco nostro pittor celeberrimo, & non manco degli antichi degno d’onore. Costui à perpetua confusion de gli scultori dipinse in un quadro un San Georgio armato in piedi appostato sopra un tronco di lancia con li piedi nelle istreme sponde d’una fonte limpida, & chiara nella qual trasverberava tutta la figura in scurzo fino alla cima del capo, poscia havea finto uno specchio appostato à un tronco, nel qual riflettava tutta la figura integra in schiena, & un fianco. Vi finse un’altro specchio dall’altra parte, nel qual si vedeva tutto l’altro lato del S. Georgio, volendo sostenere, ch’uno pittore può far vedere integramente una figura à uno sguardo solo, che non può cosi far un scultore, & fù questo opera (come cosa di Georgione) perfettamente intesa in tutte tre le parti di pittura, cio è disegno, invention, & colorire.” The anecdotes of by Pino and Vasari about Giorgione’s painting are discussed by Rona Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, pp. 60-64. Leonardo da Vinci’s commentary on the *paragone* is well known and was part of contemporary discourse, even if not published until 1651. Leonardo’s claims for the superiority of painting over sculpture can be found in *Leonardo on Painting*, ed. Martin Kemp (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 38-46; Leonardo’s notebooks also discuss mirrors as an aid to painters, pp. 202-3.

¹⁰⁰ Pardo, *Paolo Pino’s “Dialogo di Pittura,”* pp. 265-9 discusses the anecdote, noting how Anna and Rodolfo Pallucchini had “with good reason” questioned if Giorgione’s painting had actually existed, or a work by a later artist such as Savoldo’s so-called *Gaston de Foix* (Musée du Louvre) that seems to embody many of the same principles of Giorgione’s bold entry in the *paragone*. See Paolo Pino, *Dialogo di Pittura*, ed. R. and A. Pallucchini, pp. 139-140 n.2. Savoldo’s painting is now generally thought to be a self-portrait. On this painting, see *Titien, Tintoret, Véronèse*, ed. Delieuvain and Habert, cat. 25.

¹⁰¹ Goffen makes a good argument that Pino, as a student of Savoldo, would certainly have credited the painting to his teacher if the painting in question were in fact the one in the Louvre. Rather, Giorgione’s lost picture seems to have inspired works like Savoldo’s of c. 1525, and thus

was produced far before either Pino's or Vasari's texts were published. Moreover, according to Goffen, Titian's *Saint George* in a private collection in Venice, mentioned in a note above, "may recall the spiraling stance of Giorgione's lost figure." See Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, pp. 62-3. For the complexities of the original commission of the *Saint George*, perhaps part of an altarpiece for the French general the Vicomte de Lautrec, and the vicissitudes that may have led to its present, fragmentary condition, see Paul Joannides, *Titian to 1518: The Assumption of Genius* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 286-88.

¹⁰² The Vienna portrait is discussed by Jaynie Anderson, *Giorgione*, p. 314 (though she includes the painting within her section of "Controversial Attributions"), *Giorgione: Myth and Enigma*, ed. Ferino-Pagden and Nepi Scirè, cat. 1, and *Pietro Bembo*, ed. Beltramini, Gasparotto, and Tura, cat. 3.3.

¹⁰³ Pardo, p. 548 n. 293, offers the fascinating precedent of a lost painting by Jan van Eyck that, like the *Arnolfini Portrait* or Giorgione's *Saint George*, was also greatly admired for its clever placement of a mirror to show more than one side of a figure, though the rivalry with sculpture is not mentioned explicitly here. As discussed by Michael Baxandall, the mid-quattrocento humanist Bartolommeo Fazio describes this painting, owned by Ottaviano della Carda, precisely: "women of uncommon beauty emerging from the bath... and of one of them he has shown only the face and breast but has then represented the hind parts of her body in a mirror painted on the wall opposite..." After adding some remarkable details within the painting, Fazio continues by noting, "But almost nothing is more wonderful in this work than the mirror painted in the picture, in which you see whatever is represented as in a real mirror." Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist observers of painting in Italy and the discovery of pictorial composition, 1350-1450* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 107. For parallel within Giorgione's oeuvre, Anna and Rodolfo Pallucchini, pp. 139-40 n. 2, noted a passage in Ridolfi's *Vita di Giorgione* which lists several paintings with ingenious reflections bellowing to "Signori Giovanni e Iacopo Van Voert" in Antwerp. These paintings included "un giovinetto parimente con molle chioma & armatura, nella quale gli riflette la mano di esquisita bellezza... una mezza figura d'un ignudo pensoso con panno verde sopra à ginocchi, & corsaletto à canto, in cui egli traspare, nelle quali cose diede à vedere la forza dell'Arte..." Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, p. 106. This latter painting in particular would seem to be a similar picture, if a slightly less ambitious version, of the lost *Saint George*.

¹⁰⁴ See Vasari-Milanesi, I, p. 101 and IV, p.98. The passages are translated in Vasari-de Vere, I, p. 21 and 644.

¹⁰⁵ For the summary of the documentary evidence, see John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), pp. 298-99, and Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, p. 60.

¹⁰⁶ Gaetano Milanesi doubts that the anecdote could apply to Giorgione, since he would have been only about ten years old when the work on the statue was well underway. See Vasari-Milanesi, IV, p. 98 n. 1. But the discussions could have lasted at least until the unveiling of the statue on March 21, 1496. See Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, pp. 60-1.

¹⁰⁷ The translation is found in Vasari-de Vere, I, p. 644. The original, in Vasari-Milanesi, IV, p. 98, reads as follows: “Dicesi che Giorgione ragionando con alcuni scultori nel tempo che Andrea Verrocchio faceva il cavallo di bronzo, che volevano, perchè la scultura mostrava in una figura sola diverse positure e vedute girandogli attorno, che per question avanzasse la pittura, che non mostrava in una figura se non una parte sola; Giorgione, che era d’opinione che in una storia di pittura si mostrasse, senza avere a camminare attorno, ma in una sola occhiata tutte le sorti delle vedute che può fare in più gesti di un uomo, cosa che la scultura non può fare se non mutando il sito e la veduta, tal che non sono una, ma più vedute; propose di più, che da una figura sola di pittura voleva mostrare il dinanzi ed il dietro e i due profili dai lati; cosa che e’ fece mettere loro il cervello a partito; e la fece in questo modo. Dipinse uno ignudo che voltava le spalle ed aveva in terra una fonte d’acqua limpidissima, nella quale fece dentro per riverberazione la parte dinanzi: da un de’ lati era un corsaletto brunito, che s’era spogliato, nel quale era il profile manco, perchè nel lucido di quell’arme si scorgeva ogni cosa; da l’altra parte era uno specchio, che dentro vi era l’altro lato di quello ignudo....”

¹⁰⁸ Tietze, *Tintoretto*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁹ Echols and Ilchman in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 26, p. 270, discuss the National Gallery *Saint George and the Dragon*, noting that “the commission seems to have been of particular importance for Tintoretto, for none other among his works has quite this degree of detail and finish.” Moreover they draw attention to the amount of ultramarine blue in the painting, in the dress of the princess, the drapery of the corpse, and the sky, as described by Jill Dunkerton, “Tintoretto’s Painting Technique,” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, pp. 139-58, esp. 146-7. The conspicuous level of finish and expense taken in this picture then poses the question: was this picture intended as a reward for a loyal patron, or might it have been designed to convert a skeptic who found Tintoretto’s paintings far too loosely and even sloppily painted?

¹¹⁰ For Tintoretto’s painting in London, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 206 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 62. Pallucchini and Rossi offered a date for the picture of 1555-8, while Cecil Gould, writing a decade earlier, had preferred one even later, “not earlier than the 1560’s,” though based on vague arguments like a similarity of the landscape to that in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco *Crucifixion*; see Gould, *National Gallery Catalogues: The Sixteenth-Century Italian Schools* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1975), pp. 254-6. Thorough analyses of the *Saint George and the Dragon* have been undertaken recently by Echols and Ilchman in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 26, who use the date of c. 1553 (as in “Checklist” above), and Penny, *Sixteenth Century Italian Paintings: Venice 1540-1600*, pp. 142-53, who prefers the slightly later date of c. 1555. Note that in the latter entry, the image of the Camerlenghi *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess* (Penny’s fig. 3, p. 146), is reversed.

¹¹¹ For Carpaccio’s painting, see Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, pp. 287-90, Linda Borean in Stefania Mason, *Carpaccio: The Major Pictorial Cycles*, trans. Andrew Ellis (Milan: Skira Editore, 2000) pp. 110-13; and Borean in *Carpaccio: Pittore di storie*, ed. Giovanna Nepi Scirè (exh. cat. Galleria dell’Accademia, 2004) (Venice: Marsilio, 2004), pp. 88-9.

¹¹² For this painting, see Palluchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 348 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 226. For the argument that Tintoretto may have occasionally buried the main event in painting, making sure that the protagonists are not the largest in the composition, in order to require interpretive effort on the part of the beholder, see Ilchman, “Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative,” esp. pp. 77-81.

¹¹³ Penny, *Sixteenth Century Italian Paintings: Venice 1540-1600*, p. 147, credits an observation made by Michael Kitson, namely “how the division of the action makes it possible for us to suppose what we see is that the princess imagines or prays for.”

¹¹⁴ The corpse, the one motionless figure in an otherwise agitated scene, is also more or less at the center of the pictorial field. Tintoretto employed such a device later in his career with the weeping mother contemplating her slain child in the exact center of his tumultuous *Massacre of the Innocents* in the Sala Terena, Scuola Grande di San Rocco of 1581-84. For this painting, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 438 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 266.

¹¹⁵ Krischel, “Tintoretto e la scultura veneziana,” pp. 22-25 makes a convincing identification of the relief by Pietro da Salò from the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni as Tintoretto’s source. See also his essay, “Tintoretto and the Sister Arts” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 121, and the observation that this sculptural point of departure, rather than that inside the building, would have distanced himself from “Carpaccio’s famous, but then rather old-fashioned, representation.” Even if Pietro da Salò’s sculpture is stylistically more dynamic than the composition of Carpaccio’s picture, as a relief it nevertheless emphasizes action across the surface, whereas Tintoretto stresses great depth. For the relief itself, see Alberto Rizzi, *Scultura esterna a Venezia; corpus delle sculture erratiche all’aperto di Venezia e della sua laguna* (Venice: Stamperia di Venezia editrice, 1987), p. 196, where it is described as in Istrian stone. A treatment report by Maria Anna Zanazzo, “La scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni. Documenti relative alla realizzazione della facciate di Giovanni Zon raccolti in occasione del suo restauro” of 2003, made during the time of the cleaning of the façade in 2001-2004, makes clear the sculpture is in marble. (Document in Save Venice Archives, Venice). For post-restoration images of the façade and relief, see *Four Decades of Restoration*, ed. Conn and Rosand, pp. 244-45.

¹¹⁶ See Roland Krischel, *Jacopo Tintoretto: 1519-1594*, trans. Anthea Bell (Cologne: Könemann, 2000), p. 97. Strictly speaking, however, the unicorn is traditionally an emblem of virginity, and thus would be more applicable to the princess, spared death, than the victory of horse and rider over the dragon.

¹¹⁷ For the drawing in the Louvre, n. 5382, see Paola Rossi, *Disegni di Jacopo Tintoretto*, pp. 51-2, and Rearick in *Le Siècle de Titien*, cat. 238.

¹¹⁸ For the *Susannah and the Elders*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 200; the entry by Sylvia Ferino and Robert Wald in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 31; Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 64; and Bernard Aikema, “La Casta Susanna,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto*:

Actas del Congreso Internacional, ed. Falomir, pp. 45-9. The Biblical text with the story of Susannah, Daniel 13, is considered by protestants an apocryphal book.

¹¹⁹ David Rosand discusses the Vienna *Susannah and the Elders* in the context of other female nudes and mirrors in “Specular Exchange.” A painting of *Narcissus* (Galleria Colonna, Rome), of similar dimensions and theme of the trapped gaze, has occasionally been proposed as a pendant for the *Susannah*, starting with Wilde, “Mostra del Tintoretto,” p. 152. This idea is often acknowledged as interesting, but is ultimately rejected, as in the Madrid exhibition, *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 300. On Tintoretto’s *Narcissus*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 201, and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 65. On the theme of *Narcissus*, including his role in the invention of painting, see Goffen, *Renaissance Rivals*, p. 63, and Norman E. Land, “*Narcissus pictor*,” *Source* 16, 2 (1997), pp. 10-15.

¹²⁰ Borean, “Documentation,” p. 421.

¹²¹ Shutters for the organs of Venetian churches by major Renaissance painters include, among many, Gentile Bellini for the Basilica di San Marco, Giovanni Bellini and workshop for Santa Maria dei Miracoli, Sebastiano del Piombo for S. Bartolomeo di Rialto (fig. 27 in this dissertation), Girolamo da Santa Croce (?) for San Giovanni Crisostomo, Veronese for San Sebastiano and for San Geminiano (with Veronese’s workshop executing sets for Ognissanti and for San Giacomo di Murano), and Palma Giovane for San Zaccaria and for Sant’Alvise. The subject of painted organ shutters is covered in a recent book on Venetian organs, Massimo Bisson, *Meravigliose macchine de giubilo: l’architettura e l’arte degli organi a Venezia nel rinascimento* (Verona: Scripta Edizioni, 2012).

¹²² On Tintoretto’s organ shutters for San Benedetto, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 385-88, and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cats. 83-86. For those in the church of San Rocco, see Pallucchini and Rossi, cats. 433-34 and Echols and Ilchman, cats. 211-12.

¹²³ Borean, “Documentation,” p. 421.

¹²⁴ The following paragraphs are indebted to the pioneering documentary work and analysis of Michael Douglas-Scott as seen in his dissertation, “Art Patronage and the Function of Images at the Madonna dell’Orto in Venice under the Secular Canons of San Giorgio in Alga circa 1462-1668” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1995), especially pp. 225-34. Other studies of the paintings and the church, which this and subsequent chapters draw upon include Vincenzo Zanetti, *La Chiesa della Madonna dell’Orto in Venezia* (Venice: Tipografia del Commercio Marco Visentini, 1870); *The Church of the Madonna dell’Orto*, ed. Ashley Clarke and Philip Rylands (London: Paul Elek, 1977); Lino Moretti, *The Church of the Madonna dell’Orto*, trans. Ashley Clarke (Turin: Scaravaglio, 1992); Luisa Riccato and Fiorella Spadavecchia, *Chiesa della Madonna dell’Orto: arte e devozione* (Venice: Marsilio, 1994); Lino Moretti, Antonio Niero, and Paola Rossi, *La Chiesa del Tintoretto: Madonna dell’Orto* (Venice: Parrocchia Madonna dell’Orto, 1994). Douglas-Scott, pp. 230-1 and pp. 352-2, also synthesizes a number of old sources, chiefly Giannantonio Moschini, *Guida per la città di Venezia*, I (Venice:

Tipografia di Alvisopoli, 1815), pp. 13-4, to describe the iconography of the other paintings surrounding the organ, including those on the bottom of the organ case on the organ loft, some of which, according to Moschini, were also by Tintoretto. Somewhat following on the lead of Douglas-Scott, namely analyzing the decoration of a Venetian Renaissance church from the patron's point of view, is a recent book by Benjamin Paul, *Nuns and Reform Art in Early Modern Venice: The Architecture of Santi Cosma e Damiano and its Decoration from Tintoretto to Tiepolo* (Farham, Surrey and Burlington, Vermont: 2012). Two chapters, 7 and 8, are devoted to paintings by Tintoretto or his workshop in the church.

¹²⁵ Douglas-Scott notes that this is the only document from the Madonna dell'Orto mentioning Tintoretto by name during his lifetime to survive. Douglas-Scott further observes that the format of this new settlement is interesting, since there was no notary present and no penalties for non-fulfillment, that the subject matter was not specified (though it may have been in the earlier, 1548, contract, and that the foodstuffs probably came from the monastery's lands on the *terraferma*. See his "Art Patronage and the Function of Images at the Madonna dell'Orto," pp. 225-26.

¹²⁶ Mazzucco, *Jacomo Tintoretto & i suoi figli*, p. 143, where she notes that the birth of Faustina's mother, Gierolima, happened in 1522, and that in turn Faustina was born, according to declaration at the time of her death, in 1545. Mazzucco believes that it is reasonable that Faustina was married c. 1560, at about the age of fifteen, to a husband in his early 40s. Such age differences were relatively common in the era, but Mazzucco admits that Faustina was very young: "Basti dire che sua madre era più giovane di suo marito." Such a chronology does not square with that proposed by Krischel. He favored a date for their wedding of "1550/2" with the bride being half his age (of thirty or more). He further believed that Tintoretto painted the Munich *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* c. 1551, a date later than is now thought. This later date did help Krischel's argument that the painting reflected Tintoretto's unease at being a much older husband to a younger wife. See Krischel, *Jacopo Tintoretto: 1519-1594*, p. 50.

¹²⁷ See Douglas-Scott, "Art Patronage and the Function of Images at the Madonna dell'Orto," p. 227 and his Appendix III 39, pp. 492-3.

¹²⁸ Paola Rossi also makes this point of noting the immediate precedents for the organ shutters, *La Chiesa del Tintoretto*, p. 95.

¹²⁹ Borean, "Documentation," p. 423. Borean's transcription, uses "mazo" but Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, p. 126 – without quoting the original – say the date of the document is 14 May 1556. Angelo Mercati first published the documents, "La scrittura per la 'Presentazione della Madonna dal Tempio' del Tintoretto a S. Maria dell'Orto," in *La Mostra del Tintoretto a Venezia*, fascicolo II (April), 1937, pp. 1-6. It seems Mercati confuses the issue because he describes in his text (p. 2) the month of the final payment as "14 maggio 1556" but his transcription uses "1556 adi 14 mazo" (p. 5).

¹³⁰ Luigi Colletti, *Il Tintoretto*, 2nd ed. (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1944), p. 23. This view of a gap between the execution of the outer and inner shutters has been followed by,

among others, Francesco Valcanover in *The Church of the Madonna dell'Orto*, ed. Clarke and Rylands, p. 55, Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 160-1, and Paola Rossi in *La Chiesa del Tintoretto*, pp. 95-102.

¹³¹ Douglas-Scott, "Art Patronage and the Function of Images at the Madonna dell'Orto," p. 232. The Pisani Chapel is now where Jacopo Tintoretto, his daughter Marietta, and son Domenico, are all buried.

¹³² "Through centuries of Christian art gold has signified the light of heaven, the glow of mosaics of applied gold leaf always symbolizing a higher, supernatural illumination. In the course of the fifteenth century, the reflected light of actual gold began to be replaced in painting by the natural light of the real world, in which artists discovered a more convincing objective correlation for the divine presence." Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 79. Although this comment ties in a key motif of Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* to a larger tradition, the golden light in the Madonna dell'Orto organ shutters is of course far more prevalent in the outer shutters, those showing the two saints. The gold present Tintoretto's *Presentation* is mostly in the mosaic patterns in the risers of the stairs, which is in fact gold leaf. In this way Tintoretto has introduced a deliberate archaism to his painting practice. I would surmise that the golden color of the sky may not be intentional and probably discolored smalt. Joyce Plesters and Lorenzo Lazzarini were not able to take cross-sections to ascertain the pigments employed in the *Presentation*, beyond noting the presence of the gold leaf, and of orpiment and realgar pigments to make certain fabrics stand out. See *The Church of the Madonna dell'Orto*, ed. Clarke and Rylands, p. 91.

¹³³ This is the view adopted in Echols and Ilchman, "Checklist," cats. 68-70.

¹³⁴ The passage is translated in Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 24. The original, printed in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 21, and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 20, reads, "in altra parte stà San Cristoforo ginocchioni, che attende il colpo della spade del manigoldo, con ispoglie military tratte per terra; e dal Cielo scende un'Angelo lietissimo con palma in mano." The identification of Saint Christopher is repeated, for example, in Marco Boschini, *Le Minere della Pittura* (Venice: 1664), p. 447; and later editions such as Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Descrizione di tutte le pubbliche pitture della città di Venezia* (Venice: Pietro Bassaglia, 1733), p. 398; and Marco Boschini and Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana; trattato in cui osservasi l'ordine del Busching* (Venice: Francesco Tosi, 1797).

¹³⁵ For Andrea Zucchi's print, see Agnese Chiari Moretto Wiel, *Jacopo Tintoretto e suoi incisori*, cat. 57.

¹³⁶ The most thorough discussion of the dedications and the patronage in this church remains Douglas-Scott, "Art Patronage and the Function of Images at the Madonna dell'Orto."

¹³⁷ At least by Berenson in 1894 the correct title was recognized; Bernard Berenson, *The Venetian Painters of the Renaissance* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894), p.

121. Yet the older identification has occasionally been employed, e.g. Lino Moretti in 1992 in *The Church of the Madonna dell'Orto*, n.p.

¹³⁸ Douglas-Scott, "Art Patronage and the Function of Images at the Madonna dell'Orto," p. 234.

¹³⁹ Johannes Wilde, "Die Mostra del Tintoretto zu Venedig," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 7 (1938), p. 145. Wilde speculated reasonably that both figures were based on the same drawing.

¹⁴⁰ Wilde, "Die Mostra del Tintoretto," p. 145.

¹⁴¹ See, for example, Paola Rossi in *La Chiesa del Tintoretto*, p. 102.

¹⁴² Levie, "Daniele da Volterra e Tintoretto" and Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 159.

¹⁴³ Borean, "Documentation," p. 422.

¹⁴⁴ In the case of the diffusion of images after the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, see two important exhibition catalogues: Alida Molto, *La Sistina riprodotta: gli affreschi di Michelangelo dalle stampe del Cinquecento alle campagne fotografiche Anderson* (exh. cat. Calcografia Nazionale, Rome) (Rome: Fratelli Palombi Editore, 1991) and *Michelangelo e la Sistina: la tecnica, il restauro, il mito*, ed. Fabrizio Mancinelli (exh. cat. Fondazione Cini, Venice) (Rome: Fratelli Palombi Editore, 1990), esp. the essay by Giovanni Morello, "La Sistina tra copie ed incisioni," pp. 135-40, and cats. 141-262.

¹⁴⁵ This seems to have been the case with some of Cornelius Cort's engravings after Titian that record a painting before it was finished and sent to its destination. Indeed, a number of Titian compositions that were immediately exported from Venice for foreign destinations were known to local artists through prints. For this subject, see Agnese Chiari, *Incisioni da Tiziano*.

¹⁴⁶ For the relationship between Lotto's fresco and Tintoretto's painting, see Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 82-3, p. 209 n. 85, p. 210 n. 98, and p. 212, n. 115. For Lotto's fresco itself, largely overlooked in the literature, see Giordana Mariani Canova, *L'opera completa del Lotto* (Milan: Rizzoli Editore, 1974), cat. 153.

¹⁴⁷ See Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Reading on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (New York, London, and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1941), p. 523, quoted in Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 73.

¹⁴⁸ The figure illustrations in chapter 3 of Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Italy* permit a brief survey of which Italian painters made a point of employing fifteen steps. Those that do show fifteen include Jacopo Bellini (Rosand's fig. 62 and apparently fig. 63), Cima (fig. 66), Peruzzi (fig. 72, again apparently), and of course Tintoretto (fig. 79). Those painters that do not depict fifteen include Giotto (fig. 68), Carpaccio (fig. 65), Lotto (fig. 78 – he offers far more than fifteen), and, somewhat surprising given the horizontal format of his mural, Titian (fig. 56).

¹⁴⁹ Paola Rossi also includes in her list of similarities a pointing woman who gestures toward the climbing Mary, and a standing woman holding a child in her arms (Rossi, *La Chiesa del Tintoretto*, p. 98) but these do not show a strong resemblance at all.

¹⁵⁰ The text is translated by Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 512. The original passage, in Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 591, reads, “che è un’opera finita e la meglio condotta e più lieta pittura che sia in quell luogo.”

¹⁵¹ Boshchini, *Carta del Navegar*, ed. Anna Pallucchini, p. 249: “Questi è componimenti artificiosi/ Dove con tanta regola e misura/ Se vede caminar l’architettura!”

¹⁵² Many of Ruskin’s most insightful comments on Venetian painting occur within the “Venetian Index” appendix to the *Stones of Venice*, where pictures are discussed within their respective monument, listed in alphabetical order. See Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, II (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1885), p. 326.

¹⁵³ Some of the following paragraphs are based on material by Echols and Ilchman previously published in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 114-15, and by Ilchman in “The Major Pictorial Cycles” and cat. 14 in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir. It also is based on discussion by John Marciari in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, pp. 129-31.

¹⁵⁴ Veronese’s formation is discussed, for example, in Diana Gisolfi Pechukas, “Two Oil Sketches and the Youth of Veronese,” *Art Bulletin* 64, 3 (1982), pp. 388-413; W.R. Rearick, *The Art of Paolo Veronese: 1528-1588* (exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., 1988) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 20-71; David Rosand, “Paolo Caliari; A Veronese Painter Triumphant in Venice,” and Diana Gisolfi, “Veronese’s Training, Methods, and Shop Practice,” in *Paolo Veronese: A Master and His Workshop in Renaissance Venice*, ed. Virginia Brilliant and Frederick Ilchman (exh. cat., John and Mable Ringling Museum, Sarasota) (London: Scala, 2012), pp. 15-29 and 31-43. Most recently, see the survey of Veronese’s youth and training in Salomon, *Veronese*, pp. 16-75.

¹⁵⁵ See John Marciari in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, pp. 129-31.

¹⁵⁶ For Tintoretto’s painting in Vicenza, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, 136, Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 51, and especially Ilchman in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, cat. 14.

¹⁵⁷ Veronese’s painting, in the Louvre since 1797, is discussed on p. 115 of *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman. For Veronese’s share of this ceiling, see Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese*, I, cats. 34-36. See also Jean Habert, “La peinture vénétienne de 1540 à 1560 dans les collections du Louvre, in *Da Bellini a Veronese*, ed. Toscano and Valcanover, pp. 559-87, especially 570.

¹⁵⁸ *Veronese: the stories of Esther revealed*, ed. Giulio Manieri Elia (exh. cat., Palazzo Grimani, Venice; Venice: Marsilio, 2011). See the review by Xavier F. Salomon, “The restoration of Veronese’s ceiling in S. Sebastiano, Venice,” *Burlington Magazine* 154, 1306 (2012), pp. 20-23.

¹⁵⁹ For Veronese's painting of fabrics, see Rembrandt Duits, "'Abiti gravi, abiti stravaganti': Veronese's Creative Approach to Drapery" in *Paolo Veronese: A Master and His Workshop*, ed. Brilliant and Ilchman, pp. 59-69.

¹⁶⁰ For the various sections of San Sebastiano, see Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese*, I, cat. 41-49 (sacristy ceiling), 56-58 (nave ceiling), 77-84 (nave frescoes), 88-94 (organ shutters and related decorations), 106-119 (further frescoes), 157 (high altar), 171, 173 (*lateralis* in main chapel). On the saint, the church, and its decoration, see also, *Studies in Venetian Art and Conservation* (New York and Venice: Save Venice Inc., 2008).

¹⁶¹ These paragraphs are based on material I originally published in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 288.

¹⁶² For the Libreria Marciana, see Manuela Morresi, *Jacopo Sansovino* (Milan: Electa, 2000), pp. 191-213.

¹⁶³ For this ceiling, see Juergen Schulz, *Venetian Painted Ceilings of the Renaissance* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 16-21, 93-96.

¹⁶⁴ The translation comes from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 29. The original, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 26, and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 29, reads, "Quasi circa il medesimo tempo si pose mano alle Pitture della volta della Libreria di San Marco, che furono compartite da Titiano, che havenne il carico da Procuratori, trà lo Schiavone, Paola da Verona, Battista Zelotti, Giuseppe Salviati, Battista Franco & altri Giovanni tenuti allori in concetto di valorosi, escludendone il Tintoretto."

¹⁶⁵ Vasari-Milanesi, VI, pp. 372-73, and Vasari-de Vere, p. 416.

¹⁶⁶ For this painting as a competitive salvo against Tintoretto, see my discussion in *Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese*, ed. Ilchman, p. 139. On the dating of the new organ, see Rodolfo Gallo, "Per la datazione delle opere del Veronese," *Emporium* 89 (March 1939), pp. 142-55. The inner and outer shutters (the latter joined to make a single canvas) are now in the Galleria Estense, Modena. See Rearick, *The Art of Paolo Veronese*, cats. 29-31 and Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese*, I, cats. 102-4.

¹⁶⁷ See Flaminio Corner, *Notizie storiche delle chiese e monasteri di Venezia e di Torcello* (Padua: Giovanni Manfre, 1758), p. 203; Alvise Zorzi, *Venezia scomparsa* (Milan: Mondadori, 2001), pp. 223-27.

¹⁶⁸ See Rearick, *Art of Paolo Veronese*, p. 53. John Garton discusses Rearick's proposal that Menna is a sort of self-portrait in *Grace and Grandeur*, pp. 94-97. The organ decorations are also discussed in Salomon, *Veronese*, pp. 94-99.

¹⁶⁹ The translation comes from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 19. For the original, see Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 17 and Borean, "Documentation," p. 423. The Venetian begins: "Né vi voglio lasciare a dietro Giacomo Tintorello, il quale è tutto spirit e tutto prontezza.

Questi ha un suo quadro in Consiglio e ha diverse opere per tutta la città, ma si desidera in lui più diligenza, che del resto è eccellente.” And the foreigner concurs: “Voi dite il vero: anch’io ho considerate il suo quadro: non pare finite: per ciò credo che questo nasca dalla sua molta prestezza.”

¹⁷⁰ Tintoretto’s lost painting is discussed in Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, p. 265, Fortini Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting*, p. 277, and Borean, “Documentation,” p. 422. There is some dispute if the 1553 work was instead *The Coronation of Barbarossa* (the early sources are not clear). Tintoretto is paid for a second mural in 1562-64. Both were destroyed in the 1577 fire.

¹⁷¹ For the translation, see Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino,”* p. 125. For the original, *ibid*, p. 124: “Ne debbo tacer, poi che non si dee tacere la verità, che intorno alla historia colui, che dipinse nella sala detta di sopra, appresso il quadro della battaglia dipinta da Titiano, la historia della scomunica, fatta da Papa Alessandro e Federico Barbarossa Imperadore, havendo nella sua inventione rappresentata Roma, uscì al mio parere sconciamente fuori della convenevolezza a farvi dentro que’ tanti Senatori Vinitiani, che fuor di proposito stanno a vedere: conciosia cosa, che non ha del verisimile, che essi cosi tutti a un tempo vi si trovassero: ne hanno punto de far con la historia. Servò bene (e divinamente) all’incontro la convenevolezza Titiano nel quadro, ove il detto Federico s’inchina & humilia innanzi il Papa, baciandogli il santo piede.” Roskill, pp. 281-83, doubts that the painting in question in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio is one by Tintoretto, and instead insists it is one by the Bellini (or their workshops). This seems a strange objection, since there would be little point in setting up either Bellini as Titian’s rival at this point, decades after the older artists’ deaths.

¹⁷² The original Italian is found in Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino,”* p. 126, “mostrò di haver bene havuto poca consideration alhora, ch’ei dipinse la Santa Margherita a cavallo del Serpente.” The translation is on p. 127. Roskill again, on p. 286, denies the argument, first put forward by Colletti, p. 21, that the painting in question was Tintoretto’s *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess*, since “Margaret” is specified. But it is nearly impossible to imagine Saint Margaret “riding” a serpent, and Tintoretto’s picture for the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi otherwise fits the bill. Nichols, among many, agrees that the unnamed painter in Dolce is Tintoretto; see Nichols, “Tintoretto, *prestezza* and the poligrafi,” pp. 72-73.

¹⁷³ Nichols, *Tintoretto*, p. 67. He goes on to argue that had Dolce understood that this female figure was an attribute and not a saint, he may have been more forgiving.

CHAPTER FIVE

A BOLD PROPOSAL

It can be said that Sculpture and Painting are imitators of Nature, and moreover, that one can say that the Sculptor must study the finest paintings, like the Last Judgment by Tintoretto in the Church of the Madonna dell'Orto and many others in the Scuola di San Rocco....

Marco Boschini, *Le ricche minere della pittura veneziana*

As the culmination of his work in the 1550s, Tintoretto needed to execute the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf* (figs. 1 and 2) to resurrect and fulfill the promise of the *Miracle of the Slave*. Through this commission he would prove to the Venetian public, and himself, that he remained a vital force. As will be shown below, these two paintings have received relatively little comment from twentieth-century scholars, despite being regarded by a number of the early sources as pivotal in Tintoretto's career.¹ The lack of attention in the twentieth century is particularly surprising given the frankly unusual circumstances of the commission and the paintings' exceptional iconography. How these paintings came into being, the narratives they depict, and the direct emotional appeal they make to the viewer, may help our understanding of what Tintoretto himself intended. In addition, the choir paintings in the Madonna dell'Orto allow us the opportunity to consider a Renaissance artist engaging in both personal devotion and public debate.

As noted previously, Tintoretto made these two paintings for a site of great personal meaning.² The Madonna dell'Orto was his local church. Documents record that he had lived in the neighborhood of the church since 1548, long before he began these

paintings.³ As discussed in Chapter Four, in 1548 (an agreement renegotiated in 1551) he received a commission from this church to execute the organ shutters.⁴ From Vasari to the present, the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* has been regarded as one of Tintoretto's best works. It seems probable that the intended location of the painting – as well as the opportunity to challenge Titian – had inspired the artist.

Ridolfi, we recall, reported that the painter in his later years, following the completion of the *Paradiso*, “spent much time pious meditation in the church of the Madonna dell’Orto and in conversation on moral themes with those Fathers who were his intimates.”⁵ Above all, this was the church in which he was buried. Ever since his marriage to a daughter of the prominent Episcopi family, Tintoretto had known that he and his children would enjoy the right to be buried in that family’s vault in the Madonna dell’Orto.⁶ This would be Tintoretto’s resting-place until the *Last Judgment*. In light of his personal connections to this site, then, we may legitimately assume that he had plenty at stake in his paintings for this church.⁷

The very circumstances of the commission proclaim the painter’s ambition. In the absence of any documents about the choir paintings, Ridolfi’s biography provides the only account.⁸ Apparently Tintoretto himself proposed the commission to the prior of the church and offered the pictures at a minimal charge, requesting only a token payment for materials.

And since his fertile genius bubbled continuously with ideas, he was always thinking of ways to make himself known as the most daring painter in the world. So he proposed to the fathers of the Madonna dell’Orto to paint two large pictures for the chapel of the high altar, which was fifty feet high. The Prior, deeming that a year’s revenue would not be sufficient for such an undertaking, laughingly dismissed him. But Tintoretto, without losing his poise, added that he asked for this work only enough payment to cover his expenses, and that he wished to make them a gift of his labor. The wise Prior, on thinking it over, decided not to let such a fine opportunity slip by and so he concluded an agreement with him for one hundred ducats.⁹

One hundred ducats was a low fee for two giant paintings; by comparison Veronese received more than three times that for the single huge *Wedding at Cana*.¹⁰ Even in the absence of confirming documents, Ridolfi's account is entirely consistent with Tintoretto's reputation as a shrewd capitalist, always eager to get his foot in the door.¹¹ Given this pattern of entrepreneurial behavior, Ridolfi's description of the self-generated commission in the Madonna dell'Orto rings true. Moreover, only an extremely ambitious painter, and never a patron, would have conceived of entire bays of the gothic choir as suitable fields for 14.5m tall canvases. Their pointed arches make the choir pictures the gigantic progeny of Bonifacio's shaped canvas paintings for the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi (e.g. figs. 114, 115). The scale of Tintoretto's two paintings – each dwarfs Titian's *Assunta*, the tallest vertical work of the previous generation (fig. 146) – suggests the outsized aspirations of a hungry artist.

It is important to clarify the timing of this offer.¹² Since Vasari describes the paintings in detail, it has been long understood that both must have been complete and installed by 1566, when the Tuscan critic visited Venice. Based solely on stylistic arguments, the two choir paintings have been dated fairly consistently by scholars to 1562-3, or just slightly earlier or later. It should have seemed logical, perhaps, that Tintoretto would not have proposed a self-generated commission if he was already engaged on major paintings. Tintoretto had a number of such projects in the works for in 1561 and 1562. He was finishing the *Wedding at Cana* (church of the Salute, Venice) in 1561, and was beginning the next set of canvases for the Scuola Grande di San Marco in 1562.¹³ A new and crucial piece of evidence has solved this impression of a bottleneck of commissions at the start of the decade. This was the discovery of the presence of figures clearly based on Tintoretto's *Last Judgment* in a mural of the same subject (fig. 147), painted by a northern painter in oils on plaster and dated 1561, located in the Benedictine

abbey of Farfa, in northern Lazio. These quotations suggest that the painting in the Madonna dell'Orto was substantially finished, or indeed perhaps totally unveiled, by that year.

Not only did Tintoretto propose the two pictures, he may well have chosen the subject matter. For example, as discussed in Chapter Two, Pordenone had persuaded the officers of the Scuola Grande della Carità that the Marriage of the Virgin was, for several reasons, a more appropriate subject to decorate the Sala dell'Albergo than the Assumption. Thus by the mid-sixteenth century, patrons in Venice sometimes deferred to the opinions of painters for the choice of subject matter.¹⁴ Religious narrative was, after all, a specialty of painters. In the instance of the Madonna dell'Orto, it seems highly unlikely that a patron would have picked these very two subjects for such enormous spaces. For Tintoretto, however, the selection of a Last Judgment would have seemed an obvious – perhaps inevitable – choice, given the prominence of Michelangelo's earlier monumental fresco (fig. 134) of the same subject and the heated debates that continued to swirl around it.

Perhaps there was an additional reason why Tintoretto chose the Last Judgment as his topic. This motive could have been the very term *giudizio* or “judgment,” an attribute seen as a positive quality throughout mid-cinquecento writings about art, and certainly so in Venice. For example, in Aretino's initial letter, of February 1545, praising Tintoretto's ceiling painting of the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* (fig. 16), he claims that “any man who is gifted in judgment” (“da ogni uomo ch'è di perito giudicio”) would share his high opinion of the painting.¹⁵ In Pino's *Dialogo di Pittura* of 1548, “giudicio” is the essential first part of *disegno*, necessary for learning the other three skills of the art.¹⁶

Similarly, in Dolce's *Aretino*, the term is frequently employed. For example, Fabrini states that although painters might be thought to be more "qualified to judge painting" ("atto a far giudizio di Pittura") than non-artists, Aretino, who has never painted, still displays "exceptional judgment in this field" ("giudiciosissimo in quest'arte").¹⁷ Later in the dialogue, the same speaker employs the phrase "men of judgment" ("i giudiciosi") to convey those who have knowledgeable opinions on poetry.¹⁸ The concept of "buon giudizio" is invoked as essential in order to imitate nature.¹⁹ In a final example, the voice of Aretino, in discussing flaws within Michelangelo's Sistine fresco, refers to the "day of judgment" ("quello di Giudicio") and the "Eternal Judge of the Universe" ("eterno giudice delle cose").²⁰ The term seems to have been ubiquitous in learned discussions and writings about art in Italy in the 1540s and 1550s.²¹ In this context, Tintoretto needed to display to his critics and rivals that far from being a careless or hasty painter, he was indeed deeply familiar with "giudicio." Was there a better way to make this point than by executing an enormous Last Judgment, a *Giudizio Universale*?

Now to the order of execution of the two great paintings. While they might have been completed simultaneously, it stands to reason that Tintoretto began by painting the *Last Judgment*, given that the topic offered a challenge to a painter who wanted to compete with rivals beyond Venice, specifically Michelangelo. Additionally, the greater legibility of the *Making of the Golden Calf*, and indeed its frankly more successful composition, may be the result of Tintoretto altering his strategy, and increasing the simplicity of the figural arrangement, midway through the commission. While Tintoretto never saw the Sistine Chapel fresco in person, he, like many of the other participants in the debate on the *Last Judgment*, would have known the mural through drawn and printed images.²² Prints were issued soon after the unveiling of Michelangelo's fresco,

and many drawings and paintings circulated. Thus many critics of Michelangelo in Venice, beginning with Pietro Aretino and Lodovico Dolce, had joined the debate without seeing the original.²³

Tintoretto's *Last Judgment* makes direct quotations from the Sistine Chapel, such as the winged angel swooping head-first in the bottom right corner, copied from Michelangelo's man pushed out of Charon's boat. The canvas also shares the fresco's general mood of cataclysm. Nevertheless, Tintoretto's treatment is fundamentally different from that of Michelangelo, presenting formal contrasts that suggest he intended to offer a deliberate artistic corrective of the famous work. Despite the restrictions of the narrow field, Tintoretto's composition is far less stratified than Michelangelo's four broad layers (which in fact reveal the levels of scaffolding needed to execute the fresco). Not only are certain figures in the fresco disproportionately larger than others, the overall scale increases from the bottom to the top of Michelangelo's picture, defying perspective. Unlike Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, where most of the action takes place in the foreground, with figures arrayed parallel to the picture surface, Tintoretto's version offers terrifying vistas directed especially to a Venetian viewer: the Day of Wrath as the ultimate *acqua alta*.

As is well known, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* was also vulnerable to theological attack, particularly for the number and prominence of nude figures. Even admirers of Michelangelo's work, such as the priest Bernardo Cirillo, found the presence of so many nudes unsettling, wishing that this "ostentatious display of his art and prowess" had been painted in a garden loggia rather than the Pope's chapel.²⁴ Moreover, specific lacunae within the fresco had attracted complaints. For example, letters and tracts published by theologians protested that Michelangelo's angels did not have wings (and thus were indistinguishable from other figures), how saints lacked haloes, that

Christ was beardless and lacked other attributes, and how both the Virgin and the Baptist did not perform their customary role of intercession.²⁵ Moreover, the preeminent angel of the Day of Judgment, the Archangel Michael, is missing from the teeming composition, and thus his task of weighing souls remains unperformed. Given that this angel was Michelangelo's name saint, this omission must have seemed particularly odd. Finally, printmakers evidently found the physical extent of Hell depicted in the fresco inadequate, and consequently enlarged it in their printed copies.²⁶

It seems safe to conclude that Tintoretto used the canvases in the *Madonna dell'Orto*, painted in the period of such criticism, to propel himself into the debate by amending these omissions. He announced, in effect, that he had judged the Sistine fresco, and found it wanting. Even when viewed from the front of the nave (the access point of a typical worshipper), and not directly below the painting, the figures within Tintoretto's *Last Judgment* are large enough that many iconographical details are readily perceived. Tintoretto's Christ is bearded and equipped with the sword of vengeance and the lily of mercy. The Virgin and John the Baptist hover close by, interceding. His angels have prominent wings. Tintoretto describes a larger Hell, extending farther than the eye can see. The left side of the picture features a prominent prince of angels, the Archangel Michael, the namesake of his rival, with his attributes of sword and balance conspicuously in the fury of his task. Above all, Tintoretto avoided the effect of gratuitous nudity that offended so many of Michelangelo's critics; plenty of unclothed limbs manifest the Venetian artist's skill at foreshortening, but few inappropriate bodies detract from the effect.

The pendant offered Tintoretto scope to make a statement as well. Although the specific pairing of the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf* was not sanctioned by any particular textual or visual tradition, the linking of episodes in the

lives of Moses and Christ was common in Renaissance art. El Greco, in a small triptych datable to c. 1568 (Galleria Estense, Modena) offers an intriguing echo of Tintoretto's choir paintings, pairing once again two of the episodes from the Madonna dell'Orto. The center panel of the triptych's front depicts the Last Judgment, while the center section of the back shows Moses on Mount Sinai.²⁷

In the upper section of the canvas on the left wall of the choir of the Madonna dell'Orto, Tintoretto shows Moses receiving the Tablets of the Law. The lower section depicts the very rare subject of the creation of the Golden Calf. Tintoretto has chosen not the episode of "Adoration of the Golden Calf," but rather the earlier moment of the fabrication of the idol.²⁸ The gray calf carried on the platter is a clay *bozzetto* that will be cast from the piled up gold jewelry. Even as Moses receives from God the Ten Commandments, his followers are violating the second commandment – the prohibition of graven images. At the far right, a sculptor holding dividers confers with Aaron, who is in effect the "patron" of the statue. At their feet lies, unused, an enormous balance – which alludes to the weighing of souls at the *Last Judgment*, and thus underscores the sins committed by the Israelites.

An explanation for the size and iconography of these two paintings – and for their very existence in the first place – appears to lie in Tintoretto's wish to proclaim his own orthodoxy in contrast to the widely perceived theological laxity of Michelangelo. In doing so, Tintoretto entered around 1558 a debate that was still very active in Venice in these years. Although the Venetian government had established in 1547 an office to investigate heresy, the *Tre savi sopra'eresia*, widely divergent theological views continued to exist in Venice.²⁹ The Council of Trent had not yet issued decrees on religious images, and contemporary writings indicate that no single orthodoxy had emerged in the 1540s and 1550s. Venice was noted for the relative tolerance of Lutheran,

Anabaptist, and millenarian viewpoints. Large communities of protestant foreigners and a flourishing press furthered an open discourse. The Venetian state deliberately kept papal interference, even the activities of the Inquisition, under local control.

Within this context, Venetian artisans (Tintoretto's approximate social level) demonstrated a particular willingness to debate these ideas, to engage in a "continuous conversation" mentioned in the Inquisition testimony of one humanist. Even the role of religious images was controversial. Aretino and his circle attacked Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* and the new licentiousness it seemed to have encouraged. Some Venetians went even further. In 1548, a witness described a goldsmith with a shop on the Frezzaria to the Inquisition as wanting to "take all the images of saints and the crosses and other things from the churches, put them in a heap, and set them on fire."³⁰ To some of Tintoretto's peers, then, religious art itself was blasphemy.

In these circumstances, Tintoretto's giant choir paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto can be understood as his entrance into these debates. In the *Last Judgment*, he presents a Venetian corrective of Michelangelo's fresco, amending many of the iconographical discrepancies and offering a well-draped cast of characters. The prominent place given to water in Tintoretto's painting – and the drowned bodies of the damned – may reflect the method by which the Venetian state executed those convicted of heresy, by drowning in the sea.³¹ The painting thus serves not only as a judgment on Michelangelo, but as a warning of the dangers of heresy.

Similarly, the pendant *Making of the Golden Calf* shows the creation of an idol, a grave, even blasphemous misuse use of art. He seems to suggest that those who create idols and worship them – whether a golden calf or a licentious fresco – will suffer at the day of the Last Judgment. In the *Making of the Golden Calf* Tintoretto seems to be invoking more than the *paragone* between sculpture and painting. Indeed, Tintoretto

here refers to a more urgent debate in the eyes of his Venetian contemporaries. While the *Making of the Golden Calf* presents an example of artistic blasphemy, the *Last Judgment* facing it offers an exemplary religious painting. Taken together, the two works can be seen as Tintoretto's judgment on the responsibilities of artists in the making of religious art.³²

The case of the choir paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto, when added to the numerous examples of Tintoretto's innovations in religious pictures in the two previous decades discussed above, emphasize that this painter was a remarkably ambitious artist, one who wished to surpass his rivals in their art as he simultaneously professed a deep sense of personal piety.

Later in his career, there are a number of indications, both in the documentary record and in the early biographies, that Tintoretto took his religious beliefs seriously. In other words, there is some evidence that his sacred paintings were more than professionally inspired.³³ Although he left behind few personal opinions, and certainly no religious commentary, documents from the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, where he was a member starting in 1565, offer more concrete evidence of the way that Tintoretto seems to have linked his painting and his religious beliefs. In a 1577 document, the artist commits the remainder of his life to the Scuola's patron saint and the completion of the confraternity's decoration. Tintoretto declares "that wishing to demonstrate the great love that he bears for the our Scuola and for my devotion to the glorious messer San Roch," that he would "pledge to dedicate the rest of my life to his service ... and I promise each year for the Feast of Saint Roch three large paintings...." As Rosand concluded, "The act of painting thus becomes a gesture of piety."³⁴

This documented statement of Tintoretto's statement contrasts with the most famous record relating to sixteenth-century Venetian painting, Paolo Veronese's

testimony before the tribunal of the Inquisition in 1573. Summoned to justify the many superfluous figures in his *Last Supper* for the refectory of the convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, which included “buffoons, drunkards, Germans, dwarves” insulting church decorum, Veronese pleaded artistic license. He then claimed, with some logic but no success, that these objectionable figures remained toward the margins of the painting and did not intrude upon the group of Christ and the Apostles.³⁵ Perhaps significantly, unlike many Venetians called before the Inquisition, who defended themselves by claiming to be good Christians, Veronese made no appeal to his own piety.

Ridolfi’s biography noted that after completing the *Paradiso*, Tintoretto slowed down his pace of work and “gave himself over to the contemplation of heavenly things, thus preparing himself like a good Christian for the way to heaven.”³⁶ As discussed above, Ridolfi added that Tintoretto “spent much time in pious meditation in the church of the Madonna dell’Orto.” Such comments are not common in Ridolfi’s *Lives*. The biographer mentions briefly that Jacopo Bassano made a point in his last years to read holy scripture, though this is mentioned in the context of the painter spending time with his musical friends. Veronese is noted in passing as instructing his children in religious matters, though this is part of a description of the painter’s modest habits.³⁷ Above all, Ridolfi mentions little about the personal beliefs of Bassano and Veronese, and nothing at all of the religious practices of Titian, even in a seemingly exhaustive biography. In this light, Ridolfi’s specific description of Tintoretto’s pious meditation acquires a certain weight and demands further consideration. A strong sense of Catholic orthodoxy may go a long way in explaining why Tintoretto took considerable pains in the planning and execution of his great religious paintings. As he was to show repeatedly in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Tintoretto’s self-promotion and his piety were intertwined.

Revisionist History

After reviewing in depth Tintoretto's work of the 1540s and 1550s, it is important to stress that the two choir paintings in the Madonna dell'Orto ranked in nearly all of the early sources as among the most important pictures in his oeuvre. The pictures even surpassed, in the minds of many, *the Miracle of the Slave*. While some of the writers cited in Chapter Three emphasized how the *Miracle of the Slave* made a huge impression on its early audiences, other key sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers were less consistent in their praise or did not concede the painting a unique place within Tintoretto's oeuvre.

It is worth reviewing the evidence. In later historiography, the prestige of the painting is beyond question. For example, in 1866 Hippolyte Taine proclaimed, "No painting, in my judgment, surpasses or perhaps equals his Saint Mark in the Academy... perhaps there is not in the world one fuller and more animated than this one."³⁸ In the second half of the twentieth century, Hans Tietze, Rodolfo Pallucchini, Rosand, Echols, Tom Nichols, and Krischel, among others, all saw this painting as a crucial step in both Tintoretto's development and the evolution of Venetian painting. Most of them would agree that Tintoretto's picture had shattered – as completely as the broken mallet, held up by the flummoxed executioner, at the center of the composition – pictorial conventions that had held sway for nearly a century.

On the other hand, some of the painter's contemporaries and writers of the generations that immediately followed were less unanimous in their evaluations of the painting and its position in Tintoretto's development. As discussed previously, Aretino saw it as a breakthrough, particularly in terms of the successful mastery of three-

dimensionality of the figures, the specific quality of relief in a picture being a much-discussed topic in those years. The brilliance of the painting also confirmed Aretino's own track record as a spotter of talent. Calmo may have taken the unveiling of the picture as a sign that publishing an extravagant letter praising a friend would be well received by both recipient and comprehensible to the larger public. A century later, some writers devoted particular attention to the painting, underscoring its importance. For example, Giustiniano Martinioni's 1663 revision of Francesco Sansovino's 1581 guidebook, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare*, devotes enough space to the painting to suggest that in his estimation Tintoretto's canvases for the Scuola Grande di San Marco are every bit as important a monument to the art of painting as those in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. In fact, Martinioni devotes more words to the description of the sub-events depicted in "This Miracle of the Saint in saving the servant of the Knight of Provence" ("Quel miracolo del Santo nel liberar il Servo di un Signor di Provenza") than he does to the entire Sala Superiore of the Scuola di San Rocco.³⁹ Such attention confers admiration. In the same decade, Boschini, never shy about voicing his opinions, asserts in his poem that the *Miracle of the Slave* was the most beautiful picture of Tintoretto, or indeed the world.⁴⁰

In the context of such consistent praise it seems remarkable that their contemporary Ridolfi, who championed Tintoretto as a particular hero within the development of Venetian painting, did not feel the same way about this apparently landmark work.⁴¹ To be sure, Ridolfi asserts that a long description of such a famous picture is not needed; it is enough to have "lightly sketched the concept, since Fame with everlasting acclamation unceasingly spreads its honors."⁴² In the context of the full biography, however, Ridolfi does not accord any special status to the *Miracle of the Slave* as a career breakthrough or a rupture in the tradition of Venetian narrative painting.

Ridolfi does not place the picture as the culmination of an implied youthful period, nor does he suggest any particular agency or initiative on the part of Tintoretto. Rather, and somewhat surprisingly, Ridolfi grants this special status – and a sense of deep personal involvement on Tintoretto’s part – to the two paintings for the church of the Madonna dell’Orto, the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf*.

Compared to Aretino or Boschini, for example, Ridolfi was not the most subtle or inspired observer of Venetian painting, but he understood well the motivations and personality of his subject. He recognized to a degree that others missed that Tintoretto used these two giant canvases to make an audacious wager and resurrect his career. Ridolfi would not have placed the paintings executed for the “Padri della Madonna dell’Horto” toward the front of an apparently chronologically organized biography unless their importance justified such a displacement. After all, they were painted at the end of the 1550s, when Tintoretto was about forty, and not thirty years old, his age at the time he executed the *Miracle of the Slave*. The placement toward the start of the biography and the tone employed make clear that Ridolfi saw the Madonna dell’Orto paintings as particularly noteworthy, and indeed more important, than the *Miracle of the Slave*. These two giant canvases are the first works that are described in any detail in Ridolfi’s *Vita*, and they come before the account of the Scuola Grande di San Marco paintings. Moreover, Ridolfi positions the Madonna dell’Orto canvases as the works that took the artist to the next level, paintings that broadcast his name as “the world’s most daring painter” (“il più arrischiato Pittore del Mondo”).⁴³ The biographer makes no similar claim for the *Miracle of the Slave*.

Finally, toward the end of the biography, just a paragraph before describing Tintoretto’s final illness and death, Ridolfi sums up the painter’s career with a Top Ten list of masterpieces. He begins with these very two pictures: “Among his numerous

works we mention only the following: the two great paintings in the Madonna dell'Orto; the painting of the *Miracle of the Slave*, the two of the *Trinity*, the Crociferi Fathers' altarpiece of the *Assumption*.... Each of these paintings by its excellence would suffice to render his name ever bright and glorious."⁴⁴ The prominence of the *Last Judgment* and its pendant at the head of this select list, and the claim that any single painting in this group would be sufficient to maintain the painter's reputation for posterity, are striking. It seems that Ridolfi was onto something, and the choir paintings of the Madonna dell'Orto are deserving of more attention.

A quarter-century later, Boschini makes an even stronger assertion about those two pictures in his discussion of Tintoretto within his *Ricche minere* (1674). The *Last Judgment* is in fact the very first painting described in the biography, right after the description of Tintoretto's brief apprenticeship and abrupt departure from Titian's studio, as an example of how the younger artist came to equal his rival. Boschini cites this painting as one of the two best examples in his oeuvre, along with a painting of the *Battle of Zara* for the Palazzo Ducale, as exemplifying one of Tintoretto's most remarkable talents, namely his ability to have figures seem to project from the canvas:

...on making his figure leap forwards out of the canvas. And this passion may be seen particularly in the Universal Judgment, which he painted in Santa Maria known as dell'Horto, now belonging to the Padri Borgognoni; and in the Scrutinio of the Ducal Palace, with the exploding mine, in the Taking of Zara. And as Titian, using Truth, drew a parallel between Nature and Painting, so Tintoretto with brilliant pictorial deceit has tricked even the most piercing and lynx-like eye; so that, bedazzled, we cannot even rest our gaze on such swift movements.⁴⁵

Boschini's short biography is full of nuanced observations about Tintoretto's working methods and brushwork, but it names very few individual paintings. He does not single out even one painting within the Scuola di San Rocco. For Boschini, a key ingredient in Tintoretto's greatness, one that made him by implication the peer of Titian, could be found in the *Last Judgment*. The placement of the discussion of the *Last Judgment* within

this biography is not casual, but rather appears as the culmination of Tintoretto's youthful studies and continuous efforts to overcome his expulsion from Titian's *bottega*: "And despite this exile, by applying himself more intensively to his studies and working ceaselessly and eagerly, he profited from this to such an extent that he became a miracle of the world of Art."⁴⁶ Several pages later in the *Ricche minere*, the critic also praises the *Last Judgment* within his discussion of *disegno*, citing it as a paragon of painting that sculptors must study: "It can be said that Sculpture and Painting are imitators of Nature, and moreover, that one can say that the Sculptor must study the finest paintings, like the Last Judgment by Tintoretto in the Church of the Madonna dell'Orto and many others in the Scuola di San Rocco...."⁴⁷ In Boschini's opinion, then, the *Last Judgment* was actually Tintoretto's breakthrough work, offering an achievement of lasting importance to future generations, particularly sculptors.

Likewise, Vasari, writing almost a century before Ridolfi and Boschini, when all these pictures were relatively new and presumably part of the discourse of contemporary painting, also plays down the singularity of the *Miracle of the Slave*. As we have seen, Vasari praises its variety, foreshortenings, portraits, and other details. He further notes that Tintoretto's nearby sea storm picture of *Saint Mark Rescues a Saracen* (fig. 93), which undoubtedly contains the intervention of workshop assistants, was not as carefully executed as the *Miracle of the Slave*: "ma non è già questa fatta con quella diligenza che la già detta."⁴⁸ Vasari does not otherwise focus extra attention on the *Miracle of the Slave*, however, nor on the others in the cycle.

Rather, he offers a place of honor to two large works painted for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the Palazzo Ducale, the *Coronation of Frederick Barbarossa by Pope Adrian IV* and *Pope Alexander III Excommunicating Barbarossa*, created about five years after the *Miracle of the Slave*.⁴⁹ Although these paintings were destroyed in the

fire of 1577, the attention Vasari lavishes on them is understandable since they would have been the most prestigious public commissions Tintoretto had yet received. Moreover, according to Vasari, the *Excommunication* was among his best paintings, and Tintoretto's force of will had ensured that his work would at least rival, if not conquer the famous competitors who had also contributed to that same cycle: "...it deserves to be numbered among the best things that he ever did, so powerful in him was his determination that he would equal, if not vanquish and surpass, his rivals who had worked in that place."⁵⁰

Like Ridolfi and Boschini, Vasari does, however, accord surprising attention to the two paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto, giving these two far more total space than the four in the Scuola di San Marco. He also places their discussion before, and not after that of the *Miracle of the Slave*.⁵¹ This positioning grants the Madonna dell'Orto pictures greater prominence as a crucial step in the artist's biography while diminishing his other, earlier breakthrough. Finally, Vasari obviously thinks enough about these two paintings, particularly the *Last Judgment*, to pause in his sequence of descriptions of compositions to make a pointed comment about Tintoretto's limitations as a painter. Although this critique is perhaps more revealing about the critic than the artist, that Vasari chose this very painting for analysis suggests what an important painting in Tintoretto's career – and by extension Venetian painting – this was.

First, Vasari admires the "extravagant invention" of the *Last Judgment*, and the sense of terror that it inspired, rendered effective, once again in his mind, by the variety of human figures, both saved and damned, and the deep recessions into space. His esteem invokes the checklists of other critics: "... with an extravagant invention that truly has in it something awesome and terrible, by reason of the diversity of figures of either sex and all ages that are there, with vistas and distant views of the souls of the

blessed and the damned.”⁵² He also approves of an iconographic requirement, Charon’s boat, innovatively portrayed here. But then Vasari’s esteem runs out, and he changes tack, positing a remarkable question:

If this fantastic invention had been executed with correct and well-ordered drawing, and if the painter had given diligent attention to the parts and to each particular detail, as he has done to the whole in expressing the confusion, turmoil, and terror of that day, it would have been a most stupendous picture. And whoever glances at it for a moment, is struck with astonishment; but considering it afterwards minutely, it appears as if painted as a jest.⁵³

If only Tintoretto had employed proper *disegno* – one can practically hear Vasari sigh – and had paid attention to the details as well as the overall effect, then he would have created a truly astonishing picture, worthy of the eschatological subject matter. As it is, anyone considering the canvas carefully must think it a big joke.

Vasari’s harsh criticism of Tintoretto’s *Last Judgment* recalls a similar charge he made – or actually put into the mouth of Michelangelo – against another Venetian painting the Tuscan critic considered superficially impressive, if fundamentally defective. According to Vasari, during Titian’s stay in Rome in 1545-46 to deliver the *Danaë* (fig. 32) to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, Michelangelo and Vasari himself paid a call to the Venetian visitor and examined the new painting. Although Michelangelo supposedly praised the picture to Titian’s face, behind his back he confided in Vasari the lament that Venetians never learned to draw well in the first place:

Michelagnolo and Vasari, going one day to visit Tiziano in the Belvedere, saw in a picture that he had executed at the time a nude woman representing Danaë, who had in her lap Jove transformed into a rain of gold; and they praised it much, as one does in the painter’s presence. After they left him, discoursing of Tiziano’s method, Buonarroti commended it not a little, saying that his colouring and his manner much pleased him, but that it was a pity that in Venice men did not learn to draw well from the beginning....⁵⁴

Vasari’s anecdote is ingenious in that it simultaneously attacks – with a broad brush, as it were – Titian and the entire Venetian school, employs the authority of Michelangelo to emphasize the necessity of good drawing, and underscores his own friendship with the

famous artist. All the same, the specific charge seems mean-spirited and beside the point.⁵⁵ In the opinion of posterity, Titian has had the last word on female nudes.

To Vasari, Tintoretto's *Last Judgment* was a similar near miss: a painting remarkably ambitious but ultimately flawed. By this view, Aretino's warning about Tintoretto's "trascuratezza," or carelessness, at the time of the *Miracle of the Slave* had clearly gone unheeded in the subsequent decade, and this painting on a much larger scale could therefore only be considered a failure. Vasari, like Ridolfi and Boschini after him, was undoubtedly onto something when he recognized the ambition of the two choir paintings. Vasari was so impressed at their dimensions that he noted their height in his text: "braccia ventidue." But in his larger condemnation of these two works, perhaps he missed something essential. Perhaps we should take the side of the painter and not the critic, and consider that the details, the "particolari" within the painting, manifested themselves expressly as Tintoretto had intended.

Vasari, Ridolfi, and Boschini understood the paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto to be pivotal ones in Tintoretto's oeuvre. They were not alone; less partisan critics publishing during the painter's lifetime shared the high esteem for these paintings. Borghini, whose brief 1582 biography of Tintoretto within *Il Riposo* makes little attempt to place the works in chronological order, and mostly just lists the subjects and locations of the "principal" paintings, takes a stance similar to Vasari. Borghini's account pays more attention to the paintings for the Madonna dell'Orto than those in the Scuola Grande di San Marco, only minimally describing the subjects of that latter cycle.⁵⁶ Similarly, Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo's treatise *Idea del tempio della pittura* of 1590 esteems Tintoretto, labeling him "huomo raro nella universale armonia del disegno," but only mentions specifically two paintings to make his case. These are of course the *Miracle of the Slave* and the *Last Judgment*, the latter depicting the "giuditio di Christo

che egli pinse in Santa Maria dell’Horto.” Lomazzo venerates both works for their larger than life-size figures in particular.⁵⁷ These many early sources confirm that the *Last Judgment*’s Renaissance fame preceded its modern oblivion.

Lasting Effects

Despite the achievement of Paolo Veronese at the church of San Sebastiano in the mid-1550s, Tintoretto’s successful proposal and execution of the choir paintings for the Madonna dell’Orto by about 1560 seems to have made him the front runner for the next great prize for painters in Venice: the decoration of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. By working at an unprecedented scale – and on a strict budget – in his neighborhood church, Tintoretto had announced to the Venetian public that he and his workshop could undertake the most imposing commissions by themselves. There would be no need to split up major decorative programs among a range of *botteghe*. Although, as we have seen, certain *confratelli* within the Scuola di San Rocco were willing to donate money to prevent Tintoretto from getting a foothold in the Sala dell’Albergo, and he only won the 1564 competition by deceptive means, his recent success at the Madonna dell’Orto surely went a long way to persuading the *zonta* of San Rocco to accept his offer of a donated painting.

It is worth considering one more detail in the document mentioned above. On November 27, 1577, Tintoretto declared his intention to dedicate the rest of his life to Saint Roch and the completion of the decoration of the Scuola. Beyond finishing the murals for the ceiling of the Sala Superior, each year he promised to produce three significant canvases (“tre quadri grandi”) in time for the saint’s feast day, August 16th, until the entire interior of the meetinghouse had been covered.⁵⁸ The telling detail in the document is Tintoretto’s proposed annual payment for three major paintings: a

“provision” of one hundred ducats – “ducati cento” – the same modest fee, given the size of the works in question, as he had requested for the pair of the Madonna dell’Orto canvases.

Tintoretto’s contemporaries as well as later artists also came to understand the consequences of the Madonna dell’Orto pictures and correspondingly adjusted their own work. Tintoretto’s massive paintings of the *Last Judgment* and the *Making of the Golden Calf*, which covered with canvases, for the first time, entire bays of gothic churches, gave painters inspiration. For example, a conspicuous echo is seen in Aliense’s *Resurrection*, dated 1586, for the church of San Marziale.⁵⁹ The treatment of individual figures and the overall composition is clearly indebted to Tintoretto’s example. Yet an even more important borrowing is the format, a tall rectangle terminating in a pointed arch, similar to that in Tintoretto’s choir paintings. Analogous to its antecedent, Aliense’s canvas was designed to occupy an entire bay of the gothic church. Unfortunately, the specific shape was rendered irrelevant following the complete remodeling of San Marziale during its 1693-1721 reconstruction (fig. 149). The painting’s current placement on the walls of the late Baroque *cappella maggiore* seems somewhat absurd.

Tintoretto’s choir paintings also put architects on notice. It is striking that the first important church interior that follows these paintings, Andrea Palladio’s San Giorgio Maggiore, whose wooden model was completed in March of 1566, seems to take into account this new development. Gothic and earlier Renaissance churches offered large, uninterrupted expanses of wall that now ambitious painters could covet – one thinks immediately of the canvas murals from the late Cinquecento and Seicento that now cover the interiors of Codussi’s San Zaccaria (fig. 150). By contrast, Palladio’s elevations in San Giorgio make such encrustation impossible (fig. 151).⁶⁰ The architect has introduced

a new profusion of imposing architectural elements: grand cornices, massed columns and pilasters, and elaborate window and portal surrounds. With the exception of the vaults, there is little area within the church's interior that might entice a painter like Tintoretto.

As a new kind of proleptic Renaissance architecture, Palladio's design seems intended to ensure that only certain prescribed fields could be available for canvas paintings. These limited fields included spaces above the altars in the nave (e.g. that later filled with Jacopo Bassano's painting of the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, fig. 152) and in the transepts. Other spaces were allotted for *laterali* above the dossals on either side of the High Altar, these latter two which Tintoretto and his workshop would fill c. 1592-94 (fig. 153).⁶¹ But the comparison of these two laterali with their counterparts in the Madonna dell'Orto, also on either side of the High Altar, is striking. Although the San Giorgio *Last Supper*, at 365 x 568 cm, is a huge canvas, it is dwarfed by the scale of the murals in the choir in the gothic church (each 1450 x 590 cm). Tintoretto had not reduced his ambitions as he got older. Rather he had found himself confronted with an architect who understood the lasting effects of the painter's innovation at the end of the 1550s. In other words, if Tintoretto had offered to Venetian artists a new conception of mural painting, Palladio appears to have figured out how to keep this painterly ambition in check.

Perhaps the most fascinating resonance of Tintoretto's *Last Judgment* occurs with the painter El Greco. After his transformative stay in Venice, where he seems to have studied with Titian and absorbed deeply Tintoretto's style, he moved to Rome around 1570, and stayed there until he appears to have worn out his welcome with the local artists and ecclesiastical authorities in about 1577. According to Giulio Mancini's *Considerazione sulla pittura* (begun in the 1610s), when the occasion arose to cover up some of the figures in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, those that Pope Pius V had

declared indecent for that hallowed space, the painter became overcome with indignity and arrogance. El Greco then claimed that if the entire fresco were torn down, he would propose to replace it with a new work that would be in no way inferior to Michelangelo's, but instead conceived with dignity and decorum:

Thus, when the occasion arrived to copy several figures from Michelangelo's Last Judgment, which Pope Pius had condemned as indecent for that locale, he burst out saying that if the entire work were to be torn down, he would have made it with honor and decency no less than with good skill in painting.⁶²

Clearly what El Greco had in mind was a “telero alla Veneziana,” a massive mural on canvas, in the mode of and inspired by Tintoretto's *Last Judgment*. Given Tintoretto's own artistic ambition, we can also speculate that if Tintoretto had in fact ever journeyed to Rome, he would have made the same offer to the pontiff.

¹ See, for example, Ashley Clarke and Philip Rylands, *The Church of the Madonna dell'Orto*, pp. 53-91; Paola Rossi, "Jacopo Tintoretto alla Madonna dell'Orto" in Lino Moretti, Antonio Niero, and Paola Rossi, *La Chiesa del Tintoretto: Madonna dell'Orto*, (Venice: Parrocchia della Madonna dell'Orto, 1994), pp. 93-149, and Ilchman, "Tintoretto: pensare e disignare in grande," with additional bibliography.

² The following pages are based on material published earlier by the author, especially "Tintoretto: pensare e disignare in grande" and the conclusion of "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative," pp. 85-91.

³ See the document for 20 January 1548 in Borean, "Documentation," p. 420.

⁴ See, for example, the document for 6 November 1551, *ibid.*, p. 421.

⁵ Translation from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 70. The original, from Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 63, and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 95, reads, "Trattenevasi spese fiate in pie meditationi nella Chiesa dell'horto, & in morali discorsi con que' Padri famigliari suoi."

⁶ Although it has been assumed that Tintoretto married Faustina c. 1550, there is new evidence suggesting that this did not happen until later in the decade (see the biographical section on the "Decisive Years: 1547-1555" by Robert Echols in *Tintoretto*, ed. Falomir, p. 215). Mazzucco, as discussed in the previous chapter of this dissertation, suggests that the date of marriage may have been as late as c. 1560.

⁷ Much of the following was earlier published within "Tintoretto: pensare e disignare in grande," and Ilchman, "Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative."

⁸ Ridolfi-Haddehn, 1924, II, p. 19. Ridolfi-Enggass 1984, pp. 21-22.

⁹ Translation in Ridolfi-Enggass, pp. 21-2. The original, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 19 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 14, reads, "E perche bollivano del continuo i pensieri nel fecondo ignegno suo, pensava ad ogn' hora il modo di farsi conoscere il più arrischiato Pittore del Mondo. Quindi si offerse a' Padrid della Madonna dell'Horto di fargli quei due gran quadri della Cappella maggiore, che può ascendere lo spatio di cinquanta piedi in altezza. Se ne rise il Priore, stimando non essere bastevole per quella operatione l'entrata dell'anno, licentiandone il Tintoretto, il quale senza smarrirsi soggiunse, che altro non pretendeva per quella operatione, che una ricognitione per le spese, volendo delle fatiche sue farglene un dono. Sopra che riflettendo il saggio Priore, pensò non si lasciar fuggir di mano così bella occasione, e conchiuse seco l'accordo in ducati cento."

¹⁰ The contract for Veronese's *Wedding at Cana*, dated 6 June 1562, states that the Monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore will pay the painter "324 ducats, an unprimed canvas and the support, a cask of wine, and his food while he works on the painting, including meals eaten in the refectory." Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese: L'opera completa*, II, p. 556. The document is translated in Chambers and Pullan, eds., *Venice: A Documentary History*, p. 414.

¹¹ Hills, "Tintoretto's Marketing"; Nichols, "Price, 'Pretezza' and Production"; and Nichols, *Tintoretto: Tradition and Identity*, pp. 101-47.

¹² Because Vasari describes the paintings in detail, it has been long known that they must have been complete and installed by 1566, when Vasari was in Venice. Vasari-Milanesi 1881, VI, pp. 590-1. For stylistic reasons alone, the two choir paintings have been dated consistently 1562-3 (e.g. Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, pp. 182-3) or c. 1564 (Valcanover and Pignatti, *Tintoretto* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1985), pp. 34, 36.). I had long considered that Tintoretto would not have proposed a self-generated commission if he had already received further work for the Scuola di San Marco (starting in 1562) or was finishing the *Wedding at Cana* (1563), and thus believed the commission had to be substantially underway c. 1560, which I argued in Ilchman, “Pensare e disegnare in grande.” The recent discovery of the presence in the *Last Judgment* in the Abbey of Farfa (dated 1561) of figures clearly based on Tintoretto’s *Last Judgment* provides proper confirmation this hunch, and makes clear that the painting was substantially finished, or indeed totally unveiled by then. See Bert W. Meijer, “Flemish and Dutch Artists in Venetian Workshops: The Case of Jacopo Tintoretto” in Bernard Aikema and Beverly Louise Brown, *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian* (exh. cat. Palazzo Grassi, Venice; New York: Rizzoli, 1999), pp. 138-141, who assigns this oil on plaster mural to the “Master of Farfa.” Krischel, *Jacopo Tintoretto: 1519-1594*, pp. 64-70, instead attributes it to Dirk Barendsz.

¹³ For the *Wedding at Cana* (originally for the monastery of the Crociferi), see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 230 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 89.

¹⁴ See Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, p. 173 (doc. 20) for the substantial latitude given Pordenone in 1538 by the ruling board (*banca e zonta*) of the Scuola della Carità in choosing a suitable subject.

¹⁵ Aretino’s full letter in Italian is included in Aretino, *Lettere sull’arte*, II, CCXI, pp. 52-3, Lepschy, *Davanti a Tintoretto*, p. 12, and Borean, “Documentation,” p. 419.

¹⁶ See Pino, *Dialogo di Pittura*, ed. Rodolfo and Anna Pallucchini, pp. 100-1, and Pardo, *Paolo Pino’s “Dialogo di Pittura,”* p. 331.

¹⁷ Roskill, *Dolce’s “Aretino,”* pp. 100-1.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 130-1.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 138-9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-7.

²¹ See the excellent summary, with many more examples and bibliography, by Robert Klein, “Judgment and Taste in Cinquecento Art Theory” [1961], reprinted in *Form and Meaning*, trans. Madeline Jay and Leon Wieseltier (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), pp. 161-69, 250-55.

²² Among many studies of the *fortuna critica* of the Sistine frescoes, see for example Mancinelli, Fabrizio, ed. *Michelangelo e la Sistina*. For the question of a trip by Tintoretto to Rome, see Chapter Two in this dissertation.

²³ For example, Roskill, *Dolce's "Aretino,"* pp. 160-7.

²⁴ Romeo De Maio, *Michelangelo e la controriforma* (Rome: Laterza, 1978), p. 48. Although somewhat dated, this study remains essential and is one of many that compiles extensive textual evidence of the criticism that Michelangelo's fresco received. A more recent account is Bernadine Barnes, *Michelangelo's Last Judgment: the Renaissance Response* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998).

²⁵ A classic investigation of how complaints may have reflected theological uneasiness at the time is Leo Steinberg, "Michelangelo's 'Last Judgment' as Merciful Heresy." For a recent discussion of the problem of wingless angels, see Michael Cole, "Discernment and Animation, Leonardo to Lomazzo," in Reindert Falkenburg et al., *Image and imagination of the religious self in late medieval and early modern Europe* (Tournhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), pp. 133-161.

²⁶ This important point was made by Steinberg, "Michelangelo's 'Last Judgment,'" p. 56.

²⁷ On the Modena Triptych, see, for example, Tiziana Fratti, *L'Opera completa del Greco* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1969), cat. 5; José Álvarez Lopera, ed., *El Greco: Identity and Transformation, Crete. Italy. Spain.* (exh. cat. Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; Milan: Skira, 1999), cat. 6; David Davies, "El Greco's Religious Art; The Illumination and Quickening of the Spirit" in *El Greco*, ed. David Davies (exh. cat. Metropolitan Museum of Art and National Gallery, London, 2003), pp. 45-71, esp. pp. 45-7.

²⁸ Despite the persuasive identification observed by David Rogers in 1977 in a letter to the editor (Rogers, "Tintoretto's Golden Calf," *The Burlington Magazine* 119, 895 (1977), p. 715), several more recent authors, such as Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 236, or Cassegrain, *Tintoret*, pp. 204-6, figs. 170, insist on the old identification. The latter author also maintains the traditional date for both paintings of 1562-4, slightly later than the 1562-3 of Pallucchini and Rossi (and is incidentally inconsistent with the caption of the detail, on p. 206, which uses "1560-1562"), despite a number of publications in the previous decade that argue convincingly that the *Last Judgment* must have been well underway, and probably complete, by 1561, based on the quotation of certain figures from Tintoretto's painting in the mural at the abbey of Farfa.

²⁹ John Martin, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993) offers an excellent study of Venetian heretics in the sixteenth century.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-94.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

³² A portion of this analysis was included in Ilchman, "Pensare e disegnare in grande."

³³ Some of the following material was previously presented in Ilchman, “Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative,” pp. 84-5.

³⁴ See Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 160-61. The original passage, quoted in Rosand and Borean, “Documentation,” for November 27, 1544, pp. 434-35, reads as follows, “Hora volendo dimostrar l’amor grando ch’io porto à ditta venerando nostra scola per devocion ch’io ho nel glorioso messer san rocho da desiderio di veder essa scola finita, et adornata di pitture in tutte le parti fanno bisogno, son contenuto, et mi obbligo deddicar el restate della mia vita al suo servizio promettendo di far oltra el soffittado preditto ... tutt’altre pitture cosi nella scola, ... et prometto dar ogni anno per la festa de messer san rocho tre quadri grandi posti suso....” Rosand’s commend is on p. 161.

³⁵ Among the many discussions of Veronese and the Inquisition, see Philipp P. Fehl, “Veronese and the Inquisition,” in his *Decorum and Wit: The Poetry of Venetian Painting. Essays in the History of the Classical Tradition* (Vienna: IRSA, 1992), pp. 223-60; Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 118-2; and Paul Kaplan, “Veronese and the Inquisition: the Geopolitical Context” in *Suspended License: Censorship and the Visual Arts*, ed. Elizabeth Childs (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1977), pp. 85-124. For a recent summary, see Salomon, *Veronese*, pp. 17-22.

³⁶ The translation from Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 70. The original reads, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 63, and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 95, “dandosi alla contemplatione delle cose celesti, preparandosi come buon Cristiano alla via del Cielo.” For further ideas proposed in the scholarly literature as evidence of Tintoretto’s piety, see Ilchman, “Tintoretto as a Painter of Religious Narrative,” p. 93, n. 62.

³⁷ See Ridolfi-Hadeln, I, pp. 202, 348.

³⁸ Hippolyte Taine, *Florence and Venice*, tr. J. Durand (New York, 1869), pp. 314-25, quoted in Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, pp. 114-5.

³⁹ Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare* (1581), ed. Giustiniano Martinioni, I (Venice: Steffano Curti, 1663; repr. Venice: Filippi Editore, 1968), pp. 287-88.

⁴⁰ Boschini, *Carta del navegar*, ed. Anna Pallucchini, p. 284.

⁴¹ For speculations on Ridolfi’s use of Tintoretto as a vehicle for constructing a master narrative of Venetian art, see Maria H. Loh, “Death, History, and the Marvelous Lives of Tintoretto.”

⁴² Translation in Ridolfi-Enggass, p. 25. The original, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 22 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 24, is “leggiermente delineato il concetto, poiche la Fama con eterno grido ne spiega del continuo gli honori.”

⁴³ Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 19 and Ridolfi-Vite, p. 14

⁴⁴ The translation comes from Ridolif-Enggass, p. 79. The original, in Ridolfi-Hadeln, II, p. 71, and Ridolfi-*Vite*, p. 105, reads, “Fra le cui numerose operationi annverando solo i due gran quadri della Madonna dell’orto; il quadro del miracolo del servo posto nella Confraternità di San Marco, i due della Trinità; la tavola dell’Assunta de’ Padri Crociferi... ogn’una di queste, per l’eccellenza sua, sarebbe bastevole à rendere per sempre chiaro e glorioso il nome suo.”

⁴⁵ The translation comes from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 46. The original, from Boschini, *Ricche minere*, p. 730, reads, “... di far balzare le figure fuori delle tele. E questi furori si veggono in particolare nel Giudicio Universale, che espresso in Santa Maria detta dell’Orto, ora de’ Padri Borgognoni, e nello Scortinio del Palagio Ducale, la Mina fulminante nella presa di Zara. E sicome Tiziano con la Verità ha fatto parallelo tra la Natura e la Pittura, così il Tintoretto, con l’inganno virtuoso Pittoresco, ha fatto travedere l’occhio, ancorché più acuto e linceo; di modo che, abbarbagliato, non può neanche affissarsi a quei fieri movimenti.” For Tintoretto’s *Battle of Zara* in the Sala del Scrutino, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 444 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cat. 289. Boschini also praised a painting in the Scuola di San Marco cycle as a prime example of Tintoretto’s *colorito* in rendering nudes: “La sostanza principale del suo Colorito fu nei Nudi, ponendo in essi carne e sangue, come specialmente si vede nel quadro in testa della Scuola di San Marco.” Boschini, *Ricche minere*, p. 731. This description of the treatment of the nude presumably refers to the *Miracle of the Slave*, though it could also be the *Theft of the Body of Saint Mark* (Accademia) or the *Finding of the Body of Saint Mark* (Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan). But this praise, and the following sentences about the vibrant brushwork that looked finished from a little distance away, are buried in the middle of the biography, not up front.

⁴⁶ The translation is from Lepschy, *Tintoretto Observed*, p. 46. The original, in Boschini, *Ricche minere*, p. 730, reads, “E, non ostante l’esilio, applicandosi maggiormente a gli studi, con incessante fervore se ne approfittò in modo che ne divenne stupor dell’Arte.”

⁴⁷ Translation by the author. Boschini, *Ricche minere*, p. 749. “Dicono in fine che la Scultura e la Pittura sono imitatrici della Natura, e che tanto si potrebbe dire che lo Scultore deve studiare dalle Pitture rare, come dal Giudicio Universale del Tintoretto nella Chiesa della Madonna dell’Orto e da tante altre nella Scuola di San Rocco....”

⁴⁸ Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 592. For Tintoretto’s painting, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cat. 245 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” p. 98.

⁴⁹ For these lost paintings, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, p. 265 and Borean, “Documentation” under 20 December 1553.

⁵⁰ The translation comes from Vasari-de Vere, II, pp. 510-11. The original, in Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 589, reads, “ella merita di essere fra le migliori cose, che mai facesse, annoverata: tanto potè in lui il disporsi di voler paragonare, se non vincere e superare, i suoi concorrenti, che avevano lavorato in quel luogo.”

⁵¹ Crucially in both Vasari’s and Ridolfi’s *Vite* of Tintoretto, the Madonna dell’Orto and the Scuola di San Marco paintings are discussed before and thus lead up to those for the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. Vasari, who published his book in 1568 just after

Tintoretto finished his work in the confraternity's Sala del Albergo, used the rigged competition as the culmination of the biography. Ridolfi, who knew of course the decoration of the entire building, considered the Scuola di San Rocco paintings to be the fulcrum of his career, giving it substantial attention, as befits such an extensive cycle of paintings, and placing it closer to the middle of the text.

⁵² The translation is from Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 511. The original, in Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 591, reads, “una stravagante invenzione, che ha veramente dello spaventevole e del terribile per la diversità delle figure che vi sono di ogni età e di ogni sesso, con strafiori e lontani d’anime beate e dannate.”

⁵³ The translation comes from Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 512. The original passage, in Vasari-Milanesi, VI, p. 591, reads, ...e se quella capricciosa invenzione fusse stata condotta con disegno corretto e regolato, ed avesse il pittore atteso con diligenza alle parti ed ai particolari, come ha fatto il tutto, esprimendo la confusione, il garbuglio e lo spavento di quel dì, ella sarebbe pittura stupendissima: e chi la mira così a un tratto, resta maravigliato; ma considerandola poi minutamente, ella pare dipinta da burla.”

⁵⁴ The translation is from Vasari-de Vere, II, p. 791. The original passage, in Vasari-Milanesi, VII, p. 447, reads, “Andando un giorno Michelagnolo ed il Vasari a vedere Tiziano in Belvedere, videro un quadro, che allora avea condotto, una femina ignuda, figurate per una Danae, che avea in grembo Giove trasformato in pioggia d’oro, e molto come si fa in presenza) glielo lodaro. Dopo partiti che furono da lui, ragionandosi del fare di Tiziano, il Buonarruoto lo comendò assai, dicendo che molto gli piaceva il colorito suo e la maniera; ma che era peccato che a Vinezia non s’imparasse da principio a disegnare bene....”

⁵⁵ Considering the painting in question, Vasari’s anecdote comes off as unintentionally humorous and even self-defeating. After all, who can really stand in front of that picture and be concerned primarily with *disegno*?

⁵⁶ See Borghini, *Riposo*, pp. 552-53 (Borghini-Ellis, pp. 261-62) for Tintoretto’s paintings in the Madonna dell’Orto, and p. 554 (Borghini-Ellis, p. 262) for the remarkably compact mention of the Scuola Grande di San Marco pictures. Borghini offers a confusing description, since although the writer indicates that there are four pictures in the cycle, it is difficult to tell which phrase (or phrases) corresponds to which painting, or if there are indeed only four pictures in total: “Nella scuola di San Marco quattro quadri de’ miracoli di detto Santo, dove si veggono diverse belle attitudinim rususcitar morti, liberare spiritati, fuggire i mori, venir pioggia del Cielo, e spegnere il fuoco in cui dovea essere abbruciato un martire, e spaventevoli effetti d’una fortuna di mare.” Borghini-Ellis, p. 262 translates this passage as: “In the Scuola di San Marco are four pictures of miracles of that saint where different beautiful poses are seen: the dead raised, spirits freed, the Moors in flight, the coming of the rain from Heaven to extinguish the fire in which they tried to burn a martyr, and dreadful effects of an accident at sea.” This confusion is a little surprising since Borghini based much of his text on Vasari, who more-or-less describes the four canvases accurately and in far greater detail; see Vasari-Milanesi, VI, pp. 592-93 and Vasari-De Vere, II, pp. 512-3.

⁵⁷ Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *Idea del tempio della pittura* (Milan: Paolo Gottardo Pontio, 1590), p. 159.

⁵⁸ The original, from Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*, pp. 160-1, and Borean, “Documentation,” pp. 434-35, is transcribed above.

⁵⁹ For a good reproduction (plate 6) but only some discussion of the painter’s career, see Haris K. Makrykostas, *Antonio Vassilacchi Aliense, 1556-1629: A Greek Painter in Italy* (Athens: Matsoukis, 2008).

⁶⁰ Although Palladio’s *Quattro Libri* does not specifically advocate limiting pictorial decorations within his churches, there is a striking passage near the start of the Fourth Book, “On the forms of Temples, and of the decorum to be observed in them,” where he discourages abundant or distracting images, and, as a result, prioritizes the architecture over any decoration. At the end of chapter 2, Palladio writes: “Of all the colours, none is more proper for churches than white; since the purity of colour, as of the life, is particularly grateful to God. But if they are painted, those pictures will not be proper, which by their signification alienate the mind from the contemplation of divine things, because we ought not in temples to depart from gravity, or those things, that being looked on render our minds more enflamed for divine service, and for good works.” The translation comes from Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Architecture*, trans. Isaac Ware (New York: Dover Publications, 1965), p. 82. The original is found in Andrea Palladio, *I Quattro Libri dell’Architettura* [1570] (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1990), IV, p. 7. On the church of San Giorgio Maggiore, see Bruce Boucher, *Andrea Palladio: The Architect and His Time* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1998), pp. 163-70, and Tracy E. Cooper, *Palladio’s Venice: Architecture and Society in a Renaissance Republic* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp.109-45.

⁶¹ For Tintoretto’s *Last Supper* and *Gathering of the Manna* – both executed exclusively by the *bottega*, see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Opere sacre e profane*, I, cats. 466-67 and Echols and Ilchman, “Checklist,” cats. 308-309.

⁶² The original passage is found in Giulio Mancini, *Considerazione sulla pittura*, ed. Luigi Salerno, 2 vols., (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1957), I, pp. 230-31. “Onde, venendo l’occasione di coprir alcune figure del Giudizio di Michelangelo che da Pio erano state stimate indecenti per quel luogo, proruppe in dir che, se si buttasse a terra tutta l’opera, l’haverebbe fatta con honestà et decenza non inferior a quella di bontà di pittura.”

1. Jacopo Robusti, called Tintoretto, *Last Judgment*, c. 1558-60, oil on canvas, 1,450 x 590 cm (570 9/10 x 232 1/5 inches), church of the Madonna dell'Orto, Venice.



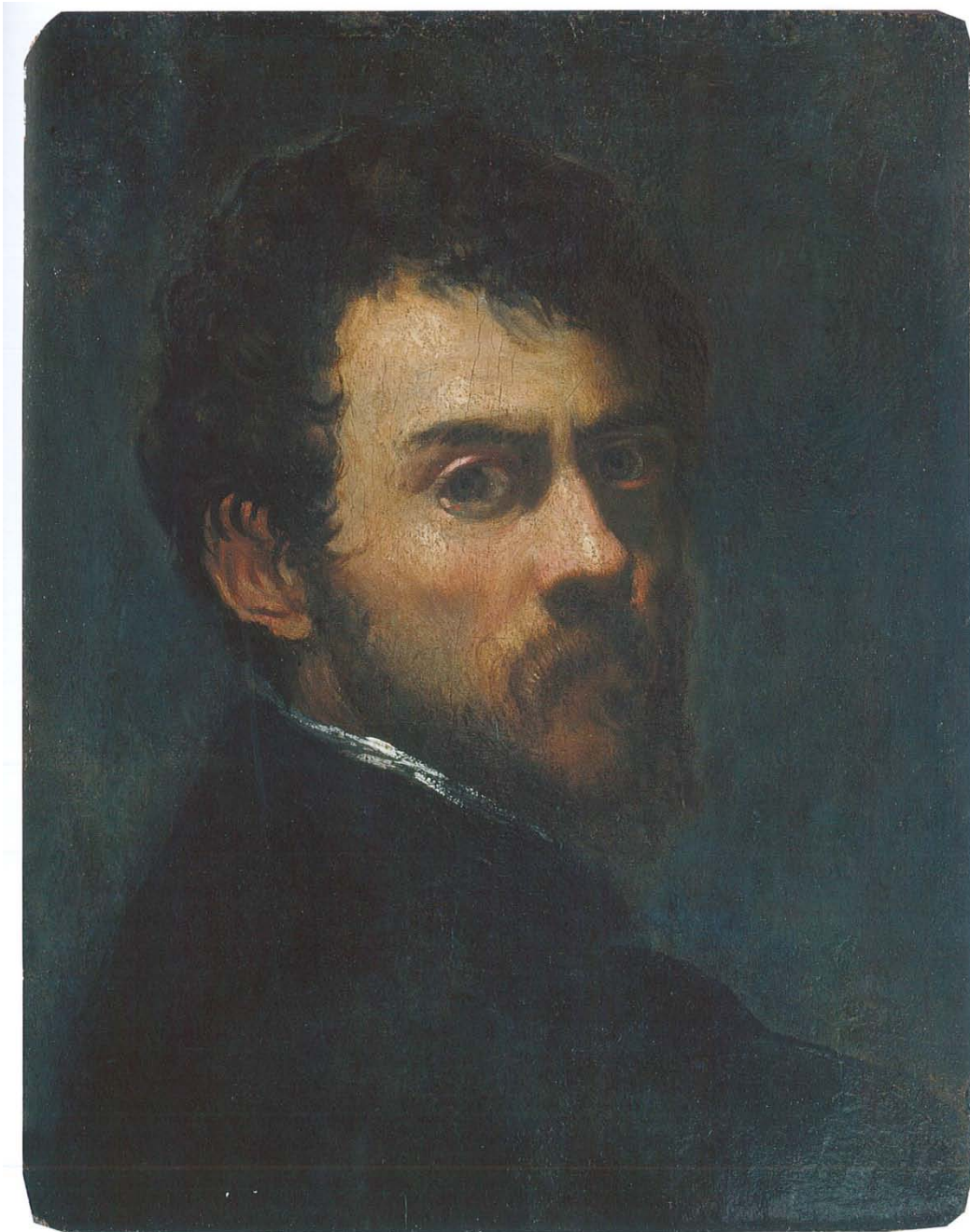
2. Tintoretto, *Making of the Golden Calf*, c. 1558-60, oil on canvas, 1,450 x 590 cm (570 4/5 x 232 1/5 inches), church of the Madonna dell'Orto, Venice.



3. Jacopo Robusti, called Tintoretto, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1546-47, oil on canvas, 45.1 x 38.1 cm (17 ¾ x 15 inches), Philadelphia Museum of Art.



4. After Tintoretto (Domenico Tintoretto?), *Portrait of Jacopo Tintoretto*, oil on panel, 45.7 x 36.8 cm (18 x 14 ½ inches), Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



5. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Portrait of a Man Aged Twenty-Six*, dated 1547, oil on canvas, 130 x 97 cm (51 5/8 x 38 1/8 inches), Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, the Netherlands.



6. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Last Supper* (detail of heads on the right side), dated 1547, oil on canvas, 157 x 433 cm (61 4/5 x 170 2/5 inches), San Marcuola, Venice.



7. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1588, oil on canvas, 63 x 52 cm (24 4/5 x 20 1/2 inches), Musée du Louvre, Paris.



8. Paolo Caliari, called Veronese, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1548, oil on canvas, 63 x 51 cm (24 4/5 x 20 inches), Hermitage, St. Petersburg.



9. Titian, *Salome*, c. 1516, oil on canvas, 90 cm x 72 cm (35 in x 28 inches), Doria Pamphilj Gallery, Rome.



10. Titian, *Pietro Aretino*, 1545, oil on canvas, 97 x 78 cm (38 1/5 x 30 7/8 inches), Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, Florence.



11. Giorgione, *Self-Portrait as David*, c. 1500?, oil on canvas, 52 x 43 cm (20 ½ x 16 9/10 inches), Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig.



12. Titian, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1550?, oil on canvas, 96 x 72 cm (37 7/10 x 28 3/10 inches), Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.



13. Titian, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1562?, oil on canvas, 86 x 65 cm (33 4/5 x 25 1/2 inches), Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



14. Annibale Carracci, *Self-Portrait on an Easel*, c. 1595, oil on panel, 42 x 30 cm (16 ½ x 11 4/5 inches), State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



15. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Miracle of the Slave*, 1548, oil on canvas, 416.5 x 543.5 cm (164 x 214 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



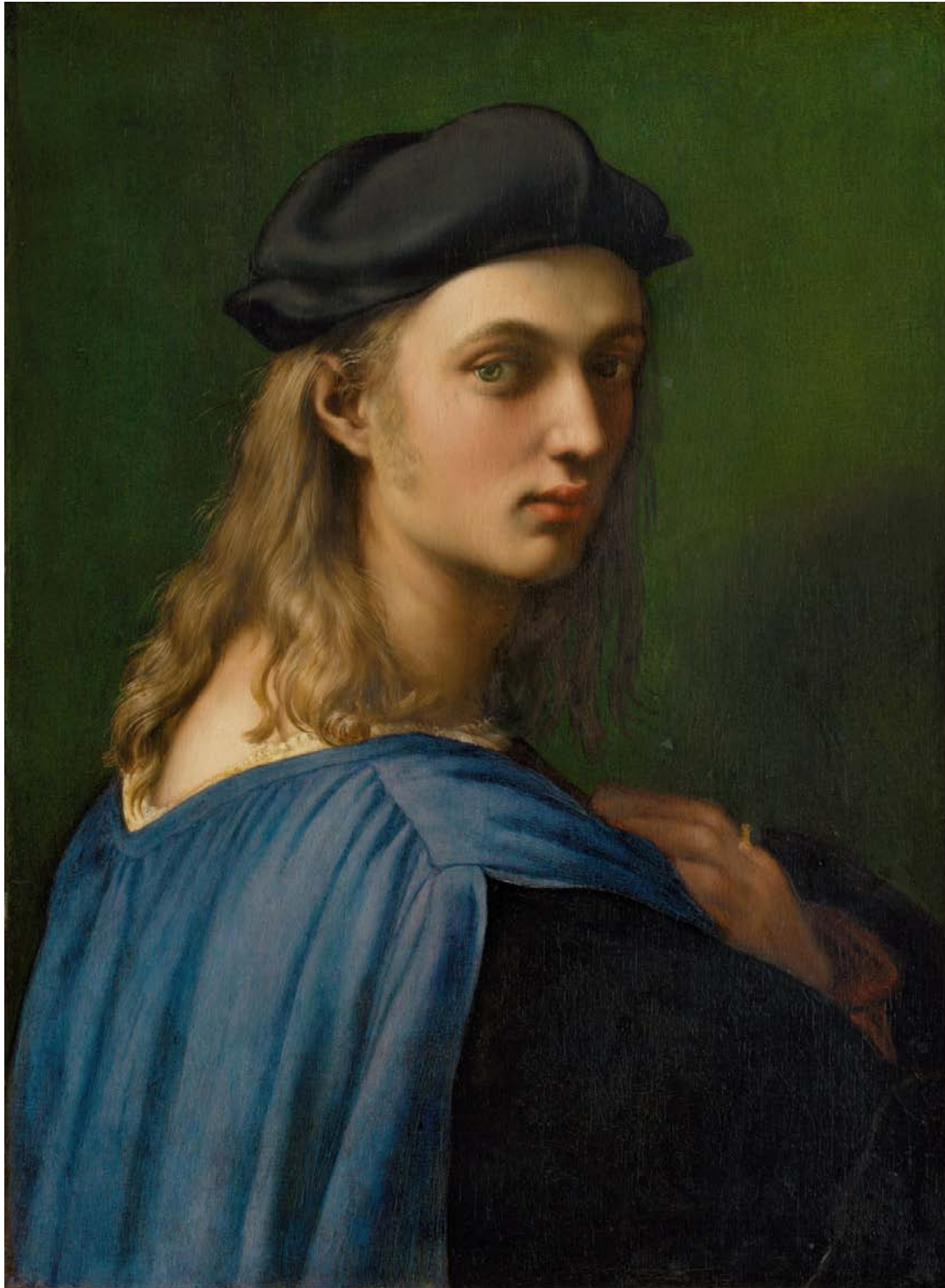
16. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas*, 1544-45, oil on canvas, 137 x 236 cm (53 15/16 x 92 15/16 inches), Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford.



17. Titian, *Assunta*, 1515-18, oil on panel, 690 x 360 cm (271 1/10 x 141 7/10 inches), church of the Frari, Venice.



18. Raphael, *Bindo Altoviti*, c. 1515, oil on panel, 59.7 x 43.8 cm (23 1/2 x 17 1/4 inches), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.



19. Albrecht Dürer, *Self-Portrait*, 1500, oil on panel, 66.3 x 49 cm (26 1/10 x 19 inches), Alte Pinakothek, Munich.



20. Albrecht Dürer, Self-Portrait, 1498, oil on panel, 52.5 x 41cm (20 3/5 x 16 1/5 inches), Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



21. Jan van Eyck, *Man in a Red Turban*, 1433, oil on panel, 26 x 19 cm (10 1/5 x 7 1/2 inches), National Gallery, London.



22. Rembrandt, *Artist in His Studio*, c. 1628, oil on panel, 24.8 x 31.7 cm (9 ¾ x 12 ½ inches), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



23. Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1628, oil on panel, 22.6 x 18.7 cm (8 4/5 x 7 3/10 inches), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



24. Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria*, c. 1504-8, oil on canvas, 347 x 770 cm (136 3/5 x 303 1/10 inches), Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.



25. Titian, *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, 1534-38, oil on canvas, 345 x 775 cm (135 4/5 x 305 1/10 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



26. Giorgione, *Tempest*, c. 1506, oil on canvas, 99 x 73.6 cm (39 x 29 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



27. Sebastiano del Piombo, *Saint Louis of Toulouse*, c. 1510, oil on canvas, 293 x 137 cm (115 3/10 x 54 inches), church of San Bartolomeo di Rialto, Venice (on deposit at the Gallerie dell'Accademia).



28. Vittore Carpaccio, *Healing of the Possessed Man at Rialto*, 1494, oil on canvas, 365 x 389 cm (143 7/10 x 153 1/10 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



29. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Conversion of Saint Paul*, c. 1544, oil on canvas, 152.4 x 236.2 cm (60 x 93 inches), National Gallery of Art, Washington.



30. Giulio Fontana after Titian, *The Battle of Spoleto*, c. 1569, engraving.



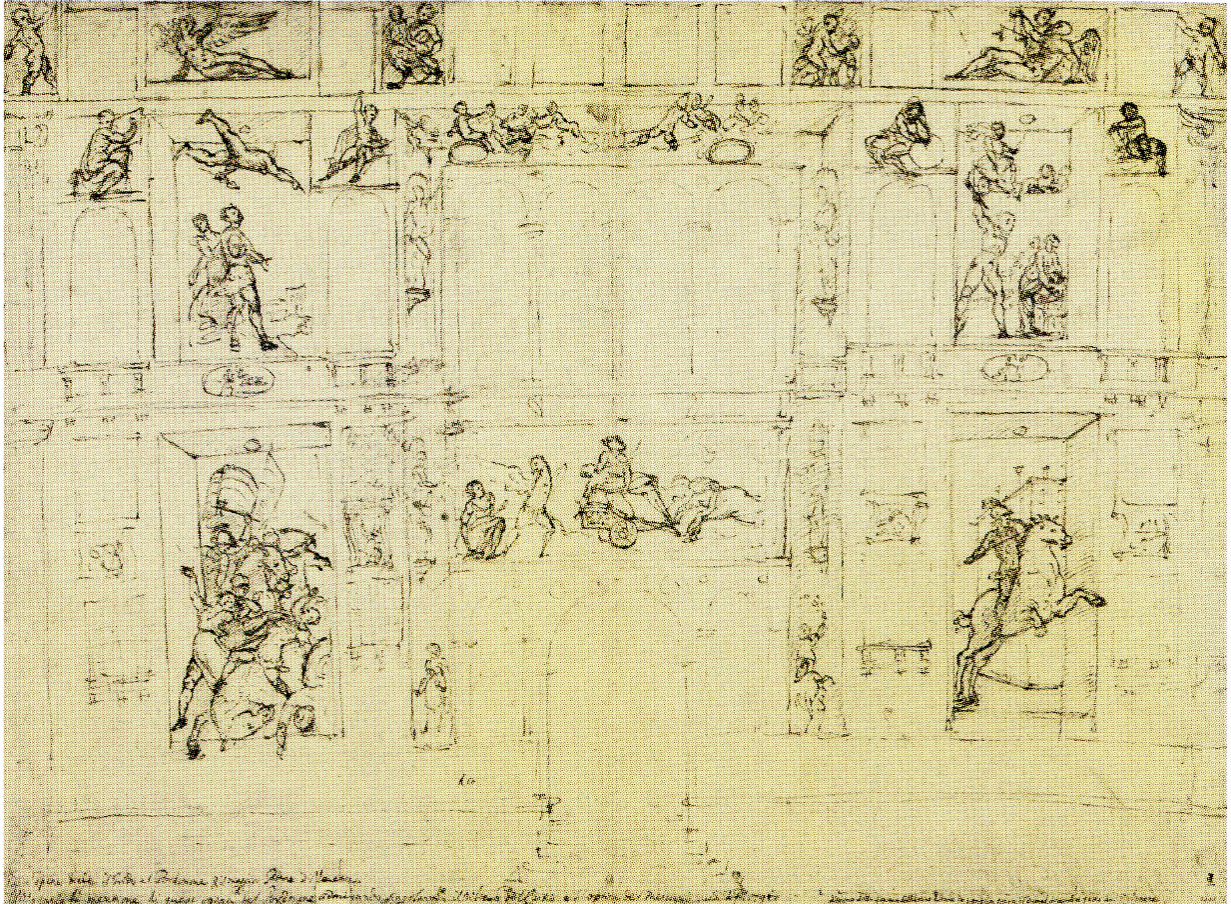
31. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan*, c. 1545, oil on canvas, 135 x 198 cm (53 1/10 x 78 inches), Alte Pinakothek, Munich.



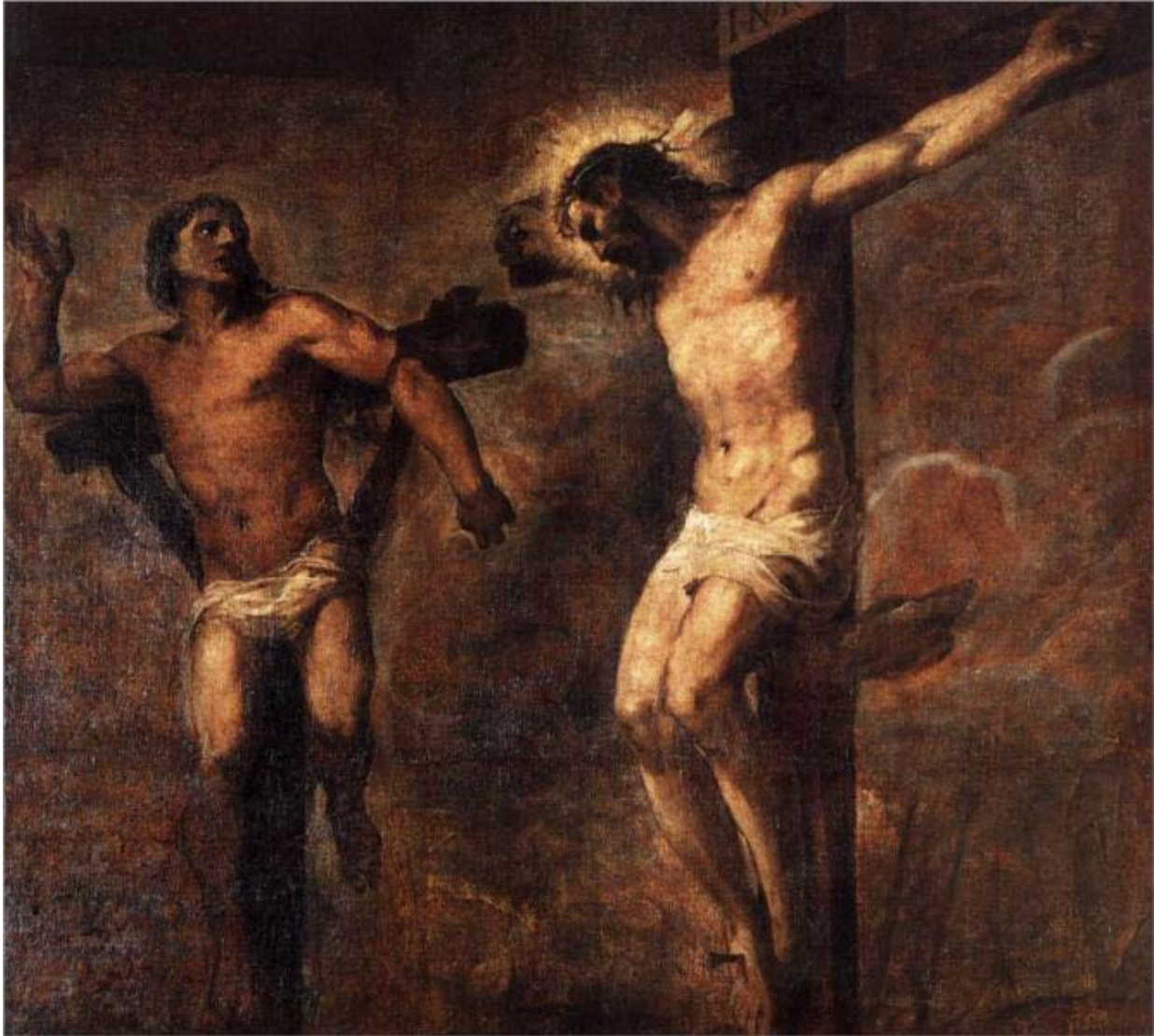
32. Titian, *Danaë*, 1544-6, oil on canvas, 120 x 172 cm (47 ¼ x 67 7/10 inches), Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.



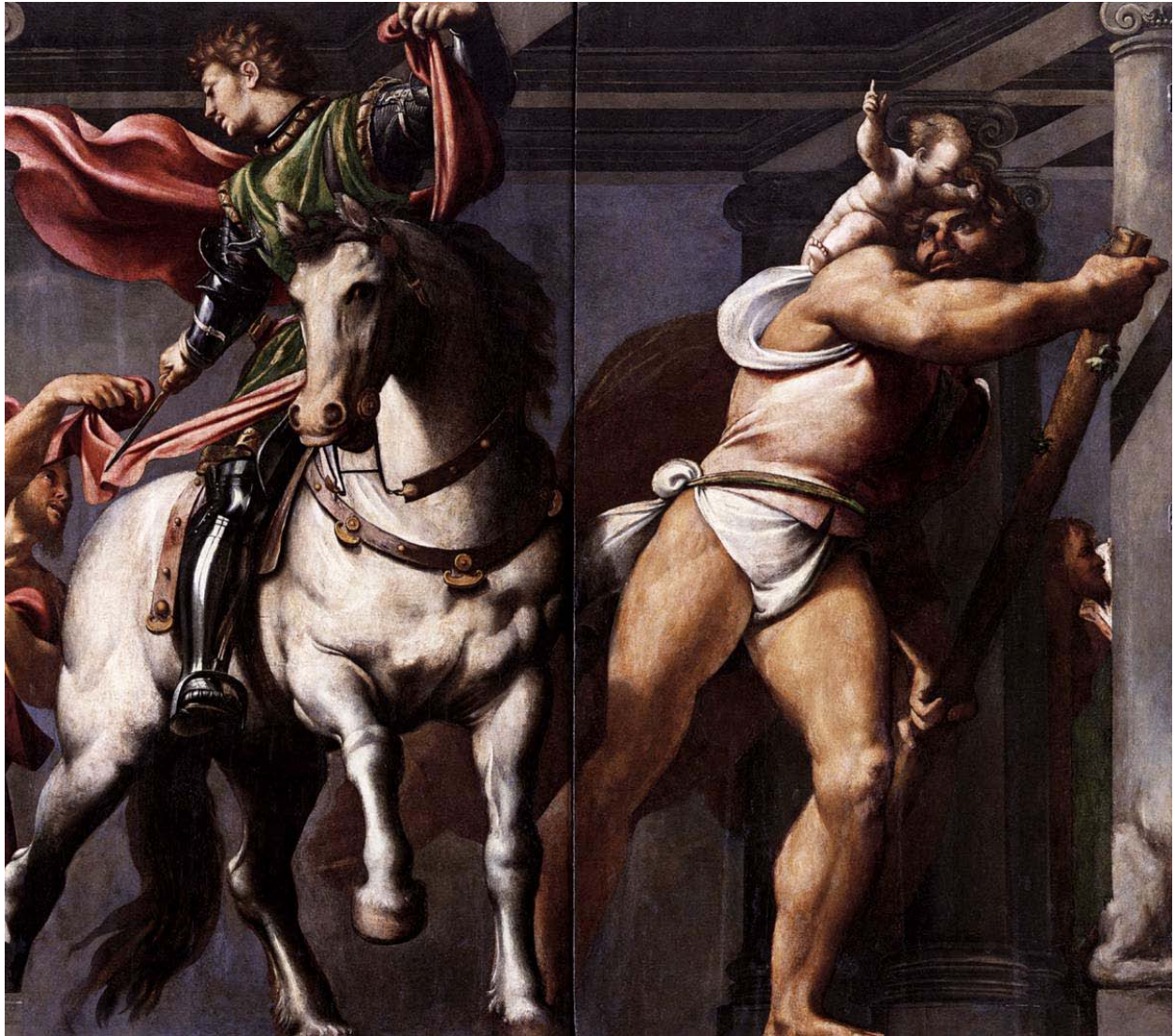
33. Giovanni Antonio de Sacchis, called Pordenone, preparatory drawing for the façade of Ca' Talenti (later d'Anna), c. 1530-35, ink on paper, 41.9 x 56.9 cm (16 ½ x 22 2/5 inches), Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



34. Titian, *Christ on the Cross with the Good Thief*, c. 1563-68, oil on canvas, 137 x 149 cm (53 9/10 x 58 3/5 inches), Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna.



35. Pordenone, *Saint Martin and Saint Christopher*, c. 1528-29, oil on panel, 236 x 134 cm (92 15/16 x 52 3/4 inches) each, church of San Rocco, Venice.



36. Titian, *Saint Christopher*, c. 1523-25, fresco, 310 x 186 cm (122 x 73 1/5 inches), Doge's Palace, Venice.



37. Pordenone, *God the Father*, 1520, fresco, Cappella Malchiostro, Duomo di Santa Maria Annunziata, Treviso.



38. Titian, *Annunciation*, c. 1520-23, oil on panel, 179 x 207 cm (70 1/5 x 81 2/5 inches), Cappella Malchiostro, Duomo di Santa Maria Annunziata, Treviso.



39. Cappella Malchiostro, Duomo di Santa Maria Annunziata, Treviso.



40. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Saint Roch in Glory*, 1564, oil on canvas, 240 x 360 cm (94 ½ x 141 7/10 inches), Sala del Albergo, Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice.



41. Pordenone, *Saint Sebastian, Saint Catherine, Saint Roch*, oil on canvas, c. 1535-38, 173 x 115 cm (68 1/10 x 45 1/5 inches), church of San Giovanni Elemosinario, Venice.



42. Titian, *Saint John the Almsgiver*, late 1540s?, oil on canvas, 264 x 148 cm (103 9/10 x 58 1/5 inches), church of San Giovanni Elemosinario, Venice.



43. Gian Pietro Silvio, *Marriage of the Virgin*, c. 1543, oil on canvas, 600 x 345 cm (236 1/5 x 135 4/5 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



44. Girolamo Dente (Girolamo di Tiziano), *Annunciation*, 1557-61, oil on canvas, 600 x 345 cm (236 1/5 x 135 4/5 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



45. View of the Sala dell'Albergo of the Scuola Grande della Carità, facing Silvios's *Marriage of the Virgin* and Dente's *Annunciation*, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



46. Pordenone, *Death of Saint Peter Martyr*, black chalk, pen, gray and blue wash with brush, heightened with white lead, on gray-blue paper, 56.1 x 40.5 cm (22 x 15 9/10), Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



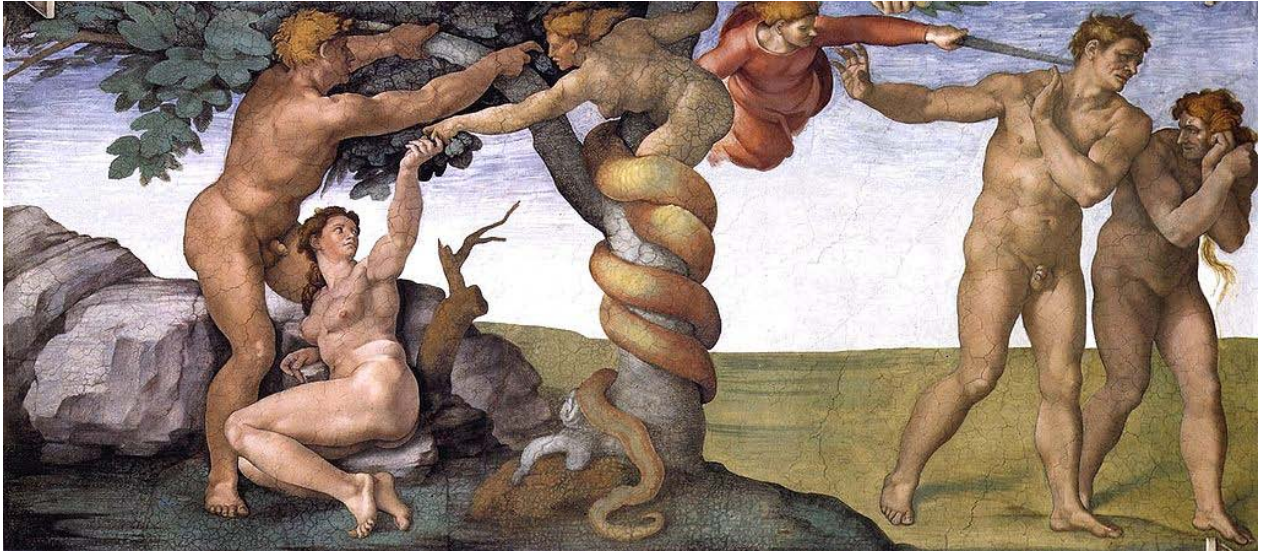
47. Giovanni Bellini, *Death of Saint Peter Martyr*, c. 1507, oil and tempera on wood, 99.7 x 165.1 cm (39 2/5 x 65 inches), National Gallery, London.



48. Titian, *Miracle of the Jealous Husband*, 1511, fresco, 340 x 185 cm (133 4/5 x 72 4/5 inches), Scuola del Santo, Padua.



49. Michelangelo, *The Temptation of Adam and Eve*, c. 1510, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican.



50. Martino Rota after Titian, *Death of Saint Peter Martyr*, c. 1560, engraving, 40.1 x 27.2 cm (15 13/16 x 10 11/16 inches), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



51. Carlo Loth after Titian, *Death of Saint Peter Martyr*, 1691, oil on canvas, 570 x 330 (224 3/16 x 129 7/8 inches), church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice.



52. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Esther before Ahasuerus*, c. 1547-48, oil on canvas, 207.4 x 273 cm (81 3/5 x 107 1/2 inches), Royal Collection, Hampton Court.



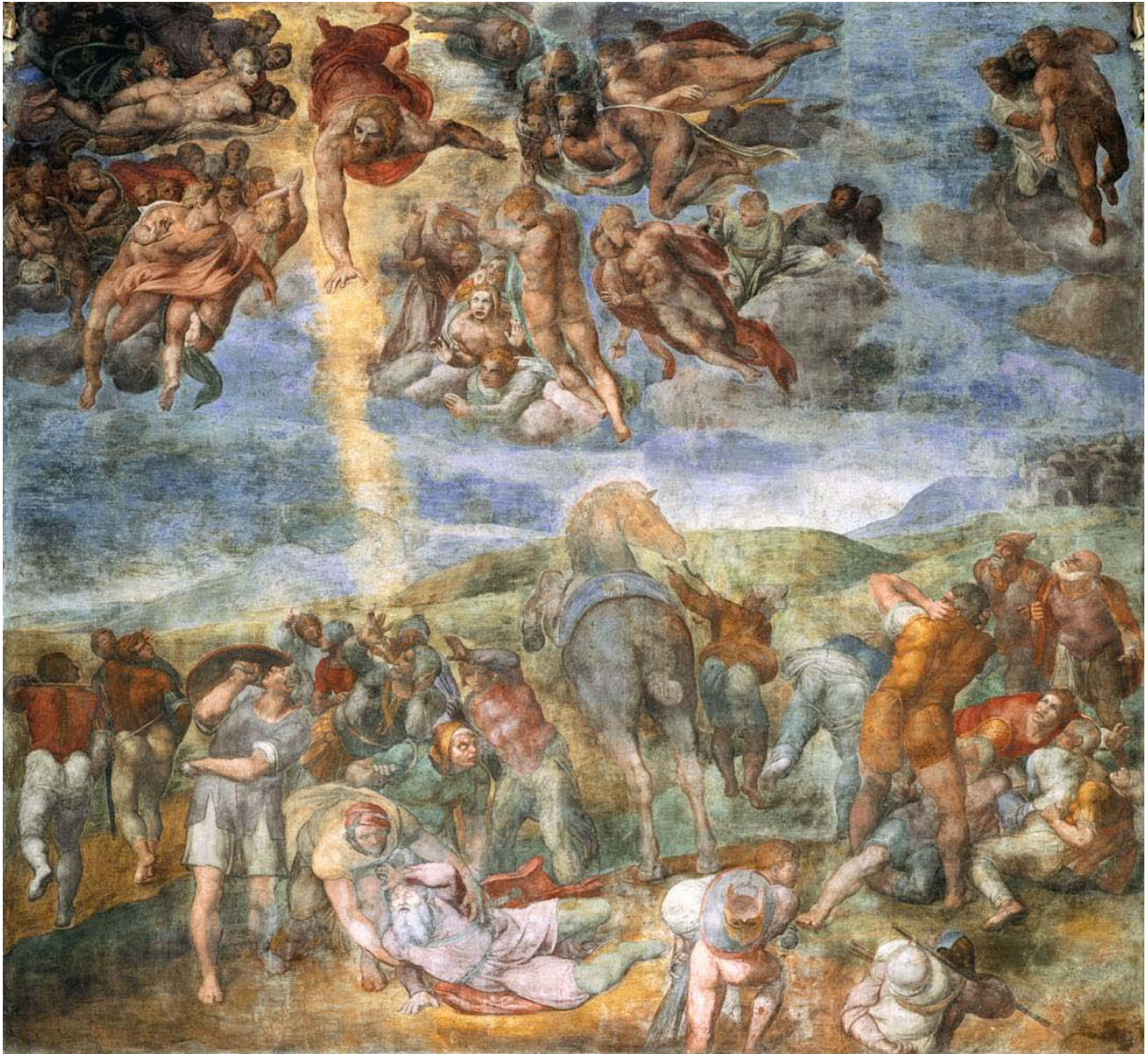
53. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Christ at the Pool of Bethesda*, 1559, oil on canvas, 238 x 560 cm (93 7/10 x 220 1/2 inches), church of San Rocco, Venice.



54. Francesco Salviati, *Visitation*, 1538, fresco, Oratory of San Giovanni Decollato, Rome.



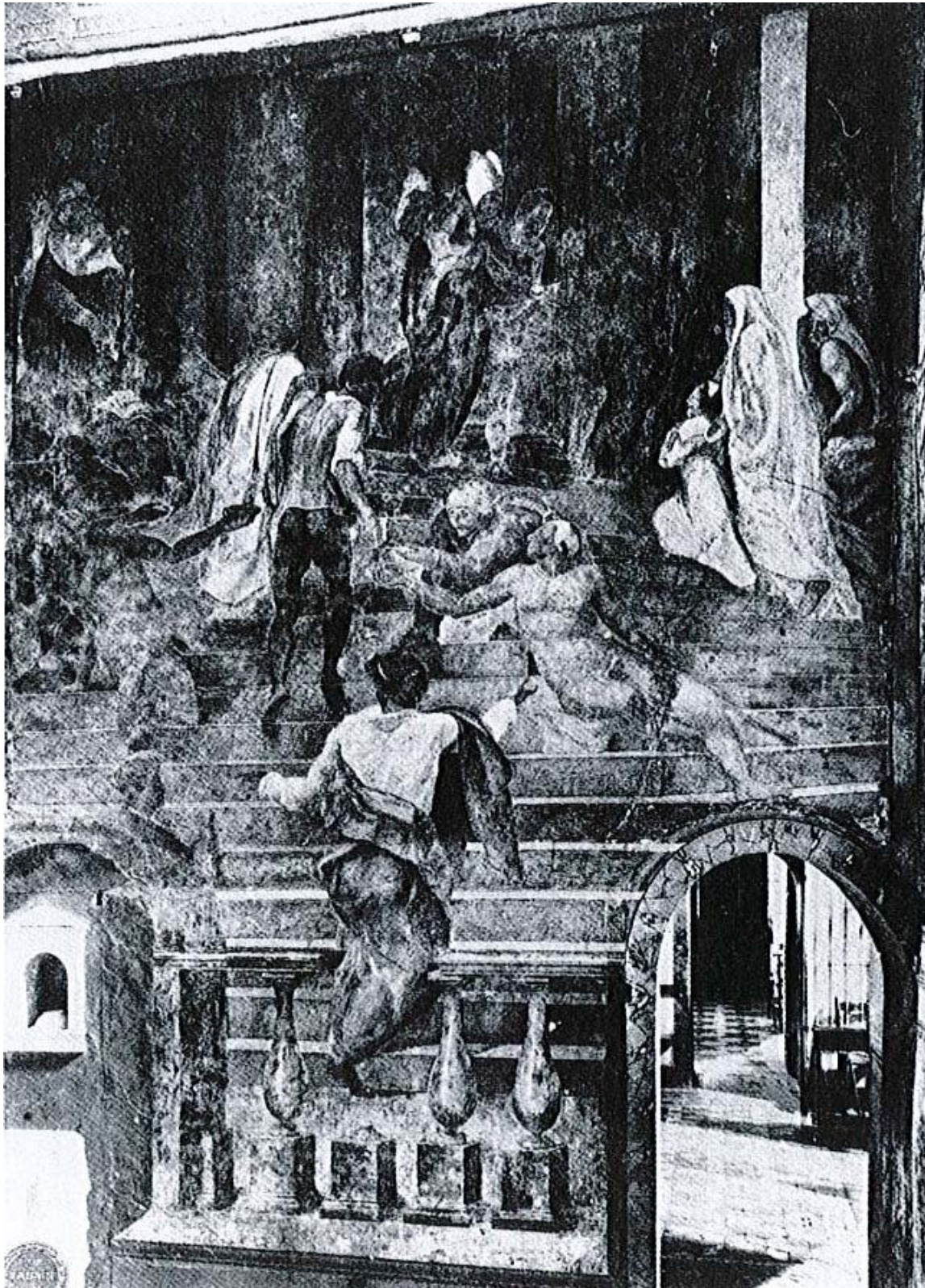
55. Michelangelo, *Conversion of Saint Paul*, 1542-45, fresco, Cappella Paolina, Vatican.



56. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, 1551-56, probably c. 1556, oil on canvas, 429 x 480 cm (168 9/10 x 189 inches), church of the Madonna dell'Orto, Venice.



57. Daniele da Volterra, *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, c.1550-52, fresco, Rovere Chapel, church of Trinità dei Monti, Rome.



58. Jacopo Tintoretto, Study of the Head of Michelangelo's Giuliano de' Medici, c. 1545-50, black chalk with white lead heightening on paper, 357 x 238 mm (14 x 9 2/5 inches), Christ Church Library, Oxford.



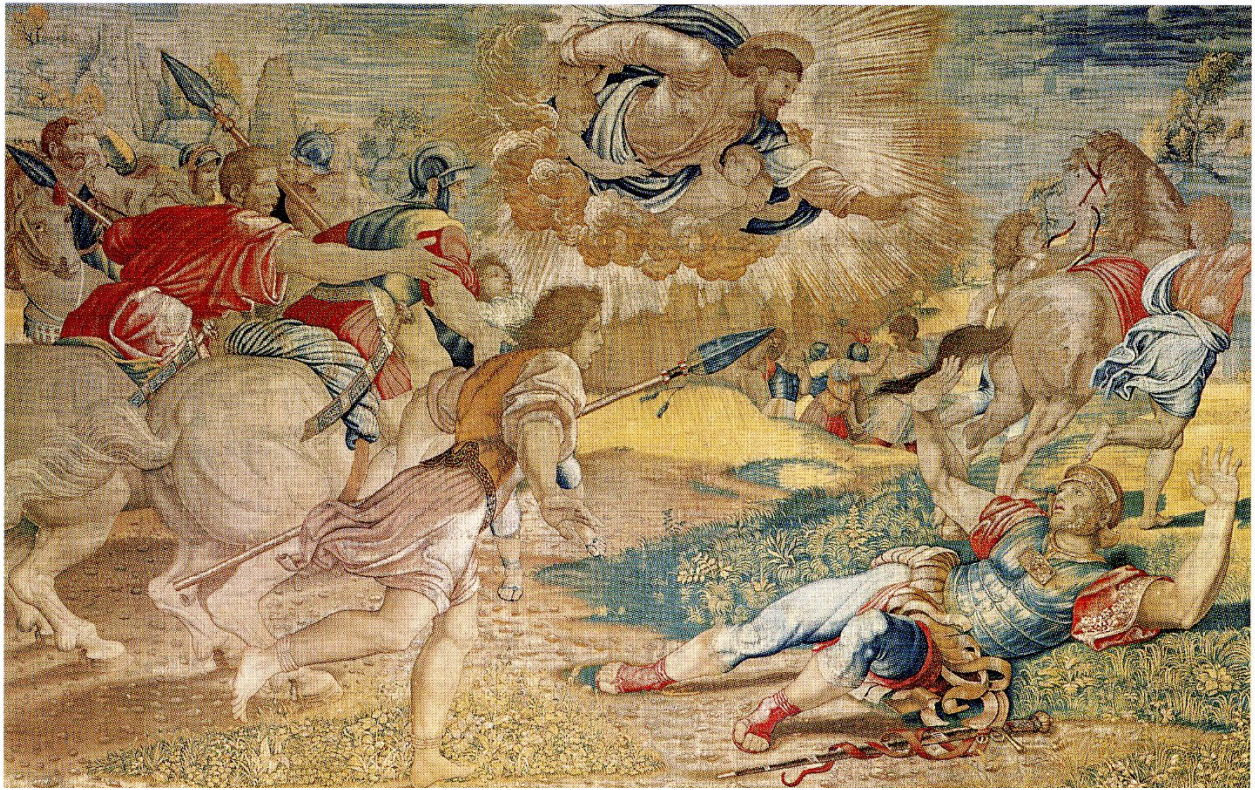
59. Andrea Medolla, called Schiavone, *Conversion of Paul*, c. 1542-44, oil on canvas, 224 x 294 cm (88 1/10 x 115 7/10 inches), Fondazione Querini-Stampalia, Venice.



60. Schiavone, *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1547, oil on canvas, 185 x 222 cm (72 4/5 x 87 2/5 inches), Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan.



61. After Raphael, *Conversion of Saint Paul*, 1517-19, tapestry, Vatican Museums, Vatican.



62. Titian, preparatory drawing for the *Battle of Spoleto*, c. 1538, charcoal and black chalk with white heightening on paper, 38.2 x 44.4 cm (15 x 17 ½ inches), Musée du Louvre, Paris.



63. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, early 1550s, oil on canvas, 360 x 200 cm (141 ³/₄ x 78 ³/₄ inches), Church of Santa Maria dei Carmini.



64. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Holy Family with Saints*, 1540, oil on canvas, 171.5 x 244 cm (67 ½ x 96 inches), private collection.



65. Bonifacio de' Pitati, *Holy Family with Saints*, c. 1530, oil on canvas, 152.4 x 204.5 cm (60 x 80 ½ inches), M. F. De Young Museum, San Francisco.



66. Michelangelo, *Prophet Ezekiel*, c. 1510, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican.



67. Michelangelo, *Medici Madonna*, 1521-34, marble, Sagrestia Nuova, church of San Lorenzo, Florence.



68. View of Titian's *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* within the Sala dell'Albergo, Scuola Grande della Carità, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



69. Titian, *Bacchus and Ariadne*, 1520-23, oil on canvas, 176.5 x 191 cm (69 2/5 x 75 1/10 inches), National Gallery, London.



70. Paris Bordone, *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge*, c. 1534-35, oil on canvas, 375.9 x 304.8 cm (148 x 120 inches), Gallerie dell'Academia, Venice.



71. Giovanni Bellini and workshop, *Assumption of the Virgin*, c. 1510, oil on panel, 350 x 190 cm (137 4/5 x 74 4/5 inches), San Pietro Martire, Murano.



72. Attributed to Stefano dell'Arzere, *Martyrdom of Saint Theodore*, c. 1552, oil on canvas, 387 x 414 cm (152 3/8 x 162 15/16 inches), church of San Salvador, Venice.



73. Paolo Veronese, *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian*, c. 1558, fresco, upper level, church of San Sebastiano, Venice.



74. Paolo Veronese, *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian*, c. 1565, oil on canvas, apse, 355 x 540 cm (139 7/10 x 212 1/2 inches), church of San Sebastiano, Venice.



75. Jacopo Sansovino, *Miracle of the Slave*, 1541-44, bronze, 48.3 x 65.4 (19 x 25 7/10 inches), Basilica di San Marco, Venice.



76. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Crucifixion*, 1565, oil on canvas, 518 x 1,224 cm (203 9/10 x 481 9/10 inches), Sala dell'Albergo, Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice.



77. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Crucifixion* (detail of the raising of the Good Thief's cross).



78. Palma il Vecchio and Paris Bordone, *Burrasca (Storm at Sea)*, c. 1527-33, oil on canvas, 362 x 408 cm (142 ½ x 160 3/5 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



79. Pordenone, *Consignment of the Ring to the Doge*, pen and brown ink and wash, heightened with white, on blue paper, before 1534, 36.1 x 25.4 cm (14 1/5 x 10 inches), Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Paris.



80. Raphael, *Sacrifice at Lystra*, 1515-16, gouache on paper (tapestry cartoon), 305 x 506 cm (120 x 199 1/5 inches), Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



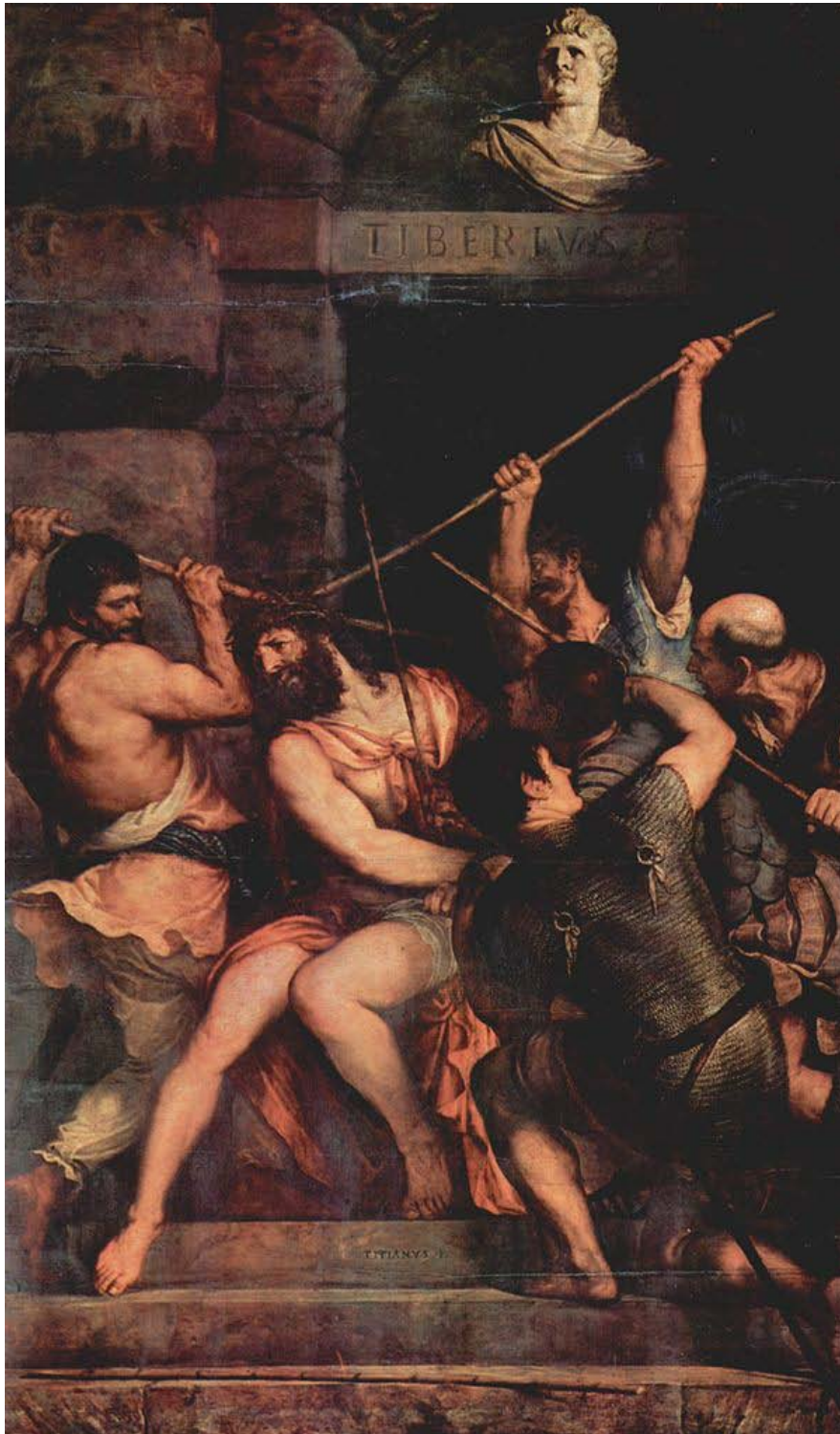
81. Raphael, *Expulsion of Heliodorus*, 1511-12, fresco, 750 cm wide (300 inches), Stanza di Eliodoro, Vatican Museums, Rome.



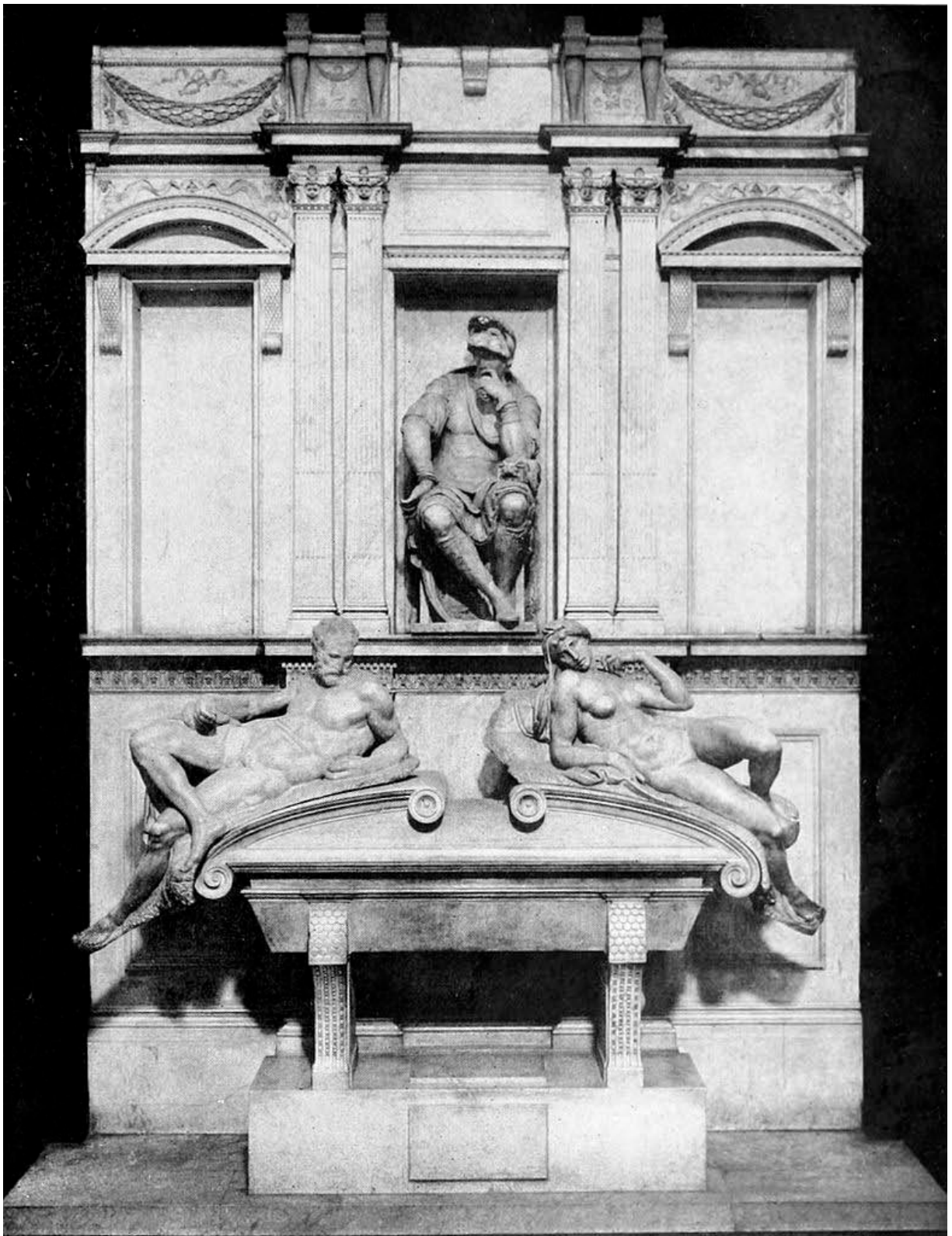
82. Jacopo Sansovino, *Miraculous Apparition of Saint Mark*, 1541-44, bronze, Basilica di San Marco, Venice.



83. Titian, *Crowning with Thorns*, 1540-42, oil on panel, 280 x 181 cm (110 ¼ x 71 ¼ inches), Musée du Louve, Paris.



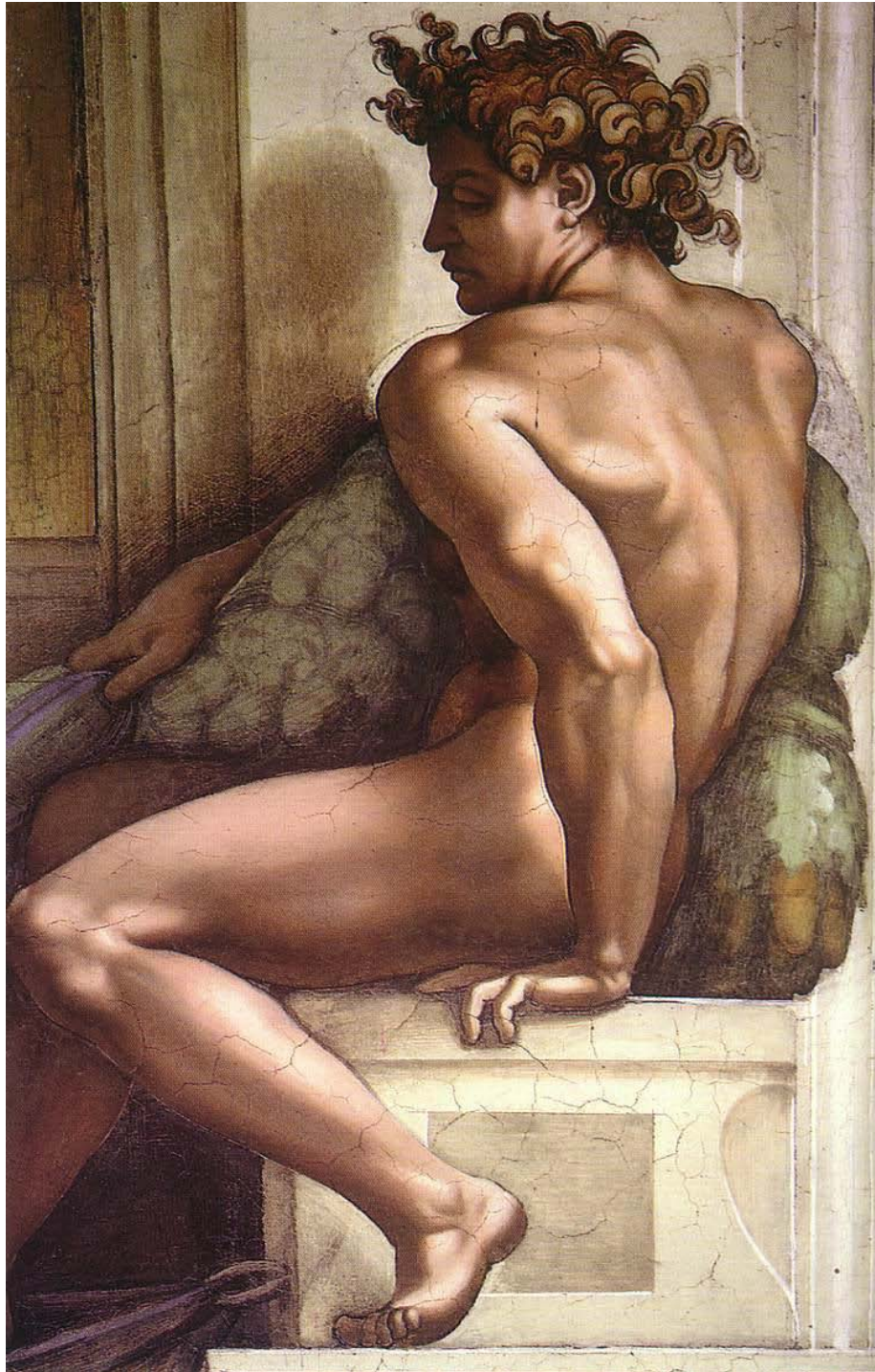
84. Michelangelo, *Tomb of Lorenzo de' Medici*, with statues of *Dusk and Dawn*, 1520-34, marble, New Sacristy, church of San Lorenzo, Florence.



85. Tintoretto, *Study of Michelangelo's Crepuscolo*, 1550s?, black chalk with white on blue laid paper, 37 x 27.1 (14 ½ x 10 3/5 inches), Gabinetto dei Disegni e Stampe, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



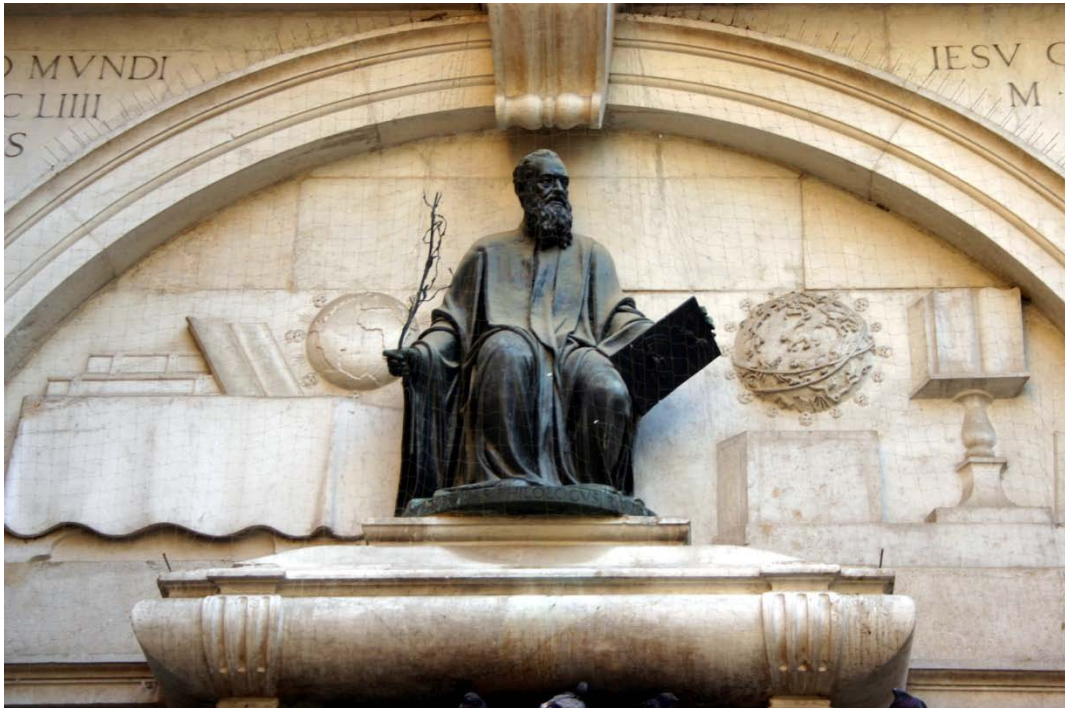
86. Michelangelo, *Ignudo* (to the upper right of the Prophet Joel), c. 1509-10, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican.



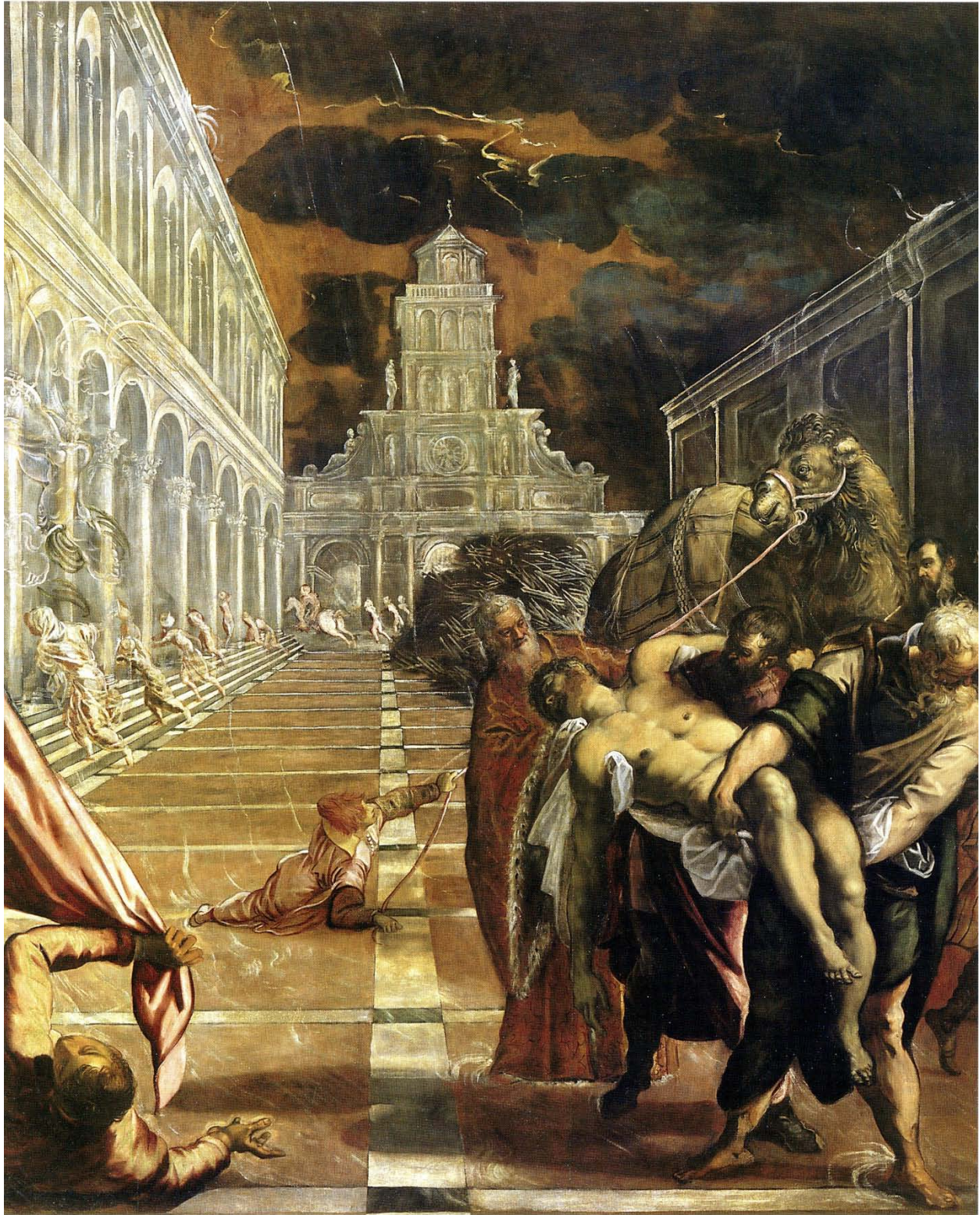
87. Jacopo Sansovino, Loggetta, 1538-45 (reconstructed 1902-12), Piazza San Marco, Venice.



88. Jacopo Sansovino and Alessandro Vittoria, Façade of San Zulian, Venice, 1554-47.



89. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Theft of the Body of Saint Mark*, 1562-66, probably c. 1564, oil on canvas, 403.8 x 320 cm (159 x 126 inches), Gallerie dell' Accademia, Venice.



90. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Miracle of the Slave* (detail of the figure in gray).



91. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Saint Roch Cures the Plague Victims*, 1549, oil on canvas, 307 x 673 cm (120 4/5 x 264 9/10 inches), church of San Rocco, Venice.



92. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Saint Martial in Glory with Saints Peter and Paul*, 1549, oil on canvas, 376 x 181 cm (148 x 71 1/5 inches), church of San Marziale, Venice.



93. Jacopo Tintoretto and studio, *Saint Mark Rescues a Saracen*, 1562-66, probably c. 1564, oil on canvas, 398 x 337 cm (156 7/10 x 132 3/5 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



94. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Christ Washing the Feet of his Disciples*, 1548-49, oil on canvas, 210 x 533 cm (82 3/5 x 209 4/5 inches), Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



95. Titian, *Ecce Homo*, 1543, oil on canvas, 242 x 361 cm (95 1/5 x 142 1/10 inches), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



96. Titian, *Ecce Homo*, c. 1546, oil on slate, 68 x 53 cm (26 7/10 x 20 4/5 inches), Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



97. Unidentified Venetian painter (follower of Schiavone?), *So-called Portrait of Caterina Sandella*, third quarter of the 16th century, oil on canvas, 100 x 114 cm (39 1/3 x 44 4/5 inches), private collection, Bellinzona.



98. View of the Sala dell'Albergo, Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice.



99. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Finding of the Body of Saint Mark*, 1562-66, probably c. 1564, oil on canvas, 405 x 405 cm (159 2/5 x 159 2/5 inches), Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.



100. Anton Maria Zanetti after Jacopo Tintoretto, *Aurora (Dawn)*, 1760, engraving, 18 x 18.4 cm (7 x 7 1/5 inches), British Museum, London.



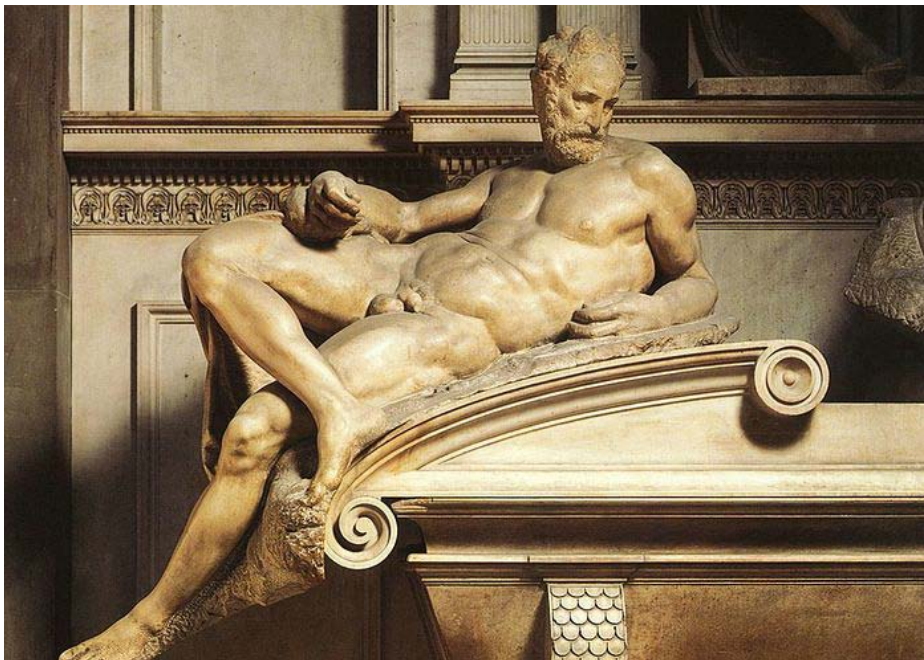
101. Anton Maria Zanetti after Jacopo Tintoretto, *Crepuscolo (Dusk)*, 1760, engraving, 19 x 18.4 cm (7 2/5 x 7 1/5 inches), British Museum, London.



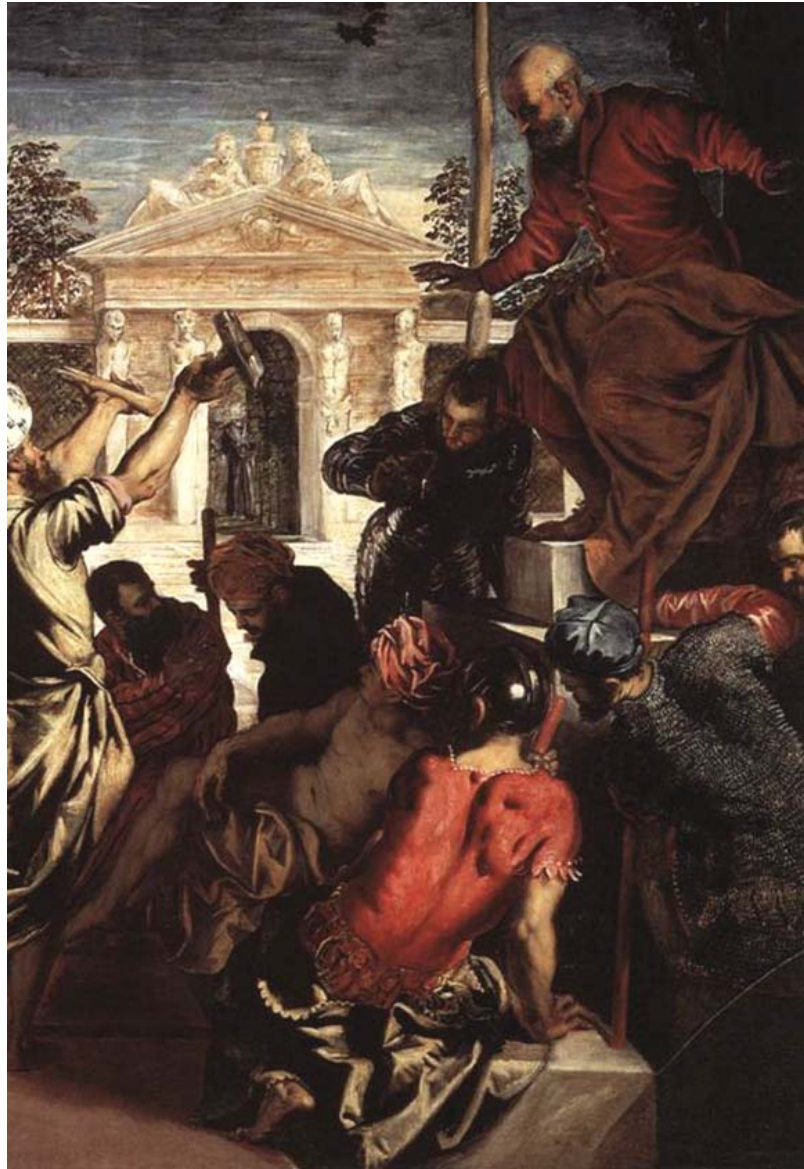
102. Michelangelo, *Aurora (Dawn)*, 1526-34, marble, Sagrestia Nuova, church of San Lorenzo, Florence.



103. Michelangelo, *Crepuscolo (Dusk)*, 1526-34, marble, Sagrestia Nuova, church of San Lorenzo, Florence



104. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Miracle of the Slave* (detail of the lounging figures at right).



105. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Creation of the Birds, Fish, and Animals*, 1550-53, oil on canvas, 151 x 258 cm (59 2/5 x 101 1/2 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



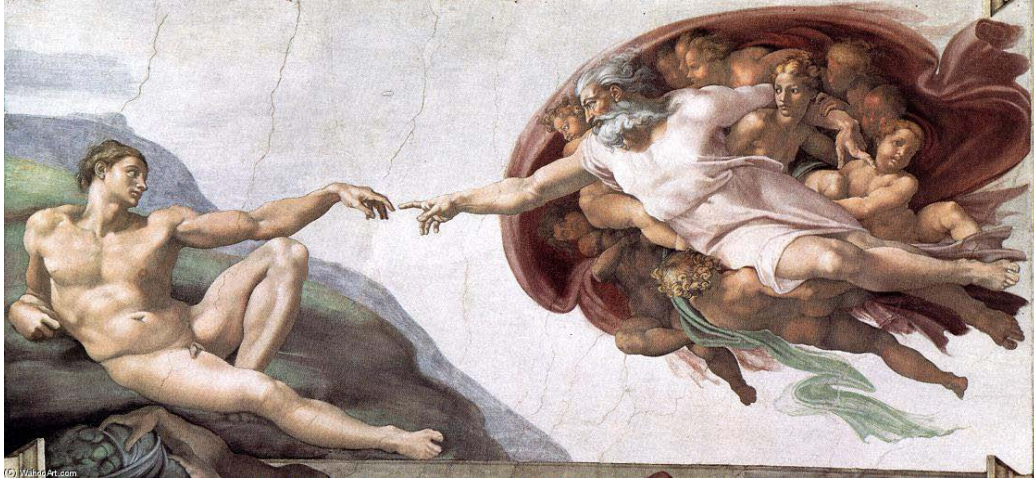
106. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Temptation of Adam and Eve*, 1550-53, oil on canvas, 152.4 x 223.5 cm (60 x 88 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



107. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Cain Killing Abel*, 1550-53, oil on canvas, 198.1 x 152.4 cm (78 x 60 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



108. Michelangelo, *Creation of Adam*, 1511, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican.



109. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Deposition of Christ*, mid-1550s, oil on canvas, 225 x 294 cm (88 ½ x 115 7/10 inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



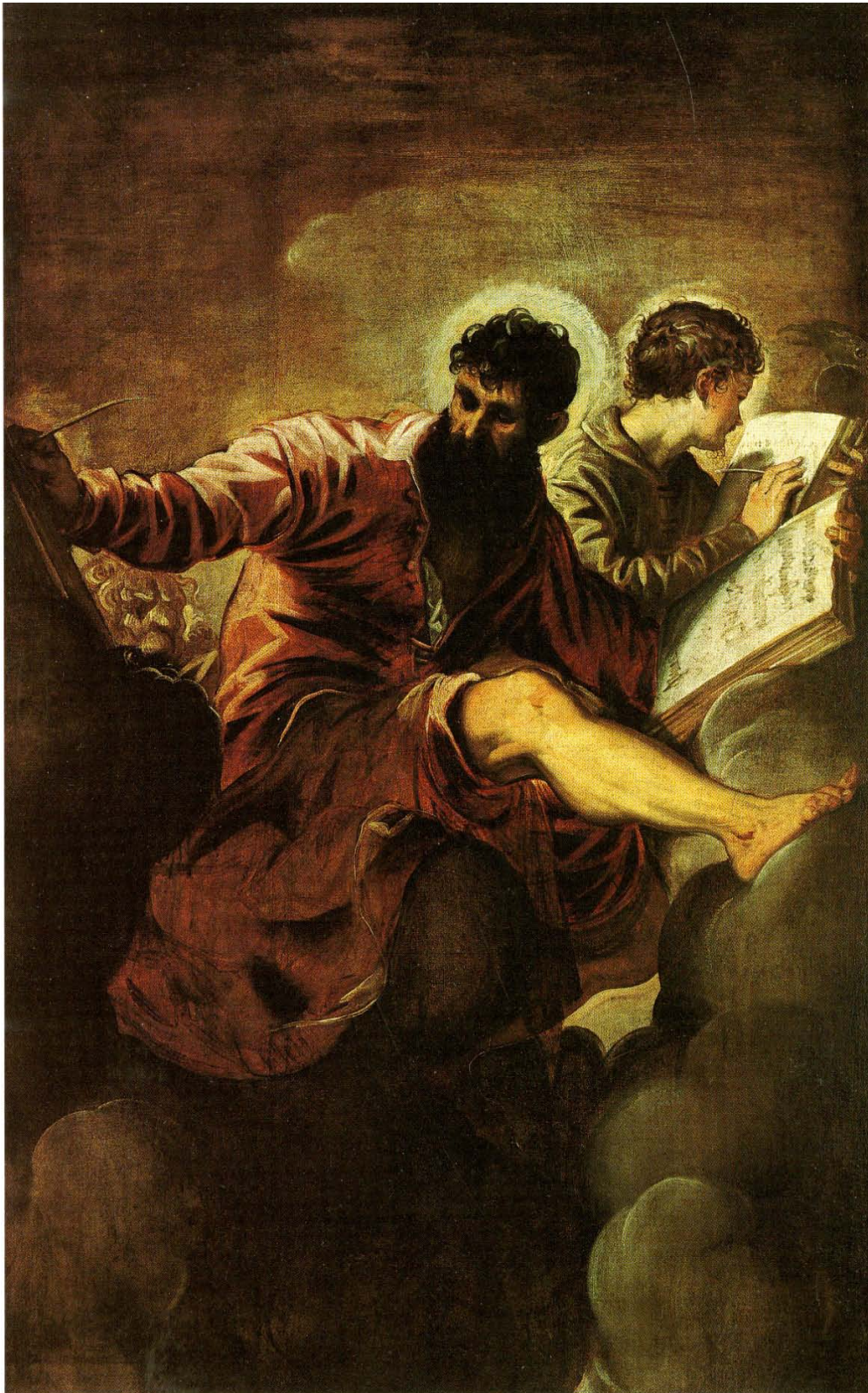
110. Daniele da Volterra, *Deposition of Christ*, c. 1541-45, fresco, Cappella Orsini, church of SS. Trinità dei Monti, Rome.



111. Michelangelo, *Pietà*, 1497-1500, marble, Basilica di San Pietro, Vatican.



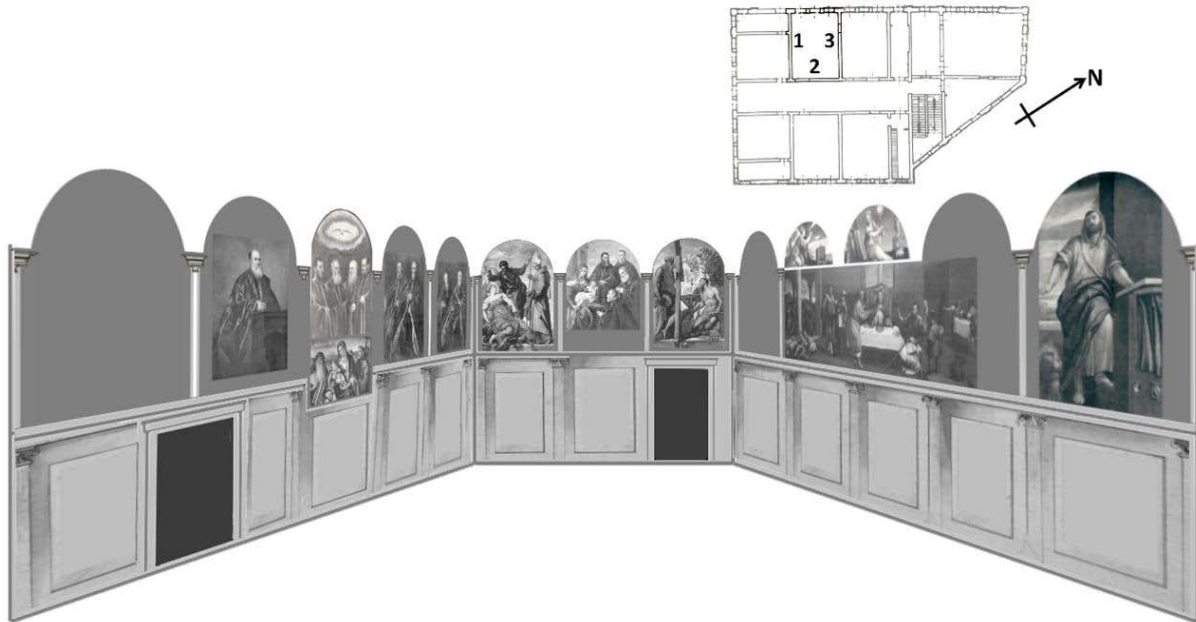
112. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Saint Mark and Saint John*, 1557, oil on canvas, 257 x 150 cm (101 1/10 x 59 inches), church of Santa Maria del Giglio, Venice.



113. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess*, 1552, oil on canvas, 226 x 146 cm (89 x 57 ½ inches), Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.



114. Reconstruction of the first room of the Magistrato del Sale, Palazzo dei Camerlenghi (reconstruction by Philip Cottrell).





1 – South-west wall: **A**) Palma Giovane, *St James* (lost); **B, C & D**) *Hope, Faith* (cat. 91, c. 1533-6) & *Charity* (lost); **E**) Bonifacio / Cernotto, *Supper at Emmaus* (cat. 90, c.1533-6, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan); **F**) *St. Mark* (cat. 41, c.1529-30).

2 – South-east wall: **G**) Tintoretto, *Sts. Louis, George and the Princess* (1551-2); **H**) Tintoretto, *The Virgin and Child and Four Magistrates* (1552-3); **I**) Tintoretto, *Sts. Jerome and Andrew* (c.1552).

3 – North-east wall: **J**) School of Tintoretto, *Portrait(s) of Magistrate(s)* (lost); **K**) School of Tintoretto, *Portrait of a Magistrate* (1560s/70s?); **L**) School of Tintoretto, *The Holy Spirit and Four Magistrates* (1560s/70s?); **M**) Benedetto Diana, *Virgin and Child with Sts. Jerome and Francis* (c. 1500); **N & O**) School of Tintoretto, *Portraits of Magistrates* (1560s/70s?).

All works are Bonifacio and workshop, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, unless otherwise stated.

115. Bonifacio de' Pitati, *Saints Matthew and Saint Louis IX, King of France*, c. 1538-39, 216 x 139 cm, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, on deposit with the Fondazione Giorgio Cini since 1953.



116. Enea Vico after Parmigianino, *Venus, Vulcan and Mars*, 1543, engraving, 23 x 32.7 cm (9 1/16 x 12 4/5 inches).



117. After Michelangelo, *Sleeping Cupid*, marble, Methuen Collection, Corsham Court, Wiltshire.



118. Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo, *Self-Portrait* (formerly *Gaston de Foix*), c. 1525, oil on canvas, 91 x 123 cm (35 4/5 x 48 2/5 inches), Musée du Louvre, Paris.



119. Titian, *Saint George*, c. 1516-17?, panel, 124.6 x 65.7 cm (49 x 25 4/5 inches), private collection, Venice.



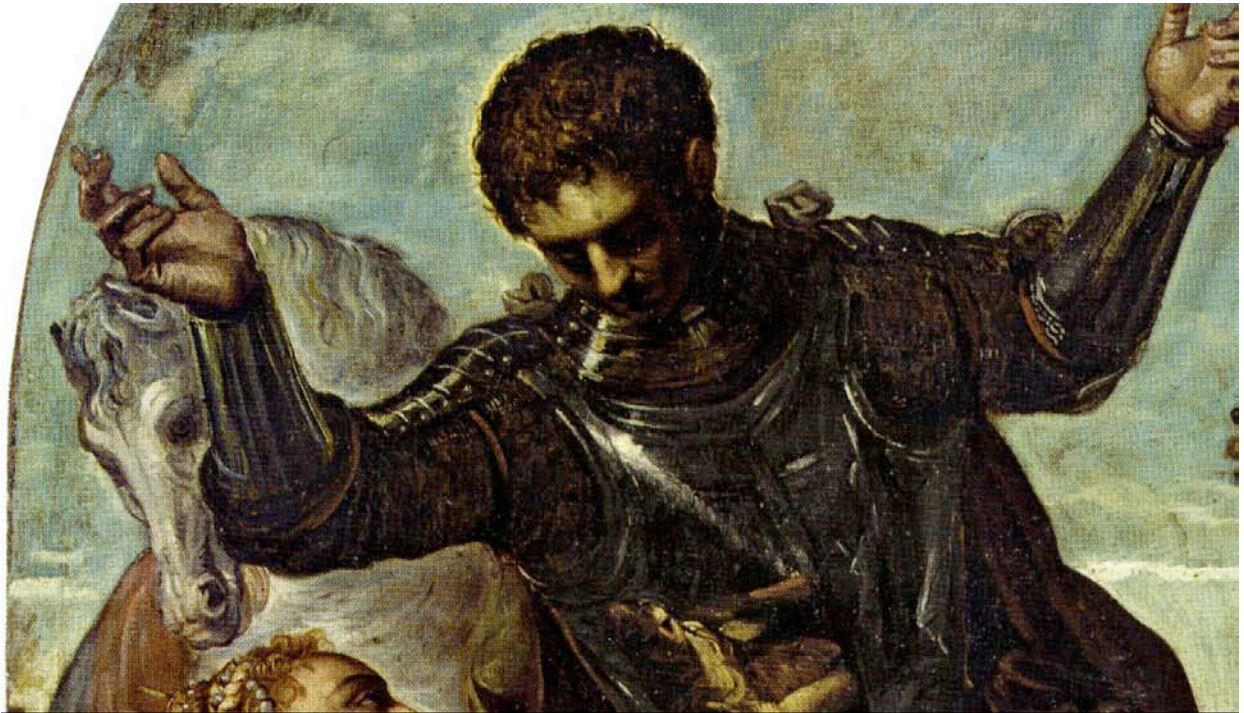
120. Giorgione, *Boy with the Helmet (Francesco Maria della Rovere?)*, c. 1500?, oil on canvas, transferred from panel, 73 x 64 cm (28 7/10 x 25 1/10 inches), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



121. Andrea del Verrocchio, *Equestrian Monument of Bartolommeo* , 1480-96, bronze, 395 cm high (155 ½ inches), cast by Alessandro Leopardi, Campo SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice.



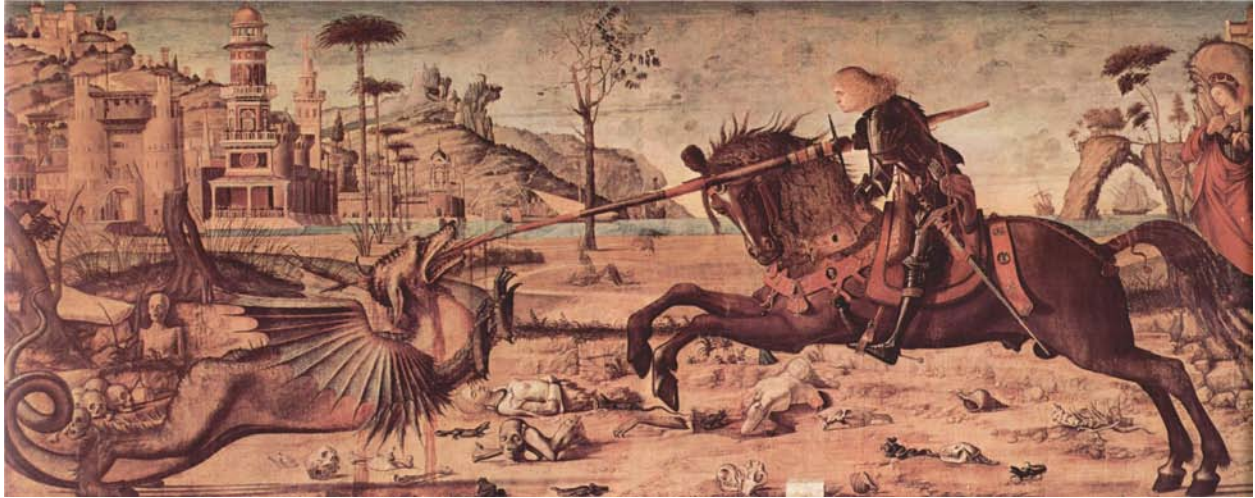
122. Detail of the reflection of the armor in Tintoretto's *Saint George, Saint Louis, and the Princess*.



123. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Saint George and the Dragon*, c. 1553, oil on canvas, 158.3 x 100.5 (62 3/10 x 39 1/2 inches), National Gallery, London.



124. Carpaccio, *Saint George and the Dragon*, c. 1502-5, oil on canvas, 141 x 360 cm (55 ½ x 141 7/10 inches), Scuola San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice.



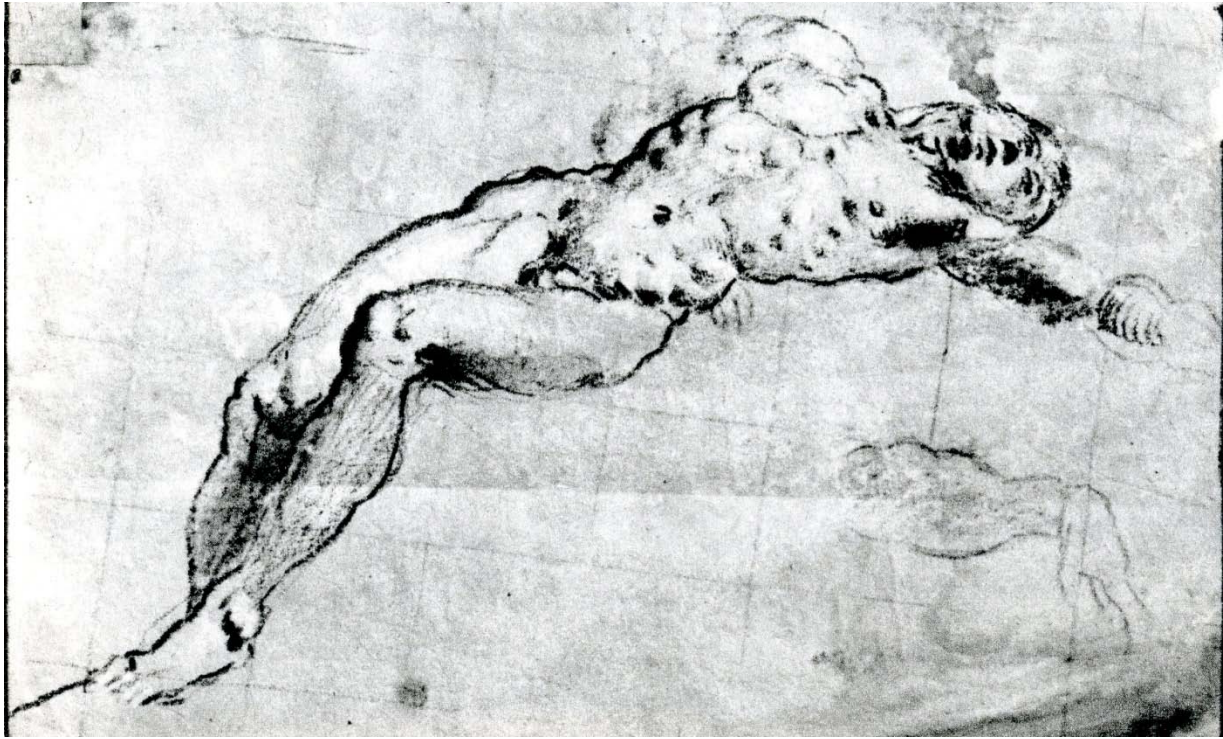
125. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Baptism of Christ*, 1578-81, oil on canvas, 538 x 465 cm (211 4/5 x 183 inches), Sala Superiore, Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venice.



126. Pietro da Salò, *Saint George and the Dragon*, 1551-52, marble, Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni.



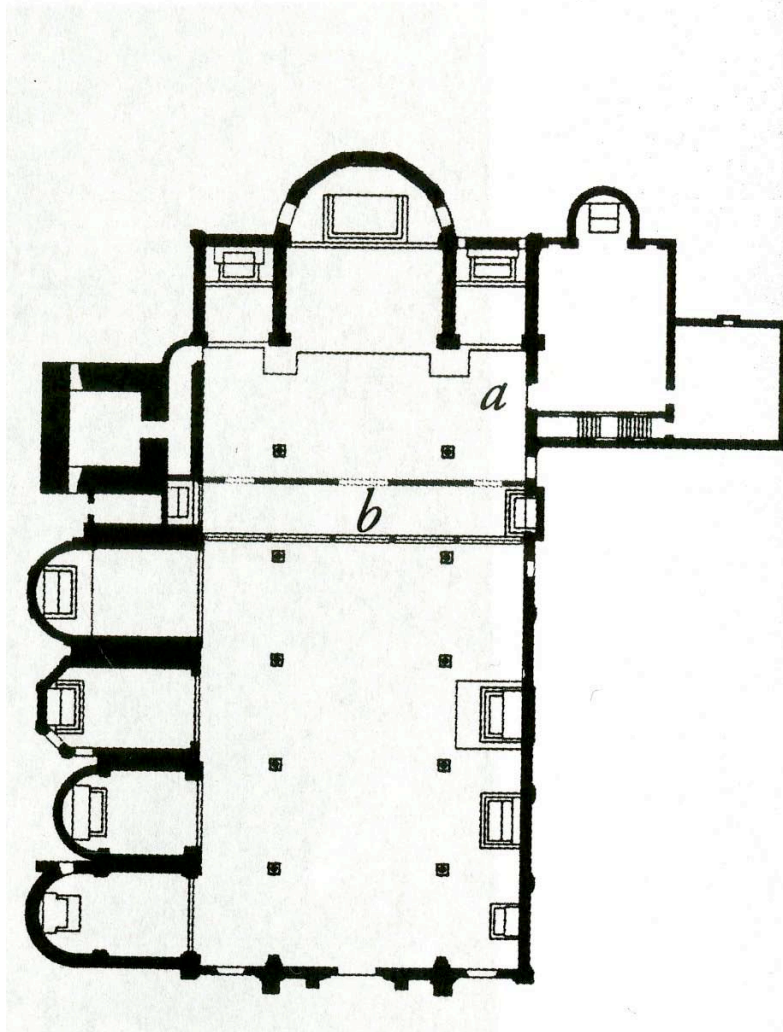
127. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Study of a Male Nude on his Back*, c. 1553, black chalk on faded blue paper, 25.4 x 41.6 cm (10 x 16 3/8 inches), Musée du Louvre, Paris.



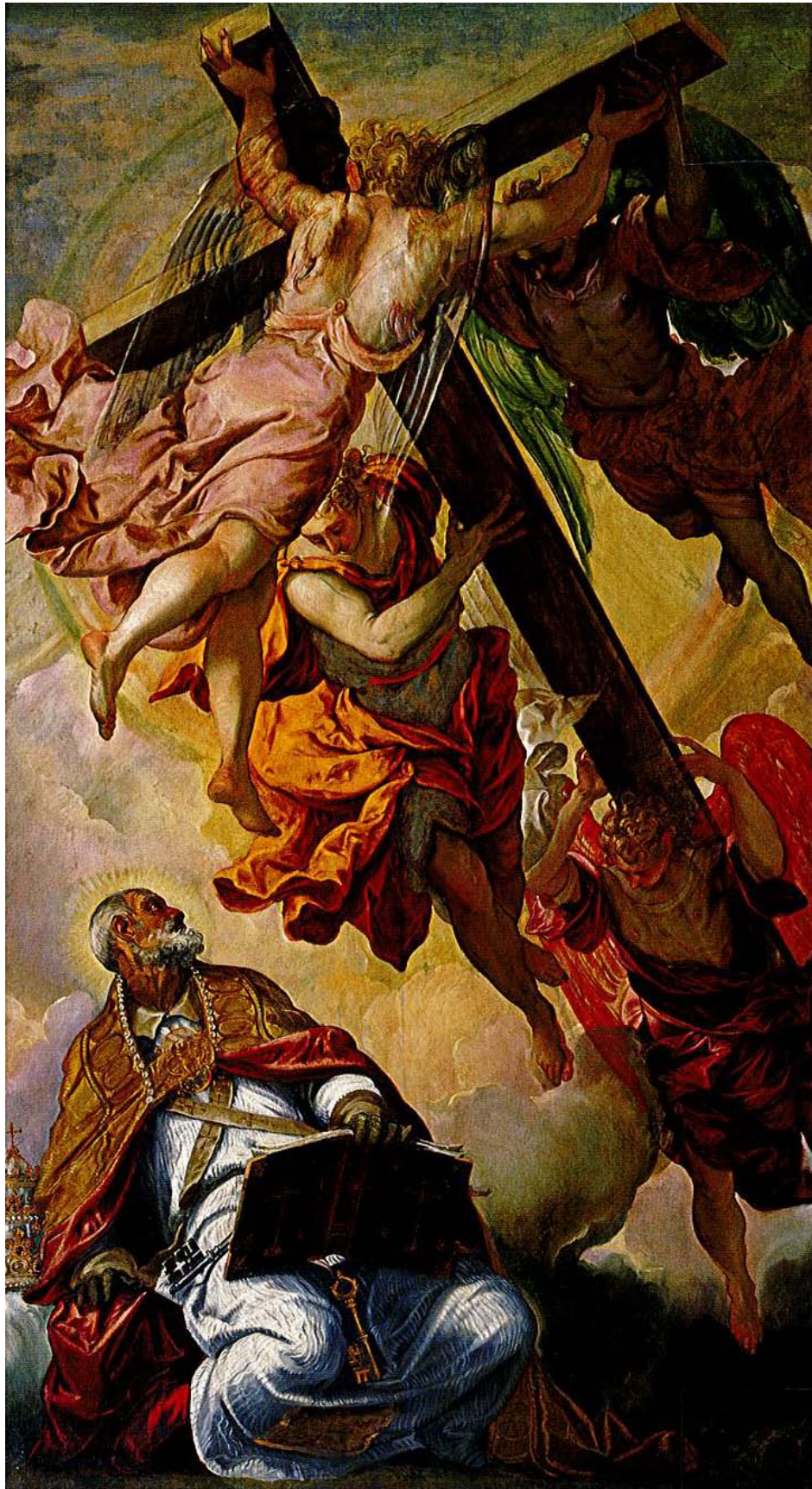
128. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Susannah and the Elders*, 1555-6, oil on canvas, 146 x 193.6 cm (57 ½ x 79 1/5 inches), Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, Vienna.



129. Plan of the Madonna dell'Orto (from Massimo Bisson, *Meravigliose macchine di giubilo*, p. 209), with the placement of the Renaissance organ marked as "a."



130. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Apparition of the Cross to Saint Peter*, 1551-56, probably c. 1556, oil on canvas, 500 x 245 cm (197 x 96 ½ inches), church of the Madonna dell'Orto, Venice.



131. Jacopo Tintoretto, *Beheading of Saint Paul*, 1551-56, probably c. 1556, oil on canvas, 430 x 240 cm (169 1/5 x 94 1/2 inches), church of the Madonna dell'Orto, Venice.



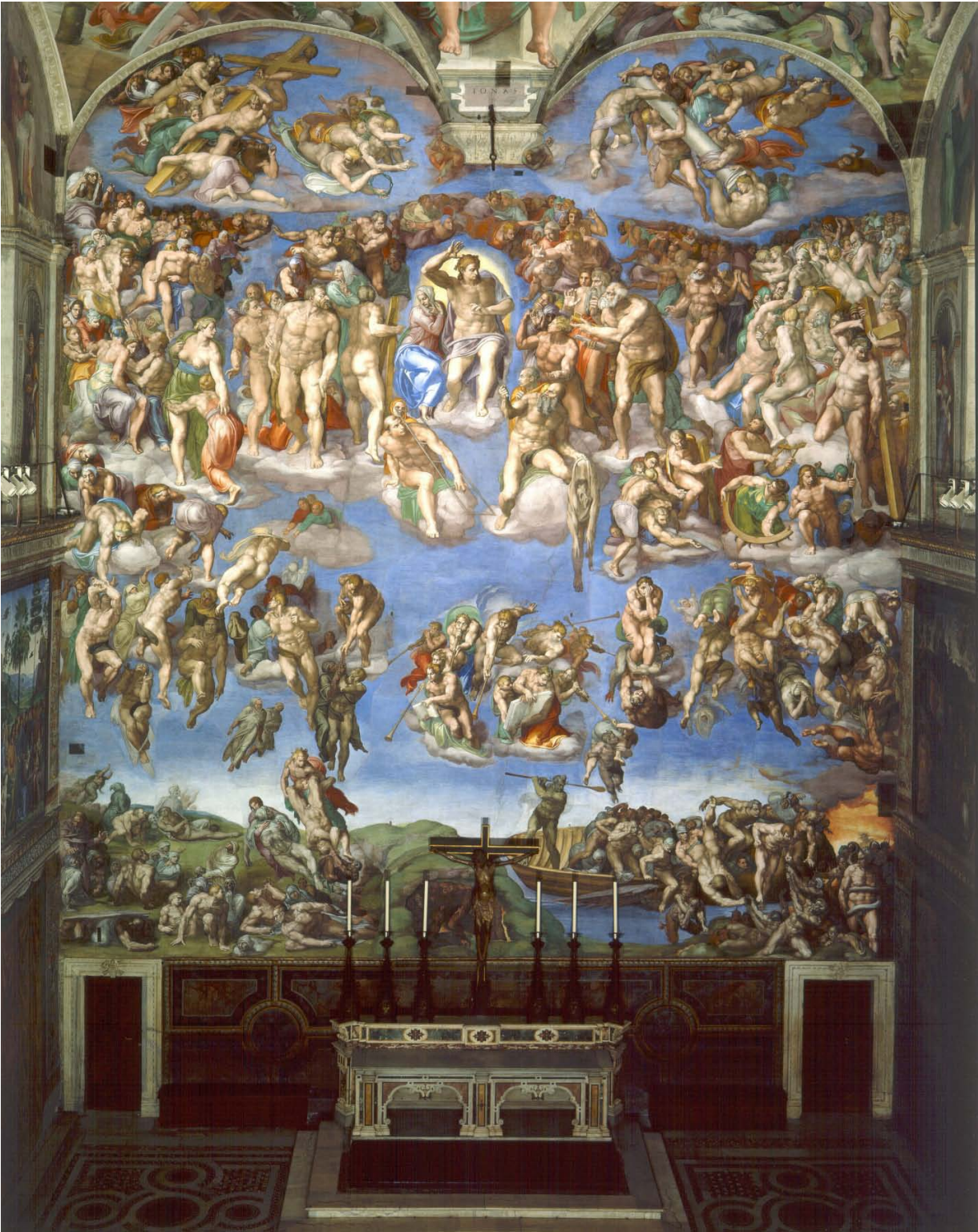
132. Andrea Zucchi after a drawing by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo after Jacopo Tintoretto, *The Beheading of Saint Paul* (“Decolazione di S. Cristoforo Opera del Tintoretto”), c. late 1710s, engraving, Biblioteca, Palazzo Ducale, Venezia.



133. Michelangelo, *Jonah*, 1511-12, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican.



134. Michelangelo, *Last Judgment*, 1536-41, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican.



135. Michelangelo, *Last Judgment* (detail of the upper left lunette).



136. Lorenzo Lotto, *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, dated 1525, church of San Michele al Pozzo Bianco, Bergamo.



137. Paolo Veronese, *Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist, Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint Catherine* (*Giustiniani Altarpiece*), c. 1551, oil on canvas, church of San Francesco della Vigna, Venice.



138. Titian, *Madonna di Ca' Pesaro*, 1519-26, oil on canvas, church of the Frari, Venice.



139. Tintoretto, *Saint Augustine Healing the Lame*, c. 1549-50, oil on canvas, Musei Civici, Pinacoteca di Palazzo Chiericati, Vicenza.



140. Veronese, *Jupiter Expelling the Vices*, 1554-55, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



141. Ceiling of the nave of the church of San Sebastiano, Venice.



142. Veronese, *Triumph of Mordechai*, 1555-56, oil on canvas, church of San Sebastiano, Venice.



143. Interior of the Reading Room, Libreria Marciana, Venice.



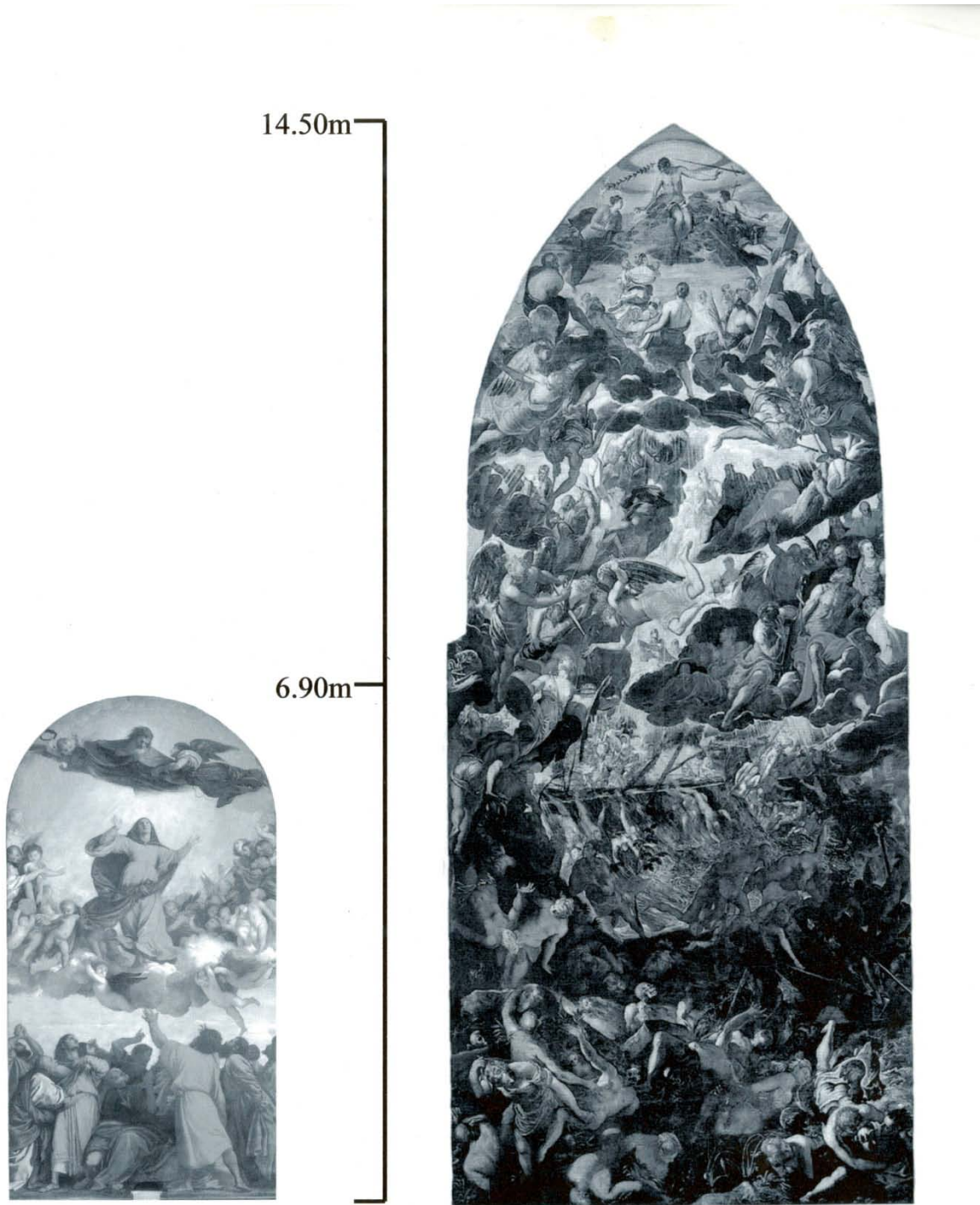
144. Veronese, *Allegory of Music*, 1556-57, oil on canvas, Libreria Marciana, Venice.



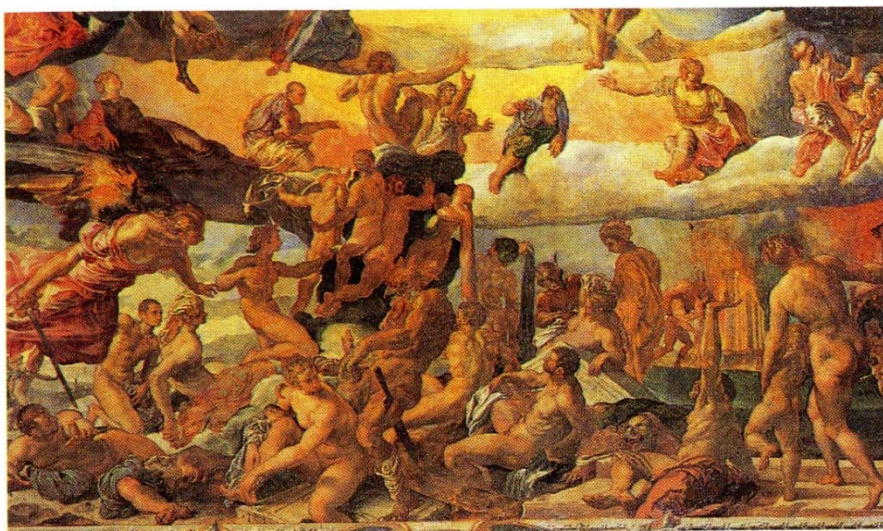
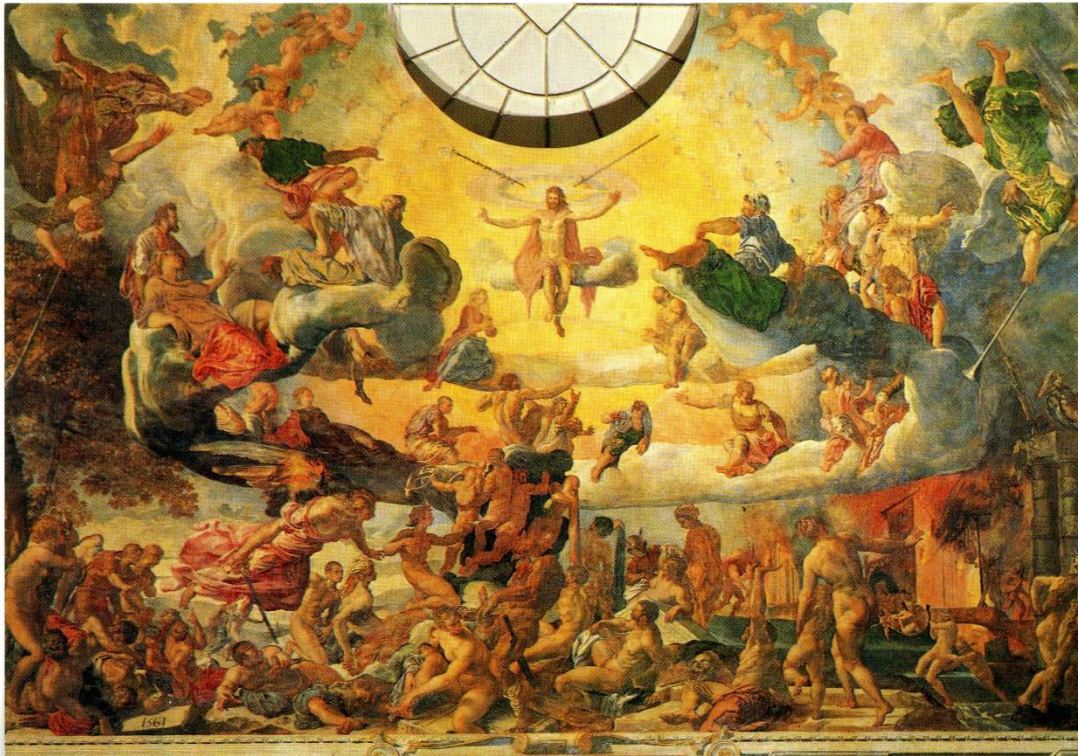
145. Veronese, *Saint Menna*, c. 1559-60, oil on canvas, Galleria Estense, Modena.



146. Scale comparison of Titian's *Assunta* (church of the Frari, Venice) and Jacopo Tintoretto's *Last Judgment* (church of the Madonna dell'Orto, Venice).



147. Northern Painter, *Last Judgment*, 1561, oil on plaster, 119 x 111.3 cm (46 4/5 x 43 4/5 inches), Abbey of Farfa, Italy.



148. Antonio Vassilacchi, called Aliense, *Resurrection*, 1586, oil on canvas, approximately 6 meters tall (19 3/5 feet), church of San Marziale, Venice.



149. View of the right apse of San Marziale, showing Aliense's *Resurrection*. Photo courtesy of Ralph Lieberman.



150. Interior of San Zaccaria, Venice. Photo courtesy of Ralph Lieberman.



151. Andrea Palladio, Interior of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice. Photo courtesy of Ralph Lieberman.



152. View of the right nave of San Giorgio Maggiore featuring Jacopo Bassano's *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1590-1, oil on canvas). Photo courtesy of Ralph Lieberman.



153. Right wall of the Cappella Maggiore in San Giorgio Maggiore featuring Jacopo Tintoretto and Workshop's *Last Supper* (1592-94, oil on canvas). Photo courtesy of Ralph Lieberman.



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