

ARTISTIC EXCHANGES BETWEEN
SPAIN AND ITALY, 1516–1621
Orrente, Maíno, Tristán,
Borgianni and Cavarozzi

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CEEH
Centro de Estudios
Europa Hispánica

FIRST PUBLISHED BY

Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica (CEEH)
C/Felipe IV, 12
28014 Madrid – Spain
www.cceh.es

The Auckland Project
58 Kingsway
Bishop Auckland
County Durham
DL14 7JF – United Kingdom
www.aucklandproject.org

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PeiPe Diseño y Gestión

Colour separation
Museoteca

Printing
Advantía Comunicación Gráfica

ISBN: 978-84-18760-17-4
DL: M-2721-2024

Printed and bound in Spain

Cover image:

Detail of Bartolomeo Cavarozzi, *Holy Family with the Young Saint John*,
c. 1620 [fig. 5.7]

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Introduction

With the opening of the Spanish Gallery at Bishop Auckland in autumn 2021, the English county of Durham currently enjoys one of the largest concentrations in a single area outside Spain of Spanish artworks made between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. This encompasses not just the Spanish Gallery and Auckland Palace in Bishop Auckland, but also the Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle and a number of smaller holdings nearby.¹ As a result, several important Spanish artists whose names are largely unknown to an Anglophone audience now have a substantial presence in the United Kingdom. Using their works in the Spanish Gallery as a *point d'appui*, the purpose of the text that follows is to discuss the careers and artistic production of three Spanish artists who were active in Italy, particularly in Rome, as well as two Italian artists who had close ties to Spain at the very beginning of the seventeenth century.

The principal artists under discussion here are Pedro de Orrente (1580–1645), Juan Bautista Maíno (1581–1649), Luis Tristán (c. 1585–1624), the Roman Orazio Borgianni (1574–1616) and the Viterbese Bartolomeo Cavarozzi (1587–1625). As it stands, the Spanish Gallery holds six works that are associated with Orrente, three by Maíno and one by Tristán; this compares with four by Orrente, two by Maíno and three by Tristán in the remainder

1 Baron and Beresford 2014; Dotseth and Roglán 2019.



CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT

A Spanish Imperial World in Italy: 'en los estados de su magestad'

The words chosen for the title of this chapter, which translate as 'in the states of his Majesty', are exactly those used by Juan Bautista Maíno in a legal document of 1620 to describe his travels through Italy.¹ With all their reverence for Italy, art historians have all too often either ignored or forgotten that in the years when all these Spanish artists were resident in Italy, Spain was the dominant world power. The Italian Peninsula [fig. 1.1] had become to all intents and purposes only one component of a much larger Spanish Empire, whose extent stretched by 1600 from the Philippines to Rome. In a lecture in 1975 the historian Helmut Koenigsberger coined a phrase that best describes what held this vast agglomeration of territories together, calling it a 'composite monarchy'.² That is to say, an entity where a single ruler, in this case the King of Spain, governed each of his numerous territories as if they were a separate kingdom. Within that single larger entity, the precise degree of Spanish rule over certain areas of Italy remains arguable, ranging from Sicily and Naples which had been under direct Aragonese rule since the fifteenth century, to nominally independent duchies such as Florence.³ Nonetheless, in sum, directly or indirectly, by 1600 the Spanish king exercised a degree of control over all the individual

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- 1 This document has most recently been transcribed in Ruiz Gómez 2009, 231–33.
 - 2 Published in Koenigsberger 1986, 12; see also Elliott 1992.
 - 3 Dandeleit and Marino 2007; see also Ditchfield 2015.



CHAPTER 2

ITALY IN SPAIN

Juan de Juanes, El Greco and Juan Correa de Vivar

Before discussing the activities and outputs of Spanish artists in early seventeenth-century Rome, however, it should be noted that a number of Spaniards were influenced by Italian models already in the sixteenth century, despite not having themselves travelled to Italy.¹ For example, the Spanish Gallery currently has two important works on display by the Valencian artist Vicente Juan Masip, more commonly known as Juan de Juanes. These are a *Holy Family* attributed to Juanes and a *Crucifixion* in the Gallery holdings. Previously, there was only a single painting by Juanes in a British collection, one that was never on public display.² This has not prevented his art from being appreciated in Britain; in his *Handbook* of 1845, the Hispanophile traveller Richard Ford described Juanes tellingly as ‘the Spanish Raphael’.³ The son of the painter Vicente Masip, Juanes may never have travelled to Italy, or even much beyond the immediate hinterland of Valencia, but his paintings in the Gallery show how far his art was nonetheless impregnated with that of Italy, and not only Raphael.

Neither should it be forgotten that it was through the course of Juanes’s comparatively long life – he died aged nearly eighty, while the thirty-five to forty age range that our other artists reached was in fact the norm – that the

1 For a broadbrush discussion of this phenomenon see Redondo Cantera 2004.

2 Sotheby’s, London, December 2021.

3 Ford–Robertson 1966, vol. 3, 1123.

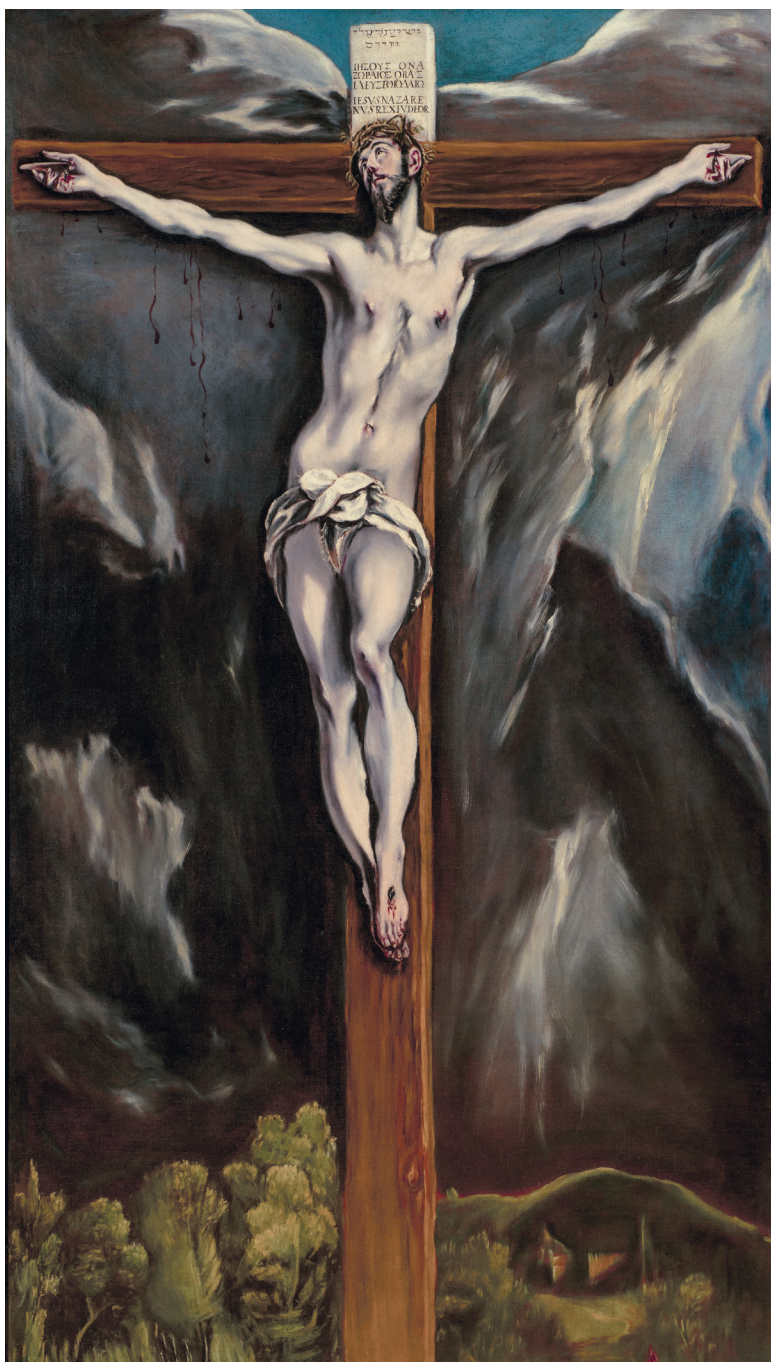


Fig. 2.3 El Greco, *Christ on the Cross*, c. 1600–10, oil on canvas, 179.4 × 103.5 cm. Spanish Gallery, Bishop Auckland

CHAPTER 3

CIRCA 1600

The Spanish in Rome and Venice I: Matching Magdalenes

This chapter focuses on two paintings of the penitent Magdalene in the Spanish Gallery, one by Luis Tristán and the other by Juan Bautista Maíno, both painted soon after their artists had returned from Rome. Neither work is dated, but stylistically the *Penitent Magdalene* by Tristán can be placed between 1620 and 1624, and Maíno's to sometime around 1609. These are very different paintings, but both show the mark of the Italian experiences of their creators. The one by Maíno [fig. 3.1] was first published in 1989, tellingly attributed to a follower of Caravaggio, possibly the obscure Genoese artist Luigi Miradori (c. 1605–c. 1656).¹ It was only when this same painting was re-sold at Christie's in London ten years later that it was first given to Maíno, an attribution from which there has been no subsequent dissent.² The *Penitent Magdalene* by Tristán is a still more recent discovery since it was sold on the Paris art market in 1996 as a work by Alonso Cano (1601–1667). It was, however, re-attributed to Tristán by Zahira Véliz once she had cleaned the painting in 1999, and again there has been universal agreement on this ascription since.³

1 *Mirari* 1989, n. 45.

2 Christie's, London, *Old Master Pictures*, 9 July 1999, lot 71; the attribution history is summarised in Ruiz Gómez 2009, 170–72.

3 Véliz 1999; Pérez Sánchez and Navarrete 2001, 238–39; Navarrete 2005.



Fig. 3.1 Juan Bautista Maíno, *The Penitent Magdalene*, c. 1609, oil on canvas, 117.5 × 89 cm. Spanish Gallery, Bishop Auckland

That said it should not be forgotten that, having been born in Milan, Caravaggio was himself originally a subject of the Spanish Crown and it is evident that his art was popular with contemporary collectors in Spain, and particularly so after he had fled to Spanish Naples in 1606.²⁵ The saga of the widely accepted Caravaggio, the *Scourged Christ* which recently surfaced for sale in Madrid, provides further proof of that popularity.²⁶ What can be said for certain is that Caravaggio's naturalism was very significant for the future development of seventeenth-century Spanish art, and that copies of his works are recorded in Seville from an early date.²⁷ Nonetheless, the art-historical focus on Caravaggio in recent years has distorted interpretation of Roman art in these years, and in particular the careers of Iberian artists working there, who are often examined solely through this Caravaggesque prism.²⁸

Yet another problem is the stylistic label *Caravaggisti*, a generic and increasingly unhelpful term that has been applied indiscriminately to the followers of Caravaggio, whatever their degree of relationship to the master.²⁹ The label increases the difficulty of disentangling the work of one such artist from that of another, as is evident from several of the works that will be discussed here. For example, at least ten copies were made almost immediately of the disputed Caravaggio painting of the *Holy Family with Saint John*, the supposed original of which is currently on loan to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and that would have been painted around 1602–04 [fig. 3.5].³⁰ One of these copies, recently re-discovered in a collection in Brussels, has now been given to Maíno [fig. 3.6]; if the attribution of the original to Caravaggio is correct, this might prove to be a direct connection between the two

25 Vannugli 2009, 355–81; Kientz 2012; Benay 2017.

26 Oil on canvas, 111 × 86 cm, Pérez de Castro family and Mercedes Méndez Atard Collection, withdrawn from sale in April 2021. Sgarbi–Cuppone 2021, 1–119; Dury 2021, 83.

27 See the essays in *Colloquio* 1974; Milicua and Cuyàs 2005; Pérez Sánchez and Navarrete 2005b, 21–33; Terzaghi 2021b.

28 For example, Papi 2016.

29 For instance, the essays collected in Longhi 2000; Bonfait 2012.

30 Schütze 2017, 461–62; Gash 2021, 52.



Fig. 3.13 Mateo Cerezo, *The Penitent Magdalene*, c. 1665–66, oil on canvas, 126.8 × 104 cm. Spanish Gallery, Bishop Auckland



CHAPTER 4

CIRCA 1600

The Spanish in Rome and Venice II: Landscape and Portrait

Juan Bautista Maíno was the artist of a number of works in the Spanish Gallery collection. The earliest is an *Apparition of the Christ Child to Saint Anthony of Padua*, among the few other paintings executed by him in Rome that may have been re-discovered [fig. 4.1]. While the quality of the picture is obviously high, this attribution is not universally accepted, however, and a number of alternative names have been proposed.¹ Whoever the artist may be, this depiction of one of Saint Anthony of Padua's miracles became particularly popular in the seventeenth century across all artistic media. In this painting the saint, dressed in his Franciscan habit, his waist girdled with the belt with three knots that is characteristic of his Order – recalling its friars' three initial vows of poverty, chastity and obedience – is seated before a table draped with a blue cloth.² Anthony opens his arms wide in surprise as the Christ Child appears as if from the book he is reading and chucks him under the chin. Anthony has bent forward so that he and the Child are on the same level while, in a palpable reminder of mortality, the pages of the book are held open by a skull.

This particular painting was discovered very recently in a Roman private collection, with an attribution there to Velázquez. Previously it had only been known from a photograph in the Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale

1 Willer 2021, 143.

2 Butler–Thurston 1926–38, June vol., 163.



Fig. 4.7 Pedro de Orrente after Tintoretto, *Plague Victims*, early 1600s, ink and wash drawing, 210 × 250 mm. Private collection, Madrid

Take, for example, the unusually large *Raising of Lazarus* that was recently bought by the Spanish Gallery. While this work bears a nineteenth-century attribution to Jacopo Bassano on the frame, it is undoubtedly the work of Pedro Orrente [fig. 4.8].³³ At present it is his only known depiction of this powerful biblical episode in which Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, and which is only included in the Gospel according to John (11:1–44). In Orrente’s composition a group of figures are set against a rocky landscape where, in the centre, the dead Lazarus has been brought out from the tomb and then raised from the dead. One man holds him while another unwraps his burial shrouds. Christ stands to the right, flanked by Lazarus’ amazed sisters, Mary and Martha. The scene seems to be illustrating Jesus’ simple

33 The author is grateful to Alejandro del Pozo Maté for confirming this re-attribution.

CHAPTER 5

CIRCA 1600

Italians in Spain: Orazio Borgianni and Bartolomeo Cavarozzi

The last artists to be considered here are two Italian painters, the Roman Orazio Borgianni and the Viterbese Bartolomeo Cavarozzi. The Spanish Gallery has two paintings by Borgianni, an *Annunciation* and the *Innkeeper*. The *Annunciation* was discovered recently in a Spanish private collection [fig. 5.1], while the *Innkeeper* has a much longer history, though it was only re-attributed to Borgianni in the 2020s.¹ Borgianni not only travelled extensively in Spain but also worked almost exclusively for a Spanish clientele once back in Rome; he probably played a key role, too, in the Italian travel plans of our Spanish artists in these years. Borgianni remains under-represented in British collections, apart from a large number of prints held in the British Museum.² Furthermore, in terms of paintings, besides the *Annunciation* and the *Innkeeper* there is only one other work by his hand in the British Isles, the striking *Saint Christopher carrying the Infant Christ*, one of a number of versions of this particular composition painted by Borgianni, now in the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh [fig. 5.2].³

1 Papi 2020b, 42–43.

2 Among them *Saint Christopher carrying Christ on his Shoulders*, c. 1615, etching, 386 × 289 mm, V,10.94; and after Raphael, *God appearing to Moses in the Burning Bush*, 1615, etching, 160 × 190 mm, 1893,1018.19.26; *Noah and the Animals leaving the Ark*, 1615, etching, 145 × 167 mm, 1893,1018.19.8; and *Joshua commanding the Sun and the Moon to Stand Still*, 1615, etching, 147 × 200 mm, 1893,1018.19.35.

3 Papi 1993, 104–06, 126–27 and 139–40; Vannugli 2009, 407–11.



Fig. 5.1 Orazio Borgianni, *The Annunciation*, c. 1610, oil on canvas, 146 × 114 cm. Spanish Gallery, Bishop Auckland

By Way of Conclusion

On the opening of the Spanish Gallery to the public in October 2021, one reviewer stated her admiration for what had been achieved there but noted the lack of a proper catalogue of the works of art displayed in the museum.¹ The purpose of this text has been not only to contribute towards that catalogue but also to explain to both an academic and a lay audience why at least this one particular group of works of art in the Spanish Gallery is so significant. Hopefully after reading this text the names of Juan Bautista Maíno, Luis Tristán, Pedro Orrente, Orazio Borgianni and Bartolomeo Cavarozzi will assume their due importance in the Spanish artistic pantheon for the reader. Especially so as their works in the Spanish Gallery illustrate for the first time in a United Kingdom museological context the lived realities of a Spanish cultural presence in Rome at the beginning of the seventeenth century, a presence which too often continues to be ignored. If the visitor now leaves the Gallery with a new appreciation of, in particular, the works and talents of Maíno, Tristán, Orrente, Borgianni and Cavarozzi, this aim will have been fulfilled. Future volumes in this ongoing series will next highlight other neglected areas of Spanish art that are now accessible thanks to the Spanish Gallery's wider holdings.

1 Kent 2022.

This book was printed in 2024,
400 years after the death of Luis Tristán
and 399 after the death of Bartolomeo Cavarozzi.