

JACOPO TINTORETTO

Venetian school, 1518-1594.

This artist, whose family name was Robusti, took the nickname Tintoretto on the basis of his father's profession of dyer (tintore). The character of his artistic apprenticeship has been much disputed: while Ridolfi wrote of ten days of working under Titian, and Borghini appears to state that he modelled his draughtsmanship on Michelangelo (whose sculpture he knew in the form of casts or modelli) and his color on Titian, Bonifazio Veronese, Paris Bordone and Schiavone have also been proposed as his teachers. The earliest absolutely certain work of his which survives is the Last Supper in ^{San} Marcuola, Venice, dated 1547 ; but the Apollo and Marsyas (Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford) has generally been identified as one of a pair of pictures which he did for Pietro Aretino in 1545 ; and a Sacra Conversazione, signed "Iacobus" and dated 1540, has been reasonably attributed to him.

There is good reason to think, on the basis of his work, that Tintoretto visited Rome early on, most probably in the 1550s ; but the only occasion when he is recorded outside Venice is in 1580, at Mantua. His enormous output includes a vast number of religious paintings, histories, mythologies, allegories and portraits. Particularly famous are the cycles of paintings that he did for the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice. Late in life he was assisted in his work by his son Domenico. He died in Venice on May 31, 1594.

Apollo and the Nine Muses

oil on canvas, $21\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{3}{4}$ ins.

Provenance

Archduke Leopold Wilhelm (1659)⁽¹⁾ ; Gemälde Galerie, Vienna (by 1882) ; Princess Thurn and Taxis (after 1907) ; Silbermann Galleries, New York (1939)⁽²⁾. Acquired by Dr Clowes in 19 .

Literature

Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhochsten Kaiserhauses, Vienna, 1882 ~~cat.~~, no.463 ; 1895 and 1907 cats., no.241 ; E. von der Bercken and A.L.Mayer, Jacopo Tintoretto, 2 vols., Munich, 1923, I, p.247 ; H.Tietze, Tintoretto, Phaidon Press, 1948, p.351 ; B.Berenson, Italian Pictures of the Renaissance, Venetian School, 2 vols., Phaidon Press, 1957, I, p.173 ; C.Garas, "Le Tableau de Tintoret du Musée de Budapest et le Cycle peint pour l'Empereur Rodolphe II", Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux Arts, 30, 1967, p.44 and fig.34.⁽⁸⁾

Exhibited

Four Centuries of Venetian Painting, Toledo Museum of Art, March 1940, no.56 (cat. by H.Tietze) ; Pontormo to Greco, the Age of Mannerism, John Herron Art Museum, Indianapolis, Feb.-Mar.1954, no.57 ; Ind., 1959, no.54.

Versions

1. Hampton Court, Royal Collns., no.77 (Von der Bercken-Mayer, II, pl.99 ; Tietze, fig.107) $83\frac{1}{2} \times 119\frac{3}{4}$ ins. Inscr. at bottom left "JACOPO TINTORETTO IN VENETIA". With an additional muse to the left, instead of the right, of the one at the left corner of harpsichord, and without the figure of Apollo as he appears in the Clowes version. Assumed to have come from the Gonzaga colln. at Mantua, since it was subsequently in the gallery of Charles I.

2. Colln. Otto Lanz, Amsterdam. A fragment corresponding to the muse at the bottom left in the Hampton Court version (Tietze, fig.108). $50 \times 32\frac{1}{4}$ ins. Von Hadeln convincingly indicated (Burl.Mag., 43, 1923, p.293) that this is to be taken as a fragment of a lost original, on which the Hampton Court version is based.⁽⁶⁾

3. Banks colln., Kingston Lacey, Dorset. A six-sided ceiling painting, showing Apollo with seven women.⁽⁵⁾

4. Formerly Dresden, Gemäldegalerie, no.271 ; lost in World War II (Garas, p.39, fig.30, as studio of Tintoretto).

Versions, cont.

214 x 325 cm. With Apollo in the center, the nine Muses and the three Graces. From Prague; according to tradition it was taken from there in 1632 by Johann George I, Prince of Saxe.⁽⁴⁾

The Clowes painting, which can be traced back to 1659 (see above) was engraved in David Teniers II's Theatrum Pictoricum of 1660.⁽⁷⁾ Ascribed to Tintoretto in the Vienna catalogues (1882 and later), it was accepted as such by von der Bercken and Mayer (1923) and certified as a Tintoretto by L. Venturi (1937) and by W. Suida.⁽⁸⁾ Tietze⁽⁹⁾ recorded it simply as a variant of the Hampton Court painting. In his 1957 listing Berenson attributed it to the studio of Tintoretto.

This ~~version~~^{painting} cannot be any one of the three versions of the subject by Tintoretto mentioned by Ridolfi in the seventeenth century.⁽⁶⁾ Ridolfi, however, records a painting of the Muses by Palma Giovane, as well as one by Tintoretto, as having belonged to the Emperor Rudolph II.⁽¹⁰⁾ In terms of handling, and the fact that it is a variant of some quality of a Tintoretto composition, it seems quite possible that the present work is by Palma Giovane (1544-1628)⁽¹¹⁾; and in view of its provenance, it could be the work in question.⁽¹²⁾

Notes.

- ^{Identifiable from the engraving referred to below,}
1. It appears as no. 357 in the 1659 inventory of that colln. ; ~~and of the engraving referred to below.~~
2. According to a record in the Frick Art Ref. Lib.
3. The painting is erroneously said there to be in the Indianapolis Museum.

Notes, cont.

4. It includes the right leg of the next muse and the rocks behind, exactly as in that version.

5. According to Garas, op.cit., p.44, n.40, this painting does not represent Apollo and the Muses, but rather The Crowning of Poetry.

6. See J.Hübner, Verzeichnis der Dresdener könig. Gemälde-Galerie, Dresden, 1827, p.132.

7. By Hoy : in reverse, inscr. "3½ alta, 5½ lata". The print differs in minor details of the drapery. This publication (first issued in Antwerp-Brussels, 1660 ; later eds. 1673 and 1684) reproduces Italian pictures from the colln. of the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm.

8. Venturi, doc. of Sept.1, 1937 ; and undated ^{sketch} ~~doc.~~ by Suida (both in Clowes archives).

9. It was suggested in the 1882 Vienna cat. that the Clowes version was probably the one mentioned by Ridolfi as being in the Barberigo colln. (C.Ridolfi, Le Meraviglie dell'Arte [Venice, 1648], ed.D.von Hadeln, 2 vols., Berlin, 1914-24, II, p.54 : "un capriccio delle Muse in picciolo quadro"). Tietze, however, pointed out in the 1940 Toledo cat. that this work was still recorded in the 1845 cat. of the same colln. (no.35). The version recorded by Ridolfi as being in the Casa Mulo at San Vido (~~ibid.~~ ^{ibid.}, p.55 : "un Capriccio delle Muse con Apollo nel mezzo, che suona il liro") differed in having Apollo in the center playing. As for the version Ridolfi mentioned as belonging to a cycle of four paintings executed for the Emperor Rudolph II. (ibid., p.50 : "Le Museche ridotto in un giardino formano un concerto di Musica con varii strumenti"), Garas (op.cit., pp.29ff.) ^{has} convincingly argued, on iconographical grounds, that Dresden no.271 (see under versions) formed the central piece of the cycle in question. She proposed correspondingly that Ridolfi

Notes, cont.

erroneously identified Dresden no.265, Women making music (her fig.31 ; 142 x 214 cm.), with six women in it in a garden, as the relevant painting done for Rudolph II, because the latter had died in 1612, his collection was dispersed in the first half of the seventeenth century, and no.265 also came from Prague. Cf. von Hadeln, p.50, n.2, for the suggestion that Ridolfi was referring to no.265.

10. Op.cit., II, p.194 : "Apollo nel mezzo delle Muse". Referred to by Gares (op.cit., p.38, n.26) as lost.

11. This was suggested to the compiler by E.Fahy (orally, 1966) purely on the basis of the work's character.

12. For the dispersal of Rudolph II's collection in the early XVIIth c., which would accord with the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm's ownership of this work, see n.9 above.