

TITIAN

Venetian school, ca. 1488 (?) -1576.

Tiziano Vecellio came from Pieve di Cadore in the Dolomites. The date of his birth is uncertain. The traditional and canonic date given in some of the early biographical sources is 1477 ; but at the same time competing sources (letters of the time, and other sixteenth and seventeenth century lives) give a range of dates running all the way from 1473 to 1482 or later. A birth date within the latter time range cannot be ruled out absolutely, but Titian himself appears either not to have known his age late in life or to have exaggerated it deliberately ; and present-day opinion had tended towards the view that he was born later, around 1488-90, and correspondingly did his first independent paintings around 1505⁽¹⁾. Dolce records that he was sent to Venice at the age of nine to study painting with the Zuccati, that he spent time successively in the studios of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, and then worked alongside Giorgione, painting with him the frescoes on the Fondaco de' Tedeschi (for which Giorgione was paid in 1508).

The completion of the altarpiece of the Assumption of the Virgin for the Frari church in Venice (1516-18) established Titian's reputation ; and from then on he worked not only for the Venetian republic, but also for the great princely families elsewhere in Italy --the Estes of Ferrara, the Della Roveres of Urbino, the Gonzagas of Mantua. He did work equally for Francis I of France; and in 1545 the patronage of the Farneses led him to pay a visit to Rome. His relations with the Hapsburgs were of even greater consequence ; he worked for Charles V, who made him Count Palatine and Knight of the Golden Spur in 1533, for other members of the Hapsburg courts, and subsequently for Charles's successor as King of Spain, Philip II, who kept Titian almost continually busy on his behalf during the artist's late years. Titian did numerous portraits and religious and mythological paintings. He signed himself on his letters variously Titiano, Tiziano or Ticiano and Tizian or Tician Vecellio, and on his paintings used the Latinized ^{form} Titianus or Tizianus; the anglicization "Titian" was already in use in the seventeenth century.

TITIAN (cont.)

Man with a Glove

oil on canvas, 29½ × 23 ins.

Condition

The costume --especially the sleeves and collar --suggest repainting ; the work may also have been rehandled, since it appears too large.

Provenance

J.Seligmann, Paris-New York (1937 ?). Acquired by Dr Clowes prior to 1940.

Literature

A.Venturi, "Tre Ritratti Inediti di Tiziano", L'Arte, 8, 1937, p.56 and fig. 3 ; H.Tietze, cat. of exhn., Four Centuries of Venetian Painting, Toledo Museum of Art, March 1940, no.67 (ill.).

Exhibited

Toledo, 1940 (see lit.)

Published by A.Venturi as a late Titian (of the 1560s). Tietze (1940) suggested a follower of Titian. In the opinion of the compiler, this portrait --with allowances made for its rehandling --should in fact be attributed to Leandro Bassano (Venetian school, 1557-1622). Amongst signed portraits by that artist, one may compare particularly the very early

one of "Leonardo Armano di Venetia" --the Nuremberg merchant Leonard Hermann, who was in Venice between 1571 and 1582 -- in the Alte Pinakotek, Munich (no.8091)⁽²⁾; the Man with the Clowe Sculpture at Hampton Court⁽³⁾; and the Portrait of Alvise Corradini in the Museo Civico, Padua (no.1625)⁽⁴⁾. The Clowes portrait would appear to belong in date after the Munich and Hampton Court ones, and the adherence in it to Titian's example correspondingly suggests a date around 1590-1600⁽⁵⁾.

Notes.

1. Venturi in his article of that year (see lit.) ~~puts~~^{referred} it as being in a "private colln."
2. Unpublished. I owe my knowledge of this work and the information given above the latter to E.Verheyen, who kindly supplied me with a photograph. He fully accepts ^{the} attribution of the Clowes portrait to Leandro (oral statement, 1967). The treatment of the fur and the nose in the Munich portrait are particularly similar.
3. E.Arslan, Massimo, 2 vols., Milan, 1960, I, p.262 and II, pl.317; dated there 1590-95. The whole treatment of the head, and its relation to the background, are similar in this case.
4. Ibid., I, p. 66 and II, pl.331; dated there around 1600.
5. This date is equally suggested ^{to the compiler} by E.Verheyen ^(see n. 2) ~~(see n. 2)~~.