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Images for the music: drawings and secular cantatas

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3. SIR JOHN SYMMONS AND THE LOST DECORATIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A small volume preserved in Oxford at the Ashmolean Museum (cat. nr. WA1942.49) contains 32 pen drawings attributed to the renowned Florentine graphic artist Stefano della Bella (1610-1664). This volume, originating from the collection of Francis Douce (1757-1834), was bequeathed to the Bodleian Library in Oxford as per his will. Over time, many prints and drawings from his collection were transferred to the Ashmolean Museum.¹²⁸

The drawings, though created by the same artist, do not share a unified subject matter. They include views of Rome, marine scenes, mythological and sea creatures, and genre-like representations. A distinctive feature of these drawings is the presence of fragments of musical compositions, both text and staves, on the verso of each leaf, penned by various hands.

In this chapter, I propose a reconstruction of the music manuscripts from which these drawings were extracted. This case study exemplifies how visual decorations, through their presence or telling absence, can reveal the collection history and contextual depth of 17th-century cantata manuscripts. Conversely, the decorations provide insights into the visual sources employed, suggesting a wealth of contextual information to be explored.

During my investigations it became evident that the album at the Ashmolean Museum contains intricate vignettes excised from miscellanea collections of cantatas now housed

in three separate libraries across Europe and Russia: the Stadtbibliothek in Hamburg (D-Hs ND VI 2263,1 D and D-Hs ND VI 2263,III), the British Library in London (GB-Lbl Add. 24311), and the National Library of Saint Petersburg (RUS-SPsc Fond 956 opis' 2 no. 247, olim Hs ND VI 2263,II). Remarkably, all four of these manuscripts share a common provenance. They were assembled in the extraordinary private library of Sir John Symmons (1745-1831), an English gentleman bibliophile whose ex-libris appears uniformly on the pastedown or guard leaf of each volume. Lastly, they were sold at Symmons's auction in 1828 and bought within a lot of five volumes by the organist Edward Hodges (1796-1867).¹²⁹

These manuscripts currently exhibit paper patches where the original decorated initials once stood. On the recto, a simple pen-drawn letter now substitutes the lost vignette; the missing portion of music and text has been carefully recopied on the verso. Based on codicological evidence, watermark analysis, and comparative paleography, I will argue that the excision of the original drawings likely occurred at the end of the 18th or very beginning of the 19th century. The removal appears to have been executed with deliberation and technical competence, consistent with contemporary antiquarian practices of unbinding and reassembling fragments of interest for separate sale or album mounting.

After detailing the early provenance of the Ashmolean album, I will reconstruct the four source volumes. The discussion will include physical descriptions, analysis of the visual models for the drawings, and a contextual reassessment of their original function within the manuscripts.

By reconstructing these volumes, we gain a deeper understanding of their production and use and the collecting practices that shaped their

¹²⁸ Topper 2002, p. 49.

¹²⁹ Hodges's collection was then sold between the 4th and 5th of July 1864 by Puttick & Simpson in a collective sale. Coover 1988, King 2010.

transmission and dismemberment. This investigation reveals how 17th-century music manuscripts were entangled with broader histories of taste, antiquarianism, and material culture.

3.2 THE ASHMOLEAN ALBUM

The album at the Ashmolean Museum is bound in red Moroccan leather, with a golden geometrical border consisting of uninterrupted double-lined rectangles along the sides intersecting on the four corners. In the intersections are golden flowers. Within the rectangles is a decorative double spiral. The spine is divided into compartments, and on the second is the title: “DELLA | BELLA | DRAWINGS”. The spine is further decorated with a look-a-like fish skin motif created with intersecting lines. The folding of the leather secured to the cover is also decorated with a pearl-shaped iron, forming a golden chain around the border. This simple yet highly refined and elegant approach to binding can be dated to early 19th-century England, as is reminiscent of the workshop of Charles Lewis (1786–1836).¹³⁰

The interior of the cover presents marbled paper, whereas the edges of the book have been gilded. The back of the cover is scratched, possibly with a sharp point; this defect, however, does not affect the integrity of the volume. The drawings are mounted from the sixth folio onwards, in paste-down. The pages are numbered in the top right corner in blue pen or graphite. The volume ends with five blank leaves. The thickness of the paper is not homogeneous: four drawings are in fact pasted on thick paper (namely folios 5, 6, 26, 27 and 30).

The sizes of the drawings are quite similar, with an average of 75 x 105 mm. Pen and black ink, sometimes with brownish shades, are the techniques employed for all the vignettes. All the drawings are enclosed in a double frame, with the external frame being slightly thicker and the internal traced in double lines.

3.2.1 ALBUM PROVENANCE

As the stamp on the first mounted drawing in the album attests, it once belonged to Francis Douce (L. 987), an eminent but also historically complex figure who was an antiquarian, collector, and curator at the British Museum between 1789 and 1811. His reputation as a collector was well-established among contemporaries: William Young Ottley (1771–1836), Keeper of Prints at the British Museum, praised the Douce collection for its rarity and intellectual value, even noting that Douce once owned the original woodblocks for Albrecht Dürer’s (1471–1528) *Small Passion*.¹³¹ Similarly, Jean Duchesne (1779–1855), Keeper at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, visited Douce’s Cabinet in London and described it as a “most exquisite selection”, including 15th-century prints unnoticed even by Adam Bartsch (1757–1821).¹³² Douce’s collecting practices, which were eclectic and, at times, troublingly indiscriminate by today’s standards, were nonetheless coherent expressions of his intellectual and aesthetic curiosity. His deep interest in medieval imagery, illuminated manuscripts, and marginal iconographies such as the *Dance of Death*, fools, grotesques, and decorative initials is well documented and culminated in the substantial bequest he made to the Bodleian Library in 1843.¹³³ This donation, celebrated in a 1984 exhibition marking its 150th anniversary,

¹³⁰ The no-longer-accessible British Library Bindings Database (formerly accessible at [<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/bookbindings/>]) provided images and catalogue records for historical book bindings in the Library’s collections. As of 2024, the database is no longer publicly available following a

cyberattack that affected the British Library’s digital infrastructure in late 2023.

¹³¹ Ottley 1831.

¹³² Duchesne 1834.

¹³³ Topper 2002.

illustrates the breadth and idiosyncrasy of Douce's taste, which can be situated firmly within the antiquarian culture of his time.¹³⁴ The exhibition catalogue offers an updated biography and an overview of the collector's print and drawing holdings, notably in section 6 (items 41–57). While Northern schools dominate, Italian printmakers are also represented in Douce's collection, indicating a broader graphic sensitivity that aligns with his interest in Italianate decoration.

The acquisition of the set of drawings examined in this case study fits within this context.¹³⁵ Douce's fascination with manuscript borders and decorated initials offers a plausible explanation for his interest in the drawings' ornamental qualities. Although Sir John Symmons – owner of the cantata manuscripts until 1828 – is not mentioned in Douce's surviving records, the possibility of indirect acquisition via dealers or fellow collectors, many of whom acted as intermediaries in an active and international market, cannot be excluded. Notably, names such as John Triphook (fl. 19th century), Thorpe (fl. mid-19th century), and William Young Ottley (1771–1836) appear frequently in Douce's notes. Douce's acquisition records show repeated transactions with primary London dealers, including William and George Smith (in partnership 1835–1848), who supplied him with prints by Dürer, Altdorfer, the Wierix family, and other Northern masters. Smith's name often appears alongside those of Colnaghi and Thomas Rodd (1763–1822), suggesting a vibrant and interlinked network of antiquarian suppliers. Rodd stands out not only for the volume and variety of materials he provided to Douce, from illuminated prayer books, prints and annotated armorial manuscripts, but also for the depth of their professional relationship. Rodd's name appears in dozens of acquisition notes between 1824 and 1830, often as

¹³⁴ Bodleian Library 1984.

¹³⁵ The Museum holds a typewritten copy of the manuscript acquisition diary of Francis Douce. I have no record of an inventory number.

the source for lots that included rare drawings and Italian prints. Douce's trust in him was such that he remembered him with a legacy in his will and even commissioned him to produce a handwritten desiderata list of witchcraft literature, which Rodd later delivered to the Bodleian.¹³⁶ In this context, acquiring an album of decorated drawings – possibly unrecorded – through Rodd or one of his regular correspondents seems entirely plausible.

Furthermore, the presence in his collection of works by artists like Jacques Callot (1592–1635), whose professional and stylistic intersections with Stefano della Bella are well known, further suggests Douce's awareness of and appreciation for early 17th-century Italian and French printmaking.¹³⁷ In this light, the attribution of the Ashmolean vignette series to Della Bella, although not explicitly documented somewhere, may have been Douce's interpretative act—an aesthetic gesture shaped by his knowledge, tastes, and broader collecting strategy.

3.2.2 NOT JUST VIEWS OF ROME

The discovery that these drawings were originally vignettes excised from cantata manuscripts emerged gradually, and somewhat serendipitously. The first clue appeared in the Ashmolean Museum's online catalogue, which noted that the versos of the drawings were "inscribed in ink with part of a music score complete with lyrics." However, since the drawings are mounted on laid paper, the musical content on the reverse is only partially visible. When the pages are backlit, both text and music become clearly legible.

I typed these excerpts of text in the CLORI database, which revealed a striking pattern: the cantatas came from manuscripts in Hamburg and London that were missing initials. These had been

¹³⁶ Topper 2002.

¹³⁷ Jameson 2018.

replaced with plain patches of paper bearing a simple pen-drawn initial on the recto and fully notated text and music on the verso.

Ultimately, I identified four manuscripts from which the drawings were removed: two currently held at the Stadtbibliothek in Hamburg, one at the British Library in London, and one formerly in Hamburg, but now housed in the National Library in Saint Petersburg.¹³⁸

3.3 THE MANUSCRIPTS

During a visit to the Hamburg library, I discovered that the three cantata volumes originally held there had been looted by the Red Army during World War II and transported to Russia during the so-called “Operation Gomorrah”.¹³⁹ Of these, only volumes I and III were eventually repatriated to Germany, while volume II remained in Russia.¹⁴⁰ For this reason, some more recent studies mistakenly assumed this volume had been lost during the war.¹⁴¹ The three Hamburg volumes entered the library in 1875, acquired from the private collection of Friedrich Chrysander (1826–1901), a key figure in 19th-century Handel scholarship.¹⁴² In contrast, the volume now in London was donated between 1860 and 1861 by the English organist and musicologist Henry John Gauntlett (1805–1876).¹⁴³ As it appears in the annotated sale catalogue of the sale of Symmons’s collection, all the music manuscripts for sale were acquired by the English organist and composer Edward Hodges.¹⁴⁴ As the sale of Hodges’s collection took place in 1864, it is likely that he ceded at least the Gauntlett’s volume

before that year, as the British Museum acquired it at the latest in 1861.

Despite sharing nearly identical dimensions, the volumes present different though contemporaneous bindings. D-Hs ND VI 2263,1 and GB-Lbl Add.24311 are remarkably similar. Although their leather is red-brown and green, they were tooled with the same decorative irons. Their compartmented design, featuring a central coat of arms, suggests they were bound in the Andreoli workshop in Rome during the late-17th century.¹⁴⁵ The arms, surmounted by a feathered helmet, likely belonged to a lay member of the Rocci family, although no documented connection between the Rocci lineage and these manuscripts has yet emerged.¹⁴⁶ The same coat of arms appears on a sumptuous manuscript now held at the Newberry Library in Chicago (US-Cn MS 5067), where its provenance traces back only to the collection of Madame de Pompadour (1721–1764).¹⁴⁷

In his manuscript catalogue of the Hamburg music collection, Arrey van Dommer (1828–1905) notes that many cantatas were adorned initially with large, decorated initials. In some cases, these initials were never realized; in others, they were cut out and replaced with pasted patches bearing the copied music.

All of the 25 cantatas in D-Hs ND VI 2263,1 and GB-Lbl Add.24311 (13 and 12 cantatas, respectively) originally contained a vignette. I matched 24 drawings from the Ashmolean album to their respective cantatas, fully reconstructing the volume at the British Library (GB-Lbl Add.24311) and almost entirely rebuilding the first volume of the set in Hamburg (D-Hs ND VI 2263,1).

¹³⁸ *Giovani* 2013, and ead. 2014.

¹³⁹ *Alessandrini* 2019; *Karcovnik-Petrovna Rjzanova* 2004.

¹⁴⁰ According to *Alessandrini* (2019): “[...] The arrival in 1991 of 2,227 manuscripts from Leningrad (St Petersburg) meant that about 90% of the seventeenth to eighteenth-century music manuscripts had now returned [...]”, p. 457.

¹⁴¹ *Charteris* 1998.

¹⁴² *Valentin* 1957.

¹⁴³ *Charteris* 1997, id. 1998, and id. 2002.

¹⁴⁴ The annotated catalogue is preserved at the library of the Wallace Collection Library in London.

¹⁴⁵ *Hobson* 1991.

¹⁴⁶ *Nicolai* 2008. I am very grateful to Dr. Nicolai for his information about the Rocci family’s archive.

¹⁴⁷ On the label pasted on the inner side of the cover: “[...] This manuscript is said to have come from the Library of Madame de Pompadour. [...]”

For the third volume of this collection (D-Hs ND VI 2263,III), I identified all five missing vignettes, each now replaced by patches. Three drawings come from the volume in Russia (Olim D-HS ND VI 2263,II).

After reconstructing the provenance of all the vignettes, the question of when the operation of cutting out and replacing the drawings occurred arose quite predominantly. According to the CLORI record of GB-Lbl Add.24311, this happened in the same period that the manuscripts were realized.¹⁴⁸ However, a close examination of the paper of the same volume revealed important clues. On the manuscript pages, I spotted different portions of recurring watermarks (on 65 pages), representing either the top or bottom part of lilies or three mountains. Not all the marks are complete due to the cut edges for binding. These marks relate to paper produced in Rome between 1650 and 1690. I soon realized that one of the patches substituting the original vignettes presented a watermark, or at least a portion of it. It is the beginning of the cantata “Come in Ciel dell’Aureo Crine” by Alessandro Stradella, on folio 45 (GB-Lbl Add.24311.05). It is a section of a larger mark presenting a coat of arms with a post horn, on top of which is a crown. The watermark ends at the bottom with two initials, a C and an S, intertwined, which appear on the page in question. This paper comes from the mill Curteis and Sons (Churchill 231), active from 1777 until circa 1800 in Surrey, a region located to the southeast area of London.¹⁴⁹ This watermark evidence points compellingly to the last decades of the 18th century. By that time, all four volumes were already in England and—crucially—unified within the vast private library of

Sir John Symmons, the collector whose ex-libris appears in each manuscript.

During a research visit to the archives of the Royal Literary Fund (RLF) at the British Library, I found examples of Curteis paper used in correspondence from the same period, directly supporting the hypothesis that Symmons himself may have overseen the substitution of the original vignette pages. In at least one case, the watermark on a patch in the manuscript perfectly matches the paper used by the RLF in the early 1800s.¹⁵⁰ This coincidence suggests a shared material supply and consolidates the link between the cantata manuscripts and Symmons’s custodianship.

Whether driven by aesthetic, economic, or bibliophilic motives, this excision most likely occurred while the volumes were housed in Symmons’s library, before their eventual dispersal at auction in 1828. Cutting out initials, plates, or decorations from manuscripts and books was common. Plates were sold at auctions separately and collected in albums. Francis Douce himself, the owner of the drawings at the Ashmolean since the 19th century, was acquainted with this practice and indulged in it too.

At the same time, one cannot entirely exclude that the excision of the drawings occurred at a later stage, after the 1828 auction, and perhaps before Douce’s death in 1834. Arguably, restorers in the nineteenth century sometimes used earlier paper stocks precisely in order to disguise the date of repairs. In this scenario, Edward Hodges could still have acquired the volumes intact, and the drawings may have been removed only in the years between

¹⁴⁸ “[...]The initial letter was cut out and replaced shortly after the manuscript was completed, as evidenced by the contemporary handwriting of the music recopied on the back of the new initial. [...]” <https://cantataitaliana.it/en/node/4414>. Author’s translation of the field “notes”. (Last accessed 12th May 2025).

¹⁴⁹ Shorter 1957 pp. 236-237, 260-261, illustrated on pp. 287-288.

¹⁵⁰ See letters from Carlisle to Symmons concerning the so-called *Nicholson affair* from May 21st 1815 and the letters thereafter until mid June of the same year. GB-Lbl Loan 96 RLF 1/45 (Due to a malfunction of the online catalogue of the British Library it is not possible to provide the exact signature of the letters).

1828 and 1834. My own examination, however, suggests that the patches were inserted primarily to preserve the musical text, rather than to deceive or repair. Their careless use of mismatched paper—often with chain-lines running in an opposite direction in respect to the orientation of the cantata folios—indicates that the replacements were functional rather than meant to deceive. Both possibilities remain open, but the material evidence supports a pragmatic rather than a falsifying intervention.

3.3.1 SIR JOHN SYMMONS AND HIS LIBRARY

Born into a landed family in Llanstinan, Pembrokeshire, John Symmons was the eldest son of John Symmons Sr. (1701-1771), and Maria Philipps (unknown dates) of the influential Picton Castle lineage. Despite this firmly Welsh inheritance, Symmons spent most of his adult life in London, quickly becoming embedded in elite intellectual, literary, and scientific circles. A member of the exclusive Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club from 1783 (alongside the Prince of Wales and other high-ranking nobles), Symmons cultivated a reputation as a polymath, dilettante, and connoisseur.

His scientific credentials were substantial: he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1794, was a founding member of both the Royal Institution and the Linnean Society, and held membership in the Horticultural Society, Society of Antiquaries, and the Royal Literary Fund, to which he remained deeply committed as a benefactor and trustee. His Paddington House residence near Hyde Park became a hub of intellectual and botanical activity. There, Symmons maintained an extensive garden, catalogued in *Hortus Paddingtoniensis*, as well as a personal museum and an exceptional library of over 40,000 volumes and numerous

topographical drawings, maps, and early printed books.¹⁵¹ Among his acquisitions was the entire print collection of the physician and anatomist Charles Combe (1743-1817), bought by private contract before it ever reached auction.

Symmons's social circle included Anthony Carlisle (1768-1840), the eminent surgeon, discoverer of electrolysis, and eventual husband to Symmons's daughter Martha (1780-?). Carlisle is now widely accepted as the probable author of *The Horrors of Oakendale Abbey*, a gothic novel attributed to a "Mrs Carver."¹⁵² The novel's male protagonist, Lord Oakendale, bears several biographical and psychological traits that mirror Symmons's persona, suggesting that his complex character may have inspired the literary figure. The novel's themes of decay, secrecy, and macabre science align intriguingly with Symmons's documented interest in anatomical curiosities and funerary artifacts: one famous case notes his possession of the mummified corpse of a boy sealed in a vault since the 1665 plague.¹⁵³

As a friend and correspondent of scientists like the botanist Joseph Banks (1743-1820), the philosopher William Godwin (1756-1836), the writer Richard Duppa (1770-1831), the anatomist John Hunter (1728-1793), and the Shakespearean scholar Maurice Morgann (1725-1802), Symmons also supported young scholars and writers through the Royal Literary Fund. His brother Charles Symmons (1749-1826), a respected poet and biographer of John Milton (1608-1674), and his niece Caroline (1789-1812), a promising poetess who died young, both link the family to literary culture of the time. Symmons's daughter Martha married Carlisle in 1800, further entwining the family in the currents of late-Enlightenment science and early-Romantic literature.

Symmons's vast collections, spanning botany, numismatics, music, and art, proved both a monument and a liability. Financially

¹⁵¹ Salisbury 1797.

¹⁵² Carver or Carlisle 1797; Cole 1952; Shelton 2019.

¹⁵³ Blumenbach 1794.

overextended, he was declared bankrupt in the 1820s. His possessions, including his celebrated library and artworks, were auctioned in 1828 in multiple sessions by Phillips of New Bond Street.¹⁵⁴ He then fled to the Low Countries, where he died in Tournai in 1831 at age 86, just days after composing a codicil to his will in an attempt to amend an earlier inheritance decision. His estate was valued at only £450, a pitiful remnant of the fortune that once allowed him to shape entire cultural networks.

Through his collecting and personal history, Sir John Symmons emerges as both an architect and a casualty of the 18th-century culture of collecting: a man who preserved and dispersed knowledge with equal fervor, and whose posthumous afterlife remains suspended between antiquarian respectability and gothic literary myth.

3.3.2 THE DISPERSAL OF BOOKS AND VIGNETTES

The dismemberment of the cantata manuscripts and the extraction of their decorative vignettes must be understood in the broader context of Sir John Symmons's collecting habits and the eventual dissolution of his library. A bibliophile of legendary proportions, Symmons amassed a private collection estimated at over 40,000 volumes, including works on literature, law, botany, music, antiquities, and the arts. The precise modalities of acquisition and, significantly, of deaccession, remain largely undocumented. Symmons may have acquired the cantata volumes through two possible channels. On one hand, the late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century British market for Italian

books was flourishing. Contemporary Italian observers deplored this constant outflow of works on paper, which were harder to regulate than antiquities or paintings, to the point that Pope Clement XI's edict of 1704 explicitly extended export bans to manuscripts and printed books.¹⁵⁵ On the other hand, Symmons could have obtained them directly during the Grand Tour he undertook in 1764, shortly after the death of his father.

By 1828, Symmons had fallen into financial ruin, a consequence of both his extravagant patronage and the unregulated generosity for which he was known.¹⁵⁶ That year, his entire collection was consigned to public auction. The sale, managed by Phillips of New Bond Street, lasted fourteen days and included multiple catalogues of books, prints, manuscripts, and curiosities. The volumes were sold as lot 773 on the fourth day of sale, on 6th of May 1828, as confirmed by the pen inscription on the inner side of every volume cover.¹⁵⁷

The hypothesis that Symmons himself removed the vignettes from the manuscripts before the sale is supported by internal and external evidence. The watermark of Curteis and Sons that I found in the patch paper of the volume at the British Library points to an intervention at the end of the 18th century, precisely the period during which Symmons was active as a collector.¹⁵⁸ The substitution patches, neatly inscribed with musical notation and simple pen-drawn initials, suggest a deliberate effort to preserve textual and musical content after extracting the images.

However, whether Symmons carried out this operation himself remains uncertain. The

¹⁵⁴ Phillips 1828.

¹⁵⁵ Guerrieri 2010, p. 114.

¹⁵⁶ From the letters in the RLF archive, I was able to determine that he often intervened with generous personal donations in several cases where the institution denied requested amounts for various purposes, like funerals (!) of members. Also, Gauthier de Brécy, the librarian of Sir Symmons, confirms the

magnanimity of the English man in helping him and other French émigrés, among many others.

¹⁵⁷ Lots 773–780 collected around 100 volumes of: "[...] music books, containing some very curious and scarce compositions by Italian masters [...]." Phillips 1828.

¹⁵⁸ Shorter 1957.

possibility of third-party involvement cannot be excluded. His French librarian, Gauthier de Brécý (1753-1836), later wrote that he had frequently loaned books from Symmons's library without the owner's knowledge, sometimes even to some people living abroad.¹⁵⁹ In such a context, the physical removal of valuable decorative material and discreet reinsertion of the now-mutilated volumes would not have been impossible. Moreover, despite Douce's meticulous recordkeeping, no direct link between Symmons and Francis Douce, the final owner of the Ashmolean drawings, can currently be documented. If Douce acquired the vignettes through intermediaries, such as Thomas Rodd, John Triphook, or William Smith, the drawings may have passed through the antiquarian market without documentary evidence correlated to Symmons.

It is therefore plausible and likely that the vignettes were separated from the cantatas before their public sale, possibly with the intention of achieving a higher profit by selling them as individual works of art. This practice was far from unusual at the time: decorated initials, full-page miniatures, and other manuscript fragments were routinely extracted and sold separately, often to be mounted in albums such as the one now housed at the Ashmolean Museum.

After the 1828 auction, the volumes passed into the hands of the English organist Edward Hodges. His possession, however, appears to have been brief and largely custodial, with no evidence that he interfered with their material state. Unlike Symmons, Hodges had little antiquarian incentive to remove and resell the illustrations separately, making it unlikely that the dismemberment occurred during his ownership.

The following section offers a physical and material survey of the four cantata manuscripts, confirming their shared provenance through

detailed comparison of bindings, layouts, and drawing remnants.

3.4 THE MANUSCRIPTS IN DETAIL

The codicological and material characteristics of the four cantata manuscripts, bindings, decorative patterns, paper formats, and above all the measurements of the extracted vignettes and their patch replacements, offer concrete evidence not only of their shared provenance but also of a systematic operation of visual deconstruction. This section presents a detailed morphological description of the Symmons volumes, combining external and internal elements with precise measurement data. Where possible, I report the size of the lacuna left by the removed vignette and the dimensions of the surviving drawing now preserved in the Ashmolean album. This data allows for a material reconstruction of the act of removal, offering insights into the visual economy of manuscript production and the antiquarian practices that later intervened in their fate.

3.4.1 GERMANY, HAMBURG, VOL. 1 (D-Hs ND VI 2263,1)

Of the three cantata manuscripts formerly held in Hamburg, only volumes I and III remain in the Stadtbibliothek. As previously mentioned, Volume II was taken to Russia during World War II. The first volume, D-Hs ND VI 2263,1, is bound in red Moroccan leather richly decorated in gold. The external cover plate measures 208 × 271 mm. In the centre is a coat of arms featuring a bunch of grapes with two leaves and a small branch, surmounted by a helm adorned with four large feathers. The cover's design, which follows a symmetrical quadrant layout and exhibits a characteristic *horror vacui* style, is consistent

¹⁵⁹ From the autobiography of the librarian: "[...] Throughout the duration of this work, he had given me the freedom and authority to lend books from his library to émigrés known to him and to me. I deemed

it necessary and prudent to have these books returned to Paddington; they were brought back and restored to their usual place. [...]". Translation by the author. Brécý 1834, p. 290.

with the late-17th-century Roman bindings attributed to the Andreoli workshop.

The ornamentation includes two outer floral frames, intertwined acanthus leaves and a geometric hollow border between double lines, grottesca-like motifs at the corners, and, toward the centre, a densely populated area with flying cupids, vine leaves, and further floral arrangements. The spine, divided into six compartments, is decorated with foliage and geometric patterns; the second bears a sticker with the inscription "ITALIAN / CANTATES," likely applied during the Symmons era. The page edges are gilded.

Several inscriptions appear on the inner cover: "4S N773 9 Blu (?) et [...] V Music Page S4"; a sticker from the library reading "Hamb. Stadtbibl. / Realcat. ND.VI. / No. 2263"; and handwritten notes such as "Cantate da Camera à voce sola BC" and "4^o" in pencil. Sir John Symmons's ex-libris is pasted on the guard leaf, accompanied by further annotations including "Samml. Vol. I."

On the first page (pencilled as fol. 1), a table of contents lists the titles of 13 cantatas. A partially-erased note in the upper-right-hand corner of this page includes the word "of," suggesting a post-Roman context, though the handwriting differs from that of the content list.

On the first page, numbered on the top right with pencil (1) is the table of contents:

Per stentato Camino Asperso 1
Sopra tutte L'Altre Belle Al. Stradella 13
X [in pencil] *In Boscareccia* 29
Vincesti O Ciel Al. Stradella 53
Sciogliete pur Al. Stradella 73
Arresta il piè fugace 93
Tra L'Ombre più secrete 121
*L [!!] penare per te Stradella** 141 [*in different handwriting and ink]
Regia dell'Orbe Etrusco 173
Anima incenerita Al. Stradella 215
Gia dell'Indo Medes. 241
Mentre un Zephyro Arguto Scarlatti 255

L'Armida. Pensi Ola Stradella 295

On this same page, on the top right corner, are further hand-written notes that have been erased. Though only a single word is now visible: "of" which might point already to Symmons rather than the Roman context. Yet the handwriting is rather different than that of the list of contents. On the bottom right corner in red pencil, we find: "63", and there are heavy smudges on the bottom right corner.

On the backing of the cover notes, in pen in brown ink, we find:

340 W(?) 3 = 85 = 4c " 5'
B3_0 " 10 " 6

4' 15' 6

For the rest of the pages the original page number, registering the recto and verso consecutively is replaced by a pencil folio number, thus referring only to the recto. A detailed comparison of the original manuscript page numbers (in brown ink) with the current foliation (in pencil) follows below, along with measurements of the lacunae left by the removed vignettes and the dimensions of the surviving drawings (see **Table 1**)

Each manuscript page measures approximately 195 × 270 mm. The staves are centred on the page, typically 3–4 cm from the binding margin and 5 cm from the outer edge. Vertical ruling lines are sometimes present, demarcating the width allowed for music copying.

3.4.2 RUSSIA, SAINTPETERSBURG, VOL. 2 (OLIM D-Hs ND VI 2263,II; NOW RUS-SPsc Fond 956 opis' 2 no. 247)

The second volume in the original Hamburg set consists almost entirely of cantatas by Alessandro Stradella (1639-1682), though the

hands involved in copying them are not uniform.¹⁶⁰ Its external appearance closely resembles that of the third volume (D-Hs ND VI 2263,III, now in Hamburg), suggesting they were bound in the same workshop, possibly at the same time. Although direct physical examination was not possible, comparative analysis of binding style and proportions suggests that the external plate measures approximately 210 × 270 mm.

The binding is in green leather with relatively simple gilt decoration: a broad geometric border defined by double lines encloses floral ornaments in each corner, ending in grape clusters with stylised leaves and tendrils. The spine, reportedly damaged, was not available for direct analysis or imaging.

Three pasted labels are still visible on the front cover's inner side. The uppermost bears the title "Cantate da Camera à voce sola B.C."; beneath it is a label from the Hamburg Stadtbibliothek, although no catalogue number is included.

On the right, in pen: "Ms / 4^{or}". Symmons's ex-libris is pasted at centre, and a third label at the bottom reads "Samml. Vol. II." A familiar inscription, "4S N 773 9 Blu(?) et (? Or e/...) V Music Page S 4", appears along the top of the inside cover, in the same hand and format found in the other three volumes.

Unlike the other manuscripts, no table of contents is appended. The sequence of cantatas begins directly with "Chi'io nasconda il mio foco" by Stradella. The lacunae left by the removed vignettes follow the same structure and position as in the other volumes, though only the dimensions of the surviving drawings can be reported here due to lack of access to the originals. This is why **Table 2** does not include the measures of the holes.

3.4.3 GERMANY, HAMBURG, VOL. 3 (D-Hs ND VI 2263,III)

The third volume in the original Hamburg set (now in situ) is a true miscellanea, both in terms of musical content and material construction. It includes works by multiple composers, copied by at least two distinct copyists. The diversity of scripts, page layouts, and decorative interventions within the volume makes it an especially valuable case for understanding copying practices in Roman cantata production of the late-17th century.

The binding, in green leather with relatively restrained gilt tooling, mirrors that of the Russian volume (Olim II). The external plate measures approximately 210 × 270 mm. A double-lined rectangular frame encloses floral ornaments in each corner, terminating in grape clusters with accompanying leaves and tendrils. The gilt decoration includes small gold dots dispersed between the floral motifs—fourteen on the front cover, sixteen on the back—suggesting an imprecise execution, possibly by a less experienced artisan.

The volume has undergone substantial restoration. The cover has been reconstructed and the spine replaced. A modern label has been affixed to the new spine, "CANT / DIVER." which is likely an abbreviation of the handwritten title found inside: "Canta tedi uerze" (sic), a garbled rendering of "Cantate Diverse."

The decorative endpaper, pasted initially to the inner cover, has been detached and rebound as the first folio. This striking bronze varnish paper features the typical zoomorphic and floral motifs printed in red and green, with overlaid bronze outlining.

¹⁶⁰ There are evident discrepancies among the handwritings, though a discussion of copyists lies outside the aims of this case study at present.

Table 1

Drawing	New pagination Pencil (folios)	Measures of the hole in mm	Measures of the drawing in mm
GB-OAM WA1942.49.23	2	86 x 104	76 x 104
GB-OAM WA1942.49.7	8	90 x 89	80 x 89
--	16	82 x 96	--
GB-OAM WA1942.49.5	28	85 x 92	72 x 92
GB-OAM WA1942.49.2	38	86 x 101	77 x 100
GB-OAM WA1942.49.27	48	81 x 100	75 x 100
GB-OAM WA1942.49.9	62	88 x 101	77 x 101
GB-OAM WA1942.49.3	72	87 x 106	80 x 106
GB-OAM WA1942.49.22	88	84 x 102	75 x 102
GB-OAM WA1942.49.31	110	87 x 101	80 x 101
GB-OAM WA1942.49.6	123	82 x 92	72 x 92
GB-OAM WA1942.49.12	130	88 x 89	80 x 89
GB-OAM WA1942.49.29	150	90 x 94	78 x 93

The pattern - including large, stylized flowers with black pistils, black dogs, and various foliage - indicates that it was printed in Augsburg at the end of the 17th century or at the latest during the first half of the 18th century. The printing method was stencil- and / or block-based.¹⁶¹ The endpapers, found at both the front and back of the volume, measure approximately 200 × 270 mm each.

On the top of the guard page is the recurring inscription "4S N 773 9 Blu (?) et (? Or e/...) V Music Page S 4"; to the right, in pencil, appears "12/13." Below this is the table of contents, listing fifteen cantatas. Two different hands and inks were used to compile it, with the second hand (likely British) adding the pagination and replacing missing composer names with "No Name." Repetitions are indicated with "D" or "D^o" for ditto. Several titles are inaccurately transcribed—particularly those cantatas that originally featured vignettes, which had likely already been removed by the time the list was compiled. The table of contents reads as follows:

Già dell'Umida Notte Gaetano Furloni Pag 1
Impara a on dar Bononcini 19
Non più ferite Amore _____ 27
Voi volete ch'io Canti Severo del Luca 37
Lungi dal Patrio Suolo D 45
Mio Tiranno Adorato D 57
Hor che gli lie (??) No Name 73
Lurilla e congual Cora (sic!) F. (sic!) Cola 83
Occhi vaghi Voi Giacomo Bacchi 87
Tirsi che pena el Tace No Name 91
[C]-olei che Portia (sic!) No Name 99
Il Ciel che Noné (sic!) D^o 107
[L]-igio di due Pupilli (sic!) D^o 117
Cieco Nume Tiranno Bononcini 126
Quanto Siete ver Mio Ziani 130

The second copyist had little idea of what is written in the text of the cantatas. In fact, the

first two, on folios 37 and 45 respectively, are transcribed entirely and correctly by the first hand. Besides some spelling mistakes, the second hand could not figure out the initial of the text of the cantatas on folios 99 and 117, very likely because the vignettes were already removed. For the cantata on folio 107, also missing the vignette, the text begins with the article "Il" suggesting, therefore, that it was copied entirely and (almost) correctly by the second copyist.

On the verso of the guard page, now numbered "a/" in the top right corner, a library stamp is visible. The first cantata, "Già dell'humida notte" by Gaetano Furloni (fl. end 17th century), follows. Its initial is rendered as a large, ornate calligraphic letter, embellished with leaves and fruit-like elements in thin pen strokes. At the foot of the page appears a blue rectangular Cyrillic stamp with the number 17033—a trace of the volume's wartime displacement to Russia during World War II. On the last page of the book, before the end paper, a handwritten note in pencil reads: "Begast, Juli 1997 (or 1991)."

Table 3 provides information on the position of the missing illustrations and the size of the substituting patches.

Although modest in decorative scope, the volume's physical features—including the ex-libris of Sir John Symmons, the recurring internal annotations, and the precision of the vignette removal—support its identification as part of the same corpus as the others. The stylistic consistency of the removed drawings and their subsequent placement in the Ashmolean album further confirms their shared provenance.

3.4.4 GREAT BRITAIN, LONDON, VOL. 4 (GB-Lbl. Add.24311)

The manuscript now preserved at the British Library, under the shelf mark Add. MS 24311, entered the collection in 1861 as a purchase

¹⁶¹ Heijbroek-Greven 1994. On p. 33 is reproduced a portion of this same pattern.

from the organist and musicologist Henry John Gauntlett (1805–1876). A manuscript note on the guard page reads: “Purchd. Of Dr. St. Gauntlett / 20 July 1861. / (Putt. 10 June Lot. 768),” a clear indication that the volume had been sold at Puttick & Simpson in London as lot 768 during the auction of 10–11 June 1861.¹⁶²

On the inside of the front cover, a manuscript note in brown ink repeats the now-familiar phrase: “4S N 773 9 Blu (?) et (?) V Music Page S 4.” The ex-libris of Sir John Symmons is pasted at the center, and a penciled note in the lower left corner reads “MUSIC C / 128.a.”

The binding is of green leather, adorned with elaborate gilt tooling. A double acanthus frame encloses a richly ornamented central panel divided into four compartments. Each corner contains foliate and floral elements; within a scalloped inner frame are small four-petaled blossoms; the central space hosts a dense vegetal arrangement, including angels bearing grape clusters.

At the very center appears a coat of arms: a bunch of grapes supported by two branches with leaves, surmounted by a helmet with four large feathers. Although the original spine has been heavily modified, three of the compartments retain their titles and classification: “CANTATE / VARIE”, “MUS. BRIT. / JURE EMPT.”, and “24311 / PLUT. / CXXVIII.A.”

On the upper and lower compartments, decorated with a stamped gold rosette, are labels reading “MUSIC” and “C.” The back cover mirrors the front in design. In the inside of the bottom cover, on the top left, we find the following annotations in brown ink:

290 W(?)o = 72 " 6 = 3 " 12 " 6
 B0 ----- 0 " 10 " 6

 4 " 3 " 0

Following the guard page is a list of the cantatas copied in the volume. The handwriting is likely from the late-18th or early-19th century and corresponds closely with the annotations found in the other manuscripts once owned by Symmons. The list includes the incipits of each cantata; some are slightly miscopied, especially where the decorative vignette had already been removed. Pagination was later revised in pencil to match foliation standards, with folio numbers now beginning from the table of contents. These are included in the round parentheses below. In square parentheses are my own annotations.

- Il più tenero Affetto* - - 1 [the capital ‘A’ is in 19th-century cursive script, and is therefore rounded] (2)
- Come o Bella* - - 29 (16)
- Fermatevi O Bei Lumi* - - 45 (23)
- Intorno a Picciolo* - - 73 [the complete title would have included *lume*; furthermore the final ‘o’ of Picciolo should have been left out] (37)
- Come in Ciel* - - 87 (45)
- La Fortuna di Roma* - - 103 (53)
- Stan soggetti* - - 127 [original title with *alla Fortuna*] (65)
- Tante Perle* - - 143 (73)
- Non vantar tanta Bellezza* - - 159 (81)
- Con tutto che Amore* - - 183 [again with a rounded capital A] (93)
- Sono in Armi* - - 207 [in this case the capital A is somehow copied from the cantata] (104)
- Io che lasciato fui* - - 271 (136)

The manuscript is approximately 195 × 265 mm in size. Musical staves are consistently centered; in some cases, double vertical ruling marks indicate the intended copying boundaries. Two folios (23 and 103) present staves without any musical notation.

¹⁶² Coover 1988, pp. 179–180.

Table 2

Drawing	New pagination Pencil (folios)	Measures of the hole in mm	Measures of the drawing in mm
GB-OAM WA1942.49.19	17	?? x ??	73 x 91
GB-OAM WA1942.49.11	57	?? x ??	73 x 92
GB-OAM WA1942.49.24	105	?? x ??	74 x 103

Table 3

Drawing	New pagination Pencil (folios)	Measures of the hole in mm	Measures of the drawing in mm
GB-OAM WA1942.49.28	37	90 x 100	78 x 100
GB-OAM WA1942.49.26	45	88 x 88	80 x 88
GB-OAM WA1942.49.21	99	86 x 87	75 x 87
GB-OAM WA1942.49.20	107	85 x 97	72 x 92
GB-OAM WA1942.49.18	117	86 x 100	77 x 100

The patches that now fill the original lacunae are laid paper of a darker shade, with chain lines oriented horizontally. These patches are always slightly larger than the removed area, suggesting careful adjustment. On a few folios (65r, 73r, and 136r), faint musical traces are visible at the patch edges—possibly transferred from the verso of facing pages, due to moisture or glue migration.

That the drawings were removed post-binding is confirmed by the consistent buffer space between the cut and the gutter, which allowed for a clean extraction. The width of each inserted vignette corresponds precisely to the original lacuna, whereas the height was slightly trimmed—typically by less than a centimeter—to ensure visual harmony in the Ashmolean album.

The manuscript contains works by a variety of composers: five cantatas by Alessandro Stradella, three by Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier (1662–1700), one each by Alessandro Scarlatti (1660–1725) and Francesco Bagaglia (1694–1740), and two by anonymous authors. Two copyists can be identified, with notably differing musical scripts, particularly as related to the direction and formation of clefs (especially the bass clef), and to letterforms such as ‘f’ and ‘g’. The following table provides an overview of the extracted drawings in the order they should have appeared in this volume.

Table 4 provides an overview of the extracted drawings in the order they should have appeared in this volume.

3.5 THE RECONSTRUCTED MANUSCRIPTS

Table 5 contains all cantata titles along with their composers, ordered as they appear in each manuscript described above. In the first column is the composer, in the second the title of the composition, in the third the inventory number of the missing drawing or the current

decoration, and in the last the manuscript’s call number. *Call. Initial* signals the presence of a calligraphic initial; *None* stands for no decoration.

3.6 VIGNETTES AND INITIALS

According to the classification outlined in the Introduction, the initials in the Symmons’ manuscripts fall into several categories. Five cantatas feature purely calligraphic initials, while two display no decorative space at all, their text running unbroken from margin to margin. In twelve cases, a blank space was clearly left for a decoration that was never executed or later removed. Notable exceptions include the phytomorphic initial that opens the Russian manuscript (olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.01), and the now-missing drawing from the first volume of the Hamburg collection (D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.03).

All the drawings gathered in the Ashmolean album, by contrast, fall under the category of vignettes namely images imbued with spatial, scenographic, or narrative connotations. Among them, eight may be defined as allusive, incorporating visual details that anticipate or echo the themes of the cantata they accompany. In twelve others, the draftsman appears to have altered specific details from the original visual source to suit the cantata’s opening letter, creating a form of figurative initial. The remaining vignettes feature hidden initials, often ingeniously concealed within anthropomorphic or zoomorphic forms, or architectural elements.

Far from being merely decorative flourishes, these images play an active role in shaping the reader’s engagement with the manuscript. They operate at once as paratextual thresholds, drawing the eye, and marking the textual entry point, and as allegorical prompts, offering visual commentary or mood-setting devices.

Their presence creates a richly layered experience: reading becomes seeing, and vice versa. In this sense, these vignettes act as visual

games, inviting recognition, interpretation, visual pleasure, and amusement.

The following sections explore some of their typologies and techniques in more detail, beginning with the allusive vignettes that integrate identifiable iconography into the form of the opening initial.

3.6.1 ALLUSIVE VIGNETTES

The first vignette in the Ashmolean album (cat. 3.01) combines a recognizable view of the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli with a mythological scene featuring Venus disarming Cupid. The goddess raises the arrows of Cupid in her left hand, while his bow lies abandoned on the ground. The episode, drawn from a well-established visual tradition in Italy, is integrated here into the foreground of a landscape otherwise populated by fishermen and ruins.

What makes this vignette particularly significant is a close correspondence between image and text. The cantata that follows describes the speaker's attempt to resist the assaults of Love, metaphorized as a siege of the heart's fortress. The gesture of Venus neutralizing Cupid's power becomes, in this context, a visual allegory of the cantata's moral stance: desire subdued by anger, or perhaps by reason. Interestingly, the same motif of Venus disarming the winged god appears in two other manuscript sources of cantatas by Alessandro Stradella, one in Cambridge (GB-Cfm MU MS 131.01), the other in Paris (F-Pn Rés.Vm7 639), always in the form of a small vignette. This recurrence suggests that the scene may have functioned as a kind of visual commonplace, a prelude recognizable to a cultivated audience.¹⁶³

The allusive vignettes do not directly illustrate the dramatic content of the cantatas, nor do they always contain a hidden initial. Rather, they propose a scene, a setting, or a gesture that anticipates or resonates with the emotional and rhetorical structure of the poem. Their

relationship with the text is oblique, suggestive, and often poetic rather than referential.

In some cases, allusion operates through landscape and atmosphere, as in the riverside scene with bathers in "Tra l'ombre più secrete" (cat. 3.09), or the expansive skyscape above the Roman ruins in "Come in ciel dell'aureo crine" (cat. 3.14). In others, it lies in a single added figure or action, like a pointing hand, a hovering moth, or a gesture of flight or surrender, that charges the image with symbolic energy. The drawing accompanying "Intorno a picciol lume" (cat. 3.10), for instance, stages the allegory of the moth and the flame in a richly stylized interior, suggesting a theatrical setting as well as an erotic trajectory.

In "Già languia la note" (cat. 3.19), the monumental view of Saint Peter's Basilica, shown without both Bernini's left bell tower and the embracing colonnade, acts less as a literal setting and more as a rhetorical backdrop. It frames the cantata's tragic monologue within a space of imperial and divine silence, while the broad presence of the river suggests instability, separation, and emotional drift.

In the vignette for "Aure voi che spirate" (cat. 3.24), the sail and mast of a ship crossing a quiet inlet form a wide and open capital "A." The image derives its resonance less from its letterform and more from a topical and symbolic overlap with the cantata's language, which invokes wind, tide, and sea routes as metaphors for emotional return. The ship becomes a vehicle of longing and invocation: it prefigures the beloved's arrival even as it silently draws the eye into the poetic flow.

Finally, in the case of "Sono in armi Bellezza e Virtù" (cat. 3.32), the vignette transforms a generic battle scene into a metaphorical struggle between desire and reason. Here, the image is not merely allusive but fully allegorical: a pictorial double of the poem's moral conflict.

¹⁶³ Luciola 2011, pp. 207-219.

Table 4

Drawing	New pagination Pencil (folios)	Orig. MS page Brown ink	Measures of the hole in mm	Measures of the drawing in mm
GB-OAM WA1942.49.30	2	1	90 x 100	81 x 100
GB-OAM WA1942.49.15	16	29	87 x 97	79 x 97 [said 107(?)]
GB-OAM WA1942.49.8	23	45	84 x 91	72 x 91
GB-OAM WA1942.49.10	37	73	83 x 95	75 x 95
GB-OAM WA1942.49.14	45	87	90 x 101	82 x 101
GB-OAM WA1942.49.17	53	103	88 x 103	78 x 103
GB-OAM WA1942.49.25	65	127	86 x 104	75 x 104
GB-OAM WA1942.49.16	73	142	87 x 99	79 x 99 [said 100(?)]
GB-OAM WA1942.49.13	81	159	89 x 104	80 x 104
GB-OAM WA1942.49.1	93	183	89 x 107	79 x 107
GB-OAM WA1942.49.32	104	207	94 x 108	85 x 108
GB-OAM WA1942.49.4	136	271	90 x 103	80 x 104

Table 5

Author/Composer	Title	Ashmolean Album inv.	Manuscript inv.
Anonymous	<i>Per stentato camino</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.23	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.01
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Sopra tutte l'altre belle</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.07	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.02
Anonymous	<i>In boscareccia scena</i>	Missing drawing	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.03
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Vincesti, o ciel, vincesti</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.05	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.04
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Sciogliete, pur sciogliete i vostri accenti</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.02	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.05
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Arresta, arresta il piè</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.27	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.06
Anonymous	<i>Tra l'ombre più secrete</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.09	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.07
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Il penare per te, bella, m'è caro</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.03	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.08
Anonymous	<i>Regea dell'orbe Etrusco</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.22	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.09
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Anima incenerita</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.31	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.10
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Già nell'indo emisfero</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.06	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.11
Alessandro Scarlatti	<i>Mentre Zeffiro arguto</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.12	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.12
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Pensi olà, che si bada?</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.29	D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.13
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Ch'io nasconda il mio foco</i>	Phytomorphic initial	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.01
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Già languia la notte</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.19	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.02
Alessandro Stradella	<i>L'Arianna: Ferma il corso, torna al Lido</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.11	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.03
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Aure voi che spirate</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.24	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.04
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Adorata libertà</i>	No initial/full page score	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.05
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Bella Rosa nel cui stelo</i>	No initial/full page score	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.06
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Udite amanti un prodigio novella</i>	None	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.07
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Deggio penar così</i>	None	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.08
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Solcava in curvo legno</i>	None	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.09
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Con fia mai ah'nó ch'io sperì</i>	None	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.10
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Addio cieli addio stelle</i>	None	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.11
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Quando sembra che nuoti quest'Alma</i>	None	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.12
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Doppo ben mille prove date</i>	None	olim Hs ND VI 2263,II.13
Gaetano Furloni	<i>Già dell'humida notte</i>	Call. Initial	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.01
Giovanni Bononcini (1670-1747)	<i>Impara a non dar fede</i>	None	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.02
Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier	<i>Non più ferite amore</i>	None	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.03
Severo De Luca (fl. 1688-1734)	<i>Voi volete ch'io canti</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.28	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.04

Severo De Luca	<i>Lungi dal patrio suolo</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.26	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.05
Severo De Luca	<i>Mio tiranno adorato</i>	Call. Initial	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.06
Anonymous	<i>Hor che gl'eterei campi</i>	Call. Initial	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.07
Gregorio Cola (fl. 1696-1709)	<i>Eurilla è con qual core</i>	Call. Initial	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.08
Pietro Giacomo Bacci (1643-post 1693)	<i>Occhi vaghi voi siete</i>	None	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.09
Giovanni Bononcini	<i>Peno e l'alma Fedele</i>	None	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.10
Anonymous	<i>Colei che porta in fronte</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.21	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.11
Anonymous	<i>Il ciel che non è stanco</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.20	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.12
Anonymous	<i>Ligio di due pupille belle</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.18	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.13
Giovanni Bononcini	<i>Cieco nume tiranno spietato</i>	Call. Initial	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.14
Marc'Antonio Ziani (ca. 1653-1715)	<i>Quanto siete ver' me stelle spietate</i>	None	D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.15
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Il più tenero affetto</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.30	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.01
Anonymous	<i>Come, ò bella, disciogli</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.15	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.02
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Fermatevi, ò bei Lumi</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.08	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.03
Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier	<i>Intorno a picciol lume</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.10	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.04
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Come in ciel dell'aureo crine</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.14	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.05
Alessandro Scarlatti	<i>La fortuna di Roma [also titled <i>Il Coriolano</i>]</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.17	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.06
Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier	<i>Stan soggetti alla fortuna</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.25	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.07
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Tante perle non versa l'Aurora</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.16	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.08
Giovanni Lorenzo Lulier	<i>Non vantar tanta bellezza</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.13	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.09
Francesco Bagaglia (1694-1740)	<i>Con tutto, che Amore</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.01	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.10
Anonymous	<i>Sono in armi Bellezza e Virtù</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.32	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.11
Alessandro Stradella	<i>Io, che lasciato fui</i>	GB-OAM WA1942.49.04	GB-Lbl. Add.24311.12

A similar dynamic is at play in the vignette for “Pensi olà che si bada” (cat. 3.13), where a solitary female figure, recognizable as Armida, raises a sword while her stance forms a capital “P.” Though the letter functions as an ornamental initial, the posture is also narratively charged: it enacts the vengeance and emotional agitation voiced in the cantata, merging typographic design with psychological gesture. As in the previous example, the image does not depict a specific episode but condenses its emotional premise in symbolic action.

In all these instances, the vignette does not comment on the text so much as prepare the eye for a mode of reading, one that is affective, metaphorical, and visually informed. The image serves as a threshold, offering tonal or symbolic cues that resonate with the cantata’s poetic argument. The result is a layered page, in which visual and verbal registers unfold in parallel. Rather than illustrating, these images invite recognition, echoing the Baroque taste for emblematic density and interpretive ambiguity.

3.6.2 VIGNETTES WITH FIGURATIVE INITIALS

Some of the most inventive images in the Ashmolean album feature letters concealed within figures or composite forms, functioning as disguised initials. These vignettes do not establish an explicit iconographic dialogue with the cantata texts they precede; rather, they invite the viewer to decode a letter embedded in bodies, gestures, or juxtapositions of natural and architectural elements. Their meaning lies not in narrative or atmosphere, but in visual construction: they are ornamental enigmas, designed to be recognized, not simply seen.

In one scene (cat. 3.06), a small sailboat gliding across a river bends its mast and sail to form a capital “G,” unobtrusively integrated into a pastoral landscape. Elsewhere (cat. 3.07), a pair of intertwined sea creatures rise from the water to form a serpentine “S,” continuing the motif of

marine calligraphy discussed in relation to Filippo Juvarra in Chapter 2. In a more frontal composition (cat. 3.09), a grotesque satyr on the riverbank leans forward beside a curved reed, the two elements together forming a “C” by adjacency rather than by transformation.

Some initials are formed directly by human figures. In cat. 3.08, a pair of standing women define a “V” with their mirrored stance, placed symmetrically within an empty Roman piazza. In cat. 3.12, a group of ruins serves as a backdrop to two male figures who clasp hands and feet to form an acrobatic “A,” exaggerated in its artificiality. These gestures are not emotionally expressive, nor do they belong to a broader allegorical program: they function as letters embedded in spectacle, demanding an active gaze.

Though unrelated to the cantatas’ contents, these images demonstrate a sophisticated play on visual literacy, where the initial is neither explicit nor ornamental, but performed. They occupy a liminal space between paratext and decoration, between calligraphy and choreography. Their primary effect is to train the viewer’s eye to look slowly, to interpret, and to recognize pattern—an aesthetic gesture in itself, and one perfectly attuned to the Baroque fascination with emblematic ambiguity.

3.6.3 VIGNETTES WITH A TWIST

In a third group of images, the initial is neither mimetically integrated nor directly formed by a single figure. Instead, it is suggested through compositional cues: vertical rhythms, spatial alignments, or juxtapositions of structures and gestures that, when viewed attentively, echo the shape of the first letter in the cantata’s incipit. These vignettes do not conceal initials so much as prepare the eye to read them within the logic of the image.

In “Sciogliete pur, sciogliete” (cat. 3.15), the curved trunk of a slender tree in the centre of a pastoral landscape subtly forms a capital “S,” its

branches bifurcating just enough to catch the viewer's attention. In "Il penare per te, bella" (cat. 3.16), a vertical mast atop a coastal fortress becomes a towering "I," its role amplified by the omission of other visual distractions from the source print. Similarly, a ship braving a stormy sea in "Io che lasciato fui" (cat. 3.17) uses its central rigging to draw an equally bold "I," while a bifurcated tree in "Vincesti, ò ciel, vincesti" (cat. 3.18) defines a naturalistic "V" through symmetrical balance.

In "Mentre un Zeffiro arguto" (cat. 3.21), the rooftops of a farmhouse and its annex compose a diagonal-vertical-diagonal rhythm that outlines a monumental "M," showing how built forms can serve graphic functions without symbolic intent. A similarly constructed initial appears in "Ligio di due pupille belle" (cat. 3.22), where a standing and kneeling figure together suggest an "L" through the opposition of vertical and bent postures. In "Regea dell'orbe etrusco" (cat. 3.23), a soldier marching in profile, isolated from the rest of the figures, sketches a clear "R" with his curved arm and forward-leaning silhouette.

The "A" formed by the angled mast and sail in "Aure voi che spirate" (cat. 3.24) brings typographic clarity into alignment with poetic thematics: the invocation of winds and sea routes finds resonance in the pictorial structure itself, transforming a ship into a visual and affective prelude. Similarly, in "Il più tenero affetto" (cat. 3.25), a lone figure standing in the foreground, staff in hand, marks the page with a silent, vertical "I," both typographically precise and emotionally congruent with the cantata's argument of departure from the loved one. The same strategy applies to "Il ciel, che non è stanco" (cat. 3.28), where a slightly detached pedestrian in the Roman Forum visually anchors the incipit with minimal intervention.

A particularly subtle example appears in "Lungi dal patrio suolo" (cat. 3.31), where a solitary figure at the center of a wide piazza, casting a long diagonal shadow, suggests a tilted "L." Here the letter emerges not from posture or

architecture, but from light itself. The initial becomes visible only when figure and shadow are read together, offering one of the album's most restrained yet eloquent cases of compositional lettering.

In all these instances, the letter is not imposed but emerges from within the scene, requiring attention, inference, and recognition. These are not decorated initials in the classical sense, but compositional initials, born of alignment rather than transformation.

Their success lies in subtlety: they do not overwhelm the image, but gently structure it, guiding the viewer into the text with a visual gesture that is both minimal and eloquent.

3.6.4 DRAWN FOR THE VIEW (?)

Not all vignettes in the album seem to engage with the cantata they precede in a typographic or symbolic sense. A small group of drawings presents scenes of considerable architectural or landscape interest, while offering no identifiable initial, either concealed, constructed, or suggested. The title of this section carries a question mark for a reason: these images raise the possibility that some vignettes were included simply for the sake of the view.

In "Tante perle non versa l'Aurora" (cat. 3.26), a sweeping perspective of Roman ruins and horsemen provides a monumental backdrop with no visible intervention. The scene is well-balanced and atmospheric, but graphically neutral. Similarly, "Colei che porta in fronte" (cat. 3.29) features a river bridge, yet despite its compositional clarity, no alphabetic form emerges - no curve, no upright, no hint of a capital letter.

The vignette for "Per stentato cammino" (cat. 3.30) centers on the arch of Constantine rendered with architectural exactitude. Though finely drawn and spatially eloquent, it offers no visual threshold into the poem, functioning instead as a decorative prelude. Even in "Il ciel,

che non è stanco" (cat. 3.28), where a single upright figure might suggest a letter "I," the ambiguity remains – and invites caution. The same applies to the lost cantata "Colei che porta in fronte" (cat. 3.21), where the drawing remains stubbornly reticent despite its compositional care.

What do these images offer, if not letters? Perhaps nothing more and nothing less than a moment of visual openness, an invitation to pause before the singing begins.

Yet even this muteness may be deceptive. In a manuscript so consistently attuned to typographic play, one must ask: is the image truly devoid of a letter, or is it simply that I cannot see it?

This question cannot be settled with certainty. What looks like absence may be the result of my own inattention. These vignettes thus mark not a failure of design, but a limit of recognition: the point at which reading turns back into seeing, and the eye must accept its doubt.

3.7 ICONOGRAPHIC SOURCES

The iconographic sources behind the manuscript's drawings are diverse but remarkably coherent in date and origin. Seventeen of the thirty-two drawings derive from six different series published by Israël Silvestre (1621–1691) in Paris between 1645 and 1648. Three others are based on sets published by his uncle, Israël Henriot (1590–1661), in 1643 and 1647. The remainder include four drawings after Jacques Callot (1592–1635), two after François Collignon (1609–1687), two after Langlois (1588–1647), one after Giangiacomo de Rossi (1627–1691), one after Balthazar Moncornet (1600–1668), and one after Ercole Bazzicaluva (1590–1641). Only a single drawing appears to be an original invention, seemingly inspired by the cantata it introduces.

That so many sources can be traced back to Stefano della Bella is not surprising. Many of these prints were etched by him or after his designs. Furthermore, his close collaboration with French publishers first in Rome (1631–1636) and later in Paris (from 1639 onward), ensured their wide diffusion.¹⁶⁴

Most of the prints used were published in Paris in the 1640s and 1650s, offering a clear *terminus post quem* for the manuscripts' redaction and decoration. Current scholarship dates the manuscripts to the 1690s, when French print series were widely collected in Italy.¹⁶⁵ Their subject matter, mostly views of Rome and its environs, seascapes, and landscapes, fits within the genre of *voyages pittoresques*, which had become fashionable from the early-17th century onward. This iconographic and rather scenographic taste was mirrored in painting and fresco decoration, where vedute and imaginary ruins held a prominent place.¹⁶⁶

The prints, originally ca. 70 × 165 mm and horizontal in format, were adapted by the draftsman to fit the smaller manuscript margins. Compositions were cropped or selectively copied; in a couple of cases, the left and right halves of a single print generated two separate drawings (cat. 3.09 and 3.15; cat. 3.18 and 3.28). These choices were far from arbitrary: the urban landmarks featured are recognizable, suggesting deliberate selection and cultural intent.

This same editorial eye governed the handling of seascapes, landscapes, and genre scenes. Modifications, such as replacing a building with a tree or omitting an oversized ship, reveal not just spatial adaptation but also aesthetic preference. Moreover, figures (or staffage) were often introduced or repositioned to interact with textual themes or to create visual analogues of the cantata's tone. These additions, though modest, are key to understanding the

¹⁶⁴ Piazzzi 2013.

¹⁶⁵ Negro Spina 1990, pp. 256–257.

¹⁶⁶ Briganti 1986, pp. 49–52; Ferrari 2008, pp. 27–30.

symbolic and narrative ambition of the manuscript's decoration (see 3.3.1).

3.8 OVERVIEW OF THE VIGNETTES

The vignettes examined throughout this chapter are anything but generic decorations. Their iconographic and structural complexity, emerging from careful selection, modification, and reinterpretation of printed sources, suggests a cultivated and technically skilled hand, actively engaging with both image and text. While the attribution to Stefano della Bella is understandable given the sources used, the drawings also merit attention from a graphic and technical point of view.

Far from being mere reproductions, these vignettes reflect a conscious effort to organize space, articulate depth, and balance visual rhythm. Though small in size, they display an assured control of perspective and a selective intelligence. The draftsman rarely replicates the original in full, but instead isolates meaningful portions, shifts emphasis, and inserts elements that serve a new compositional or narrative purpose. This is particularly evident in the so-called "twisted" vignettes, where a subtle interplay of visual cues and calligraphic intention results in ambiguous forms.

Graphically, the execution is also telling. The use of pen and ink mimics the etched line with surprising fidelity, not simply in outline, but also in its handling of pressure, flow, and density. One might say that where Callot and Della Bella strove to make etching look like drawing, this anonymous draftsman went the other way round: working in ink to capture the tonal qualities and graphic vibration of the printed line. This inversion is more than a visual curiosity: it speaks to an understanding of print not only as a model but as a medium to be translated, reimagined, and adapted to a different material context: namely, the manuscript page.

In short, these drawings are not only interpretive acts; they are exercises in graphic intelligence. They mirror the cantatas' lyrical complexity with their own visual sophistication and invite the viewer to participate in a layered experience of looking, reading, and listening. In doing so, they transform the manuscript into a site where multiple media converge.

3.9 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter aimed to demonstrate how decorative elements in cantata manuscripts are far more than ornamental flourishes: they are rich repositories of information. The vignettes preserved in the Ashmolean album, originally cut from four Roman manuscripts, offer a lens through which to examine not only the aesthetic strategies underpinning manuscript design but also their material histories, their trajectories through 18th-century collecting, and their modern rediscovery.

These images reveal how Roman cantata manuscripts were implicated in broader patterns of 18th-century cultural extraction. The dismemberment of the volumes, likely under the bibliophilic eye of Sir John Symmons, reflects the practices of acquisition, fragmentation, and recontextualization that characterized British collecting approaches. The prints chosen as iconographic models, largely French publications from the 1640s and 1650s, point to a sophisticated visual culture shaped by collecting networks and shared symbolic literacy.

At the same time, this chapter intersects with contemporary book history. One of the four volumes from which the drawings were removed, long thought lost after the upheavals of World War II, was identified during this research and is now preserved in the Russian National Library in St Petersburg. This is not merely a footnote: it underscores the potential of manuscript decoration to guide reconstruction, to expose paths of circulation and loss, and even to lead to new discoveries in institutional collections. The

volume not only sheds new light on the decorative practices of Roman cantata manuscripts, but also expands the known repertoire of Stradella's cantatas, offering a new primary source for his music.


Finally, the vignettes offer insight into the intended readerly experience of the manuscripts. Their visual strategies, particularly those employing hidden or compositional initials, invite playful, erudite participation. They are part of a 17th century aesthetic that blurs the boundaries between text and image, reading and seeing, interpretation and amusement. Through subtle cues and emblematic suggestions, they reward the viewer who recognizes not only the letter embedded in a figure or a tree, but also the cityscape, the architectural fragment, or the source print.

In short, the story of these drawings, from creation to removal, from dispersal to rediscovery, testifies to the power of decoration to illuminate music's material past. Their careful analysis sheds light on the entangled histories of manuscript production, graphic culture, collecting, and connoisseurship. They show that even the smallest visual detail can carry with it the weight of artistic intention, historical upheaval, and scholarly revelation.

3. CATALOGUE

This catalogue offers a systematic visual and documentary account of the 32 pen drawings currently held at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (inv. WA1942.49). The aim of this catalogue is twofold: to provide detailed material documentation of the surviving drawings, including dimensions, techniques, inscriptions, and states of preservation, and to offer contextual iconographic and philological interpretations for each image. Each entry presents a reproduction of the drawing, the poetic incipit identified through databases such as CLORI, an English translation, and iconographic commentary that includes relevant parallels with known prints and models by artists such as Della Bella, Callot, Buffagnotti, and Silvestre. When possible, a codicological link to the cantata manuscripts discussed in Chapter 3 is also provided, along with measurements of the lacuna left by the removed vignette, reinforcing the physical correspondence between the fragments and their source volumes. While several of the drawings have long been associated with della Bella, alternative attributions or uncertainties are noted where relevant.

The entries follow the disposition of the vignettes in the Ashmolean album. Readers are encouraged to consult sections 3.4.1 through 3.4.4 of the chapter for parallel descriptions of the manuscripts and for cross-referencing individual vignettes with their corresponding cantatas. This catalogue thus serves both as an independent visual corpus and as a critical supplement to the archival reconstruction undertaken in the main body of the dissertation.

cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.01	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.1 Francesco Bagaglia, "Con tutto, che Amore" [2326]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: ca. 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 79 x 107 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden allusive initial. Venus disarming Cupid. Image link: https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73581</p>		<p>Con tutto che Amore Mi vada stringendo La rocca del core Ancor non mi rendo E col ferro e col foco La mia costanza assale Ma lo strale e la face Io prendo a gioco. Perché giungano i suoi dardi A far piaghe più penose Pria l'affina entro gli sguardi Di due luci dispettose.</p>	<p>Though Love, with all its might, May press upon me tight, The fortress of my heart Still will not yield its part. With sword and flame he tries To shake my steadfast guise, But his torch and dart I treat As trifles at my feet. To sharpen crueler blows, He hones his shafts, I know, Within the scornful gleam Of two eyes that cruelly beam. Yet I fear, alas, That with each fierce new pass Of Love's relentless host, My heart may yield its boast. Though made of tempered steel, Against this boy's bold zeal— This blind and winged sprite— I see him take to flight, To storm my breast again, Unfolding wings in vain. But to keep my soul from falling, Let anger heed its calling, Let wrath arise and stand, To shield my heart and hand. That Love may not obtain The glory of my pain, Let a fire of proud disdain Burn his feathers down again.</p>
			<p>Ma temo, ohime Che al replicato assalto De guerrieri d'Amore Cederà questo core Ancor che sia di smalto Che per esser alato Quel Fanciullo bendato Vedo già che à miei danni Per entrar nel mio sen Nel mio sen dispiega i vanni Ma perché non si renda La fortezza dell'Alma Venga l'ira in soccorso, E il cor difenda.</p> <p>Perché non habbia del mio Sen la palma à quell'alato Nume Un bel foco di sdegno</p>	<p>That with each fierce new pass Of Love's relentless host, My heart may yield its boast. Though made of tempered steel, Against this boy's bold zeal— This blind and winged sprite— I see him take to flight, To storm my breast again, Unfolding wings in vain. But to keep my soul from falling, Let anger heed its calling, Let wrath arise and stand, To shield my heart and hand. That Love may not obtain The glory of my pain, Let a fire of proud disdain Burn his feathers down again.</p>

Arda le piume.

So Love shall not defeat me,
If I let fierce scorn meet me,
And with its boldest power,
Stand guard this final hour.

Perché non m'abbatta la forza
d'Amore
Farò che combatta sdegnoso
rigore.

3.01a

Title: "Tempio della Sibilla in Tivoli", *Antiche. E. Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da. Israel. Silvestro. cum privile Regis excudit Parisiis.*

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

Date: 1645-48


Technique and support:
etching on paper

Size: 75 x 150 mm

Provenance/cat. nr: Augusto Guidini Collection, Iconoteca dell'Accademia di architettura Mendrisio, Università della Svizzera italiana.

Bibliography : Faucheux 3.2



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.02	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.2 Alessandro Stradella , "Sciogliete pur i vostri accenti," [5307]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: ca. 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 77 x 100 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, use of the composition.</p>		<p>Sciogliete pur, sciogliete i vostri accenti, Otiose mie corde, Con melodie concorde Secondate il tenor de miei tormenti, Acciò fra vostri musici respiri Versi più grato il suon de miei sospiri. Su la cetra d'un bel labro Dolci note Amor compose E con voci armoniose Crudo fabro Le mie pene articolò. Fra due conche di rubino Vaghe per le espose il cielo E con turbine di gelo Reo destino Le mie fiamme distillò. In così duro stato Chiedo soccorso al Fato! Ed ei crudel del mio dolor si ride. E destando a miei danni aure homicide, Acciò l'incendio rio l'alma distempre Con armoniche tempre Somministra alimento al foco mio. Con fiati sonori,</p>	<p>Unleash, yes, unleash your tones, Idle strings of mine, With harmonies divine, Echo now the tenor of my moans, So that within your musical sighs, The sound of my grief may sweeter rise. Upon the lyre of a lovely lip, Sweet notes did Love transcribe, And with harmonies that grip, The cruel smith My sorrows he inscribed. Between two ruby shells, Heaven placed its fair pearls, And with a storm of icy swirls, Wicked fate My burning love distills and hurls. In such a harsh condition, I cry to Fate for aid— But cruelly he mocks the pain I've laid. He stirs to harm me winds of deathly breath, And, lest this soul escape its blazing death, He tunes the flames anew, In harmonies untrue,</p>

rhythmic emphasis. The solution reflects a more integrated and subtle approach to initial design, where landscape structure provides a framework for textual reference without interrupting pictorial coherence. There is no direct iconographic connection between the image and the cantata's content.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73118>

Provenance/cat. nr.: D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.05

Bibliography: -

Related work(s): -

Cocenti fragori
M'avventa nel seno
Canora beltà.

That feed the fire with sound and
sigh—

A tanto diletto
L'accesso mio petto
Languisce, vien meno,
Ne trova pietà.
E con deliquio eterno
Nel paradiso altrui prova l'inferno.

With tuneful beauty,
Piercing in its duty,
He strikes my breast anew
With music's cruel delight.

At such sweet torment,
My heart, now fervent,
Faints and loses sight,
And finds no mercy bright.
In endless swoon I dwell,
In others' heaven tasting my own
hell.

3.02a

Title: *Première Suite de Quatre Paysages.*

Attribution: François Collignon, after Stefano Della Bella

Date: ca. 1643

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 112 x 208 mm

Provenance/cat. nr.: GB-Lbma 1871,0513.701

Bibliography: De Vesme 1093




cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.03	GB-Oam WA1942.49.3 Alessandro Stradella, "Il penare per te bella m'è caro," [5309]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: ca. 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 80 x 106 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, use of the composition This vignette reinterprets the left portion of a larger port scene, deliberately omitting the vessels and activity on the right in order to highlight a single vertical mast rising from the fortress atop the promontory. The mast, accentuated by its isolation and framing, draws a clear capital "I", the initial of the text. Though entirely naturalistic and integrated into architecture, its role as a visual cue is emphasised by the compositional decision to exclude surrounding clutter. The eye is led naturally to the top of the hill, where the upright line breaks the skyline with typographic precision. There is no iconographic correspondence between the drawing and the cantata's intensely affective narrative of suffering and desire.		Il penare per te, bella, m'è caro, Pur ch'un giorno sperar possa mercede, Deh ti muova a pietà il mio pianto amaro, Che nascan queste stille in mar di fede. Sol contentati, amata, Dhe bagi genuflesso a piedi tuoi Quella mano adorata, A cui diè l'alabastro i pregi suoi? E se il candore È simbolo di fede, Al candor della man l'alma non cede.	To suffer for you, my beauty, is sweet, So long as I might one day hope for grace. Oh, may my bitter tears your pity meet, These drops born of a faithful soul's embrace. Be content, beloved, If I may kneel and kiss, in humbled art, That hand adored and gloved, Whose alabaster shames all sculptor's part. And if pure white Be faith's true sign above, Then her white hand speaks truer than my love. Phoebus may halt his golden race, The seas may still their endless sway, But cease to love? That has no place— Nor now, nor any day.
			Febo il corso arresterà L'ondeggiar cesserà il mare. Ma ch'io lasci mai d'amare, Non puot'esser, non sarà. La mia Erminda adorerò, Finché havrò spirito nel seno, Nè il mio foco verrà meno, Ma via più l'accenderò. Sotto il cielo latino Non si vidde già mai beltà sì rara E per donna sì cara, Meraviglia non fia, s'arde Fileno.	But cease to love? That has no place— Nor now, nor any day. I shall adore my fair Erminda true, While breath remains within my living breast. My flame shall not grow weak or bid adieu—

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73582>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI

2263,1.08

Bibliography:**Related work(s):**

Se per lei venne meno,
 Se gl'eremi cercò,
 Se pianse, se languì,
 Se per lei delirò,
 Che al fin lecito fia
 Piangere, vaneggiar, perdere i
 sensi
 Per bellezza divina,
 Che merta idolatria, che merta
 incensi.
 Sorte ria, che seguirà?
 Finirà
 Di piagarmi,
 Tormentarmi
 La crudel mia deità?
 Mio destino, e che farò?
 Viverò,
 Fiera sorte,
 Dammi morte,
 Perché almen non penerò.
 Destinati nel baratro infernale
 Furon quei, che nel sen gl'odij
 covaro.
 Ivi gl'empj ne andaro
 Giustamente puniti.
 Ma la crudele Erinda
 Fa provar un inferno
 Al misero Fileno
 E vuol, ch'in seno
 Sentà un incendio eterno,

*It ever grows, unrested and
 unblest.
 Neath Latin skies, no fairer sight
 was seen;
 And for a lady so divine,
 It is no wonder that Fileno burns,
 If for her he lost all reason,
 Sought the wilderness alone,
 Wept, and wandered senseless
 seasons.
 Let it be no sin
 To mourn, to rave, to lose the
 mind entire,
 For such divine a beauty,
 Deserving of incense and of
 sacred fire.
 Cruel fate, what shall you do?
 Will you
 At last relent
 And end the torment
 Dealt by my pitiless deity?
 O my destiny—what shall I
 embrace?
 Shall I live
 With this fierce fate?
 Then let me die—
 For only thus shall pain abate.
 To the depths of Hell were cast
 the damned,
 Those who nursed hatred deep
 within their chest;*

E per pena maggior non vuol, che
mora.
Tal castigo le dà, perché l'adora.

There, the impious were rightly
judged and banned,
Their endless torment fit and just
redress.

Yet cruel Erminda, with a harsher
hand,

Inflicts a hell on poor Fileno's soul.
She bids a fire within my spirit
stand, / But bars me from death's
consoling goal.

The greater punishment she thus
bestows:

To live, and burn, because he
loves her so.

3.03a

Title: *Divers Paysages.*

Attribution: Stefano Della Bella;
publisher: Henriët Israël

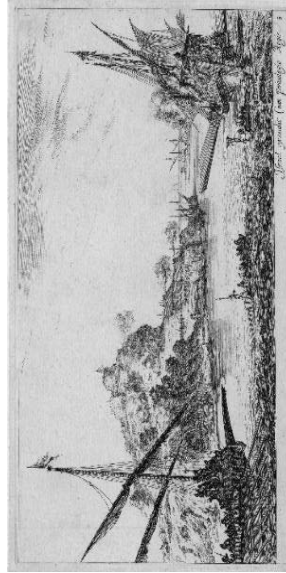
Date: ca. 1643


Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 115 x 255 mm

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbma
1871,0513.716

Bibliography: De Vesme 764



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.04	GB-Oam WA1942.49.4		<p>Io che lasciato fui Piu' che dà gli occhi altrui, Dal mio Fato crudele in abbandono, Vengo à provar se giova in strana forma, E nova cangiar me stesso E pur l'istesso io sono Filli, tu mi lasciasti, Et io dovei partir, Mà non ho per fuggir Petto, che basti.</p> <p>Il rimedio d'Amor È scordarsi d'amar, Mà l'istesso dolor Che mi guida ad'amar F'ache l'anima mia Sol pensa à Filli Al suo rimedio oblia.</p> <p>Il non pensare à te Curar mi può solo Mà la tradita fe in sasso mi cangiò E mentre lete invoco Corre lete à mio danno Onde di foco.</p> <p>Mà dimmi empia e rubella Per esser infedele</p>	<p><i>I, who was left behind More than by any eyes of others, / By cruel Fate abandoned and denied, Now come to test if change of form brings peace, To change myself in some strange guise— And yet, I am the same beneath disguise. / Phyllis, you left me, And I should too depart, But I have not the strength, No heart stout enough to start. // The remedy for love Is to forget we ever loved at all— / But the very same pain That leads me to recall Keeps my soul Fixed on Phyllis still, And makes me forget love's cure and will. // To not think of you Alone might be the way— But betrayed faith Has turned me into stone, And while I call on Lethe's sway, Lethe flows against me, Bringing fire, not oblivion, in its play. // But tell me, cruel and defiant one: To be unfaithful,</i></p>
	<p>Alessandro Stradella, "Io che lasciato fui" [t. Giovanni Filippo Apolloni], [4140]</p> <p>Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p> <p>Date: ca. 1690</p> <p>Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper</p> <p>Size: 80 x 104 mm</p> <p>Description/Remarks: Hidden, use of the composition This drawing depicts several ships in the midst of a storm. The central is more detailed and prominent. Its sails torn and hull tilted, surrounded by crashing waves and the other vessels in the distance. The composition centres on a vertical mast, which rises sharply from the deck and cuts the sky in a stark upward motion, visually echoing a capital "I". The scene is markedly less concerned with topographic fidelity than with emotive composition. The storm functions as a visual topos of disorientation and turmoil, mirroring the cantata's conflicting sentiments of love, abandonment, and the futility of escape. The initial is not disguised but suggested through compositional</p>			

alignment: the mast anchors the page graphically and textually, reinforcing the opening word of the poem ("Io"). This is a clear case of symbolic and graphic convergence, in which the image does not illustrate but amplifies the affective register of the cantata.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73583>

Provenance/cat. nr.: GB-Lbl

Acc.24311.12

Bibliography:

Related work(s):


Pensi d'esser più bella Il vanto di crudele Morto mi vuoi cresce Forse ornament à l lumi tuoi? Così di gloria cede Nel bel seno di Filii Lo sdegno all'ira Alla bugia la fede? Ò mille volte, e mille Maledetto quel di ch'al tuo sembiante Fissai lo sguardo à tante Prove, e tante per falsa ti ravvigo, Ogni voce, ogni moto, Il guardo, il riso, sembra pace et è Guerra È Nembo, e par sereno, e quanto in te Si serra è tutta inquità Tutto è veleno resta perfida Quella pace à goder, Con cui mi lasci. Lasso mà che m'arresta, Chi mi lega le piante Della ragione à scorno. Ah', ch'in un solo istante Parto, e resto, amo, oblio, M'involo, e torno. Se giovasse il fuggir Come pronto, e spedito Mi partirei da te per non morir, Mà se per ogni lito	Do you think it makes you fairer? / Does the pride of cruelty Raise your dead lover As adornment to your eyes' cold glare? Thus glory yields In Phyllis' lovely breast To scorn and wrath, And truth gives way to falsehood's jest. // Oh, a thousand times, and more, / Cursed be the day I set My gaze upon your traitorous silhouette. Through proof on proof, I now confess— / Every word, each motion, / Your glance, your smile— seem peace, and yet are war, / A storm that masks itself as calm— / All in you is unrest, All is poison. False heart, You keep the peace for your delight / With which you leave me torn apart. // Alas, what holds me still? / What binds my feet / In shame, by reason fettered? / Ah! In but a single breath / I go—and yet remain, I love and I forget, I flee—and turn again. // If fleeing helped, / How swiftly would I fly from you, / So not to die. / But if on every shore I carry with me all my pain,
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Porto meco il mio mal resta cor
mio
Tanto abbrugia l'ardor quanto
l'oblio.
Lo scordarsi del mal il pianto non
asciuga
Ne si vince il dolor quando è fatal
Che val dunque la fuga
Che mi giova il partir
Per vendicarmi tento peno
ad'amar
Tanto à scordarmi.

Then, dearest heart,
Both burning love and cold
forgetting / Seem equally in vain.
// To forget such sorrow
Dries no tear, nor dulls the smart—
/ One cannot overcome true grief
/ When it is written in the heart. /
What good, then, is fleeing? /
What help is there in parting
ways? / To seek revenge I try— /
But loving still, I only weep / And
cannot make myself forget / No
matter how I grieve or deeply cry.



- 3.04a** **Title:** "Baviere ordinaire qui passe de Douvre a Calais" *Vues de Ports de Mer.*
Attribution: Stefano della Bella
Date: 1647
Technique and support:
 Etching on paper
Size: 90 x 139 mm
Provenance/cat. nr: US-NYmm
 2018.839.132
Bibliography: De Vesme 797

cat.	Inventory nr.; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.05	<p data-bbox="264 1688 292 1944">GB-Oam WA1942.49.5</p> <p data-bbox="300 1514 363 1944">Alessandro Stradella, "Vincesti o ciel." [5306.]</p> <p data-bbox="371 1514 435 1944">Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p> <p data-bbox="443 1823 470 1944">Date: 1690</p> <p data-bbox="478 1514 574 1944">Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 72 x 92 mm</p> <p data-bbox="582 1514 965 1944">Description/Remarks: Hidden, use of the composition This vignette adapts a composition by Stefano della Bella, omitting the original flock of sheep and focusing instead on a solitary bifurcated tree, placed almost exactly at the centre of the image. Its trunk leans sharply left, while the twin branches arch outward and upward, forming the unmistakable profile of a capital "V." The initial is not formed by transformation or disguise, but by compositional emphasis: the tree is both natural and typographic, its placement guiding the viewer's eye to a shape that echoes the incipit. The surrounding landscape remains calm and spacious, offering no narrative content, but supporting the structure of the letter as a graphic anchor. There is no iconographic correlation between the drawing and the cantata's</p>		<p data-bbox="300 595 327 869">Vincesti, ò ciel, vincesti!</p> <p data-bbox="335 663 362 869">I tuoi raggi funesti</p> <p data-bbox="370 551 434 869">Hanno del petto mio più fine tempre.</p> <p data-bbox="442 506 505 869">Vincesti, ò ciel, vincesti al fin per sempre!</p> <p data-bbox="545 584 572 869">Se di morte adopri l'armi,</p> <p data-bbox="580 551 608 869">Scudo invano il seno oppone</p> <p data-bbox="616 584 643 869">E non san gli stoici carmi</p> <p data-bbox="651 584 678 869">Incantar l'elmo a ragione.</p> <p data-bbox="718 640 745 869">Ma se forbice eterna</p> <p data-bbox="753 517 780 869">Con falce alterna su la tela irriti</p> <p data-bbox="788 640 815 869">De miei spirti arditi,</p> <p data-bbox="823 595 850 869">Dimmi, con qual oggetto</p> <p data-bbox="858 640 885 869">Contro filo indiretto</p> <p data-bbox="893 663 920 869">Il taglio rivolgesti?</p> <p data-bbox="928 506 956 869">Tu Rosina uccidesti, ò traditore!</p> <p data-bbox="963 629 991 869">Perché di cruci nuovi</p> <p data-bbox="999 663 1026 869">L'inventato dolore</p> <p data-bbox="1034 506 1098 869">Ne g'altrui sensi ogni mio senso prova?</p> <p data-bbox="1137 707 1165 869">Così m'atterra</p> <p data-bbox="1173 730 1200 869">Del fato vile</p> <p data-bbox="1208 730 1235 869">Obliquo stile</p> <p data-bbox="1243 696 1270 869">Di torta guerra.</p> <p data-bbox="1278 640 1305 869">La mina, ch'ei tenta,</p> <p data-bbox="1313 629 1340 869">Non s'apre al mio piè,</p> <p data-bbox="1348 618 1375 869">Gli strali, che avventa,</p>	<p data-bbox="300 125 363 461">You have won, oh heavens, you have won!</p> <p data-bbox="371 170 467 461">Your fatal rays have struck A breast of finest steel and made it yield.</p> <p data-bbox="475 125 539 461">You have won, oh heavens, and forever sealed!</p> <p data-bbox="579 103 675 461">If death be your weapon's might, Then vain the shielded chest must be, And stoic charms in lofty rite Cannot enchant the helm of Reason's plea.</p> <p data-bbox="826 170 922 461">But if your eternal shears, With alternating scythe, provoke the threads Of my bold and daring breath, Tell me—against what image, On which fated line, Did you direct your cut and mark the death?</p> <p data-bbox="1106 136 1133 461">You slew Rosina, oh betrayer!</p> <p data-bbox="1141 170 1168 461">Why then must I now bear The burden of new woes Invented to make others' sorrow mine to wear?</p> <p data-bbox="1321 215 1385 461">Thus I am struck down By vile fate's crooked art,</p>

violent rhetorical force, which revolves around defiance, divine betrayal, and emotional annihilation.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73584>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.04

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Non mirano a me.	By slanted wars That break the soul, not part. The mine he lays Opens not beneath my feet— The darts he flings Are not for me to meet.
Dall'altrui sen carnefice saetta Con eco ostile entro il mio cor riflette. Vincesti, ò ciel, vincesti A l'indefesso sdegno Dar possa omai dovresti? No, no, riversa pure Dell'alma mia l'instatiabil sdegno Tutto l'arco immortal delle sventure.	But from another's breast, The murderous shaft is drawn, And echoes back within my own With vengeance cruelly pressed. You have won, oh heavens, you have won— / But tell me now, Should endless scorn not find its power somehow?
E se tu speculi Forme d'offendere, Miei amici in secoli Studia a distendere, Che punto gemere Già mai saprò E gli astri premere Saggio ardirò.	No, no—then let it pour / From my insatiable soul, / This storm of wrath forevermore / Across fate's immortal scroll.
Ma il calcarli sin hor vergine impresa Soffre il contrasto il ciel non già l'offesa.	And if you seek / New shapes to strike and sting, / Then stretch across the ages / The torment of my friends' becoming. / For I shall never weep, / Nor tremble at your fire— / I shall press upon the stars With measured, wise desire.
	But to tread the stars, a path still chaste, Stirs heaven's resistance— But never heaven's taste for hate.

3.05a

Title: "Première Suite de Quatre
Paysages."

Attribution: François Collignon, after
Stefano Della Bella

Date: ca. 1643

Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 101 x 203 mm

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbma X.5.120
1643

Bibliography: De Vesme 1094




cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.06	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.6 Alessandro Stradella, "Già nell'Indo emisfero", [5313] Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p>		<p>Già nell'indo emisfero Con luminoso aspetto L'alba era uscita a ristorare Il mondo e nel cimero tetto Adagiato dall'ombra il Popol nero Sopiva i sensi in dolce oblio profondo. Quando per dare all'aure Tributo di sospiri Così espose Filandro i suoi martiri:</p>	<p>Already in the Indian hemisphere, With radiant gaze, Dawn had emerged to bring relief To the weary world; and in the vaulted lair Where shadowed silence lay, the dusky race Had lulled their senses in sweet, deep forgetfulness. Then, to offer sighs unto the winds, Thus did Filandro voice The anguish of his soul:</p>
	<p>Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 72 x 92 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, figurative, antropomorphic This small riverside scene depicts a tranquil stretch of the Arno river flanked by rustic buildings and the distant cathedral of S. Maria del Fiore. A solitary boat glides through the centre of the image, its mast and sail forming the capital letter "G". The scene, at first glance, appears to be a generic pastoral backdrop. The illusion is subtle and demands effort from the viewer. It is not an ornamental caprice, but a conceptual device: the image both conceals and reveals delaying legibility in a manner perfectly in tune with the affective aesthetics of the cantata. The boat becomes more than scenic punctuation it is a visual cipher, a metaphorical vessel adrift in emotional waters.</p>	<p>Fra le schiere de g'lestinti Infelice più di me Dimmi, o ciel, se mai sorti. Che non satio Dello stratio, Nè contento Del tormento Mi costringi notte e di In un mar d'acerbi pianti A sommerger la mia fe.</p>	<p>Among the hosts of the departed, Was there ever one more cursed than I? Tell me, O heavens, Unsated still With the wreckage, Unfulfilled By suffering still, You drive me, night and day, To drown my faith In seas of bitter weeping and dismay.</p>	
			<p>Se con tempre si fiere Le sfere Piovon sempre a miei danni G'affanni. Di rigor Di lor empio tenor Saprà l'alma Sottrar la sua salma.</p>	<p>If with such cruel tempers The spheres Rain down afflictions On my years,</p>

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73585>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI
2263,1.11

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

From their harsh, unholy laws

Shall my soul

Free its frame from mortal thrall.

*For to flee the wrath of an angry
sky,*

*Even despair may find the
strength to try.*

*Che a fuggir il furor d'un cielo
irato*

*Ha bastante speranza un
disperato.*

3.06a

Title: dedication plate of a set of 12 landscapes.

Attribution: Ercole Bazzicaluva

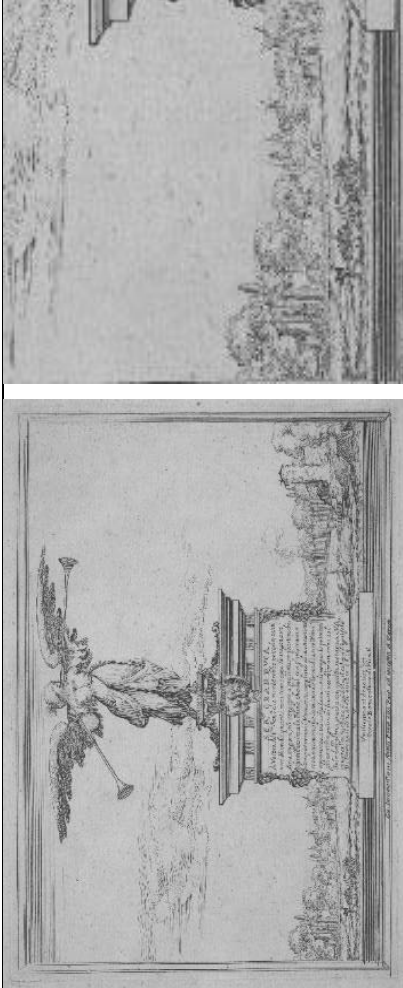
Date: 1638

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 290 x 395 mm

Provenance/cat. nr: US-Wnga 1990.3.1

Bibliography: -



cat.

Inventory nr; references;
descriptions

3.07 GB-Oam WA1942.49.7

Alessandro Stradella, "Sopra tutte l'altre belle," [5304]

Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella

Date: 1690

Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper

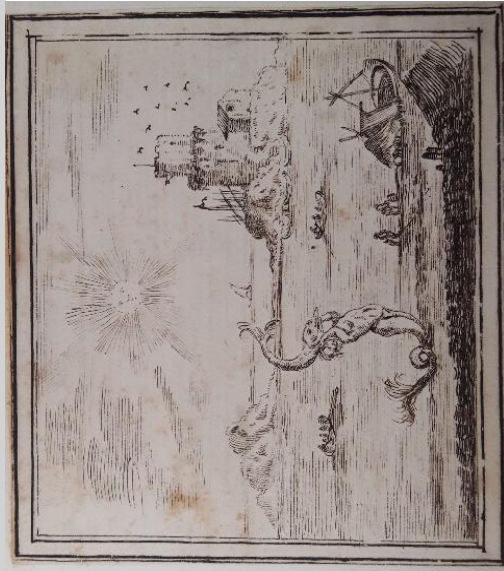
Size: 80 x 89 mm

Description/Remarks:

Hidden, anthropomorphic, zoomorphic
A dramatic seascape unfolds under a radiant sun, with fishing boats and rocky islands animating the central bay. A round fortress stands on the distant promontory. In the foreground, a merman emerges from the water. With arms raised above its head, it hoists the body of a second fish, the two tails curving together into a near-perfect "S".

This serpentine composition is not incidental. As in other examples within the manuscript, and consistent with the figurative initials found in Filippo Juvarra's designs (see Chapter 2) the "S" is formed entirely through the animation of animal and hybrid bodies. The effect is both whimsical and rhetorical: a coded initial shaped by motion, flesh, and marine invention.

images



text

translation

Sopra tutte l'altre belle
Voi più bella e vaga sete,
Nel bel volto il sole havete,
G'occhi sembrano due stelle.

Above all other beauties fair,
You shine with charm beyond
compare;
Within your face the sun does
glow,

Ma vi s'opone in voi solo una
cosa:
Che più che bella sete assai
ritrosa.

Your eyes like stars in night do
show.

But still, in you one flaw remains:
More than your beauty—your
disdain.

La bellezza senza amore
Mai nel sen gioie produce
Ella è un sol, che non ha luce,
Ella è un alma senza core.

Beauty without love brings no
delight,

It stirs no joy within the heart;
It is a sun that lacks all light,
A soul from which love stands
apart.

Così appunto, ben mio, in voi
succede:
Poco amor, gran beltà e senza
fede.

And so, my dear, in you I find:
Much beauty, little love, no heart
inclined.

Troppo barbara empietà
Mai deporre i suoi rigori
Trionfar dell'alme e i cori
Far morir con la beltà.

Too cruel is such barbarity—

To never yield your stern control,
To conquer hearts in vanity,
And with beauty, break the soul.

Siate crudele pur, che fate assai:
Far penar gl'altri e voi non gioir
mai.

Then be as cruel as you will—
You make all others suffer, yet
feel no thrill.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73630>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI
2263,1.02

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

3.07a

Title: *Divers embarquements.*

Attribution: Stefano Della Bella,
publisher: Giovanni Giacomo de Rossi

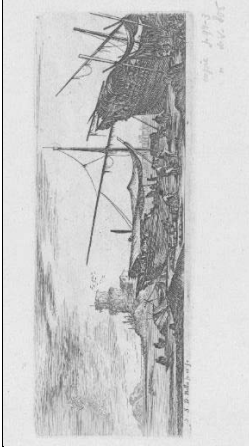
Date: 1620-64


Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 62 x 163 mm

Provenance/cat. nr: NL-Arrl RP-P-
1904-1258 (detail)

Bibliography: De Vesme 805



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation	
3.08	GB-Oam WA1942.49.8	Alessandro Stradella, "Fermatevi, o bei lumi."		Fermatevi, ò bei lumi, Non mi guardate più. Fatto esangue Per voi iangue Il mio core, Che d'Amore È ridotto in servitù.	Hold, oh lovely lights, Look on me no more. Already bloodless, For you languishes My heart— Made a slave To Love's burning lore.
	Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella		Fuggitemi, ò bei lumi, Non mi guardate, nò. Se mirate, M'impiegate, Ch'ogni sguardo Fassi un dardo, Ond'ogn'or trafitto io vò.	Flee from me, oh lovely lights, No more your gaze bestow. If you glance, You wound— Each look becomes a dart, And pierced at every moment I must go.	
	Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 72 x 91 mm		È d'un cor sventurato Troppo misera sorte, Onde gl'altri han la vita, io n'ho la morte.	Such is the fate, too cruel, Of an unlucky heart: Where others find life, I find only death in part.	
	Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic A rustic building, with a group of figures at its base and a single man holding a horizontal staff across his shoulders.		Filli, che ne begl'occhi Tutti del cielo ha trasportato i rai, Sa di tutto l'Inferno In un sol guardo epilogare i rai, Onde s'avvien, che poi O per ire, o per vezzo ella mi miri, Mi costa un guardo sol mille martiri. Tal lieto di mie pene	Phyllis, in whose eyes All the rays of heaven shine bright, Knows how to gather All of Hell's torments in a single sight. Thus, if she gazes at me— Be it anger or sweet play— One glance alone Costs me a thousand pains in a day.	

letterform, rather than designing one, reflects a minimalist and economical strategy of visual paratext.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73631>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Add.24311.03

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Con tirannico riso hor gode

Amore,

Che con le gioie ancor s'affligge
un core.

Lungi dal mio seno

Tuo veleno, ò nudo Arciero.

Se scherzi, tu sferzi,

Se alletti, saetti,

Se ridi, m'uccidi,

E se Amico ti fai, sei più severo.

Fugga dal mio core

Tuo rigore, ò cieco Infante.

Del vago lo m'appago,

Ma presto funesto

lo sento un tormento,

Che all'instabil piacer cangia
sembiante.

Ma folle, e che vaneggio?

D'Amor così discorro

Misero e non m'aveggio

In quei deliri, in qual error
trascorro?

Amor, deh', mi perdona!

Errai, ma dell'error fu mio

l'affanno,

Io me stesso condanno,

Che per Filli il mio bene

Mi son dolci i dolor, care le pene.

Crescano pur a mille a mille i
guai,

Che s'unito ad un guardo

Now Love, delighted

With my endless sorrow,

Laughs tyrannically,

Finding joy in my borrowed
morrow.

Far from my breast,

Your venom fly, oh naked Archer!

If you jest, you lash;

If you charm, you strike;

If you smile, you slay;

And if you feign friendship, you

are crueller still today.

Flee from my heart,

Your harshness, oh blind Boy!

In beauty I find delight—

Yet swiftly, too swiftly,

Torment arises

And changes pleasure into

fleeting fright.

But—foolish me!—what madness
is this?

To speak thus against Love,

Wretched and unaware

Of the delirium, the error I move
within!

Love, ah, forgive me!

I strayed—but the sorrow was all

mine,

And I blame myself alone.

Balenerammì un riso,
Sarà tosto il mio Inferno un
Paradiso.

*For because of Phyllis, my sweet
treasure,
Even pain is dear, and wounds are
pleasure.*

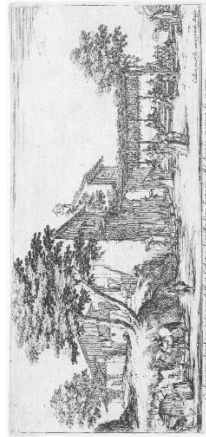
Luci vezzose,
Non mi fuggite!
Sia di morte terribile il gelo,
Ch'il mio Amore temerlo non sa,
E darà propitio il cielo,
Se con voci sol m'uccide
Omicide, a me gradite.

*Let sorrow multiply by thousands
more—
For if with a glance
She should grant me a smile,
My Hell would turn at once into
Paradise.*

Non mi fuggite,
Luci vezzose!
Se d'Amore propitia la sorte
Per voi sole morire mi fa,
Mi sarà vital' la morte,
Che per causa così bella
La mia stella a me dispose.

*Charming eyes,
Do not flee!
Though death's terrible chill
Might seize me still,
My Love shall not fear,
And Heaven shall bless the kill—
If with voices alone
You murder me, so sweetly known.*

*Do not flee,
Charming eyes!
If by Love's favor
You alone bring me death,
Then death shall be life anew—
For so lovely a cause,
My star has destined me to you.*



3.08a **Title:** "La dernière planche gravée par
deffunt Callot, a laquelle l'eau forte n'a
esté donée quapres sa mort."

Attribution: Jacques Callot

Date: 1636


Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 80 x 165 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: US-Wnga
57.650.322

Bibliography: Lieure 1428

Size: 80 x 165 mm

cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.09	GB-Oam WA1942.49.9		<p>Tra l'ombre più secrete, Quando l'anima già stanca Ogni fascino mortal depone in Lete L'amoroso desio, che in me non dorme, Riconduce al pensier l'amiche forme. Ma quel fugace rio, Che le fiorite sponde Lava ed al corso intanto affretta l'onde del ben, per cui mi struggo, L'oggetto immaginato adoro e fuggo.</p>	<p><i>In the deepest shade of night, When the weary soul at last Lays down all mortal weight in Lethes stream, The longing born of love— unbound by sleep— Leads back into my thoughts those forms I cherish deep. But that fleeting stream, Which laves the flowery shore And hastens every wave along its gleam, Of the good I crave and pine for, Shows me the imagined form—I worship, and I flee it evermore.</i></p>
	<p>Anonymous [RISM: Alessandro Scarlatti], "Tra l'ombra più secrete" [5309]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 77 x 101 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden allusive initial A pastoral riverside scene, densely populated and rendered with a delicate atmospheric tone. Compared to the print, the drawing features several added elements: more bathers scattered across the foreground and a particularly notable figure on the left who, half-submerged, points toward the river. On the far left, a thick cluster of bushes and vegetation casts a deep shadow, creating a visual pocket of secrecy the "ombra più secrete" [=most secret shadow] evoked in the cantata's opening line. This setting, though seemingly tranquil, becomes charged with meaning when read alongside the text. The speaker describes how, in the most private, shadowed moments, amorous desire reawakens, stirred by memory and</p>		<p>Son pur belle d'un aspe le spoglie, Quando al sole fa pompa del seno. Ma raffreni lo sguardo le voglie, Che quell'oro È un tesoro, In cui splende più ricco il veleno. Perché grato è il piacer, ti danna a morte, E se il cor n'ha tormento, La gloria in quel dolor trova alimento; Là nell'indica sabbia Prenda l'onda bramata entro il cimiero</p>	<p><i>Even the serpent's skin appears so fair, When it bares its breast to the glowing sun. Yet let not gazes run unware, For that gold— Though bright to behold— Holds poison richer than any won. For though pleasure be sweet, it condemns you to die, And if the heart is wracked with pain, In that very grief, glory feeds again.</i></p>

imagination. The river, here central both visually and thematically, functions as a metaphor for time, longing, and the impossibility of possession. The vegetation on the left forms a hidden "T" shape, possibly alluding to the cantata's opening word, though the letter is not explicitly drawn. The erotic gaze is thematised and then subverted in the poetic text. What begins as sensual attraction is reframed through moral caution and classical exempla: a parched warrior, a poisonous treasure, a deceptive celestial vapour. The bather who points, a gesture seemingly innocent, may thus be read as a warning figure, or an embodiment of that desio d'Amor [=desire of Love] which "rides and plays" but ultimately "kills its mother."

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73632>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.07

Bibliography:

Related work(s): 3.15

Sitibondo guerriero,
 Ma n'asperga l'arene e non le labbia,
 Poi che all'esempio di virtù si rara
 Mille schiere più liete
 Nell'arsura di lui spengon la sete.
 Mira il prato, il suo vapore
 Farsi stella in ciel sereno.
 Ma quel raggio, che l'alletta,
 Con adultero splendore
 Poi dal ciel torna saetta
 Per ferire il patrio seno.
 Figlio d'alma gentile
 È quel desio d'Amor, che scherza
 e ride,
 Ma se poi vuol goder, la madre
 uccide.

*There, on Indian sands,
 May the wave so long desired
 strike the crest
 Of a parched warrior's helm in his
 quest—
 Yet wet only the dust, not his lips,
 For through such rare and
 virtuous thirst,
 A thousand joyful ranks
 Shall quench their own by his
 example first.
 See the meadow—its breath,
 Rising like stars in the calm of the
 skies.
 But that very beam which tempts
 with golden grace,
 With adulterous light returns
 To wound its native place.
 A child of noble soul
 Is that love-born desire which
 plays and laughs in glee,
 But when it seeks to feast—
 It slays its mother mercilessly.*

3.09a

Title: "Ponte Laudentano vicina
Sant'Agnessa," Antiche. E. Moderne.
Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da.
Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile Regis
excudit Parisiis.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

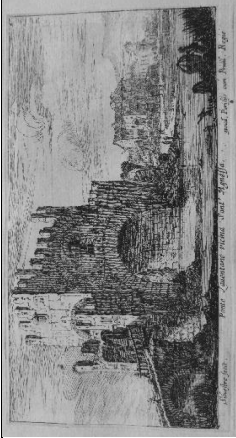
Date: 1645-48

Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 70 x 150 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: I-Ricg S-FC67065

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.8



cat.

Inventory nr; references; descriptions

3.10 GB-Oam WA1942.49.10

Giovanni Lorenzo Lullier, "Intorno à picciol lume," [4132]

Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella

Date: 1690

Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper

Size: 75 x 95 mm

Description/Remarks:

Allusive vignette

This vignette breaks from the landscape norm by presenting a richly furnished interior scene, a long coffered hall decorated with grotesque motifs, chandeliers, and a perspective that leads the viewer's eye towards a door at the back. To the left, in the foreground, a small moth hovers near a candle placed on a table. A dog runs from right to left, in the direction of the seated figure behind the table. Unlike other vignettes in the album, this image does not derive from a known print, but it is heavily theatrical in composition and inspired by the content of the cantata's text. The visual grammar, forced perspective, axial symmetry, decoration of walls and ceiling, strongly evokes 17th-century stage design, particularly the kinds of illusionistic scenes created in

images



text

translation

Intorno a picciol lume,
Ch'emulava l'ardor de miei
sospiri,
Con audaci deliri
Farfalletta gentil battea le piume.
E mentre accesa amante
Col suo volo costante
Tesseva in faccia all'adorato
incendio
Amorose carole,
Parea Clitia volante in faccia al
sole.

Ma non contenta a pieno,
Di contemplar col ciglio
Del vicin foco il lucido periglio
Notturna fenicetta
Nel rogo amato a incenerir
s'affretta.
E pria d'arder in grembo al suo
bel foco
Con sussurro già roco,
Ch'in ossequio d'Amor sul labro
ordi,
Rimproverò le mie follie così:

Bella fiamma, che pur sei
Calamita del mio volo,
Se ti miro, ogn'hor consolo
Cò tuoi lampi i lumi miei.

Sì, sì, fiamme mie belle,

Around a little flame,
That rivaled the heat of my sighs,
With bold and frenzied flight
A gentle butterfly beat her wings
in game.
And as, in burning love,
With tireless arcs she wove
In front of her adored and blazing
pyre
A dance of love in air,
She seemed a flying Clytie before
the sun's fire.

But not content to gaze
Upon the gleaming danger
Of the flame's nearness with
enchanted eyes,
The night's small phoenix, bright
and tender,
Hurried to burn in the fire she did
prize.
And just before she vanished
In her beloved fire's embrace,
With voice already faint—
In honor of Love, her final breath
Reproached my folly thus in
death:

"Lovely flame, you are to me
The magnet of my flight,
And when I see you, your light

Bologna and Rome. The closest visual affinity is a stage design by Carlo Antonio Buffagnotti (1660-1717), whose sets often depicted long ceremonial halls, palaces, or salons, composed with scenographic depth and decorative exaggeration.

This setting is perfectly matched to the cantata it introduces, a lyrical meditation on desire and self-destruction, voiced through the allegory of a moth [=farfallotta] fatally drawn to a flame. The moth, drawn to the "bel foco" of beauty, dances, idolises, and finally burns itself to ash. The cantata stages a moralised erotic trajectory, from desire, through delight, to excess and annihilation. And the vignette answers this trajectory by dramatizing the space of seduction and combustion.

Here, the candle is literal and symbolic. It is placed at the centre of a courtly room. The coffered ceiling might allude to nobility or elevation, while the grotesques that climb the walls allude to the creeping, entangling nature of desire. The perspective pulls the viewer into the scene, mimicking the moth's fatal approach.

This allusive vignette thus becomes a miniature stage for the drama of erotic ruin.

Pur v'amo e vi desio

Benché siete facelle al morir mio.

Ah, che dirò morendo

De vostri ardori

Idolatrando il lume?

Purche ne godan gli occhi, ardon le piume.

La farfalla così,

Che al rogo al fin volò

Nella fiamma, ch'amo, s'incenerì.

Fuggi amante, deh fuggi

Quel lampo di beltà, che t'innamora.

Muor nel periglio, chi il periglio

adora.

Brings comfort to my sight.

Yes, yes—my beautiful flames,

I love you and desire you,

Though you are the torches of my funeral too.

Ah, what shall I say while dying

Of your devouring blaze,

As I worship your light until the end of days?

So long as my eyes may take their fill,

Let my wings burn—I'll love you

still."

Thus the butterfly,

Who flew at last into the flame,

Was turned to ash by the fire she claimed.

Flee, lover—ah, flee!

That beam of beauty that inflames thy core—

He dies in danger

Who worships danger evermore.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73119>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Add.24311.04

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

3.10a

Title: (above) "Sala Reggia" (below)
 "Stanza d'Anagilde in Campagna." *La
 forza della virtù: drama per musica da
 rappresentarsi nel Teatro Malvezzi
 l'anno M.DC.XCIV. / di Domenico David;
 dedicato all'eminentissimo, e
 reverendissimo sig. cardinale Marcello
 Durazzo legato di Bologna.*

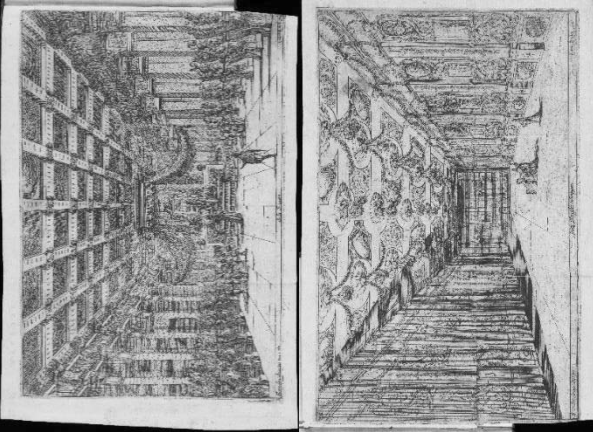
Attribution: Carlo Antonio Buffagnotti
Date: 1694

Technique and support: etching on
 paper

Size: ??

Provenance/cat. Nr: US-NH 2021210

Bibliography: Sartori 1991 10875



cat.

Inventory nr; references; descriptions

3.11 GB-Oam WA1942.49.11

Alessandro Stradella, "Ferma il corso e torna al Lido" «L'Arianna»

Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella

Date: 1690

Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper

Size: 73 x 92 mm

Description/Remarks:

Hidden, anthropomorphic

This drawing derives from a formal French garden scene originally published in a print by Moncornet but focuses only on the central portion of the composition, isolating a group of figures near the path. A man holding an open parasol gestures with his right arm, which forms a clean diagonal against the vertical axis of his body and accessory.

Together, the pose and object produce a distinct capital "F", legible by its alignment and silhouetting. The result is not a concealed or symbolic initial, but one embedded through figural configuration: a moment of gesture caught and fixed into letterform.

While the garden layout and fountain hold no narrative relationship to the cantata's intensely emotional tone, centred on betrayal, vengeance, and

text

Ferma il corso e torna al lido,
né fuggir più dal mio seno;
se mirar non puoi l'aspetto con
diletto,
il mio duolo ascolta almeno,
che fra cifre d'argento
leggerai nel mio pianto il tuo
contento.

Al mio costante amore,
alla mia fedeltà,
perfido traditore,
questo premio si dà?

Così la fede osservi
al giorno d'Imeneo?
E tant'odio conservi
contro Arianna tua, crudo Teseo,
che, sprezzata, tradita,
vilipesa, schernita,
abbandonata in solitaria riva,
lasci l'anima mia d'anima priva?

In questa sponda infida,
esule dal suo regno,
senza cor, senza guida,
esposta all'altrui sdegno,
lasci colei che libertà ti diè
e con furtivo piè,
del mio rapito onor porti il tesoro
entro i frutti del mar toro?

On this treacherous strand,
an exile from her kingdom,
without heart, without guide,
exposed to others' wrath,
you leave the one who gave you
liberty.

translation

Halt your course and return to the
shore;

flee no more from my breast.
If you cannot gaze with delight

upon my face,

then at least listen to my sorrow,
for within my tears, woven in
silver,
you shall read your own joy.

To my steadfast love,
to my loyalty—
faithless betrayer—

is this the reward you give?
Is this how you honor your vow
on the day of Hymen?

And do you preserve such hatred
against your Ariadne, cruel
Theseus,
that, scorned, betrayed,
dishonored, mocked,
you abandon me on this lonely
shore,
leaving my soul bereft of soul?

On this treacherous strand,
an exile from her kingdom,
without heart, without guide,
exposed to others' wrath,
you leave the one who gave you
liberty.



eventual clemency, the image serves as graphic anchor, marking the incipit with a visual rhythm. The rigid geometry of the parterre contrasts with the inner disorder voiced in the text, creating a quiet dissonance between order and emotional implosion.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73633>

Provenance/cat. nr: Olim D-Hs ND VI 2263, ll.03

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

La mia vita immersa resta,
e con flebile tempesta
fa naufragio funebre il mio
decoro,
ed io, tra tanti affanni ogn'or più
involta,
di Dio non fo, dell'Idol mio, altra
giostra.

E invendicata in questo suol
m'assido:
ferma il cor e torna al lido.

Vincerò di tua fierezza
l'implacabile rigor,
e soggetta al mio furor
d'un crudel sarà l'asprezza.
E così, con equal sorte,
mentre cerchi, o fellon, darmi la
morte,

del mio sdegno mortal fra' lacci
avvinto,
lo scempio pagherai d'un core
estinto.

In grembo all'Erebo,
con face stigia,
t'aggirerò dal petto barbaro,
con forza orribile strage farò.

Ah no!
Sì fieri oltraggi contro il mio
amato sol
tolgan le stelle,

and with stealthy steps
stole the treasure of my stolen
honor
from the fruits of the sea-born
bull.

My life remains submerged,
and with a feeble storm
my honor shipwrecks in a funeral
wreck;

and amid so many anguishes,
ever deeper enmeshed,
I dare not accuse God,
but only my idol.

And unavenged upon this shore I
sit:
halt your heart and return to the
shore.

I shall conquer the implacable
rigor
of your pride,
and subjected to my fury
shall be the harshness of a cruel
soul.

Thus, with equal fate,
while you, O traitor, seek to bring
me death,
caught within the mortal snares of
my scorn,

you shall pay for it
with the ruin of your extinguished
heart.

né mie brame ribelle offendan mai della tua luce i raggi.	<i>Into Erebus's womb, with a Stygian torch, I shall hurl you; from your barbarous breast, with dreadful force, I shall wreak bloody havoc.</i>
Basterà dell'error per giusta emenda che a me, pentito, o traditor, ti renda.	<i>Ah no! May the stars, with pity, keep such fierce outrage from harming my beloved sun, nor may my rebellious desires ever tarnish the rays of your light.</i>
In un mar d'immensa gioia condurrai felice l'anima, e fugata ogni aspra noia godrò perpetua calma.	<i>It shall suffice, as penance for your wrongs, that you, repentant, return to me, traitor.</i>
Ma, s'alle mie querele, ai miei tormenti, la dovuta pietà nieghi, spietato, e con abete alato solchi dell'empio Egeo le spume algenti, perch'io fra le pene ardenti cada sventata in questa arena infesta di predator, lascio Ostia funesta?	<i>You shall lead my soul to an ocean of boundless joy, and, all bitter sorrows fled, I shall enjoy eternal peace.</i>
Esangue, insepulto, esposto al volere di rigide fiere, sia l'empio tuo volto e lo scheletro immondo del cadavere tuo corrompa il mondo!	<i>But if to my laments, to my torments, you deny the pity you owe, ruthless one, and with your winged bark you cut across the frothing, bitter Egean waves, so that, amid burning pains, I may fall senseless upon this treacherous shore,</i>
No, frena le note, mia lingua troppo audace;	

cangia la guerra in pace,
che dar morte al mio cor l'alma
non puote.
T'adorerò, mio ben, negletta
amante,
e se vissi fedel, morirò costante.

*abandoned among predators,
O wretched harbor!*

*Unburied, exposed,
at the mercy of wild beasts,
may your vile face,
your monstrous corpse,
be corrupted before the world.*

No—
restrain your bold tongue, my
soul!

*Turn war into peace,
for to kill the one it loves
is beyond the heart's power.*

*I shall adore you still,
neglected lover;
and if I lived faithful,
faithful I shall die.*

3.11a

Title: *Livre nouveau de fleurs tres util pour l'art d'à orfeureire, et autres.*

Attribution: Baltazar Montcornet, after Nicolas Cochin

Date: 1645

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 86 x 126 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: Wien, MAK – Museum für angewandte Kunst, Wien, Bibliothek und Kunstblättersammlung, inv. K1 2714

Bibliography:




cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.12	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.12 Alessandro Scarlatti, "Mentre un Zeffiro arguto," [5314]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 80 x 89 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, use of the composition This drawing shows a rustic compound composed of a stable, an outbuilding. The foreground is occupied by figures tending to a field, and the composition opens diagonally from left to right, guiding the viewer's gaze across the architectural cluster. The main buildings overlap to form a visible capital "M", suggested by the steep pitch of two roofs and a central upright volume. The letter is not delineated but emerges from spatial alignment and the triangular rhythm of the structure. The result is a compositional initial, more "read" than "seen." There is no narrative connection between the pastoral setting and the cantata's content.</p>		<p>Mentre un Zeffiro arguto Con la sferza dell'ali Castigava l'ardor de lampi estivi, Del mar presso alle sponde, Cui baciavan l'arene i salsi argenti, Mesto e solingo un di D'Amor mi doisi e favellai cosi:</p>	<p>While a clever Zephyr, With the whip of its wings, Chastised the heat of summer's lightning blaze, By the sea, near the shore, Where the briny silver kissed the sand, Sad and alone one day Of Love I grieved, and thus began to say:</p>
	<p>Non più lacci, non più strali, Son legato, son ferito, Hai vinto Amor, hai vinto! D'un tremulo crine La bionda procella Ritorta in anella, Intesse fatali Catene al mio cor.</p>	<p>Non più lacci, non più strali, Son legato, son ferito, Hai vinto Amor, hai vinto! D'un tremulo crine La bionda procella Ritorta in anella, Intesse fatali Catene al mio cor.</p>	<p>No more snares, no more darts, I am bound, I am wounded— You've conquered, Love, you've conquered! From trembling locks, A golden tempest, Twisting in curls, Weaves fatal chains That bind my heart.</p>	
	<p>Non più lacci, non più strali, Son legato, son ferito, Hai vinto Amor, hai vinto! Pupilla, che splende, Co' i sguardi m'accende, Ma l'alma infelice Qual nuova Fenice Ritrova i natali D'un ciglio all'ardor.</p>	<p>Non più lacci, non più strali, Son legato, son ferito, Hai vinto Amor, hai vinto! Pupilla, che splende, Co' i sguardi m'accende, Ma l'alma infelice Qual nuova Fenice Ritrova i natali D'un ciglio all'ardor.</p>	<p>No more snares, no more darts, I am bound, I am wounded— You've conquered, Love, you've conquered! An eye that glows Ignites me with its gaze, But this sorrowful soul— Like a new-born Phoenix— Finds life again In the fire of a glance.</p>	
	<p>Vuol Cupido, ch'io mora E la mia fè negletta Di severa beltà l'orgoglio adora.</p>	<p>Vuol Cupido, ch'io mora E la mia fè negletta Di severa beltà l'orgoglio adora.</p>	<p>Like a new-born Phoenix— Finds life again In the fire of a glance.</p>	

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73634>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI

2263,1.12

Bibliography:**Related work(s):**

Così genio fatale

Mi costringe ad amar con duolo eterno

Sotto angeliche spoglie alma d'inferno.

Sirena, ch'alletti

Con vezzi homicidi,

Dolcezze prometti,

Ma, perfida, uccidi.

Co' i cenni furtivi

Di lieta sembianza

Le ceneri avvivi

Di morta speranza.

Stelle, barbare stelle,

Ch'il mio voler forzate,

L'inumano rigore

Nel cor di Filii ò la mia fè cangiata.

Navigar l'Egeo d'amore

Contro vento è gran sventura.

Nell'onda torbida, che rauca freme,

Si perde l'ancora d'amica speme,

Che d'un ciglio lo splendore

Degl'amanti è cinosura.

Mio cor, se di Fortuna

Spira un aura nemica,

Per non restar tra le tempeste absorto

Cupid wills that I must die,
And my neglected faith

Now bows to proud and pitiless beauty.

Thus a fatal spirit

Forces me to love in endless sorrow—

An angelic form concealing a heart of shadow.

Siren, who enchants

With murderous grace,

You promise sweetness,

But, treacherous, bring death in its place.

With secret signs

And joyful show,

You rekindle the ashes
Of a hope laid low.

Stars—cruel stars!

That twist my will with force,

You've changed my faith

Into Phyllis' heartless course.

To sail love's Aegean

Against the wind is bitter fate.

In murky waves that roar and groan,

The anchor of all hopeful dreams

is thrown—

For from a single glance

Chiudi le sparse antenne e riedi al porto.

Lovers take their guidance and their chance.

My heart, if Fortune's breath

Blows in hostile strain,

To not be lost among these storms
at sea,

Draw in your scattered sails—
return to port, be free.



3.12a **Title:** "Le Jardin," *Les quatre paysages*.

Attribution: Jacques Callot


Date: 1618-24

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 84 x 210 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: F-Pn IFN-
8495873

Bibliography: Lieure 264

cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.13	GB-Oam WA1942.49.13 Giovanni Lorenzo Lullier, "Non vantar tanta bellezza," [4137]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 80 x 104 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic. Set in a sunlit piazza framed by classical ruins, this vignette presents a stage-like composition, where everyday activity unfolds in the shadow of monumental architecture. At the centre of the foreground, two elegantly posed female figures stand slightly apart, joined by a stick and some fabric that arc between them. Together, their stances trace the vertical shafts and diagonal stroke of a capital "N", creating a figurative initial formed entirely through bodily alignment. The effect is theatrical yet restrained: the initial is embedded within a moment of poised interaction. The symmetry is enhanced by the surrounding emptiness, which isolates the figures and draws the eye to their relational geometry.		Non vantar tanta bellezza Filli mia che caderà Non sei sola ad'esser bella E soggiace alla tua stella Anco il fasto che ha vaghezza Di donarti verde età Non vantar tanta bellezza Filli mia che caderà. Vedesti mai su nei stellati giri Vapor tratto dal suolo Che in veste d'oro il suo mortal copri? A pena a mezzo ciel l'ali scopri Che a terra egli cadé lo giuro su l'honor della mia fé Filli, tal sorte a te succederà.	Boast not so of your beauty, Phyllis, my dear—it too shall fall. You are not the only one fair, And even your star must one day yield. The pride that grants you The bloom of youth and grace Is also bound to time's cruel call. Boast not so of your beauty, Phyllis, my dear—it too shall fall. Have you ever seen, High among the stars, A vapor drawn from earth That dressed its mortal self in golden glow? No sooner had it reached mid-sky in flight Than back to earth it fell below. I swear upon the honor of my truth— / Phyllis, such fate awaits your youth. // Boast not so of your beauty, Phyllis, my dear—it too shall fall. // You may claim that the flowers of your face Shall bloom a little longer—grace be granted. But time, which even marble does erase, / Think—will it spare you, / Leave you alone in all the world.
			Non vantar tanta bellezza Filli mia che caderà. Dirai che i fior d'un viso Han più lunga stagion siati concesso Ma il tempo che consuma il marmo istesso Pensa tu se vorrà Lasciar te sola al mondo Per tormento de cori e per mercede	Than back to earth it fell below. I swear upon the honor of my truth— / Phyllis, such fate awaits your youth. // Boast not so of your beauty, Phyllis, my dear—it too shall fall. // You may claim that the flowers of your face Shall bloom a little longer—grace be granted. But time, which even marble does erase, / Think—will it spare you, / Leave you alone in all the world.

Unlike other vignettes in this group, there is no clear iconographic or metaphorical link to the cantata's moralising message on beauty, transience, and pride.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73635>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Acq.24311.09

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Ciò che nacque col tempo al tempo cede.

Poiché il ciel ti dié nel ciglio
Il poter d'un guardo invitto
Nel destar l'altrui periglio
Ben tu dei haver memoria
Onde nacque la tua gloria
Far del merito un delitto
Saria troppa crudeltà.

Non vantâr tanta bellezza
Filli mia che caderà.

To torment hearts without
reprise, / And as reward, let
beauty never leave?

What's born with time must to
time give way—
That is the law all must obey. //
Since heaven placed within your
eyes / A gaze so potent, never
missed—
If in rousing peril,
You find your glory and delight,
Then you should also keep in sight
/ That to make virtue seem a
crime / Would be too cruel a twist.
/ Boast not so of your beauty, /
Phyllis, my dear—it too shall fall.

3.13a

Title: "Tempio del Sole." Antiche. E. Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da. Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile Regis excudit Parisiis.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

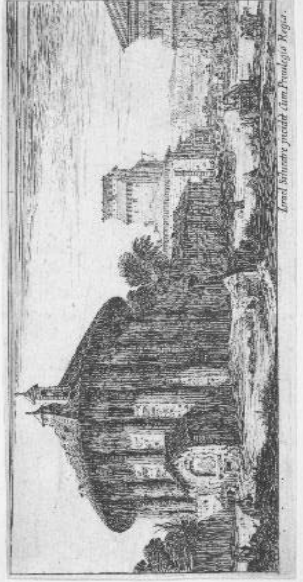
Date: 1645-48


Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 69 x 159 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: US-NYmm 2012.136.240

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.9



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.14	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.14 Alessandro Stradella, "Come in ciel dell'aureo crine," [4133]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p>		<p>Come in Ciel dell'aureo crine Spiega il sol tranquilli i rai Qual dall'indiche marine Più bel dì nacque già mai.</p> <p>Ovunque il guardo io giro Smalta di Giuno i campi Un ridente zaffiro E perché l'ali in feste Non rivolgan curiosi A svegliar nemi a seminar tempeste</p> <p>Entro all'ebrio clauastro Preme acerba catena Africo et Austro.</p> <p>Sol placido fiato D'auretta gioconda Hor nuota su l'onda Hor scherza nel prato E porge all'altrui ciglio avia sì pura</p> <p>Di costante seren speme si cura.</p> <p>Ma qual mentre vagheggio Pompe si belle in un momento alzarsi Dall'Occidente oscura nube io veggio?</p> <p>Come spedito il volo Muove per l'aere e sego</p>	<p>As in the sky the golden-haired sun Spreads its tranquil rays, What day was ever born More fair from Indian bays?</p> <p>Wherever I cast my gaze, Juno's meadows shine with light, Like laughing sapphire skies. And lest the wings of roving winds Should rise in revelry To stir dark clouds or sow tempestuous cries, Within their drunken prison Fierce chains now bind The South and Afric wind.</p> <p>Only the gentle breath Of a playful breeze Now dances on the seas, Now teases through the grass beneath— And to others' eyes it brings A purest hope of calm, of constant peace in things.</p> <p>But ah! While I delight In such sweet pomp and grace, Suddenly I see arise A dark cloud from the western skies.</p>
	<p>Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 82 x 101 mm Description/Remarks: Allusive vignette This vignette reproduces the Basilica of Maxentius (or "Temple of Peace"). The structure, a long façade of collapsing arches, dotted with foliage and framed by classical fragments, is rendered with less foreground than in the original, and with significantly more sky above, where a flock of birds is carefully drawn in flight. This seemingly minor modification is, in fact, highly meaningful when read against the cantata text. The cantata opens with a serene, almost Arcadian description of atmospheric calm, light, wind, clarity, and hope, but soon shifts into a dramatic storm. The visual emphasis on the open sky, and the presence of birds in flight, may thus anticipate the sudden meteorological violence described in the second stanza. The image is not a</p>			

narrative illustration but a spatial and emotional analogue, a visual mood-board calibrated to evoke the cantata's affective arc: from placid euphoria to catastrophic reversal. Unlike other vignettes in the album, this drawing does not appear to hide an initial within its structure. Rather, it plays on a more atmospheric register, where the contrast between stone and air, ruin and open space, echoes the fragility of contentment and the unpredictability of fortune.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73636>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Add.24311.05

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Ha di nemi seguaci immenso stuolo?
 Ohimè già reso è cieco
 Da fosco orrore il sol già d'ogn'intorno
 Toglie notte improvvisa
 Con ombra micidial la vita al giorno.
 Già di Noto i crudi sibili
 Turban l'aria il suol combattono
 Piogge irate e lampi orribili
 Frangon rupi e selve abbattono.
 E dove oh Dio spariro
 Quelle che qui pur dianzi hebbero Impero
 Calme tanto tranquille
 Ahi che quaggiù non splende
 Serenità che non s'aggiaccia a mille
 Repentine vicende
 Serba per pochi istanti
 Variabil fortuna ugal tenore
 Quindi impara o mio core
 A non sperar già mai stabil contento
 Cangia in pena ogni gioia un sol momento.

How swift its flight!
 It rushes through the air,
 And draws behind it
 Storming hosts beyond compare.
 Alas! The sun, now veiled
 In gloom and shadow deep,
 Has turned to blindness—
 And sudden night
 Steals from the day its life,
 And slays it with its shade.
 Now Notus howls and shrieks,
 He shakes the earth and rends the skies—
 Furious rain, and lightning bleak
 Strike the cliffs and fell the trees
 that rise.
 Oh God—where have they fled,
 Those powers that reigned but
 moments past?
 Such peace, so still, so mild...
 Ah, here below, no light endures—
 No serenity but what is pierced
 By a thousand sudden changes,
 And Fortune, fickle,
 Grants to calm but fleeting time.
 So learn, my heart,
 Never to hope for joy that lasts
 sublime—
 For a single moment
 Can turn all bliss to pain and
 darkened torment.

3.14a

Title: "Tempio della Pace," Antiche. E. Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da. Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile Regis excudit Parisiis.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

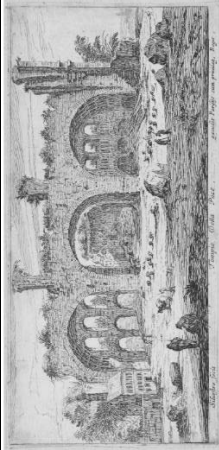
Date: 1645-48

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 72 x 157 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: Princeton University Art Museum, inv. x1938-143

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.5




cat.	Inventory nr.; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.15	GB-Oam WA1942.49.15 Anonymous, "Come o bella disciogli," [4130]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 79 x 97 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic The ruined bridge dominates the central portion of the scene, while a collapsed walkway connects the left riverbank to the main structure. In the right foreground stands a male figure with grotesque features, possibly a satyr, shown in a bent pose with his back arched. To his right, a tall river plant or reed curves upward. Together, the figure and the vegetal element form a clear capital "C", constructed not through transformation but through compositional adjacency. There is no direct iconographic link to the cantata text, but the spatial logic reveals an intentional use of figural and natural elements to generate a readable yet understated ornamental initial.		Come, ò bella, disciogli Con armonico fiato Contro del Nume alato Sì dolorsi accenti, Se con dolci portenti Tu negl'occhi e nel labro Tutte d'Amor l'insidie sue raccoglie, Mentre con rio tenore Col canto alletti e poi trafiggi il core.	How is it, O beauty, that you let fall with harmonious breath such sorrowful accents against the wingèd god, if in your eyes and on your lips you gather all the snares that Love has ever devised— while, with cruel intent, your singing charms and then pierces the heart?
			De tuoi lumi vaghi arcieri Per far guerra a un petto amante Sol dà sguardi lusinghieri Prende l'armi il Dio volante. Se del labro il dolce canto Lusingando un core allette, Fatto Arciero di vendette Di piagare ogn'alma hà vanto.	From your eyes, fair archers, to wage war on a loving heart, you launch only alluring glances— and the wingèd god takes up arms. If the sweetness of your song seduces a heart with flattery, then, turned avenger-archer, he boasts of wounding every soul.
			Così dunque, ò crudele, Sol per scherno d'Amanti Lusinghiera, infedele Clori, tal'or tu canti Contro l'infido Amor Battaglie e morte. Ma con più lieta sorte, Lasso, ben io comprendo, Dal tuo mentito core.	Thus it is, O cruel one, that only to mock your lovers you sing, charming yet unfaithful Clori, of battles and death against treacherous Love. But with clearer fate— alas, I see it plainly— from your lying heart,

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/11720>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Add.24311.02

Bibliography:

Related work(s): 3.09

Che d'Amore hai comune
E inganni e Regno.

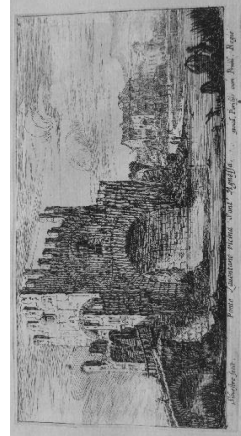
that in love you share
both his deceptions and his
dominion.

3.15a

Title: "Ponte Laudentano vicina
Sant'Agnessa," Antiche. E. Moderne.
Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da.
Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile Regis
excudit Parisiis.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

Date: 1645-48



Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 70 x 150 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: I-R1cg S-FC67065

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.8

cat.

Inventory nr; references; descriptions

3.16 GB-Oam WA1942.49.16

Alessandro Stradella, "Tante perle non versa l'Aurora," [4136].

Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella

Date: 1690

Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper

Size: 79 x 99 mm

Description/Remarks:

Vignette, no initial

Scene featuring monumental ruins, an arch in the distance, and various groups of figures moving across a broad esplanade. The architecture is detailed but not exaggerated, and the human presence remains evenly dispersed.

Despite careful analysis, no discernible initial appears to be embedded within the composition. Neither the architectural structures, nor the figures in foreground or background, trace the outline of a letter. The image seems to function entirely as a view, setting the stage but not intervening graphically in the cantata's structure. There is also no evident thematic or atmospheric link between the drawing and the cantata's tone, which is intensely introspective and mournful.

images



text

translation

Tante perle non versa l'Aurora
Quante cadon da g'occhi di clori
E del volto le Rose,
E i candori rugiadose
Si mirano ogn'ora.
Tante in cielo non splendono
stelle
Tante Arene non sono nel mare
Quante scorrono lagrime amare
Da due luci del sole più belle.

Not so many pearls does Aurora
shed
As those that fall from Clori's eyes
instead—
And on her face, the roses
And pale hues kissed by dew
Are mirrored ever anew.
Not so many stars shine in the
skies,
Nor grains of sand fill ocean's
wide floor,
As bitter tears that endlessly pour
From two bright suns, her weeping
eyes.

Tu piangi amato bene,
Et io piango, e sospiro
E sono le tue pene
La dolente cagion de miei
tormenti
E vuol astro fatale
Per rendere il mio duol
Sempre immortale,
Che questo cor che il tuo bel volto
adora
Giunga alla morte e per penar non
mora.
È inseperabile, ahime il dolor
Se regna stabile nell'Alme Amor.
Chi provò sdegnoso il fato adirato
Non pietà crudeltà sperar poi lice
Che à un infelice
Sorde sono le stelle,
E cieco Amore.

You weep, beloved soul—
And I weep, and sigh with you.
Your pain makes up the whole
Of what torments my spirit too.
And some cruel star above,
To make my sorrow
Forever echo love,
Decreases this heart, which adores
your lovely face,
Shall reach to death—yet never
leave this place.
For pain, alas, is inescapable,
When Love remains, unshakably
stable.

The grand ruins offer no symbolic echo of grief or solitude; they provide instead a monumental, almost indifferent frame—a scene drawn for the eye, not for the voice.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/71721>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl
Acid.24311.08

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Whoever met a wrathful fate with
pride
Should not expect, nor beg, for
mercy's grace.

To one cast low and cast aside,
The stars are deaf,
And Love is blind.

So let him die to joy—
And live only in pain, resigned.

Perche mora al gioir, viva al
dolore.

3.16a

Title: *Paysages et ruines de Rome.*

Attribution: Stefano della Bella,
publisher Pierre Mariette

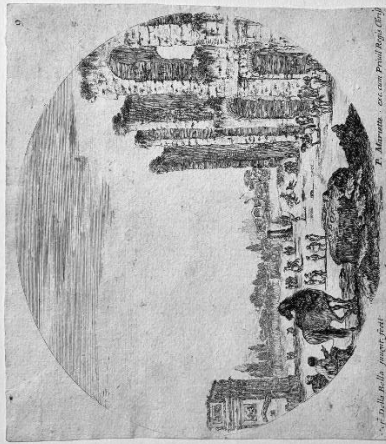
Date: 1655

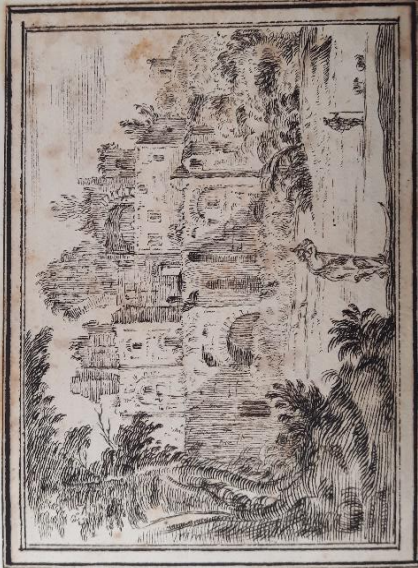
Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 128 x 128 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: Private
collection, The Netherlands

Bibliography: De Vesme 827



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.17	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.17 Alessandro Scariatti, "La Fortuna di Roma." [4134]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 78 x 103 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic A single standing figure, not present in the source print, occupies the centre of the foreground. The man, dressed in rustic clothes, leans on a long scythe, with his body upright and the tool held at an angle. Together, torso and blade form a capital "L", stylised but legible, and clearly constructed as a graphic intervention rather than a naturalistic detail. This invented figure provides a visual incipit to the cantata, though without narrative or symbolic relation to its subject — the tragic patriotism of Coriolanus, his mother Veturia, and wife Volturnia. The letter operates in visual isolation: it is neither camouflaged nor exaggerated, but inserted quietly into the scene, demanding a certain calligraphic attentiveness from the</p>		<p>La fortuna di Roma A debil filo appesa A momenti attendea l'ultima offesa Coriolano irritato Dall' infelice e forse ingiusto esiglio In vendetta cangiato Havea l'amor di cittadin di figlio De Volsci unito al bellicoso ardire Dalle tende nemiche Sovra il Tebro stendea l'ombra guerriere Venian gl'amici a schiere Per frenar del suo Cor l'ardire insano I più famosi eroi Chiedevano pietà ma tutto invano Che il giovane superbo Al suo campo seguace un guardo gira E rispondon per lui fortuna ed' ira. Miei compagni e che s'aspetta La fortuna è un sol momento Sia virtude o tradimento Vuò far bella una vendetta. Amici ecco di Roma il fin bramato</p>	<p>Rome's fortune, Hung by a slender thread, Awaited, moment by moment, its final blow. Coriolanus, enraged By his unjust and bitter exile, Had turned from love Of citizen and son— To vengeance wild and dire. // Joined with the Volsci In their warlike fire, From enemy tents He cast a warrior's shadow over the Tiber. Friends came in droves To check the madness in his heart, / The noblest heroes Pleaded for mercy—but all in vain. / The proud young man, Turned to his loyal host with steely gaze— And for him, Fortune and Wrath replied in praise. // My comrades— what do we wait for? // Fortune is but one brief hour. / Be it virtue or betrayal, I'll make vengeance my finest power. / Friends—behold the fall of Rome you sought! I swear upon the honor of your souls:</p>

viewer. As with other figurative initials in this group, the image does not comment on the text but asks to be read through it, as part of a silent contract between letter and landscape.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/71722>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Acid.24311.06

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Io giuro su l'honor delle vostre
alme
Che dal nostro valor pende un
gran fato
Volea più dir ma gli sospese il
labro
Un numeroso stuolo
Di nobili donzelle
A cui facean la scorta
Volumnia bella a Coriolan
consorte
Veturia Genitrice
Così con doppia face Amor
ribatte
Dell'ira i moti e in nobil cor
combatte.
Caro figlio io so ch'hai vanto
D'atterrar ogni valore
Ma per vincere il tuo core
Vengo a vincere col pianto.
Sposo amato un vero ardire
Vuò destar alla tua gloria
Ma una fiamma di memoria
Destar voglio e poi morire.
Di marito e di figlio al dolce nome
Doppo breve pensier cedè ma poi
Fù da i seguaci il traditor tradito
A sì funesto avviso
Uscir dolenti le romane donzelle
In nero amanto
E dove il sangue sparse

*Upon our valor hangs a mighty
fate.
He would have spoken more—
But his lips were stayed
By a noble host of women,
Led by Volumnia,
His fair and faithful wife,
And Veturia, his mother—
Two torches of love
That burned through rage
And fought the storm within his
noble heart.
Dearest son, I know your pride
Lays every valor low—
But to conquer your own heart,
I come, with tears that flow.
Beloved husband—true courage
Wins glory through might,
But I would light a flame of
memory, / Then perish from your
sight. // At the sweet name of
husband—of son,
He yielded, after but a fleeting
thought.
Yet in that hour,
His own were turned against him.
Betrayed by those he led,
He fell, and mournful Roman
maidens
Clad in mourning black
Departed from the blood-stained
ground,*

Il Giovane infelice

Amarissima corse onda di pianto

Fui poi d'urna invece

S'alzò Teatro al femminil valore

Chi vive per tradir tradito muore.

Where the young man—unhappy—
Had spilled his wrath. // A bitter
tide of tears

Flowed in place of urns.

A theater was raised there
instead,

To honor women's valor.

He who lives to betray

Shall by betrayal be struck down,
and dead.

3.17a

Title: "Veduta del Palazzo Maggiore."
Antiche. E. Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma.
E. Contorno. Fate. Da. Israël. Silvestro.
cum privilegio Regis excudit Parisiis.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

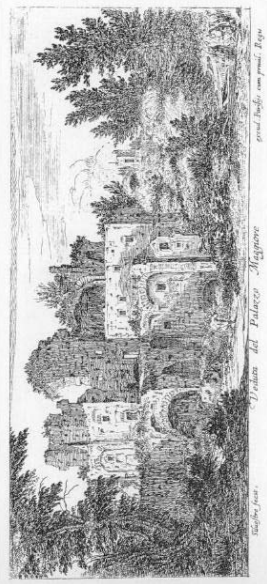
Date: 1645-48


Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 115 x 224 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: art market

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.3



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.18	GB-Oam WA1942.49.18 Anonymous, "Ligio di due pupille belle" Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 77 x 100 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic (use of the composition) This vignette depicts a monumental ruin, probably inspired by Roman baths or theatres, set within a vast open square. A massive arched structure dominates the right side of the composition, while other fortified buildings stretch toward the left. The space is animated by scattered figures, both seated and standing. Two figures in the middle ground, placed just before the central arched wall, create the shape of a capital "L". One stands upright, holding a staff or spear, while the other crouches or kneels beside them, forming a short horizontal line. The juxtaposition of these bodies and their shadow projected on the ground, draws the eye into the geometry of the page, insinuating the initial through human alignment.		Ligio di due pupille belle si ma crudeli un cor costante, fatto saldo ad amante del nudo Arciero, a mille colpi e mille, nell'Idolo spietato un di s'affisse, sciolse un sospir, ruppe il silenzio e disse: Armati pur d'orgoglio, negami pur pietà, sarò di fede un scoglio nel mar di tua fiera:za, trofeo di rigidezza, l'alma t'adorerà. Congiurati a' miei danni, girino, empio destino, astri tiranni: far non potranno ch'io non t'adori, e sia vittima al tuo rigor l'anima mia. T'amerò, crudel, sì sì, t'amerò senza speme di mercé. Stancherà fors'anche di tua durezza la mia fè; fors'anche un dì la tua durezza la mia fè stancherà. E s'è scritto nel ciel ch'io stia penando, penerò, morirò, ma sempre	Devoted to two lovely eyes (though cruel they may be), a faithful heart, made firm in love for the naked Archer, stood fast through a thousand wounds, and on that ruthless idol one day it fixed— then loosed a sigh, broke silence, and said: Arm yourself with pride, deny me pity still, I'll be a rock of faith in the sea of your disdain; a trophy to your harshness— yet still, my soul will worship you. Let all conspire against me— cruel fate, tyrant stars— they shall not make me cease to adore you, nor spare my soul from being a victim to your cruelty. I will love you, yes, cruel one, I will love you without hope of mercy. Perhaps, even your harshness may one day tire of my steadfast love; perhaps, one day,

There is no evident connection between the architectural setting and the content of the cantata.

Image link: <https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/71723>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI 2263,III.13

Bibliography:

Related work(s): 3.28

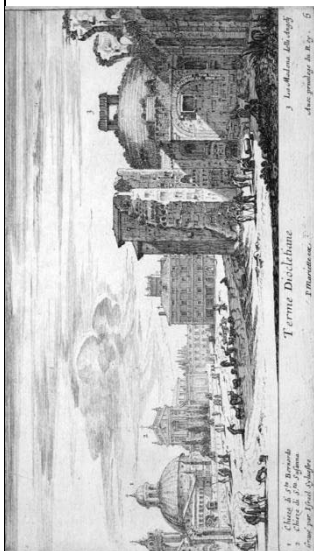
amando;
ma sempre amando, penerò.


*my faith may wear your harshness
down.*

*And if it's written in the stars
that I must suffer,
then suffer I shall, and die—
but ever loving,
ever loving, I shall suffer.*

3.18a**Title:** "Terme Diocletiane." Vues de

Rome et de Venise

Attribution: Israël Silvestre**Date:** 1621**Technique and support:** etching on paper**Size:** 114 x 200 mm**Provenance/cat. Nr:** GB-LWI 224771**Bibliography:** Fauchoux 4.6

cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3. 19	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.19 Alessandro Stradella, "Già languia la notte."</p> <p>Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p> <p>Date: 1690</p> <p>Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper</p> <p>Size: 73 x 91 mm</p> <p>Description/Remarks: Vignette, no (?) initial, Allusive This vignette is a reduced reinterpretation of Silvestre's etching. The drawing retains the general structure and perspective of the original but omits several architectural elements, most notably the left bell tower, designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) and later dismantled due to structural issues. The foreground introduces human figures and small boats navigating the Tiber, which now acts as a symbolic and literal threshold between the viewer and the ecclesiastical complex. The figures on the left sit or crouch among reeds, watching the river or each other. The broad sweep of the water occupies nearly a third of the image, turning the river into an almost theatrical proscenium in front of the dome.</p>		<p>Già languia la notte, e i zeffiretti alati, con aliti adorati, scorreano a ravvivar sui campi i fiori.</p> <p>Già i pargoletti Amori sorgean dal Gange a colorir le sponde, e già tremole l'onde attendeano inquiete goder fra molli argenti dell'adorato Sol i rai nascenti.</p> <p>Quando Medea tradita, al pallido splendor del dì bambino, scopri del reo Giasone la fuga ardita.</p> <p>Allor del suo destino, palesando il tenore, contro il suo traditore, che già l'onde solcava invan, s'accinse a provocar i venti, col far noti in tal guisa i suoi lamenti:</p> <p>Cielo, oh Dio, cielo che tardi? Destà, omai, desta lo sdegno! Per ferir forse l'indegno l'arco tuo non ha più dardi? Nume, o tu Nume d'Averno,</p>	<p>The night was already fading, and little winged Zephyrs, with perfumed breaths, were gliding to revive the flowers of the fields.</p> <p>Already the little Loves rose from the Ganges to paint the shores, and the trembling waves, restless, / awaited / to bathe in the tender silver of the newborn rays of the adored Sun.</p> <p>When Medea, betrayed, at the pale splendor of the newborn day, / saw revealed the bold escape of wicked Jason. / Then, revealing the fate set before her, against her traitor, who already was sailing the waves, / she roused the winds and gave voice to her grief in this manner: //</p> <p>Heaven, O God, heaven, why do you delay? Awake now, awake your wrath! To strike the vile one, have your bows no arrows left? //</p> <p>O god, you spirit of Hell,</p>

The cantata that follows is a dramatic monologue of betrayal, vengeance, and ambivalent love: Medea, abandoned by Jason, first calls down divine punishment, then hesitates, then urges his death again, only to retract once more. This emotional oscillation is staged as a stormy confrontation between passion and justice, and water recurs as both setting and symbol.

In this light, the presence of the Tiber in the vignette takes on new meaning: it becomes the arena of both escape and retribution, the liquid territory in which the drama unfolds.

Unlike other vignettes, there is no evident initial hidden in the composition. The image functions more as a panoramic tableau, preparing the reader for a cantata of operatic breadth and tragic intensity. The view is both real and emblematic: a Rome that watches, unmoved, while Medea rages between fury and surrender.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/71724>

Provenance/cat. nr.: Olim D-Hs ND VI 2263,II.02

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

s'á punir t'ellesse il fato
l'infedele, l'empio, l'ingrato,
perché non danni a strazio
eterno?

Nei sentieri dell'onda vorace,
Dio delle acque, sommergi
l'infido,
e nel mar, pria che giunga sul
lido,
di sua vita s'estingua la face.

Fiamme ultrici, tua destra
tonante
vibri, o gran Nume del Polo!
E a trafigger quel seno incostante
i tuoi fulmini affrettino il volo.

Ah no! fermate, o Numi,
lasciate pur in vita
lo spergiuro, l'ingrato,
l'infedele adorato;
ché, s'egli è la mia vita, egli è il
mio core,
viver già non poss'io, s'egli sen
more.

Ma tu, crude!, non vedi,
e forse intanto un lusinghiero
inganno
ti minaccia la morte.
Ahi! se armata a tuo danno
l'onda t'assale e ti contrasta il
lido,

if fate has chosen you to punish /
the faithless, the wicked, the
ungrateful,
why do you not condemn him to
eternal torment? //

On the paths of the devouring
wave,
god of the waters, drown the
traitor, / and before he reaches
the shore, / extinguish the flame
of his life.

Let avenging flames, / from your
thundering hand, / strike swiftly, O
great God of the Pole,
and pierce that inconstant heart /
with your furious bolts. // Ah no!

Stop, O gods—
let him live still,
the perjurer, the ungrateful one, /
the adored traitor;
for if he is my life, he is my heart
too,
and I cannot live if he should die.

But you, cruel one, do not see,
and perhaps even now,
some treacherous deceit
threatens your death.
Ah! if, armed against you,
the waves assault and battle you
at the shore,
before you sink,

pria di restar assorto,
corri al mio seno e ti ricovra in
porto.

*run to my breast and find shelter
in my arms.*

Torna, o caro!

Return, oh beloved!

E se crudele

And if cruel Zephyr

niega Zefiro i respiri,

denies you his breath,

daranno fiato alle tue vele

*my sighs shall fill your sails more
than the breezes.*

più che l'aure i miei sospiri.

If the proud, capricious wave

Sorgogliosa onda incostante

refuses your desire,

si fa sorda al tuo desio,

*my tears shall calm your ship
better than the sea itself.*

darà calma al pino errante

più che l'onda il pianto mio.

Torna, o caro, torna, oh Dio!

Return, oh beloved, return, O God!

Ma già che sordi il Ciel, la Terra, il
Mare,

*But since the heavens, the earth,
the sea,*

l'Inferno, e tu, più crudo e più

*and hell itself—and you, more
cruel and deaf than all—*

sordo,

do not hear my cries, my

sei alle strida, alle pene, ai pianti
miei,

*suffering, my tears,
why do I waste my voice in vain?*

a che più spargo le mie voci

why do I waste my voice in vain?

indarno,

why do I waste my voice in vain?

se l'offesa son io, s'a me s'aspetta

If I am the one wronged,

far del barbaro indegno l'aspra

then to me belongs

vendetta?

*the fierce vengeance against the
wicked barbarian!*

Con armate falangi

With armed legions

l'Oceano varcherò,

I shall cross the Ocean,

e nei confini dell'abisso stesso

*and even in the very depths of the
abyss*

anco ti giungerò.

I shall pursue you.

Amici, a che tardate?

I shall pursue you.

Su veloci accorrete,

I shall pursue you.

volando il mar fendete, uccidete, sbranate!	<i>Friends, why do you delay? Swiftly fly, cut through the sea, strike him down, tear him apart!</i>
Già parmi, io già m'avviso, il di lui teschio calpestar reciso.	<i>Already I see, already I imagine, his severed skull beneath my foot.</i>
No, no, non più dimora: mora l'infido, mora! Forse, in mirar core sì perfido reso cadavere, esangue e lacero, dell'ira i stimoli potrò chetar.	<i>No, no more delay: let the traitor die! Perhaps in seeing his perfidious heart, cold, bloodless, and torn, the fury in my soul will find its peace.</i>
E di cangiar degli astri torbidi gl'influssi rigidi in raggi prosperi con simil vittima potrò sperar.	<i>And maybe then, the dark stars above will turn their harsh influences into rays of fortune, with such a sacrifice to fulfill my hope.</i>
Prendetelo, sì! Ma, oh Dio, non l'uccidete, no, ch'è l'idolo mio.	<i>Take him, yes! But oh God— do not kill him, no! For he is still my idol.</i>
Sì, sì, per maggior pena, cinto d'aspra catena, conducetelo a me. E se veggio il superbo, con un duolo più acerbo, chieder umil perdono chino al mio piè, così l'audace avvinto	<i>Yes, yes, for greater punishment, bound in harsh chains, bring him back to me! And if I see the proud one, broken with sorrow,</i>

vedrò supplice prima, e poi
estinto.

Onde, cangiato in fiume
delle lacrime mie sarà mio vanto
far che venga il crudele
a naufragar degli occhi miei nel
pianto.

E al fin, tradito il traditore
istesso,
saprò ben io ardere,
e incenerirlo col foco mio.

Alme che tenere seguite Amor,
or che sentite il mio dolor,
deh, compatite l'afflitto cor.

Figlio di Venere,
che fai nel ciel?
Dai tuoi alti culmini
scaglia il tuo tel,
vibra i tuoi fulmini
contro il crudel.

*humbly beg forgiveness at my
feet, / thus shall I see him, once
bold, / now humbled and
destroyed. // And making a river
of all my tears,
it will be my triumph
to see the cruel one
shipwrecked in the flood of my
weeping.*

*And at last, betrayed,
the traitor himself
I shall know how to burn and
reduce to ashes
with my own fire.*

*Souls who tenderly follow Love,
now that you hear my grief,
ah, pity this afflicted heart!*

*Son of Venus,
what do you still in heaven?
From your lofty heights,
hurl your bow,
send your thunderbolts
against the cruel one!*

3.19a

Title: "Vue de l'Église Saint Pierre et du Chateau Saint Ange," *Vues de Rome et des environs.*

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

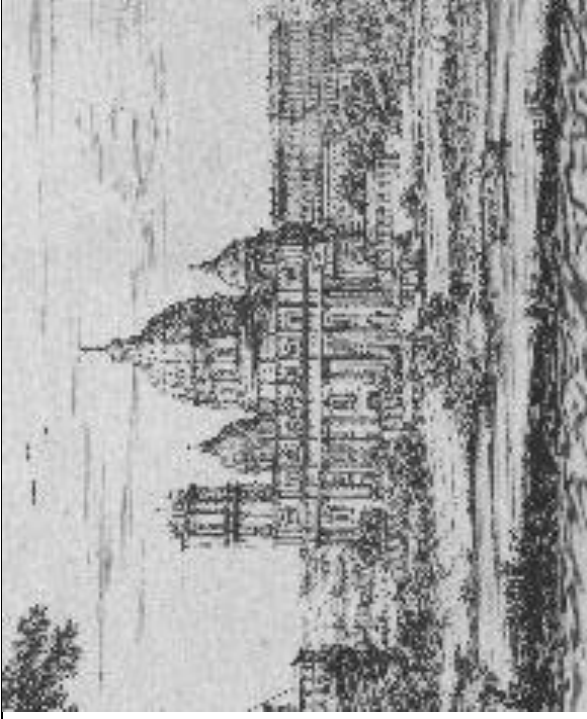
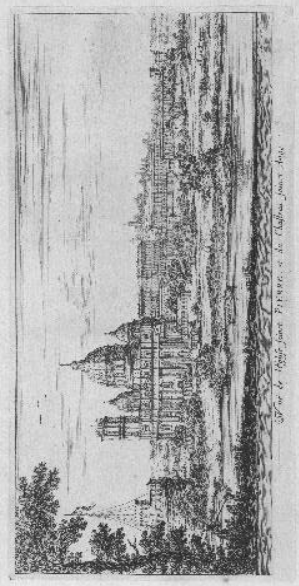
Date: ca. 1650


Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 211 x 330 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: US-Wnga 1981.69.12.226

Bibliography: Faucheux 11.1



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.20	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.20 Anonymous, "Il ciel che non è stanco" Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 72 x 92 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic (use of the composition) The buildings including the tower of the church of Santi Luca e Martina are rendered with architectural clarity, while the figures in the foreground are reduced to a few small groups and individuals.</p>		<p>Il Ciel, che non è stanco di vibrar contro me fulmini, o Filii, vuol ch'io parta e ti lasci. Deggio partir? Deggio lasciarti? Ahi lasso, non so se amante, o convertito in sasso.</p> <p>Già che vita il ciel mi toglie col privarmi del mio bene, non andrò di selve amene a goder l'ombrese foglie, a goder l'ombrese foglie.</p> <p>In un antro che minaccia al mio duol tempesta eguale, io seguir saprò la traccia della morte più funesta.</p> <p>Morte, tu sola puoi torre agli affanni un disperato core, se la vita è martire a chi, volendo, ancor non può morire.</p> <p>Non pretendo che consoli, cara pace, il mio dolor. Vuò che i miei pensieri soli sian le furie del mio cor.</p>	<p>Heaven, never weary of hurling bolts at me, O Phyllis, now wills that I must leave you, that I must part from you. Must I go? Must I leave you? Alas! I do not know if I am still a lover or turned already into stone.</p> <p>Since Heaven steals my life by robbing me of my joy, I shall not roam the pleasant woods to delight in shady leaves, to delight in shady leaves.</p> <p>In a cavern that threatens a tempest equal to my grief, I shall follow the dark path of the most dreadful death.</p> <p>O Death, you alone can take sorrow from a desperate heart, if life is but torment for one who, even wishing it, cannot die.</p> <p>I ask not, gentle peace,</p>

The result is a quiet instance of compositional lettering, one that initiates the reading without revealing itself immediately.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/11725>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI 2263.III.12

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

In dura lontananza m'accingo a lagrimar. Piangerò tanto ch'il destino rio tempri rigori suoi col pianto mio.	that you soothe my pain. I want my thoughts alone to be the furies of my heart. In cruel separation I prepare to weep. I shall weep so long that cruel fate may soften its harshness with my tears.
Occhi dolenti, formate un mare, naufragate in quell'onde pietose i miei tormenti.	Weeping eyes, form a sea, let my torments wreck upon those pitiful waves.
E se tarda la morte, e se sordo l'inferno si mostra a danni miei col più strano rigore, morte ad inferno avrò nel mio dolore.	And if death delays, and Hell turns deaf to my despair with the strangest cruelty— then death and Hell will be found within my sorrow.

3.20a

Title: "Veduta di Campo Vaccina." Vues de Rome.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

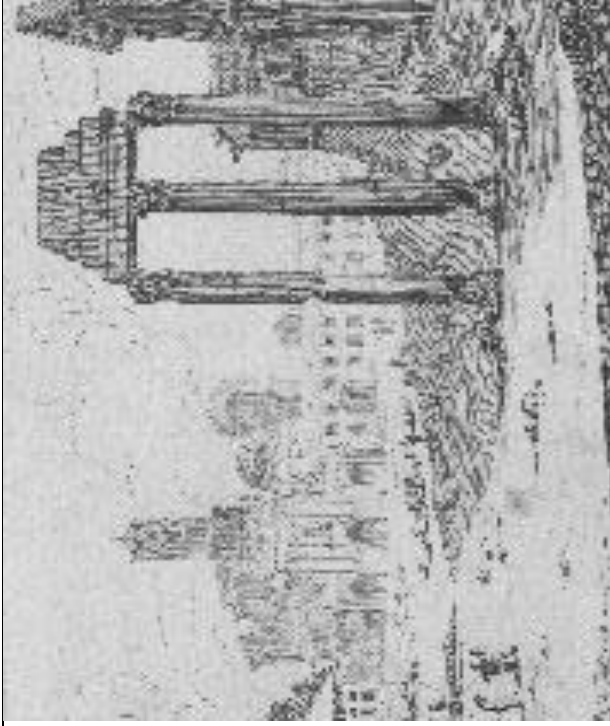
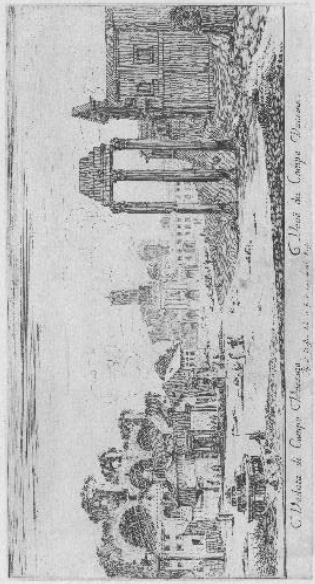
Date: ca. 1650

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 211 x 330 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: US-Wnga 1981.69.12.202

Bibliography: Faucheux 8.8




cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.21	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.21 Anonymous, "Colei che porta in fronte" Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 75 x 87 mm Description/Remarks: Vignette This vignette depicts a fortified bridge over a wide river, flanked by a cylindrical and a square tower. Several boats glide across the water, while distant figures and buildings animate the background. A group of plants and seated figures in the foreground provide spatial framing, but no central focus. Despite detailed rendering, no initial can be discerned within the composition. Neither the arrangement of architectural elements, nor the positioning of human or natural features suggests a typographic shape. The drawing appears to function entirely as a framing landscape, offering no visual link to the incipit or theme of the cantata.</p>		<p>Colei che porta in fronte L'incendio del cor mio, Su la sponda d'un rio, Di bel ire sferzando Il candor di mia fede Perché geloso sono Poco amante mi crede. Io per placar quell'alma Tumidete a disdegno a miei tormenti Sciolgo così gl'innamorati accenti. Cara bella, tutta mia, S'io t'adoro, amor lo sa. Ma se provo gelosia Non offendo tua beltà Finché spirito in seno avrò, Sangue in vene e cor in petto, Tu sarai mio sol diletto. Sempre fido t'amerò Né potrà fortuna ria Ritornarmi in libertà. Troppo bella e troppo vaga È la fiamma ch'ardi il cor. Se gelosa è la mia piaga T'un incolpa il dio d'amor, Fin che l'alma in vita sta, Idolatro fido amante Questo sen sarà costante Nel servire tua beltà.</p>	<p><i>She who bears upon her brow The fire that burns within my heart, By the banks of a stream, Scorning my pure devotion With a beauty full of wrath, Because I am jealous, She deems me but a tepid lover. To soothe that soul, So swollen with disdain for my torment, I now loosen the passionate tones of love: Dearest beauty, wholly mine, If I adore you, Love knows it well. But if I feel jealousy, It is no insult to your grace. So long as breath fills my chest, Blood runs in my veins, And my heart beats in my breast, You shall be my only delight. Ever faithful, I shall love you, Nor shall cruel fate Return me to liberty. Too fair, too bright, Is the flame that burns my heart. If my wound is born of jealousy, Blame not the god of Love. So long as my soul lives on, As a devoted, faithful worshipper, This heart shall remain steadfast</i></p>

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73637>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI
2263,III.11

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Né sarà destin crudele
Ch'io non peni al tuo splendor.

*In service of your beauty.
Nor shall cruel destiny
Keep me from suffering in your
splendor.*

3.21a

Title: "Vue du pont Lamentano proche de Tivoli." *Vues de différents lieux.*

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

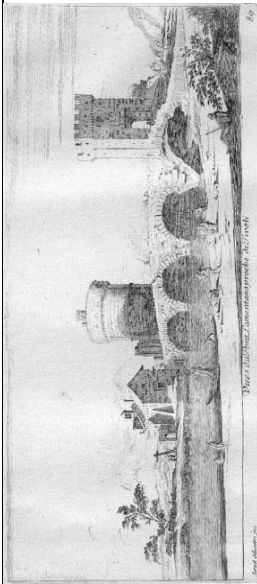
Date: ca. 1650

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 116 x 249 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: GB-lbm X,9.190

Bibliography: Faucheux 21.1



cat.

Inventory nr; references;
descriptions

images

text

translation

3.22

GB-Oam WA1942.49.22

Anonymous, "Regea dell'orbe etrusco"
[5311].

Former attribution(s): Stefano della
Bella

Date: 1690

Technique and support: pen and
brown ink on paper

Size: 75 x 102 mm

Description/Remarks:

Hidden, anthropomorphic

This vignette depicts a rural scene
showing a congregation outside a
church. The drawing reproduces only
the left portion of the original

composition, omitting the crowd on
the right and instead isolating a single
soldier in the left foreground.

This marching figure, viewed in three-
quarter profile and carrying a heavy
satchel or pack, is carefully placed and
shaped to suggest a capital "R". His
forward-leaning posture and bent right
arm form a curved diagonal, while the
torso and pack trace a rounded
shoulder and vertical line.

There is no direct narrative
correspondence between the vignette
and the cantata's tragic monologue on
the failed assassination of Porsenna by
Muzio Scevola.



Regea dell'orbe etrusco
Ad inondar del Quirinale grembo
Carco di ferro hostil Porsenna un
nembo,

Quando dal Tebro fusco
Mutio mirollo e a vendar l'offese
Della patria fedel così s'accese:
Dunque del gran Tarpeo l'aquile
auguste

Han da giacere al pondo
Di barbaro Titan, di rege
immondo?

Dunque per un Tifeo
Vedovo ha da restare il
Campidoglio

Di palme, di trofei, corone e
soglio?
Ah, che solo il pensier l'alma
m'accora,

O Porsenna perisca o Mutio mora.
Ferro, tu non sei mio,
Se non l'uccidi hor.

Se non appresti a berevere
Tutto il mio sangue al Tevere
Svenato dal mio cor.

Chi ha sprito nel petto,
Di Marte al dispetto
D'incontro di morte
Timore non ha.

He ruled the Etruscan world—
And to flood the Quirinal's womb
With storms of hostile steel,
Came Porsenna, heavy with war's
gloom.

But from the dusky Tiber
Mucius arose, ablaze to avenge
His homeland's wounds, with fiery
resolve did he engage:

Must, then, the august eagles
Of great Tarpeian heights
Bow beneath the weight
Of a barbarian Titan—of a foul
king's might?

Shall one Typhoeus make the
Capitol
Bereft of palms, of trophies,
crowns, and all?

Ah—this very thought
Pierces my soul with dread!
Let Porsenna perish—
Or let Mucius fall instead!
Steel, you are not mine

Unless you strike him now—
Unless you offer up my blood
To the Tiber in a crimson flood
Drawn from this loyal heart.
He who bears a soul within his
breast,
Fears not death,
Though Mars himself contest.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73638>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI

2263,1.09

Bibliography:**Related work(s):**

<p>A che dunque, pensier, tu pensi ancora? O Porsenna perisca o Mutio mora. Son l'offese eterne trombe Che sin dalla tombe Risvegliano a vendetta ogni valor. Così Mutio dicea El ferro micidial tutto nel petto Gli profondò, ma con contrario effetto, Poiché, quando credeva Atterrato al suo piè l'hoste protervo In vece di Porsenna uccise il servo. // Crudi numi, astri severi, Deh, movetevi a pietà. Ecco Mutio tradito Dal suo braccio inawertito, Fatto scopo d'empietà. Ma che pietà? mertì pietade indegno? Non merta premio, chi non colpisce al segno. Dunque la mano rea Si castighi col foco, e se ferio, Chi non doveva, hora ne paghi il fio. Bragie, bragie,</p>	<p>Why, then, thought—do you still delay? Let Porsenna perish— Or let Mucius die this day. Offense is an eternal trumpet That calls forth valor from the tomb— To vengeance it awakes The noble soul in gloom. So spoke Mucius—and Drove the deadly blade into his chest, Yet fate betrayed his noble quest. For when he thought He'd cast the tyrant at his feet, He found he'd slain the servant, not the king in seat. Cruel gods, stern stars— Move now to pity, I implore! Behold Mucius—betrayed By his own hand's unthinking blade, A victim of this war. But what pity? Does he merit such grace? Who misses the mark Deserves no praise, no honored place. So let this guilty hand Be judged by fire. If I struck the wrong man, Let now my flesh atone entire. Embers—embers, That devour my arm in flame,</p>
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Che il mio braccio colmate
d'ardori,
Non scemate già punto il mio
honor.
Siete rose fodrate d'allori,
Che formate corone al mio error.
// Così manco di man di braccio
estinto,
Se da Mutio perdei, Scevola ho
vinto.

*You do not dim my honor's name.
You are roses lined with laurel
bright,
That crown my fault
In glory's light.
So, though I lost my hand—my arm
consumed in flame,
If Mucius failed—then Scaevola is
my name. /*

3.22a **Title:** Le misères et les malheurs de la guerre.

Attribution: Jacques Callot

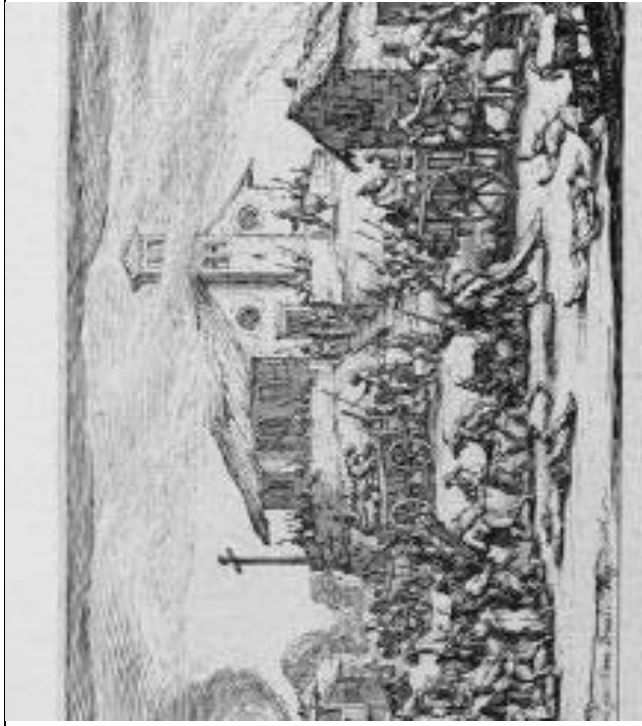
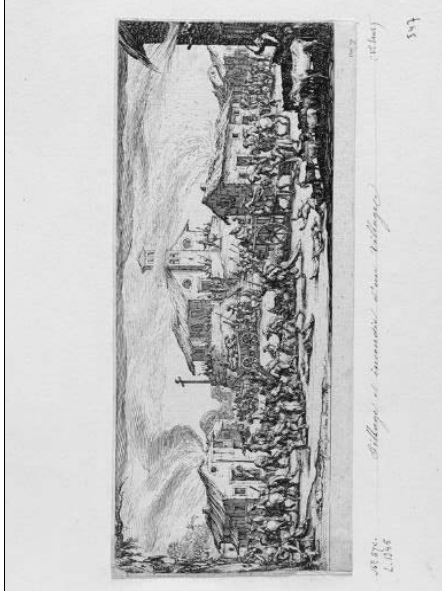
Date: 1633

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 85 x 187 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: F-PIL 44 LR/547
Recto

Bibliography: Lieure 1345



cat.

Inventory nr; references;
descriptions

images

translation

text

3.23

GB-Oam WA1942.49.23

Anonymous, "Per stentato cammino
aspero," [5300].

Former attribution(s): Stefano della
Bella

Date: 1690

Technique and support: pen and
brown ink on paper

Size: 76 x 104 mm

Description/Remarks:

Vignette

The drawing presents the Constantine
arch standing alone in a rural clearing,
flanked by vegetation and low walls. A
few figures walk or converse near the
base, but none of them dominate the
scene or engage the viewer's attention
directly.

No visual or structural element
appears to form an initial, nor does the
composition suggest any graphic cue
at the level of letterform. The overall
layout is symmetrical, calm, and
scenographic – a faithful rendering of
a classical monument with minor
adjustments in scale and proportion.
The cantata's tone of suffering and
interior conflict finds no direct echo in
the image, which appears to have been
chosen (or retained) for its decorative
clarity rather than symbolic or
rhetorical relevance. It thus belongs



Per stentato cammino
Asperso ogn'or di pianti
Mi conduce e mi spinge il mio
destino
E se pur veggio avanti
Due begl'occhi ridenti,
Cinisure amorose al mio desio
Pur tragger non posso
Da quel riso d'Amor se non
tormenti.

Veggio risplendere
Luci sì care,
Ne so cessare
Di lacrimar!
Più sento accedere
Fiamme nel core,
Più sveglio ardore
Nel sospirar.

Lumi, che splendono
Da sì bei rai,
Non lascian mai
Di tormentar!
E qual'or scendono
Tra quei bei giri,
Nuovi sospiri
Fan risvegliar.

Along a path so steep and slow,
Forever bathed in tears I go,
Driven onward by my fate,
Though I see before me, late,
Two lovely eyes that softly shine,
Love's beacons bright, desire's
design,
Yet from that smile Love grants to
me,
I draw no joy—only misery.

I see those radiant eyes appear,
So dear, so dear—
Yet still I weep, nor find relief.
The more I feel love's flame arise,
The more my soul ignites with
grief.

Eyes that shine with such fair
light,
Their beams so bright,
Bring not delight,
But ceaseless pain.
And when they fall, those lashes
low,
In gentle arcs that sweetly flow,
They stir anew my sighs again.

among the vignettes drawn for the view: images that frame and enrich the page without actively engaging the text.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73639>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI

2263,1.01

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

3.23a

Title: "Arco di Costantino", Antiche. E. Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da. Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile Regis excudit Parisiis.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

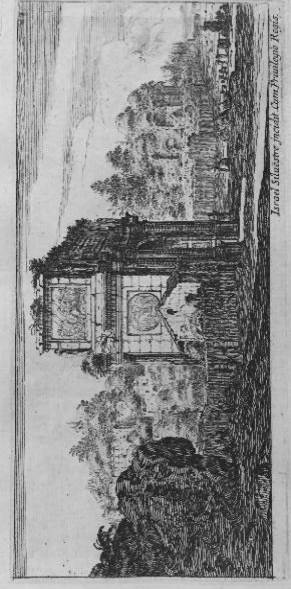
Date: 1645/48

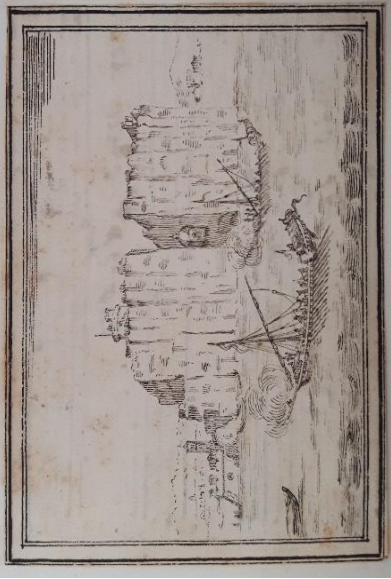
Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 68 x 153 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: art market

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.10



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.24	GB-Oam WA1942.49.24 Alessandro Stradella, "Aure voi che spirate." Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 74 x 103 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, allusive This vignette presents a fortified coastal landscape, with two sailing ships navigating choppy waters in the foreground. The vessel on the left, shown in three-quarter view, features a prominently curved sail and a vertical mast which together trace the outline of a wide, open capital "A." The fortress behind is monumental but generalized, acting more as backdrop than narrative setting. The drawing subtly reworks a known seascape model, but with adjustments in framing and detail to enhance the legibility of the letter. The initial is not integrated into a figure or disguised in natural elements; rather, it emerges compositionally from the silhouette of rigging and canvas. Its function is not decorative but symbolic and atmospheric.		<p>Aure voi che spirate Di Partenope ai lidi E voi navigli fidi Che quell'onde solcate Solo vi chieggió che per mio ristoro A me rendiate Erminda o ch'io mi moro. Pini voi che le miniere Dell'indiche maremme impoverite Per compiacer l'avide menti umane Del mare all'onde insane Vi consegnate e alle procelle in seno Frangervi non curate E doppo aver solcato Sin dall'occaseo all'orto La vostr'ancora alfin abbraccia il porto. Or se con lungo e faticoso giro Salve portate altrui merce gradita Discaro non vi sia Da Partenope a me recarsi la vita. Vesti o cielo azzurro amanto E respira aura soave Usignuol non ti sia frale Festeggiar con il tuo canto Or ch'a me riede il mio ben, Rio velen di gelosia</p>	<p>Winds, you who blow Over the shores of Parthenope, And you, faithful ships, That plow through those waves— I ask only this: For my comfort, Either return Erminda to me, Or let me die. // Pines, you who strip The mines of the Indian seas To satisfy the greedy minds of men, You who surrender yourselves To the mad waves of the sea And do not fear to break amid the storms— After having sailed From the setting to the rising sun, At last your anchor embraces the shore. Thus, if after such a long and arduous voyage You bear to others precious goods, Let it not seem a burden to you To bring back my life from Parthenope. // Sky, dress yourself In a blue cloak, And breathe forth a gentle breeze. Nightingale, may your fragile voice Celebrate with joyful song,</p>

The cantata, which opens with an apostrophe to the winds and sea, centers on themes of maritime longing, return, and emotional navigation. The ship becomes a metaphor for the speaker's hope and distress, echoing classical and baroque tropes of seaborne love and absence. The "A" thus works both as a literal incipit and as a figural condensation of the poem's emotional coordinates. Rather than illustrating the narrative, the image establishes a tone, a sense of movement, distance, and elemental invocation that prepares the eye and mind for the cantata's rhetorical unfolding.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73640>

Provenance/cat. nr.: Olim D-Hs ND VI 2263,II.04

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

L'alma mia tormentata fu a bastanza	Now that my beloved returns to me.
Dal rigor di tiranna lontananza.	Cruel venom of jealousy Has already tormented enough
Scherzi in mar placida l'onda	This soul of mine,
E si vesta il suol de fiori	Under the tyranny of distant absence. //
Voi del rio garruli umori	Let the sea play gently,
Festeggiate in verde sponda	Let the earth be clothed in flowers.
Or ch'a me riede il mio cor	You, streams of merry murmurs,
Caro amor fa piaga eguale	Celebrate upon the green banks, /
Col tuo strale	Now that my heart returns to me.
O al mio sen spegni l'ardore	// Dear Love, strike me again /
O cangia alla crudel sembianza o' core.	With your sweet dart—
Godi o' Tebro or che riede	Either quench the fire in my breast,
Dalle partenopee spiagge vicine	Or change the cruel heart of my beloved. // Rejoice, O Tiber,
La bella Erminda tua	Now that she returns
E li dove passar deve il ben piede	From the shores of Parthenope,
Smalta quel suol d'inargentate brine.	The beautiful Erminda—
Su su sparite	And where her dear foot shall tread,
Pensieri vili	Cover the ground with silvered dew. // Up, up—disappear,
Di servitù	Vile thoughts of slavery!
Non più, non più.	No more, no more.
No che non voglio amar	Not that I refuse to love—
Ma sol voglio adorar	But I wish only to adore
Della mia libertà l'ore gradite	The blessed hours of my liberty.
Su su sparite.	Up, up—disappear! //
No non fuggite	No, do not flee,
Affetti miei	My tender affections!
Meco vi vò	

Fin che vivrò.

Sì voglio adorar

E sempre sospirar

Già che così per me stelle influite

No non fuggite.

Remain with me,

As long as I shall live. / Yes, I shall
adore,

And forever sigh—

Since such is the decree

The stars have written for me.

No, do not flee!

3.24a

Title: "Rocher de Gayette lequel se fendit en deux lors de la passion de Nostre Seigneur." *Vues d'Italie.*

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

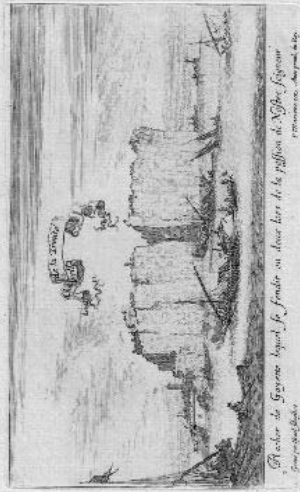
Date: c. 1640


Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 80 x 165 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: art market

Bibliography: Faucheux 5.9



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation	
3.25	GB-Oam WA1942.49.25	<p>Giovanni Lorenzo Lullier, <i>Stan soggetti alla Fortuna</i>, [4135].</p> <p>Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p> <p>Date: 1690</p> <p>Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper</p> <p>Size: 75 x 104 mm</p> <p>Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic/zoomorphic. The composition features a round coastal tower rising from rocky outcrops, with a fortified settlement in the background and various boats animating the harbour. In the foreground, a coiled sea creature emerges from the water, its tail curving back over its head to form a clear, decorative capital "S". The figure is placed in isolation at the bottom centre of the scene, drawing attention to the initial without integrating it into the surrounding narrative. As in other examples within the manuscript, the "S" is generated through the twisting pose of a hybrid or marine body, in a mode that recalls earlier grotesque.</p> <p>While there is no direct link between the cantata text and the subject of the vignette, the theme of fickle beauty</p>		<p>Stan soggetti alla Fortuna Anco i fiori di beltà. Nel giardin, ch'un volto accoglie, Questa diva il piè discioglie E con man, ch'insidie aduna, Gigli e rose a coglier va. Stan soggetti alla fortuna Anco i fiori di beltà.</p> <p>Ne di rosa o di giglio La matura vaghezza Scerner puote già mai, se cieco ha il ciglio. Così della bellezza Manca la primavera Sotto un cieco gestin l'alba o la sera.</p> <p>Filli mia, se va svanita La beltà, ch'hoggi è fiorita, N'è cagion sorte importuna Congiurata con l'età. Stan soggetti alla fortuna. Anco i fiori di beltà.</p>	<p>Even the flowers of beauty Are subject to Fortune's sway. In the garden that is a face, This goddess sets her steps in grace, And with a hand that hides deceit, She moves to pluck the rose and lily sweet. Even the flowers of beauty Are subject to Fortune's sway.</p> <p>Nor rose nor lily, In ripened bloom, May ever truly show its grace— If the gaze is blind to what it sees. So too does beauty's springtime fade, When blind command Turns dawn to dusk, and light to shade.</p> <p>Phyllis, my love, If beauty fades, though bright today, It is misfortune's fault— Conspiring with the years to steal away. Even the flowers of beauty Are subject to Fortune's sway.</p>

and ephemeral fortune may subtly echo the instability of the creature's form and placement. The sea creature appears ornamental, almost incidental, yet it anchors the composition's function as a textual threshold. Its calligraphic loop enacts a literal flourish, a visual prologue to a poem about the fragility of youth and charm.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73641>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Add.24311.07

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

3.25a

Title: "Porto Vecchio." Antiche. E.
Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno.
Fate. Da. Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile
Regis excudit Parisiis

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

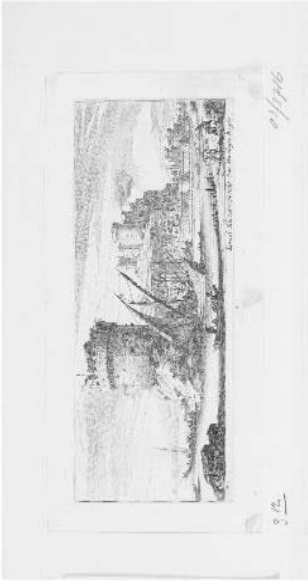
Date: 1650


Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 94 x 176 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: D-BKh 1903/3716

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.12



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.26	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.26 Severo de Luca, "Lungi dal patrio suolo" Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p> <p>Date: 1690</p> <p>Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper</p> <p>Size: 88 x 88 mm</p> <p>Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic The drawing presents the square of the <i>Bocca della Verità</i>, with a loggia on the left, rustic buildings on the right, and scattered figures engaged in various activities. A man stands at the very center of the composition, casting a clear shadow diagonally behind him. The visual alignment between standing figure and shadow produces a subtle but legible capital "L", tilted on its axis. This letter is not constructed through posture or architecture, but rather emerges from the play of light, making it one of the most discreet and effective examples of compositional lettering in the album.</p> <p>Image link: https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73642</p> <p>Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI 2263.III.05</p> <p>Bibliography:</p>		<p>Lungi dal patrio suolo Eurillo, innamorato d'una beltà crudele, per isfogare un dì l'aspro suo duolo, in solitarie piante i suoi tormenti così narrava ai fiori, all'onde, ai venti: Aure, fiori, onde, voi siete del mio duol la vera imago. Voi, aurette, sospirate, vaghe rose, sempre arsite, e con flebil mormorio, mesto rio, sol di piangere sei vago. Dunque, per non mirare sì lagrimosi oggetti, volgi al cielo le luci! Ah! che lagrime ogn'or mia sorte vuole— che se rimiro il ciel, veggio il mio sole. Chiudi dunque nel sen le dolenti pupille, già che mirar non ponno questo misero cor fra tante pene. Ah! di spietata Irene gli occhi che ti mirarono— vuoi che paghino il fio di tanto errore?</p>	<p>Far from his native land, Eurillo, in love with a cruel beauty, to ease, one day, his bitter sorrow, among silent groves told his torment to the flowers, the waves, and the winds: Breezes, flowers, waves, you are the true image of my pain. You, soft breezes, sigh; roses, ever scorched; and with a mournful murmur, you, sad stream, long only to weep. So, to avoid beholding such tearful things, I lift my eyes to Heaven. Ah! But tears fall still— for when I gaze at the sky, I see my sun. Close, then, within my breast, these grieving eyes, since they can no longer bear this heart, so torn by pain. Ah! for Irene's pitiless eyes— must they pay the price for such a sin?</p>

Related work(s):

Ch'è ben folle chi crede al tuo splendore. Dormi pure, dormi pure, e il cieco Dio versi al core onde di Lete, che l'Amore al petto mio vibra ogn'or fiamme amorose. Onde care, deh pietose, il mio foco un di estinguate! Appena avea lo sventurato Eurillo chiuse le luci al sonno, che spaventose forme lo tormentano ogn'or mentre esso dorme. Mira la bella Irene al suo dolor più fiera, più sorda alle sue pene, d'ogni pietade ignuda, nei pianti di lui farsi più cruda. Destossi, e disperato di ritrovar mai posa al suo tormento, in sì pietoso grido pianse il suo mal— ma non s'udì Cupido. O sorte crudelissima, se tormentar mi vuoi, insegnami a soffrir! A danni miei si cangiano le ombre in tiranni orribili, per farmi ogn'or languir. Ma sordo il Nume infante non udì le querele dell'infelice amante,	He is a fool who trusts your brightness. Sleep, then, sleep, and may blind Love pour into my heart the waves of Lethe, while he strikes my breast with ever-burning flames. Gentle waves, oh merciful ones, quench this fire one day! But no sooner had the wretched Eurillo closed his eyes in sleep, than fearful visions haunted him still as he dreamed. He sees fair Irene, even fiercer in his grief, deaf to his pain, stripped of all pity, growing more cruel at his tears. / He woke, and in despair. / believing he'd find no rest from torment, / he cried aloud in pitiful lament— / but Cupid did not hear. // O most cruel fate, if you would torment me, teach me how to suffer! My very shadows turn to horrible tyrants to make me languish evermore. //
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

che a se stesso crudele,
per terminar mille tormenti e
mille,
pungentissimo strale
immerse in quel bel seno.
E l'alma, sciolta
dall'infelice carcere di pene,
fuggia... e ver'... fuggia...
ma pur chiamava Irene.

*But deaf was the infant god,
who heard not the complaints
of the unhappy lover,
who, cruel to himself,
to end a thousand torments,
plunged a sharpest dart
into that fair breast. / And the
soul, freed / from its unhappy
prison of pain,
fled... fled—but still
called out Irene's name.*

3.26a

Title: "Scola greca ovvero bocca della verita." *Vues de Rome et de Venise.*

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

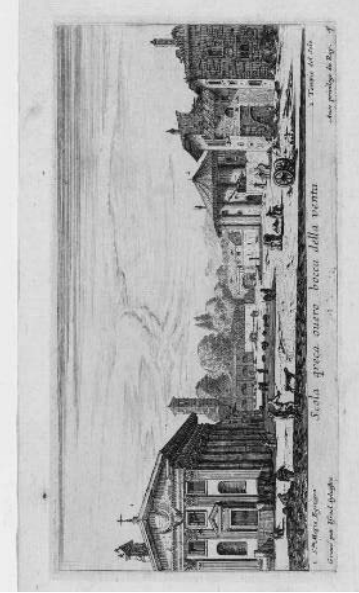
Date: 1621


Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 114 x 200 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: US-RISD Museum 81.201

Bibliography: Faucheux 4.4



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.27	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.27 Alessandro Stradella, <i>Arresta, arresta il piè</i>, f.49r-62v, [5308] Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p>		<p>Arresta, arresta il piè, Fugace mentitor, crudo tiranno, Ch'il tuo furtivo inganno Sdegnato Amor vendicherà per me. Al mio servir costante Tal guiderdon si dà? E con barbara empietà Tormentata così lasci un'amante? Ah perfido inhumano, Tradimenti sì fieri a me prepari; E con stile profano Solo a mentir, solo a tradire impari? E fra sospiri amari Me sola esponi in queste dure selve Schernò di predator, pasto di belve? Ed io lassa pur resto Invendicata ancora E senza far dimora L'armi hostil non appresto? E con archi e saette Non fò, di chi m'offese, aspre vendette. Nell'ringo del furore, Fra le squadre de i martiri Il mio cor spiega l'insegna E s'ingegna</p>	<p><i>Halt, halt your step, Fleeting liar, cruel tyrant, Your stealthy deception Shall be avenged by scorned Love for me. Is this the reward For my faithful service? With barbarous cruelty You leave your lover thus tormented? Ah, treacherous, inhuman man, Such fierce betrayals you prepare for me; And with profane intent You learn only to lie, only to deceive? And amid bitter sighs You leave me alone in these harsh woods Mocked by predators, prey to beasts? And I, alas, still remain Unavenged, And without delay I do not ready my hostile arms? And with bows and arrows I do not bring harsh revenge on the one who wronged me? In the arena of fury, Amid the squadrons of torment,</i></p>
	<p>Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 75 x 100 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic This vignette shows the Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella on the Via Appia. The circular tomb dominates the background, while to the right the remains of the adjoining fortification are sketched in lighter contour. In the foreground, a female figure is shown in a dynamic stance, with legs apart and arms raised, forming a clear capital "A". Her right foot rests on a spade, suggesting a moment of digging or marking the ground. The initial emerges from a functional gesture, rather than a theatrical display. This deliberate combination of bodily movement and letterform reinforces the cantata's themes of pursuit, resistance, and emotional resolve. The tomb in the background, a monument to loss and permanence, contrasts with the immediacy of the figure's</p>			

action. Together, the elements construct a visual threshold where gesture, letter, and landscape intersect—the “A” standing as both opening and omen.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73643>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI

2263,1.06

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Con falangi di sospiri D'espugnare il tuo rigore E s'Amore Del mio pensier non smarrirà la traccia, Prigionier ti farò nelle mie braccia.	My heart unfurls its banner And strives With legions of sighs To overcome your hardness. And if Love Does not lose the path of my thought, I shall make you prisoner within my arms.
Del tuo corso spedito L'aure tumultuose L'amato suol non varcaran sì presto, Che del mio sen tradito L'onde caliginose Non facciano al tuo piè geloso arresto E con ben degno oltraggio Nelle lacrime mie provi il naufraggio? Ah no, sì crudo scempio Bramar contro il suo cor l'alma non sà. Basterà sol, che l'empio Del mio grave languir senta pietà, E che pentito al meno De tradimenti suoi torni al mio seno.	Your swift course The tumultuous winds Will not cross the beloved shore so soon That the shadowy waves Of my betrayed heart Do not bring your jealous foot to a halt And with rightful outrage Make you shipwreck in my tears? Ah no, such cruel destruction My soul does not know how to desire against the heart it loves. It will be enough that the cruel one Feels pity for my deep languishing, And that repentant at last He returns to my breast from his betrayals. //
Fra catene di contenti Stringerà l'ore amorse E con forme più pietose Darà fine a miei tormenti.	In chains of contentment He will bind the loving hours And with gentler forms He will put an end to my torments. //
Ah, che la doglia acerba	Ah, how bitter grief

Corrompe ogni dolcezza E con tacita asprezza Solo al penar il viver mio riserba. Soffio d'aura superba, Gonfia della speranza il debil lino. Ma nel mar del dolor naufraga il pino. //	Corrupts all sweetness And with silent harshness Leaves my life to suffering alone. A breath of haughty air Swells the fragile sail with hope. But in the sea of sorrow, the ship is wrecked. //
Voi del cielo dorate fiammelle, Che infondete a mortali gl'ardori, Fate fede co i vostri splendori, Se s'asconde il mio sol fra le stelle.	You golden flames of heaven, Who pour passion into mortals, Bear witness with your shining If my sun hides among the stars.
Ma se per l'onde insane Di tumido Anfitrite Con l'ali dell'ardir varca le spume E alle sponde inumane Del portentoso Dite Tributario del duol piega le piume.	But if through the mad waves Of swelling Amphitrite He crosses the foam with wings of boldness And to the inhuman shores Of monstrous Dis He bends his wings as tribute to grief,
Fra le turbe degli estinti I più chiusi laberinti Tentarò. E nel regno delle pene Il mio bene Seguirò.	Among the crowds of the dead Through the deepest labyrinths I shall go. And in the realm of sorrows My beloved I shall follow.
Sì, sì, voglio seguire, Chi m'abbandona e fugge, Sì, sì, voglio servire, Chi mi consuma e strugge E con funesta sorte	Yes, yes, I want to follow The one who abandons and flees from me, Yes, yes, I want to serve The one who consumes and destroys me

Morirò per cercar, chi mi dà
morte.

*And with a fatal fate
I shall die in search of the one who
brings me death.*

3.27a

Title: "Tomb of Cecilia Metella",
Antiche. E. Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da. Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile Regis excudit Parisiis.

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

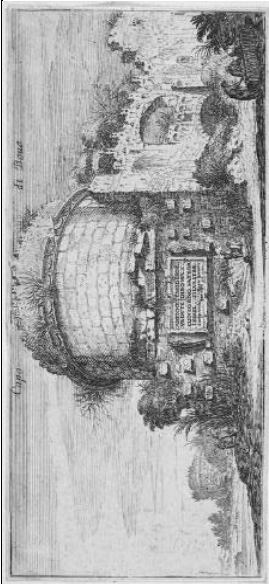
Date: 1654


Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 68 x 155 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: F-PI 31176 LR/
Recto

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.1



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.28	GB-Oam WA1942.49.28 Severo de Luca, <i>Voi volete ch'io canti canterò</i> [t. Francesco Maria Paglia] Former attribution(s) : Stefano della Bella Date : 1690 Technique and support : pen and brown ink on paper Size : 78 x 100 Description/Remarks : Hidden, anthropomorphic This vignette depicts a wide, empty square surrounded by monumental architecture, including a domed church, a baroque portal, and a palazzo with a long cornice. The view is loosely inspired by composite Roman piazzas, though not directly traceable to a single topographic source. At the centre of the square, two small human figures stand facing slightly outward, forming a shallow "V" shape through the angle of their bodies. There is no other prominent motif in the foreground; the eye is drawn to their placement and symmetry, which together define the initial. Unlike the more complex anthropomorphic or zoomorphic initials elsewhere in the manuscripts, this "V" is entirely generated by orientation and negative space.		Voi volete ch'io canti? Canterò, ma il dolor mio Chiameraà sugli occhi il pianto Piangerò se il cieco Dio Fra le labra uccide il canto. Voi volete ch'io canti. Canterò ma piangeranno Le mie voci e i miei sospiri Piangerò del cor l'affanno Canterò crudi martiri. Dirò che il mio pensiero Come libero nacque La libertà godea Ma perché poi dispiacque La mia pace alle sfere La libertà perdé restando alfine L'infelice pensiero Schiavo della prigion d'un crin ch'è nero. È nero quel crine, Che a tante ruine Condanna il mio cor: È nero quel laccio Per cui son di ghiaccio Nel mezzo all'ardor. È nero il legame Che l'arse mie brame	Do you wish me to sing? I shall sing—but my sorrow will summon tears to my eyes. I shall weep, if blind Love kills the song upon my lips. You wish me to sing. I shall sing, but my voice and sighs shall weep together. I shall lament the heart's deep anguish, I shall sing of cruel torments. I shall tell how my thought, born free, once rejoiced in liberty; but because my peace displeased the spinning spheres of fate, my thought, alas, lost its freedom, and now remains a prisoner of a single lock of black hair. That hair is black— that condemns my heart to so much ruin. That dark tress, by which I freeze in ice even amid the flames of passion. Black is the bond that compels my burning desires

There is no clear iconographic correspondence between the vignette and the cantata text, which is dense with metaphors of darkness, bondage, and infernal imagery. However, the stark emptiness of the piazza may subtly mirror the emotional void described in the poem's conclusion. The quiet geometry of the two figures, isolated in a vast architectural field, becomes a visual metaphor for a song caught between performance and lament.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73644>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI 2263.III.04

Bibliography:

Related work(s): 3.18

Costringe a penar È nero il mio nodo L'adoro e non godo Mi basta l'amar.	to suffer in pain. Black is the knot I adore, and though I find no joy, it is enough for me to love.
Vanti pur biondo crine D'ingelosir l'arene Del Pattolo e Arimaspe Del Tago ed Eritreo Del Gange e Idaspe; Che amor per darmi pene Già sul crin del mio bene Distemprò Flegetonte Lete, Stige, Cocito ed Acheronte.	Let the fair-haired locks boast of outshining the golden sands of Pactolus and Arimaspus, of Tagus and Eritrean shores, of Ganges and Hydaspes; but Love, in forging my pains, tempered my beloved's hair with Phlegethon, Lethe, Styx, Cocytus, and Acheron.
Con l'onde torbide Del nero inferno L'arcier terribile Quel crin formò Per far dell'anima Crudo flagello Fece quel crin ch'è nero sì, ma bello.	From the murky waves of black Inferno the dreadful Archer wove that hair, to forge a cruel scourge for the soul: a hair black as night— and yet so beautiful.
Dall'empie tenebre Dei ciechi abissi Il nume barbaro Quel crin rubbò Nascese i fulmini Con la sua face Sotto quel crin, ch'è nero sì, ma piace.	From the impious darkness of blind abysses, the savage god stole that hair, hiding the thunderbolts beneath that flame: black hair—so dark, yet so sweet.
E non intendo ancora	And still I cannot fathom how, for my ruin,

Come per mie ruine

Il bell'ido lo mio ch'ha l'alba in
fronte

Porta negl'occhi il sol, la notte al
crine.

Dunque convien ch'io mi
distrugga in pianti,
E volete ch'io canti?

my lovely idol, whose brow holds
the dawn,

can bear the sun in her eyes,
but the night in her hair.

Thus, I must drown myself in
weeping—
and still you wish me to sing?

3.28a

Title: "Terme Diocletienne." Vues de

Rome et de Venise

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

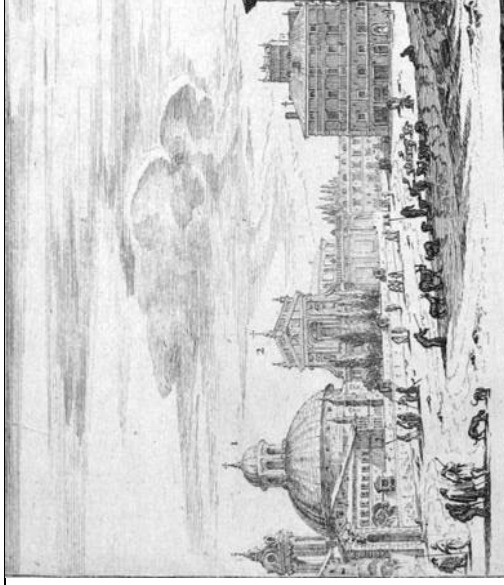
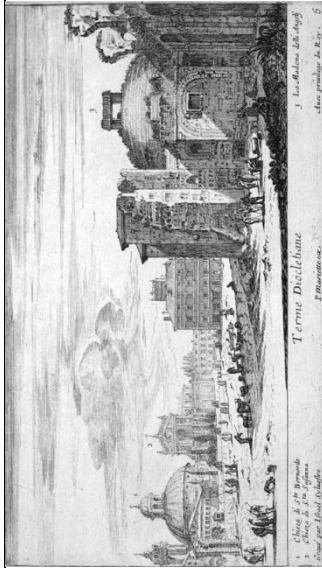
Date: 1621


Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 114 x 200 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: GB-Lwl 224771

Bibliography: Faucheux 4.6



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.29	GB-Oam WA1942.49.29 Alessandro Stradella, <i>Pensi oia' che si bada</i> [5315] Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 78 x 93 mm Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic Set in front of a ruined architectural backdrop, this vignette presents a central female figure in dramatic isolation, facing the viewer. She holds a sword in one hand. Her body and drape together form a clear, stylised capital "P", placed at the forefront of the scene. The figure can be identified as Armida, invoked directly in the cantata. Her posture conveys both rage and restraint, matching the tone of the text, in which the heroine oscillates between murderous fury and desperate love. The letter is not hidden, but incarnated in action: the "P" is both an initial and a gesture of vengeance. Unlike other initials in the manuscript that rely on disguise or subtle integration, this one asserts itself		<p>Pensi oia', che si bada? Sù, sù, venga il destriero, Mi si cinga la spada, Ch'al rimbombo guerriero De martiali carmi Il tradito mio cor già corre all'armi! Scherno del mio furor, Bersaglio del mio sdegno Sia d'un barbaro infido il capo indegno. Che pera il traditore, Che Rinaldo s'uccida, Così comanda alle sue furie Armida.</p> <p>Con valore insuperabile L'invincibile Suo poter saprò combattere Ed abbattere D'un perfido sleal l'ira implacabile, Che del mio brando horribile Il mortifero assalto Il suo sen frangerà benché di smalto.</p> <p>Ah no, frenate il volo, Homicidi miei sensi, E negl'abbissi immensi</p>	<p><i>Do you think, oh there, that I will wait?</i> <i>Up, up—bring forth the steed, Let the sword gird my side, For at the echoing beat Of martial hymns and cries, My betrayed heart already to arms does rise!</i> <i>Let him be mockery of my wrath, Target of my scorn— That vile barbarian's unworthy head be torn.</i> <i>Let the traitor perish, Let Rinaldo be struck down, So commands Armida, wild with fury, and renown.</i> <i>With a courage unconquerable, I shall know how to fight And to defeat The invincible force Of a perfidious, faithless blight.</i> <i>Let my dreadful blade descend, With deadly force defend— Let it shatter his steel-strong breast, That unrepenting wretch, no longer blessed.</i> <i>Ah no—restrain the flight, My senses steeped in murder! And in the deep abyss</i></p>

through gesture, weapon, and dramatic stance. It marks the page not just as an prologue to the emotional and rhetorical charge of the cantata.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73645>

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI 2263,1.13

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Di smemorato oblio chiudete il duolo, Che sol l'immaginar lacero al suolo Volto così gradito, È tormento infinito Ed è troppo martire Pensar l'amato estinto e non morire.	Of forgotten oblivion hide this blight. For even to imagine that face, once kissed, Fallen, torn in pain, Is torment without end— Too cruel a suffering To think my beloved slain and still be living.
No, no, cada il superbo, Distrutto del mio honore e di mia fede, E se al mio duolo acerbo L'iniquo mentitor negò mercede, Sia degna ricompensa Della barbarie sua la mia inclemenza.	No, no—let the proud one fall, Destroyer of my honor and my trust. And if my bitter grief He dares repay with silence and with gall, Let my own cruelty Be the just reward for his barbarity.
Crude idee d'aspre ferite, Che quest'alma trafiggete, Per pietà, deh, ritenete Le mie furie in grembo a Dite.	Cruel thoughts of savage wounds, That pierce this soul so deep, Have mercy now and keep My fury bound in Pluto's tomb.
Ah sì, mora l'ingrato E dal petto spietato L'iniquo spirito il mio furor distinguea, Nè pietà lusinghiera il cor mi punge! Faccian turbe voraci Delle viscere sue l'ultimo scempio E a gl'amanti mendaci La strage d'un crudel serva d'esempio.	Ah yes—let the ingrate die, And from that pitiless breast Let his wicked spirit be torn by my unrest. Let no sweet pity soften me again! Let ravaging hordes Make his entrails their final feast— And let the ruin of one cruel deceiver

*Be a lesson to all false-hearted
lovers.*

Vendicata al fin sarò,
Ne potrò

La mia sorte più incolpar,
Se penar l'odio mi fè,
Per mercè del mio rigor
Giust'Amor farà sentir
Dolce effetto del gioir.

*At last I shall be avenged,
And no more
Shall I blame fate or moan,
If hatred made me suffer.
For as reward for my harsh rigor,
Just Love shall grant me
The sweet fruit of joy delivered.*

Ah, che troppo discorda
La lingua del desio

E troppo mal s'accorda
Il dar morte, a chi regge il viver
mio.

*Ah—but how discordant still
Is the tongue of desire—
And how poorly aligns
The thought of death, for him who
gives me life entire.*

Sì, sì, pera il tiranno,
E se a punire il suo lascivo
inganno

L'armi fatali mie non son
bastanti,
Sappia la lingua sussurar
gl'incanti.

*Yes, yes—let the tyrant fall!
And if my fatal arms prove too
small
To punish his licentious crime,
Let my tongue enchant with spells
in time.*

Alme ree del nero Tartaro,

Scatenate i fieri cardini
Della stigia crudeltà
E dal vostro horrendo baratro
Per sommergere un sacrilego
Vomitare ogn'empietà.

*O damned souls of gloomy
Tartarus,
Unleash the cruel hinges
Of Styx's iron gates,
And from your horrid gulfs below,
Spew forth all blasphemies
To drown a sacrilegious foe.*

Le nubi squarcino
Tempeste o fulmini,
L'onde sconvolghino
Procelle e turbini,

*Let clouds be torn with thunder,
With lightning and wild hail—*

Il suol disserrino
Rupi e voragini,
Gemiti, fremiti
Il mondo assordino
E dall'etherea mole
Per dar tomba a un fellon ruini il
sole.

Let waves churn up in fury,
And winds in madness wail—
Let the earth crack open wide,
With rocks and gulfs untamed,
Let groans and roars resound
And deafen all creation—
Let the sun crash from heaven's
height
To become the traitor's tomb
beneath its light.

3.29a **Title:** "Baths of Diocletian." "Paysages et ruines de Rome

Attribution: Stefano della Bella, publisher : François Langlois, il Ciartres

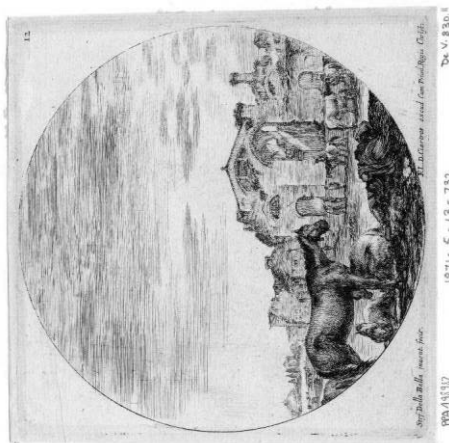
Date: 1646


Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 131 x 136 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: GB-Lbma 1871,0513.732

Bibliography: De Vesme 830



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.30	<p>GB-Oam WA1942.49.30</p> <p>Alessandro Stradella, <i>Il piu' tenero affetto</i> [4129].</p> <p>Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella</p> <p>Date: 1690</p> <p>Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper</p> <p>Size: 81 x 100</p> <p>Description/Remarks: Hidden, anthropomorphic (use of the composition)</p> <p>The composition is divided between a massive arched ruin on the left and a complex of multi-storey dwellings with chimneys and balconies on the right. Figures are scattered throughout, but the standing figure in the left foreground, holding a long staff or walking stick, commands visual attention.</p> <p>The posture and placement of this figure, upright, slightly off-centre, and isolated, form a capital "I", coinciding with the incipit of the cantata. The gesture is subtle but deliberate: the figure is not ornamental, but structurally integrated, acting as the vertical axis that introduces the page.</p> <p>There is no direct iconographic relationship between the image and the cantata, which takes the form of an extended emotional monologue by Idraspe, torn between departure and longing. Yet the solitude of the figure, placed at the visual and narrative threshold, resonates quietly with</p>		<p>Il più tenero affetto, Che mai destasse Amore In nobil petto Di costante Amatore, Questi à ciascun fuor che à tè sola ascosi Mi detta idolo mio sensi amorosi.</p> <p>Già di Sirio cocente Fugge Apollo i latrati E con tepidi fiati Più soavi respiri il ciel consente. Ma la cruda mia sorte Vuol, che queste vicende Porghino altrui la vita, a me la morte.</p> <p>Sappi dunque, mio bene, Che partir mi conviene, Pochi giri di sole Restano a me di vita, Se vita si può dire Il pensare a partire anzi a morire. Partirò.</p> <p>Dura legge, Benché sia di natura, a ciò m'induce, Senza l'amata luce Proveran gl'occhi miei continua sera, Breve sì, ma severa fia la stanza</p>	<p>The tenderest affection That ever Love awake In a noble breast Of a faithful lover, To all but you, my idol, It stays concealed— Yet bids me sing with love- inspired zeal. Already from Sirius' blaze Apollo flees the howls, And with tepid breath He grants the sky more soothing airs. But my cruel fate Decrees that these transitions Bring life to others—and to me, death. Know then, my dearest, That I must take my leave. Only a few turns of the sun Are left to me in life, If "life" it be to name This constant thought of parting— nay, of dying. I shall depart. A harsh decree, Though born of nature, urges me to go. Without your loving light, My eyes shall dwell in endless dusk. Brief, yet cruel shall be my stay</p>

the poem's affective stance: a solitary speaker preparing for exile. The result is a restrained but effective instance of initial suggestion through spatial design, emblematic of the manuscript's broader interplay between landscape, figure, and letterform.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73646>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl Add.24311.01

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Per me nel patrio albergo, E pria, ch'a te ritorni, Anni, l'ore, saran secoli i giorni. Partirò.	Within my native home, And ere I return to you, The days will feel like centuries— each hour a year. I shall depart.
Così vuole Il mio fato, il mio sangue, E benché io resti esangue Di gelosi pensieri onusto ed ebro, Volgo all'Arbia le piante, il core al Tebro.	So commands My fate, my blood, And though I stand drained, Drunk on jealous thoughts, I turn my steps toward Arbia, my heart to the Tiber.
Non lascio omai le piume, Ne mai veggio lucente Nascer dall'oriente il Rè del lume, Ch'io non pensi a quell'Alba, Che porta a gl'occhi miei sì lunga notte,	I no longer find rest on downy plumes, Nor see the King of light Rise in the East Without thinking of that Alba That brings such endless night unto my eyes.
La mia quiete, i miei sonni Son vigilie interrotte, Procellosa tempesta Prova l'anima mia pensando solo, A chi parte, a chi resta, e solca intanto	My quiet, my sleep, Are sleepless vigils torn by storm. My soul, in torment, drifts alone, Dwelling on who leaves, who stays—
Golfi di gelosia, flutti di pianto.	And sails through seas of jealousy, waves of tears.
Dovrei, lumi beati, Più continuo mirarvi, Dovrei, labbri adorati, Più frequente ascoltarvi, Ma poichè delle stelle Obbedir mi conviene, A gl'influssi protervi Meglio fia, che per tempo Avvezzi queste luci a non vedervi.	O blessed eyes, I should behold you evermore, O lips adored, I should hear your voice more often. But since I must obey The stars above, And their harsh influences,

Sì, sì, misero Idraspe, Impara a poco a poco A star lungi dal foco, Et arder sempre Forma di salde tempre All'Alma tua l'Usbergo e pensa homai Come viver potrai Lontan da questo suolo Povero d'ogni ben, ricco di duolo.	It is better that these eyes Grow used to not beholding you. Yes, yes—wretched Idraspe, Learn slowly, step by step, To stay far from the flame, And yet forever burn. Form a breastplate of steadfast metal To shield your soul, and learn now How you shall live Far from this beloved soil— Poor in joy, rich only in sorrow. Oh God, what shall I do? Hope tells me That Dori, my beloved, Swore to be constant. But cruel Jealousy Whispers to my soul: "No, she did not." O Heaven, what now? My heart, mistaken, sighs In vain for your fidelity. Yet around my sun There looms a shadow That brings me death. Among such doubting thoughts I shall waste away, Languishing in Etruria's woods, through days and hours. Led by grief, I'll tread those desolate paths, Spending my life With no company But your memory, sweet Dori.
Oh' Dio, che farò? Mi dice la spene, Che Dori il mio bene Costanza giurò. Ma ria Gelosia All'Anima mia Soggiunge di nò. O ciel, che sarà? Il cor, che delira A torto sospira/si duole Di tua fedeltà. Ma intorno al mio sole Qualch'ombra s'aggira, Che morte mi dà.	
Fra sì dubbi pensieri Consumerò languendo Nelle selve d'Etruria i giorni, e l'ore. Guidato dal dolore Per quegl'ermi sentieri Passerò la mia vita	

Senz'altra compagnia, Che la memoria tua Dori gradita. Studierò per quei Boschi Filosofo d'amore Le cagioni e gl'affetti Del gelo e dell'ardore, Speculerò la forza Di quel genio fatal, che l'Alma uccide? Tu sola in quel soggiorno Ad'ogni linea mia centro sarai, Ma non sò, s'al ritorno Ritrovar ti potrò, qual ti lasciai. Ripensarò sovente Alle noie, che porto, Alle gioie, che lascio, Stringerò in un sol fascio La mestitia, il contento, Le speranze e i timori, I miei felici, i miei gelosi Amori. L'Acque, le Beve, i venti Farò de miei pensieri Messaggieri frequenti? S'avvien ch'aura vagante D'intorno a te s'aggiri, Saranno i miei sospiri, Il mormorio dell'onda Ti narrerà il dolor, ch'in sen m'abbonda, De gl'augelli i concenti Diranno i miei lamenti, E se tal'ora di vedermi hai desio, L'ombra, che segue te, quella son io.	Through those woods, I shall study. A philosopher of love, The causes and effects Of coldness and of ardor. I'll ponder the strength Of that fatal spirit which slays the soul. And there, in that retreat, You alone shall be the center of my every line— But I know not if, upon returning, I shall find you as I left you. I will often recall The troubles I now carry, The joys I now forsake— Binding all into one sheaf: My sadness, my delight, My hopes and fears, My blissful and my jealous loves. The waters, the beasts, the winds Shall become messengers Of my wandering thoughts. If a wandering breeze Circles near you, It shall be my sighs. The murmuring waves Shall tell of the sorrow overflowing in my breast. The songs of birds Shall speak of my lament, And if at any moment you wish to see me—
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Ma vola il tempo e benché acerbo e grave	The shadow that follows you—that is me.
Riesca al labro mio	Yet time flies, and though bitter and harsh
Di proferir partendo il tuo bel nome,	It is to my lips
Studio per dirti a dio,	To utter your sweet name while parting,
Ma non sò come?	Still I try to say farewell—
O quale al mio partire	But I know not how.
Di ribellanti affetti	O what a war of passions
Battaglia in me si serra,	Wages within me at this hour,
Che mi sconvolge e tace!	It shakes and silences me!
lo parto in guerra e tu rimanti in pace.	I depart in war— And you remain in peace.

3.30a **Title:** "Antiche. E. Moderne. Vedute. Di. Roma. E. Contorno. Fate. Da. Israel. Silvestro. cum priuile Regijs excudit Parisiis."

Attribution: Israël Silvestre

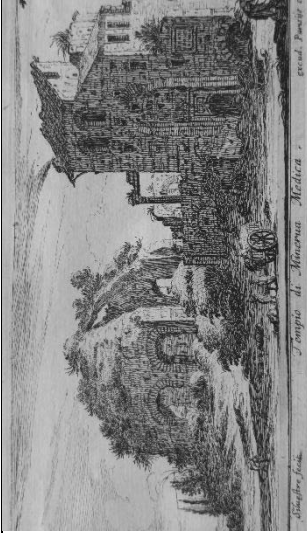
Date: 1645-48

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 67 x 154 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: Fitcher Kunsthandel, sale 10.12.2022, lot 1075

Bibliography: Faucheux 3.4



cat.

Inventory nr; references; descriptions

3.31 GB-Oam WA1942.49.31

Alessandro Stradella, *Anima incenerita* [5312].

Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella

Date: 1690

Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper

Size: 80 x 101 mm

Description/Remarks:

Hidden, Antropomorphic

In this vignette, two figures occupy the foreground, positioned in a symmetrical and unnatural pose. Their hands and feet are clasped together, forming a triangular structure that clearly describes a capital "A". The gesture is both artificial and theatrical, calling attention to its function as an initial.

All meaning is condensed into the human letter-gesture, which dominates the composition and introduces the cantata with visual intensity.

The body, bent into a letter, becomes both ornament and symbol, caught between display and distortion.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73647>

images



text

translation

Anima incenerita
A i rai del mio bel sole
Fulminata si duole,
Nè ritrova all'ardor scampo, nè
aita,
Che Lauro difensore
Non han gl'amanti al fulminar
d'Amore.

A soul turned to ashes
By the rays of my bright sun,
Struck by thunder, mourns alone,
And finds no escape from the
burning flame, no aid—
For laurel does not shield
Lovers from Love's fierce blade.

Qual nel lido acheronteo
Mesto Orfeo,
Preda d'Amor
Fò canoro il pianto mio
E pietà dal cieco dio
Non impetra
La mia cetra
Flaggellata dal dolor.

As on Acheron's shore
Sorrowful Orpheus
In Love's cruel snare,
So do I make my weeping sing,
And from the blind god
No pity can I bring—
My lyre,
Lashed by sorrow's hand,
Knows no other command.

Con severa tirannia
L'alma mia
Ciglio crudel
Fa bersaglio alle saette
E un momento non permette,
Ch'io respiri
Tra martiri
Crudo fato, avverso ciel.

By a cruel tyranny,
My soul is pierced
By a merciless eye
That turns its glance to target
true,
And not one moment does it grant
me breath—
Only martyrdom anew
By cruel fate, by heaven's wrath.

Ma qual vil codardia le glorie
oscura
Alla mia fè costante?

But what cowardice would darken
glory
Born of steadfast faith?

Provenance/cat. nr: D-Hs ND VI

2263,1.10

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

Mi sgomentan l'arsure e sono amante?	Shall flames frighten me, and I yet love?
No, vero non fia,	No—never shall it be
Che mal nato timor l'alma debelli.	That low-born fear defeats the soul in me.
Si, luci adorate,	Yes, beloved lights,
Ferite, saettate,	Wound me, strike me,
Piovete sul mio seno i mongibelli,	Rain your Etna-fires upon my breast!
Grandinate ver me strali d'ardore,	Let burning darts fall fast upon my frame—
Che a un diluvio di fiamme offro il mio core.	I offer up my heart to flame.
Il sagittario	The Archer,
Figlio di Venere	Son of Venus,
Strali ardentissimi	Let him hurl his fiercest bolts
Vibri al mio sen?	At my breast—
Che fia mio svario	Should I fall, consumed in fire,
Converso in cenere	Turned to ash in blazing pyres,
Tra incendij asprissimi	Let it be my fate confessed.
Di venir men.	
2.a	
Ciglio implacabile	An implacable gaze
Piaga insoffribile	Opens an unbearable wound
M'apra nell'anima	Within my soul—
Senza pietà.	No pity offered there.
Che caro e amabile	Yet how sweet, how dear,
È il duol terribile,	Is this terrible pain
Che mi disanima	That leaves me lifeless
Per sua beltà.	For the beauty I bear.
Ma chi sa, se gradite	But who can say, if perhaps,
A duo begl'occhi alteri	To those proud, shining eyes,
Siano le fiamme ambite	These flames I bear
E riportin mercè stratij si fieri?	

*Might win reward, though I
agonize?*

*To make oneself a victim of such
scorn,
With no hope of delight,
Is madness of the mind,
And folly of the soul's own right.*

*To be the target of cruelty
With no hope for grace...
But—what say I? It is cowardice
Of a tongue too greedy
To ask for mercy for a servitude
so dear.
To suffer for such willing bondage
Is triumph in pain, and in
outrage—a prize sincere.*

Farsi vittima al rigor
Senza speme di goder
È un delirio del pensier
E dell'anima un folle error.

2.a
Farsi scopo all'empietà
Senza speme di mercè.
Ma, che dico, è viltà
Di lingua troppo avara
Chieder mercè per servitù sì cara.
Di spontaneo servaggio
È trionfo il soffrir, premio
l'oltraggio.

3.31a

Title: "Divers Paysages."

Attribution: Stefano della Bella,
publisher: Henriët Israëli

Date: 1643


Technique and support: etching on
paper

Size: 80 x 165 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: US-Wnga
1973.34.16

Bibliography: De Vesme 765



cat.	Inventory nr; references; descriptions	images	text	translation
3.32	GB-Oam WA1942.49.32 Anonymous, "Sono in armi Bellezza e Virtù" [4139]. Former attribution(s): Stefano della Bella Date: 1690 Technique and support: pen and brown ink on paper Size: 85 x 108 mm Description/Remarks: Allusive This vignette depicts a chaotic mêlée of mounted soldiers, some charging, others retreating, many strewn across the field. Smoke rises in the background, and a distant army appears in vague formation at the upper right. In its original context, this image would likely have been read as a depiction of real or imagined warfare. But in the manuscript, paired with its cantata, it takes on an unmistakably allegorical role. The poem stages an inner conflict between two principles: Beauty and Virtue, both "armed," both demanding allegiance. The speaker is caught in a storm of indecision, drawn by desire and called by reason, seduced by delight yet compelled by honour. The battle becomes emblematic of this inner strife: not a clash of armies, but of values. The horses rear and fall as metaphors for		<p>Sono in armi Bellezza e virtù Ma non so chi di lor vincerà Mi fa grata l'Amor la servitù Mi fa bella l'Amor la libertà.</p> <p>Dove acerbi pensieri Rivolgerete i giovanili spiriti Fra diversi sentieri Una Piaggia offre i Lavri, Un'altra i Mirti.</p> <p>Se in bel Prato di fiori cupido Tra e l'affetti legati da un crine La virtude inimica à i riposi Vuol che lasci le Rose di Gnido E che cerchi il piacer nelle spine.</p> <p>Se il rigore condanna il diletto Che fa imbelle la gloria d'un Alma Il diletto poi sgrida al rigore Perché troppo sia crudo ad un petto Ne mai lasci che goda la calma.</p> <p>Così mentre m'aggio Nelle mie voglie in certe Un dolor nutre l'altro, ond'io sospiro, Che se il valor prevale Tosto un bel guardo il suo caraggio assale.</p>	<p>Beauty and virtue now take up arms— But I know not which shall win. Love makes my servitude feel sweet, And Love makes liberty A joy within.</p> <p>When bitter thoughts arise, Where will you lead, youthful spirits bold? Among diverging paths, One slope offers laurels, Another myrtle's hold.</p> <p>If in a fair field of flowers I'm drawn, With affections bound by a single strand, Virtue, foe to repose, Bids me leave the roses of Cnidus, And seek out pleasure where thorns command.</p> <p>If strictness condemns delight, And dims the soul's bright flame, Then pleasure, in turn, reproaches harshness, For being cruel to a heart That never knows calm nor gentle aim.</p>

the instability of the soul; the smoke and dust cloud the field as doubt clouds judgment. The field of honour is here also the field of affect. Unlike more delicate or picturesque vignettes in the album, this one employs a raw and compressed graphic language, full of diagonals, centrifugal movement, and overlapping gestures.

Image link:

<https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/73648>

Provenance/cat. nr: GB-Lbl

Add.24311.11

Bibliography:

Related work(s):

À fiera battaglia s'accinga l'ardir
Chi vince prevaglia
Ch'io non posso due scorte
seguir.

And so I wander,
Torn in my desires, unsure—
One sorrow feeds another, and I
sigh.
For if valor gains the upper hand,
A single glance may strike its
courage down again.

To fierce battle let boldness rise!
Let one prevail,
For I cannot follow both guides.

3.32a

Title: "La Bataille." "Le misères et les malheurs de la guerre

Attribution: Jacques Callot

Date: 1633

Technique and support: etching on paper

Size: 83 x 187 mm

Provenance/cat. Nr: US- NYmm 22.68.6

Bibliography: Lieure 1341

