

ZAHIRA VÉLIZ is the author of numerous studies on Spanish art, including a catalogue raisonné of the drawings of Alonso Cano.



Spanish Drawings in The Courtauld Gallery

COMPLETE  
CATALOGUE

Zahira Véliz

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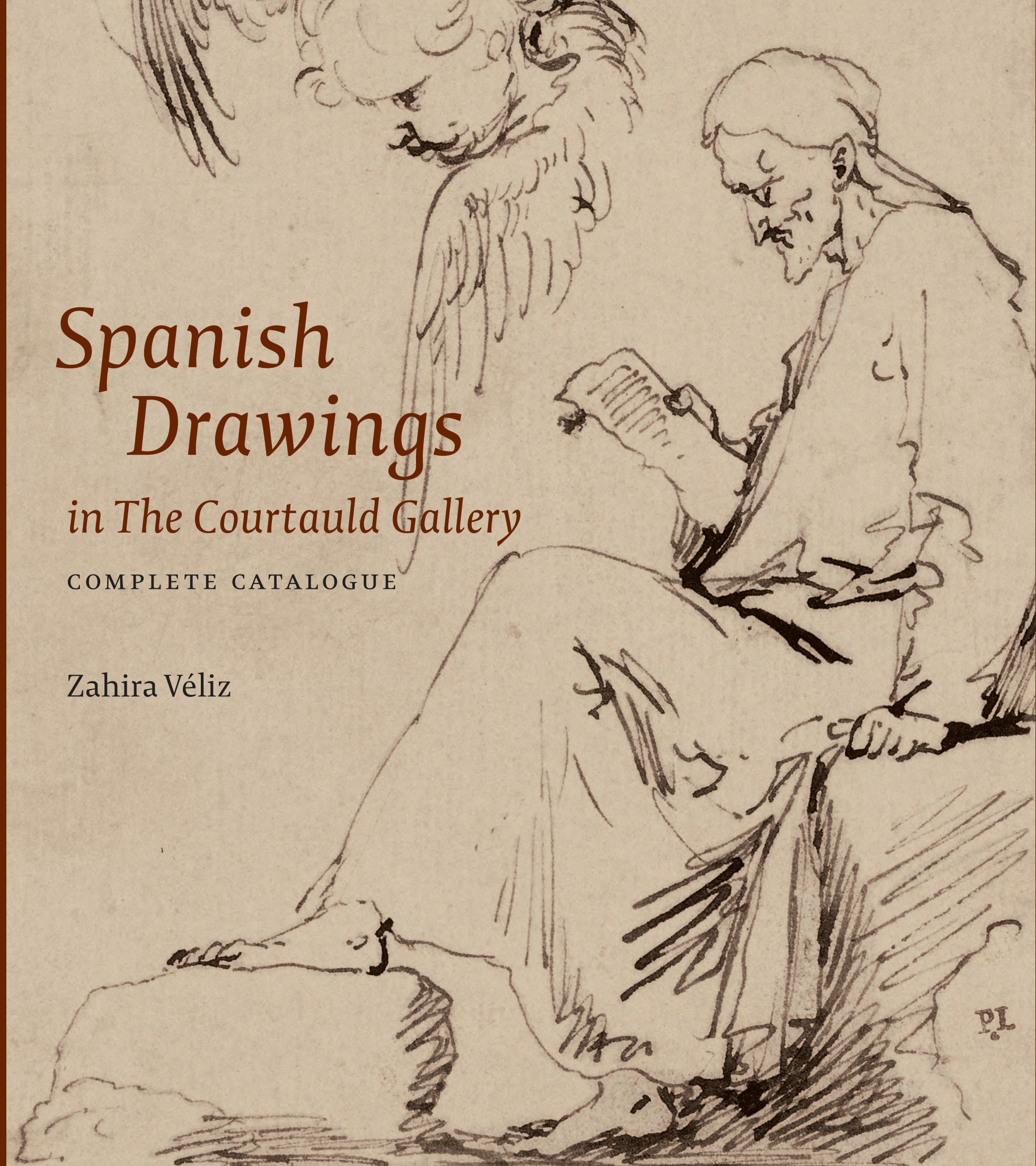


# Spanish Drawings

## in The Courtauld Gallery

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THIS CATALOGUE presents a detailed scholarly account of the Spanish drawings in the collection of The Courtauld Gallery. Ranging in date from the sixteenth to the twentieth century and numbering over a hundred works, the collection is one of the most significant outside Spain. Many of the drawings were initially brought together by the great Hispanist and collector Sir William Stirling Maxwell (1818–1878) and were later bequeathed to The Courtauld by Sir Robert Witt (1872–1952). In addition to works by such celebrated artists as Ribera, Murillo, Goya and Picasso, the collection features a representative selection of drawings from the Golden Age of Spanish art, including fine examples by Alonso Cano, Francisco Pacheco, Antonio García Reinoso, Vicente Carducho and Antonio del Castillo. Many of these works have never previously been published and they are presented here in the light of important new research.

The catalogue includes reproductions and detailed scholarly analysis of the individual works as well as an essay on the history, theory and practice of Spanish draughtsmanship and introductions to individual regional schools.

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## The sixteenth century

Art in sixteenth-century Spain may be characterised as eclectic in style, almost exclusively religious in subject-matter, and shaped by the taste of the Spanish Habsburgs – dominated in particular by that of Philip II (1527–1598; reigned 1556–98). As a prince with extensive experience of life in Germany, Italy, Flanders and even England, Philip did not easily find a Spanish artist to fulfil his sophisticated, closely defined requirements about the purposes and appearance of visual art.<sup>1</sup> As a result, when he established his court at Madrid in 1561, and began construction of his monastery-palace at El Escorial (cornerstone laid 1563; basilica consecrated 1586), Philip found himself seeking to contract artistic talent from abroad. Among the best-known masters to sojourn in Spain to work on royal projects were Federico Zuccaro (1541–1609), Luca Cambiaso (1527–1585), Pellegrino Tibaldi (1527–1596), Romulo Cincinnato and Giovanni Battista Castello ‘El Bergamasco’ (died 1569).<sup>2</sup>

The predominant influence on the visual arts at the opening of the century was undoubtedly Netherlandish and German.<sup>3</sup> The very few drawings from before c. 1550 that have survived – notably a small number relating to works commissioned by royal or noble patrons in Toledo, Guadalupe and Barcelona, executed in a meticulous pen technique consistent with the detail of the Gothic idiom of the painted imagery of the period<sup>4</sup> – do not enable us to characterise local styles or identify influential workshops. By the middle of the century, most artists who were to make a mark in Spain had passed some years in Italy, and, starting with Alonso Berruguete in central Spain and Juan de Juanes in Valencia, from that time it becomes possible to cluster sheets around the artistic personalities of these relatively well-documented masters. Such Spanish-born masters as Juan de Juanes, Alonso Berruguete, Pablo de Céspedes and Juan Fernández de Navarrete all spent extended periods of study and practice in Italy, as did also Peter de Kempeneer,

a native of Brussels who spent some two decades in Seville (see cat. nos. 1, 2, 5, 7–8). It is no wonder that the reformed Mannerism practised by Federico Zuccaro in Italy (and at the Escorial 1585–88) and by other Central Italian masters in the later sixteenth century had an enormous impact on technique and style throughout Spain.

In Spanish drawing the influence of Michelangelo and the reformed Roman Maniera was strong,<sup>5</sup> as can be observed in sheets attributed to Céspedes and Berruguete in the Courtauld collection (cat. nos. 2, 7). On the other hand, the marked influence of Venetian models may be identified in Navarrete’s work (cat. no. 5). In technique and handling the impact of Luca Cambiaso’s highly personal drawings also must not be overlooked. The audacious abstraction of structure, the assurance of the minimal pen-line contours, the dynamic but controlled mastery of chiaroscuro through wash of Cambiaso’s graphic style are echoed in the technique of line with judiciously applied wash practised by artists of three subsequent generations, including Francisco Pacheco, Alonso Cano and Sebastián Herrera Barnuevo. Cambiaso’s drawings were admired and imitated as late as the 1690s (see cat. no. 27). From these examples, it is possible to see that Spanish artists were receptive to ideas and techniques from a variety of foreign sources.

Although early literary sources offer some references to artists’ collections of drawings, the kind of collecting culture that was developing contemporaneously in Italy was absent, and most collections were perceived as part of an artist’s working materials, consulted in the studio.<sup>6</sup> From available evidence, it may be hypothesised that Spanish artists in the sixteenth century practised drawing principally as a step in the realisation of a commission on a larger scale, such as a sculpture, painting or, indeed, an entire altarpiece. The apparent function of most surviving drawings, especially those connected with the Escorial, is one preparatory for

specific and identifiable commissions in other media. This underlines the fact that drawings were utilitarian to some degree, and constituted one stage of a creative process; rarely were they conceived as independent works of art in Spain.<sup>7</sup>

While the techniques practised at the Escorial were varied, a marked predilection for ink line and hatching became deeply rooted in Seville. This may be credited to Pablo de Céspedes and his attempt to emulate Michelangelo's drawings, a preference passed on to younger generations in Córdoba and Seville no doubt through the influence of Francisco Pacheco, who greatly admired Céspedes and ascribed unshakable authority to his opinions.

By the turn of the seventeenth century, regional styles were becoming defined and an increasing number of individual artistic personalities were emerging. Spaniards who had assimilated lessons from Italy re-cast what they had learned in an individual, Spanish interpretation of the visual formulae of Rome or Tuscany. This is exemplified by the work of Alonso Berruguete, of whom it has been observed, "In his drawings, as in all his work, the Michelangelesque canon is elongated and nervous, in a kind of gothic transformation that imbues expressions and attitudes with a personal, pathetic quality".<sup>8</sup>

Italian artists coming to work in Spain, especially at El Escorial, had to bow to the necessity of adapting to the rigorous control of Philip II and his desire to embody there a complete plastic expression of the Counter-Reformation spirit. The art approved by the monarch was marked by austere dignity, strict decorum and narrative clarity.<sup>9</sup> These values continued to influence artistic practice and were transmitted into seventeenth-century usage by artists-teachers like Vicente Carducho in Madrid and Francisco Pacheco in Seville.

- 1 Having been unsuccessful in his attempts to entice Titian, Veronese or Tintoretto to Spain, Philip II was highly pleased with the work of Juan Fernández de Navarrete, a Spanish artist who planned and executed numerous large-scale religious paintings in the Escorial. Unfortunately, Navarrete died in 1579, and Philip was faced with recurring difficulties in finding an artist capable of giving expression to his formal and religious requirements. El Greco and Federico Zuccaro both failed to give satisfaction, and in the end the Escorial's pictorial decoration is a palimpsest of Central Italian artists' work (including, besides Zuccaro, Luca Cambiaso, 'El Bergamasco' and Pellegrino Tibaldi). For a detailed discussion of the decorative programmes at the Escorial and the artists who executed them, see Mulcahy 1994.
- 2 El Greco was one whose artistic production, although destined for a high reputation in history, did not meet with the approval of Philip II, apparently because it lacked appropriate decorum (see Sigüenza 1605/1988, p. 536). El Greco's drawings are few, and attributions to his hand are not always universally accepted. His graphic oeuvre seems to have played no important role in the story of Spanish drawing. For a recent view of El Greco as a draughtsman, see Turner 2007.
- 3 Reflecting the prevailing taste in Castile, Isabella the Catholic was a

patron of Flemish artists, notably of Juan de Flandes (1460–c. 1519) and his collaborator Michel Sittow (c. 1468–1525/26), from whom she commissioned various works. In 1498, Juan de Flandes is documented as her court artist. See among others Ishikawa 2004.

- 4 *Corpus*, I, pp. 17–18, nos. 1–7.
- 5 The term 'reformed Maniera' describes the subdued Mannerist style that became associated with the art produced in Rome after the Council of Trent established guidelines for visual art in which narrative clarity, decorum and the awakening of piety were of the highest importance. These values were combined with Michelangelo's monumental figure style, which, before and after Trent, dominated artistic expression in Rome and central Italy.
- 6 For example, Juan Fernández Navarrete's most valuable possessions at the time of his death were two albums of prints and a folder containing a number of working drawings. See Zarco Cuevas 1932, pp. 50–51, and Logroño 1995, pp. 90–95.
- 7 See Newcome-Schleier 1995, *passim*.
- 8 Pérez Sánchez 1986, pp. 121–23: "En sus dibujos como en su obra toda, la tensión miguelangelesca se adelgaza y crispa en una especie de goticismo profundo que da una personal cualidad patética a sus expresiones y actitudes".
- 9 Mulcahy 1994, pp. 10–13; Checa Cremades 1995.

N<sup>o</sup> 55



## Alonso Berruguete or workshop

Paredes de Nava c. 1488–1561 Toledo

2

### *The Holy Family*

#### *Verso: Three studies of a male leg*

Pen, brown ink and brown wash over traces of black chalk; trimmed to fragmentary framing line in black chalk (preserved at top and left edges), small losses at lower left corner and at right edge, horizontal crease at bottom, minor stains throughout and some abrasion

Inscription (verso, at bottom) in graphite in a nineteenth-century hand *Roelas*

208 × 129 mm  
D.1952.RW.119

#### PROVENANCE

Sir William Stirling Maxwell (1818–1878); Sir John Stirling Maxwell (1866–1956); E. Parsons & Sons, catalogue 38, 1921, probably lot 380; Sir Robert Witt (1872–1952); Witt Bequest 1952

#### EXHIBITIONS

London 2011, no. 8

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Handlist 1956, p. 163; *Corpus*, I, p. 28, no. 68, pl. XXII

This image of the Holy Family complies with the traditional grouping, placing the Virgin Mary and Infant in the foreground, with Saint Joseph leaning heavily on his staff and looking on contemplatively from behind the Virgin's shoulder. The figures correspond closely with the central group in the altarpiece of the Adoration of the Magi in the church of Santiago, Valladolid (fig. 26) by Alonso Berruguete, who signed the contract for the sculptures in 1537,<sup>1</sup> and this close compositional correspondence first prompted the attribution of the drawing to Berruguete's circle.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly the broad strokes of wash over flowing pen contours and internal modelling by parallel pen lines, in some areas with long strokes – in the

folds of the Virgin's tunic below her knees, for example – are reminiscent of Berruguete's drawings, although these usually lack broadly applied wash.<sup>3</sup> The drawing and sculpture differ in some subtle ways: for example, the position of the Virgin's fingers at both left and right are only suggested in the drawing, whilst they are more clearly structured in the sculpture; the drawing lacks the careful articulation of folds over the Virgin's abdomen, and the position of the Child's head relative to the arm also differs; the leaning of Joseph's solid figure toward the left balances the three-dimensional group, while in the drawing Joseph seems less substantial, and his slightly smaller scale makes him more remote. These observations may indicate that the drawing preceded the sculpture. The confident establishment of volume and relief in the drawing suggests that this could record the artist's conception of three-dimensional forms, without attention to details that would be resolved in a later stage, perhaps in the process of extracting the figures from the block of wood. Equally, these characteristics could be interpreted as belonging to a copy either after a lost drawing or after the sculpture itself. Thus the Courtauld sheet appears to be a working drawing, recording one stage in the development of the sculptural group, or a closely related copy, allowing an attribution to Alonso Berruguete or his workshop.



FIG. 26 Alonso Berruguete, *The Holy Family*, 1537, central group of the Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece, Valladolid, Santiago Church

#### NOTES

1 Azcárate 1958, pp. 149, 155.

2 *Corpus*, I, p. 28, no. 68, pl. XXII, ascribed to the circle of Berruguete.

3 See Boubli 2002, pp. 26–31, nos. 2–11.



verso of cat. no. 2





## Gaspar Becerra or workshop, attributed

Baeza c. 1520–c. 1570 Madrid

3

### Design for an altarpiece

Pen and brown\* ink and wash over traces of black chalk and ruled stylus lines, with subsequent additions in charcoal; trimmed; filled in losses at lower right quadrant, creases and repaired tears, pinholes at top centre and lower left; foxing, discoloration and local staining throughout, some localised abrasion

Numerous original inscriptions identifying the subjects for various compartments of the altarpiece: (central compartment) *nuestra señorade habito* [Our Lady of the Habit];<sup>1</sup> (left compartment) *sanfranziscodepadua* [Saint Francis of Padua]; (left predella panel) *laborio* [The Washing (of the Feet)]; (right predella panel) *lazena* [The Supper]; further fragmentary inscriptions: (lower right) *Sa. . .*; (lower left) *. . . l[?]ang san juan*; (at left side) a scale marked in intervals

257 × 388 mm  
D.1952.RW.2896

#### PROVENANCE

2nd Duchess of Westminster  
(née Constance Edwina  
Cornwallis-West, 1876–1970);  
Sotheby's, 1915 (sale unknown);  
Julian G. Lousada (c. 1874–1945),  
gift to Robert Witt 1923;  
Sir Robert Witt (1872–1952);  
Witt Bequest 1952

#### EXHIBITIONS

London 1961, p. 16, no. 25;  
London 1978, no. 1; London  
2011, no. 4

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mayer 1926, p. 2; Handlist 1956,  
p. 158; London 1961, p. 16,  
no. 25; *Corpus*, I, p. 90,  
no. 522, pl. cxv

The upper part of the altarpiece represented in the drawing was lost when the sheet was trimmed. General composition and decorative details of the surviving section suggest a sixteenth-century date. The technique, with fine pen over ruled stylus lines, and the final application of delicate layers of wash, is consistent with this date. The annotations are also in a sixteenth-century hand, and the Courtauld drawing may have formed part of an agreement in which these notes of subjects chosen by the patron indicated their placement within the structure fixed on the drawing. Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Lucy appear as half-length relief figures in oval format over the left and right compartments of the first story. At predella level,

the tabernacle, with the Resurrection of Christ, is flanked by the four Evangelists in relief, placed below the four central striated and carved columns. The description of the image for the central compartment as *nuestra señora [del] Habito* may refer to a sculpture in the round venerated in the convent of San Damaso of the Discalced Carmelites in Madrid, founded in 1575, with the active support of Philip II; the sculpture was a donation of the wife of Philip II's barber.<sup>1</sup>



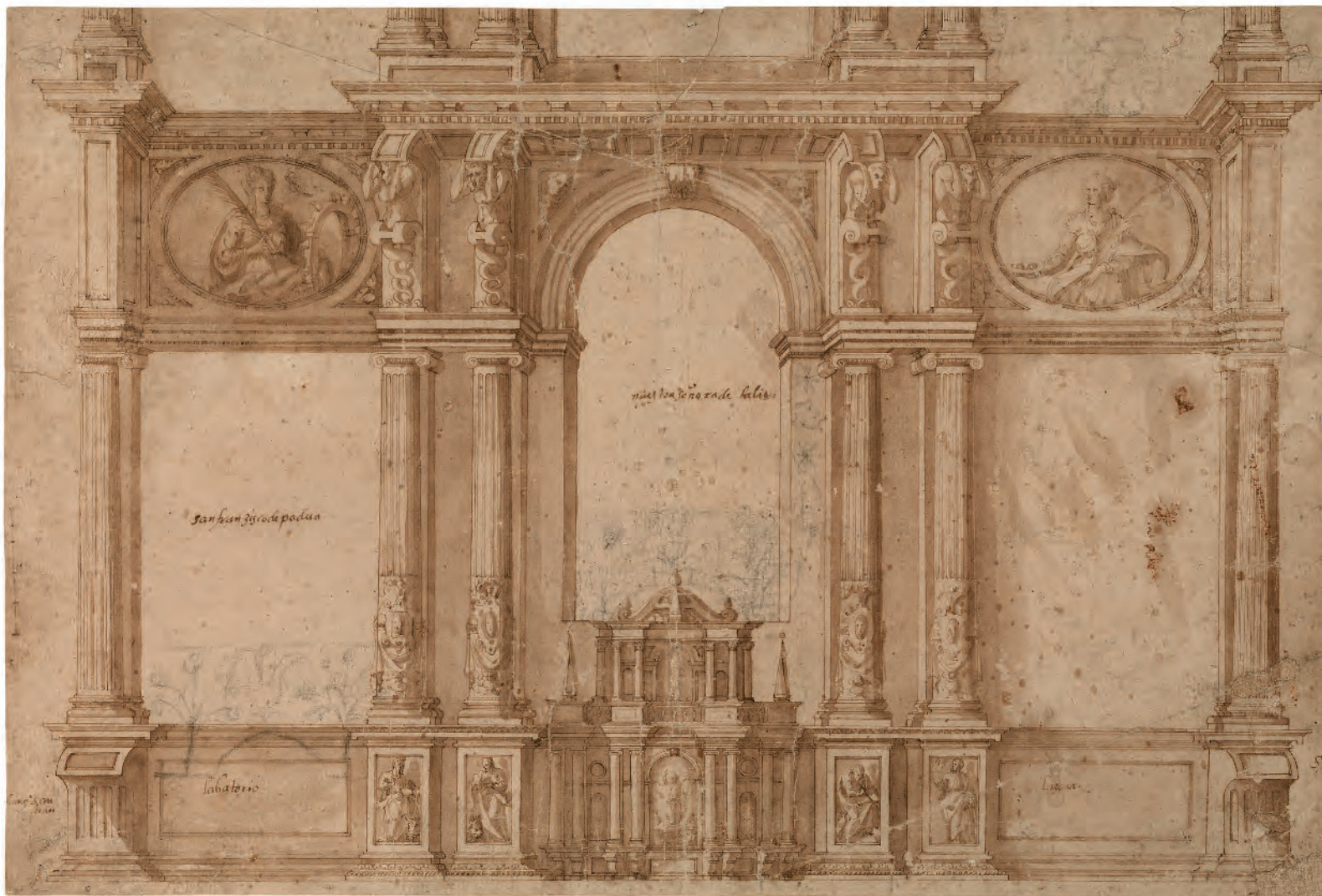
FIG. 27 Gaspar Becerra, High Altar  
(detail), c. 1558–62, Astorga Cathedral



FIG. 28 Gaspar Becerra, *Upper section of an altarpiece*,  
pen, ink and wash, 374 × 495 mm, Madrid,  
Biblioteca Nacional, inv. no. DIB/16/35/1



FIG. 29 Gaspar Becerra, *Design for the  
Altarpiece of the Descalzas Reales Convent*,  
Madrid, ink and wash, 870 × 505 mm, Madrid,  
Biblioteca Nacional, inv. no. DIB/16/34/1



More particularly, the indications of subject in the blank areas bear great similarity to the inscriptions in the design for an altarpiece in the Biblioteca Nacional by Gaspar Becerra (fig. 29), made for the convent of the Descalzas Reales, another foundation greatly favoured by Philip II and his family. It has not been possible to connect the Courtauld drawing with a documented altarpiece by Becerra, but the architectural ornaments employed, and the wash technique giving relief to the sculptural figures, are consistent with those of the Biblioteca Nacional drawing just mentioned and with those of another in the same institution (fig. 28), thus firmly linking the style and technique of the Courtauld sheet with Becerra or his workshop. A number of details in the drawing, such as the proportion and design of the tabernacle, or the device of flanking the principal scenes of the second storey with striated columns decorated with figurative carved motifs near the base, are

reminiscent of Becerra's great altarpiece commission for the Cathedral of Astorga of about 1558–62 (fig. 27). Becerra was a painter, sculptor and architect, and therefore could execute the narrative and devotional scenes either as paintings or sculpture, depending on the patron's pocket and preference. The comparative austerity of the altarpiece in the Courtauld drawing, and the central arched compartment, suggest a somewhat later date than the Astorga commission, possibly one close to the altarpiece of Santa María de Mediavilla in Medina de Rioseco of about 1575, based closely on Becerra's design but executed by others.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, if 'Our Lady of the Habit' signifies the sculpture donated to the Descalced Carmelites, the altarpiece drawn in the Courtauld sheet could not have been executed before 1573 (the date of its foundation); that is to say, it must have been executed by his workshop at least three years after Becerra's death.

#### NOTES

- 1 See Gea Ortigas 2002.
- 2 García Chico, 1960, I, pp. 46–52.

4

## Patricio Cajés or workshop

Arezzo c. 1540–1612 Madrid

### *Saint Paul*

Pen and brown\* ink, and grey wash, heightened with white and pale pink body-colour on toned paper, over traces of black chalk; unevenly trimmed, laid down overall, small pinholes top and bottom, some abrasion, minor surface accretions and staining throughout, foxing; flattened vertical creases and repaired tears, particularly in the lower part

Inscription (lower centre) in dark brown ink in a later hand, *Céspedes*

262 × 133 mm

D.1952.RW.122

#### PROVENANCE

Sir William Stirling Maxwell (1818–1878); Sir John Stirling Maxwell (1866–1956); Sotheby's, 15–16 February 1921, lot 249; E. Parsons & Sons, catalogue 38, 1921, lot 379 (together with cat. nos. 7, 9, 33); Sir Robert Witt (1872–1952); Witt Bequest 1952

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Handlist 1956, p. 160; *Corpus I*, p. 37, no. 124, pl. xxxviii

Saint Paul stands against a plain background, holding a book at his side with his right hand, while his left arm reaches out to rest on the hilt of a large sword pointing to the ground. The representation of standing saints, apostles and prophets, holding their attributes, silhouetted against a plain background, was a popular compositional formula in Seville around 1600. An example by Francisco Pacheco is typical of such works (fig. 30).

This sixteenth-century sheet bears an old inscription to Céspedes, apparently by the same hand as that on cat. no. 7. However, the areas of evident weakness in this drawing, such as the

awkward foreshortening of the arm holding the sword, make it unlikely it to be an autograph work by the artist. Infrared photography (fig. 31) reveals a pentiment in the area of the sword's hilt, the hand and arm, suggesting that the artist did not find this foreshortening easy to resolve. The most reliable attribution to Pablo de Céspedes is the large sheet in the Ashmolean (fig. 40), in which the figure style is much more heroic in conception. A drawing in the Museo del Prado also formerly attributed to Céspedes, and now to Patricio Cajés, showing *The miracle of a bishop saint* (fig. 32),<sup>1</sup> has a number of details of execution very



FIG. 30 Francisco Pacheco, *Saint Jerome*, brown ink and wash, 292 × 205 mm, Madrid, Abelló collection



FIG. 31 Infrared photograph, detail of cat. no. 3



FIG. 32 Attributed to Patricio Cajés, *The miracle of a bishop saint*, c. 1580–95, ink, wash and body colour, 283 × 240 mm, Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado, inv. no. D01678

similar to those in the Courtauld drawing: the awkwardness in drafting the foreshortened arm directly above the head of the youth seated on the ground is remarkably like the inaccurately rendered arm of Saint Paul; the application of body colour highlights in closely parallel or feathered lines is similar in both drawings; in both the artist also employed straight parallel hatching in ink to create relief or to suggest shadow; the personal shorthand used by the artist for drawing side-glancing eyes is very similar in both sheets. A firm attribution to Cajés is difficult to justify on the basis of this single comparison, but it seems clear that the Courtauld *Saint Paul* has more in common with the Central Italian reserve of Cajés's hand than the monumental Michelangelesque interpretation favoured by Céspedes.

The combination of underdrawing, grey wash, brown ink line and body colour creates a painterly technique and would have made a high degree of finish possible. Unfortunately much of the refined layering and subtle effects of chiaroscuro which the draughtsman had aspired to achieve has been greatly compromised by past water-damage and abrasion. The juxtaposition of brush-applied wash and parallel hatching in areas both of ink line and of body colour highlights is distinctive.

NOTE

- 1 Pérez Sánchez 1972, p. 23, inv. no. F.D. 153. This was catalogued in the twentieth century as by Patricio Cajés on stylistic grounds, despite a long-standing association with Pablo de Céspedes.



## Juan Fernández Navarrete, called El Mudo

Logroño c. 1538–1579 Toledo

### *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*

Black and white chalk over stylus lines; trimmed close to original ink framing line and laid down overall; abrasions, repaired holes and tears, marked discoloration throughout; localised staining

Inscription (lower left edge) in ink, seventeenth-century hand . . . *la mano del mudo*; (verso) short inscriptions in ink, indecipherable

348 × 261 mm  
D.1952.RW.50

#### PROVENANCE

Sir William Stirling Maxwell (1818–1878); Sir John Stirling Maxwell (1866–1956); Sotheby's, 15–16 February 1921, lot 249; E. Parsons & Sons, catalogue 38, 1921, lot unknown; Sir Robert Witt (1872–1952); Witt Bequest 1952

#### EXHIBITIONS

London 2011, no. 7

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Handlist 1956, p. 94; Vowles 2008; Véliz 2011a

The iconography of the Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria originated in the fifteenth century. The vision she is said to have had consisted in a wedding ceremony in which Christ (usually represented as an infant, as in the Courtauld drawing) placed a ring on her finger. In some accounts, the ceremony took place in the presence of many saints and angels,<sup>1</sup> such as are represented in the Courtauld sheet. At lower right a bearded figure sits with an open book on his lap; at upper right two angels look on, and at upper left an older female figure may represent Saint Anne, mother of the Virgin; the venerable bearded figure, holding

a cross, may be Simon of Cyrene.<sup>2</sup> The arrangement of the figures relates closely to prints by Lo Schiavone (Andrea Meldolla, Zara c. 1510–1563 Venice; see fig. 33), and a uniquely worded inscription connects the Courtauld drawing to the Spanish artist 'El Mudo' (Juan Fernández Navarrete).<sup>3</sup>

Despite the evident similarities to Schiavone's style the cautious black- and white-chalk technique of the Courtauld sheet differs significantly from drawings by the Venetian, which were more typically in pen and brush.<sup>4</sup> The carefully worked surface of the Courtauld drawing is more reminiscent of the tonal and textural timbres of Schiavone's etchings,<sup>5</sup> and the Courtauld sheet is indeed a pastiche of figures assembled from this artist's prints.<sup>6</sup> Some areas of the drawing even appear to have been transferred directly from prints to the paper, as some of the intended lines correspond exactly to contours from prints, indicating that they were probably traced with a stylus.<sup>7</sup>

The early seventeenth-century inscription at the lower edge of the sheet, [*de*] *la mano del mudo* ([by] the hand of El Mudo) stands apart from the more normal *del Mudo* or, simply, *mudo* that appear on a number of drawings that have been attributed to this artist. The expression 'by the hand' seems to emphasise the named artist's agency, almost as if to counter the initial impression of the drawing's Venetian appearance.

'El Mudo' has a small, sparingly documented oeuvre of about twenty autograph paintings<sup>8</sup> and a smaller number of drawings, including *A lion drinking* (fig. 34) and *Abraham and the Three Angels* (fig. 35).<sup>9</sup> Both these drawings, executed in chalks, functioned as finished preparatory studies for paintings.<sup>10</sup> In comparison, the *horror vacui* and two-dimensional character of *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* denote the work of a less experienced



FIG. 33 Andrea Schiavone, *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine with saints and an angel*, c. 1550–60, woodcut, 312 × 227 mm, London, British Museum, inv. no. 1860,0414.135

