

Attributed to Taddeo ZUCCARO (Sant'Angelo in Vado 1529 - Rome 1566)

Saint Roch

Pen and brown ink and brown wash.

228 x 150 mm. (9 x 5 7/8 in.)

While this fine drawing was included, as 'Attributed to Taddeo Zuccaro', in the 1990 sale of drawings by the Zuccari from the Lawrence-Woodburn collection and later the British Rail Pension Fund, it was aptly noted by Gere in the auction catalogue that although 'Previously catalogued as a studio work…The possibility that the drawing is by Taddeo himself cannot be entirely dismissed. The penwork seems compatible with that of some late drawings by him and the application of wash is particularly delicate and sensitive.' However, Gere chose not to include the present sheet in the addenda to his catalogue of Taddeo Zuccaro's drawings, published in Master Drawings magazine in 1995.

Nevertheless, it may be noted that the present sheet is of high quality and is very close, as both Gere and, more recently, Marco Simone Bolzoni have noted, to the elder Zuccaro's manner in several details. Similarities in handling and technique may be noted with such drawings by Taddeo as a compositional study of Ananias Healing Paul's Blindness in the Uffizi, formerly attributed to Federico Zuccaro but given to his brother by Gere in his 1995 article. As Bolzoni has pointed out, however, certain passages in the present sheet, such as the tree at the right, the hands of the saint and the structure of his face, are not wholly convincing as by Taddeo.

The first known owner of the present sheet was the 17th century portrait painter Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), whose renowned collection of nearly ten thousand drawings was dispersed at auction in 1688 and 1694. The drawing was later in the collection of the eminent portrait painter Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), who assembled one of the single greatest collections of Old Master drawings ever seen in England. Four years after Lawrence's death, his collection was acquired by the art dealer and collector Samuel Woodburn (1753-1853). The present sheet was included in an album, assembled by Woodburn, of over seventy drawings - mainly by Taddeo and Federico Zuccaro - from Lawrence's collection. In 1860, several years after Woodburn's death in 1853, many of the drawings from Lawrence's collection that were still in his possession, including the 'Zuccaro album', were sold by his heirs at auction in London.

The album was acquired at the Lawrence-Woodburn sale in 1860 by bibliophile and collector Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), who bought several lots of drawings at the sale. Phillipps's collection passed by descent to his grandson Thomas Fitzroy Phillipps Fenwick (1856-1938), who began the dispersal of the collection of drawings, much of which was eventually acquired by the British Museum in 1946. The album of Zuccaro drawings was purchased from Phillipps Fenwick in 1930 by Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach (1876-1952), an American dealer in rare books and manuscripts. While six drawings from the album were sold to the collector Janos Scholz and are now in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, the remainder of the album remained intact until it was acquired in 1978 by the British Rail Pension Fund.

Exhibitions

Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Splendor and Elegance: European Decorative Arts and Drawings from the Horace Wood Brock Collection, 2009, no.119.

Literature:

John Gere, 'The Lawrence-Phillipps-Rosenbach "Zuccaro Album"', Master Drawings, Summer 1970, p.134, no.29, fig.5 (as Zuccaro Studio); Horace Wood Brock, Martin P. Levy and Clifford S. Ackley, Splendor and Elegance: European Decorative Arts and Drawings from the Horace Wood Brock Collection, exhibition catalogue, Boston, 2009, p.157, no.119, illustrated p.119 (as Taddeo Zuccaro).