TITIAN • TINTORETTO • VERONESE

RIVALS IN RENAISSANCE VENICE

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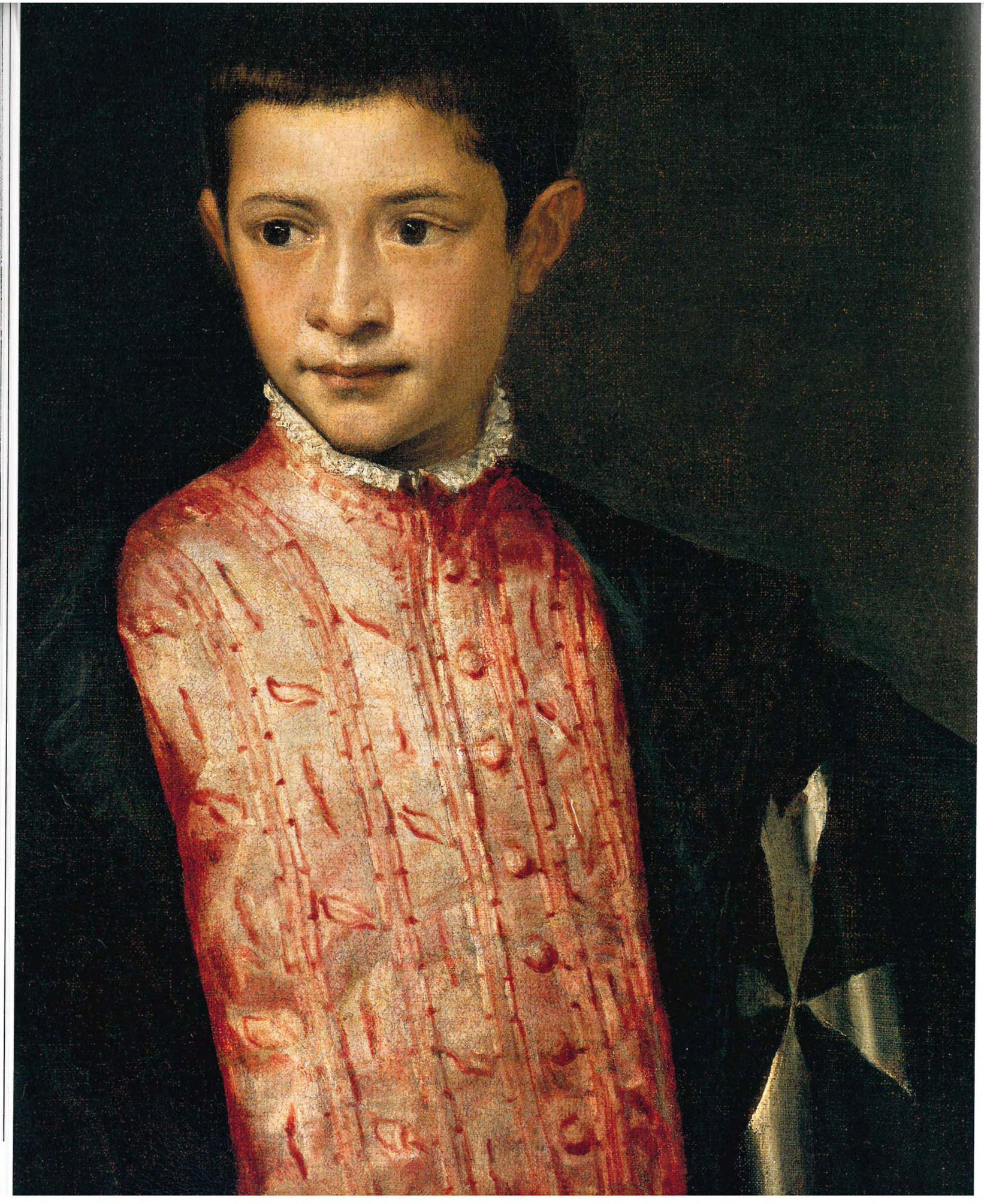

Portraiture

In all the houses of Venice are many portraits and several gentlemen have those of their ancestors to the fourth generation while some of the noblest go even further back. The custom is a most admirable one and was in use among the ancients.

Giorgio Vasari, 1568

Although the Tuscan chauvinist Giorgio Vasari found plenty to fault in Venetian painting, he made a point to praise the city's portraiture.[1] In the sixteenth century, while traditions of donor portraits within religious paintings persisted in Venice (such as the *Madonna di Ca' Pesaro* in Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari [fig. 47]), the popularity of independent portraits grew remarkably. Earlier likenesses had followed a limited repertoire of stiff, hieratic portrayals, often showing only the head and shoulders, painted in egg tempera on panel. Gentile Bellini's tempera painting from around 1478 of Doge Giovanni Mocenigo (Museo Correr, Venice) adopts the antique profile pose made popular on ancient Roman coins. By the time Giovanni Bellini assumed his older brother's place as official painter to the Republic in 1479, Roman-inspired formulas were ceding ground to new modes of portrayal.[2] Oil paintings from other parts of Italy and from the Netherlands showed the sitter's face in three-quarter view and greater verisimilitude. Giovanni embraced these innovations, and in the first two decades of the sixteenth century, his younger followers—Giorgione, Lorenzo Lotto, Palma Vecchio, and above all Titian—gradually shifted to painting more often on canvas than panel, simultaneously increasing the size of the painting. Portraits thus gradually lost some of their character as small, precious objects.

Starting around 1500, painters began to depict the sitter's head as life-size and expanded the field to include more of the body, paying particular attention to the hands as vehicles for expression.[3] The profile portrait disappeared as a type, replaced, for the most part, by sitters who looked out at the viewer (see cat. 35), contributing to a sense of connection or even confrontation. A smaller number of portraits depicted the sitter looking away, cultivating an introspective mood. In the case of Titian's *Portrait of a Man in a Red Cap* (fig. 91), the averted gaze invites the viewer to linger over such beautifully painted still-life details as the expansive fur collar and the soft leather gloves. A tangible sensuality also characterizes the flesh and costume of portraits of women, which were relatively rare in comparison to the galleries of male images. Venetian painters like Palma and Titian earned fame in the first three decades of the sixteenth century painting ideal and alluring images of women that reshaped portraiture trends (fig. 89; cat. 5).[4]

Palma and Titian's works displayed the allegorical possibilities of portraiture, contrasting the sitter's lifelike presence with the funereal stoniness of parapets (cat. 35) and other symbolic elements.[5] These images seemed to address the viewer and entreat a response, a poetic

Fig. 89
Palma Vecchio (Italian, about 1479–1528)
A Blonde Woman, about 1520
Oil on wood
The National Gallery, London

yearning, so well known from Petrarch's sonnets. In taking up these goals of portraiture—the illusion of communication, lifelike semblance, and poetic resonance—Titian seized the field from his final teacher, Giorgione. By the time Tintoretto and Veronese emerged to compete with Titian, Venetian portraiture had expanded to include a varied repertoire of poses acted out across ever-larger canvases.

Of the three painters, Titian catered to the most elevated international clientele and may have produced over two hundred portraits, a remarkable number given his abundant output in religious and mythological paintings.[6] As in the case of his encounters with the Hapsburg monarchs Charles V and Philip II, or princes of the church like Pope Paul III (cat. 7), portraiture often provided Titian's entrée to aristocratic clients and helped him secure subsequent commissions in other genres. Tintoretto was even more prolific and seems to have managed a teeming workshop "almost industrial in its size and working methods," resulting in a greater output of portraits than any of his Venetian contemporaries.[7] His patrons included members of the city's highest patrician families.[8] Tintoretto finally received the *senseria*—the sinecure making him in effect Titian's replacement as the official painter of ducal portraits—only on September 17, 1574. This was too late for him to portray the French king Henri III, who had made a state visit to Venice two months earlier. According to Carlo Ridolfi, Tintoretto executed a likeness of the monarch secretly, without commission or explicit permission.[9] By contrast to Titian and Tintoretto's prolific output, only about forty portraits by Veronese survive, yet they are of high quality and feature diverse poses.[10] Although there is no royalty among his sitters, many of the works do record Venice's elite.

All three painters portrayed sitters from across the socioeconomic spectrum, including fellow artists. Veronese painted Titian's portrait (now lost), suggesting a close rapport.[11] Women and children also sat for the artists, though Tintoretto, unlike the other two, never seems to have made the genre a priority: only a few autograph portraits of women (and none of children) by him survive. Portraying women brought its own challenges; for example, the painter could be expected to travel to a female sitter's home, whereas it was socially acceptable and more convenient for a male sitter to pose in the studio. Portrait prices sometimes took into account this inconvenience to the painter. The account book of the Venetian businessman Zuan Paolo da Ponte records an agreement on March 8, 1534, whereby Titian would paint his portrait for 10 ducats and a portrait of his daughter Julia for twice the price.[12] The client agreed to the much higher sum for Julia's portrait, since Titian had to travel to the da Ponte home. Zuan Paolo also records that Titian would be paid an additional 5 ducats to cover the ultramarine pigments required for the blue clothing in his daughter's portrait.

All three painters routinely employed assistants to make their portrait business more efficient. During the face-to-face encounter with the subject, each artist would have sought to work quickly so as to keep the sitter content and alert. Paolo Pino's *Dialogue on Painting* of 1548 made clear that protracted sittings would result in a painter's being "dubbed tedious in his procedure" and he would

thus miss out on other commissions.[13] Occasionally the client would not pay the artist for a completed work, and since it was difficult to sell the portrait to someone else, many cases arose of other subjects painted on top of abandoned portraits (cat. 30).

In applying their paints, Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese exploited the surface textures of the canvas, using it to create illusions of fabric texture or to draw attention to their signature strokes of impasto floating on the surface. In the case of Titian and Tintoretto, open brushwork and sketchy handling even aroused the anxiety or disapproval of some clients. Maria of Hungary cautioned her niece Mary Tudor to view the portrait of Philip II (fig. 97) from a distance, as Titian's portraits were not always decipherable from close-up.[14] Tintoretto's brushwork in portraits ranges from careful, as when he rivals Titian as a painter of fur and leather gloves (cat. 36), to reckless and exciting, such as the reflections on armor (cat. 40). In the latter, the brushwork both conveys the steely surface of the metal plates and celebrates the painter's bold touch.

Admiring these textural effects, poets could praise an image for its lifelike quality while in the same breath professing that it captured the subject's eternal virtues. No poet seized upon this opportunity to win favor or financial support from a sitter quite like Pietro Aretino, who extolled Titian's portrait of Paul III as "animated and true to life" even though he had not seen it.[15] Although Aretino was Titian's great supporter, Tintoretto successfully ingratiated himself with the poet and painted several works for him, including a portrait and a ceiling ensemble for his home (cat. 8).

Veronese, for his part, captured the attention of a later poet, Sir Philip Sidney, who visited Venice in 1574.[16] Writing to a close confidant in Vienna, Sidney declared that he was still undecided whether to give the commission to Tintoretto or Veronese, "who hold by far the highest place in the art."[17] Titian was apparently too old to be considered. In the end, Sidney chose Veronese and sent the portrait on to Vienna. His friend, after initial protests that the painter had depicted Sidney looking too young and slightly sad, warmed to the likeness and declared it the most valuable item in his collection.[18] Though the portrait does not survive, Veronese's pensive-looking *Boy with a Greyhound* (fig. 90) depicts a similar melancholic portrayal.

Fig. 90
Veronese
Boy with a Greyhound, mid-1560s
Oil on canvas
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

As Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese struggled to distinguish themselves, their competition was mediated by one important factor unique to the genre: the presence of the sitter. In some sense a portrait is always a likeness. Yet the artist is often expected to capture qualities that are transcendent or eternal, and as such the genre pulls an artist in opposite directions: being asked to flatter or capture something timeless while being anchored to the time-bound. Several modern writers have analyzed such tensions to great effect.[19] As we consider how our own interpretations, plagued by centuries of distance, are added onto these fictions of the artist's brush, it is useful to note that even sixteenth-century writers recognized that this purportedly truthful genre afforded a wide latitude of fanciful deceit. As Vasari commented, only when portraits are both "like *and* beautiful, then may they be called rare works, and their authors truly excellent craftsmen."[20]
— JG, FI

cat. 35

Gentlemen of Fashion

TITIAN
Portrait of a Man (Tommaso Mosti?), about 1520
Galleria Palatina, Florence
(cat. 35)

TINTORETTO
Portrait of a Man Aged Twenty-Six, 1547
Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, the Netherlands
(cat. 36)

VERONESE
Portrait of a Man, about 1551–53
Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest
(cat. 37)

In their clothing, the young gentlemen portrayed here appear to follow the etiquette of Baldassare Castiglione, who urged the ideal courtier to don elegant but restrained attire, specifying that "the most agreeable color is black, and if not black, then at least something fairly dark."[21] Castiglione followed these conventions when he posed for his own famous portrait by Raphael (Louvre, Paris), a work that Titian might have seen on a visit to Mantua in 1519.[22] The pyramidal composition of Titian's *Portrait of a Man (Tommaso Mosti?)* closely follows Raphael's example in which the sitter leans confidently on a parapet. Titian's palette is marked by a luxurious sobriety that captures the tactile elements of the picture: the fur lining of the cloak, the supple leather gloves, and the gilt pages of the book. Tintoretto's *Portrait of a Man Aged Twenty-Six* also displays a sensitivity to rich textures. The artist includes a parapet behind the sitter and expands the picture's format to accommodate a standing figure similarly well dressed in lynx-trimmed mantel and displaying a remarkable self-possession.[23] Veronese's *Portrait of a Man* follows in this mode, but a curtain is pulled open to reveal an ivy-clad view of a landscape with antique ruins. In keeping with the tenor of stylishness noted in the preceding portraits, Veronese's sitter rests a gloved hand on his hip in a nonchalant pose that calls to mind Castiglione's idea of *sprezzatura*, or effortlessness.

The names of these sitters do not survive, even if their rich attire makes it clear that they were members of the elite. Only Titian's *Portrait of a Man (Tommaso Mosti?)* offers a tentative identification of the subject. The back of the canvas bears an inscription in what appears to be seventeenth-century script: "DI THOMASO MOSTI IN ETÁ DI ANNI XXV. L'ANNO M.D.XXVI. THITIANO DA CADORO PITTORE" (Tommaso Mosti at the age of twenty-five. The year 1526. Painted by Titian from [Pieve di] Cadore). Most scholars have judged the inscription untrustworthy and prefer to date the work to 1520, based on its style.[24] Given this earlier date, the portrait might still portray Mosti before he took holy orders, but the connection is tenuous enough that the work is sometimes labeled simply *Portrait of a Man*.[25] Tintoretto's sitter remains unidentified, although an inscription declares the date of the painting, June 1547, and the sitter to be twenty-six years old. This handsome work is one of the few dated portraits from Tintoretto's early career, and until recently it was relatively unknown.[26] Veronese's *Portrait of a Man* bears no inscriptions, but the similarity of the ruins in the background to a print of the *Baths of Caracalla* by Hieronymus Cock suggests a date after 1551.[27]

Fig. 91. Titian, *Portrait of a Man in a Red Cap*, 1511–16, oil on canvas, The Frick Collection, New York

Giorgione's sensuous and wistful images set a standard for Titian's early forays into half-length male likenesses, including his *Portrait of a Man in a Red Cap*, from 1511–16 (fig. 91). The yielding sitter in that picture coaxes the viewer's gaze, while Titian's sumptuous brushwork encourages one's eyes to linger on details, such as the light chemise and leather glove. Turning to the *Portrait of a Man*

Fig. 92
Titian
Daniele Barbaro, about 1545
Oil on canvas
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

(Tommaso Mosti?) a few years later, Titian continued the intimate half-length portrayal but opted for a more self-assured pose with a book placed under the subject's hand. There is something seductive in the sitter's calm gaze and palpably soft clothing.

In works such as *Portrait of a Man Aged Twenty-Six*, Tintoretto attempts to rival Titian's subdued color harmonies and skillfull evocation of costume, especially in the sitter's gloves. The bright-lit features emulate Titian's canvas, even as the brushwork is more open and unrestrained.[28] As Falomir has noted, Tintoretto's career experienced a "meteoric rise" after 1545, and this assertive portrayal of an upright aristocrat is one of many that document the artist's growing status as portraitist to the elite.[29] The formula of a floating visage on a dark background also characterizes work of the following decades, such as *Giovanni Paolo Cornaro* of 1561 (fig. 25). By the late 1540s, Tintoretto had mastered the skills noted by Cristoforo Sorte in his *Osservationi nella pittura* (1580): "in the portraits and paintings he takes from life, he takes but a moment to insert the contrasts, shadows, half-tones, reliefs and flesh, so well imitated, in their places with such wondrous skill, speed and promptitude that it is a marvel to see him work."[30] Tintoretto's deft handling also meant shorter sitting times for patrons.

No autograph preparatory drawing survives for any of Tintoretto's portraits, and it may not have been important to his working process. Veronese, despite a smaller number of portraits, leaves two drawings of sitters' heads and at least three highly finished drawings of models striking the appropriate pose and wearing the sitter's attire.[31] Veronese's study for *Iseppo da Porto and His Son Adriano* offers a good example—models pose wearing the silk garments of father and son (fig. 99). Such costume studies point to a fundamental difference in the two portraitists that became more pronounced as they aged: Tintoretto prioritized the face and often paid only cursory attention to other parts of the canvas, while Veronese worked more slowly and tended to add more props and sumptuous attire. This difference is evident in Veronese's *Portrait of a Man*, painted when the artist was in his early twenties. The sitter strikes a grandiloquent pose, even if his right hand remains hesitantly placed on the ledge.[32] Veronese stages his fashionably melancholic subject with greater emphasis on connotative props, such as the creeping ivy and overgrown ruins, symbolizing loss and death.[33]

Veronese's interest in objects and staging could also lead him away from Titian's practice, as is evident when both artists were commissioned to portray the same sitter: Daniele Barbaro (figs. 18, 92). Titian's likeness shows the determined features of the young humanist rising out of the dark as the sole conveyor of meaning. In Veronese's image Barbaro's erudition and status are signaled by his seated pose (common to images of scholars or popes), costumes, and books. Daniele also appears in his official vestments as Patriarch-elect of Aquileia, holding his 1556 translation of Vitruvius's *De architectura libri decem*; denotative and connotative elements of his high position and learning conjoin and ultimately contend with the sitter's brightly lit face.

In these portraits, one sees Titian's opulent refinement and relaxed mastery of the pyramidal composition being transformed by his rivals into more upright and forceful portrayals. Tintoretto's depiction exudes self-confidence, while Veronese's likeness approaches a more outwardly theatrical mode, arguably at the expense of the somber tradition pioneered by Titian in the 1520s. Whether restricting the palette to emphasize a sitter's interiority or expanding it to include a sunny landscape with distant ruins, each artist attempts to dignify his sitter with a balance of fashionable presentation and noble sentiment.
—JG

cat. 36

cat. 37

Portraits of Warriors

TINTORETTO
Sebastiano Venier, about 1571–72
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, Vienna
(cat. 40)

VERONESE
Agostino Barbarigo, about 1571–72
Cleveland Museum of Art
(cat. 41)

Fig. 94. Titian, *Alfonso d'Avalos*, 1533, oil on canvas, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

The self-assurance and indeed serenity of La Serenissima was based on a powerful navy led by formidable admirals. These warriors sat for Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese in the hopes that their portraits might secure their fame and inspire the military prowess of their successors, thus keeping alive a lineage of classical portraiture stretching back to the time of Alexander the Great. According to Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, the famous portraits of Alexander by the painter Apelles were displayed in the Roman forum as exempla of strength and virtue.[53] Ancient biographers noted that Julius Caesar carried a portrait of Alexander on military campaigns to inspire him to victory, an anecdote frequently repeated by Renaissance theorists writing on the merits of portraiture.[54] This essay includes likenesses of three of the most revered Venetian commanders: Admiral Vincenzo Cappello, who led the Venetian navy in numerous Turkish skirmishes; and Admirals Sebastiano Venier and Agostino Barbarigo, who distinguished themselves in the epic Battle of Lepanto in 1571, Venier surviving to rise to an even higher rank, doge of the Venetian Republic. Their portraits made their deeds live on.

Titian's portraiture determined subsequent Venetian and European taste; he was endorsed by his contemporaries as a modern Apelles and celebrated as such in the poetry of Pietro Aretino.[55] Although Titian's portraits of sitters in armor included full-length images, multifigure compositions, and a large equestrian portrait (*Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg*, in the Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid), the format he perfected—the three-quarter-length portrait of a sitter in armor, on canvas—was the one most popular in Venice, and one embraced by Tintoretto and Veronese in their own distinctive styles. Titian's pioneering effort in this genre, a nearly three-quarter-length portrait of Charles V in armor, has been lost. The picture seems to have been painted in 1530 in Bologna on the occasion of Charles's coronation as Holy Roman Emperor, and its appearance can be reconstructed from a print by Giovanni Britto and a painting by Rubens.[56] These copies reveal that Titian depicted the emperor without a helmet but otherwise fully armed, bearing a sword in his hand. He turns his body slightly and offers the viewer an expression of composed command. The influence of this lost portrait can be seen in other works by Titian that soon followed in its wake: *Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino* of 1536 (Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence), *Alfonso d'Avalos* of 1533 (fig. 94), and *Vincenzo Cappello*, probably of 1540 (fig. 95). D'Avalos and Titian probably met in 1530 in Bologna at the coronation of Charles V. The Getty *Alfonso d'Avalos* follows the formula of the lost work quite closely, suggesting that the emperor's chief of command in Italy wanted his portrait to pay

cat. 40

Fig. 95
Titian
Vincenzo Cappello, 1540
Oil on canvas
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

homage to the emperor's earlier likeness.[57] The lapse of three years would allow for the appropriate decorum, D'Avalos's image complementing rather than competing with the model. Unlike Charles, who is represented holding a sword aloft, D'Avalos stands firm beside a small page carrying his helmet. The contrast of the formidable general and tiny page lends the image a sense of monumentality and hints at the human interaction that Titian attained with the same sitter about seven years later in a multifigure composition, the *Allocution of Alfonso d'Avalos* (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid), where Alfonso addresses his troops.[58]

The confrontational stare in *Vincenzo Cappello* announces a development, that of a newly aggressive sitter who seems as if he could crush his foes through sheer force of will. Cappello (1469–1541) served five times as the Venetian supreme naval commander, the Capitano Generale da Mar, and was knighted by Henry VII of England. Although his naval career ended unhappily at the hands of the Ottoman forces, Cappello returned to Venice and was elected procurator in 1539. The splendid portrait, generally attributed to Titian, derives from Titian's *Francesco Maria della Rovere*, but now a larger figure dominates the pictorial field, and the expression is more bellicose than thoughtful. Cappello brandishes the baton of command, while other attributes of military leadership, stacked on a shelf in the background, allude to his many appointments as Capitano Generale da Mar.[59] The various copies of Titian's *Vincenzo Cappello* attest to its popularity.[60] In fact, its portrait formula inspired Tintoretto and Veronese, as illustrated by *Sebastiano Venier* and *Agostino Barbarigo* respectively.

Pietro Aretino, in a letter of December 25, 1540, to Nicolò Molino, opens a sonnet devoted to a just-completed portrait by Titian of Admiral Vincenzo Cappello.[61] Those who judge the Washington picture to be from Titian's hand have generally accepted this to be the canvas to which Aretino refers.[62] Yet, the earliest inventory of the painting in William Beckford's Scottish collection in 1844 lists it as a Tintoretto, an attribution that continues to persuade some scholars.[63] The current volume therefore offers readers a chance to revisit these lively questions of connoisseurship.[64]

On the question of authorship, many observe a quality of finish suggestive of Titian's hand, and the highlights on the armor and helmet seem typical of Titian.[65] Yet, the linear treatment of the beard, the broad and summary handling of the crimson fabric, and the anatomical conception of the sitter's hands are slightly uncharacteristic of his practice. The treatment of the face is very similar to that in portraits of older men by Tintoretto, such as *Jacopo Soranzo* (fig. 17) and *Giovanni Mocenigo* (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin).[66] The *Portrait of a Widow* (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden) stands as a testament to the manner in which some of the softer, more carefully executed works by Tintoretto have historically been assigned to Titian.[67] Raffaello Borghini's praise of Tintoretto in *Il riposo* (1584) remains relevant here: "in coloring he is said to have truly imitated nature, and most particularly Titian, so much so that many portraits done by him are held to be by Titian's hand."[68] The sometimes close stylistic affinity among the artists leaves open the possibility that, similar to the sixteenth-century audiences Borghini mentions, we may have under-

Fig. 96
Veronese
Allegory of the Battle of Lepanto with Sebastiano Venier, after 1574
Oil on canvas
Sala del Collegio, Palazzo Ducale, Venice

estimated Tintoretto's skills of emulation, attributing one of his works to Titian. Whether by Titian or Tintoretto, the *Vincenzo Cappello* represents a memorable portrayal of this powerful admiral.

The *Vincenzo Cappello* set a standard that Tintoretto's *Sebastiano Venier* and Veronese's *Agostino Barbarigo* would uphold in the early 1570s. By the autumn of 1571, the Venetian Republic had spent more than a decade arranging a counteroffensive to the spreading Turkish domination in the Eastern Mediterranean. A Holy League, combining fleets from Venice, Spain, the Papal States, and other Christian powers, confronted an even larger Ottoman armada on October 7 off the western coast of Greece. The crushing defeat of the Ottoman forces was taken as a sign of God's favor, although subsequent Christian naval supremacy in the Eastern Mediterranean was short-lived. For this battle, the leader of the Venetian forces was Sebastiano Venier (1496–1578), whose portrait by Tintoretto celebrates the victory.[69] The elderly but formidable sitter dominates the field to a greater extent than most earlier portraits of warriors; the brushwork constituting the reflections on the armor shows Tintoretto at his most economical and dazzling. Venier's cloak, with its awkward folds, must be by the hand of an assistant, who may also have been responsible for the background scene of raging cannon fire and smoke from the galleys. Heavier fighting, however, was actually sustained by the men under Venice's second in command, Agostino Barbarigo (d. 1571), whose posthumous portrait was painted by Veronese. In the course of the battle, Barbarigo took a crossbow arrow in his left eye and died of the wound two days later.[70] He appears in Veronese's canvas holding an arrow, like Saint Sebastian, but here an attribute of civic martyrdom.[71] In addition, Veronese's *Agostino Barbarigo* has been cut down, trimmed on both sides and the bottom, suggesting that it too perhaps once included a battle scene at the lower right.[72]

The many portraits surrounding the Battle of Lepanto testify to a lucrative competition between Tintoretto and Veronese. Certainly the magnitude of the glorious military victory spurred demand for portraits of all major protagonists and opportunities for the painters to upstage each other. For example, Ridolfi singled out the episode of the wounding of Agostino Barbarigo within Tintoretto's huge narrative painting of the Battle of Lepanto for the Palazzo Ducale (lost), and Veronese executed the large canvas titled *Allegory of the Battle of Lepanto with Sebastiano Venier* (fig. 96).[73] In each case, the painter of the great narrative painting in the seat of government would have known that his rival had executed a superlative portrait of the same individual. Something of their stylistic differences is apparent in these two admiral portraits, both of which seem to have been calibrated to fit the sitter's disposition and painter's predilection. Barbarigo is gener-

cat. 41

ally praised in the historical sources as a thoughtful moderator between the acerbic Venier and the rest of the Holy League, and Veronese shows a conciliatory leader, albeit rendered in silvery, funereal hues, appropriate for a memorial portrait. Veronese's usual repertoire of props has been edited to the essentials of marble columns, a plinth, and crimson curtain. Long a symbol of fortitude, the gray marble column in this context carries the hint of the tomb; the tone is less valedictory and more elegiac. Tintoretto's *Sebastiano Venier*, by contrast, depicts a vibrant, even cantankerous character whose acute stare and incisive posture communicate authority. His extended battle baton keeps the viewer at a distance. Tintoretto rose to the challenge of representing this imposing figure, deploying his own artistic forces across the parts of the canvas that depict the admiral's mantel and armor; the heavy impastos on the polished steel generate fireworks of their own.[74]

While Tintoretto painted Venier's costume deftly, without recourse to underdrawing, other studies of armor do survive among the drawings of Titian and Veronese.[75] Titian's *Philip II* (fig. 97) of 1551 may be the portrait shipped by the Spanish prince to his aunt Mary of Hungary, with a letter apologizing for the haste with which Titian had painted his armor, adding that "if there were time it would have been done over again."[76] Despite such reservations, the work initiated a long stream of imperial commissions in other genres. One wonders what Titian might have thought of Philip's critique, since the armor in the picture appears reasonably well painted, and Titian's *Alfonso d'Avalos* suggests that the artist had mastered this skill decades earlier. Titian's steely portrayals in three-quarter length proved formative for a subsequent generation of artists. Tintoretto adopts this formula, even as he transforms it with a painterly bravura that seems to match the volatility of Sebastiano Venier. In Veronese's example, the heroics of pain, death, and human valor find a quieter painterly requiem, meant to preserve the fame of the fallen Barbarigo. Each painter in his own way builds on the antique legacy of Apelles and Alexander.

— JG, FI

Fig. 97
Titian
Philip II, 1551
Oil on canvas
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

Portraits of Family and Children

TITIAN
Ranuccio Farnese, 1542
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
(cat. 42)

VERONESE
Iseppo da Porto and His Son Adriano, about 1551
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence
(cat. 43)

VERONESE
Livia da Porto Thiene and Her Daughter Porzia, about 1551
The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore
(cat. 44)

In the Renaissance, having one's progeny recorded in portraiture allowed for a certain "shoring up" against the vagaries of fate—only about 60 percent of children survived to adulthood.[77] Likenesses of children were a sign of status and could even be circulated in the hope of furthering the marriage prospects of the sitter.[78] Not surprisingly, portraits of the young frequently show the son or daughter with the comportment and costume of the parent, suggesting a continuity of virtue and elegance across generations. This is true of Veronese's *Iseppo da Porto and His Son Adriano* and *Livia da Porto Thiene and Her Daughter Porzia*, where the finery of the children's attire is coordinated with that of the parents, down to the jewelry and embroidered and fur trims. Although these children are quite young—Adriano is perhaps five years old, and Porzia perhaps four—their gender roles are already distinguished by their outfits.[79]

The costume shown in children's portraits also often signals family ambition and power. Titian's *Ranuccio Farnese* shows the twelve-year-old wearing an oversize cloak bearing the insignia of the Knights of Malta, a reference to his priorship of the Knights' property of San Giovanni dei Forlani in Venice.[80] Yet in the midst of all this parading of status and familial expectation, both Titian and Veronese manage to introduce notes of humor and empathy that naturalize and validate the roles of children. Children are not simply shown, in the words of Leon Battista Alberti, as solemn "pledges and securities of marital love"; they also appear with a lighthearted innocence and spontaneity appropriate to their age.[81] Tintoretto, by contrast, contributed little to the genre, only occasionally depicting children as onlookers in religious narrative paintings.[82]

Childish buoyancy and charm lie at the heart of Titian's *Clarissa Strozzi* of 1542 (fig. 98). The two-year-old daughter of a rich Florentine banking family appears in pearl necklace and bracelet wearing a bejeweled belt (*cintura*) that swings gently from her waist. She has stopped long enough to embrace a timid dog and offer him a biscuit. As Jaffé has noted,

Fig. 98. Titian, *Clarissa Strozzi*, 1542, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Clarissa's pose follows an ancient prototype of Cupid stringing his bow, which, together with the frolicking putti on the relief at lower right and the pair of distant swans in the background, suggests that love and marriage are intended for the sitter's future.[83] Presumably a parent or attendant accompanied the two-year-old during the sitting, and it may have been painted in her family's residence in exile in San Canciano in Venice.[84] Not all of Titian's attempts to capture and hold a child's attention succeeded as well as the Strozzi portrait: when the young Archduchess Catherine sat for Titian at Innsbruck in 1548, she grew bored, and her portrait was later judged to be too severe.[85]

A hint of youthful impetuosity also marks Titian's *Ranuccio Farnese* in the boy's alert face and searching eyes. The rest of his gesture and costume, however, resembles Titian's formula for depicting fashionable gentlemen holding gloves. According to a letter of 1542 written to Ranuccio's older brother,

cat. 42

cat. 43

"Titian's excellence is to be admired, particularly since he did it [the portrait] partly in the presence of and partly without Signor Prior [Ranuccio]."[86] Titian depicts Ranuccio with a draped Maltese mantle slipping from his shoulders, a clever use of scale that reminds us of the sitter's tenderness even as it projects a distinguished future. Three years after the portrait was painted, Ranuccio's grandfather Pope Paul III saw to the boy's elevation to the College of Cardinals.[87] Following the warm reception of Ranuccio's portrait, other members of the Farnese commissioned important works from Titian, including portraits like *Pope Paul III* (cat. 7) and mythological subjects such as the *Danaë* (cat. 27).

Like Titian, Veronese captured spontaneous effects and appearances of youthful élan in his family portraits. The brilliant, high-key colors of Veronese's *Livia da Porto Thiene and Her Daughter Porzia* are quite different from the hues of Titian's *Clarissa Strozzi*, even if both works are rare full-length portraits of females. In general, full-length portraits of adults were not yet common in Italian art, and were more frequent on the Venetian *terraferma* than in Venice.[88] Painted about 1551, before the artist had moved definitively to Venice, these early works show his assurance even in a novel format. The Veronese canvas was meant to hang with its pendant, *Iseppo da Porto and His Son Adriano*, probably in the family's palace in Vicenza.[89]

The setting of Veronese's pendants corresponds to the Palladian fabric of Palazzo Iseppo da Porto: the monumental, planar surfaces, the warm, buff-colored stone and plaster, and an engaged half-column that appears at the far left in Iseppo and Adriano's portrait (a similar element was likely eliminated when the female portrait was cut down and the strange floor patterning added at the bottom).[90] The mother's solid, triangular form extends to protect her daughter, who spontaneously twists around from behind her and looks wide-eyed at the viewer. Livia's gaze points us toward the completion of the family's image in the nearby pendant of husband and son. Both Iseppo and Livia came from noble families involved in Vicenza's burgeoning silk trade, so it is appropriate that Veronese gives such painterly attention to their silk clothing.[91] A drawing in the Louvre shows that the artist used models wearing the da Porto's garments during the preparation of their portraits (fig. 99); the man is clearly not Iseppo, and the boy's face is highly idealized. In the final painted version, Iseppo holds his head slightly more erect, and his fingers touch Adriano's. In fact, he seems to have removed one of his gloves for the very purpose of connecting with his son; paternal gallantry contrasts charmingly with filial innocence.[92] Veronese's representation is notable, then, in that few Renaissance portraitists depict such a tender exchange between father and son.

Fig. 99
Veronese
Study for Iseppo da Porto and His Son Adriano, about 1551
Pen and ink and wash over gray chalk on paper
Musée du Louvre, Paris

The Venetian willingness to represent children and families in full-length format and with greater expression corresponds with developments in religious paintings as well. Both Titian and Veronese painted large votive works in which children provide a counterpoint of charming naïveté to the pious narrative of solemn veneration. In Titian's altarpiece the *Madonna di Ca' Pesaro* (fig. 47), at the bottom right corner, little Nicolò seems to disobey instructions to look straight ahead, and instead turns to

Fig. 100
Titian
The Vendramin Family, Venerating a Relic of the True Cross, about 1540–45, reworked mid-1550s
Oil on canvas
The National Gallery, London

connect with the viewer's gaze, thus bringing us into the world of the picture. When Titian is later commissioned to record the Vendramin family at the foot of a reliquary containing splinters from the True Cross (fig. 100), he casts the seven sons in roles appropriate to their respective ages: the eldest, Lunardo, mimics the posture of his father, who looks to the cross, while the group of the youngest three at lower right pay more attention to the dog and the approaching viewer than to the altar. The boys' postures and wrinkled hose suggest that requirements of decorum and familial duty have not yet subdued their playfulness and curiosity.

In a similar spirit, Veronese's *Supper at Emmaus* (fig. 56) depicts no fewer than ten children, offspring of the patrons who stand at the right, interspersed around Christ's table. The much expanded cast thus both witnesses the miracle and links the events to daily life. In his *Madonna of the Cuccina Family* (about 1571, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden), Veronese masters what one might call a "choreography of cuteness" in which the restless energy of the six children activates the tableaux: one climbs a column, another hugs his mother, while a third, in matching costume, grabs at the hind leg of a dog.

Whereas patrons would initiate portrait commissions, and presumably have the final say on which family members are depicted, it seems that Tintoretto had little interest in child portraiture, in contrast to Titian and Veronese, who evidently took great delight in the subject and its potential for charm. No independent portraits of very young children survive from Tintoretto's hand, and very few inhabit his larger oeuvre.[93] While Tintoretto approaches votive portraiture with innovative compositions—witness his *Madonna of the Treasurers* (fig. 12)—youthful tenderness never intrudes upon the adult sphere. Part of the reason is that Tintoretto's multifigure portraits generally depict figures as officeholders in the Venetian government, and not as members of families. But perhaps Tintoretto's temperament was simply less suited than Titian's or Veronese's to the jesting counterpoint and innocence of the genre.

—JG

cat. 44