

Gallery

8

Baroque Art in Italy, 1600-1700

The imposing space and rich color of this gallery reflect the Baroque taste for grandeur found in the Italian palaces and churches of the day. Dramatic and often monumental, this style attested to the power and prestige of the individual or institution that commissioned the works of art. Spanning the 17th century, the Baroque period was a dynamic age of invention, when many of the foundations of the modern world were laid. Scientists had new instruments at their disposal, and artists discovered new ways to interpret ancient themes. The historical and contemporary players depicted in these painted dramas exhibit a wider range of emotional and spiritual conditions. Artists developed a new regard for the depiction of space and atmosphere, color and light, and the human form. Two major stylistic trends dominated the art of this period. The first stemmed from the revolutionary naturalism of the Roman painter, Caravaggio, who succeeded in fusing intense physical observations with a profound sense of drama, achieved largely through his chiaroscuro, or use of light and shadow. The second trend was inspired by the Bolognese painter, Annibale Carracci, and his school, which aimed to temper the monumental classicism of Raphael with the optical naturalism of Titian. The expressive nature of Carracci and his followers eventually developed into the imaginative and extravagant style known as the High Baroque.



Niccolò de Simone

Flemish, active 1636-1655 in Naples

Saint Sebastian, c. 1636-40

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 144

Little documentation exists regarding the career of Niccolò de Simone. Nicknamed “fiammingo,” he migrated to Italy from northern Europe, probably in his youth. Despite his Flemish roots, his style is distinctly Neapolitan, as he was active in Naples for most, if not all, of his career. Sebastian was a Roman captain under the Emperor Diocletian in 287 A.D. and was martyred by arrows for his devotion to Christianity and his compassion toward Christian prisoners. The intense chiaroscuro and painterly technique are hallmarks of Neapolitan painting.



Luca Giordano

Italian, 1634-1705, active in Naples,
Florence, Venice, and Madrid

The Flight into Egypt, c. 1696

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 157

The Neapolitan painter Luca Giordano executed this work in Madrid while in the employ of the Hapsburg King Charles II of Spain, who appointed him court painter in 1694. The tender expression of the Madonna’s face and the softened, earthy palette suggest the influence of Murillo. According to the Gospel of Matthew, an angel urged the Holy Family to flee Jerusalem, as King Herod was plotting a massacre with the aim of killing the Christ child. The central action of the painting takes place almost entirely in the foreground, psychologically engaging the viewer.



Luca Giordano

Italian, 1634-1705, active in Naples,
Florence, Venice, and Madrid

A Bacchanal, c. 1670

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 161

Luca Giordano was one of the most celebrated artists of the Neapolitan Baroque. Initially embracing the tenebrism of the Spaniard Jusepe de Ribera, he quickly adopted a new style that emphasized a lighter, softer palette. The muted luminosity is also inspired by 16th-century Venetian painting, and Rubens' influence is evident in the fleshy figures and ruddy complexions. The subject of the bacchanal was, in fact, made popular by Giovanni Bellini and Titian. Giordano displays his sense of humor, showing a besotted child Bacchus threatening to douse an unsuspecting satyr with wine.



Luca Giordano

Italian, 1632-1705, active in Naples,
Florence, Venice, and Madrid

Allegory of Faith and Charity, c. 1670

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 159

The identities of the figures in this allegorical painting by Luca Giordano have been variously interpreted. The woman at the left is most likely Charity, who was frequently represented as a nursing mother surrounded by three children. The allegory of Faith, approaching charity from the right, holds a branch with foliage and a flaming heart that represents passionate devotion to Christianity. Giordano may have been inspired by Pietro da Cortona's representations of the Cardinal Virtues in the ceiling frescoes of the Barberini Palace in Rome.



Antonio de Bellis, attributed to
Italian, c. 1616-c. 1658, active in Naples

The Flaying of Marsyas by Apollo, c.
1637-40
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 335

Controlled by the Spanish monarchy in the 16th and 17th centuries, Naples was heavily influenced by the drama and naturalism of Spanish painting. This work by the Neapolitan painter Antonio de Bellis is based closely on a painting of the same subject by Jusepe de Ribera, a Spaniard working in Naples in the early 17th century. As recorded by the 1st-century poet Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, Marsyas, a satyr, was flayed alive for having the arrogance to challenge Apollo, the god of music, to a contest of musical ability. The agonized face of Marsyas illustrates the artist's penchant for conveying intense emotion.



Andrea Vaccaro
Italian, 1604-1670, active in Naples

Saint John the Baptist, c. 1630
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 148

Trained in Naples, Vaccaro was inspired by a variety of Italian painting traditions. This rendering of St. John the Baptist owes much to Caravaggio's influence as well as that of Guido Reni and Jusepe de Ribera. Here John the Baptist is portrayed as an athletic youth. He wears the animal skin that alludes to his sojourn in the wilderness, during which he sustained himself on honey and locusts. The sheep, though not mentioned in the biblical story, also refers to his life in the wild. The dramatic light on the body pulls the figure into the foreground, giving it a sense of sculptural three-dimensionality.



Luca Forte

Italian, c. 1615-before 1670, active in Naples

Still Life with Fruit, c. 1640-47

Oil on canvas

Museum Purchase 1961, SN 715

Often considered the founder of Neapolitan still life painting, Luca Forte introduced the realism of northern Italian art to the artistic community in Naples in the 17th century. In this impressive composition, the fruit is solid, three-dimensional, and almost sculptural. The luminosity of the painted pieces instills a rich, luscious quality to the scene. The artist's penchant for wordplay can be seen by the insertion of the Latin dedication "Don Joseph Carrafas," the supposed patron of this painting who was assassinated in Naples in 1647. One of the few signed paintings by Forte, this work is a fine example of his mature style.



Massimo Stanzione

Italian 1585-1658, active in Naples

Rest on the Flight into Egypt, c. 1646-49

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 146

The triangular massing of the figures and the strong dividing diagonal provide a glimpse into both the heavenly and the earthly realms. The Christ child, gazing at his mother, draws our attention to her as she picks up a pear with her right hand. The putti descending through the upper registers direct the viewer's focus to the Virgin's face, further emphasizing the dramatic quality of the Christ figure's vulnerability. A prominent painter of altarpieces and frescoes, Stanzione was a leading Neapolitan artist in the early 17th century and was the main rival of the Spanish émigré Jusepe de Ribera.



Francesco Curradi

Italian, 1570-1661, active in Florence

Saint Lawrence, c. 1608

Oil on wood

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 130

Curradi was a late Mannerist Florentine painter, who often exaggerated the physique of his figures to make them more dramatic and psychologically complex. He primarily painted religious subjects such as this Saint Lawrence, a young Roman martyr of the 3rd century. The saint is in the dress of a deacon, a religious figure whose primary role was to distribute alms. Saint Lawrence was also a patron saint of Florence and was a popular subject for the artists of that city. He was burned to death in the massacre of 258 A.D. at the behest of the Emperor Valerian, and he is shown holding the large grill on which he was martyred.



Jean-Louis Lemoyne

French, 1665-1755, active in Paris and
Bordeaux

Portrait Bust of the Architect Jules

Hardouin Mansart, c. 1703

Marble

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5366



Francesco del Cairo

Italian, 1607-1665, active in Milan and Turin

Judith with the Head of Holofernes,

c. 1630-35

Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1966, SN 798

The Apocryphal Book of Judith tells the story of the Jewish woman who seduced and killed the Assyrian general Holofernes, preventing him from ravaging the city of Bethulia. Francesco del Cairo depicts the heroine as a simple young girl in an elaborate dress and turban. The influence of Caravaggio is visible in the chiaroscuro and in the representation of biblical figures as ordinary people dressed in dramatic

costumes. Judith's inscrutable expression has been interpreted as pride or perhaps shock. A celebrated court painter in Turin, del Cairo frequently painted dark biblical and historical subjects that bordered on the macabre.



Italian

17th century

Portrait Bust of a Man, c. 1650

Marble

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5465



Giovanni Battista Salvi, called Sassoferrato
Italian, 1609-1685, active in Rome

Portrait of a Cardinal, c. 1651
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 128

Distinctive for his vibrant colors, sculptural forms, and compositional clarity, Sassoferrato painted in a unique, almost nostalgic style that echoed the works of Raphael. The identity of this sitter remains uncertain, though it has been suggested that he may be Camillo Massimi (1620-1678), an avid art collector in Rome and patron of Nicolas Poussin and Diego Velázquez. Other proposed identifications are Cardinals Paolo Emilio Rondinini (1617-1678) and Francesco Angelo Rapaccioli (1608-1657). The portrait contains an element of self-advertisement, as the painting of the Madonna and Child in the background is also by Sassoferrato.



Cristoforo Monari, attributed to Italian, 1667-1720, active in Florence, Pisa, and Rome

Still Life with Plates, c. 1706-09
Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1951, SN 660

Italian still life painting developed as an independent genre in its own right only in the late 16th century. The intense optical naturalism of the Roman Baroque was a major influence on its development. Unlike Dutch still lifes, which tended to show objects arranged as they would have been in everyday life, Italian artists often took a more abstract approach, allowing formal qualities such as shape and color to determine the arrangement. Monari, a specialist in the still life and court painter to Ferdinand de' Medici in Florence, often contrasted porcelains, silver, and glassware with lush, ripe fruit.



Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, called Il Guercino

Italian, 1591-1666, active in Cento, Bologna, and Rome

***The Annunciation*, 1628-29**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 122

This immense painting was originally installed over a sanctuary arch in the Church of Santa Croce in Reggio Emilia, near Bologna.

Each section contains a single monumental figure, approximately four times life size. To the left, the Archangel Gabriel floats forward to present the Madonna with a branch of lilies. The Annunciation – the moment at which Gabriel announces to Mary that she will bear the son of God – was often conceived as a work divided into two sections. Guercino's monumental religious paintings and secular ceiling frescoes, executed with striking illusionism, are some of the finest examples of the Baroque period.



British

Early 17th century

Refectory Table

Oak

Gift of Mrs. George L. Simpson, 1958, SN 1329



Sisto Badalocchio, attributed to
Italian, 1585-1647, active in Parma and
Rome

Susannah and the Elders, c. 1610
Oil on canvas
Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 111

Sisto Badalocchio began his career in the circle of Agostino and Annibale Caracci. He was a studio assistant to Agostino in Parma before assisting Annibale on the wall frescoes in the Palazzo Farnese in Rome. The style espoused by Sisto and the Carracci emphasized the naturalistic representation of figures on a grand scale, as seen in this painting. According to the Apocryphal Book of Susannah, the young woman was approached by two elders of her tribe who threatened to accuse her of adultery if she did not sleep with them. She remained steadfast in her refusal and was eventually proven innocent, and thus saved from a death by stoning.



Bernardo Strozzi
Italian, 1581-1644, active in Genoa and
Venice

An Act of Mercy: Giving Drink to the Thirsty,
c. 1618-20, Oil on canvas
Museum Purchase, 1950, SN 634

Bernardo Strozzi was primarily a painter of religious works, as he had spent twelve years of his life in a Capuchin monastery. Trained in the northern city of Genoa, he absorbed Italian as well as northern European techniques and traditions. His vibrant colors and heavy brushstrokes, typical of Genovese compositions, are particularly visible in the drapery of the female figure. This work depicts one of the seven acts of mercy described in the Gospel of Matthew, which also include feeding the hungry and burying the dead



Mattia Preti

Italian, 1613-1699, active in Naples, Rome, and Malta

Herodias with the Head of Saint John the Baptist, c. 1635

Oil on canvas

Museum Purchase, 1985, SN 990

Mattia Preti presents a terrible scene told in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew in a chillingly calm fashion. Salome holds John the Baptist's decapitated head, which she had requested of her stepfather King Herod. Her mother, Herodias, presents it to a group of onlookers, including King Herod. During his early years in Rome, Preti adopted the realism and chiaroscuro made popular by Caravaggio in the 17th century. Later in his career, he experimented with a variety of styles, including the classicism of Guercino and Poussin.



Domenico Fiasella

Italian, 1589-1669, active in Genoa, Sarzana, and Rome

Christ Raising the Son of the Widow of Nain,

c. 1615

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 112

This work and its pendant, *Christ Healing the Blind* (also displayed in this gallery), were likely installed in a chapel, possibly in a private residence. The subject of this work is taken from the Gospel of Luke, where Christ, upon entering the city of Nain, finds a widow in tears at the recent death of her son. Moved by her grief, Christ restores the boy to life. The intense light focuses attention on the foreground, while a crowd of onlookers assembles behind the astonished figures at the right of the painting.



Gian Lorenzo Bernini, studio of
Italian, 1598-1680, active in Rome and Paris

Kneeling Angel, c. 1626
Terra cotta

Museum Purchase, 1960, SN 5445

This small terracotta angel is a *bozzetto*, or study, for a large-scale marble sculpture that was designed for the high altar of the church of Sant'Agostino in Rome. The agitated drapery and sense of movement are typical of Bernini's works. His sweeping, dramatic style epitomized the High Baroque, and he was responsible for some of the most important sculptures and monuments of

17th-century Rome. Like his northern contemporary Peter Paul Rubens, Bernini required a large studio to handle his copious commissions. Though designed by Bernini, this piece was likely executed by one of his assistants, possibly Giuliano Finelli.



Italy (possibly Rome)

Portrait Bust of a Hooded Woman, early
17th century
Polychromed terracotta

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 5389

This woman may have been a nun, as suggested by her stern expression and somber clothing, or a widow, as her prominent widow's peak indicates. Terracotta models were commonly used in the 17th century as inexpensive, preliminary sketches for costly bronze or marble sculptures. Models made from

terracotta instead of wood were seen as more artistic and were often used for presenting ideas to patrons, demonstrating how the final sculpture would translate in more expensive materials, giving form to ideas, and as a means of communication between master and assistant.



Domenico Fiasella

Italian, 1589-1669, active in Genoa, Sarzana, and Rome

***Christ Healing the Blind*, c. 1615**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 113

Domenico Fiasella trained in Rome and moved in the orbit of some of the leading painters of his day. The Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani, a prominent Roman patron and collector, owned this work and *Christ Raising the Son of the Widow of Nain*, both of which depict scenes from the Gospel of Luke. The figures exhibit a sculptural volume when seen from a 45-degree angle, suggesting that they were meant to be viewed from the side. The artist may have been inspired by Caravaggio's famous altarpieces painted for chapels in San Luigi dei Francesi and Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome in the early 1600s, which displayed such an optical distortion.



Watches, SN 1436.1 through SN 1436.22

SN1436.1

Unknown

Cruciform Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in enameled gold with
gold

SN1436.2

Jean Delagarde Rose Pendant Watch,
17th century Rock crystal set in engraved
and gilded bronze with engraved silver
dial

SN1436.3

Hierosme Grebauval

Oval Pendant Watch, 17th century
Green crystal set in embossed and gilded
copper with silver and engraved copper
dial

SN1436.4

J. Ballard

Cinquefoil Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in copper with silver
edge

SN1436.5

Jacques Sermand

Tulip Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal plates set in copper with
engraved copper dial

SN1436.6

Unknown

Fleur-de-lis Pendant Watch, 17th
century
Rock crystal set in engraved and gilded
copper with gilded bronze dial

SN1436.7
M. Beron
Saddle Watch, 17th century
Embossed, engraved, and gilded copper

SN1436.8
Jean Vallier
Shell Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in engraved and gilded
copper with engraved copper dial

SN1436.9
Legrand
Saddle Watch, 17th century
Engraved silver and copper

SN1436.10
R. Barnes
Oval Pendant Watch, 17th century
Silver and copper with silver dial

SN1436.11
David Buschman
Cinquefoil Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in embossed copper
with engraved silver edge, engraved
copper dial

SN1436.12
Unknown
Rose Pendant Watch, 17th century
Copper with engraved silver edge

SN1436.13
Zacharie Fonnereau
Cruciform Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in engraved copper with
engraved and gilded copper dial

SN1436.14
M. Beron
Saddle Watch, 17th century
Embossed and engraved silver

SN1436.15
Cellier
Rose Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in engraved copper with
copper dial

SN1436.16
Robert Grinkin
Oval Pendant Watch, 1609
Embossed and engraved copper

SN1436.17
Marc Girard
Heart Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in engraved copper with
engraved copper dial.
engraved silver edge with embossed and

SN1436.18
Unknown
Rose Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in engraved and gilded
copper with silver and engraved copper
dial

SN1436.19
Josias Joly
Oval Pendant Watch, 17th century
Embossed copper with silver edge

SN1436.20
Pierre Duhamel
Cruciform Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal set in engraved copper with
engraved copper and silver dial

SN1436.21
Cellier
Saddle Watch, 16th century
Engraved copper dial

SN1436.22
Regend
Tulip Pendant Watch, 17th century
Rock crystal plates set in embossed and
gilded frame with embossed silver dial



Wax portraits, SN1443.1 through SN 1443.10

SN1443.1
Unknown, Italian
Portrait of a Woman, 16th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.2
Unknown, Italian
Portrait of a Noblewoman, 16th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.3
Unknown, Italian
Giovanna d'Austria, 16th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.4
Unknown, Italian
Portrait of a Noblewoman, 16th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.5
Unknown
Portrait of Henri II, King of France, Mid-
16th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.6
Unknown, Italian
Sebastiano Venier, 16th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.7
Unknown, Italian
Margherita Farnese, 16th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.8
Unknown, Italian
Portrait of a Pope, 17th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.9
Unknown, Italian
Portrait of a Pope, 17th century
Wax and copper-gilt case

SN1443.10
Unknown, Italian
Portrait of Giulio Genuino, 17th century
Wax relief, gilt-copper case and other
materials



Other Decorative Objects

SN7064

Unknown, Italian
Astronomical Compendium, 16th
century
Bronze-gilt

SN7066

Unknown
Cylindrical Box with Figure of Jester,
16th century
Bronze-gilt

SN7067

Unknown
Minature Tower Clock, Late-16th
century
Copper-gilt, glass, and bronze-gilt

SN7069

Unknown
Minature Tower Clock, 16th century
Brass-gilt

SN7075

Unknown, Italian
Censer(?) (Incense Burner(?)) (Brule-
Parfums(?)), 16th century
Bronze-gilt

SN7078

Unknown, Italian
Astronomical Compendium, 16th
century
Bronze-gilt

SN7085

Unknown, Italian
Pax with miniature on parchment of
Presentation of Christ in Temple, 15th
century
Bronze-gilt and silver

SN7086

Unknown, Italian
Mirror, 16th century
Bronze-gilt, silver, and lapis lazuli

SN7146

Unknown, Italian
Venetian glass vase
Metal?

SN7156

Unknown
Bell, 16th century?
Bronze-gilt