

VERONESE'S BATHING WOMEN: SUSANNA, DIANA, AND BATHSHEBA

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## **ABSTRACT**

Emily C. Crockett: Veronese's Bathing Women: Susanna, Diana, and Bathsheba  
(Under the direction of Tatiana C. String)

In a 200-year period roughly corresponding to the early and late Renaissance in Italy from 1450-1650, paintings of the stories of Susanna and the Elders, Diana and Actaeon, and David and Bathsheba, were popular across artistic expression. This thesis examines the work of Venetian Renaissance painter, Paolo Caliari, known as Veronese, by comparing his depictions of these three subjects with established artistic iconography. Through this context it can be argued that he has used the themes of the vulnerable woman, the gaze of males, and the bath, in order to challenge early modern judgement of Susanna, Diana, and Bathsheba. By embracing ambiguity and ambivalence in his paintings, Veronese has highlighted the deliberate role and responsibility of the male characters, thus absolving the women of culpability in the disastrous consequences following the moments that he has painted. In interrogating these images, this thesis seeks to advance a more nuanced understanding of Veronese's oeuvre.

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## INTRODUCTION

In a celebratory poem of 1660 on Venetian painting, Marco Boschini, author, painter, and engraver, declared “this is not painting, it is magic that casts a spell on people who see it” in response to the work of Paolo Veronese.<sup>1</sup> Veronese’s oeuvre is indicative of an artist who excelled not only in the color palette that he is often praised for, but also the full narrative he creates by his inclusion of small details. In the early literature on Veronese, many dismissed the magic he casts as an inadvertent byproduct of his work with color. While his rich Venetian color is certainly enticing, this thesis will bring attention to the thought-provoking tension Veronese has included in his mythological and biblical paintings of bathing women. Veronese is quoted as having said, “We painters use the same license as poets and madmen.”<sup>2</sup> Though this quotation relates to his *Feast in the House of Levi* (1573), it speaks to Veronese’s ruminations about the subjects of his paintings and the subsequent narratives he created.

In reviewing the literature on Veronese, several key themes emerge: early art historians such as Stearns (1901), Osmond (1927), and Fiocco (1928), largely dismissed Veronese as inferior because his compositions were not as compelling as Titian’s and he lacked the drama of Tintoretto.<sup>3</sup> Despite these perceived inadequacies, Veronese was frequently praised for his color

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<sup>1</sup>Marco Boschini, *La Carta del Navegar pittoresco*, curated by Anna Pallucchini (Venice, Italy: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 1966).

<sup>2</sup>“Noi pittori ci pigliamo la licenza che si pigliano i poeti e i matti.” Richard Friedenthal, *Letters of the Great Artists* (London, UK: Thames and Hudson, 1963), 113-118.

<sup>3</sup>Frank Preston Stearns, *Four Great Venetians; an Account of the Lives and Works of Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto, and Il Veronese* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1901); Percy Herbert Osmond, *Paolo Veronese: His Career and Work, etc.* (London, UK: Sheldon Press, 1927); Giuseppe Fiocco, *Paolo Veronese 1528-1588* (Bologna, Italy: Casa Editrice Apollo, 1928).



palette. Most of the early monographs focus on his large-scale feast scenes, particularly his *Feast in the House of Levi* due to the 1867 discovery by Armand Baschet of the archival transcriptions of Veronese's inquisition trial.<sup>4</sup> This offered a contemporary view of the artist, but has also led to a rather narrow view of his work, as it is the only extant primary source that includes Veronese's own voice on his work.<sup>5</sup> During the first half of the twentieth century, interest in Veronese remained somewhat stagnant with the literature being described as 'exiguous' by Michael Levey.<sup>6</sup> This changed in 1968 when Remigio Marini published the first catalogue raisonné of Veronese's paintings and paved the way for more than fifteen notable publications on Veronese alone, and many more on the triumvirate of the Venetian Renaissance, Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese. While many of these writings subscribe to similar conventions of the early publications focusing almost exclusively on the feast scenes and New Testament religious paintings, a few scholars have explored the particularity of his portraits and drawings, as well as the mostly familial workshop that was responsible for several paintings after his death in 1588.<sup>7</sup>

I provide this general literature review to set up one of the central premises of this thesis: that Paolo Veronese's representations of Diana, Susanna, and Bathsheba have largely been neglected in art historical scholarship. The scholarship is 'exiguous' at best. Thus, I rely heavily on the catalogue *Veronese: Gods, Heroes and Allegories* from the 2004 exhibition, *Véronèse Profane*, at the Musée du Luxembourg. This exhibition was one of the first full-scale

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<sup>4</sup>John Garton, *Grace and Grandeur: The Portraiture of Paolo Veronese* (London, UK: Harvey Miller, 2008), 10.

<sup>5</sup>Edward Grasman, "On Closer Inspection: The Interrogation of Paolo Veronese," *Artibus et Historiae* 30, no. 59 (2009): 125.

<sup>6</sup>Michael Levey, "An Early Dated Veronese and Veronese's Early Work," *The Burlington Magazine* 102, no. 684 (1960): 105.

<sup>7</sup>Richard Cocke, *Veronese's Drawings: With a Catalogue Raisonné* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); Alessandro Bettagno, *Paolo Veronese, disegni e dipinti* (Vicenza, Italy: N. Pozza, 1988).

investigations into Veronese beyond his feast scenes. More recently, the 2012 exhibition *Paolo Veronese: A Master and his Workshop in Renaissance Venice* at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota produced a catalogue that continues the scholarly work started in *Veronese: Gods, Heroes and Allegories*.<sup>8</sup> It is these scholars who have rescued Veronese from his reputation as a mere colorist, and have begun to illuminate a complex and detailed artist willing to go beyond artistic convention. It is this frame of reference through which I commence my analysis of Veronese's paintings of Diana, Susanna, and Bathsheba.

In a 200-year period roughly corresponding to the early and late Renaissance in Italy from 1450-1650, scenes of Diana and Actaeon and Bathsheba and David emerge across media roughly thirty times each; Susanna and the Elders is the most popular, appearing closer to fifty times. This collection of almost one hundred works of art is indicative of a cultural interest in this theme of the vulnerable woman within the intimate space of her bath.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the popularity indicates that Veronese was working within an established contemporary iconography of artistic renderings of these stories. Between 1560-1585, the prime of Veronese's career before his untimely death, the artist completed two paintings of Diana and Actaeon, one painting of Bathsheba, and five paintings of Susanna and the Elders. Veronese was prolific during his lifetime, completing more than 300 paintings. While these eight paintings account for only a small fraction of those 300, it is necessary to note that they are strikingly different from his most common themes: religious scenes such as the Holy Family, Resurrection, or feast scenes and

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<sup>8</sup>Virginia Brilliant, Frederick Ilchman, David Rosand, Diana Gisolfi, Blake De Maria, Rembrandt Duits, Maria H. Loh, et al. *Paolo Veronese: A Master and His Workshop in Renaissance Venice*, ed. Virginia Brilliant, Frederick Ilchman (Sarasota, FL: Scala, 2012).

<sup>9</sup>I use vulnerable here as well as later in this thesis to refer to the dangers each of these women faced by presuming the space that they chose to bathe in was private. Both Susanna and Bathsheba are at the mercy of their onlooker, and while it seems Diana may not be in the same position, it is consistently emphasized that she had no access to her weapons. Furthermore, gender roles in early modern Italy maintain an inherent inferiority of women to men, and thus they are susceptible to the infringements and immoralities perpetrated by each of the men in their stories.

large-scale celebratory works of the Venetian state.

The comparison of Diana, Susanna, and Bathsheba has not been made before, and while certainly there are differences, they are all linked by their vulnerability in the context of cleansing their bodies. Additionally, they are the only major biblical and mythological stories to include a woman bathing as the primary plot point. In fact, the only other major story that comes to mind that includes bathing is Judith, who briefly takes a public bath with her maid to entice the Assyrians.<sup>10</sup> Unlike Judith, the stories of Diana, Susanna, and Bathsheba, the act of taking a bath, becomes the catalyst for the subsequent suffering in the story. Finally, these three women are all connected by the disruption of their baths by the presence of a man and thus the introduction of the gaze of males.<sup>11</sup>

Susanna's story appears in Chapter 13 of the Old Testament book of Daniel which details the disastrous results of two prying, lecherous elders of the community who accost chaste Susanna as she bathes in her private garden. These men tell Susanna that if she does not sleep with both of them, they will accuse her of adultery with a fictional young man. She refuses and is about to be put to death for adultery when the biblical hero Daniel intervenes, saving her life and condemning the elders. In the myth of Diana, the virginal goddess of the hunt, the Moon, fertility and nature is relaxing in her grotto with her nymphs when an unsuspecting hunter, Actaeon,

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<sup>10</sup>Caryn Tamber-Rosenau, "Biblical Bathing Beauties and the Manipulation of the Male Gaze: What Judith Can Tell Us about Bathsheba and Susanna," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 33, no. 2 (2017): 55–72. There is an additional story of Bilhah and Reuben in the book of Jubilees that was known as the "Lesser Genesis" Sara M. Koenig, *Isn't This Bathsheba?: A Study in Characterization* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications), 38.

<sup>11</sup>I purposefully use the gaze of males here instead of male gaze to differentiate from Laura Mulvey's specific concept of the male gaze. While that will play a part in this thesis it is not the monolithic male gaze that links the three women together, but the individual male or males that appear in their stories, and spy on their bath.

stumbles upon the scene.<sup>12</sup> Diana punishes him for his transgression by turning him into a stag who is then hunted and killed by his own hunting dogs. Bathsheba is mentioned several times throughout the Bible, but the story illustrated by Veronese is in Chapter 11 of 2 Samuel. Bathsheba bathes on the roof of her home, as would have been common during the rainy spring season of Jerusalem, when she is observed by King David. Taken by her beauty, David sends a messenger to summon her to his bedchamber. Fearing the wrath of the king, she commits adultery and sleeps with David, and becomes pregnant with his child. To conceal his sin, David sends Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, to the front lines of an unnamed war where he is killed by the opposing side. David marries Bathsheba who is now a widow, but God punishes him for his misdeeds by killing the child of their forbidden union just a few days after Bathsheba gives birth.

These stories and the texts from which they originate are the basis of the eight paintings discussed in this thesis, and yet in many of these paintings, Veronese has deviated from conventional iconography to produce works that require a closer reading. Maria H. Loh writes an essay in *Paolo Veronese: A Master in His Workshop in Renaissance Venice* that provides an illuminating lens with which to analyze the deviations that Veronese has included.<sup>13</sup> Loh argues that Veronese's work is not ambiguous but ambivalent, "present[ing] the interpreter with two clear but contradictory positions." She goes on to write, "Veronese's paintings offer the spectator an enchanted but vertiginous space of visual pleasure, a fraught surface upon which stories of

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<sup>12</sup>While the canonical text by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* indicates that Actaeon truly found the goddess accidentally, other texts from antiquity, specifically that of Nonnus, relates that Actaeon has been purposefully looking at the goddess and her nymphs. I believe the text from Nonnus is the text that Veronese used in creating his 1560s *Diana and Actaeon* at the MFA Boston.

<sup>13</sup>Maria H. Loh, "Veronese's Story of the Eye" in *Paolo Veronese: A Master in His Workshop in Renaissance Venice*, ed. Virginia Brilliant, Frederick Ilchman (Sarasota, FL: Scala Publishers, 2012), 71-85. In this particular article she is referring to Veronese's *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (c. 1570), *Repentant Magdalene* (c. 1565-75), *Venus and Adonis* (1570s), *Diana and Actaeon* (c. 1560-65), and *Actaeon and Diana with Nymphs* (1560s), but notes that the entirety of Veronese's work include ambiguity that is almost ineffable.

love and death are told and upon which fantasies of domination and surrender take place.”

Building upon Loh’s work, this thesis will argue that in creating his paintings of bathing women, Veronese has challenged the conventional early modern portrayal of seductress, femme fatale, and adulteress that had typically been ascribed to Susanna, Diana, and Bathsheba.

In addition to Loh, I will take methodological cues from the work of Caryn Tamber-Rosenau and Mieke Bal. Tamber-Rosenau contrasts the stories of Susanna and Bathsheba that have frequently been cast as “seductive” with the story of Judith, who Tamber-Rosenau argues knowingly uses her feminine wiles in order to trap the Assyrian general, Holofernes.<sup>14</sup> Though this thesis will not address Judith, notably this is one of the only scholarly works that actively brings Bathsheba and Susanna together for comparison. Additionally, I will use Mieke Bal’s concept of “envisioning” or creating an image while reading, to inform my analysis of the text from which these paintings derive, and thus subsequently influence the way in which educated men would have understood them.<sup>15</sup>

Through the eight paintings mentioned above, this thesis will interrogate the Venetian interest in the subject of the beautiful woman bathing by exploring Veronese’s use of the themes of the vulnerable woman, the gaze of males, and the bath. Each chapter below will focus on the stories of Susanna, Diana, and Bathsheba respectively, while keeping the recurring themes at the forefront. Additionally, Veronese’s time at the Villa Barbaro and his relationship with the Barbaro brothers seems to be fundamental to these paintings, and will play an overarching role in their analysis.

This thesis aims to illustrate that Veronese’s paintings of bathing women are more than

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<sup>14</sup>Tamber-Rosenau, “Biblical Bathing Beauties and The Manipulation of the Male Gaze,” 55-72.

<sup>15</sup>Mieke Bal and Sherry Marx-MacDonald, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

an excuse to paint a nude woman, as is so often the case, but rather an exercise in purification that shifts the blame from the assailable women to the men who spy on them. While still maintaining an erotic gloss, Veronese has included details that challenge the stereotypical opinion that these women are inviting the men's gazes and thus are responsible for the calamity that befall the men.<sup>16</sup> In the paintings of Susanna, he seems to remind the viewer she is a mother, and mindful of the law. In the Diana painting, it seems that Veronese has deliberately used a literary source that shifts the responsibility to Actaeon from the "cruel" Diana. Finally, the painting of Bathsheba reminds the viewer of the authority David holds over Bathsheba. In interrogating the ambiguity Veronese has included in these paintings, I hope to advance the aforementioned scholarship to nuance the understanding of Veronese's oeuvre.

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<sup>16</sup>For this thesis, I will use the term erotic in such a way that refers to the "aesthetics of desire," as well as something that was meant to arouse that desire in a *civilized* manner. In Bette Talvacchia's *Taking Positions* she notes that her project was in part to differentiate between "the nature of what was considered perilously obscene" and "what was acceptably erotic." As such when using erotic, I refer to the acceptable desire that is produced from many of these paintings. By presenting salacious lust within the form of high the story of a virtuous woman, the desire becomes erotic and thus acceptable. While erotic refers to the aesthetics, I use sexual later on to emphasize physicality and aggressiveness. Bette Talvacchia, *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), ix.

## CHAPTER 1: SUSANNA AND THE ELDERS

“Are you such fools, you sons of Israel? Have you condemned a daughter of Israel without examination and without learning the facts? Return to the place of judgment. For these men have borne false witness against her.”<sup>17</sup> Daniel’s criticism of the people at the end of Chapter 13 of the Book of Daniel echoes the sentiment detected in Veronese’s paintings of Susanna and the Elders that will be analyzed in this chapter. While conventional on first glance, a closer examination of Veronese’s depiction of the most prolific theme of the three stories discussed, reveals an ambiguity which challenges the early modern view of Susanna as a seductress or temptress.<sup>18</sup>

The story of Susanna and the Elders appears in Chapter 13 of the Book of Daniel and starts with the introduction of a young woman named Susanna who was married to a very rich man, Joakim.<sup>19</sup> Daily, many elders of the community would visit with Joakim, and when they

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<sup>17</sup>Daniel 13:48-49 (Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition) The Vulgate was still commonly used in cinquecento Venice, particularly as the Council of Trent of 1545-1563 established The Vulgate as canon. For all of the in-text citations of the biblical verses I will use the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition, however I will also include The Douay-Reims English translation of the vulgate in the footnotes. In this case verses 48 and 49 read “But he standing in the midst of them, said: Are ye so foolish, ye children of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth, you have condemned a daughter of Israel? Return to judgment, for they have borne false witness against her.” Edmund Sutcliffe, “The Council of Trent on the *Authenticity* of the Vulgate,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 8:XLIX, no. 193-194 (1948): 35-42.

<sup>18</sup>Babette Bohn, “Rape and the Gendered Gaze: Susanna and the Elders in Early Modern Bologna,” *Biblical Interpretation* 9, no. 3 (2001): 259.

<sup>19</sup>The biblical story of Susanna and the Elders is included in the book of Daniel by the Roman Catholic church, but is considered apocryphal by Protestants.

would leave, Susanna would retreat to her husband's gardens. Every day when she would take refuge in the gardens, two powerful elders would watch her, as they had become infatuated with her. The story goes that Susanna decided to bathe in the garden one hot day, and sent her two maids away to fetch oils and ointments. After the maids had left, and the door to the garden was closed, the two elders accosted Susanna. These men threatened Susanna by telling her that if she did not have sex with each of them, they would publicly declare that they had witnessed her adultery with a young man in the garden. Susanna says, "I am hemmed in on every side. For if I do this thing, it is death for me; and if I do not, I shall not escape your hands. I choose not to do it and to fall into your hands, rather than to sin in the sight of the Lord."<sup>20</sup> Having come to her decision she calls out to her maids, who come running and then are told by the elders what they "witnessed" Susanna doing.

Susanna was brought to trial and based on the testimonies of the elders, condemned to death. As Susanna was being led away, God spoke to young Daniel to seek the truth, so he spoke up with the criticism that started this chapter and asked to cross-examine the elders separately. He asked each of the elders under what tree they saw Susanna and the fictitious young man. One elder replied "a mastic tree" which is an evergreen shrub while the other answered "a holm tree" or an evergreen oak. Using this evidence, Daniel condemned the elders, and set Susanna free.

As noted in the introduction, the story of Susanna and the Elders was the most popular of the three bathing narratives in Italy from 1450-1650, with more than fifty different artists taking on the depiction of Susanna. In quattrocento Italy, Susanna was depicted as a chaste wife to

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<sup>20</sup>Daniel 13:22-23 (RSVCE) The Douay-Reims translation reads, "Susanna sighed, and said: I am straitened on every side: for if I do this thing, it is death to me: and if I do it not, I shall not escape your hands. But it is better for me to fall into your hands without doing it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord."



emulate, and was frequently found on *cassoni* panels that accompanied a bride to her new husband's home.<sup>21</sup> This was more than likely because the story was seen in many catacomb paintings, as well as an exegesis by Hippolytus of Rome in which he explained the story as an allegory for the persecution of Christ.<sup>22</sup> However, it seems that in the time period I have isolated, 1450-1650, there is a shift to the seductive Susanna.<sup>23</sup> This shift is particularly apparent in Veronese's contemporary, Jacopo Tintoretto and his painting of *Susanna and the Elders* in 1555 (Figure 1.1). With reference to Tintoretto's painting, Robert Hahn writes that "Susanna has never been more beautiful, more bemused, or more naked."<sup>24</sup> With their clothed bodies, Veronese's Susannas stand in stark contrast to the work of his contemporaries.

Edward Olszewski points to a change in Venetian legal code as an explanation for a resurgence of interest in Susanna's story in cinquecento Venice.<sup>25</sup> In accordance with the role of Daniel in the Susanna story, in 1537 the Council of Ten "appointed a *balia* to question witnesses in advance of their court appearance."<sup>26</sup> This was in direct relation to the establishment of the

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<sup>21</sup>A *cassone* is a marriage chest found in Italian culture from the late middle ages onward.

<sup>22</sup>Edward Olszewski, "Expanding the Litany for Susanna and the Elders," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 26, no. 3 (2007): 42.

<sup>23</sup>Bohn, "Rape and the Gendered Gaze," 262; Cristelle Baskins, "'La Festa di Susanna': Virtue on Trial in Renaissance Sacred Drama and Painted Wedding Chests," *Art History* 14 (1991): 329-44.

<sup>24</sup>Robert Hahn, "Caught in the Act: Looking at Tintoretto's Susanna," *Massachusetts Review* 45, no. 4 (2004): 634. This quote also points out a distinction in language between the naked and the nude as put forth by Kenneth Clark. This thesis will use naked and nude subscribing to Clark's ideas by distinguishing a nude as an idealized and more civilized form, while the naked is reserved for more profane depictions of a body that is connected with shame. Inevitably this distinction lies in gender, however, when a woman attempts to conceal her nakedness such as using a pudica gesture, her body is then acceptable as an artform. There is also a difference in intention, as a nude body is meant to be appreciated, a naked body implies a surprise or misdeed, or inevitably a lack of consent. In metaphorical terms, being nude is wearing your bathing suit, while being naked is being seen in your underwear that includes the same amount of fabric if not more.

<sup>25</sup>Olszewski, "Expanding the Litany for Susanna and the Elders," 47.

<sup>26</sup>Olszewski, "Expanding the Litany for Susanna and the Elders," 47; The Council of Ten was a major governing body in the Republic of Venice from 1310 to 1797. In 1553 Veronese received a major commission to paint the

Council against Blasphemy that “had jurisdiction over gambling, sodomy, rape, deflorations of virgins, sexual relations between Christians and Jews...”<sup>27</sup> Created to attempt to curb the power of the Venetian political elite over the treatment of women within the Republic, the law was not a reflection of progressive attitudes toward women, but rather an interest in keeping bloodlines clean and protecting the “property” of the husbands, fathers, and brothers.

It is possible that with knowledge of who commissioned the Susanna paintings, it would be possible to reconstruct the meaning they hoped Veronese would portray. Unfortunately, for each of the Susanna and the Elders canvases, the commission and patron are unknown, as is a good portion of the provenance, but will still be related here to establish a sense of chronology.<sup>28</sup> One of the earliest *Susanna* paintings is dated to around 1570 and is now found in Genoa in the collection of Collezione d'Arte della Banca Carige, but can be traced to the Doria Collection of Genoa (Figure 1.2).<sup>29</sup> Chronologically, after the Banca Carige *Susanna*, is the canvas now found in the Palazzo Bianco in Genoa, which can also be linked with the collection of the Doria, but with slightly less certainty (Figure 1.3).<sup>30</sup> This smaller canvas of the late 1570s or early 1580s

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ceiling for the *Sala del Consiglio dei Dieci* or the Hall of the Council of Ten, this has often been cited as the catalyst for the rest of his career.

<sup>27</sup>Olszewski, “Expanding the Litany for Susanna and the Elders,” 48.

<sup>28</sup>Terisio Pignatti and Filippo Pedrocchi, *Veronese, Vols. 1-2* (Milan, Italy: Electa, 1995).

<sup>29</sup>Though I will not use this evidence in detail in this thesis, as I am not interested in mapping an ancestral tree, I do think it is interesting to note that the house of Doria from the Republic of Genoa was closely connected to the Giustiniani family from Venice. This is important because not only were Marcantonio and Daniele Barbaro the children of Elena Pisani whose mother was of the Giustiniani family, Marcantonio’s wife who will feature somewhat prominently in this chapter was Giustiniana Giustiniani. Paul F. Grendler, *Renaissance Education between Religion and Politics* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate/Variation, 2006), 72; Steven Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople 1453* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1965); Pignatti and Pedrocchi, *Veronese, Vol 1*, 271; Federigo Alizieri, *Guida Artistica per la Città di Genova* (Genoa, Italy: Presso Gio. Grondona Q. Giuseppe, 1846), 442; Filippo Pedrocchi, “Susanna and the Elders,” in *Veronese: Gods, Myths, and Allegories* ed. Patrizia Nitti (Milan, Italy: Skira Editore, 2004), 116.

<sup>30</sup>Pignatti and Pedrocchi, *Veronese, Vol 1*, 366; Salomon, *Veronese*, 209; In the seventeenth century it was connected to *Mary Magdalene in the Wilderness* in the same Doria collection and presumed to be a pair that was meant to be shown together. This is based partially in the fact that the original dimensions of the Mary Magdalene were

was considered the prototype for the larger 198 x 198 cm painting that is now in the Louvre and is dated similarly (Figure 1.4).<sup>31</sup> In the opinion of Pignatti and Pedrocco, the attribution is somewhat questionable, but the provenance can be traced to the house of Bonaldi in Venice, where it was then sold to Everhard Jabach who sold it to Louis XIV in 1671 where it remained, eventually becoming part of the holdings of the Louvre.<sup>32</sup> The fourth *Susanna* dated to around 1580, is the canvas that is now in the Museo Nacional del Prado that is noted in 1666 as having been in the Alcazar di Madrid and later the Palazzo Reale in 1794 (Figure 1.5). The final and some say best painting in the *Susanna* series is found in the Kunsthistorisches in Vienna and is dated to the late 1580s, sometime before Veronese's death in 1588 (Figure 1.6).<sup>33</sup> It is sometimes referred to as part of the Beaumont series of Old and New Testament stories, because in 1613 it can be traced to the collection of Charles de Croy, Duc d'Arshot at Beaumont Castle where it stayed until 1635 when it was acquired by Buckingham Palace, and then acquired in 1649 for the Vienna collection.<sup>34</sup> I give this brief provenance to put these paintings somewhat in chronological order as well as to highlight the lack of information that is to be found on the original commission. Certainly, the proportion of Veronese's paintings of *Susanna* in comparison to those of *Diana* and *Bathsheba* mimic the general proportion noted in the introduction, however it is unclear for whom the paintings were intended.<sup>35</sup>

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originally 120 x 165 cm while the *Susanna* is 117 x 152 cm, however at one point the *Magdalene* was enlarged to 155 x 200 cm

<sup>31</sup>Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese, Vol 1*, 518.

<sup>32</sup>Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese, Vol 1*, 518; Carlo Ridolfi, *Le Maraviglie dell'Arte (1648)* ed. D.F. von Hadeln (Berlin, Germany: Soc. Multigrafica Ed. Somu, 1914), 339.

<sup>33</sup>Pignatti and Pedrocco, *Veronese, Vol 1*, 466.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>There are two other *Susanna* paintings attributed to Veronese's workshop and/or circle that can be found in Dresden and a private collection in the UK, but because the lack of Veronese's touch it seems somewhat irrelevant to include them.

Of the five paintings discussed above there seem to be two basic compositions that Veronese followed. As noted earlier, Pignatti and Pedrocco agree that the Palazzo Bianco *Susanna* (Figure 1.3) is more than likely a smaller prototype for the Louvre *Susanna* (Figure 1.4). In each of these paintings there is an intimacy to the composition. Veronese has included a garden wall that forces the three characters to the very edge of the picture plane and that provokes a sense of unease, as if one is trapped in the gardens with the lecherous elders. On the left, the viewer is separated from Susanna and the Elders by a small pool and a barking lap dog, presumably a toy spaniel or drop eared phalène.<sup>36</sup> Behind the wall, Veronese displays plants of various types, though they are distinctly different in each composition, but may perhaps locate the paintings within Veronese's experience of the natural world. In the Louvre painting, there is one type of tree with leaves somewhat reminiscent of laurel leaves or possibly myrtle, but the shape of the tree and the smoothness of the trunk points more toward a cork oak. The plants in the Palazzo Bianco canvas are more diverse. On the left of the canvas is what is presumably a small vineyard, though there are no grapes present. Next to the vineyard is one branch of what looks like a juniper tree, and next to that is another, possibly laurel possibly cork oak. At the edge of the wall, behind Susanna, there is a herm with a body of a satyr. In both paintings, the head of the herm is turned slightly to face Susanna and acts as an additional viewer of the scene. Though the faces in both paintings are similar, and equally terrifying due to their bestial nature, there is a keen difference between these two herms. The Palazzo Bianco is a priapic satyr, with a visibly erect phallus concealed by a sheet, while the Louvre satyr is castrated, possessing no genitalia.

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<sup>36</sup>Maria Aliverti notes that the drop-eared phalène became popular at the end of the sixteenth century as a fashion accessory and was frequently depicted in portraits of royalty and nobility. Maria Ines Aliverti, "An Icon for a New Woman: A Previously Unidentified Portrait of Isabella Andreini by Paolo Veronese," *Early Theatre* 11, no. 2 (2008), 160.

The second type of composition is found in the Vienna, Madrid, and the Banca Carige canvases. Unlike the intimacy of the first type of composition these paintings are far more open, offering a wide perspective of the garden and architecture in the background. As noted earlier, the Banca Carige is the earliest dated *Susanna* and is the least “threatening” of all five paintings. In this composition, the elders look as if they are simply proposing their idea of sleeping with her rather than demanding. Susanna leans away, covering herself with her drape while also bringing a hand to her breast. The Palladian courtyard that surrounds them, as well as the open sky above it, enhances the feeling of open space, and indicates Veronese’s knowledge of architecture both as friend to Palladio as well as a resident of Verona, which still to this day contains Roman ruins. In the Vienna composition, the elder’s hands are inches away from Susanna and while she leans away in this version as well, her body seems to hunch over to conceal and thus protect herself. In the Prado composition it is unclear if the elder on the right is touching Susanna as the lower part of his arm is obscured by Susanna’s chest. In both the Vienna and the Prado paintings, there is a white two-story building with several buildings and balconies. The building strongly resembles the Villa Barbaro, which offers an excellent point of entry to a discussion of the significance of this building, this place, and this patron to Veronese’s oeuvre.

### **Villa Barbaro**

Given Veronese’s rather irreverent statement to the inquisition in 1573, “We painters take the same license as poets and madmen,” it is clear that he was fully comfortable using his imagination liberally in his work to create a complete narrative.<sup>37</sup> That being said, it will be

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<sup>37</sup>“Noi pittori ci pigliamo la licenza che si pigliano i poeti e i matti,” Richard Friedenthal, *Letters of the Great Artists*, 113-118.

argued here that Veronese did not conjure up nonexistent material, but rather, created amalgamations of visual material he encountered in his everyday life.<sup>38</sup> By establishing these links it becomes easier to develop a holistic view of the paintings within Veronese's specific mindset. In the case of the bathing paintings discussed in this thesis, it will be shown that investigating Villa Barbaro and its patrons, brothers Daniele and Marcantonio, provides insight into the context in which Veronese was working. Sometime between 1559 to 1562 Veronese was commissioned to paint a series of frescoes for the Villa Barbaro in Maser, a small town outside Treviso.<sup>39</sup> The villa was constructed by Andrea Palladio, and is noted by Palladian scholars to be "unlike any other of Palladio's villas, in its setting, organization, and sculptural and painted decoration."<sup>40</sup> The dates of construction for the villa are approximate at best, with scholars stating that it was mostly completed by 1558 to placing its construction between 1560 and 1570.<sup>41</sup> It has been noted that the architecture of the villa, as well as the iconographic program of the frescoes found within, is a blend of the influences of Daniele, Marcantonio, Palladio and Veronese.<sup>42</sup> This speaks to a flow of ideas that would have been prominent in this circle.

It is important here to explain the Roman influence on the construction of the villa, which subsequently indicates a recurring Roman influence on Veronese not only in his work on the

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<sup>38</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 15.

<sup>39</sup>Howard Burns, "Villa Barbaro at Maser," in *Palladio*, ed. Guido Beltramini and Howard Burns (London, UK: Royal Academy of Arts, 2008), 114-117.

<sup>40</sup> Burns, "Villa Barbaro at Maser," 114.

<sup>41</sup>Adalbert dal Lago, *Villas and Palaces of Europe* (London, UK: Paul Hamlyn, 1966), 50; Rodolfo Pallucchini, *Gli Affreschi di Paolo Veronese a Maser* (Bergamo, Italy: Istituto Italiano D'Arti Grafiche Editore, 1939), 5. Pallucchini proposed the original date between 1560 and 1570, while da Lago argued for an earlier date of 1558.

<sup>42</sup>Burns, "Villa Barbaro at Maser," 114.

Susanna paintings, but Diana and Bathsheba as well.<sup>43</sup> Between February and July of 1554, Palladio, Daniele, and Pirro Ligorio visited Rome. This trip led to Palladio producing a guidebook to the antiquities and churches to be found there, but perhaps more importantly, the guidebook included his study of water supply, aqueducts, and baths.<sup>44</sup> This study of water included viewing the Nymphaeum at the Villa Giulia, which has been cited as a strong influence on the Nymphaeum that was included at Maser.<sup>45</sup> This is particularly important as previous to 1550 and the construction of the Villa Giulia by Bartolomeo Ammannati, the ancient construction of a nymphaeum had not been reintroduced into Renaissance architecture.<sup>46</sup> While in Rome, the trio visited with the patron of Ligorio, Cardinal Ippolito d'Este. This probably included a visit to the work in progress, Villa d'Este in Tivoli of which Ligorio was responsible for many of the gardens and water features.<sup>47</sup> This visit is supported by the fact that in Daniele's 1556 Italian translation of Vitruvius' *Ten Books of Architecture* with illustrations completed by Palladio, he dedicates the book to Cardinal d'Este and specifically mentions his wonderful gardens in Tivoli. This specific mention to the Villa d'Este will be important to the discussion of fountains later in this chapter.

In addition to the drawings provided for Daniele's translation project, in 1570 Palladio released his own treatise on architecture known as *I quattro libri dell'architettura*. In this book

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<sup>43</sup>Burns, "Villa Barbaro at Maser," 114.

<sup>44</sup>Vaughn Hart and Peter Hicks, *Palladio's Rome* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 1.

<sup>45</sup>Burns, "Villa Barbaro at Maser," 116.

<sup>46</sup>John Coolidge, "The Villa Giulia: A Study of Central Italian Architecture in the Mid-Sixteenth Century," *The Art Bulletin* 25, no. 3 (1943): 177-225.

<sup>47</sup>Katherine Wentworth Rinne, *The Waters of Rome: Aqueducts, Fountains, and the Birth of the Baroque City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 51.

there is a discussion of the Villa Barbaro with a woodcut of a preparatory sketch, that differs from the actual fabrication of the villa (Figure 1.7). Notably, the difference between these preparatory sketches and the execution of the villa are details that are found almost entirely in Veronese's Vienna *Susanna* (Figure 1.6).<sup>48</sup> This distinct connection with both Villa Barbaro and Palladio's treatise on architecture serves as a foundation for the rest of my argument. Sergio Marinelli notes the similarity to the façade of Maser in his catalogue entry for *Palladio*. He also makes a statement observing that, "here Palladio's architectural language has been translated into Veronese's pictorial language."<sup>49</sup> While Marinelli is writing specifically of the façade of the extant Villa Barbaro, the architecture in Veronese's Vienna *Susanna* mimics the woodcut introduced earlier, specifically in the three figures atop the left pediment.<sup>50</sup> Notably, these figures are not included in the built façade, and while the figures are not exact matches, Veronese's middle figure seems to imitate the draping that surrounds the figure as well as the body positioning (Figure 1.8).

This connection with Villa Barbaro is specifically important to establishing the relationship of the *Susanna* paintings to the Nymphaeum that is included in the gardens of Maser. First, in the Palazzo Bianco and Louvre canvases, the wall behind the figures is notably curved, which mimics the architecture of the Nymphaeum that is found in the back of the Villa Barbaro. Carolyn Kolb and Melissa Beck describe it as "the exterior hemicycle of the 'Nymphaeum', the curved and niched fountain-house set before the entrance to the grotto sanctuary in the private

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<sup>48</sup>Sergio Marinelli, "Susanna and the Elders," in *Palladio*, ed. Guido Beltramini and Howard Burns (London, UK: Royal Academy of Arts, 2008), 129.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Andrea Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'architettura* (Venice, Italy: Dominico de Franchesci, 1570), 116.



garden behind the palace.”<sup>51</sup> Additionally, Marinelli notes that in each of the Susanna compositions, the figures are in “the garden on a raised platform, like a proscenium.”<sup>52</sup> This is important because the Nymphaeum is situated such that going from the Nymphaeum into the house leads you to the second story of the villa into the *Sala dell'Olimpo*. Specifically, scholars have noted that the grotto that rests behind the hemicycle functions as a proscenium, that invokes an ambiguity of being both seen and hidden.<sup>53</sup> These connections seem to imply that Susanna is in her private gardens at Villa Barbaro—often referred to as the *giardino segreto*—nestled within the grotto of the Nymphaeum about to take her bath when she is interrupted.<sup>54</sup> The insinuation that the setting is the gardens of Villa Barbaro is further emphasized by the inclusion of grapes and cork oak trees mentioned earlier, as the villa is still known today for its vineyards and wine production, including corking bottles.<sup>55</sup>

### **Wet Nurse**

Throughout the Susanna pictures, Veronese emphasizes the breast, making the viewer particularly aware of Susanna’s nipple. While at first glance this type of emphasis could be read as sexual, I believe Veronese’s true intention was to associate his Susanna with the iconography of motherhood. In each of Veronese’s depictions, Susanna is almost entirely clothed, except for a glimpse of breast. In the case of the Louvre picture, the viewer cannot see Susanna’s breast, however Veronese has painted one of the elders in such a way that it looks as if he has his hand

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<sup>51</sup>Carolyn Kolb and Melissa Beck, “The Sculptures on the Nymphaeum Hemicycle of the Villa Barbaro at Maser,” *Artibus et Historiae* 18, no. 35 (1997):15.

<sup>52</sup>Marinelli, “Susanna and the Elders,” 129.

<sup>53</sup>Chelsea Hoffman, “The Villa Barbaro: An Integration of Theatrical Concepts in Search of Absolute Illusion and Spatial Unification” *Colgate Academic Review* 9, (2012): 244.

<sup>54</sup>Kolb and Beck, “The Sculptures on the Nymphaeum,” 17.

<sup>55</sup>Inge Jackson Reist, “Divine Love and Veronese's Frescoes at the Villa Barbaro,” *The Art Bulletin* 67, no. 4 (1985): 630.

down the front of her robes (Figure 1.4). In the Palazzo Bianco image, the viewer sees a small portion of Susanna's nipple that is further emphasized by the diagonal line formed by the arm of one of the elders (Figure 1.3). Additionally, when following the gaze of the satyr and the gaze of the elders, an upside-down pyramid can be drawn, with her nipple acting as the capstone. In the Vienna canvas, we again follow the elder's gaze to her chest, her pink nipple emphasized by the deep green of her robes (Figure 1.6). Following the gaze of the elder in the Prado canvas we again are brought to her chest. In the Prado painting, Veronese has used a similar compositional element to the Louvre painting in that he has painted the elder's arm in such a way that we as the viewers cannot see where it ends (Figure 1.5). Instead he has created an odd visual effect such that it almost appears as if the elder's arm has merged with Susanna's hand that is cupping her left breast. In the most obvious emphasis of the nipple, the earliest Susanna cups at her breast with two fingers placed on either side of her nipple looking as if she is beginning to breastfeed (Figure 1.2).

This is not the only time in Veronese's oeuvre that he references breast feeding. In *Mars and Venus United by Love* (1570s), Venus holds her breast and her nipple between two fingers, and we can see the smallest amount of milk beginning to trickle for Cupid who is below her (Figure 1.9). Additionally, in his *Madonna and Child with Saints Lucy and Catherine and Two Nuns* (c. 1580) Veronese has painted Mary breastfeeding the Christ child by exposing her left breast close to the mouth of the child (Figure 1.10). Finally, in a subject that has rarely been depicted in art, Veronese's *The Homeless Cain and his Family* (1585) has recycled the two finger-hold on the nipple in Cain's wife feeding their child (Figure 1.11).<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>This is not the full extent of Veronese's references to breast feeding but are the three that closely resemble how he has depicted Susanna.

The idea of liquid flowing from a woman's breasts is not only found in Veronese's pictorial language, but is evident in his surroundings at Villa Barbaro. The Nymphaeum is crowned with an "acroterial figure" that holds her breasts, from which water comes out (Figure 1.12).<sup>57</sup> While this is the sculpture that would have been readily visible to Veronese, there are two other examples of fountains with water coming out of the breasts. In nearby Treviso, where Veronese had a country house, a fountain was commissioned to celebrate the end of a difficult drought in 1559.<sup>58</sup> Dubbed *Fontana delle Tette*, the tradition was that with the installation of every new Podestà of Treviso, the fountain would have red wine in one breast and white wine in the other for three days and the citizens could drink for free (Figure 1.13).<sup>59</sup> In addition to this local fountain, in 1568 a fountain of Diana of Ephesus was created and placed in the gardens of Villa d'Este (Figure 1.14).<sup>60</sup> While this is after Daniele's and Palladio's visit to Rome in 1554, the idea for the fountain had already been drafted by Giulio Romano who shared it with Palladio, meaning that Veronese could have been aware of it by proxy.<sup>61</sup> The fountain features a depiction of Diana as seen in Ephesus where the front of her body is covered in breast like shapes that then have water flowing out of them. Though Diana is known as the virgin goddess, she also is the goddess of fertility and fecundity.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Kolb and Beck, "The Sculptures on the Nymphaeum," 17.

<sup>58</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 37.

<sup>59</sup>Museo Civico de Treviso

<sup>60</sup>Marjatta Nielsen, "Diana Efesia Multimammia: The Metamorphoses of a Pagan Goddess from the Renaissance to the Age of Neo-Classicism" in *From Artemis to Diana: The Goddess of Man and Beast*, ed. Tobias Fischer-Hansen and Birte Pulsen (Copenhagen, Denmark: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009), 467.

<sup>61</sup>Nielsen, "Diana Efesia Multimammia," 465.

<sup>62</sup>Nielsen, "Diana Efesia Multimammia," 462.

In addition to these physical representations, as mentioned earlier, Pirro Ligorio wrote a well-known treatise on water that further connects water with breastfeeding and breast milk. Ligorio notes the divine circulation of rivers and waters, which as Marjatta Nielsen posits could also “apply to the veins of the human body, or to nursing women.”<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, in his commentary on Ligorio, Robert Gaston writes that:

For Ligorio, water corresponds to the mythical ‘anima del mondo’ and therefore a garden fountain can represent an allegory of human life, with a hierarchical descending system of rushing waters and basins...Fountains in gardens similarly produce benefit and nourishment, which leads man to praise the ingenious inventive powers of both God and man.<sup>64</sup>

As Veronese was among the Barbaros and their companions often, it seems likely he would have been privy to these speculations on water circulation and fountains.

The lauded frescoes by Veronese inside Villa Barbaro provide visual evidence that Veronese was thinking about nursing women, and perhaps more generally the life-giving nourishment that comes from women’s breasts. In the *Sala dell’Olimpo*—right off the Nymphaeum—Veronese painted a portrait of the wife of Marcantonio Barbaro, Giustiniana Giustiniani, on the vault of the room in trompe l’oeil effect, as if looking down from a balcony (Figure 1.15). Next to her, is the wet-nurse who nursed her children, a fact that is supported by her placement under an image of *Fecundity* which features four breasts with milk coming out of them, as well as the nipple that is visible from the nurse’s low-cut dress.<sup>65</sup> The emphasis on the maternal function of breasts rather than a sexual function that is consistent throughout Veronese’s pictorial language and contemporary context, all seem to accentuate Susanna’s role

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<sup>63</sup>Nielsen, “Diana Efesia Multimammia,” 466.

<sup>64</sup>Robert W. Gaston, *Pirro Ligorio: Artist and Antiquarian* (Florence, Italy: Silvana, 1988), 227.

<sup>65</sup>Mary Rogers, “An Ideal Wife at Villa Maser: Veronese, the Barbaros, and Renaissance Theorists of Marriage,” *Renaissance Studies* 7, no. 4 (1993): 389.

as a mother, which the reader is aware of because we are told that her children appear at the trial in verse 30.<sup>66</sup>

### **Lecherous Voyeur**

In these subtle clues that remind us that Susanna is a mother, the lechery of the elders becomes even more despicable because their dress is suggestive of Venetian senators.<sup>67</sup> In light of the law mentioned earlier that was specifically put in place to curb the power of the political elite, the viewer is made aware that the elders pose a risk not to Susanna as a woman, but rather the purity of her husband's blood line. Veronese has highlighted the leering of the elders, by his inclusion of the herm at the end of the wall. Veronese's addition of the bestial rendering of the satyr that at least in the Palazzo Bianco painting apparently has no control over his genitalia, equates both the elders and the viewers as no better than the satyr. The erotic voyeurism is no longer "sexy" but shameful.

Mieke Bal writes that, "in a sense, the story of Susanna is about illegitimate viewing and, as such, it raises the question whether viewing is by definition an illegitimate activity."<sup>68</sup> The emphasis of Susanna as a mother, puts the act firmly in the category of illegitimate activity, as any real activity could result in an illegitimate heir. In the paintings where there is a small lap dog barking, the illegitimacy is highlighted. Not only is the dog representative of loyalty as it often is in Renaissance compositions, the dog also gives Susanna a voice, which according to both biblical and civil law was imperative in establishing innocence for rape victims.

Deuteronomy 22:24 refers to this law in saying that the woman is to be stoned because she did

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<sup>66</sup>Daniel 13:30.

<sup>67</sup>Marinelli, "Susanna and the Elders," 129.

<sup>68</sup>Mieke Bal, "The Elders and Susanna," *Biblical Interpretation* 1, no. 1 (1993): 12.

not cry out for help while being assaulted.<sup>69</sup> This is important because the story of Susanna and the Elders is set up in the context of Susanna being the daughter of Hilki'ah, and that her parents had taught her to be knowledgeable of the law of Moses.<sup>70</sup> The inclusion of the dog in turn focuses the blame not on Susanna, but the lustful elders.

At first glance, Veronese's Susanna pictures fit into the artistic tradition in which Veronese was brought up: two older men who look somewhat dignified, a partially clothed woman, an allusion to a garden or nature, and a water feature. In interrogating the pieces further, however, one begins to situate them within the possible sources of inspiration of Veronese. In emphasizing the reality of Villa Barbaro and casting Susanna as a mother, she goes from imaginary temptress, to real life victim. This in turn shifts the blame from this susceptible woman who only wanted to enjoy her bath privately to the lecherous elders who decided to not only spy on her, but to punish her for her vulnerability.

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<sup>69</sup>Olszewski, "Expanding the Litany for Susanna and the Elders," 47.

<sup>70</sup>Daniel 13:2-3.

## CHAPTER 2: DIANA

Of the three women examined in this thesis, Diana is the outlier and may seem misplaced. She is not a biblical wife, but a pagan goddess. She is the only one with enough power to be able to punish the man spying on her. Despite these differences, like Susanna and Bathsheba being labeled as seductress and adulteress, Diana has received significant criticism over the years that essentially label her a “femme fatale.” This story is frequently depicted to show Actaeon as the victim, and Diana as the “aggressor.” It is often seen as a story of tragedy but because of the presumed erotic nature of women bathing, it has appeared in many artists’ oeuvres. Veronese’s depictions, while still including the eroticism, also include ambiguity that shifts the blame back to Actaeon for “curiously spying on that which he should not.”

The earliest source for the story of Diana and Actaeon is found in Stesichorus in the mid-sixth century BCE, but that version is almost unrecognizable to the version of the myth known in the Renaissance and today.<sup>71</sup> The story of Diana and Actaeon that is familiar to most is that found in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. As Leonard Barkan notes, Ovid is certainly not the first source of this myth and there are many other writers who are recovered and translated in the early modern period. Ovid’s, however, “is the version that signals the entrance of the myth on the main stage of cultural history.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Carl C. Schlam, “Diana and Actaeon: Metamorphoses of a Myth,” *Classical Antiquity* 3, no. 1 (1984): 83.

<sup>72</sup>Leonard Barkan, “Diana and Actaeon: The Myth as Synthesis,” *English Literary Renaissance* 10, no. 3 (1980): 318.

## Ovid's Diana and Actaeon

The story of Diana and Actaeon that would have been most commonly circulated in Veronese's day is found in Book 3 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, lines 165 to 252. As the story opens, Ovid describes the valley where Diana and her nymphs bathe in great detail, and then devotes several lines to the care of Diana by her nymphs.<sup>73</sup> This description of the scene "serves to build up the suspense and fetishizes the unseen body of the goddess."<sup>74</sup> This is particularly apparent in the 1732 translation by Joseph Addison, that mimics the poetry of the original Latin:<sup>75</sup>

Panting with heat, and breathless from the sport;  
Her armour-bearer laid her bow aside,  
Some loos'd her sandals, some her veil unty'd;  
Each busy nymph her proper part undrest;

These few lines give the reader the mental image not only of Diana's nymphs undressing her piece by piece, but also Diana's breast rising and falling, probably glistening with sweat from her hard work.

The Ovidian version of the story then goes on to paint Actaeon as a cruel victim of fate who "strays with aimless steps through the strange wood" and comes upon Diana and her nymphs.<sup>76</sup> When the Nymphs see the man's face they start to scream, beat their breasts, and crowd around Diana to cover her naked body, while also covering their own. Ovid then takes

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<sup>73</sup>Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. A. S. Kline (Ann Arbor, MI: Borders Classics, 2004), lines 160- 168.

<sup>74</sup>Malcolm Bull, *The Mirror of the Gods: Classical Mythology in Renaissance Art* (London, UK: Allen Lane, 2006), 280.

<sup>75</sup>Ovid, *Metamorphoses 1732*, trans. Sir Samuel Garth, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Joseph Addison and William Congreve (New York, NY: Garland Pub, 1976), 120.

<sup>76</sup>Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 169.



care to describe Diana's embarrassment, "red as the clouds which flush beneath the sun's slant rays, red as the rosy dawn, were the cheeks of Diana as she stood there in view without her robes."<sup>77</sup> Seeking revenge for her embarrassment, Diana:

caught up a handful of the water that she did have, and threw it in the man's face. And as she sprinkled his hair with the vengeful drops she added these words, harbingers of his coming ruin, 'Now you may tell, if you can tell that is, of having seen me naked!' Without more threats, she gave the horns of a mature stag to the head she had sprinkled, lengthening his neck, making his ear-tips pointed, changing feet for hands, long legs for arms, and covering his body with a dappled hide.<sup>78</sup>

As Actaeon is looking in the reflection of the water, contemplating his fate, his dogs start to attack him, because they do not recognize their master. Eventually his dogs, "surround him on every side, sinking their jaws into his flesh, tearing their master to pieces in the deceptive shape of the deer."<sup>79</sup> Actaeon's companions cheer the dogs on, but wonder where Actaeon is, upset he is missing the dogs doing their jobs.

Of the paintings discussed in this thesis, Veronese's two paintings of Diana and Actaeon are the earliest chronologically in Veronese's career. The Philadelphia Museum of Art currently owns a 1560-65 painting that closely follows the Ovidian myth as well as the established artistic conventions of the early modern period (Figure 2.1). In reviewing the established elements found in this version, the Boston painting that will be discussed below becomes much more interesting. The established iconography of Diana and Actaeon is first found in early printed versions of Ovid (1557, 1563) that included woodcuts as educational tools for memorization (Figure 2.2,

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<sup>77</sup>Ovid, *Metamorphoses Volume I: Books 1-8.*, trans. Frank Justus Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 137.

<sup>78</sup>Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 195-197.

<sup>79</sup>Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 251.

2.3).<sup>80</sup> The two main elements in these woodblocks, both of which can be seen in the Philadelphia canvas, tend to be a partially metamorphosed Actaeon, with a male body and a stag head, as well as an indication of Diana's hand moving the water to flick onto Actaeon.<sup>81</sup> In a sense these were the two most important parts for the reader's memory as they communicate both the punishment (Actaeon being turned into a stag) and the action that caused it (Diana using water to change Actaeon because she could not reach her bow and arrow).

The setting of the scene can vary but generally will include either a wooded natural area of water or a distinctly man-made small fountain (Figure 2.4).<sup>82</sup> Veronese has followed the woodblock by Lodovico Dolce by including a naturalistic setting of the woods, one that almost makes the viewer feel part of the scene (Figure 2.5). Generally there is some reference to Actaeon's fate after he has been transformed either from the inclusion of just his dogs, a scene of his dogs attacking him as a stag, or sometimes Actaeon's companions taking away his stag body as a trophy. The Philadelphia painting is in poor condition, but it looks as if this scene of Actaeon being attacked is seen just under Diana's hand. Finally, during the early sixteenth century, Diana and her nymphs are almost always naked.<sup>83</sup>

In comparison to the Philadelphia *Diana*, the small rectangular canvas currently at the

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<sup>80</sup>Ilaria Andreoli, "Ovid's 'Meta-metamorphosis': Book Illustration and the Circulation of Erotic Iconographical Patterns," in *Shakespeare's Erotic Mythology and Ovidian Renaissance Culture*, ed. Agnès Lafont (London, UK: Routledge, 2017), 21.

<sup>81</sup>This can be seen in in the 1557 woodcuts by Bernard Salomon *Métamorphose Figurée* and Virgil Solis's 1563 woodcut for J. Spreng's *Metamorphoses Illustratae*.

<sup>82</sup>Lodovico Dolce's Italian *Le Trasformationi* is an example of the wooded area. Engravings like Jean Mignon's *The Transformation of Actaeon* and Georg Pencz's *Diana and Actaeon*, show the story in a fountain like structure.

<sup>83</sup>E.K. Waterhouse, *Titian's Diana and Actaeon* (London, UK: Charlton Lecture's on Art, 1952), 13.

Boston Museum of Fine Arts is radically different (Figure 2.6).<sup>84</sup> The Boston *Actaeon Watching Diana and Her Nymphs Bathing* is one of five paintings completed by Veronese in the early 1560s of a similar size and mythological iconographic program. Four of the paintings are in the MFA Boston's collection, including *Jupiter and a Nude*, *Jupiter with Gods and Goddesses on Olympus*, and *Atalanta Receiving the Boars Head from Meleager*.<sup>85</sup> An additional canvas of the *Rape of Europa* is in the private Rasini collection in Milan.<sup>86</sup> Filippo Pedrocco notes that this mythological cycle echoes the classical imagery that is seen in the Villa Barbaro, thus giving the painting a date in the early 1560s.<sup>87</sup> This is particularly evident in the background of the Boston *Diana and Actaeon* that echoes the *locus amoenus* topos and the *all'antica* style that are both integrated within Veronese's fresco cycle of the Villa Maser. While his Philadelphia painting seems to parallel the Ovid story smoothly, it seems that the Boston canvas has been painted in such a way that the source is not Ovid.

In Ovid's text Actaeon is the cruel victim of fate and of Diana's wrath. As noted earlier, although Ovid was the most well-known in the early modern period, he was not the only recovered writer of antiquity that related the story of Diana and Actaeon. In many versions, Actaeon's fate is a gray area of innocence and guilt.<sup>88</sup> In the Boston *Actaeon Watching Diana*

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<sup>84</sup>The majority of this chapter will address the Boston canvas as it deviates from tradition, but also is in much better condition than the Philadelphia canvas. As Pignatti and Falla note the canvas is in badly damaged condition, and is further obscured by what looks like a heavy layer of varnish that diminishes the rich color that Veronese is known for using.

<sup>85</sup>Stefania Mason, "Heavenly Vaults of the Gods and Human Loves. Paolo Veronese and Mythological Painting," in *Veronese: Gods, Heroes and Allegories*, ed. Patrizia Nitti (Milan, Italy: Skira Editore, 2004), 26.

<sup>86</sup>Mason, "Heavenly Vaults of the Gods and Human Loves. Paolo Veronese and Mythological Painting," 26.

<sup>87</sup>Filippo Pedrocco, "*Atalanta and Meleager*, 1562-1565, *Actaeon and Diana with Nymphs*, 1562-1565, *Venus and Jupiter*, 1562-1565," in *Veronese: Gods, Heroes and Allegories*, ed. Patrizia Nitti (Milan, Italy: Skira Editore, 2004), 26; Inge Reist, "The Classical Tradition: Mythology and Allegory," in *Paolo Veronese: A Master and His Workshop in Renaissance Venice*, ed. Virginia Brilliant and Frederick Ilchman (Sarasota, FL: Scala, 2012), 117.

<sup>88</sup>Barkan, "Diana and Actaeon: The Myth as Synthesis," 323.

*and Her Nymphs Bathing*, Veronese painted Actaeon in such a way that he is not in the process of happening upon the goddess and her nymphs, but has already found them and has stopped to gaze at the women. To “stray with aimless steps” would imply that Actaeon was walking through the woods when he perhaps came to a clearing. In the Philadelphia canvas, that mood is evoked by Veronese’s hand on the tree, indicating perhaps peeking around the corner, and his “stag-face” almost looks startled. Because Actaeon has already been partially metamorphized, hence his “stag-face,” there is a sense that Diana has been rash in judgement and has punished the man before he has even fully understood what he has come upon. In the Boston version any implication that Actaeon’s discovery was accidental has been removed. Instead, Veronese has painted Actaeon reclining on a rock, his head in his hands, gazing at Diana and her nymphs on the right side of the painting.<sup>89</sup> In addition to the insolent posture Veronese has given Actaeon, the painter also highlights this persistent gaze by including a dead grass colored scalene triangle that connects Actaeon’s groin between his splayed legs to the backsides of the nymphs. Additionally, his phallic hunting staff lays at his side, projecting downwards towards the nymphs. This gives not only an erotic gloss to virile Actaeon, but also introduces a somewhat threatening undertone. Actaeon has the higher ground and is armed, while the goddess and her nymphs are vulnerable within their grotto. These details signal a palpable carnal motive on Actaeon’s part. In other versions of this story, Actaeon is metamorphized before he even has a chance to become aroused, and thus all sensual or erotic energy is surrounding Diana. Veronese has communicated to the viewer that Actaeon is a man who has invaded the space of the vulnerable women, and has the ability to act on his impulses.

This painting has frequently caused problems as it is unlike most of Veronese’s work.

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<sup>89</sup>Waterhouse, *Titian's Diana and Actaeon*, 15.

Because of its shape and format, it has been categorized as a *cassone* painting or a *frontali di cassone* by Giuseppe Fiocco, but Terisio Pignatti and Paul Falla argue that it is a *spalliere* painting.<sup>90</sup> As noted in the first chapter, a *cassone* painting is one that would decorate a marriage chest that a bride would take to her husband's home; a *frontali di cassone* would be the image that is in the front. While a *spalliere* can refer to a seat back, Pignatti and Falla imply that it is a panel that would have been inserted into the wall. *Spalliere* comes from the Italian word for shoulder, *spalla*, thus the paintings would often be put at eye level.<sup>91</sup> While not an uncommon practice for some artists, Pignatti and Falla write, "We hear nothing of decorations for *cassoni* or other furniture, a form of art that does not seem to have interested Veronese,"<sup>92</sup> hence its problematic nature within the oeuvre of Veronese. Despite the function of the piece being unknown, Pignatti and Falla assert "as to the mythological subjects that seem to have frequently caught Veronese's fancy in the 1560s: they are always inspired by Ovid, whom the painter follows very closely."<sup>93</sup> I would argue that in the case of the Boston *Actaeon Watching Diana and Her Nymphs Bathing* the canvas is most certainly not following Ovid closely. Ovid's Actaeon "is innocent and guiltless; he is simply a victim of fate" which is not the case for Veronese's Actaeon.<sup>94</sup> Veronese's Actaeon has made the choice to lean against a rock, put his foot up, and put his head in his hands. This is in sharp contrast to the Philadelphia canvas where

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<sup>90</sup>Terisio Pignatti and Paul Falla, "'Spalliere' Paintings by Paolo Veronese," *The Burlington Magazine* 123, no. 941 (1981): 478.

<sup>91</sup>Katherine McIver, *Women, Art and Architecture in Northern Italy, 1520-1580: Negotiating Power* (London, UK & New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 156.

<sup>92</sup>Pignatti and Falla, "'Spalliere' Paintings," 478.

<sup>93</sup>Pignatti and Falla, "'Spalliere' Paintings," 481.

<sup>94</sup>Michael Clarke, "The Bridgewater Collection and the National Gallery of Scotland" in *Titian and the Golden Age of Venetian Painting: Masterpieces from the National Galleries of Scotland*, ed. Edgar Peters Bowron, (Houston, TX: Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 2010), 18.

it appears that Actaeon has not even emerged from behind the tree to see the women but has already been partially turned into a stag.

### **Nonnus and the Connection to the Barbaro Brothers**

Although Veronese would have been familiar with the Italian translation of Ovid by either Lodovico Dolce, whose woodcuts are mentioned above, or Andrea dell'Anguillara, it seems that the story he has painted in his Boston canvas is more consistent with another source.<sup>95</sup> As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, Ovid was not the only translation known to people of this time. By the sixteenth century, humanists had shifted their focus to the Greek text of well-known works.<sup>96</sup> In 1427, Francesco Filefo brought a version of *Dionysiaca* by Nonnus through Venice from Constantinople.<sup>97</sup> Marie Curto Tanner has convincingly proposed this text as possible source material for Titian's *Diana and Actaeon* at the National Gallery (Figure 2.7). While the triumvirate of Venice is frequently cast as a rivalry, contemporary evidence suggests that Titian looked at Veronese as an heir apparent to his own artistic practice. This is suggested by a story in Veronese's biography that once in St. Mark's square Veronese had greeted Titian with reverence, while Titian affectionately hugged him and added "that it made him happy to consider Paolo as uniting in his person the decorum and the nobility of painting."<sup>98</sup> As Titian had finished his *Diana and Actaeon* just a year before Veronese started on his, it seems likely that he would have shared ideas with this painter who was not his rival but his protégé.

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<sup>95</sup>Clarke, "The Bridgewater Collection and the National Gallery of Scotland," 18.

<sup>96</sup>Clarke, "The Bridgewater Collection and the National Gallery of Scotland," 21.

<sup>97</sup>This copy is now currently in the Laurentian library in Florence known as the *Laurentianus plut. 32.16* manuscript Marie Curto Tanner, "Titian: The Poesie for Philip II" (PhD diss., New York University, 1976), 73; Domenico Accorinti, *Brill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2016), 701.

<sup>98</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 35.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Veronese's most prolific patrons were the Barbaro brothers, Daniele and Marcantonio, for whom he painted elaborate frescoes at the Villa Maser. This is important because it is likely that both Daniele and Marcantonio would have been familiar with Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* since both were educated at the University of Padua—"a primary site in the Renaissance revival of classical literature."<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, Marcantonio later served as the *bailo* of Constantinople from 1568-1574, which suggests he would have been familiar with the city and its culture, relating to the important fact that Francesco Filefo brought the first copy of *Dionysiaca* from Constantinople in 1427.<sup>100</sup> Even if Veronese himself was not familiar with the original text, it is likely that either Daniele or Marcantonio could have related the story, and perhaps its differences from Ovid, in the same way that Daniele chose the iconographic program of Veronese's paintings in the Doge's Palace in 1554.<sup>101</sup> In the case of this painting, and its function as perhaps a *spalliere*, biographer Carlo Ridolfo communicates that Marcantonio and Veronese had previously worked on a *spalliere* together on the story of Esther.<sup>102</sup>

Nonnus' version of Diana and Actaeon is found in Book V of *Dionysiaca* from lines 287-551. The description of Actaeon coming upon Diana and her nymphs is described as follows:

For as he sat up in a tall oak tree amid the spreading boughs, he had seen the whole body of the Archeress bathing; and gazing greedily on the goddess that none may see, he surveyed inch by inch the holy body of the unwedded virgin close at hand. A Naiad nymph unveiled espied him from afar with a sidelong look, as he stared with stolen

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<sup>99</sup>Clarke, "The Bridgewater Collection and the National Gallery of Scotland," 12.

<sup>100</sup>Paul F. Grendler, *Renaissance Education between Religion and Politics* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006), 72.

<sup>101</sup>Filippo Pedrocchi, *Veronese* (Milan, Italy: Skira Editore, 2010), 12. Between Veronese's upbringing in Verona with an interest in Classical architecture and his close proximity to the learned Barbaro brothers and their social circle recent scholars have proposed that Veronese himself had become quite educated by the 1560s.

<sup>102</sup>Pignatti and Falla, "'Spalliere' Paintings by Paolo Veronese," 481; Carlo Ridolfo, *Le Maraviglie dell'Arte (1648)*, 341.

glances on the unclothed shape of her queen, and shrieked in horror, telling her queen the wild daring of a lovesick man.<sup>103</sup> This text closely aligns with the Actaeon that Veronese has depicted in this intimate canvas. The body language of Actaeon is conforming to the literary version that “gaz[es] greedily” at the body of Diana. Veronese has clearly been inspired by what John Joseph Winkler calls the “sexual ekphrasis” of Nonnus, or the tendency for his poetry to include “erotic descriptions of bodies being looked at.”<sup>104</sup> In fact this tendency of voyeurism can be documented, by Winkler’s count, twenty-three times throughout *Dionysiaca*. Patricia B. Salzman-Mitchell describes the innate quality of ekphrasis as “incit[ing] in the reader a desire to intrude, to see ‘what is inside.’”<sup>105</sup> As a viewer of this painting, then, we become entrenched in a cycle of looking, seeing the man gaze at Diana, but also Diana’s own gaze, which ultimately leads to Actaeon’s punishment.

### **Villa Barbaro’s Nymphaeum**

The dating of both the Philadelphia and the Boston paintings suggest that Veronese would have completed them while in Maser at the Villa Barbaro, or just shortly after his time there. Other than the fact that Marcantonio and Daniele could have been useful for the literary source material, it is important to note the presence of the Nymphaeum mentioned in Chapter 1 at the Villa Barbaro. Besides the obvious connection with Diana and her nymphs within the general function of a nymphaeum—an ancient Greek or Roman sanctuary or grotto consecrated to water nymphs—the iconographic program of Villa Barbaro’s Nymphaeum contains a specific

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<sup>103</sup>Nonnus, *Dionysiaca*, trans. W H D Rouse (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940).

<sup>104</sup>John J. Winkler, “In Pursuit of Nymphs: Comedy and Sex in Nonnos’ Tales of Dionysos,” (PhD diss., University of Texas, 1974), 68.

<sup>105</sup>Patricia B. Salzman-Mitchell, *Web of Fantasies: Gaze, Image & Gender in Ovid’s Metamorphoses* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2016), 47.



reference to the story of Diana and Actaeon. In the Nymphaeum, Marcantonio Barbaro, who was an amateur sculptor, is thought to have created the decoration for the *giardini a soggetti* or gardens that feature individual decorations with allegorical subject matter.<sup>106</sup> Within the hemicycle of the Nymphaeum Marcantonio created white stucco decorations and sculptures or ornamentation as well as pairs of mythological figures with antagonistic relationships, one of which includes Diana and Actaeon with a curious message.<sup>107</sup>

The statues stand on opposite sides of the hemicycle, Diana (Figure 2.8) bare-breasted but armored, with a half-moon on her forehead to make her identity abundantly clear, while Actaeon sprouts horns from his head while his dogs become unruly at his feet (Figure 2.9). Under each of the statues is an inscription in vernacular Italian. The inscription under Diana reads, “Fuggo Cupido e a seguir// belve attendo// chè non si vince amor//se non fuggendo” / “I flee from Cupid and chase after wild beasts, for one never conquers love except by fleeing.”<sup>108</sup> Under Actaeon it says “Chi curioso spia//ciò che non deve// invece di gior//corna riceve” / “He who curiously spies on that which he should not, Instead of pleasure is crowned with horns!”<sup>109</sup> What makes these inscriptions fascinating is the fact that they are in regional Italian, a vernacular that is not only everyday but is indicative of slang. Kolb and Beck characterize this choice “as though one is meant to feel that the peasants that may have posed for the figures could also have written the verses accompanying each deity.”<sup>110</sup> Given that both Marcantonio and Daniele were

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<sup>106</sup>Kolb and Beck, “The Sculpture on the Nymphaeum,” 15.

<sup>107</sup>Kolb and Beck, “The Sculpture on the Nymphaeum,” 17.

<sup>108</sup>Kolb and Beck, “The Sculpture on the Nymphaeum,” 21.

<sup>109</sup>Kolb and Beck, “The Sculpture on the Nymphaeum,” 21.

<sup>110</sup>Kolb and Beck, “The Sculpture on the Nymphaeum,” 17.

learned men, this choice to include the inscriptions in the vernacular Italian appears intentional.<sup>111</sup> It also is reminiscent of the speech made by the ghost of Actaeon to his father later in the Nonnus text at line 432, “I should never have desired the Archeress of the wilds, I should never have seen the Olympian shape. If only I had loved a mortal girl! But I left earthborn women and quick fated wedlock to others, and I desired an immortal.”<sup>112</sup> Actaeon tells his father that he should not blame Diana and her nymphs, and that it was his fault—instead of pleasure from loving Diana he was crowned with horns and met his death.

“He who curiously spies on that which he should not” is a sentence that implies deviation from the Ovidian narrative in which Actaeon has stumbled upon the nymphs and is turned into a stag before he knows what is happening. The idea of intrusion by a deliberate voyeur rather than an accidental one is what makes the Boston canvas unsettling. Veronese has marked off an interior, intimate and presumably safe space for Diana and her nymphs by painting the antique ruins directly behind the nymphs, and the red piece of fabric that is suspended from trees which acts almost as a tent. This red curtain is reminiscent of Titian’s depiction of the subject of Diana and Actaeon and has been thought of as an invention of Titian because it is found nowhere in literary or artistic tradition.<sup>113</sup> As Veronese seemed to learn from Titian, a 1580 drawing attributed to the school of Veronese seems to indicate that his pupils were learning from his

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<sup>111</sup>It is possible this was influenced by the fact that Daniele was the pupil of Pietro Bembo, a Venetian scholar, who wrote *Prose della volgar lingua*, or *Discussions of the Vernacular Language* in 1525 which praised using vernacular over using Latin that was generally only for the educated humanists. Additionally, Bembo wrote *Gli Asolani* in the language of Petrarch (Italian) in 1505 which ironically includes a discussion of Actaeon. Marie Tanner discusses this connection in relation to Titian’s *Diana and Actaeon* and Titian’s relationship with Bembo in Marie Tanner, “Change and Coincidence in Titian’s *Diana and Actaeon*,” *The Art Bulletin* 56, no. 4 (1974): 535-550.

<sup>112</sup>Nonnus, *Dionysiaca*, trans. W H D Rouse (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940).

<sup>113</sup>Paul Hills, "Titian's Veils," *Art History* 29, no. 5 (2006): 787.

compositions (Figure 2.10).<sup>114</sup> The drawing clearly derives from the Boston *Diana* while making a few subtle changes. This drawing shrinks the distance between Diana and Actaeon, but has enlarged the tent making the viewer even more aware that the nymphs wished to be in private. This seems to eliminate the tension and ambiguity that is crucial to the composition of the painting. Furthermore, the unknown the artist has transposed the nymph coming out of the water in the Boston painting, such that she is now looks as if she is reaching for Actaeon. In the same way the slight changes to the composition eliminate ambiguity, the difference in medium also highlights the nuance that is lost in black and white. This drawing in juxtaposition elucidates the subtlety as well as importance of Veronese's details. Veronese's distinguished color, in this case a fleshy red, functions within a particular manner in the context of Nonnus.

### **Ambivalent Space**

If Veronese's Boston canvas can be seen to have relied on Nonnus rather than Ovid, the lush pinkish-red of the curtain that protects the nymphs takes on an interesting dimension. In the *Dionysiaca*, red has been described as the color of sexual desirability connected with rosy naked flesh frequently described and linked with Aphrodite.<sup>115</sup> The association of rosy flesh and sexual desirability continues through to the nineteenth century, when in 1822 Louis Léon Rostan notes the trigger of rosy flesh and warns that bathing in 19 degrees centigrade had a tendency to

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<sup>114</sup>This work was lot 22 and sold at Christie's in 1998 (sale 6074), it is unclear where it is today. Its provenance is listed as the The Sagredo-Borghese album which W.R. Rearick believes was assembled after Gisuseppe Caliarì, Paolo's grandson, died in 1681 and ended the Caliarì line, resulting in large sales of both Paolo's work and the continuation of his workshop after his death in 1588. Rearick believes that Doge Nicolò Sagredo had begun collecting works on paper during the seicento which included works on paper by the Veronese circle including this one. W.R. Rearick, "More Veronese Drawings from the Sagredo Collection," *Master Drawings* 33, no. 4 (1995): 132-143.

<sup>115</sup>Winkler, "In Pursuit of Nymphs," 21. I use sexual here to explicitly refer to the physicality. Rather than erotic which I have reserved for acceptable sexuality, sexual is used in such a way to differentiate the aggressiveness and physicality involved in the scene.

“irritat[e] the sex organs” and in 25 degrees centigrade or more the acceleration of the pulse had “a unique tendency to contact with the opposite sex.”<sup>116</sup> Additionally, the way Veronese painted the curtain emphasizes a sexual physicality that seems to come through the object. The curtain is particularly cavernous, and has a yonic quality to it—the light pink labia-like folds on the outside and the dark red tones on the inside. This in and of itself suggests not only intimacy, but a distinct separation of inside from outside. With his deliberate, “greedy” gaze, Actaeon thus penetrates the chaste space of Diana. In relation to the written word of Ovid, Salzman-Mitchell describes this spatial intrusion as, “a narrative and visual intrusion, whereby both male internal viewer and external viewers and readers need to break the visual boundaries to see and to grasp knowledge of what is going on in a scene.”<sup>117</sup> This description relates closely to Mieke Bal’s concept of “envisioning” or when readers “create images from textual stimuli” (see above, p. 7).<sup>118</sup> In keeping the texts in mind when viewing paintings of Diana and Actaeon, the textual reference radically changes the perception of the narrative. If the textual reference is Ovid, Actaeon is innocent and Diana is a cold-hearted femme fatale, whose beauty seduced Actaeon in such way that he has no part in his fate. If, however, the textual reference is Nonnus, as it appears to be in the Boston canvas, the blame shifts to Actaeon’s willful actions to break both the visual and physical boundaries between him and the goddess. In the same way that the Elders acted on their lust, Actaeon has gone beyond the acceptability of erotic and into the dangerous nature of the sexual.

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<sup>116</sup>Martin Schmidt, “Between Hygiene, Intimacy and the ‘Pink Cheeks’ of Bourgeois Virtue A Cultural History of Bathing” in *Intimacy!: Baden in Der Kunst = Intimacy!: Bathing in Art*, eds. Leismann, Burkhard, and Martina Padberg (Ahlen, Germany: Kunstmuseum Ahlen, 2010), 18.

<sup>117</sup>Salzman-Mitchell, *Web of Fantasies*, 44.

<sup>118</sup>Bal and Marx-MacDonald, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, 39; Tamber-Rosenau, “Biblical Bathing Beauties and the Manipulation of the Male Gaze,” 58; Garth Lean, Russell Staiff, and Emma Waterton, *Travel and Imagination* (New York, NY: Berghahn, 2017), 107.

The small size of the Boston canvas further emphasizes this need to break visual boundaries and to intrude on the scene. The smaller size of this picture signifies that the viewer must lean in closely to absorb all the details. This physical act of stepping nearer to view the scene echoes the deliberate proximity in which Actaeon has placed himself to Diana and her nymphs. In describing the Diana and Actaeon painting, Waterhouse classified it as, “belong[ing] to a class, of which Paris Bordone was the most notable exponent, which were deliberately erotic. They were made, I imagine, for the private cabinets of gallant collectors and have no bearing on public style.”<sup>119</sup> The small size and thus close looking that is required becomes a double-edged sword.

Veronese has created a visually uncomfortable and ambivalent space for the male viewer, not just Actaeon. On one hand, Actaeon’s “greedy gaze” is understandable. The fleshy mingling of Diana and her nymphs just off center of the picture provides an almost 360° view of the female nude. If one were to stitch the angles of the individual bodies together, the viewer has been provided front, back, and both sides through the positions of the various nymphs and Diana.<sup>120</sup> With the blonde locks of a Northern Italy beauty, Diana’s hair closely adheres to ‘the beautiful woman type’ outlined in Agnolo Firenzuola’s *Dialogo delle Bellezze delle donna* (1542). Elizabeth Cropper describes Firenzuola’s dialogue as “probably the most complete

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<sup>119</sup>Waterhouse, *Titian's Diana and Actaeon*, 15. This would stand on its own rather be integrated into pieces of furniture like a *cassone* or *spalliere*

<sup>120</sup>This technique is reminiscent of Titian’s in creating the poesie for Philip II. In a letter from Titian to Philip II dated from sometime around September 1554, Titian essentially says that since in his version of Danae for the king she is facing towards the front, in the next poesie, in this case Venus and Adonis, he will vary the position, so that the king can see another angle. “E perchè la Danae che io mandai già a Vostra Maestà, si vedeva tutta da la parte dinanzi, ho volute in quest’altra poesie variare a farle mostrare la contraria parte, acciocchè riesca il camerino, dove hanno da stare, più grazioso a la vista” Titian, *Le lettere*, trans. Clemente Gandini, and Celso Fabbro, (Pieve di Cadore, Italy: Magnifica Comunità di Cadore, 1977), 171.

exposition of the beauty of the ideal woman among the multitude of sixteenth-century treatments of the theme, being concerned not only with her perfect features, but also with her colors, proportions, and such elusive qualities.”<sup>121</sup> The dialogue frequently served as an ideal example for artists to attempt to capture, and Veronese is no exception. Firenzuola stated that the hair, “should be fine and blonde, sometimes similar to gold, sometimes honey, sometimes like the bright rays of a clear sun, wavy, thick, abundant long.”<sup>122</sup> Physical feature by physical feature, Diana and her nymphs are all ideal versions of the female nude as described by early modern writers and are thus to be savored and enjoyed by the viewer. As Paul Hills writes, “Actaeon is punished for his transgression by sight, but of course the princely viewers for whom the canvas was painted can survey the scene without peril or shame.”<sup>123</sup> The moment this painting has depicted is pre-metamorphosis, and thus pre-punishment. Without too much thought, the viewer could be perpetually suspended in a moment of erotic voyeurism—an exercise in lust with the guise of intellectual pursuit. With an extended viewing of the canvas, however, that illusion of consequence-free lust is shattered.

Veronese juxtaposes the beautiful nude and invitation to look as described above with additional details that stand in direct contrast. One such detail is the obvious foreshadowing of Actaeon’s fate in his depiction of the two hunting dogs, lapping at the water. Though small in number and size, the inclusion of the greyhound-like dogs reminds the viewer of the fate that awaits Actaeon. Once Diana’s hand, which is in motion in the picture, has finished sprinkling

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<sup>121</sup>Elizabeth Cropper, “On Beautiful Women, Parmigianino, Petrarchismo, and the Vernacular Style,” *The Art Bulletin* 58, no. 3 (1976): 374.

<sup>122</sup>Agnolo Firenzuola, *On the Beauty of Women*, ed. and trans. by Konrad Eisenbichler and Jacqueline Murray (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 46.

<sup>123</sup>Hills, “Titian’s Veils,” 788.

water onto Actaeon, he will transform into a stag and become the prey of his well-meaning dogs. Further, regarding the white, pink, and red sheets that cover the ground, Maria Loh has observed that they “invoke Actaeon’s bloody, lacerated body.”<sup>124</sup> The haphazard arrangement of the sheets certainly echoes the violence and movement that is implied by the literary description of the dogs going after their master, a description that almost has the reader visualizing the fervor with which the dogs attacked. Diana’s bow and arrow to the right of the canvas highlight the activity of the hunt, which conjures up not only the reminder that Diana turned him into a stag because she could not reach her arrows, but also alternative versions of the story. In some versions of the story—specifically that by Diodorus—Actaeon boasts that he is a better hunter than Diana and because of that he deserves her hand in marriage.<sup>125</sup> Salzman-Mitchell writes that “the desire to surpass the goddess in hunting proposes a metaphor for sexual domination given that hunting is a common erotic metaphor and a figure of desire.”<sup>126</sup> Hunting as a common erotic metaphor is palpable in the details described in the beginning of this chapter. The phallic hunting object and his position in relation to Diana and her nymphs gives the painting a threatening undertone and hints at the sexual domination that Actaeon desires. His desire to catch the uncatchable, represents both his lust and his hubris which is quickly punished.

Even the bath in which this story is set has an ambivalent connotation. Water is obviously essential to life in that it quenches thirst, but it also functions as a purifying agent. In many religions and spiritualities, “taking the waters” cleanses in both literal and figurative ways.<sup>127</sup> It

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<sup>124</sup>Loh, “Veronese’s Story of the Eye,” 82.

<sup>125</sup>Carl Schlam, “Diana and Actaeon: Metamorphoses of a Myth,” *Classical Antiquity* 3, no. 1 (1984): 87.

<sup>126</sup>Salzman-Mitchell, *A Web of Fantasies*, 48.

<sup>127</sup>Alev Lytle Croutier, *Taking the Waters: Spirit, Art, Sensuality* (New York, NY: Abbeville Publishing, 1992).

not only restores health, but has been thought to protect against malevolence, or in the case of story of Diana and Actaeon, protect against prying eyes.<sup>128</sup> In the early modern period, Actaeon's voyeurism would not be unusual in relation to how people would have understood bathing and bath houses. Diane Wolfthal notes that, "art reflects and reinforces this association between bathing and voyeurism... Like texts, images need to be interpreted, but since they repeatedly include a voyeur in scenes of public baths, we may reasonably conclude that the two were closely associated in the mentalité of the times"<sup>129</sup> Although common, it seems that water and bathing not only functioned within the positive or harmless realm, but could also be interpreted negatively.

This negative interpretation was partially because illicit looking, bathing, and acting on those urges were intimately intertwined in the space of the bath. In *The Italian Renaissance Nude* Jill Burke narrates a contemporary account from apothecary Luca Landucci who "note[ed] that women feared going near the bathhouse because of its reputation."<sup>130</sup> This reputation was not only the lecherous viewing by the male patrons, but sex crimes as well that derived from the lecherous viewing. Understanding the way in which early modern viewers would have seen the bath reiterates that Actaeon's obvious arousal in the Boston painting is dangerous to the nymphs. Within the story of Diana and Actaeon, however, it is not the bathers or the voyeurs who are weaponized; it is the water itself that Diana uses against Actaeon to seal his fate. Diana's bow

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<sup>128</sup>Richard Palmer, "In this our lightye and learned tyme": Italian baths in the era of the Renaissance," *Medical History*, no. 10 (1990): 15; This is seen in the Nonnus text when it is written that upon being seen, Diana "sank with gliding limbs into the water, until by little and little all her form was hidden."

<sup>129</sup>Diane Wolfthal, *In and Out of the Marital Bed: Seeing Sex in Renaissance Europe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 125.

<sup>130</sup>Jill Burke, *The Italian Renaissance Nude* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 39-40.



and arrow are not near her when Actaeon's presence is revealed and thus it is the sprinkle of water that hits Actaeon and turns him into a stag.

Water also functions as a mirror, as can be seen in the subtle minutiae by Veronese, which follows the text that tells us that Actaeon looked into the reflecting pool and could recognize his eyes but did not recognize the body of the stag he now possessed.<sup>131</sup> This of course brings about a connection to Narcissus, who was tricked by a watery reflection, but it also implies a reflection on oneself. The darker elements of the painting mentioned earlier, such as the foreshadowing within the image of the dogs, function as reminders of the consequences of Actaeon's actions. In reflecting on oneself within the context of this painting, there is a connection to the moralizing script under the Actaeon sculpture in the Villa Barbaro Nymphaeum. "Instead of pleasure, he is crowned with horns"—the sobering moralization of the painting thus stands in opposition to the female nude that is both inviting and erotic.

The dichotomous zone in which this painting rests is similar to that of Veronese's Susanna pictures. At first glance, the painting invites the viewer to enjoy Diana's nude body within what seems to be a simple pastoral mythological scene. Upon further investigation, it becomes evident that the Actaeon depicted in this painting is not a normal Ovidian Actaeon that the viewer can relate to in blameless innocence. Instead of a vengeful Diana who can be thought of as cruel and unreasonable in her punishment, the viewer now sees a naked Diana who has been violated by a willful Actaeon. "He who curiously spies on that which he should not" will be punished accordingly.

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<sup>131</sup>Salzman-Mitchell, *Web of Fantasies*, 51; Barkan, "Diana and Actaeon: The Myth as Synthesis," 322.

### CHAPTER 3: BATHSHEBA

The last, and most contentious, painting of Veronese's that will be discussed is his 1575 *Bathsheba at her Bath* (Figure 3.1, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts). What makes this painting intriguing is the way in which Veronese has depicted his Bathsheba, leaving ample room for interpretation. In many ways the painting is reminiscent of his Susanna paintings, with even the man who approaches the woman looking strikingly similar to the elders. The crucial difference of course, is the presence of only one man—indicative of Bathsheba rather than Susanna who is purposely approached by *two* elders.<sup>132</sup> In this chapter, I will argue that Veronese painted this canvas in such a way that Bathsheba is no longer rendered as an adulteress—as was the common interpretation in the sixteenth century—but a victim of David's imperial power.

The story of Bathsheba that is most often frequently depicted by artists is found in 2 Samuel 11: 2-5. In the Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition the first verse reads, "It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very

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<sup>132</sup>While this painting has been suggested as possibly being Susanna or maybe even Esther, I will be writing this chapter with the assumption that it is Bathsheba. This based primarily in the work of Josephine le Foll, who notes that the painting has been identified as Bathsheba since the work of Marco Boschini in la *Carta del Navegar Pittoresco*, the panegyric poem from which I quote at the beginning of this thesis. Since the first record of the painting in 1671, the painting has been known as Bathsheba at her bath, but it has also been frequently compared with Veronese's Susanna paintings. Josephine le Foll, "*Bethsabée au bain* ou la métamorphose d'un tableau," *Traverses*, no. 4 (1992): 52-58; Josephine le Foll, "L'ambivalence méditée de la *Bethsabée* de Véronèse," *Venezia Cinquecento* 22, (2012): 163-186.

beautiful.”<sup>133</sup> After seeing her, David asks his servants who the woman is and is told that it is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah. In verses four and five the text reads, “So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, ‘I am pregnant.’”<sup>134</sup> In an attempt to conceal his sins, David first sends for Uriah and tells him to go down to his house to “wash his feet,” presumably so that he will sleep with his wife and Bathsheba can claim the child is his. When Uriah does not go home, and thus does not sleep with his wife, David sends him to the front of the battlefield where he is killed. David then marries Bathsheba, but God punishes him for his crime by making the child stillborn.<sup>135</sup>

Meir Sternberg notes that 2 Samuel 11 is “frugal to excess even relative to the biblical norm.”<sup>136</sup> This is particularly true in relation to Bathsheba’s role in the text. It is because of that frugality that, as Sara Koenig notes, “the different ways people have filled the gaps regarding Bathsheba have been wildly and widely different.”<sup>137</sup> Although more text on Bathsheba is available in 1 Kings when she establishes her son Solomon on the throne, most people have used only this small part in 2 Samuel to create a spectrum of interpretations that ranges from labeling

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<sup>133</sup>2 Samuel 11:2 The Douay-Reims translation reads, “In the meantime it happened that David arose from his bed after noon, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: And he saw from the roof of his house a woman washing herself, over against him: and the woman was very beautiful.”

<sup>134</sup>2 Samuel 1:4-5 The Douay-Reims translation reads, “And David sent messengers, and took her, and she came in to him, and he slept with her: and presently she was purified from her uncleanness: And she returned to her house having conceived. And she sent and told David, and said: I have conceived.”

<sup>135</sup>2 Samuel 11:6-27.

<sup>136</sup>Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 191.

<sup>137</sup>Koenig, *Isn't this Bathsheba?*, 2.

Bathsheba as a seductress to a victim.<sup>138</sup> In regards to the end of the spectrum that casts

Bathsheba as seductress, Caryn Tamber-Rosenau connects this interpretation to Susanna's story, writing:

Just as Bathsheba and Susanna attracted the lust of the men who watched them wash themselves, so too have they captured the imaginations of clerics, secular scholars, and artists for centuries. Many interpreters have seen in both Bathsheba and Susanna a certain blameworthy seductiveness, holding them partly responsible for the events that follow.<sup>139</sup> It seems that this phenomenon of interpretations is apparently not only in reading and analyzing the text, but in painting the story as well. This, of course, includes Veronese's depiction of the subject.

Early scholars such as Fiocco date Veronese's *Bathsheba* to around 1560; most others agree date is nearer to 1575.<sup>140</sup> Although the commission details are missing, the coats of arms of two Venetian families appear in the painting: the Badoer and the Soranzo. The more prominent coat of arms on the ewer at Bathsheba's feet is that of the Badoer. In the shadow of the ewer, there is a box or a casket that has the coat of arms of the Soranzo.<sup>141</sup> Josephine le Foll, who discovered the second coat of arms in 1992, has noted that this could mean that the painting was

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<sup>138</sup>Sara M. Koenig, *Bathsheba Survives* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2018), 1-2. Koenig's description of this book relates that it "demonstrates how the minor character of Bathsheba has invited a succession of gap-filling that has gone on through the centuries." She also notes that this 'gap-filling' is based on a mere seventy-six verses in which Bathsheba appears.

<sup>139</sup>Tamber-Rosenau, "Biblical Bathing Beauties and The Manipulation of the Male Gaze," 56. Tamber-Rosenau later notes the long line of religious scholars that have described Susanna as "asking for it" including Hans Willhelm Hertzberg, Gösta Werner Ahlström, George G. Nicol, and Randall C. Bailey.

<sup>140</sup>Terisio Pignatti, and Filippo Pedrocchi, *Veronese: Opera Completa, Tomo Secondo* (Milan, Italy: Electa, 1995), 424.

<sup>141</sup>le Foll, "*Bethsabée au bain* ou la metamorphose d'un tableau," 53-54; le Foll, "L'ambivalence méditée de la *Bethsabée* de Véronèse," 163.

commissioned for an alliance between the two families, a marriage perhaps, but the fact that one coat of arms is so hidden complicates that hypothesis.<sup>142</sup>

Veronese's *Bathsheba* is similar to his *Susannas* in that, despite being poised to bathe, she is still relatively clothed. Much of her body is covered in a blue drape except for her right nipple, her right arm, and her right foot. This general lack of nakedness that Veronese has included in both the *Susanna* and *Bathsheba* paintings seem to stand in opposition to the majority of artists who would use the subjects as an excuse to paint nude women.<sup>143</sup> Babette Bohn writes, "at virtually the same moment that *Susanna* loses her clothes, *Bathsheba* regains hers" which indicates either an artistic interest in nudity or moralization, but not both.<sup>144</sup> It almost suggests an interchangeable nature. If an artist were to paint both women early in their career, one would be nude and one would be clothed. If that same artist painted both at the end of their career, it is entirely possible that the nude woman and clothed woman switched. Veronese seems to operate in opposition to this by nuancing his paintings of the two women. Their sparse nudity would indicate the moralization objective, but the canvases still contain a considerable amount of eroticism.

In emblematic early modern Italian images of *Bathsheba* such as Paris Bordone's two paintings from 1540, the compositions are rather formulaic (Figure 3.2, 3.3). There is a nude *Bathsheba* with several attendants in the foreground of the painting, with a small-scale *David* in the background generally watching from a tower window. Diane Wolfthal notes that women

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<sup>142</sup>Le Foll, "*Bethsabée au bain* ou la metamorphose d'un tableau," 54.

<sup>143</sup>David M. Gunn, "Bathsheba Goes Bathing in Hollywood: Words, Images, and Social Locations." *Semeia* 74, (1996): 81; Exum, Cheryl. "Bathsheba Plotted, Shot, and Painted." *Semeia* 74 (1996): 58.

<sup>144</sup>Bohn, "Rape and the Gendered Gaze," 263.

were normally the ones depicted in windows, as windows and doorways were erotically charged as a “liminal space, between the boundary of public and private” and thus the liminal space between the male and the female.<sup>145</sup> Consequently, the iconography of David at the window not only clearly illustrates the text but also is distinguished from other depictions of women at windows and as such unmistakably communicates the subject of David and Bathsheba. This idea of space between David and Bathsheba is further emphasized by the extremely detailed architectural features Bordone has included as was popular at the time. Inevitably the ornate architecture is juxtaposed against the simpler fountain, and thus the viewer is aware of the space in which Bathsheba bathes and the imposing palace from which David watches her. Furthermore, the details of the architecture seem to overshadow David and keep him from being the focus of the painting, which in turn minimizes his role in the text. As Koenig writes “it has in some cases, been important to devalue Bathsheba to maintain a high view of David.”<sup>146</sup> By diminishing the role and culpability of David in the story, the blame has to be shifted somewhere thus thrusting it on to Bathsheba. In a literal interpretation of size, the female who takes up most of the composition bears more burden than the male who is barely visible. Additionally, this formulaic composition that emphasizes Bathsheba’s nude body, promotes an understanding that the—presumably male—viewer, can empathize with the temptation that David felt.<sup>147</sup> In fact, poet Clément Morot divulges a story in which King Francis I of France saw paintings of Bathsheba and David and was so provoked by them that he sent his host with whom he was staying, “Baron

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<sup>145</sup>Wolfthal, *In and Out of the Marriage Bed*, 75.

<sup>146</sup>Koenig, *Isn't this Bathsheba?*, 5.

<sup>147</sup>Exum, “Bathsheba Plotted, Shot, and Painted,” 58.

d'Orsonvilliers, on a reconnoitering expedition of the enemy troops” and used the opportunity to seduce the Baron’s wife.<sup>148</sup>

The convention of a miniscule David at his window continues across Europe, and into not only paintings, but anatomy books. Charles Estienne’s 1545 *De dissectione partium corporis humani libri tres* appropriates the erotic series of engravings by Jacopo Caraglio entitled “Loves of the Gods” to display anatomical specimens (Figure 3.4).<sup>149</sup> While this is certainly not the first anatomical manual, it does differ from previous studies in that the bodies are given ornamental decorations that “frame the anatomical iconography in such a way that each figure can in itself tell a story which is no longer merely scientific or purely descriptive.”<sup>150</sup> In this print we see a naked woman with legs splayed, dissected at the midsection showing the viewer a small fetus, labeled according to parts of the anatomy of a pregnancy. In the background, we see a man standing on a balcony, shielding his eyes and adjusting his glasses to see the woman.<sup>151</sup> Bette Talvacchia labels this figure as “a voyeur...wearing glasses and what appears to be academic regalia and holding a scroll.”<sup>152</sup> While Talvacchia does not mention David, the exceptionality of the *man* at the window during this time frame indicates the man is David. Furthermore, when depicting other parts of David’s history his role of writer of the Psalms is emphasized by his

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<sup>148</sup>Jan L. de Jong, “Spying and Speculating: Francesco Salviati’s Painting of King David and Bathsheba in the Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti in Rome,” *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift/Journal of Art History* 79, no. 2 (2010): 95.

<sup>149</sup>Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 160.

<sup>150</sup>Andrew Carlino, “Chapter One: Representing the Body: The Visual Culture of Renaissance Anatomy,” *Medical History, Paper Bodies: A Catalogue of Anatomical Fugitive Sheets 1538-1687* 43, no. 19 (1999): 29.

<sup>151</sup>This of course brings a questionable interpretation of the text as per the biblical story, Bathsheba was cleansing herself of “her uncleanness” (read: menstrual period) and thus is fertile, but not pregnant. If she was with child at the time that David saw her, this would imply that child is Uriah’s and also that later in the story when Bathsheba comes to David and tells him that she is with child, that is actually Uriah’s. This in turn, makes David’s hands-off murder fruitless, as the child is not his.

<sup>152</sup>Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 168.

possession of a scroll.<sup>153</sup> Interestingly enough it is entirely possible that this print was known to Veronese as Daniele Barbaro was at the University of Padua at the same time as Charles Estienne, who was writing and experimenting with these prints while there.<sup>154</sup>

These contemporary examples illustrate Veronese's deviation from the norm; he not only clothes Bathsheba, but introduces a pronounced male figure in the foreground. Furthermore, while the standard composition focuses attention on Bathsheba and away from David, Veronese has emphasized this pronounced male by including an additional scene in the background of the painting. To the right of the canvas is a colonnade or loggia that is painted in an almost grisaille-like finish, most of the colors are muted compared to the bright red of the male figure and soft blue of Bathsheba. In the corner of the loggia we see a group of men. Three of them are facing the viewer, one of whom bears a strong resemblance to the man in the foreground; both have beards, strong noses, bald heads, and red tunics. The small-scale man facing the viewer raises his hand in what almost looks like a gesture of frustration at a man who is facing away from the viewer and has a turban-like covering on his head. Among the columns are glimpses of other men who seem to be congregating.

The scene visible to the right could be an additional narrative, before or after this man's meeting with Bathsheba, particularly given the remarkable similarity between the two men. In addition to this conversation in the background, Veronese has added two striking details. On the balcony of the colonnade is a figure leaning over the balustrade. Very little detail is visible, but it is reminiscent of our miniscule Davids in the typical works mentioned above. Below this figure

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<sup>153</sup>Adolphe Napoléon Didron, *Christian Iconography; or, The History of Christian Art in the Middle Ages Volume II* (London, UK: George Bell and Sons, 1886) 386.

<sup>154</sup>Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 160; Hugh James Rose, Henry John Rose, Thomas Wright, *A New General Biographical Dictionary* (London, UK: T. Fellowes, 1857), 136.



though, barely visible at first glance, is a ghostly face at the bottom right corner of the first window. The features are almost indistinguishable, but it is clear that it is a face with the head wrapped in a covering. These details, particularly the ghostly face, contribute to the perplexing nature of this image.

### **The Identity of the Man in the Foreground**

The confusion continues when trying to interpret the prominent male figure in the front. Who is the viewer to presume this figure is? The limited scholarship available on this painting has not touched on the problem of the male figure, and thus he is generally thought of as the messenger as that is what *should* be depicted according to the text. There is a significant problem with how Veronese has depicted the man, however, for him to be a simple messenger. While missing the traditional mink cape, the golden balls that decorate the man's shoulders, as well as the rich gold and red colors are evocative of the dress of the Doge of Venice.<sup>155</sup> When comparing the colors of the brocade in Veronese's painting to Titian's portrait of Doge Andrea Gritti, who reigned 1523 to 1538, the similarity of the color is uncanny (Figure 3.5). As sumptuary laws were incredibly important at the time, wearing the dress that was the prerogative of the doge would seem to indicate the man is not a simple messenger. While such detailed garments may seem inconsequential, Salomon has noted that Veronese's older brother, Antonio was an embroider and have influenced his appreciation for "sophisticated fabrics."<sup>156</sup> Additionally, Ridolfo wrote that Veronese had an impeccable memory and was able to use that as inspiration for his paintings, which indicates an attention to detail that would include his characters wearing the appropriate costuming for their station.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup>le Foll, "*Bethsabée au bain* ou la metamorphose d'un tableau," 52-58.

<sup>156</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 25.

<sup>157</sup>Ibid.

The remaining options of the identity of the foregrounded man are that he is either David or Uriah. A depiction of Uriah would be unusual; there are, however, two examples. In the *sala grande* in the Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti in the Villa Giulia in Rome there is a fresco cycle of Bathsheba (Figure 3.6).<sup>158</sup> The frescoes were painted between 1553 and June 1554 by Francesco Salviati, and depict Bathsheba bathing in the middle, Bathsheba climbing a long staircase to the tower of David, and to the left Uriah being killed in battle.<sup>159</sup>

The other example is a fresco cycle at the Palazzo del Te in Mantua. This cycle by Giulio Romano is noteworthy in the context of Romano's influence on Veronese. It has been observed that much of Veronese's early work improved drastically after study of Romano.<sup>160</sup> Having completed a commission for the Gonzaga court in 1553, it is likely that Veronese visited Mantua around the same time and was able to study Romano's frescoes in the Palazzo del Te.<sup>161</sup> The frescoes are found in the Loggia di Davide and include the *Toilette of Bathsheba*, *David Spying on Bathsheba*, and the *Drunkenness of Uriah*. In the *Toilette of Bathsheba*—the scene is actually quite rare in Renaissance art as David is not visible—Bathsheba is able to enjoy her bath without an unannounced voyeur, and she is clothed (Figure 3.7).<sup>162</sup> That said, art historians have interpreted this as a way to show her preening, connecting her with the vanity of Venus, and thus

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<sup>158</sup>Jan L. de Jong, "Spying and Speculating," 94.

<sup>159</sup>While we unfortunately cannot state with certainty that Veronese saw this fresco, it is important to reiterate that the Villa Giulia, as well as its Nymphaeum were both primary vital inspiration to Palladio in the construction of Villa Maser. Thus, given Veronese's close working relationship with Palladio, it is likely that he could have heard about it in passing—particularly when considering the fact that the trip to Rome made by Palladio, Barbaro and Ligorio occurred between February and July of 1554.

<sup>160</sup>Federico Zeri, and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian paintings: Venetian school; a catalogue of the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, NY: New York Graphic Society, 1973), 83.

<sup>161</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 61.

<sup>162</sup>Maria Maurer, "The Palazzo del Te and Spaces of Masculinity in Early Modern Italy," (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2012), 53.

a more cognizant role as a “seductress” that differs from Veronese’s painting.<sup>163</sup> *David Spying on Bathsheba* features a very naked and exposed Bathsheba in the foreground, being washed by her maid, with David pictured above with a messenger (Figure 3.8). The *Drunkenness of Uriah*, unlike the Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti fresco, depicts Uriah alive, but drunk after having spent time with David. These fresco cycles indicate an interest in the role of Uriah, but as noted above, his depiction is infrequent, and, more importantly, not in the position we find in Veronese’s painting.

The evidence given above is not to propose that the man in Veronese’s painting is Uriah, but to develop a fuller picture of the artistic context in which Veronese was working. In fact, the connection to Giulio Romano and the Palazzo del Te will be brought up later on in relation to the face at the window, but is worth mentioning because of its inclusion of Uriah. This all being said, it seems unlikely that the man is Uriah due to Veronese’s inclusion of a subtle detail. If one looks closely at Bathsheba’s ears and cheeks, they are bright red. While the cheeks alone could be indicative of Firenzuola’s ideal beauty, the color of the ear causes a problem with that theory. Firenzuola details that “the ears should be soft, but not flabby, and colored more like pale pink roses or like *balas* rubies than like true red rubies”<sup>164</sup> According to Firenzuola the color should be closer to pink than red, but Veronese has used a color that is closer to the red tunic of the man than the pink flesh of her nipple. If not beauty, the red must be indicative of embarrassment. One of the terms used for embarrassment in sixteenth century Italy, was *rossore*, literally meaning “redness” suggesting this was a conscious choice of Veronese.<sup>165</sup> Why would a wife be that embarrassed to be seen naked or bathing by her husband? By eliminating these two male

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<sup>163</sup>Eric Jan Sluijter, "Rembrandt's Bathsheba and the Conventions of a Seductive Theme," in *Rembrandt's Bathsheba Reading King David's Letter*, ed. Ann Jensen Adams (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 83.

<sup>164</sup>Cropper, “On Beautiful Women, Parmigianino, Petrarchismo, and the Vernacular Style,” 383.

<sup>165</sup>Andrea Rizzi, "Signs of Trust in the Italian Renaissance," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 22, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 336.

identities above, it seems that the male in the foreground is David, and that Bathsheba is embarrassed by his presence. The embarrassment of being seen by a stranger is compounded by the authority that stranger possesses.

### **David's Relation to Jupiter**

Although this painting has frequently been compared to the composition in Veronese's Susanna paintings of around the same time period—Josephine le Foll going so far as to call Veronese a specialist painter of Susanna—there is an additional comparison that can be made from Veronese's oeuvre.<sup>166</sup> In the same series that the Boston *Diana and Actaeon* was completed, there is a painting of the same rectangular size which is labeled as *Jupiter and a Nude* or *Jupiter and Venus* (Figure 3.9). While seemingly disparate subjects, it appears that Veronese has quoted this composition. Both couples are concealed by what may be a small portico, sitting on a bench, overlooked by a statue, and separated from the rest of the figures in the painting. Although the nude in the *Jupiter* painting is sitting on Jupiter's lap, she leans away from him at the same angle that Bathsheba leans away from David. Furthermore, in both images the man wears red, and the woman has a garment of cooler colors that contrasts against that red. Additionally, the colonnade as well as the small fruit bearing trees are very similar and presented in an orderly manner within the garden. One of the most striking similarities the exact quotation of the almost colorless figure hunched over the balustrade, here transposed to the opposite side. While not part of the Bathsheba picture, in the background of the *Jupiter* canvas is what looks like a small bath with two nude women in it, which is reminiscent of depictions of Bathsheba with her maids, such as in the frescoes at Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti.

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<sup>166</sup>le Foll, "*Bethsabée au bain* ou la metamorphose d'un tableau," 52.

In comparing these two paintings and their shared composition, what becomes apparent is the influence that both David and Jupiter—as men and rulers—have over the women. Furthermore, both are known for stories that involve satiating their lust. Jupiter is well known for his “loves,” what is essentially a euphemism for rape, as the women (and one boy, Ganymede) have no choice in the matter.<sup>167</sup> This veiled reference to sexual violence is also true in the case of Bathsheba and David, for two reasons. First, although Old Testament law dictates that both parties be punished for adultery, Bathsheba is spared, suggesting the full onus is borne by David.<sup>168</sup> The seemingly unequal punishment also supports the fact that the text “gives no indication that she could have resisted David, given the power imbalance between them.”<sup>169</sup> As David J. Zucker explicitly writes, “David exploited his power as a ruler, and simply took Bathsheba because he could do so. In short, he sexually exploited and raped Bathsheba... ‘Bathsheba [is] a casualty of David’s sexual imperialism.’ She is the victim of ‘power rape.’”<sup>170</sup>

Ironically, this comparison of David and Jupiter brings in the figure of Federico II Gonzaga, and thus Giulio Romano, which offers a transition to an analysis of the voyeur. The Palazzo del Te, built by Federico II Gonzaga, was known as the libidinous duke’s “pleasure palace” and was designed as a getaway for the duke and his mistress Isabella Boschetti.<sup>171</sup> The iconographic program of the Palazzo is littered with erotic and almost obscene frescoes, with

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<sup>167</sup>Charles Segal, “Jupiter in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*,” *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 81.

<sup>168</sup>Koenig, *Isn’t This Bathsheba?*, 70.

<sup>169</sup>Tamber-Rosenau, “Biblical Bathing Beauties and The Manipulation of the Male Gaze,” 61.

<sup>170</sup>David J. Zucker, *The Bible’s Prophets: An Introduction for Christians and Jews* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 51.

<sup>171</sup>Janet Cox-Rearick, *Giulio Romano: Master Designer*, ed. Janet Cox-Rearick (New York, NY: Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery, Hunter College of the City Univ. of New York, 1999); Manfredo Tafuri, *Giulio Romano*, ed. Manfredo Tafuri (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

references to both Jupiter and David, figures to whom Federico Gonzaga related. In fact, in celebration of a 1522 defeat of Francis I of France, Federico commissioned portrait medals for himself in which the image was either David playing his harp or slaying Goliath.<sup>172</sup> Gonzaga's reference to both Jupiter and David was not uncommon for powerful men in the early modern period. All of these ruling men have significant power over their sexual partners. As mentioned earlier, the garment—specifically the golden balls—that the man wears is particularly interesting as it eliminates the possibility that the man is a messenger. Instead, it implies that Veronese intended this figure to be read as the Doge of Venice. Thus, by including the intricate details of the garment, Veronese has reminded the viewer that Bathsheba, who is painted as a true *Venetian* beauty, is not only powerless as a woman, but as a subject of the ruler.

### **Voyeur as Moralizer**

As mentioned above, an intriguing part of this painting is the small, barely noticeable face in the window. The detail is evocative of one of the most recognizable postures of Giulio Romano's drawings for *I Modi*. Romano, Raphael's acclaimed pupil was responsible for a variety of famous works, but perhaps his most infamous is that of *I Modi*, or *The Positions*, which illustrate sixteen positions for sexual intercourse in incredibly explicit detail.<sup>173</sup> Though the originals are lost, several woodblock copies survived, with Pietro Aretino adding salacious sonnets to the 1550 woodblocks producing the book *Sonneti Lussoriosi*.<sup>174</sup> Given Aretino's relationship with Daniele Barbaro, and Veronese's relationship with Romano, it seems that he

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<sup>172</sup>Egon Verheyen, *The Palazzo del Te: The Palazzo del Te in Mantua. Images of Love and Politics* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 32.

<sup>173</sup>Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 32-47.

<sup>174</sup>*Ibid.*

would have been aware not only of the woodblocks, but the poems that accompany them.<sup>175</sup> In Posture Eleven a couple copulates in the foreground while in the right corner, a woman watches with scorn through the window. Talvacchia notes that the figure at the window is an “exceptional inclusion” in the positions and introduces the figure as representative of “secretive visual pleasure.”<sup>176</sup> This of course is indicative of the David and Bathsheba subject as a whole, but also adds an interesting dimension to the face at the window present in this painting. Part of Aretino’s poem translated by Lynne Lawner reads: Old Woman, “Ah, shameless pair! I spy you//On that mattress pulled down to the floor. //You whore, you’d better defend yourself.”<sup>177</sup> The woman is not only a voyeur in the erotic sense, but infuses harsh judgement on the couple. In standard representations, David is the one who watches from a window as an erotic voyeur. This ghostly face, however, is distinctly excluded from the garden, a Harlequin patterned window separating it from the rest of the scene. This explicit boundary between inside and out communicates that the face is excluded from the scene entirely. By incorporating the strange detail of a face that evokes the voyeur mentioned above, Veronese has introduced judgement into the painting as if reminding the viewer that David is punished for his transgressions later in the story. The face is “watching the watcher” which implies an almost moralizing effect, or a reminder that nothing stays secret.<sup>178</sup> David makes several attempts to keep his affair with Bathsheba a secret, but is

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<sup>175</sup>Marco Faint, “‘E Poi in Roma Ognuno è Aretino’: Pasquino, Aretino, and the Concealed Self,” *Renaissance & Reformation/Renaissance et Reforme* 40, no. 1 (2017): 161–85.

<sup>176</sup>Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 28.

<sup>177</sup>Lynne Lawner, *I Modi, The Sixteen Pleasures: An Erotic Album of the Italian Renaissance* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 1989), 82.

<sup>178</sup>“Watching the Watcher” refers to the Latin phrase “Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?” coined by Roman poet Juvenal in his *Satires VI*, lines 347-348. While Juvenal wrote this line in context of keeping a wife faithful, it was reused by Plato in the *Republic* to refer to tyrannical rule. Timothy Besley and James Robinson, “Quis Custodiet

unsuccessful and is eventually punished. In being punished, ironically, Nathan, speaking for God, specifically mentions the fact that David's sins were done in secret, and thus his punishment will be in "broad daylight" for all of Israel to see.<sup>179</sup> The idea of the voyeur being an eyewitness to wrongdoing takes on additional meaning with regard to the Venetian state. Within Venice and the Palazzo Ducale were sculptures called the "Bocca di Leone" or "Boche per le Denunzie de Segrete"—the lion's mouths in which one could insert an anonymous letter accusing someone of treason.<sup>180</sup> The mouth of the fountain from which water flows onto Bathsheba's hand, somewhat resembles this "Bocca di Leone."

While the face at the window makes the viewer cognizant of being watched, and perhaps influenced to do the right thing, Veronese has also included a detail that encourages self-reflection. In the painting of Bathsheba, at the very bottom of the canvas, Veronese has masterfully captured the reflective qualities of water. While this certainly serves a practical purpose in exemplifying Veronese's prowess as a painter, we are reminded that water is reflective, and consequently something that one could use to look inside themselves. We clearly see the reflection of Bathsheba's foot resting on her sandal. A comparable reflection is found within both the Banca Carige *Susanna* and in the Boston *Diana* canvas in which the water reflects both the bodies of the nymphs and the dogs. Self-reflection is a humbling act that ultimately serves to correct behaviors; this of course is interesting in relation to our male figures in these paintings. Particularly as David was the only one to live through his ordeal and express remorse for his actions. It is almost as if Veronese is indicating that his viewers should take a

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Ipsos Custodes? Civilian Control Over the Military," *Journal of European Economic Association* 8, no. 1-2 (2010): 655-663.

<sup>179</sup>2 Samuel 12:12.

<sup>180</sup>Lorenzo Memmo, *Codice Feudale Della Serenissima Repubblica Di Venezia* (Venice, Italy: Pinelli, 1780), 196.



journey of self-reflection before they are undermined by their own lust as David was.

Furthermore, self-reflection seems to indicate taking responsibility for one's own actions, thus absolving Veronese's bathing Bathsheba of her reputation as a "seductress" or "adulteress."

Veronese's deviation from representing Bathsheba as naked could be indicative of this absolution. It seems that after the Council of Trent in 1563, the presence of Bathsheba in general was frowned upon due to the provocative nature of the story, and the unflattering light that was cast on King David. Jan L. de Jong traces the reception of story during the decades following the Council of Trent, and notes a 1570 sermon that encapsulates the prevailing attitude towards Bathsheba: "Bathsheba's nudity [was] to herself [the cause] of her lapse and dishonor, to her husband of his bloody and disgraceful death, and to David of divine wrath and persecution."<sup>181</sup> This seems to be a trend amongst all of the bathing women this thesis has analyzed in which their nakedness is the cause of destruction. The long-established interpretation was that it was not the man's fault for looking, but rather the woman's fault for revealing herself (regardless of the fact that each of the women was involved in what they thought was a private moment). Instead of subscribing to this interpretation, Veronese has clothed Bathsheba, reminded the audience of David's power, and given the indication that David's actions are not condoned. By including these understated details, Veronese has absolved Bathsheba and shifted the blame almost entirely to David.

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<sup>181</sup>de Jong, "Spying and Speculating," 95.

## CONCLUSION

Veronese is a relatively mysterious figure in the history of art because there exists sparse first-hand documentary evidence about his life. In fact, the only “glimpse” that we get is the written documentation of his trial for the Inquisition in 1573, with which I began this thesis.<sup>182</sup> Much of what we know of Veronese as a person comes from the early biographies by Vasari, Raffaele Borghini, and Carlo Ridolfo.<sup>183</sup> Through these biographies we know that Veronese was reputed to have “faultless character and personality” that manifested particularly in his role as a father: he “ruled his family with great prudence, keeping his children away from harmful acquaintances and practices, teaching them with every piety about religious observance and moral disciplines.”<sup>184</sup> In addition to these perceptions of character, we know that upon Titian’s death, Philip II offered Veronese a position in his court to decorate rooms of the Escorial; Veronese declined, citing his work in Venice, but also that he “was sorry to leave his own nest for adventure.”<sup>185</sup> Veronese seems, according to the evidence available, to have been a man of upright moral character and one who felt a profound commitment to his family.

In relation to the family structure of the time, Mary Rogers notes that the Villa Barbaro was a space in which the woman was “seen less a companion to a husband than in her role as

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<sup>182</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 22.

<sup>183</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 22-23.

<sup>184</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 35; Carlo Ridolfo, *Le Maraviglie dell’Arte (1648)*, 348.

<sup>185</sup>Salomon, *Veronese*, 28.

mother and ruler of the house”<sup>186</sup> and that Veronese’s fresco of Giustiniana Giustiniani mentioned in Chapter 1 of this thesis, reflects the “cultural climate of around 1560, showing a new concern with marriage, which could permit a mistress of a house to be so pictorially prominent.”<sup>187</sup> Given Veronese’s position within the Barbaro’s circle, he likely regarded his wife with similar reverence.

Susanna and Bathsheba were both wives and mothers, and while Diana was a virgin goddess, and thus not a mother, she is the goddess of fertility and a surrogate mother to her nymphs. Additionally, one of the Barbaros’ intellectual contemporaries and someone Veronese would have been familiar with, Sperone Speroni, cited Diana as an exemplar for housewives since the goddess “was chaste and constantly on the move.”<sup>188</sup> In introducing these three women as wives, mothers, and victims of men’s lust and wandering eyes, Veronese helped to reshape the prosaic opinion of Susanna, Diana, and Bathsheba.

In 1542, Speroni wrote the dialogue *On the Dignity of Woman (della dignità della donna)* in which he included “Daniele Barbaro” as a speaker. The conversation is centered around the question of whether men are better than women, and one group argues that:

Women’s inferior position in society is not ‘natural’; to the contrary, ‘every woman by nature is the governor of man.’ And ‘if custom is contrary, it is because... men, more robust and made with greater strength than women, force [them] with violence [into subordination]...In marriage, ‘love, a kind of counter-force, can in time reinstitute a wife’s lawful and benign order of government.’ After ‘having obtained his wife by forcing her into an unnatural and illicit submission,’ a man is ‘convert[ed]’ by his wife’s love into becoming her ‘law-abiding subject.’<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup>Rogers, “An Ideal Wife,” 380.

<sup>187</sup>Rogers, “An Ideal Wife,” 386.

<sup>188</sup>Rogers, “An Ideal Wife,” 392.

<sup>189</sup>Sperone Speroni as cited in Sharon L. Jansen, *Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 105.

One character in the dialogue, Beatrice, starts to speak essentially saying that a proper wife had joy and happiness to serve her husband.<sup>190</sup> The dialogue is intended to illustrate that women wanted to be perfect wives and subordinate to men. While Beatrice becomes the authority on the matter in disagreeing with the men—that women are indeed inferior—both sides of the argument support the more nuanced view of women that Veronese has arguably included in the paintings discussed here. The dialogue elucidates two conflicting ideas. On one hand, it acknowledges that uncivilized and brutish men can be tamed into “law-abiding citizens” by their loving wives. On the other, the inferiority of women in society is maintained.

This ambiguity is echoed in the paintings analyzed in this thesis. Veronese’s enigmatic and thus compelling paintings change very subtle details of conventional iconography in ways that suggest that the women can no longer be viewed as “scapegoats.” Instead, Veronese seems to highlight the responsibility men have over their actions, and in doing that has absolved each of his bathing women from their role in the eventual punishment that befell the men.

The way in which Veronese has cast Susanna, linking her with a more maternal characteristic is a cautionary tale for those identifying with the elders. It is if Veronese suggests, “would you sexualize this young mother, a giver of life, and ideal wife for your own wanton desires?” thus almost shaming the viewer who might feel a connection with the elders. In highlighting Susanna’s maternal qualities, Veronese has subsequently reminded the viewer that she is connected to a husband and that illicit relations would compromise the blood line of that husband.

Veronese’s treatment of Diana, and his seeming use of Nonnus is indicative of the blame shifting to Actaeon from Diana. Furthermore, the inclusion of Marcantonio Barbaro’s *Diana and*

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<sup>190</sup>Jansen, *Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe*, 106.

*Actaeon* statues surrounding the Nymphaeum at Villa Barbaro offers an edifying view of the subject. The inscription under the statue of Actaeon—"He who curiously spies on that which he should not, instead of pleasure is crowned with horns"—clearly indicates that men know when they are doing the wrong thing, and warns them that they will be punished.

Finally, Veronese's treatment of Bathsheba, a woman about whom the discourse has vacillated from victim to seducer and back again, aligns with the thought that Bathsheba is blameless and simply the victim of the powerful male figure who desired her. The visual quotation of his earlier painting of Jupiter creates a triad of elite rulers across time and space—Jupiter, David, and the Venetian Doge—which in turn highlights the abuse of power within David's theft of another man's wife.

By recognizing that Veronese's paintings of Susanna, Diana and Bathsheba diverge from conventional iconography, we are able to make bold claims about the innovations in his approach to the subject of the bathing woman. In introducing ambiguous details to his paintings, Veronese complies with the fantasies expected from his patrons when requesting a bathing scene, but has also included meaning that tempers the erotic and acts almost as a moralizing agent. Veronese has dismissed the customary roles of seductress, femme fatale, and adulteress that were ascribed to his bathing women, and instead has highlighted men's deliberate role and thus responsibility in these stories. Veronese has used the intimate space of the bath and the inappropriate gaze of males to enforce the vulnerability of these women and thus their innocence in the disastrous events that follow the moments depicted.

## ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1.1 Jacopo Tintoretto, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1555-1556. Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Oil on Canvas, 146 x 194 cm.



Figure 1.2 Paolo Veronese, *Susanna and the Elders*, c. 1570. Genoa: Collezione d'Arte della Banca Carige, Oil on Canvas, 175 x 320 cm.



Figure 1.3 Paolo Veronese, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1580. Genoa: Palazzo Bianco, Oil on Canvas, 111 x 145 cm.





Figure 1.4 Paolo Veronese, *Susanna and the Elders*, after 1575. Paris: Musée du Louvre, Oil on Canvas, 198 x 198 cm.

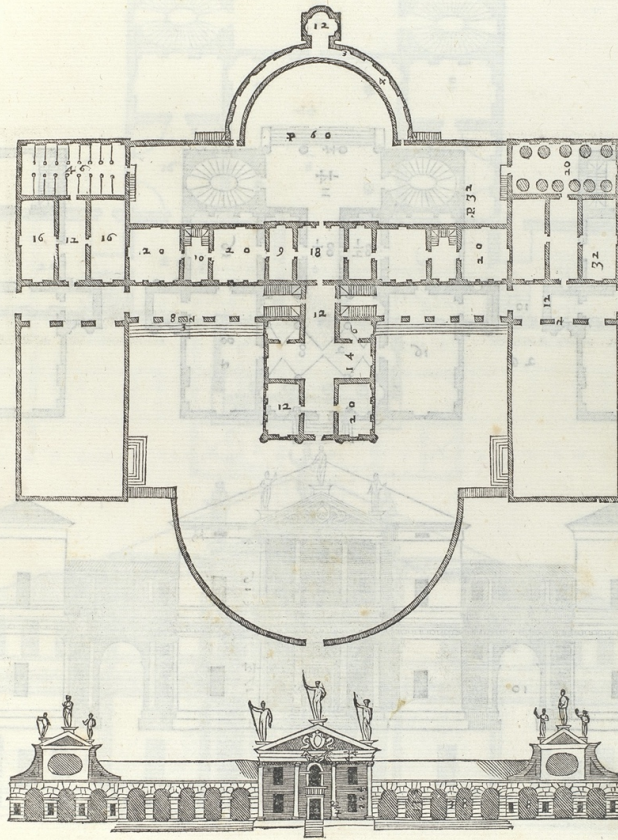


Figure 1.5 Paolo Veronese, *Susanna and the Elders*, c. 1580. Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado,  
Oil on Canvas, 151 x 177 cm.



Figure 1.6 Paolo Veronese, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1585-1588. Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Oil on Canvas, 140 x 280 cm.

LA SOTTOPOSTA fabrica è a Masera Villa vicina ad Afolo Castello del Triuigiano, di Monsignor Reuerendissimo Eletto di Aquileia, e del Magnifico Signor Marc'Antonio fratelli de' Barbari. Quella parte della fabrica, che esce alquanto in fuori, ha due ordini di stanze, il piano di quelle di sopra è a pari del piano del cortile di dietro, oue è tagliata nel monte rincontro alla casa vna fontana con infiniti ornamenti di stucco, e di pittura. Fa quella fonte vn laghetto, che serue per pesciera: da questo luogo partitasi l'acqua scorre nella cucina, & dappoi irrigati i giardini, che sono dalla destra, e sinistra parte della strada, la quale pian piano ascendendo conduce alla fabrica; fa due pescchiere con i loro beueratori sopra la strada commune: d'onde partitasi; adacqua il Bruolo, il quale è grandissimo, e pieno di frutti eccellentissimi, e di diuerse seluaticine. La facciata della casa del padrone ha quattro colonne di ordine Ionico: il capitello di quelle de gli angoli fa fronte da due parti: i quai capitelli come si facciano; porrò nel libro de i Tempij. Dall'vna, e l'altra parte ui sono loggie, le quali nell'estremità hanno due colombari, e sotto quelle ui sono luoghi da fare i uini, e le stalle, e gli altri luoghi per l'vso di Villa.



LA FABRICA

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Figure 1.7 Andrea Palladio, "Villa Barbaro," from *I quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio (Book 2, page 51), 1570. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, Printed Book with Woodcut Illustrations, sheet 28.8 x 19.5 cm.



Figure 1.8 detail of Paolo Veronese, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1585-1588. Vienna:

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Oil on Canvas, 140 x 280 cm.



Figure 1.9 Paolo Veronese, *Mars and Venus United by Love*, 1570s. New York: Metropolitan

Museum of Art, Oil on Canvas, 205.7 x 161 cm.



Figure 1.10 Paolo Veronese, *Madonna and Child with Saints Lucy and Catherine and Two Nuns*, c. 1580. Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Oil on Canvas, 68 x 84.5 cm.



Figure 1.11 Paolo Veronese, *The Homeless Cain and his Family*, c. 1585. Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, Oil on Canvas, 105 x 153 cm.





Figure 1.12 Andrea Palladio and Marcantonio Barbaro, Garden Nymphaeum, Villa Barbaro, Maser, Italy (Photo by Bob Ramsak).



Figure 1.13 Venetian Sculptor, *Fontana delle Tette*, 1559-1560. Treviso: Musei Civici di Treviso, Istrian stone.



Figure 1.14 Gillis van den Vliete, *Fountain of Diana of Ephesus*, 1568. Tivoli: Villa d'Este.



Figure 1.15 Paolo Veronese, detail from the vault of *the Sala dell'Olimpo Giustiniana Giustiniani and Nurse*, 1560-1561. Maser: Villa Barbaro, Fresco.



Figure 2.1 Paolo Veronese, *Diana and Actaeon*, c. 1560-1565. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oil on Canvas, 121.3 × 164.5 cm.

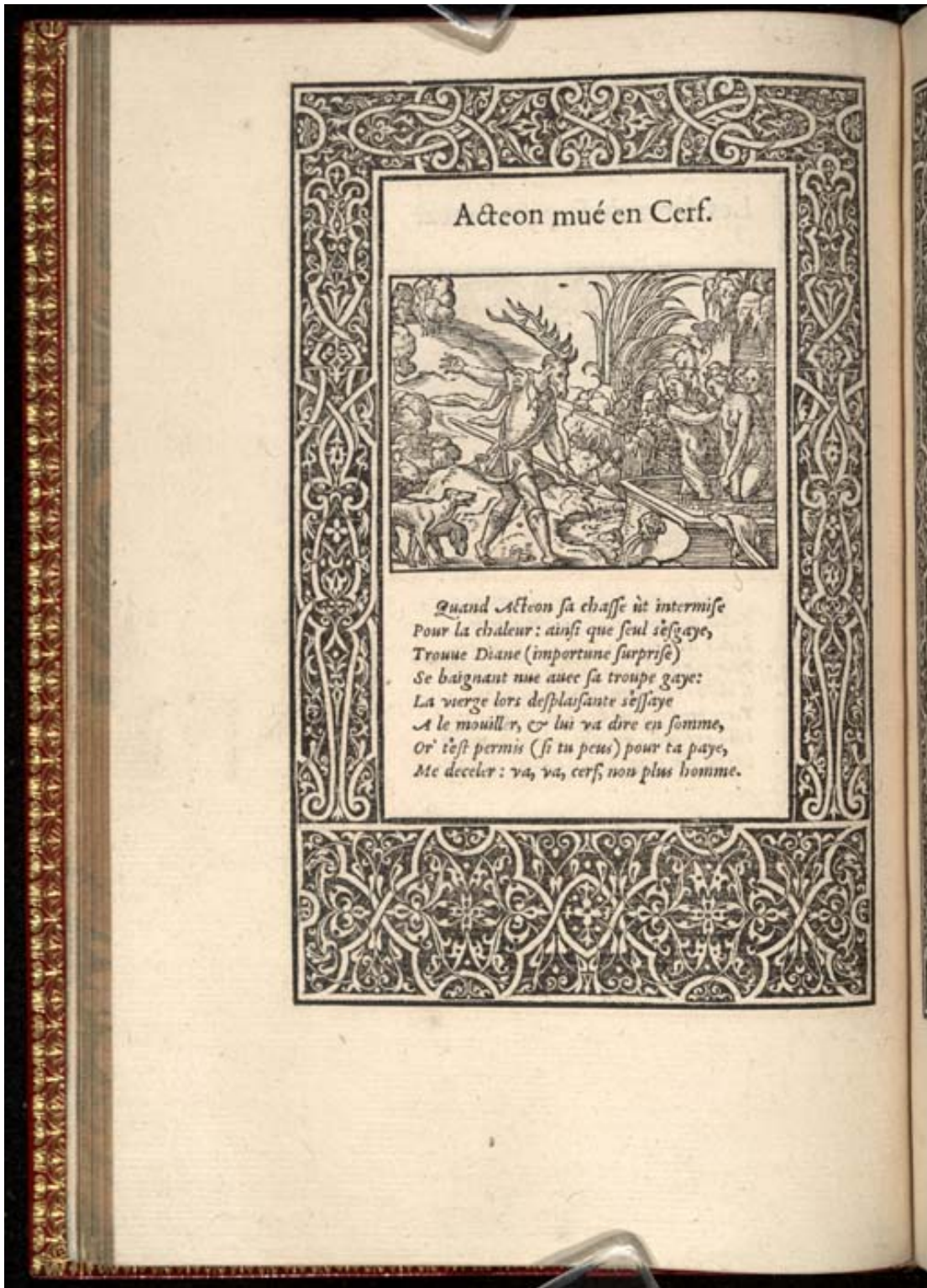


Figure 2.2 Bernard Salomon, *Diana and Actaeon*, 1557, in *Métamorphose Figurée*, Woodcut.



Figure 2.3 Virgil Solis, *Diana and Actaeon*, 1563, in *Metamorphoses Illustratae*, Woodcut.



Figure 2.4 Georg Pencz, *Diana and Actaeon*, 1500-1550. Chapel Hill: Ackland Art Museum, Engraving, 4.7 x 7.8 cm.





Figure 2.5 Anonymous, *Actaeon sees Diana and her Nymphs bathing*, 1567, in Lodovico Dolce's *Le Trasformationi*, Woodcut.



Figure 2.6 Paolo Veronese, *Actaeon Watching Diana and Her Nymphs Bathing*, 1560s. Boston:

Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Oil on Canvas, 26 x 101 cm.



Figure 2.7 Titian, *Diana and Actaeon*, 1556-1559. Edinburgh, London: National Galleries of Scotland and National Gallery, Oil on Canvas, 184.5 × 202.2 cm.



Figure 2.8 Marcantonio Barbaro, *Diana*, 1554-1555. Maser Nymphaeum Hemicycle, East Arm.



Figure 2.9 Marcanonio Barbaro, *Actaeon*, 1554-1555. Maser Nymphaeum Hemicycle, West Arm.

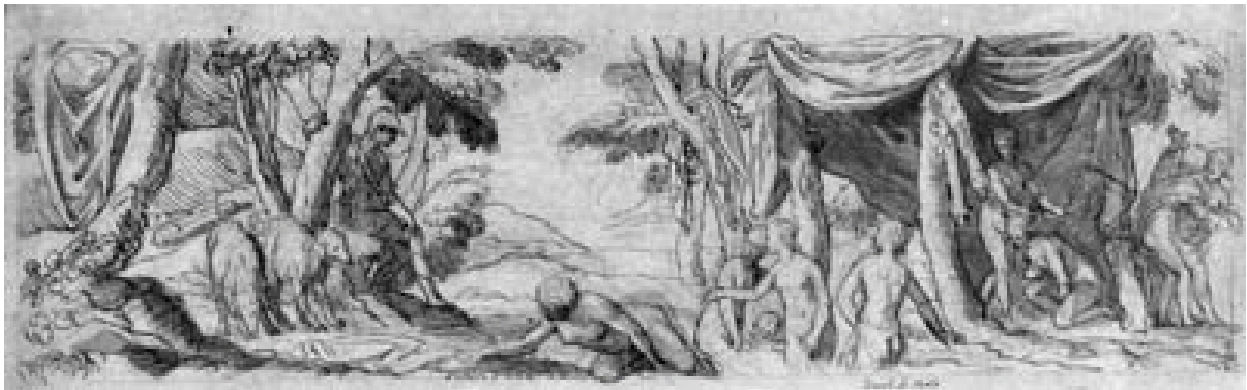


Figure 2.10 Veronese School, *Diana and Actaeon*, c. 1580. Private Collection, Black Chalk, Pen and Brown Ink, Brown Wash on Blue Paper, 138 x 433 mm.



Figure 3.1 Paolo Veronese, *Bathsheba at her Bath*, 1575. Lyon: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon,  
Oil on Canvas, 191 x 224 cm.



Figure 3.2 Paris Bordone, *Bathsheba Bathing*, c. 1549. Cologne: Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Oil on Canvas, 234 x 217 cm.





Figure 3.3 Paris Bordone, *David and Bathsheba*, 1540-1549. Baltimore: Walters Art Museum,  
Oil on Canvas, 114 x 145 cm.



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Figure 3.4 Charles Estienne (author), Étienne La Rivière (artist), *De dissectione partium corporis humani libri tres*, page 275, 1545. Woodcut, 36 x 23 cm.



Figure 3.5 Titian, *Portrait of Andrea Gritti*, c. 1546/1550. Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Oil on Canvas, 133.6 x 103.2 cm.

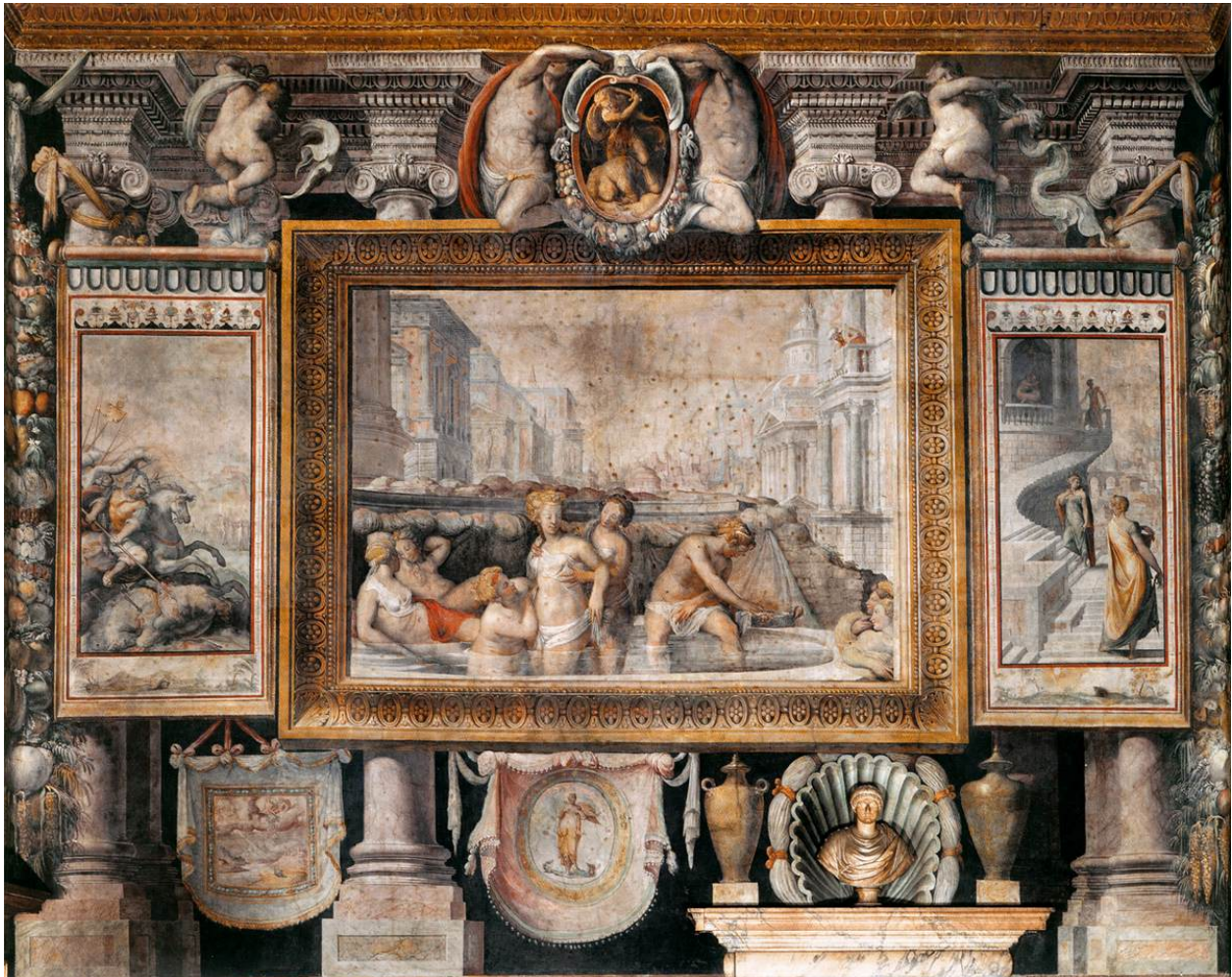


Figure 3.6 Francesco Salviati, *The Death of Uriah; Bathsheba Bathing; Bathsheba on her way to King David*, c. 1553-1554. Rome: Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti, Northeast Wall of the Sala Grande, Fresco.



Figure 3.7 Giulio Romano, *Toilette of Bathsheba*, 1532. Mantua, Palazzo del Te, Loggia di Davide, detail of ceiling vault, Fresco.



Figure 3.8 Giulio Romano, *David Spying on Bathsheba*, 1532. Mantua, Palazzo del Te, Loggia di Davide, detail of ceiling vault, Fresco.



Figure 3.9 Paolo Veronese, *Jupiter and a Nude*, 1560s. Boston: Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Oil on Canvas, 26 x 101 cm.

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