

the ceiling-centerpiece of which was to be a painting Choice of Hercules, and second, far more ambitious, coration of the vault of the great salon in the palace, theme of the Loves of the Gods. Annibale was assisthis latter project by his brother Agostino as well as by ounger painters trained in the Carracci academy, Dohino Zampieri (known as Domenichino) and Giovanni inco, both soon to become major figures in the Roman orld. Both were deeply influenced not only by their c education in Bologna but also by their intimate exto Annibale's now classicizing style, which became sis of what amounted to a new school of painting that von more than its share of important commissions in ies and palaces over the succeeding decades. (Other rs in that school were Francesco Albani and the prodigifted Guido Reni.) In the present book I shall have othing to say about this vast and formidable body of but the fourth chapter will be devoted to a younger with strong Bolognese roots, Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, known as Guercino (for his squint), specifically to twenty-plus remarkably brilliant and original paintings he produced during two years that I think of as nothing less than his <u>anni mirabiles</u>, 1619-20.

The first three chapters, in contrast, will focus on developments associated with the impact of Caravaggio (though Guercino will also make a brief appearance toward the end of Chapter One). In fact almost all the painters I shall be discussing have been characterized as "Caravaggisti," a term that on the one hand correctly testifies to their indebtedness to his example but on the other fails to acknowledge their own considerable originality. The painters I mainly have in mind are Bartolomeo Manfredi, the Frenchmen Valentin de Boulogne, Nicolas Régnier, Nicolas Tournier, and Simon Vouet, the Spaniard Jusepe de Ribera, and another Italian, a figure of some mystery, Cecco del Caravaggio, who has recently been identified as Francesco Boneri (or Buoneri), and the period of time that interests me comprises the twenty years following Caravaggio's death in 1610. The ear-

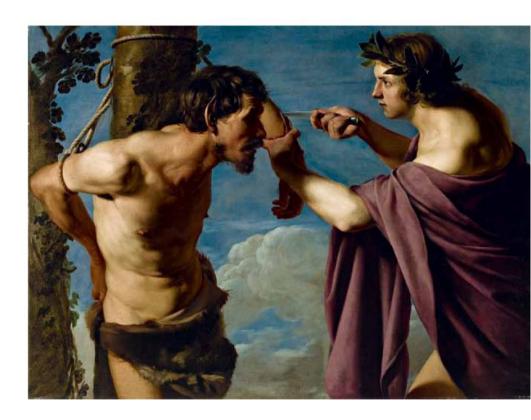


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AFTER CARAVAGGIO INTRODUCTION



orks by Manfredi, a key figure, date from 1607, those entin, whose biography remains obscure, from some fter 1615. In recent years it has become clear, largely to the researches of Gianni Papi, that the young Ribera was a significant force within the group, and that as early as 1612 he was making paintings of great power and originality (more on this below). By the late 1620s, however, the constellation of artists working under Caravag-



gio's inspiration became scattered: Manfredi died at forty in 1622, Cecco's movements are scarcely known but there is no trace of him in Rome after 1620, Ribera left Rome for Naples in 1616, Vouet returned to his native France in 1627, and Régnier removed himself to Venice in 1626. Only Valentin remained, his sudden death in 1632 putting a full stop at the end of an era. (One of Caravaggio's earliest followers, Orazio Gentileschi, not part of the above constellation, left Rome definitively in 1621.) Partly owing to the dissolution of the group, the influence of Caravaggio became eclipsed by the end of the 1620s. More precisely, the 1630s saw two major developments in Rome itself: first, the maturing of the art of Nicolas Poussin, who would later be quoted as

saying that Caravaggio had come into the world "to depainting" and whose <u>Death of Germanicus</u> (1626) and works of the late 1620s and early 1630s offered a different paradigm for serious accomplishment; and ond, the arrival of the full-blown Baroque in the spelarly illusionistic decorative projects of Pietro da Cowhose <u>Allegory of Divine Providence and Barberini</u> in the Palazzo Barberini was officially unveiled in (work on it had begun in 1633). It is also true that a Caravaggesque impulse continued elsewhere in Europarticular in Utrecht, home to three native-born pa Gerard van Honthorst, Hendrik ter Bruggen and Di Baburen, all of whom had come under Caravaggio's

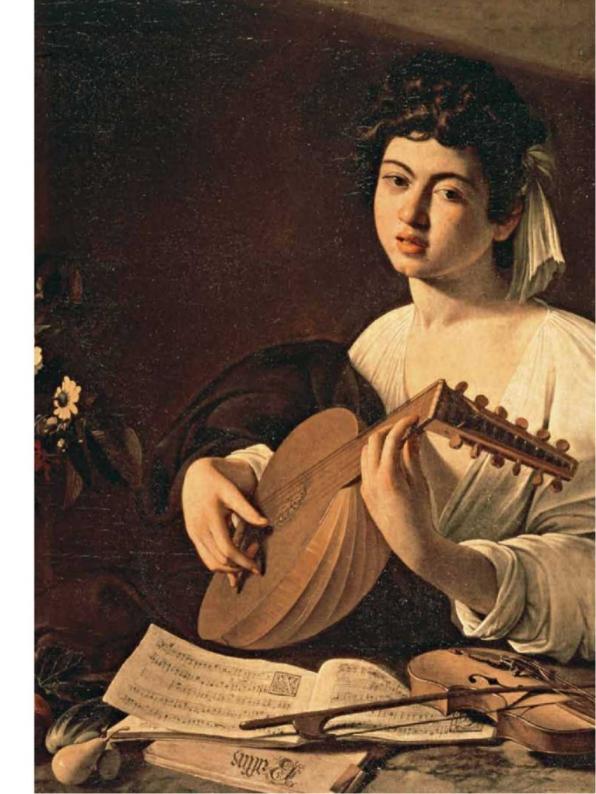
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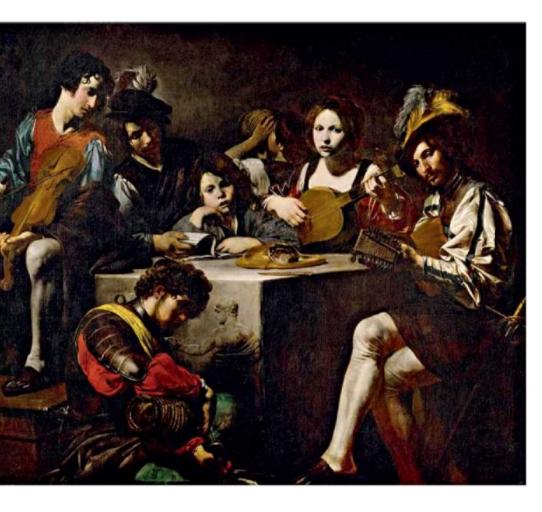




and that of other Caravaggesque painters) in Rome the second decade of the century; for that matter, the t of Caravaggio continued almost unabated in Naples, he had stayed and painted on two occasions during ars of flight following the murder of Ranuccio Tomas-1606. (The force of Caravaggio's example would have oled by that of Ribera, who spent most of his career oles after leaving Rome.) And although no one ordithinks of the greatest of Flemish painters, Peter Paul s, as Caravaggesque, the fact remains that during his n Rome (1601-03 and again later in the first decade) ly did he familiarize himself with Caravaggio's examthe extent of painting a somewhat free copy of the latntombment (ca. 1612-14), he also recommended that ike of Mantua, his patron, purchase the Death of the after its rejection by the Carmelite friars at Sta. Maria

della Scala and played a role in an Antwerp church's acquisition of the Madonna of the Ros-ary (1605-6?), another work by the master that had become available. Moreover, in Chapter One I shall suggest that one of Rubens's most impressive canvases of the first decades of the century, the Death of Seneca (1612-13) in Munich, invites contextualization alongside single-figure paintings by Manfredi, Valentin, Ribera, and the others. Intriguingly, too, another painter of indisputable greatness, Diego Velázquez, visited Italy in 1629-30, and although not a great deal is known about what he saw there, it he would surely have encountered key examples of Caravaggio's painting, with consequences for his subsequent art that remain an open question.4 But by then Ribera's paintings and prints, brought to Spain from Naples largely thanks to vice-regal patronage as well as by dealers and others, had become a force in Madrid and elsewhere.





noment" of immersion is temporally indefinite, and is to be inferred by the viewer; put slightly differently, in requires looking past the signs of instantaneousness underlying structure that implies a more open-ended of temporality. (In the case of the London picture, the ure is that of a mirror-reversed self-portrait with the

"depicted" canvas at right angles to the actual one and situated just off-picture to the right. In the <u>Moment of Caravaggio</u> I show that some such dispositif was at work in a surprising number of 16th- and 17th-century self-portraits.)

Another basic structural polarity in Caravaggio's art is between <u>absorption</u> — the depiction of figures engrossed

