

Baerle (no.30; Fig.1) and *Margaretha Tulp* (c.1658; Six Collection, Amsterdam; no.33).

Bol, too, is allowed to spread his wings in the Amsterdam Museum. The presentation of his work begins with the superb – and still profoundly Rembrandtesque (indeed, it was long thought to be by Rembrandt) – *Portrait of a woman* (c.1640–45; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; no.56), who may be Elizabeth Bas, a member of one of Amsterdam's leading merchant families. It then moves on to works in a quite different, very colourful and profoundly Flemish style. In great portraits such as *Jan and Catharina van der Voort* (1661; Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp; no.85) and *Johanna de Geer and her children* (c.1664; Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Amsterdam, on loan from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; no.90) his model is, again, Jordaens rather than Van Dyck, but far from being slavish imitations these are vigorous and effective portraits. In his civic commissions, notably *Gaius Fabricius Luscinus*

in *Pyrrhus's army camp* (1655–56; Amsterdam Museum; nos.75 and 76), Bol's debt to Rubens is evident.

Both artists painted fine group portraits, which sit, of course, within a long and distinctively Dutch tradition. Neither tried the bold compositional drama of *The night watch* (1642; Rijksmuseum), although Flinck showed a hesitant awareness of it in the oil-sketch for the *Civic guardsmen of the company of district 1* (1648; Amsterdam Museum; no.25). Bol's finest group portrait is the moving *Governors of the lepers' asylum* (1649; Amsterdam Museum; no.64).

The star of the show, however – largely because of its enormous size and romantic story – is undoubtedly Bol's *Sacrifice of Isaac* (no.59; Fig.2), which has been generously lent by the Museo Nazionale di Palazzo Mansi in Lucca. It appears to have been taken to Lucca by Anna Maria van Diemen of Amsterdam when she moved there with her husband, Jeronimo Parenisi, in 1690. It is Bol

in full Rembrandt mode – closely following Rembrandt's great treatment of the subject, even to Abraham's knife being suspended in mid-air. Rembrandt painted two versions of the composition, one in the Hermitage, St Petersburg, and one, inscribed '*Rembrandt verandert en overgeschildert 1636*', in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich. It has long been argued that Flinck was Rembrandt's collaborator in the latter version.

This splendid exhibition, which prompts a reassessment of the work of both artists, is accompanied by an excellent catalogue, divided into a series of essays on aspects of both – including the drawings and prints, which follow a similar stylistic pattern to the paintings.¹ The team of curators, led by Leonore van Sloten of the Rembrandthuis and Norbert Middelkoop of the Amsterdam Museum, are to be congratulated on an important achievement. To coincide with the exhibition, a volume of fifteen thoughtful papers, full of new information, has been published.² They were given at a conference in 2015 at Herstmonceux Castle, Sussex, organised by the Bader International Study Centre of Queen's University, Kingston, Canada.

The exhibition at the Museum Van Loon focuses on a reconstruction of Bol's fascinating collection. His successful career and advantageous marriage gave him the opportunity to collect paintings by his Dutch and Flemish contemporaries and a well-chosen selection is shown here. Once again, there is a fine catalogue, with an especially valuable essay on Bol as a collector by Quirine van Aerts.³



2. *The sacrifice of Isaac*, by Ferdinand Bol. 1646. Canvas, 268 by 213 cm. (Museo Nazionale di Palazzo Mansi, Lucca; exh. Amsterdam Museum).

¹ Catalogue: *Ferdinand Bol and Govert Flinck: Rembrandt's Master Pupils*. Edited by Norbert Middelkoop. 272 pp. incl. numerous col. ills. (Wbooks, Amsterdam, 2017), €29.95. ISBN 978-94-6258237-8.

² S.S. Dickey, ed.: *Bol and Flinck: New Research*, Zwolle 2017.

³ Catalogue: *Ferdinand Bol: Het huis, de collectie, de kunstenaar*. Edited by Tonko Grever, Willem te Slaa and Quirine van Aerts. 72 pp. incl. 50 col. ills. (Wbooks, Amsterdam, 2017), €14.95. ISBN 978-94-625-822-0-0.

Bernini

Rome

by CARLO MILANO

SIMPLY TITLED *Bernini*, this spectacular exhibition at **Galleria Borghese, Rome** (to 4th February), marks the anniversary of the delivery to Maffeo Barberini in 1617 of Bernini's first fully autograph sculpture, *St Sebastian* (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; cat. no.I.5). It has been curated by Andrea Bacchi with the Borghese's director, Anna Coliva, who has played such an important part in the museum's recent renaissance.



3. *Costanza Piccolomini (Bona-relli)*, by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. 1636-37. Marble, height 74.5 cm. (Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence; exh. Galleria Borghese, Rome.)



4. *Cardinal Scipione Borghese*, by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. 1632. Marble, height 76 cm. (Galleria Borghese, Rome.)

Drawing on the expertise of an international team of scholars, they have achieved several curatorial coups. Never before have more than thirty marble sculptures by Bernini (and others in bronze and in terracotta) been assembled, together with almost all the paintings that the curators believe to be autograph. Never before have two of his most famous portrait busts, the first version of *Scipione Borghese* (no.VII.1; Fig.4) and *Costanza Bona-relli* (no.VII.3; Fig.3), been shown together.

The exhibition focuses on Bernini as a sculptor, rather than as architect or stage designer. It occupies nearly all the Villa Borghese's rooms and includes loans as well as works from the permanent collection, which has some of Bernini's most celebrated marble groups. Visitors will struggle to see it all within the two hours permitted by the timed admission tickets. Although where possible the display follows a chronological structure, it cannot precisely reflect the catalogue's systematic presentation of Bernini's career.¹ For example, sculptures by his father, Pietro (1562-1620), appear in the first two rooms and again later in the exhibition, and although the Villa's great groups are discussed together in the catalogue, they have been left in the separate rooms that they permanently occupy.

The first section is devoted to Bernini's training under his father. The *Four seasons*, by father and son together (c.1620; Villa Aldobrandini, Frascati; no.I.7), and Pietro's *Satyr riding a panther* (1595-98; Staatliche Museen,

Berlin; no.I.1) illustrate a working relationship that is occasionally so close that such groups as the *Faun teased by children* (c.1615; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; no.I.4) are attributed to both, or, as in the case of the *Four seasons*, are regarded by some as by Pietro alone, and by others, including the exhibition curators, as a collaboration between father and son.

Most of the sculptures in the opening room are displayed so that they can be seen from all angles, which is not normally possible in their permanent locations. This is par-



5. *Salvator mundi*, by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. 1679. Marble, height 103 cm. (S. Sebastiano fuori le Mura, Rome; exh. Galleria Borghese, Rome.)

ticularly exciting for *St Bibiana* from S. Bibiana, Rome (no.V.5; Fig.6), which occupies the centre of the first room, although it dates from 1624-26 and therefore does not strictly belong to Bernini's formative years. Thanks to the restoration carried out for the exhibition (in a workshop inside Villa Borghese that was visible to the public), the details of the statue, such as the extraordinary ribbon tied around her waist or the foliage at her feet can be appreciated in full for their virtuosity in a way that is impossible in the niche in which she is displayed in the church.

The theme of putti is central to the second section. The *Putto riding a dragon* (c.1616-17; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; no.II.2), which is attributed to Pietro and Gian Lorenzo, and the *Putto bitten by a dolphin* (c.1617-18; Staatliche Museen; no.II.3), which is attributed to Gian Lorenzo alone, are placed near the Villa Borghese's *Goat Amalthea* (1615; no.II.1), whose attribution to the younger Bernini has been questioned in recent years – the contributors to the catalogue are divided on this point, but this reviewer is of the opinion that the work is not by Bernini.

In the third section, dedicated to the Villa Borghese's marble groups, Federico Barocci's painting *Aeneas and Anchises* (1518) has been moved from its usual place upstairs to the room housing Bernini's group of the same subject, thus recreating the way these works were displayed by Scipione Borghese.

In her catalogue essay Anna Coliva discusses how, thanks to the patronage of the Borghese, Bernini was able to embark on the difficult and ambitious project of representing stories from classical poetry in sculpture. In doing this, Bernini referred back not only to classical art and to Michelangelo, but also to painters such as Annibale Carracci and poets such as Giovanni Battista Marino.

The relationship between Bernini and the Antique is the subject of the next section. Remarkably, the curators have been able to borrow the *Hermaphrodite* (no.III.2) from the Musée du Louvre, Paris, and have returned it to the room in which it was displayed before being sold to Napoleon. With Bernini's addition in 1620 of his famous mattress to this celebrated sculpture, and with the Ludovisi Ares (Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome; no.III.3), which he restored in the same year, the visitor's attention is drawn to the importance of the Antique as a source of inspiration and the way it was perceived in the seventeenth century. In the next two rooms visitors can marvel at the *Apollo and Daphne* (1622–25; no.V.4) and at the *David* (1623–24; no.V.3), masterpieces that have enjoyed exceptional prestige through the centuries, as described in the catalogue's fresh and rewarding analysis by Andrea Bacchi and Anne-Lise Desmas of Bernini's reception in eighteenth-century European sculpture.

The visitor then ascends to the first floor, to be greeted by a table running the length of the loggia on which are displayed nearly twenty portrait busts in marble and in bronze (and in one case, in porphyry and bronze), drawn from every stage of Bernini's career and overlooked by his statue of Clement X (1676–80; no.IX.6) from Palazzo Barberini, Rome. Designed to support the curators' argument that Bernini was above all a portraitist, the display is again commendable both because of its visual impact and because it allows visitors to see the busts in great detail and from the back too, as well as providing the opportunity to compare the casts of different bronzes. Walking around this table the visitor can follow the development of Bernini as a portrait sculptor, from his father's work, represented by the bust of Antonio Coppola (1612; S. Giovanni dei Fiorentini, Rome; no.IV.1), to an array of papal images: Gregory XV, Paul V, Urban VIII and Alexander VII. The absence of the recently rediscovered marble bust of Paul V (J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles), which could have been compared with the other images of the pontiff on display, is largely compensated for by the loan of such masterpieces as the bust of Richelieu from the Louvre (1640–41; no.IX.4) or the rarely seen *Diana de Paulo Roscioli* (before 1640; Museo Capitolare Diocesano, Foligno; no.IX.3).

Bernini's terracotta sculpture has been investigated in several exhibitions in recent years. Here the subject is approached by looking in particular at the function of clay

statuettes as models, bozzetti or reproductions according to the context in which they were made or the purpose they served. In this sense they are incorporated into a wider discussion, developed by Maria Giulia Barberini in the catalogue, on Bernini's working practice. Among the remarkable number of terracottas on show are two models for the Four Rivers Fountain in Piazza Navona, Rome (Rome, Bernini descendants; no.VI-II.6; Bolopina, Accademia di Belle Arti; no.VIII.7) and four terracottas for the angels on the Tiber's Ponte S. Angelo (1667–68; no.VIII.14; Musée du Louvre, Paris; no.VI-II.15, Palazzo Venezia; nos.VIII.16–17; Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth). The wonderful terracotta model for the equestrian monument to Louis XIV (1669–70; no.VI-II.18), from the Villa's permanent collection, is exhibited with a drawing from the Museo Civico of Bassano del Grappa (1672–73; no.VIII.19) showing Bernini's first idea for this unlucky group, which was disliked by



6. *St Bibiana* by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. 1624–26. Marble, height 191 cm. (S. Bibiana, Rome; exh. Galleria Borghese, Rome).

the King and later converted by François Girardon into a statue of Marcus Curtius.

Two bronze crucifixes and two marble versions of the *Salvator mundi* pose interesting questions of attribution and chronology. The gilt-bronze crucifix from the Escorial (no.VIII.10) is documented to 1654–57, when Don Diego de Aragon, 4th Duke of Terranova, the Spanish ambassador to the Holy See, was asked by Philip IV to buy works of art in Rome. Probably cast by Girolamo Lucenti, it was sent to Madrid, where the King liked it so much that he made a gift of a gold chain to Bernini on top of the agreed price. A larger crucifix of a similar model but with numerous variants, from the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (no.VIII.11), is displayed next to it. Its documented provenance does not go back to the seventeenth century, and it has been at the centre of a complex debate on attribution since its discovery in 2002. Although the main curators of the catalogue are in favour of the attribution to Bernini, Maria Giulia Barberini in her carefully balanced catalogue entry rightly takes a more cautious view.

Until 2001 at least, there was a wide consensus that the *Salvator mundi* in the Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk VA (no.IX.9), was a work by Bernini, following its publication by Irving Lavin.² In the exhibition it is shown facing the very similar bust from S. Sebastiano fuori le Mura, Rome (no.IX.10; Fig.5), Bernini's last work, carved in 1679 at the age of eighty-one, which he left in his will to Queen Christina of Sweden. The catalogue questions the Chrysler Museum bust and its catalogue entry rules out the attribution to Bernini altogether. Comparison in the exhibition made evident not only that the Chrysler Museum bust is in much less good condition but also that there are numerous differences of composition between the two sculptures. The comparison confirmed this reviewer's belief that the Chrysler Museum's bust is by Bernini.

The richly illustrated catalogue, which is published in both Italian and English, opens with a short essay by Lavin, to whom the exhibition is dedicated in celebration of his ninetieth birthday in 2017. He discusses the spectacular growth of interest in Bernini since the 1950s, a subject that is touched upon in other essays that deal with the sculptor's critical fortunes since the eighteenth century. The final chapter, on 'Friends and Patrons', is a very useful collection of biographies of the popes, monarchs, cardinals, aristocrats and artists connected to the sculptor.

¹ Catalogue: *Bernini*. Edited by Andrea Bacchi and Anna Coliva with contributions from the editors, Maria Giulia Barberini, Anne-Lise Desmas, Luigi Ficacci and Stefano Pierguidi. 440 pp. incl. numerous col. ills. (Officina Libraria, Milan 2017), £45, ISBN 978-8-899765-56-9 (English edition); €55, ISBN 978-8-899765-57-6 (Italian edition).

² I. Lavin: 'Bernini's death', *Art Bulletin* 54 (1972), pp.158–86.