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GIANDOMENICO TIEPOLO (1727-1804) TEN FANTASY PORTRAITS

2012

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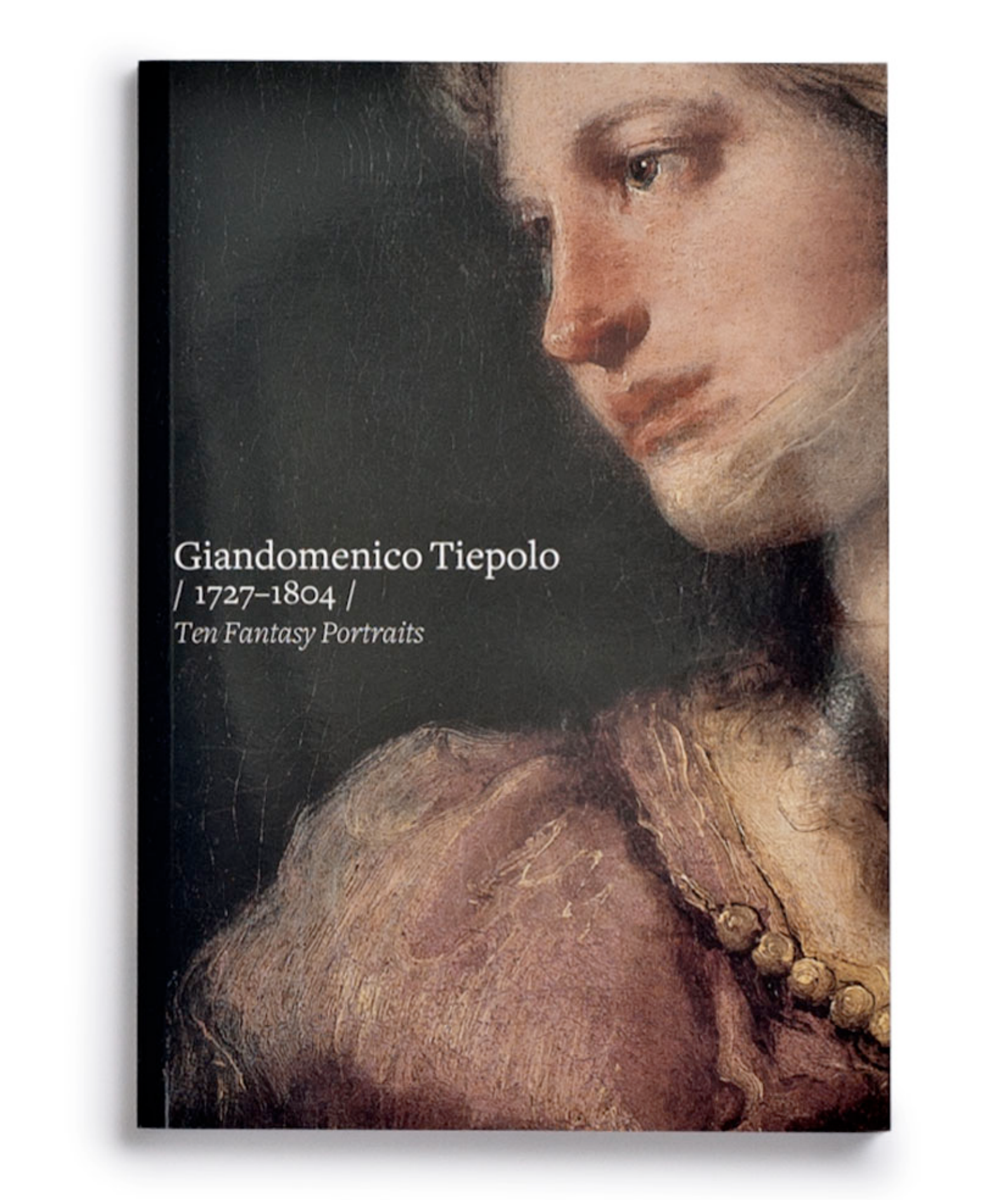


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Giandomenico Tiepolo
/ 1727-1804 /
Ten Fantasy Portraits



Giandomenico
Tiepolo
/1727–1804/

*Ten Fantasy
Portraits*

Texts by
Andrés Úbeda de los Cobos

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Fundación Juan March

This book and its Spanish edition
are published on the occasion of the exhibition

Giandomenico Tiepolo (1727–1804).
Ten Fantasy Portraits

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Eight women and two men

Foreword

This book accompanies the exhibition, *Giandomenico Tiepolo (1727–1804): Ten Fantasy Portraits*, in which a set of ten oil paintings on canvas by the Venetian artist Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo will be shown to the public for the first time. Giandomenico was the brother of Lorenzo Tiepolo, and both were the sons of Giambattista Tiepolo, the patriarch of their artistic dynasty—the “Tiepolo factory”, in the words of Andrés Úbeda. The three artists had moved to Madrid in 1762, where their principal task was the creation of decorative frescoes on various ceilings in the Royal Palace.

These ten paintings of great beauty, all of which are from a private collection, were in all likelihood conceived of as a series, given their stylistic unity, their identical size, and the similarity in the figures’ dress and poses. They represent ten heads: two old, bearded men with an eastern air; and eight beautiful young women. They can all be dated to around 1768, during the artist’s Spanish period. Strictly speaking, they are not true portraits; rather, these figures, wearing different adornments and striking various poses, do not represent real individuals but generic types with the characteristic features and attributes of a certain social, economic and intellectual group. Thus, the male portraits present their models in the manner of philosophers, wise, honorable men from an imagined Antiquity, while the portraits of young women, characterized by carefree and innocent charm, would seem to reflect an ideal paradigm of feminine beauty. Both types belong to a long and fruitful tradition in Venice: a genre that conjures up a world of the imagination whose roots are to be found in the seventeenth century, a type of painting whose master par excellence was Rembrandt himself.

The Fundación Juan March wishes to express its gratitude to the current owner of these works for the opportunity to present them to the public. The Fundación is also grateful to Andrés Úbeda de los Cobos, Chief Curator of Italian and French Painting in the Museo Nacional del Prado and the author of the essays included in this catalogue, for his special collaboration on the project. His essays shed light on the historical and aesthetic contexts of these mysterious, little-known works, “one of the least studied chapters in the history of this dynasty of artists,” and never before exhibited in public.

Fundación Juan March

Madrid, February 2012



Giandomenico Tiepolo (1727–1804).
An Artist between Venice and Madrid



On 4 June 1762, Giambattista Tiepolo (Venice, 5 March 1696–Madrid, 27 March 1770) arrived in Madrid with the commission to paint frescoes on the ceiling of the Royal Palace. His original intentions were to return to his native city upon concluding the project, but he managed to string together a series of subsequent commissions in Spain until his death in 1770. Accompanying him on this voyage were his two sons, Giandomenico (Venice, 30 August 1727–3 March 1804) and Lorenzo, who, like his father, ended his days in Spain (Venice, 8 August 1736–Somosaguas, Madrid, 2 May 1776). Both collaborated with their father Giambattista until his death, a fact that has probably contributed significantly to scholars’ difficulties in recognizing the sons’ talent and creative autonomy. Giandomenico, to whose work this catalogue is devoted, achieved that recognition first, in 1941, when the Italian historian Antonio Morassi perceived Giandomenico’s hand in the frescoes in the Villa Valmarana ai Nani in Vicenza (1757) (see “The *Fantasy Portraits*,” fig. 2).¹ His reputation was definitively restored in 1971, with the publication of an authoritative catalogue by Adriano Mariuz, who is undeniably, together with George Knox, primarily responsible for the current awareness and appreciation of the artist.² Lorenzo’s path toward general recognition has been longer and more difficult, perhaps because of his dedication to the medium of pastels, a technique that still suffers unjustifiably from critical neglect (see “The *Fantasy Portraits*,” fig. 15). The fact that the museums that own pastels by Lorenzo rarely exhibit them, due to their extremely delicate state of conservation, is not unrelated. Only the exhibition devoted to Lorenzo at the Museo del Prado en 1999 gave a fleeting view of his talent and his vigorous artistic personality.³

Giambattista is the most familiar member of the artistic dynasty, its patriarch and the one responsible for developing a style of painting character-

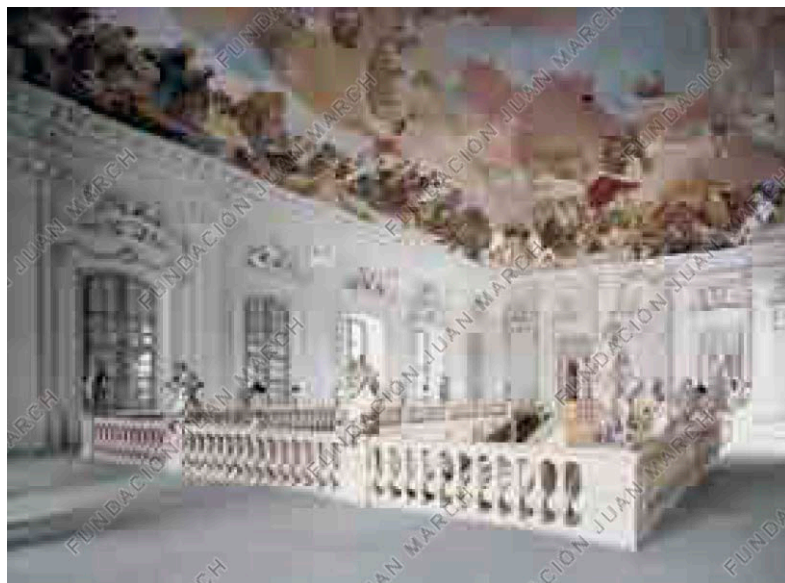


FIG. 1. Giambattista Tiepolo, view of the staircase in the Würzburg Residence. Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung, Munich



FIG. 2. Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Punchinello on the Swing*, ceiling decoration. Fresco from the Villa di Zianigo, currently in the Museo Ca' Rezzonico, Venice

ized by a markedly individual approach to color and decorative sense, vindicating the elegance and monumentality of Veronese, whom he acknowledged as his artistic forebear. He was an ambitious painter in personal and professional terms, and he published shortly before moving to Madrid in the *Nuova Veneta Gazzetta* a declaration of his artistic principles that left no doubts about his objectives and priorities: “[...] Painters must strive to triumph in their grand works, that is, those that can delight noble lords and the wealthy, for it is they who make the fortunes of artists [...]. Therefore, the painter’s mind must always reach for the Sublime and the Heroic: for Perfection.”⁴ In his most celebrated works, fresco mural cycles, he executed complex compositions filled with mythological, historical and allegorical figures. In these projects, his two sons were active collaborators whom he had purposefully trained to faithfully imitate his own style and approach, so that their contributions to the murals were harmoniously integrated in what their father had produced.

In fact, the artistic relationship in which the sons’ work was subject to Giambattista’s models can only be truly observed in their period of training during the 1740s, when Giandomenico copied drawings by Giambattista and sketched some of his works in oil and fresco. Precisely because of their imitative character, the attribution of many of these works is subject to persistent debate among scholars specializing in the Tiepolos.⁵ In 1750, the entire family moved to Würzburg, accepting the invitation from the Prince-Bishop Karl Philipp von Greiffenklau to decorate the Imperial Hall of the Würzburg Residence with frescoes. Two years later he undertook the decoration of the great staircase, the masterwork of the Tiepolo “factory,” for which Giandomenico worked shoulder to shoulder with his father [fig. 1]. It is precisely there where for the first time he defined the characteristics of his own painting and where he assumed responsibilities beyond simply filling in for his father, following his lead—for instance in the decorations above the lintel portraying the emperor Justinian, which Giandomenico signed with his own name, proudly adding his age, twenty-three.

From his father’s works, Giandomenico adopted certain important aspects in his own throughout his career, such as the oleaginous quality of his paintings, their earthy tones, the decorative features distantly evoking Veronese, and, most fundamentally, the universe of human types, both real and imaginary, populated by Orientals, gypsies, charlatans, tooth-pullers, elixir hawkers, peasant women, soldiers, strange-looking crowds of people cavorting in carnivalesque dances, idlers and onlookers who waste their time with any little distraction they see. And, above all, there is the figure of Punchinello, the burlesque character from Italian *commedia dell’arte* [fig. 2]. These characters all belong to a world fancifully removed from our own, a world that

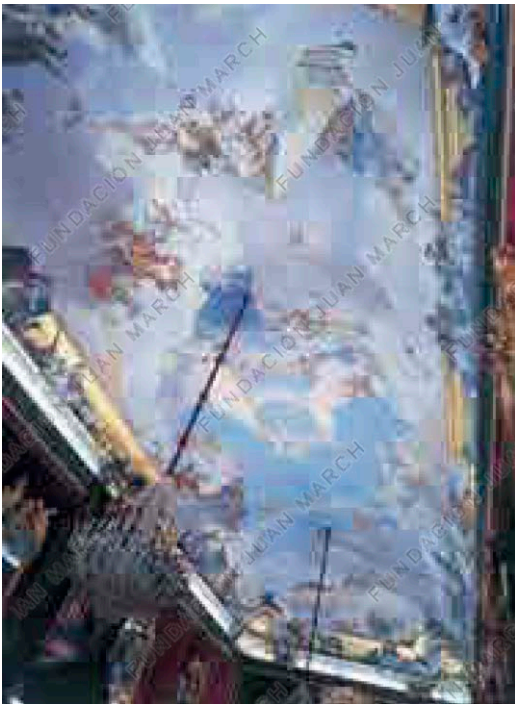


FIG. 3.
Giambattista Tiepolo,
ceiling from the Throne
Room. Royal Palace,
Madrid

belongs exclusively to the Tiepolo family, one that is picturesque, whimsical, fascinating, peopled by the character types mentioned above, born of these artists' fertile imaginations. The Tiepolos, and Giandomenico in particular, present elegant figures, especially the delightful female models, accompanied by their unforgettably theatrical props. At times these figures seem like caricatures; they are exotic and ironic and, taken all together, they represent an impossible diversity of human types coexisting in apparent harmony. It is important to acknowledge which of the artists went furthest in this regard: it was precisely Giandomenico who developed the most fecund imagination. Carnival scenes, elegant couples, chinoiseries and masquerades are more closely associated with Giandomenico than with his father or brother. (Indeed, Lorenzo remained more grounded in tangible reality than either of his relatives.) Finally, Giandomenico also took from his father the same intriguingly mysterious tone, so unlike the more docilely descriptive approach of his contemporaries, like the works of the celebrated Pietro Longhi.

The distance separating the artistic sensibilities of Giambattista and Giandomenico is apparent in the decorations of the Villa Valmarana (see "The *Fantasy Portraits*," fig. 2).⁶ There, Giandomenico was fortunate to have found a client who would allow him to represent his own pictorial universe, and the result is one of the most fascinating groups of murals of the entire eighteenth century. In the *Foresteria*, or guest house, Giandomenico's imaginative individuality achieved the most surprising heights of artistic freedom, giving life to a world in which decorative scenes of Chinese figures coexist with elegant ladies strolling in gardens and peasants captured in the

midst of their daily activities, represented in a strikingly realistic manner. Alongside these frescoes, Giambattista's own in the Villa seem somewhat routine, with their theatrical scenes taken from tales of classical antiquity and episodes from Ariosto and Tasso.

Giandomenico's presence in Spain

During the eight years he spent in Madrid, Giandomenico's output went in two fundamental directions. On the one hand, he made an important contribution to the decoration of the new Royal Palace in Madrid, first as his father's assistant in execution of the Throne Room fresco [fig. 3] and later as the artist responsible for the decoration of seven other halls, two large ones and five small ones, work he carried out between 1763 and 1765. Also from his Spanish period are some of his most famous works in oils, which reveal a surprisingly Venetian character. These include *The Burchiello* [fig. 4], now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, and *The Departure of the Gondola* in the Wrightsman collection in New York.⁷ In Spain also he painted the majority, if not all, of the heads of philosophers and young women that are the focus of this exhibition.

Regrettably, we lack information about the clientele and the reception of paintings that were so unlike what was typically sought after in the Madrid art market. It is possible that the buyers for these paintings were members of the Italian colony there, including the ambassador from the Republic of

FIG. 4.
Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Il Burchiello*. Oil on canvas, 1762/1770, 38 x 78.3 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Venice himself, Sebastiano Foscarini Alvisé, in whose residence the Tiepolos stayed when they arrived in Madrid.⁸ They also enjoyed relations with personalities like the well-to-do Genovese bookseller Angelo Corradi, whose daughter married Lorenzo Tiepolo; and the mirror merchant and nobleman from Padua known in Spain as Joseph Casina, who accompanied the Tiepolos on their journey to Madrid.⁹ There is reason to believe that the family's artistic creations also enjoyed a favorable reputation among Spanish collectors whose identities are, however, unknown. The existence, for example, of



FIG. 5. Giandomenico Tiepolo, *The Crown of Thorns*. Oil on canvas, 124 x 144 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

large scale works such as *Abraham and the Three Angels*—it is not known for what church or chapel this work was executed—cannot be explained in any other way.¹⁰ This is likewise the case with the striking, small format religious paintings that present a scene from the New Testament in the foreground while in the background one may clearly recognize the outline of the city of Madrid.¹¹ Other artists residing there were also clearly a part of the Tiepolos' world—even those in the circle of Anton Raphael Mengs, such as Francisco Bayeu, who acquired numerous sketches by Giambattista, or Francisco Goya himself, an inventory of whose possessions from 1812 mentions “dos de Tiepolo con el número 10, en 200 rr. V.” (two [paintings] by Tiepolo with the number 10, valued at 200 *reales de vellón* [i.e., coins made of billon]).¹²

When his father died in 1770, and unlike his brother Lorenzo, who decided to continue on in Spain, Giandomenico left Madrid for Venice, where he was living once again already by 12 November that same year. In Venice, he continued to work for a Spanish clientele, specifically for the clerks regular of the church of San Felipe Neri in Madrid, for which between 1771 and 1772 he executed a series of eight paintings of the Passion, currently housed at the Museo del Prado [fig. 5].¹³ Critics have not taken a particularly flattering view of this series nor, in general, of Giandomenico's output upon his return to Italy, where he confronted a new artistic panorama that already announced the end of the exuberant world of the Tiepolos, which would be supplanted by that of the advocates of a return to Greco-Roman ideals of beauty.

Giandomenico's most famous works corresponding to this period are marked by a reserved, introspective quality, as in the volume of prints titled *Catalogo di varie Opere inventate dal Celebre Gio. Batta. Tiepolo* (*Catalogue of*

Various Works Created by the Renowned Giovanni Battista Tiepolo), published for the first time in 1772, which reproduces works by his father. On the other hand, commissions for works following the family style were not lacking, including both religious paintings for churches (such as the church of San Lio in Venice, 1783) and secular ones for palaces (such as the Palazzo Contarini dal Zaffo in Venice, 1784). He had occasion to cross paths again with Mengs, whom he had met in Madrid and who examined one of Giandomenico's sketches in 1772, noting in it "una certa somiglianza dello stile delli nostri Antichi Uomini grandi dando il fare del Sig. Tiepolo un' Idea di quello di Paolo Veronese misto con lo stil moderno, e la natural vivacità della Scuola Veneziana" (a certain similarity to the style of our great men of old, for *Signore* Tiepolo's work suggests that of Paolo Veronese blended with the modern style and the natural liveliness of the Venetian School).¹⁴

Alongside this official, public and to a certain extent predictable artistic persona, however, little by little Giandomenico developed a thrillingly, uniquely individual approach to his artistic creations. His activities in this regard remained largely unknown, almost clandestine. In a more private

FIG. 6.

Giandomenico Tiepolo,
The Promenade. Fresco
from the Villa di Zianigo,
currently in the Museo Ca'
Rezzonico, Venecia



context, Giandomenico revealed an unexpected independence from the interests of Giambattista, though the son continued to reveal his indebtedness to his father's incomparable technique. The most palpably evident example of this upon his return to Venice, free at last from the oppressive presence of his father and the need to subordinate himself to the demands of family collaborations, is the cycle of decorations in his country residence, the Villa di Zianigo. There, Giandomenico enjoyed complete freedom with the subjects he depicted and in his manner of presenting them, for instance in his portraits that show his models' backs, which thus avoid the representation of faces, precisely the element that defines the identity of the character. Works such as *The New World* or *The Promenade* (1791) [fig. 6] constitute enthralling experiments in which Giandomenico radically alters traditional representational precepts, for he depicts figures that do not regard the viewer as the most important element in the scene and that, therefore, refuse to grant us a privileged point of view from which to contemplate them. Surprisingly, Giandomenico thus introduces an unsettling degree of distance between the painting and the people who will view it, giving the impression that the subject of the painting almost exists independent of the viewers. Though these "anti-portraits" find a direct precedent in the caricatures by his father, Giandomenico places them in a different context, incorporating them in compositions filled with figures, and (more importantly), giving them a narrative quality completely lacking in the examples by Giambattista.¹⁵

This cycle of frescoes is habitually contrasted with the series of paintings of Christ's Passion executed for the church of San Felipe Neri in Madrid [fig. 5]. According to this viewpoint, the freedom and lubricious fantasy of the works in Venice should be juxtaposed with the almost grotesque rigor of the commission for the Spanish church.¹⁶ In fact, however, both sets of works may be readily seen as two sides of the same coin—that is, examples of the artist's creative liberty, of his uniquely powerful and appealing personality, of his desire to offer up his own alternatives, no longer under the long shadow of Giambattista. This freedom is manifest in his canvases produced in Spain, in which, in contrast to his father's decorative style, religious devotion took a more prominent role, a deliberate turning away from the rhetoric of Veronese, which (though it continued to provide marvelous decorative effects) proved inadequate for the contemplative seclusion necessary in devotional paintings. For this reason, in the series on Christ's Passion, as well as in the Villa di Zianigo, Giandomenico went beyond what his father had ever achieved. In the case of the paintings in Madrid, he created a deliberately tragic pathos, placing devotional aspects before painterly ones; in the Venetian villa, he gave life to a new world in which mythological fantasies coexist with scenes from daily life in the Venetian countryside and in which diverse human types appear, from peasants to characters with an aristocratic air, together with his PUNCHINELLOS, who show up alongside the other characters he depicts (as in *The New World*) or inhabiting their own world in which only the laws of the imagination and fantasy rule [fig. 2].

It is tempting, and perhaps inevitable, to establish a commonality between Giandomenico's final years and Goya's last period. It is easy to imag-

ine both artists contemplating how their respective worlds, all that they had lived and fought for, were spectacularly and inexorably crumbling before them. Tiepolo's two daughters had died years before, shortly after birth, and it is not difficult to envisage him alone, displaced artistically by aesthetic currents that defended works of art radically opposed to what Tiepolo epitomized. His response, like Goya's in the *Pinturas Negras*, or *Black Paintings*, was an introspective reclusion, willfully resistant to the influences of his surroundings, so that he could create, with absolute freedom, works for no other audience than himself. Goya revealed his most intimate preoccupations in the mural paintings in his residence outside Madrid known as the Quinta del Sordo. Giandomenico chose drawing as the medium in which to give his fantasy the freest rein, creating a series he called *Divertimento per li ragazzi* (*Divertissement for Children*), one hundred and four drawings that constitute an ambiguous artistic testament in which Punchinello is the absurd, irrational protagonist [fig. 7].

The conditions in which the Tiepolos lived in Spain and the meaning of their presence there have not yet been fully established by scholars. Their time in Madrid coincided with that of Anton Raphael Mengs, an artist who bolstered himself with his theoretical writings and surrounded himself with influential figures that afforded him a privileged position that on certain occasions worked to the grave detriment of the Tiepolos. The scant information available suggests that their rivalry was inevitable, though there is evidence also of mutual professional respect, as can be seen in Mengs' judgement of Giandomenico's painting from 1772 cited above or in his recommendation that Giambattista assess the work of Tintoretto in the collection of the Marquis de la Ensenada, when it was Mengs who had been placed in charge of their purchase for the royal collection.¹⁷ Harsher, in contrast, was Mengs' opinion of Giandomenico and Lorenzo's maneuvers to guarantee themselves a higher rate of remuneration for the ceilings they painted in the Royal Palace in Madrid, practices which he did not approve of.¹⁸

For a significant number of the Tiepolos' contemporary critics, Mengs represented the point of reference regarding style and talent and, ultimately, the valid criteria for judging the merits of a painting. Thus, among critics who sat on the antipodes of the Tiepolos' artistic sensibility, the family of artists was viewed with suspicion, which extreme cases became open scorn. Comments by Antonio Ponz in his *Viage de España* (*Spanish Voyage*) offer testimony of these attitudes.¹⁹ In the sixth volume of this work, which corresponds to Madrid, he records biting criticisms of the frescoes painted by Giambattista and Giandomenico. Few friendly words are reserved for the father's work (and his son's are hardly mentioned), and Giambattista is accused of the same alleged defect in the frescoes of Corrado Giaquinto (1703–1765), namely, the lack of clarity in the use of obscure allegorical figures to represent the qualities that adorn the Spanish monarchy, which proved incomprehensible for the majority of their contemporaries and, therefore, useless. José Nicolás de Azara, Mengs' biographer, also mentions Giambattista Tiepolo and Giaquinto but ignores the presence of Giambattista's sons. In describing the completion of Mengs' first work, Azara affirms that “no obstante que en nada se parecía á

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FIG. 7.

Giandomenico Tiepolo,
The Prison Visit. Black chalk
and ink wash, 349 x 465 mm.
National Gallery of Art,
Washington





las de aquellos, toda la Nación la aclamó por el gran Pintor que era” (although it looked nothing like the works of those artists, the entire nation hailed him as the great painter he was), adding maliciously, “La emulación misma debió fingir el aplauso, para poder con mas seguridad y recato aprovechar su veneno” (emulation herself must have feigned applause, so as to more securely and secretly take advantage of her venom).²⁰ In Azara’s opinion, Tiepolo’s painting, as with that of Luca Giordano (1634–1705), was pleasing to “the ignorant,” as he calls them, who “están hechos á juzgar solamente por los ojos, y á usar poco ó nada del entendimiento” (are able only to judge with their eyes, using their intellect little or not at all).²¹ Azara put his finger on the fundamental difference between the respective worlds represented by Tiepolo and Mengs: the waning Baroque in contrast to an emergent Neoclassicism that sought in Greco-Roman antiquity the immutable foundations on which to establish its paradigm of ideal beauty.

The Tiepolos’ presence in Spain seems to have been somewhat colored by solitude and incomprehension. Perhaps the best indication of this are the opinions about Giandomenico expressed by Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez in his *Diccionario histórico de los más ilustres profesores de las Bellas Artes en España* (*Historical Dictionary of the Most Illustrious of Those Who Profess the Fine Arts in Spain*), published in Madrid in 1800, four years before the death of the artist. His views are all the more interesting because he was a connoisseur of the fundamentals of painting (he himself had intended to become a painter), he was the friend of artists (Goya painted his portrait and that of his wife), and he managed to assemble a noteworthy collection of prints and drawings. Surprisingly, Ceán Bermúdez confused the two sons, attributing to Lorenzo certain biographical details that pertained to Giandomenico and vice versa, an unambiguous sign of the eroded reputation of both artists. Among Giandomenico’s achievements that he justly praises are his prints depicting “veinte y seis cabezas de caracteres extraños con bastante espíritu y gusto pintoresco” (twenty-six heads of strange characters executed with much spirit and picturesque style).²² His judgement of Giambattista and his painting is much more benevolent, for he displays respect and admiration for the father’s work, with the overt aim of defending it. Yet, after applauding the ceiling of the Throne Room of the Royal Palace, he surprises us once again by offering an opinion odd in one who was ostensibly following the self-imposed intention not to write anything that could not be supported by historical facts: “Muchas cosas se dicen contra el extraño modo de pintar de este profesor por haberse separado del camino común que conduce á la imitación de la naturaleza; pero su gran genio y la maestría con que ha desempeñado su nuevo estilo, aunque lleno de peligros para los que se propongan seguirle, le pondrán siempre á cubierto de la sátira de aquellos que no sean capaces de imitarle” (Much has been said against this artist’s strange way of painting, for his having strayed from the common path that leads to the imitation of nature; but his great genius and the mastery with which he undertook his new style—though one that is full of dangers for those who propose to follow him—will always expose him to the satire of those incapable of imitating him).²³

- 1 Antonio Morassi, "Giambattista e Domenico Tiepolo alla villa Valmarana," *Le Arti* 19 (April–May 1941) and Antonio Morassi, *Tiepolo: La Villa Valmarana*, Cinisello Balsamo, Milan: Edizioni D'Arte Amilcare Pizzi, 1944.
- 2 Adriano Mariuz, *Giandomenico Tiepolo*, Venice: Alferi, 1971. In subsequent publications he completed the information included there. The last of these was "Giandomenico Tiepolo (1727–1804)," in *Giandomenico Tiepolo: Maestria e Gioco, Disegni dal mondo*, ed. Adelheid M. Gealt and George Knox, exh. cat., Castello di Udine, 14 September–31 December, Milan: Electa, 1996, pp. 17–38. Reprinted in A. Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, Verona: Cierre Edizioni, 2008, pp. 365–90. (Henceforth "Mariuz 1971," "Mariuz 1996" and "Mariuz 2008," respectively.)
- 3 *Lorenzo Tiepolo*, ed. Andrés Úbeda de los Cobos, exh. cat., Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 21 October–15 December, Madrid: Skira, 1999.
- 4 "[...] li Pittori devono procurare di riuscire nelle opere grandi, cioè in quelle che possono piacere alli Signori Nobili, e ricchi, perchè questi fanno la fortuna de' Professori [...]. Quindi è che la mente del Pittore deve sempre tendere al Sublime, all'Eroico, alla Perfezione." Mariuz 1996, p. 28.
- 5 George Knox, "Giandomenico Tiepolo: disegni," in *Giandomenico Tiepolo: Maestria e Gioco...*, pp. 39–61.
- 6 Fernando Rigon, *Giambattista e Giandomenico Tiepolo, Villa Valmarana ai Nani*, Schio: Sassi, 2008.
- 7 Mariuz 1971, p. 150, plate 190 for the work in Vienna; and p. 130, plate 189 for the work in New York.
- 8 G. M. Urbani de Gheltof, "Tiepolo in Ispagna," *Bulletino di Arti e Curiosità Veneziane* (1880), p. 171.
- 9 Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, *Los Pintores de Cámara de los Reyes de España*, Madrid: Fototipia de Hauser y Menet, 1916, p. 135.
- 10 Museo Nacional del Prado, cat. no. 2464.
- 11 As is the case with *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (private collection), the *Lamentation* (private collection) and *Saint Joseph with the Christ Child*, for the church of San Pascual de Aranjuez. *Giambattista Tiepolo, 1696–1770*, ed. Keith Christiansen, exh. cat., New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996, p. 344.
- 12 Regarding Bayeu, see José Luis Morales y Marín, *Francisco Bayeu: Vida y obra*, Zaragoza: Moncayo, 1995, p. 275. Regarding Goya's inventory, see Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, "Cómo vivía Goya (I. El inventario de sus bienes; II. Leyenda e historia de la Quinta del Sordo)," *Archivo Español de Arte*, 18 (1946), p. 106.
- 13 The dates may be inferred from the last painting in the series, the *Entombment of Christ*, dated 1772. All of the paintings were presented publicly in the Piazza San Marco in Venice on 31 August, as was the custom on certain occasions when a work of art was to leave the city. See Mariuz 1971, p. 71, n84. The approximate dimensions are 125 x 145 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, cat. nos. 355–362.
- 14 Sandra Moschini-Marconi, "Il catalogo delle Gallerie dell'Accademia: Nuovi accertamenti," *Ateneo Veneto* (1967), p. 154.
- 15 For the term "anti-portraits" see Mariuz 1996, p. 32.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 17 This is *Judith and Holofernes*, Museo Nacional del Prado, cat. no. 391. See Juan J. Luna, "Mengs en la corte de Madrid: Notas y documentos," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 17 (1980), p. 9, a document dated 15 August 1768.
- 18 Jesús Urrea Fernández, "Una familia di pittori veneziani in Spagna: i Tiepolo," in *Venezia e la Spagna*, Milan: Electa, 1988, p. 242.
- 19 Antonio Ponz, *Viage de España, en que se da noticia de las cosas más apreciables, y dignas de saberse, que hay en ella*, 18 vols., Madrid: Imprenta de la Viuda de Ibarra, Hijos, y Compañía, 1772–94, vol. 6, 1776, pp. 15–21.
- 20 *Obras de D. Antonio Rafael Mengs, Primer Pintor de Cámara del Rey, publicadas por don Joseph Nicolas de Azara, Caballero de la Orden de Carlos III, del Consejo de S. M. en el de Hacienda, su Agente y Procurador General en la Corte de Roma*, Madrid: Imprenta Real de la Gazeta, 1780, p. XIV.
- 21 *Ibid.*
- 22 Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez, *Diccionario histórico de los más ilustres profesores de las Bellas Artes en España*, Madrid: Imprenta de la Viuda de Ibarra, 1800, vol. 5, p. 44.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 46.



Fundación Juan March



Works on display

Fundación Juan March

1

Giandomenico Tiepolo
Portrait of an Old Man with a Turban, ca. 1768
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm
Private collection



2

Giandomenico Tiepolo
Portrait of a Bearded Old Man, ca. 1768
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm
Private collection



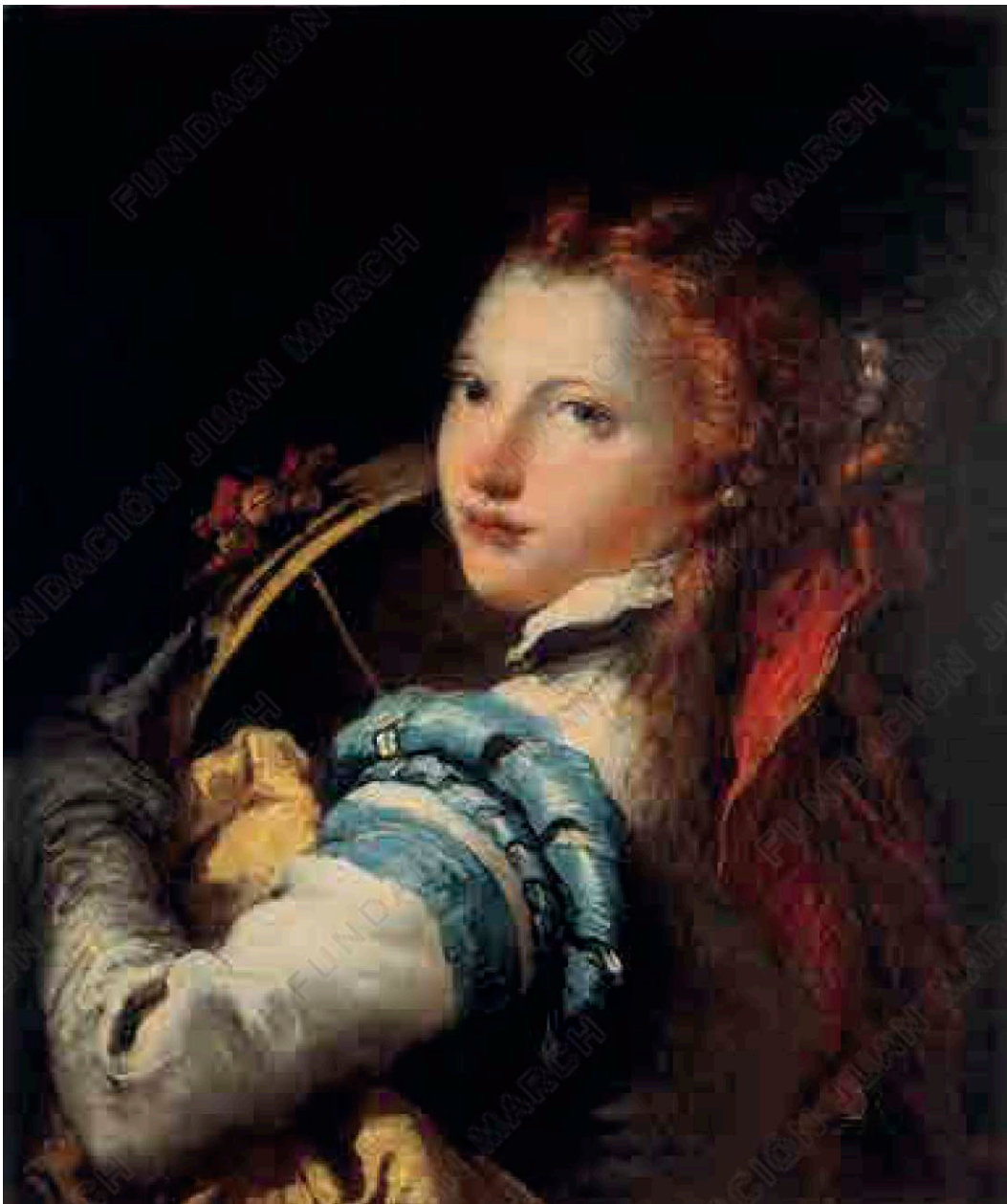
3

Giandomenico Tiepolo
Portrait of a Woman in Profile (presumed
to be Anna Maria Tiepolo), ca. 1768
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm
Private collection



4

Giandomenico Tiepolo
Portrait of a Woman with a Drum, ca. 1768
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm
Private collection



5

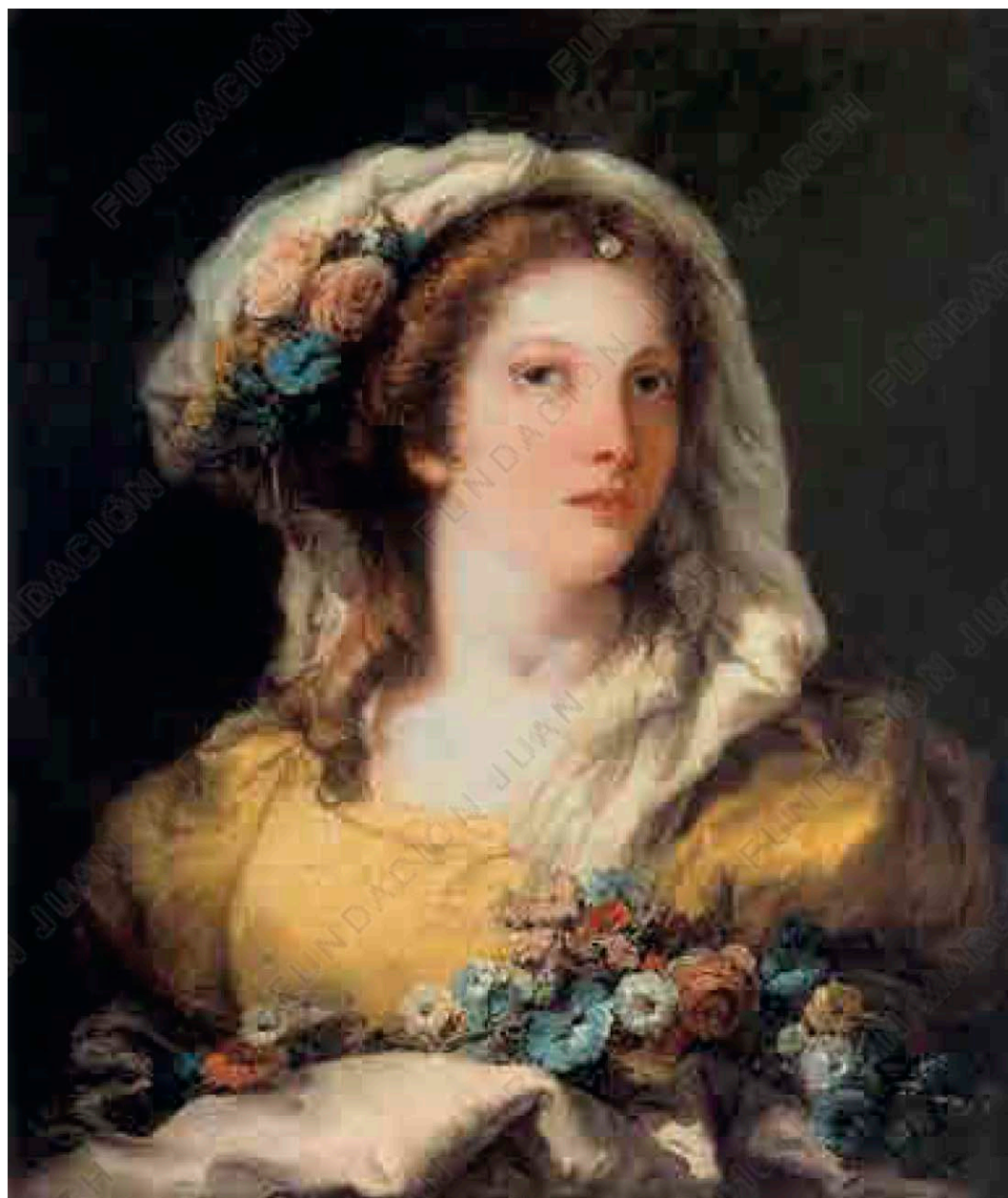
Giandomenico Tiepolo

Portrait of a Young Woman with a Kerchief and Flowers, ca. 1768

Oil on canvas

60 x 50 cm

Private collection



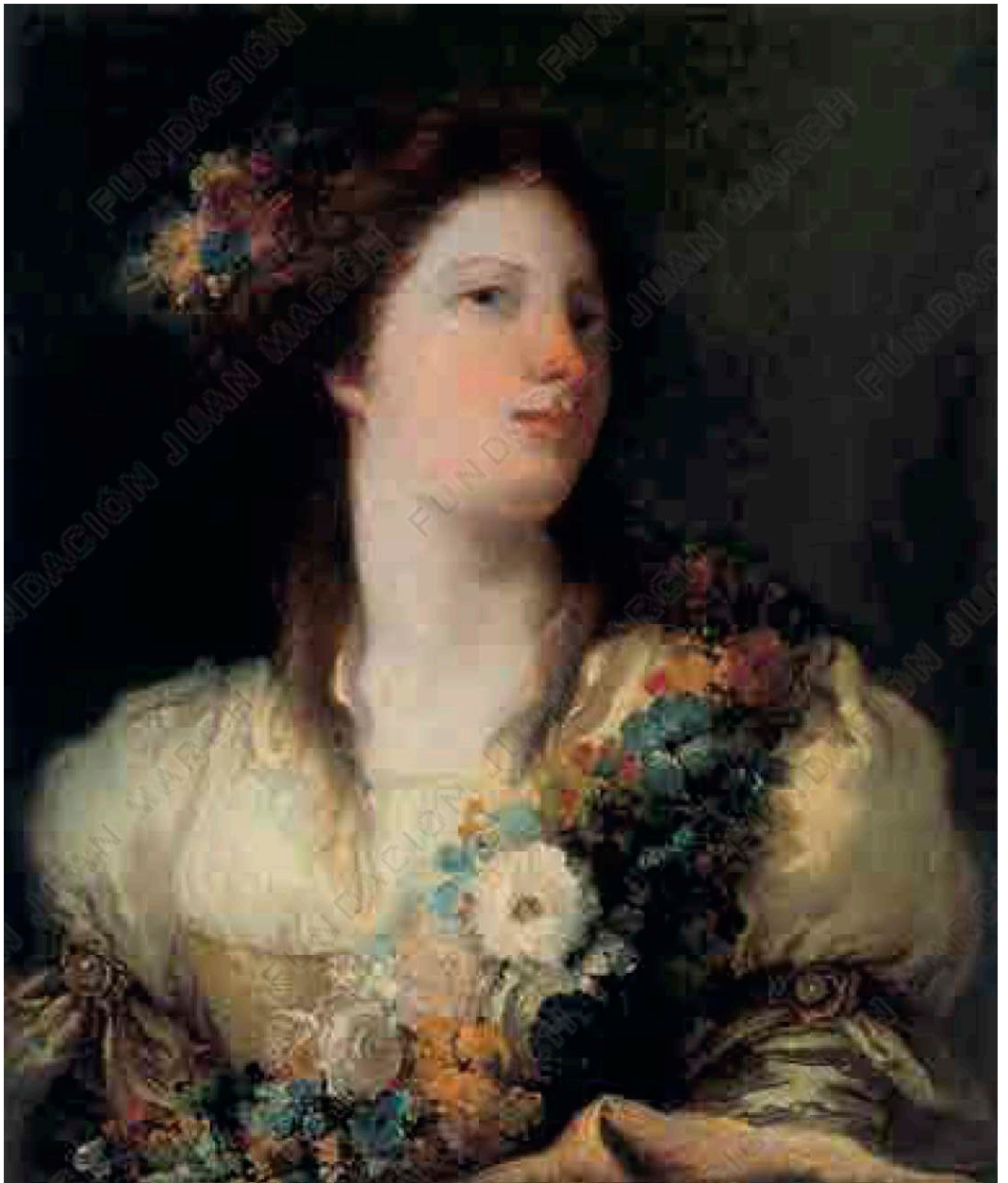
6

Giandomenico Tiepolo
Portrait of a Young Woman with Fruit, ca. 1768
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm
Private collection



7

Giandomenico Tiepolo
Portrait of a Young Woman with a Garland of Flowers, ca. 1768
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm
Private collection



8

Giandomenico Tiepolo

Portrait of a Young Woman Wearing a Red Ribbon in her Hair, ca. 1768

Oil on canvas

60 x 50 cm

Private collection



9

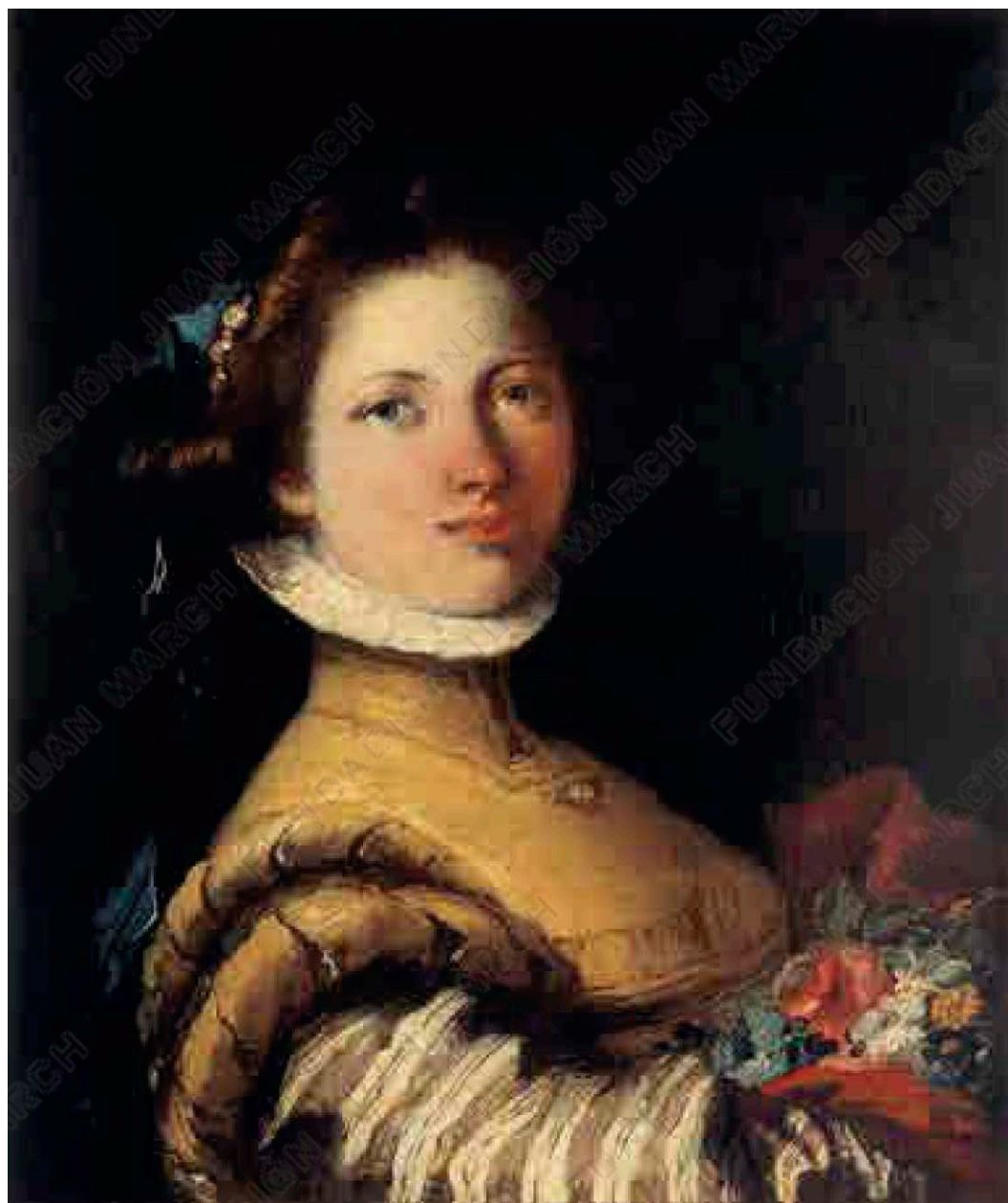
Giandomenico Tiepolo

Portrait of a Young Woman Wearing a Blue Ribbon in her Hair, ca. 1768

Oil on canvas

60 x 50 cm

Private collection



10

Giandomenico Tiepolo

Portrait of a Young Woman with a Kerchief, ca. 1768

Oil on canvas

60 x 50 cm

Private collection







The Fantasy Portraits

The series of portraits brought together in this exhibition is composed of ten paintings: two images of bearded men in eastern dress and eight images of young women. They all share the same dimensions, sixty by fifty centimeters, which is the most common format of works of this sort in Giandomenico's oeuvre. Nothing is known about certain fundamental aspects of these works, such as the identity of their first owner, how they were arranged in the owner's residence or the impact they had on Tiepolo's contemporaries. The earliest information about them places the paintings in a private collection in El Puerto de Santa María (Cádiz), from whence they came into the possession of their current owners, probably after the Spanish Civil War.¹ Proof of the interest they inspired are the two copies of the *Portrait of a Woman with a Drum* [CAT. 4] in the Museo de Cádiz, thought to be originals by Giandomenico until the 1950s, and the copy of the *Portrait of a Man with a Turban* [CAT. 1], which was previously in the Lázaro Galdiano collection and whose current whereabouts are unknown.²

The fantasy portraits represent one of the least studied chapters in the story of this dynasty of artists, undoubtedly because of the difficulties in attributing the surviving works to each member of the Tiepolo family and to their many imitators. A good example is the present series, works that had remained unknown in the original until now. That circumstance, however, did not prevent the existing copies from becoming the subject of debate, in particular, the copies in Cádiz of the *Portrait of a Woman with a Drum* mentioned above [CAT. 4]. A review of the questions raised by these copies is especially interesting, for they can be easily applied to the entire group of "portraits." Thus, the catalogue of the Museo de Cádiz from 1876 listed the two drum portraits as numbers 51 and 52, attributing the first to Giambattista Tiepolo and labeling the second a copy.³ At the beginning of the twentieth century, Pompeo Molmenti brought a photograph of one of these to the attention of art critics specializing in the Tiepolos, though it was, of course, an image of a copy of the real original.⁴ This information was cited by eminent scholars like Eduard Sack (1910), who likewise attributed it to Giambattista.⁵ Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón (1953) was apparently the first to claim it was a copy, perhaps because he had knowledge of the existence of the originals in the col-

FIG. 1.
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
Portrait of a Young Woman.
Museo Lázaro Galdiano,
Madrid. Inv. 3549



lection in Sanlúcar.⁶ Since then, other scholars have studied the painting, gradually refining the attribution. Jacob Bean, for instance, pointed to the existence of a drawing by Giandomenico that he considered a sketch for this painting.⁷ In 1962 (finally!) Antonio Morassi attributed the painting—or, rather, its copy—to Giandomenico due to its similarity to other works that are known with certainty to be by his hand.⁸

Regrettably, every attempt to locate the paintings in this exhibition in eighteenth-century collections in Cádiz has failed to bear fruit. They do not appear in the famous collection of Sebastián Martínez, a friend of Francisco de Goya's, who owned works by that artist as well as other contemporaries of the painter from Venice such as Anton Raphael Mengs and Pompeo Batoni.⁹ Nor are they to be found in the collection of Pedro Alonso O'Cruley or that of José Murcia.¹⁰ All three collections were sold upon the death of their owners.

There is indirect evidence to suppose that the fantasy portraits enjoyed considerable success. A large number of them have survived to the present, though, unfortunately (as with the series in this exhibition), very little is known about the identity of their first owners. Agustín de Silva Fernández de Híjar, the tenth Duke of Híjar, President of the Council of Military Orders (*Consejo de las Órdenes*), and well known for his literary soirees, owned one set which he may well have acquired directly from the artist. All or a portion of the set ended up in the collection of the Marquis of Salamanca; documents from the sale of this collection in Paris on 25 and 26 January 1875 mention “five studies of heads with different expressions.”¹¹ Their measurements (around eighty-five centimeters tall), are considerably greater than those of the paintings being examined here. The powerful prime minister Manuel de Godoy is known to have possessed three heads of old men, which he must have acquired on the Madrid art market. A portrait in the Museo de la Academia de San Fernando in Madrid has been identified as one of those once owned by Godoy.¹²

The chronology of their execution is also not known, though on this point all the specialists in the work of Giandomenico have reached a rare agreement, namely that all the paintings belong to his Spanish period, from 1762 to 1770. Entire sets of these paintings by Giandomenico have survived intact, though they are the exception: the majority of the paintings are now held individually in separate collections. Thus, in addition to the set in this exhibition, there is another set of four magnificent heads of old men in the collection of the Marquis of Perinat (Madrid) and another set housed in the Museo Lázaro Galdiano in Madrid. The latter is more relevant to the set in this exhibition, for it includes one painting of a bearded old man and four of young women [fig. 1].¹³

The available information about these paintings is so scant that it proves difficult to answer even the most obvious questions. We do not know, for example, if Tiepolo created a standard gallery model; if that was the case, we cannot know how many paintings might have comprised it. It is also pointless to speculate whether he typically combined old bearded men with young women, as in the case of the present set. It is also entirely

possible that in some of these sets there were portraits of young men, for examples of individual paintings of this sort have survived.¹⁴ So have images of young women in eastern dress; surviving examples of such works (some of which are very mediocre) are perhaps copies of originals by Tiepolo since lost.¹⁵ Such paintings would not have been strange from the brush of Giandomenico, for he very successfully painted women in oriental dress in the fresco known as the *Winter Stroll* in the gothic pavilion of the Villa Valmarana [fig. 2].

What we can confidently claim is that Giandomenico produced paintings of uneven quality, executed variously. He also painted clothing, faces and adornments with different degrees of care, so that the paintings vary considerably among each other—or, perhaps more accurately, from set to set. I find no difficulty, however, in affirming that the set in this exhibition is, together with the set from the Perinat collection, the finest of them all. In the portraits of women in this series, Giandomenico set his models slightly further back so that their arms are visible, though only in one case can we contemplate a hand. The greater distance allowed him to adorn their images with garlands of flowers, fruit, a drum, a graceful hand, as well as the decorative cloths on their sleeves or the vibrantly colored mantles that appear in the lower corner of almost every one and whose utility is unclear. The artist also here presents a greater variety of poses, going beyond the frontal view or the habitual three-quarter views looking to the left or right. He places one of the women, perhaps the most beautiful, in profile [CAT. 3] and another in an unprecedented and striking back view [CAT. 4]. An examination of all the other surviving female portraits related to this series confirms such a claim. Indeed, in almost all the others, Giandomenico did just the opposite, placing the models in the close foreground, saving himself the need to represent the additional, adorning elements referred to above; he thus produced images lacking much of the decorative charm that this series exhibits. (This is, on the other hand, no reason to harbor doubts about the attribution of



FIG. 2.
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
Winter Stroll, (detail).
Gothic room of the
Guest-House of the Villa
Valmarana, Vicenza



FIG. 3.
Rembrandt, *Old Bearded Man in a High Fur Cap, with Eyes Closed*. Etching, 114 x 105 mm



FIG. 4.
Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, *Head of a Bearded Man with a Turban Facing Right*. Etching, 110 x 81 mm

these works to Giandomenico.)

Strictly speaking they are not “portraits,” that is, images that represent the physical appearance of a specific individual, but rather they are “types” or generic models that do not evoke any person in particular, instead manifesting characteristics associated with a certain socioeconomic or intellectual group—in this case, the stern, concentrated gaze of old, bearded men that conjure up the idea of philosophers or venerable elders of a dreamed-of Antiquity; or the innocent, carefree spirit of young women surrounded by flowers or musical instruments in a likely effort at representing an ideal of feminine beauty. Attempts have been made to link one or another of the male portraits to historical personages, though they are not very persuasive.¹⁶ The numerous surviving copies and the difficulty of correctly attributing them to the various members of the family of artists are testimony of Giandomenico’s success with this genre.

Philosopher portraits

The world of fancy that these paintings represent is not owing solely to the creative genius of the Tiepolo family. Rather, its origins are to be found in the previous century, when a small number of artists worked—with varying degrees of success—on creating imagined portraits of bearded, solemn-looking men. Rembrandt’s paradigmatic images provided the model for the general characteristics of these “portraits”: elderly men wearing sumptuous clothing as imagined by the artist’s fancy, but presenting a generic appearance and lacking any specific identity [fig. 3]. Even the smallest details carry the stamp of the Dutch master, such as the rich belt that frequently crosses the old man’s chest, adorned with cam-

eos or miniatures. Furthermore, there is no doubt that Giambattista, the patriarch of the dynasty, was familiar with and appreciated the two series of the undeniably Rembrandtian *teste all'orientale* by the Genoese artist Benedetto Castiglione [fig. 4]. From Castiglione he developed a taste for unusual views, such as the sitter whose back is turned, hiding the face.¹⁷ Count Antonio Maria Zanetti (1680–1767), a collector and art dealer, affirmed in a letter to Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694–1774) that these two artists constituted the most powerful impetus for Giandomenico.¹⁸

At the opposite extreme of this sensibility, which gives foremost importance to the painting's decorative character, we find artists like Jusepe de Ribera, Salvator Rosa, [fig. 5], and Pietro della Vecchia. Ribera established the model for a different sort of philosopher: a humble male character presented in a long bust portrait, in earthy tones and accompanied by attributes that allow him to be identified. Some (as is the case with certain paintings by Luca Giordano) are true self portraits; others (as with exam-



FIG. 5. Salvator Rosa, *Head of a Man with a Turban*. Oil on canvas, 59.5 x 49.5 cm. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, on loan from the Denis Mahon collection

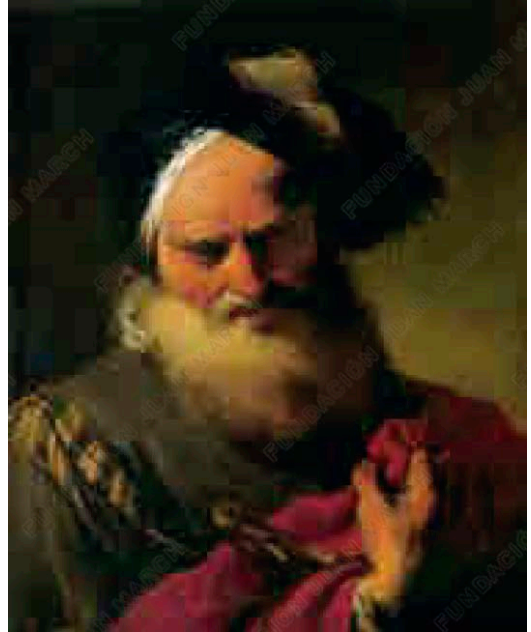


FIG. 6. Giovanni Battista Pittoni, *An Astronomer in Oriental Robes, a Caliper in his Right Hand*. Oil on canvas, 46.3 x 37.8 cm. London art market



FIG. 7.
Fernando Selma,
Flavius Josephus.
Copper engraving.

ples by Salvator Rosa) reveal a more profoundly philosophical vein. In contrast to these artists, Tiepolo's portraits of old men are the product of his own imagination and lack the interest in verisimilitude or philosophical depth that one may encounter in examples from the previous century. No study exists on the influence of these paintings on other artists, which, however must have been considerable. Evidence of that influence is the head painted by another Venetian, Giovanni Battista Pittoni (1687–1767), similar in every way to Tiepolo's and perhaps painted in recognition of the commercial success of the formula [fig. 6].¹⁹ In Spain, some of these images were used to represent historical figures, such as in the curious print by Fernando Selma following a drawing by Antonio Carnicero that is a supposed portrait of "Flavio Josefo, natural de Jerusalem" (Flavius Josephus, native of Jerusalem) [fig. 7] but which is in reality one of the philosophers from the Perinat collection in Madrid.²⁰

In creating his fantasy portraits, Giandomenico used the examples painted previously by his father. Giambattista may have begun producing heads of bearded old men in the middle of the 1740s; many of these were engraved by Giandomenico in two books each containing thirty prints.²¹ Save for rare exceptions, the heads painted by Giandomenico reproduce with greater or lesser degrees of faithfulness the images from the first of these two books, specifically, the one that can be dated with certainty to before his voyage to Madrid (1762). George Knox has formulated an explanation (as yet unchallenged) for the genesis of these paintings. According to this scholar, Giandomenico reused material from his father's oeuvre for his etchings, both drawings and individual figures from his father's paintings, which he then transformed into the protagonists of his philosopher portraits. He also used heads of old men painted by Giambattista, twenty of which have been identified as models for Giandomenico's prints.²² Given that this first book of prints was in production in the autumn of 1757, we must consider the fact that Giambattista developed the genre of the bearded old man or philosopher before that date, when at least twenty works that served as models for Giandomenico must have already been in existence.

The etchings reproduce, inverted, this first series of heads by Giambattista [figs. 8 and 9]. Furthermore, some of them have been cut off in the lower portion, where Giandomenico frequently eliminated the attributes they carried: books, swords, etc. Such is the case with the two heads of old men in the present set. The steps in their creation may be followed



FIG. 8.
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
*Portrait of an Old Man
with a Sword*. Etching

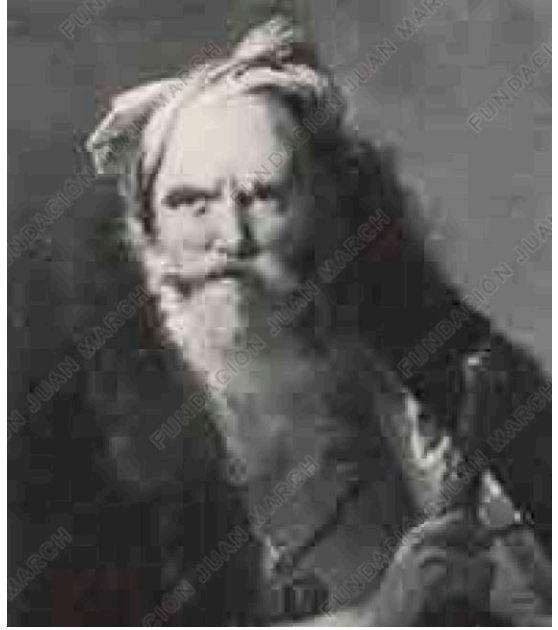


FIG. 9.
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
*Portrait of an Old Man with
a Beard*. Etching

FIG. 10.
Attributed to Giambattista
Tiepolo, *Portrait of an Old
Man with a Sword*. 58 x 47.5
cm. Whereabouts unknown

fairly exactly. The first of these heads, *Portrait of an Old Man with a Turban* [CAT. 1], superior to the other in quality, began with a head of an old man known now only through photographs [fig. 10].²³ In that portrait, the character is presented somewhat further from the immediate foreground, allowing the inclusion of part of his arm and hand, which holds a sword.²⁴ In the print [cf. fig. 8], Giandomenico presents an inverted image of the old man, and he is placed closer in the foreground, because of which the sword, now on the left, has lost its prominence. Giandomenico used this print (and not his father's original) as a model for his own painting [CAT. 1]: as in the print, the figure is looking toward his right and the chain on his chest does not bear the medallion that appears in Giambattista's work. Furthermore, Giandomenico eliminated the hand holding a sword and turned the old man's original kerchief into an ostentatious turban. These two modifications appear to confirm Giandomenico's presumed turn toward the decorative: figures that once evoked a distant connection to things philosophical are now bust-length portraits whose intention can only have been decorative.²⁵ There is another, nearly identical copy of this head, also by Giandomenico, in MM. Cailleux (Paris).²⁶

The second of the male portraits in the set on exhibition [CAT. 2] suggests a somewhat more complex genesis. As in the previous case, its origins are to be found in the work of Giambattista, who used the same old man on various occasions. First of all, a drawing survives that may well have been a model for one or more of the works discussed in this paragraph [fig. 11].²⁷ The most interesting of these is Giambattista's *Banquet of Cleopatra*, known in various versions in which, together with the protagonists of the story, there is a bearded old man very similar to the

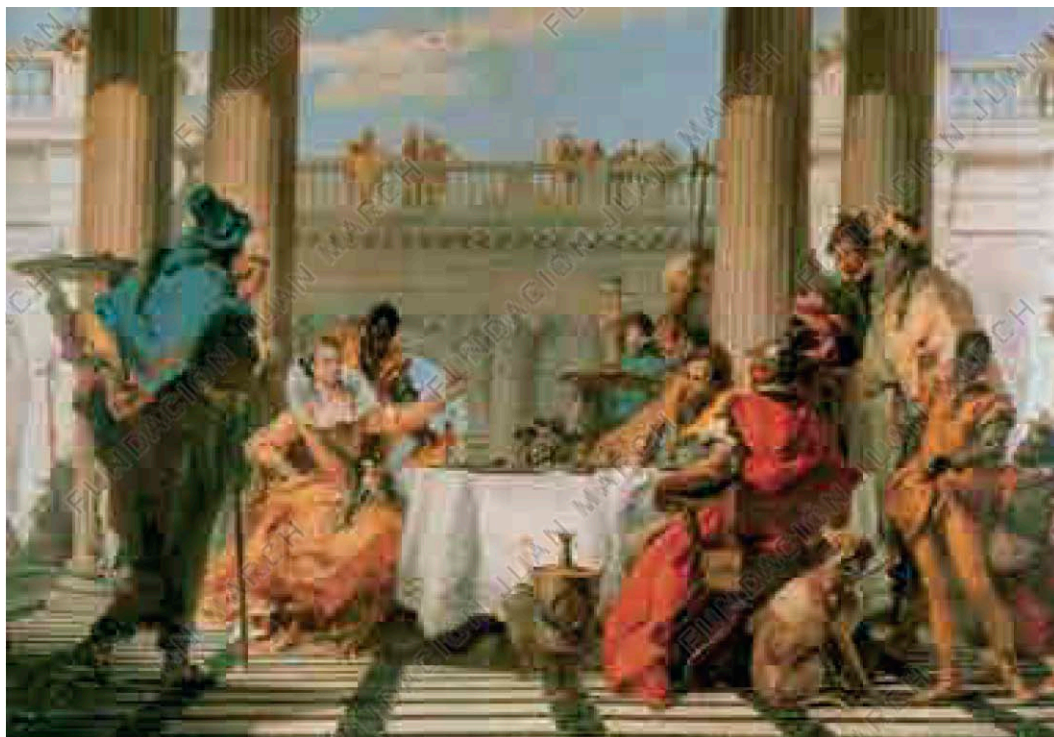


FIG. 11. (right)
Giandomenico
Tiepolo, studies for
the Kaisersaal fresco
(detail). Würzburg,
formerly in the
Museum Boijmans Van
Beuningen, Rotterdam

FIG. 12.
Giambattista Tiepolo,
*The Banquet of
Cleopatra*. Oil on
canvas, 24.9 x 34.6 cm.
National Gallery of
Victoria, Melbourne



second painting in Giandomenico's series here [fig. 12].²⁸ Finally, there are two heads of old men that use the same figure: one which is attributed only to Giambattista, now in a private collection and a second, about which there is some dispute regarding the attribution, now in the collection of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts [fig. 13], which reproduces the same subject, inverted.²⁹ For the portrait exhibited here, Giandomenico must have taken as his model, inverted, the copy in Minneapolis. (In



FIG. 13.
Giambattista or
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
Head of a Philosopher
1750/1760. Oil on canvas,
61 x 50 cm. Minneapolis
Institute of Arts, the William
Hood Dunwoody Fund,
Minneapolis

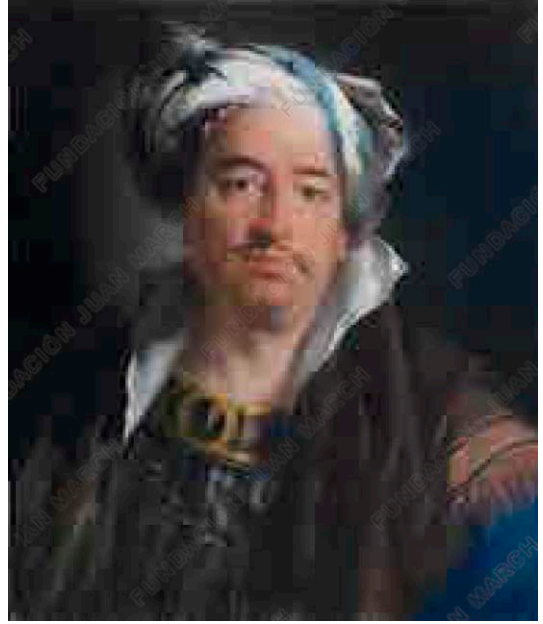


FIG. 14.
Lorenzo Tiepolo, *Bust of
an Oriental*. Pastel on blue
paper, 55.2 x 47.2 cm. Museo
Nacional del Prado, Madrid

the corresponding print, the open book and the spectacles in one hand also appear, which indicates it is based on the copy in Minneapolis.) The painting in the present exhibition is very similar to the print, although—as in the case of the other philosopher—he has brought the figure closer in the foreground, thus eliminating all of the elements that appear in the lower portion of the original.

The third Tiepolo, Lorenzo, also devoted himself to the creation of heads of old men, though his approach followed a radically different path, quite distinct therefore from the sensibility of the patriarch of the dynasty. His two heads of Orientals in the Museo del Prado, executed in pastels with unequalled skill, are testimony of his divergence from Giambattista's models. The *Bust of an Oriental* [fig. 14], for example, humanizes Giambattista's (and Giandomenico's) models, with his tired gaze, lowered eyelids and prominent bags under his eyes that lend him a somewhat melancholy air.³⁰ And, no known heads of young women survive by Lorenzo, at least none conceived in the same manner as his father and brother: in Lorenzo's oeuvre only his portraits of *infantas* from the Spanish royal family come closest, but because they represent specific personages, they fall into a very different category from the works examined here.³¹

The portraits of young women

In the case of the portraits of young women, the Tiepolos were likewise following a long tradition that had been particularly fruitful in Venice. We know of similar paintings by Raphael, Parmigianino, Titian, Veronese, and (closer to the Tiepolos' age) Rosalba Carriera, who popularized these portraits executed in pastels. It is therefore no surprise that with such precedents as these the young women's attire in Giandomenico's portraits should vaguely recall *cinquecento* styles.

The creative process behind the paintings of young women was very different from that of the philosophers. A winding path led to the portraits of old men, beginning with an initial set of paintings followed by a series of prints based on them and which in turn provided the models for the paintings in this set. Such was not the case for the female portraits, however. This difference may be owing to the fact that, in contrast to the old men—who were born of Giambattista's unbounded imagination—the female portraits in this exhibition were a true invention of his eldest son, who, as we shall see, only on a few occasions and for the sake of generic or superficial details utilized his father's models. In fact, there is such a degree of difference between the portraits by the two artists that one concludes that Giambattista's did not appeal to Giandomenico, who was therefore obliged to create new models more in consonance with his own sensibilities.

A piece of information related to these developments that is difficult to interpret is Giandomenico's indication on 21 June 1758 to Pierre-Jean Mariette that he intended to create a series of nine or ten prints of female portraits that then, for unknown reasons, he never executed. Some have supposed that these prints would have been based on models by his father, though there is no documentary evidence to support this hypothesis.³² It is also possible he intended to create portrait prints of his own invention.³³ The information thus raises new questions about the genesis of Giandomenico's portraits of young women, many of which, regrettably, have no satisfactory answer. One wonders, for instance, why he never made the etchings. If he was going to copy works by his father, it has been suggested that perhaps the stylistic links to his two masters, Rembrandt and Castiglione, renowned for their portraits of old men, was not as apparent in the female portraits, which discouraged Giandomenico from completing the project.³⁴ If, however, he was intending to create prints based on his own works, one could legitimately imagine a strictly commercial reason for Giandomenico's failure to produce the etchings: namely, that in consideration of the high costs of such a venture and lacking the security of his father's immense renown, his own works would produce scant profits.

Another debate centers on the meaning of these images, particularly when the women appear partially nude or when they are associated with objects, animals or colors that can be linked to thinly veiled erotic intentions. Certain paintings by Giambattista, such as the *Young Woman with a Macaw* [fig. 15], in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, lend themselves to such an interpretation, in this case, because of the woman's exposed

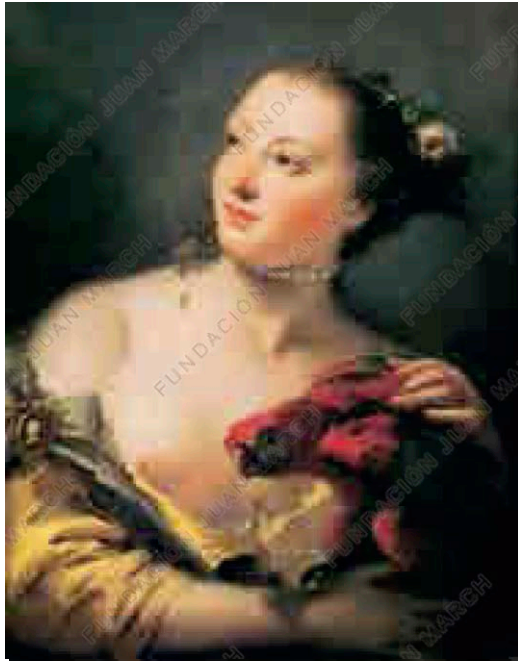


FIG. 15.
Giambattista Tiepolo,
*A Young Woman with a
Macaw*. Oil on canvas,
72 x 53.5 cm. Ashmolean
Museum, Oxford

breast, her costly jewels, the abundant use of yellow (associated with Venetian courtesans), and by the presence of the parrot itself, a symbol of lust.³⁵ Nevertheless, this sort of association is not as apparent in Giandomenico's works; rather, because of the women's modest dress, and because their beauty is less stunning, one imagines that a decorative function must have been foremost in his mind.

As was indicated in the case of the heads of old men, Giandomenico's imaginary portraits of women are works produced in Spain, and they were probably conceived of as series. In addition to the female portraits that exist in the collections mentioned above (that is, the group in this exhibition and the set in the Museo Lázaro Galdiano), at least nine other fantasy portraits of women are known to exist, some of which were undoubtedly produced in Spain; they are currently scattered in different collections but they are candidates for inclusion in one or more other series.³⁶ The *Portrait of a Woman* in the Cleveland Museum of Art, is certainly the most famous of them all.³⁷ Originally from a Spanish collection, it was in the United States already by 1938.³⁸ The others include the following: *Portrait of a Young Woman Dressed as a Page* (William van Horne collection, Montreal);³⁹ *Portrait of a Young Woman with Flowers in her Hair* (Koplan collection, New York);⁴⁰ *Portrait of a Woman with a Fur Hat* (private collection, Bergamo);⁴¹ *Young Woman with a Mandolin* (formerly in the Espírito Santo Silva collection, Lisbon);⁴² two mentioned in the Aznar collection (Madrid) [fig. 16];⁴³ and two others in the former Tomás Harris collection (London), likewise originally from Spain [figs. 17 and 18].⁴⁴ In one exceptional case, on the reverse of one of these portraits, painted on the canvas

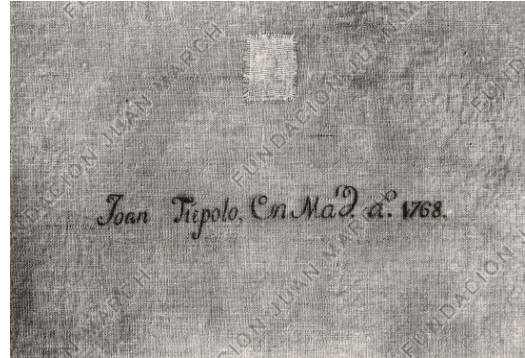
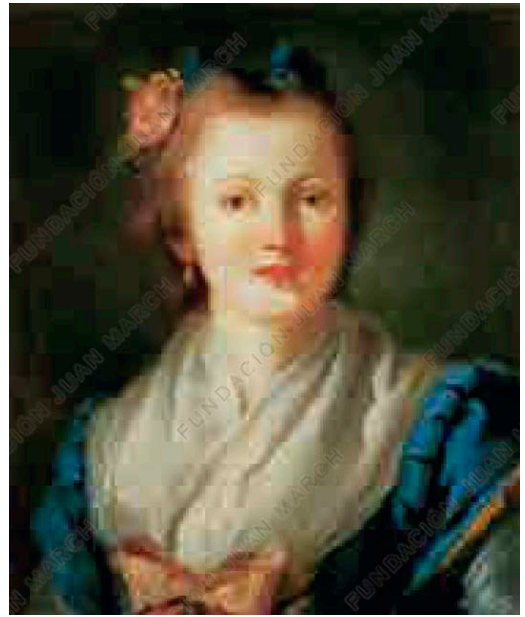
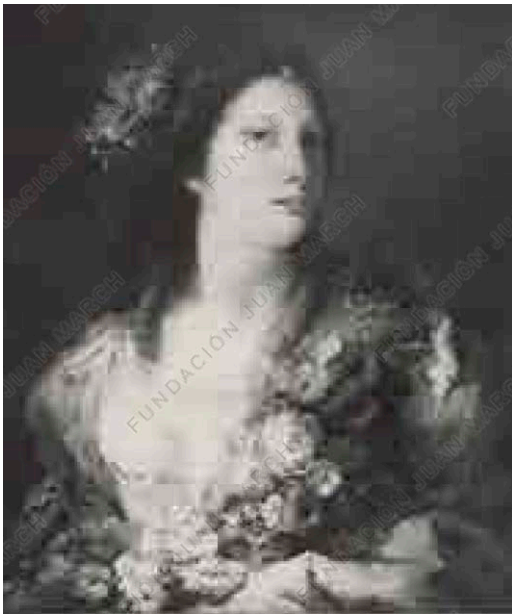


FIG. 16.
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
*Portrait of a Young Woman
with a Garland of Flowers.*
Oil on canvas, 60 x 50 cm.
Former Aznar collection,
Madrid

FIG. 18.
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
Portrait of a Young Woman.
Oil on canvas. Former
Tomás Harris collection,
London

FIG. 17.
Giandomenico Tiepolo,
*Bust of a Woman Dressed in
Blue.* Oil on canvas, 59 x 50
cm. Former Tomás Harris
collection, London

FIG. 19.
Inscription on the reverse of
the painting (FIG. 17)

probably by the artist himself is the following inscription: “Joan Tiepolo, en Mad. a°. 1768” (Joan [sic] Tiepolo, in Madrid, year 1768) [Fig. 19], which must be not only the date of this particular canvas but indeed of the rest as well.⁴⁵ The works in this exhibition should be situated at a date close to this one. The appearance of this set obliges us in a certain sense to change our view of these “portraits.” Indeed, their stylistic unity and their similarity in size, the nature of the young women’s attire and poses, and the generic character they share in common leads one to think of unified groups, true series that were broken up at points in the past that scholars cannot now determine.⁴⁶ In fact (though it is the only such case), the *Portrait of a Woman with a Garland of Flowers* in the Aznar collection is repeated in one painting from this exhibition [cf. fig 16 and CAT. 7].⁴⁷

The portraits of young women have a twofold iconographic pedigree. On the one hand is his father Giambattista’s work. From his father, Giandomenico derived the generically elegant character, the models’ restrained poses, their presentation in the close foreground and the occasional association with a musical instrument that provides greater variety in the group. Because of these similarities, scholars have been able to draw superficial points of comparison between the father’s paintings and the son’s, such as Giambattista’s *Woman with a Mandolin*, and the same subject by his son (Lisbon).⁴⁸

Much more interesting is the *Portrait of a Young Woman with Fruit* [CAT. 6], which illustrates better than any other the son’s subtle dependency on his father’s painting. In truth this painting reflects the fusion of different elements. On the one hand there is the artist’s own sensibility which led him to create an image that shares a common aesthetic with the rest of the set. On the other hand, however, Giandomenico appropriated elements from two paintings by his father. The first of these is *The Meeting of Anthony and Cleopatra* [fig. 20], painted in the Palazzo Labia in Venice (1746–47).⁴⁹ Cleopatra’s face reproduces a model Giambattista used on various occasions; here she is turned toward the right, with a haughty or listless gaze, with a necklace of pearls and braids of hair on either side of her neck.⁵⁰ The same model, inverted, can be observed

FIG. 20.

Giambattista Tiepolo, *The Meeting of Antony and Cleopatra*. Palazzo Labia, Venice

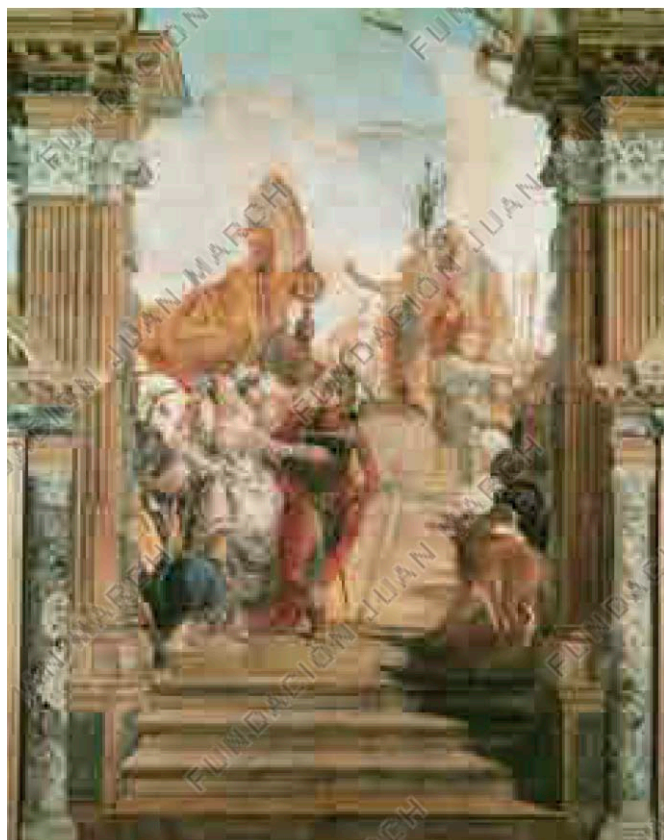




FIG. 21. Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Virgin Mary*, ca. 1770. Private collection, Budapest

in the other painting by his father that Giandomenico closely studied: the famous *Young Woman with a Macaw* [fig. 15], which presents close up the same feminine type, with a few variants, such as the braids here replaced with the grape leaves on her right shoulder.⁵¹ A drawing attributed to Giandomenico survives in which the first of these two faces is reproduced, and there is much evidence that he must have also closely studied the second image.⁵² The most conclusive evidence of his scrutiny of his father's works is the *Portrait of a Young Woman with Fruit*, for the woman here adopts a pose like Cleopatra's, with the same necklace and braid, while her left hand touching the fruit recalls the woman's hand stroking the parrot in Giambattista's portrait.

The second source of inspiration for Giandomenico for the female portraits of this series is his own oeuvre, in which female figures frequently appear in poses similar to the habitual ones in his fantasy portraits, in religious, mythological and history paintings, as well as in paintings derived from his own family life. Among the paintings with religious subjects, his Virgins, retiring and sorrowful, stand out; they share with the portraits of young women the same restrained, somewhat inexpressive beauty; their sumptuous dress; and their dominating presence in the foreground of the painting. An excellent example is the *Virgin Mary* from a private collection in Budapest [fig. 21], executed very close in time to the date of the series in this exhibition.⁵³ This Virgin's physical typology is not dissimilar from

that of some of the fantasy portraits, such as one of the paintings formerly in the Harris collection [fig. 18], with which it shares the oval shape of the face, the line of the nose (which in both cases is prolonged in the curve of the eyebrow on the right), the small mouth and full lips, the strong neck, and the kerchief with its deep, sinuous folds.⁵⁴ The best example of Giandomenico's use of models from his own work is the magnificent *Portrait of a Young Woman in Profile* [CAT. 3], which represents a model unlike all the others in the series, with more clearly defined physical characteristics that make her seem less generic. Because of the physical typology as well as the pose and dress, this portrait is very similar to the woman who appears on the extreme right of the eighth station of the *Via Crucis* (or *Way of the Cross*) in the Venetian church of San Polo [fig. 22], a work from Giandomenico's youth.⁵⁵ The origin of both images may possibly be found in a drawing attributed to Giandomenico that was part of a series of family portraits he drew (though this particular drawing presents a treatment of its subject unlike the works that are most identifiably his) [Fig. 23]. George Knox identified the sitter as Anna Maria Tiepolo, the artist's sister, who must be the same woman who appears in the church of San Polo in Venice and in the painting in the present exhibition.⁵⁶ Given this precedent, it is not unreasonable to suppose that some of the images that have a more

FIG. 22.

Giandomenico Tiepolo,
*Jesus Meets the Daughters
of Jerusalem* (detail). Oil on
canvas, 100 x 70 cm. Eighth
Station of the *Via Crucis*
cycle in the Oratory of the
Crucifix, Church of San Polo,
Venice

FIG. 23.

Giandomenico Tiepolo,
*Portrait of Anna Maria
Tiepolo*. 236 x 168 mm.
National Museum, Warsaw





notably individual character—and for which there are also surviving preparatory drawings, such as the *Portrait of a Young Woman with a Drum* [CAT. 4]—might have been painted from life, perhaps with sitters from his own family. This last portrait in particular is another good example of how Giandomenico reused material from previous work in the execution of this set of paintings, for her face is a literal reproduction of Saint Helena in *Saint Macarius and Saint Helena with the True Cross* [fig. 24], also in the church of San Polo.⁵⁷ (And, as indicated, a preparatory drawing of this face survives, in Giandomenico's own hand.⁵⁸)

Finally, the distinguished air that characterizes all the young women in this series may be found in Giandomenico's images of solemn subjects from classical antiquity, as, for instance, in *The Continnence of Scipio* [fig. 25] or in *Alexander the Great with the Women of Darius*, whose female figures share with the group in this exhibition the same dignified manner and the same fanciful dress.⁵⁹ Curiously, such figures were criticized in Italy for being dressed *alla spagnola*, and therefore not very appropriate for the representation of biblical subjects.⁶⁰

FIG. 24.

Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Saint Macarius and Saint Helena with the True Cross* (detail). Oil on canvas, 95 x 149 cm. Oratory of the Crucifix, Church of San Polo, Venice

FIG. 25.

Giandomenico Tiepolo, *The Continnence of Scipio*. Oil on canvas, 121 x 97 cm. Städelches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt

- 1 This may be surmised from Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón's comment that "Regarding these series, there is information that until recently one (composed of eight pieces depicting a gypsy family) formed part of a collection in Sanlúcar;" in *J. B. Tiepolo en España*, Madrid: CSIC, 1953, p. 24.
- 2 Knowledge of its existence is provided by a black and white photograph from the Museo Lázaro Galdiano. I am grateful to Carmen Espinosa and Carlos Sánchez Díez for kindly allowing me to examine the paintings and the documentation related to them.
- 3 Quoted by César Pemán y Pemartín, *Catálogo del Museo Provincial de Bellas Artes de Cádiz (Pinturas)*, Madrid: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1964, p. 116. Though it is impossible to specify which, one of the two copies appeared for the last time in the inventory corresponding to 1916 in that museum. The other is currently attributed to José García Chicano (1775–1844), who studied in Rome and Florence.
- 4 Pompeo Molmenti, *G. B. Tiepolo: La sua vita e le sue opere*, Milan: Ulrico Hoepli, 1909, p. 107.
- 5 Sack also identifies the photographer: Laurent y Compañía. See Eduard Sack, *Giambattista und Domenico Tiepolo: Ihr Leben und ihre Werke*, Hamburg: Clarmanns Kunstverlag, 1910, p. 208, no. 433.
- 6 Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, op. cit., p. 24.
- 7 Jacob Bean, *Bayonne, Musée Bonnat: Les dessins italiens de la collection Bonnat*, Paris: Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1960, no. 167. Sanguine with touches of white crayon on greenish blue paper, 341 x 234 mm. Inscribed in pen, above right: "Tiepolo." Inv. no. 1306.
- 8 Antonio Morassi, *A Complete Catalogue of the Paintings of G. B. Tiepolo, Including Pictures by his Pupils and Followers Wrongly Attributed to Him*, London: Phaidon Press, 1962, p. 8. Nevertheless, as late as 1964, César Pemán y Pemartín claimed that it was the "probable work of Giambattista or perhaps one of his sons." (See op. cit., p. 116.) Meanwhile, Adriano Mariuz cites this painting among Giandomenico's autograph works, in Mariuz, *Giandomenico Tiepolo*, Venice: Alfieri, 1971, p. 116. (Henceforth "Mariuz 1971".)
- 9 See Nicolás de la Cruz y Bahamonde, *Viage de España, Francia é Italia, por D. Nicolas de la Cruz y Bahamonde, conde de Maule*, Cádiz: Imprenta de D. Manuel Bosch, 1813, vol. 13, pp. 339–42; María Pemán, "La colección artística de don Sebastián Martínez, el amigo de Goya, en Cádiz," *Archivo Español de Arte*, vol. 51, no. 201 (1978), pp. 53–62; Nigel Glendinning, "Los contratiempos de Leandro Fernández de Moratín a la vuelta de Italia en 1796," *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos*, vol. 82, no. 3 (1979), pp. 580–82.
- 10 For O'Cruley, see Antonio Ponz, *Viage de España, en que se da noticia de las cosas más apreciables, y dignas de saberse, que hay en ella*, 18 vols., Madrid: Imprenta de la Viuda de Ibarra, Hijos, y Compañía, 1772–94, vol. 18, pp. 25–26; for Murcia, see Ponz, pp. 27–28, and N. de la Cruz y Bahamonde, op. cit., vol. 13, pp. 337–39.
- 11 *Collection Salamanca: Tableaux anciens des Écoles Espagnole, Italienne, Flamande et Hollandaise provenant des galeries de l'Infant don Luis de Bourbon; du Marquis d'Altamira; du Marquis d'Almeina; de Iriarte; de la Comtesse de Chinchon, née de Bourbon; de Don José de Madrazo; etc., etc., et du Palais de Vista-Allegre. Vente Hôtel Drouot*, Paris, 1875, p. 71, no. 112.
- 12 Isadora Rose Wagner, *Manuel Godoy patrón de las artes y coleccionista*, Madrid: Universidad Complutense, 1983, vol. 2, pp. 464–66. It is impossible to identify the origin of paintings such as the work called *An Oriental* from the collection of the Viscount of Baiguer (attributed to Giandomenico, 48 x 36 cm), which was exhibited in Gilberte Martin-Méry, *De Tiepolo a Goya*, exh. cat., Bordeaux, 7 May–31 July 1956, p. 31, no. 66 (not reproduced).
- 13 The dimensions of the paintings in this series are 60 x 50 cm, the same as the series in this exhibition and, in general, the customary size for Giandomenico's heads. It is a collection that is not included in the catalogue prepared by Adriano Mariuz, which is why the experts on this artist have not been aware of its existence. From my perspective, the four portraits of young women with the inventory numbers 2327, 3547, 3549 and 3558 are all by Giandomenico. Also by Giandomenico is the male portrait numbered 3559 (based on print I-11 in the *Raccolta di Teste* by Giandomenico, in turn based on an original by Giambattista in the Pinacoteca Malaspina in Pavia). This collection also includes no. 3557 (a very mediocre copy of print I-6, based on an original by Giambattista in the Pinacoteca Malaspina in Pavia); no. 8404 (a very mediocre copy of print I-17, whose original model is in the museum in Ca' Rezzonico in Venice); and no. 8420, which is currently missing (a very mediocre copy of one of the heads of an old man presented here [CAT. 1], with another identical copy in MM. Cailleux, Paris). The works numbered 2152 and 2156 are of higher quality and may be from the hand of a later imitator. The philosophers are reproduced in Salomón Reinach, *La colección Lázaro de Madrid*, Madrid: La España Moderna, 1927, part 1, p. 108, no. 105; p. 375, no. 354; and p. 376, no. 355; and part 2, pp. 78–79, nos. 540 and 541. Two female portraits appear in Eduardo Llorent y Marañón, ed., *Segundo centenario del nacimiento de Goya: Exposición de retratos ejemplares: Siglos XVIII y XIX – Colecciones madrileñas*, Madrid: Museo Nacional de Arte Moderno, 1946, plates 12 and 14.
- 14 With certain variants, such as those wearing oriental dress (Mariuz 1971, plates 218 and 219); the so-called "pages" (Mariuz 1971, plates 221 and 222) and the *Portrait of a Sculptor* (oil on canvas, 59 x 49 cm) in *Le Portrait en Italie au siècle de Tiepolo*, exh. cat., 7 May–5 September, Paris: Musée du Petit Palais, 1982, p. 104, no. 49bis.
- 15 Of this group, I am familiar only with two copies in the Museo del Prado, from the bequest of Rosa Rodríguez Vaamonde. They entered the museum in 1898 as works attributed to Giambattista, associated with two heads of philosophers, one of which is a not terribly rigorous copy of an original in the Perinat collection in Madrid.
- 16 George Knox mentions the possibility that it might represent Pythagoras. See *Tiepolo, tecnica e immaginazione*, exh. cat., Palazzo Ducale, Venice, July–September 1979, p. 74; G. Knox, *Domenico Tiepolo: Raccolta di teste, 1770–1979*, Udine: Electa Editrice, 1970, no. I-29. In more general terms, see G. Knox, "Philosopher Portraits" by Giambat-

- tista, Domenico and Lorenzo Tiepolo,” *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 117, no. 864 (March 1975), p. 152.
- 17 Paolo Bellini, *L'opera incisa di Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione*, Milan: Comune, 1982, pp. 106–41; Gianfranco Bruno, ed., *Il genio di Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione il Grechetto*, exh. cat., Accademia Ligustica di Belle Arti, 27 January–1 April 1990, pp. 212–25.
- 18 On the reverse of a bill dated 29 December 1757, Zanetti added a letter which reads, “Vi confesso il vero, che a mio certo intendere, ve ne sono alcune, quali, se potesse uscire dal sepolcro il Rembrandt et Gio. Benedetto Castiglione, baccierebbe chi Li [sic] ha fatte” (I confess to you verily, that I am convinced there are some [works] that, if Rembrandt or Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione were to rise from the grave, they would kiss the one who made them). Lisa Christina Frerichs, “Marianne et les eaux-fortes des Tiepolo,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. 78 (October 1971), pp. 233–49.
- 19 Inscribed on the reverse, “20/Gio Batta Pittoni”; 46 x 37.8 cm. Christie’s London, Wednesday, 13 December 2000, pp. 252–53, no. 100.
- 20 The plate appears between pages XII and XIII in Josephus, *Historia de la guerra de los judíos y de la destrucción del templo y ciudad de Jerusalén* [History of the Jewish War and the Destruction of the Temple and City of Jerusalem], Madrid: Oficina de Benito Caro, 1791.
- 21 Published by G. Knox, in *Domenico Tiepolo: Raccolta di teste...*
- 22 G. Knox, “‘Philosopher Portraits’...,” pp. 147–48.
- 23 It was sold in Sotheby’s London, in an auction on 28 November 1956, lot 25, as a work by Giambattista, an attribution accepted by G. Knox but rejected by A. Morassi (*A Complete Catalogue...*), p. 20 and Mariuz 1971, p. 122, illus. 207, who consider it the work of Giandomenico.
- 24 G. Knox, *Domenico Tiepolo: Raccolta di Teste...*, no. I-3.
- 25 Diane de Grazia, “Tiepolo and the ‘Art’ of Portraiture,” in *Giambattista Tiepolo, 1696–1770*, ed. Keith Christiansen, exh. cat., 24 January–27 April 1997, New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996, p. 257.
- 26 G. Knox, “‘Philosopher Portraits’...,” illus. no. 32.
- 27 G. Knox, *Giambattista and Domenico Tiepolo: A Study and Catalogue Raisonné of the Chalk Drawings*, New York: Oxford University Press; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980, vol. 1, p. 242, no. M. 249 and vol. 2, plate 139.
- 28 Massimo Gemin and Filippo Pedrocchi, *Giambattista Tiepolo: Dipinti, opera completa*, Venice: Arsene Editrice, 1993, p. 368, no. 308 (National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne) and p. 369, no. 309 (Gerli collection, Milan). (Henceforth, “Gemin-Pedrocchi.”)
- 29 Regarding the work in the private collection, see Gemin-Pedrocchi, p. 369, no. 310, with the preceding bibliography. (These authors date the painting to 1743–45.) Regarding the work in Minneapolis, see G. Knox, *Domenico Tiepolo: Raccolta di Teste...*, no. I-8, attributed to Giambattista; Mariuz 1971, pp. 126–27, plate 210, attributed to Giandomenico.
- 30 Andrés Úbeda de los Cobos, *Lorenzo Tiepolo*, exh. cat., Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 1999, pp. 142–45.
- 31 *Ibid.*, pp. 136–37.
- 32 L. C. Frerichs (op. cit., p. 242) proposes certain drawings in which Giandomenico copied portraits incorporated in compositions as candidates for membership in this series. No scholar has subsequently repeated this proposal, which, though not impossible, does not resolve the problem of why Giandomenico decided to abandon his father’s models in his own female portraits in oil.
- 33 As Dario Succi supposes in *Pinturas de cuatro siglos, 1997–1998*, Madrid: Galería Caylus, 1997, p. 189.
- 34 A. Mariuz, “Le acqueforti di Giandomenico Tiepolo,” in *Giandomenico Tiepolo, 1727–1804: Acqueforti, Tele, Disegni nel 250° della nascita*, exh. cat., ed. Fernando Rigon, Museo Civico di Bassano del Grappa, 1978, pp. 11–30. Reprinted in A. Mariuz, *Tiepolo*, Verona: Cierre Edizioni, 2008, p. 185.
- 35 Diane de Grazia, op. cit., pp. 256–57.
- 36 Under no circumstances can the *Portrait of a Young Woman with a Tambourine* in the Museo de Cádiz (cited in Mariuz 1971, p. 116) be considered part of this series; for, as indicated, it is a copy of the painting in this exhibition.
- 37 Oil on canvas, 60.4 x 48.6 cm, inv. no. 1952.541; Mariuz 1971, p. 117, plate 227.
- 38 Specifically in the collection of Mr. Henry G. Dalton, Cleveland, where it is still attributed to Giambattista: *Loan Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Prints by the Two Tiepolos: Giambattista and Giandomenico*, exh. cat., The Art Institute of Chicago, 4 February–6 March 1938, p. 64, no. 37. Spanish art critics remind us of this in Sánchez Cantón, op. cit., pp. 24–25 and in Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, *Pintura europea perdida por España: De Van Eyck a Tiepolo*, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1964, no. 114, cat. 334.
- 39 Oil on canvas, 60 x 50.5 cm; Mariuz 1971, p. 127, plate 223.
- 40 Oil on canvas, 58.5 x 50.8 cm; *ibid.*, p. 129, plate 224.
- 41 Oil on canvas, 60 x 50 cm; *ibid.*, pp. 112 y 113, plate 228.
- 42 Oil on canvas, 59 x 48 cm; *ibid.*, p. 120, plate 231.
- 43 Oil on canvas, 60 x 50 cm; *ibid.*, p. 124, plates 225 and 126.
- 44 Oil on canvas, 59 x 50 cm (approximate measurements); *ibid.*, p. 122, plates 229 and 230. The first of these, *Portrait of a Young Woman with Flowers in her Hair*, belonged to a collection in Seville and was subsequently sold in Madrid in 1997. It is currently in a collection in the US. See the entry by Dario Succi, *Pinturas de cuatro siglos...*, pp. 186–89.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 186.
- 46 A. Mariuz (Mariuz 1971) ended up considering two possible groupings for these paintings, both of which are in my mind mistaken. On pp. 120–21 of his book, he proposes the existence of a series of portraits of women with musical instruments that would have included the painting formerly in Lisbon (Espírito Santo Silva collection) and the painting in the Museo de Cádiz (which is actually a copy). On p. 122 he proposes another series made up of the paintings in the former Harris collection, in Bergamo, and in Cleveland, along with the paintings in the Museo Lázaro Galdiano in Madrid—a proposal that, like his first, proves incomplete and arbitrary.

- 47 *The Portrait of a Woman Wearing Blue Ribbons in her Hair and a Ruff* is also found, with slight variations, in the Museo Lázaro Galdiano. Inv. no. 3558.
- 48 Detroit Institute of Arts. Oil on canvas, 93 x 75 cm. Inv. no. 57.180.
- 49 Gemin-Pedrocco, p. 396, no. 375.
- 50 Muzeum Narodowe, Szczecin. Inv. MNS/Rys 572. 340 x 252 mm.
- 51 Gemin-Pedrocco, p. 478, no. 502.
- 52 See Filippo Pedrocco, *Disegni di Giandomenico Tiepolo*, Milan: Bruno Alfieri Editore, 1990, p. 83, no. 2, which presents the various proposals for the drawing's attribution.
- 53 Reproduced in Andrea Czére, *Giandomenico Tiepolo: Capriccio in Time and Space*, exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 15 October 2004–27 February 2005, p. 18.
- 54 Mariuz 1971, p. 122, plate 230.
- 55 *Ibid.*, plates 8 and 10.
- 56 G. Knox, *Giambattista and Domenico Tiepolo ...*, vol. 1, p. 273, no. M. 504. Anna Maria was born in 1722, so she would have been around 25 years old in 1747, when she was painted in the *Via Crucis* in the church of San Polo. The drawing is reproduced in *Giandomenico Tiepolo: Maestria e gioco, disegni dal mondo*, eds. Adelheid M. Gealt and George Knox, exh. cat., Castello di Udine, 14 September–31 December, Milan: Electa, 1996, p. 117, no. 11.
- 57 Mariuz 1971, p. 144, plate 22.
- 58 George Knox, *Giambattista and Domenico Tiepolo...*, vol. 1, p. 124, no. C-53 and vol. 2, plate 115.
- 59 *The Continenze of Scipio* is in the Städtisches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt, oil on canvas, 121 x 97 cm; see Mariuz 1971, p. 119, plate 34. *Alexander the Great with the Women of Darius* is in the Detroit Institute of Arts, oil on canvas, 118 x 98 cm; see Mariuz 1971, p. 118, plate 35.
- 60 In December 1749 the *quadraturista* (or designer of illusionistic ceiling painting) Pietro Visconti criticized one of Giandomenico's works from his youth, the *Via Crucis* in the Venetian church of San Polo in which Visconti observed "figure straniere parte vestiti alla spanola, schiavoni, et altre carichature che dicono che in quel tempo non si ritrovava tal sorta di gente" (foreign figures, some dressed *alla spagnola*, slaves and other caricatures, and they say that that sort of person was not to be found at that time). These were aspects of his work that, meanwhile, contributed to his fame as an artist unlike any other, strange and admirable, not subject to any norms other than those dictated by his imagination, just as Visconti himself recognizes when he affirms that Giandomenico painted his works "perché meglio comodono al suo caratro [*sic*]" (such that they better conformed to his character). Quoted by A. Mariuz, "Giandomenico Tiepolo (1727–1804)," in *Giandomenico Tiepolo: Maestria e Gioco...*, p. 20.

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Cover: Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Portrait of a Woman in Profile* (presumed to be Anna Maria Tiepolo) (detail), ca. 1768 [CAT. 3]

Back cover: Giandomenico Tiepolo, *Portrait of a Bearded Old Man* (detail), ca. 1768 [CAT. 2]

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