

# THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE



*The Wilds of Assynt*, by David Young Cameron.  
(Perth Museum and Art Gallery; exh. Hayward Gallery)

**April 1983**

Joseph Wilton, Francis Hayman and the chimney-pieces  
from Northumberland House

BRIAN ALLEN

Augustus Egg's triptych: a narrative of Victorian adultery

T. J. EDELSTEIN

UK £4.50 USA \$13

*Apparatus etc.*

The system of reference to Leonardo's text and illustrations by means of reproductions overprinted with Roman and standard numerals works well in general and is a great aid in unravelling the sequence of thought on each page, though a numeral such as IX too often seems like XI on a sheet in which the original text reads from right to left. And when the IX is upside down in relation to most of the items on a page, confusion is compounded – at least temporarily.

The appendix on the geometrical studies by James McCabe is a model of clarity, not least for the way in which he shows how Leonardo not infrequently proceeded on the basis of a false premise. It should also be added that the various concordances and indices serve their functions admirably, and are virtually a research tool in themselves.

*Conclusion*

The ultimate test of the intellectual value of such a commercially lavish enterprise lies in its future service to anyone studying Leonardo. This is a test of time. However, if this reviewer may be permitted to sound a personal note, the period of this review coincided with the early stages in the preparation of a paper on the Codex Leicester (now Hammer) for Baltimore, and, judged in the light of this short-term use, the volumes functioned splendidly in suggesting new relationships between different aspects of Leonardo's written and drawn legacy – and their sheer bulk ensured a good measure of indoor exercise on cold Scottish evenings.

MARTIN KEMP

**Pietro da Cortona o della Pittura Barocca.** By Giuliano Briganti. 438 pp. + 303 pls, 16 in colour. (Sansoni), 75,000 Lire.

The long-awaited second edition of Giuliano Briganti's *Pietro da Cortona* has at last appeared and it had better be said at once that it is bitterly disappointing. The author explains in the preface – and every art historian over a certain age will sympathise with him – that he found it impossible to remodel a book which he had written twenty years previously. He therefore commissioned Ludovica Trezzoni and Laura Laurenti to bring it up to date, but he might have been expected to have supervised their work with sufficient care to see that they did it thoroughly. Such is not the case.

The new edition consists of an exact reprint of the first edition, except for pp.273-86, dealing with lost paintings, which are absorbed into a longer list on pp.355-87, from which, however, a number of paintings mentioned in the first list have disappeared without explanation. To this are added two

sections, one listing fourteen paintings discovered and published since 1962 (it does not contain any wholly new discoveries), and the other (pp.331-53) consisting of additional notes to the original catalogue of existing works by Cortona. On pp.389-90 comes a pathetic little list of thirteen paintings of which the attribution '*non e stato possibile controllare*', although eight of them are in English public collections, including one permanently on view in the Courtauld Institute. A brief visit to England would have been useful, and might profitably have included a morning in the Witt Library, which would have enabled the authors to solve quite a lot of their problems. At least they would have found photographs of all but one of the pictures in English public galleries which defeated them. It might have been hoped that reproductions would have been supplied of some at least of the paintings listed in the 1962 edition but not illustrated – nearly twenty in number – of which photographs must now be readily available, and that the postage-stamp size reproductions on pp.285-86 would have been replaced by something bigger.

But if the treatment of the paintings is slap-dash, that of the drawings is worse. The section dealing with them in the first edition is modestly entitled '*Traccia per un catalogo dei disegni*', and the reader might hope that this would have been enlarged, perhaps even to a complete catalogue. If so, he will be disappointed. All the authors have done is to reprint the *traccia* and add a note recording Vitzthum's comments on it in his review of the 1962 edition (pp.402-04). The demand for a full catalogue of the drawings may be excessive, but it is reasonable to expect that the authors would have made use of the readily accessible printed sources, such as Gianatiempo's catalogue of the 1977 exhibition at the Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe, Rome, Dieter Graf's catalogue of Italian baroque drawings at Düsseldorf, or the sections of my own catalogue of drawings at Windsor which deal with Cortona; but in fact, although these books are listed in the bibliography (except for my supplementary Windsor volume) not one piece of information from them is incorporated in the new edition, and they are not even mentioned in the brief introduction (p.401) to the list of Vitzthum's corrections, though this refers to other articles by Vitzthum and works by Sabine Jacob and Campbell.

The misprints in the 1962 edition have not been corrected. Most of these consist of misspellings of foreign names, but it is disappointing to find that on p.151 the date of Cortona's death is still given as 1666 instead of 1669.

I append a few comments on points of detail (mainly based on a morning's work in the Witt Library):

Cat.No.20. Formerly Palazzo Mattei, *Adoration of the Shepherds*. This picture was sold at Christie's, 8th December 1972, Lot 12.

Cat.No.33. Rome, Capitoline, *Rape of the Sabines*. A copy exists in the collection of Lord Pembroke at Wilton.

Cat.Nos.46-48. Palazzo Barberini, small gallery. The drawings at Windsor, in the Ashmolean and at Ottawa, mentioned by Briganti as for the gallery, are all for the Salone. The recent restoration of the gallery showed that it was originally two rooms and that the two frescoes on the end walls had been moved there from another room, one at least having been slightly cut down in the process.

Cat. No. 60. Louvre, *Laban*. Other versions to be added: Chatsworth and Holkham Hall.

Cat.No.70. Palazzo Pitti, *Age of Silver*. A copy was with Marshall Spink in 1972.

Cat.No.72. Vienna, *Hagar*. Another version was with J. S. Allen, London.

Cat.No.77. Palazzo Pitti, *Age of Bronze*. A version of this in the Dulwich Gallery, not mentioned by either Briganti or Campbell, is regarded by Peter Murray, the author of the new Dulwich catalogue [1980] as the original *bozzetto* for fresco.

Cat.No.85. Palazzo Pitti, Sala di Venere. A copy of the ceiling fresco is in the Rouen Museum.

Cat.No.107. Perugia, *Holy Family with S. Martina*. A free variant is at Chatsworth.

Cat.No.109. Louvre, *Virgin and Child with S. Martina*. The authors say that Engerand records a copy of this painting in the collection of the 'duc de Bercy' at Marly. As they do not give any precise reference it is impossible to check their statement, but, assuming that they are referring to Engerand's edition of Bailly's *Inventaire des tableaux du Roy*, Paris [1899], his note on the picture on pp.48-49 contains no reference to such a copy. I wonder whether the 'duc de Bercy' is really the duc de Berry, third son of the Grand Dauphin, who would have had an *appartement* at Marly; but as he died at the age of eighteen he can hardly have formed a 'collection'.

Cat.No.115. Rome, Vallicella. A version of the dome fresco is in the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford.

Cat.No.117. Palazzo Pamphili. The letter referred to on p.251 is dated 1654, not 1651.

Cat.No.120. Formerly Palazzo Barberini, *Sacrifice to Diana*. A small version belonged to Lex Aitken in 1971 and was reproduced in *Apollo* for March of that year.

Cat.No.127. Rome, Galleria Nazionale, *Angelo custode*. Another version was sold at the Dorotheum, Vienna, 21st September 1962, Lot 20.

Cat.No.128-9. Pitti and Louvre, *S. Martina*. A copy is in the Dulwich Gallery.

Cat.No.137. The authors have failed to notice Jennifer Montagu's article in *Arte Illustrata*, IV [1971], p.42, in which the author shows that the *Adoration of the Shepherds* in the Prado was given to Philip IV in 1658 by Cardinal Francesco Barberini, and also publishes the very remarkable frame designed by Cortona for a silver relief after Algardi's *Leo and Attila* presented to the King on the same occasion.

**Problems of location and attribution:**

p.357. Düsseldorf. *The Virgin and Child and an angel*. This is the painting later transferred to Munich with the Electoral collection (No.90 in the main catalogue, where it is wrongly said to be in Augsburg).

p.363. Duke of Bridgewater. Waagen refers to 'un quadro'. This is presumably the *Adoration of the Shepherds* sold by Lord Ellesmere, Christie's, 18th October 1946, lot 125. Duke of Hamilton. Waagen mentions two pictures by Cortona at Hamilton Palace: the *Adoration of the Shepherds* and *Eleazer and Rachel*, in addition to the *Noli me tangere* (Cat.No.102 bis). They appear in the Hamilton Palace sale (Christie's, 17th July 1882) as Lots 391 and 707 respectively. The first painting seems to have disappeared, but the second – now called *Isaac and Rebecca* – was sold again at Sotheby's 22nd May 1963, Lot 130 (Fig.50). Nicholas Turner suggests that it may be by Ciro Ferri.

- p.364. Dulwich, *St Lawrence*. From the description in the catalogue this is clearly not a copy after the picture in S. Lorenzo in Miranda, as suggested by the authors. The attribution to Cortona has been abandoned since 1926. Grosvenor Collection, *Antiochus and Stratonic*. This painting was sold by the Duke of Westminster at Sotheby's 24th June 1959, Lot 3, when it was bought by the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. On being relined the name of Daniel Seiter was found on the back of the original canvas and the picture is undoubtedly by him.
- Longford Castle. The collections of Lord Folkestone and Lord Radnor are the same, the former having been raised to the Earldom of Radnor in the late eighteenth century. (The nomenclature of the English nobility is notoriously difficult!)
- Osterley Park (formerly), *Adoration of the Shepherds*. Formerly attributed to Giordano; to judge from a photograph nearer to him than to Cortona.
- p.383. Villa del Vascello (Benedetti). It is perhaps worth noticing that the *Aurora* is not mentioned in the very detailed description of the villa published anonymously in 1677.
- p.389. Bath, Holburne of Menstrie Museum, the *Bocca della Verità*. From a photograph, certainly not by Cortona.
- Glasgow, Hunterian Museum, *Flight into Egypt*. Same comment.
- London, Courtauld Institute, *Faith, Hope and Charity*. 171.5 by 128.5 cm (Fig.51), with an addition at the top which has now been re-added at the top which has now been re-added. From the Gambier-Parry collection. The fact that the principal group is almost identical with one on the left of the *Jacob and Laban* in the Louvre (Briganti, No.58) points to its being a studio work.
- p.390. Manchester, City Art Gallery, *Finding of Moses* (presented by Thomas Gough, 1928). From a reproduction does not look to be by Cortona.
- Nottingham, Castle Museum, *Birth of the Virgin*. Identical in composition with the painting in Perugia (Cat.No.86). Small versions are recorded: Sotheby's, 2nd March 1977, Lot 50 and Parke-Bernet, 4th April 1973, Lot 157 (possibly the same picture, and possibly the same as one recorded in a private collection, Dublin).
- p.392. Darmstadt, *Hagar*. The attribution to Mola is rejected by Richard Cocke, *Pierfrancesco Mola*, Oxford [1972], p.66.
- p.393. Edinburgh. It would have been helpful to give reasons for rejecting categorically Hugh Brigstocke's attribution to Cortona of the *Landscape with the Magdalen*.

#### Drawings:

- p.312. Albertina 904 is an allegory in honour of the Borghese family, not the Barberini.
- p.318. Windsor 10121 should be 01121. It represents Alexander besieging the Petra Sogdiana, not Pera.
- Windsor 12064. This represents Alexander defeating Porus, not besieging Pera.

The bibliography is not altogether satisfactory. Theoretically it brings the earlier bibliography up to date and includes items published in 1981, but it does not include the edition of the *Vite* of Pio published by the Enggasses in 1979, nor Maurice Poirier's important article, 'Pietro da Cortona e il dibattito disegno - colore' (*Prospettiva*, 16 [January 1979] p.23). Possibly as the result of a decision of policy - but if so in my opinion a bad one - it does not include any of the articles on Cortona as an architect by Noehles, Ost and others which have appeared since 1962, nor does it refer to the congress *Pietro da Cortona architetto* held in Cortona in 1969, the acts of which were

published in 1978, or Sandro Benedetti's pamphlet, *Architettura come metafora. Pietro da Cortona "stuccatore"* [1980], though it does include Noehles's book on SS. Luca e Martina of 1970. It does not, however, include Krautheimer and Jones's extracts from the diary of Alexander VII (*Römische Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, XV, [1975], p.199), a source of capital importance.

To sum up, the best one can say is that it is useful to have the 1962 edition of Briganti available again, even if it is 'warts and all'.

ANTHONY BLUNT

**Sebastiano Conca (1680-1764).** By Olivier Michel, Giancarlo Sestieri, Nicola Spinosa, and others. (Catalogo della Mostra). 426 pp. + 317 b. & w. ills. + 7 col. pls (Centro Storico Culturale 'Gaeta'), L.30.000.

Although Sebastiano Conca has long been recognised as a central figure of Roman eighteenth-century painting, there was no thorough modern study available until the late Anthony Clark re-examined his career in 1967 (reprinted in *Studies in Roman Eighteenth-Century Painting* [1981], pp.1-10). The subsequent publication of Conca's paintings and drawings - notably by Giancarlo Sestieri in *Commentari* [1969] and *Print Collector* [1976] - and their inclusion in a variety of exhibitions have since deepened our understanding of the accomplishments of one of the most appealing European artists of the century. The catalogue of the exhibition organised by the Centro Storico Culturale 'Gaeta' in 1981 to commemorate the third centenary of the painter's birth consolidates what has been known and presents a great deal of new material, both documentary and visual.

Conca was born in Gaeta, a fortified seaport on the western coast of central Italy, and went as a young man to Naples, where he entered the workshop of Francesco Solimena. In 1707, he arrived in Rome and remained there, except for brief periods, until his return to Naples and Gaeta (where he died and is buried) in the spring of 1752. His earliest Roman works, such as the pair of *Allegories of the arts* (Cat. Nos 7a, b), acquired by Cardinal Fabrizio Spada, demonstrate how rapidly he amalgamated the Neapolitan idiom acquired in his youth with the late baroque classicism prevailing in Rome under the authority of Carlo Maratti. From the outset, however, Conca's paintings were strongly personal and characterised by radically new pictorial qualities: he was, together with the Parmesan painter Michele Rocca, one of the creators of the rococo painting in Rome and, during the forty-five years he spent there, its chief promoter. He deftly reduced the baroque style of the seventeenth century into a form that is sentimental, precious and decorative, and the mode of feeling

expressed in his private religious works is as individual an element in his art as his preference for intimate size, delicate effects of colour and tone, and sweetness in his treatment of figures. His frequent use of copper as a support for small devotional paintings (Cat. Nos 8, 50, 61, 83) was shared by others in the early decades of the Roman settecento - Luti, Pietro Bianchi, and Placido Costanzi - all adhering to a practice established in Rome late in the seventeenth century by Giovanni Maria Morandi, as Ellis Waterhouse observed fifteen years ago (*Studies... presented to Anthony Blunt*, London [1967], p.119). The large number of oil sketches in Conca's *oeuvre* (Cat. Nos 11c, 12b, 17a and b, 52a) reveals a standard feature of Roman studio practices from Luti to Pompeo Batoni - a heavy reliance upon painted *bozzetti* and *modelli* during the evolution of a finished design.

Conca's cabinet paintings were not the only products of his talent relished by contemporaries, however, and his altar-pieces and large-scale fresco decorations, such as the nave ceiling of the church of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere (1721-24), contributed substantially to his reputation. He received the patronage of such church leaders as Clement XI; Benedict XIII; and Cardinals Acquaviva, Bentivoglio, Zondadari, Ottoboni, and Ruffo; as well as members of the leading Roman families. Conca played a rôle in Clement's early Christian revival in Rome with altar-pieces and a ceiling in San Clemente and the nave ceiling in Santa Cecilia. Moreover, he was among the painters selected both for the most important papal commission in the first quarter of the century - his is the figure of *Jeremiah* (Cat. No. 17) in the series of oval prophets in the nave arcade of San Giovanni in Laterano; and for the principal secular commission - the ceilings in the Palazzo de Carolis (now the Palazzo del Banco di Roma), to which Conca's contribution was a complex allegorical subject. During the half century he spent in Rome, Conca made brief trips to Turin in the early 1720s and to Tuscany in 1731-32, where he frescoed the huge *Pool of Bethesda* for the Chiesa dell' Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala at Siena (Cat. Nos 51, 52). He eventually achieved an international reputation that brought him commissions all over Italy and throughout Europe for altar-pieces, interior decorations, and cabinet paintings. Conca's influence was extended further by means of the private academy, or drawing class, he operated in Palazzo Farnese from the 1720s, and by his leadership in the affairs of the Accademia di San Luca. Conca was elected president from 1729-32 and from 1739-40; he was also, as Clark noted, one of the best administrators the Roman academy ever had.

The actual *mostra monografica* (as described by its organisers) at the Palazzo De Vio consisted of less than a quarter of the more than two hundred paintings and drawings reproduced and