

LIMINAL MESSAGES: THE *CARTELLINO* IN ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

PAINTING

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Liminal Messages: The *Cartellino* in Italian Renaissance Painting

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This dissertation traces the use of the *cartellino*—an illusionistic paper label— in the Venetian Empire from the middle of the fifteenth century to the first quarter of the sixteenth century, when the motif enjoyed its greatest popularity. The small body of existing scholarship on the *cartellino* generally focuses the motif as a vehicle for signatures. Building on these studies, I contextualize the *cartellino* as one of the most conspicuous signs of Venetian painters' assertion of identity during the early Renaissance period. Confusion about the *cartellino*'s origins has persisted in published studies, and only in a few brief discussions has its iconographic significance been evaluated. This dissertation addresses this gap in the scholarship and explains the limited popularity of the *cartellino* by placing it in the context of various cultural and economic factors that were particularly relevant in Venice and its terraferma empire during the early Renaissance period.

My dissertation presents the first comprehensive study of a large group of signatures of a particular visual type, addressing the often overlooked importance of the

specific form of the signature, its content, and the placement of the artist's name in interpretations of the paintings on which they appear.

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Introduction

The *cartellino*, an illusionistically portrayed paper or parchment label that is frequently inscribed with the painter's signature, enjoyed an intense but chronologically and geographically limited popularity, that is, in the Veneto from the late 1440s to the 1520s. Of the Italian examples I have recorded, over seventy-five percent, including the earliest instances of the motif, fall within these limits, confirming the region's importance in its invention and popularity. Scholarship about the *cartellino* is rare and generally focuses on the related phenomenon of the artist's signature. Confusion about its origins has persisted in published studies, and only in a few brief discussions has the *cartellino*'s iconographic significance been evaluated. This dissertation addresses this gap in the scholarship and explains the limited popularity of the *cartellino* by placing it in the context of various cultural and economic factors that were particularly relevant in Venice and its terraferma empire during the early Renaissance period.

Of primary importance is the *cartellino*'s typical function as the vehicle for the artist's signature. The discussion of signatures is naturally tied up with developing notions of individual identity in the Renaissance and the increasing social status of artists. By signing their pictures, painters were making a self-promoting statement; the way that artists chose to sign their paintings was part of their project of self-fashioning. From these assumptions emerge some basic questions: why did certain painters choose to sign their paintings on fictive paper as opposed to other materials, like stone or cloth; why was this phenomenon especially popular in Venice and the Veneto; and how can we account for the beginning and end of the trend? Answers to these questions involve some of the most

salient issues of Renaissance art history, specifically in parsing out fifteenth-century developments in centers outside Florence. Among these are the visualization of artistic identity, artistic theory that provides alternatives to (or alternative interpretations of) Albertian models, the commercial aspects of art making, and the position of painters within a humanist visual culture. Each of these factors had a specific character in Venice and the Veneto, which I shall argue manifested itself in artists' use of *cartellini*.

In order to interpret the trend effectively, *cartellini* must be distinguished in a meaningful way from the myriad of inscribed objects that appear in Renaissance paintings. Dario Covi, in his study of inscriptions in fifteenth-century Florentine painting, adopted the definition offered by the *Vocabolario dell'Accademia della Crusca*: "a piece of paper, pasteboard, or other material (including stone), generally rectangular in shape, and fixed—like a label or cartouche—to a wall, the side of a postament [pedestal or socle] or the surface of some other object."¹ Covi used the term 'leaflet' to describe motifs that are more commonly called *cartellini*.

Rona Goffen arrived at a more specific and useful definition. She defined the *cartellino* as a fictive paper attached to a surface parallel to the picture plane that functions as a label and furthermore is "understood to have been added to the work, to belong to a subsequent moment and to another realm, distinguished from the time and space of the beings represented."² These specifications are significant first of all because

¹ D. Covi, *The Inscription in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Painting* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1986): 227. I find the Accademia della Crusca's definition too inclusive to allow examples to be grouped in a meaningful way, and and furthermore does not acknowledge the possibility of a paper label having a more specific function or meaning except that it provided a naturalistic way of including an inscription in a painting. The same can be said of Matthew's definition, see n. 4 below.

² R. Goffen, 2001, 313. A similar definition is used in idem., "Icon and Vision: Giovanni Bellini's Half-Length Madonnas," *Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 510 and n. 137. Goffen makes the distinction between the *cartellino* and banderoles or scrolls that appear within the setting of the picture and refer to its (internal) content, not its (external) maker. The *cartellino*'s function as a label that is affixed to an object and

they make a distinction between *cartellini* and numerous other kinds of objects that are inscribed in Italian paintings, such as plaques, books, or articles of clothing.³ In addition, they emphasize the relationship between the function of the *cartellino* as a label that refers to the painting's artifice, and its frequent visual separation from the pictorial space of the painted scene. This narrow definition, however, unnecessarily rules out certain examples—namely, *cartellini* that are not “added on” but are embedded into the painted scene. My view is that the *cartellino* can be meaningfully distinguished from other inscribed papers (like scrolls, banderoles, and letters) by its distinct visual form (small and rectangular, often creased or torn) and its function as a label, that is, conveying information about the painting itself as opposed to the subject represented.⁴

Goffen's discussion of *cartellini* nonetheless points to the importance of their liminal placement in the composition, which is a central concern of my interpretations.

Cartellini differ from what I shall refer to as “floating” inscriptions or signatures (those

provides information about that object is connoted in the modern definitions of the Italian words *cartello* ('sign') and its diminutive form *cartellino* ('tag'). Goffen's definition of *cartellini* parallels that offered by O. Calabrese and B. Gigante, “La signature du peintre” *La Part de l'Oeil* 5 (1989): 31, although Calabrese and Gigante also acknowledge their ambiguous placement on surfaces parallel to the picture plane (32).

³ See, for example, Perugino's self-portrait in the Collegio del Cambio, Perugia (1500) with a fictive plaque praising the painter's art; Filippino Lippi's *Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Carafa Chapel, S. Maria sopra Minerva, Rome, 1488-93), which prominently features open books; or one of Benozzo Gozzoli's self-portraits in the Medici Palace chapel (1459), in which the artist is shown wearing a cap embroidered with his name (“OPVS BENOTII...”).

⁴ L. Matthew, “The Painter's Presence: Signatures in Venetian Renaissance Pictures” *Art Bulletin* 80 (1998): 620-21. She qualifies her definition saying that the Venetian type after mid-century was a “small, rectangular sheet that appears to be affixed to an architectural surface, usually near the bottom edge of the painting, or, less frequently, resting within the image.” The term “cartellino” dates only to the sixteenth century (see G. Alessio and C. Battisti, eds., *Dizionario Etimologico Italiano* (Florence: G. Barbèra Editore, 1950), vol. 1, 785) and sixteenth-century sources that refer to *cartellini* call them by other names. Marcantonio Michiel, describing Antonello da Messina's *Saint Jerome* (ca. 1475, London, National Gallery) calls the *cartellino* on the saint's desk a “letterina,” and in a letter describing Colantonio's painting of the same subject (ca. 1444-45, Naples, Capodimonte), Pietro Summonte calls the illusionistic bits of paper “cartucce.” Paolo Pino, in his *Dialogo della pittura* (1548) refers to the practice of signing paintings with a “bolletta,” which Mary Pardo translated as “label,” which could refer to *cartellini*, which Pino's teacher Savoldo sometimes used. The terms employed in these early sources cast doubt on Friedmann's suggestion that goldfinches (*cardellini*), a symbol of Christ's passion and their frequent inclusion in Madonna and Child pictures, could also be puns on *cartellini* (scrolls, in his translation), since both were common attributes of the Christ Child in devotional paintings. See H. Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington: Pantheon Books, 1946), 22.

whose letters are simply superimposed over the image) in that they are illusionistic signatures (shown as part of the setting by being inscribed on a depicted object).

Cartellini are often positioned on an object parallel to the picture plane, making their position ambiguous, since they could be understood as either “in” the painted space or “on” the surface of the picture; in these instances and in cases where *cartellini* are intended as a trompe-l’oeil element (in that they can be understood as papers that have been added on to the surface of the painting), which together account for the majority, I regard their placement as liminal.

The liminal placement of *cartellini* is significant because it visually parallels their function, that is, to record and transmit messages from the artist to the viewer, from one space and time to another. The painter’s message, therefore, mediates between image and viewer, and his name is accordingly placed in the space between them. Furthermore, when the artist placed the *cartellino* in the extreme foreground, as is usually the case, it addresses the viewer in its confrontational placement. In instances where the *cartellino* is more embedded into the pictorial setting, however, the painter implies that he had witnessed the people or events portrayed and that the *cartellino* is evidence of his presence. This lends a sense of truth to the painting, yet collapses the boundary separating reality and representation. In either case, the *cartellino* reveals the artifice of the work, referring to people and events separate from the represented realm of the painting by containing information about factors in the production of the painting and identifying the individual responsible for the work. Most paintings with signed *cartellini* are thus inherently reflexive—that is, self-referential, calling attention to the status of the painting as a constructed reality distinct from the viewer’s own place in space and time.

Historiography and methodology

Starting points for my research have been recent iconographic and semiotic investigations of signatures, which move beyond the traditional notions of signatures as mere tools of connoisseurship in the authentication of art objects.⁵ In 1974 André Chastel made the first attempt to create a typology of signatures in a volume of *Revue de L'Art* devoted entirely to signatures in the Western tradition.⁶ The scholarly response to this collection of essays has been significant. Semiotic analyses of signatures have provided insight into how signatures convey meaning through their placement on or in the picture.⁷ Scholars of Renaissance art have generally responded with studies of specific artists or signatures, among which Michelangelo is quite popular.⁸

Two key socio-historical studies that take a broader view are the recent articles on signatures in the Italian Renaissance by Rona Goffen and Patricia Rubin.⁹ Both Goffen and Rubin acknowledge the relationship between signatures and the construction of

⁵ See C. Gilbert, "A Preface to Signatures (with some cases in Venice)" in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. Mary Rogers (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 79-87 and L. Seidel, *Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait: Stories of an Icon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 1-18.

⁶ A. Chastel, "L'art de la signature," *Revue de l'Art* 26 (1974): 12-43.

⁷ See C. Gandelman, "The Semiotics of Signatures in Painting: A Peircian Analysis" *American Journal of Semiotics* 3/3 (1985): 87-108 and O. Calabrese and B. Gigante.

⁸ C. Gilbert, "Lo stile nelle firme del Savoldo" in *Giovanni Gerolamo Savoldo, pittore bresciano. Atti del convegno, Brescia 21-22 maggio 1983*, ed. G. Panazza (Brescia: Edizioni del Moretto, 1985), 22-28; idem. "Some Findings on Early Works of Titian." *Art Bulletin* 62 (1980): 36-75; D. Arasse, "Signé Mantegna" *Beaux-Arts Magazine* 99 (1992): 60-67; Lecoq, A.-M. "'Finxit: Le peintre comme 'fictor' au XVIe siècle" *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 37 (1975): 225-43; and A. Wang, "Michelangelo's Signature" *Sixteenth Century Journal* 35 (2004): 447-73, with further bibliography. Scholars have also explored the signatures of later early modern artists working outside Italy; see for example, A. Jensen Adams, "Rembrandt f[ecit]. The Italic Signature and the Commodification of Artistic Identity" in *Künstlerischer Austausch=Artistic Exchange*, ed. T. W. Gaetgens (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), vol. 2, 581-94; K. Hellwig, "Las firmas de Velázquez" *Boletín del Museo del Prado* 36 (2001), 21-46; J. R. Buendía, "Humanismo y simbología en El Greco: El tema d la serpiente" in *El Greco: Italy and Spain*, J. Brown and J. M. P. Andrade, eds. (Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 1984), 35-46. A conference on signatures was recently held at Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, "Der Künstler und sein Werk: Signaturen europäischer Künstler von der Antike bis zum Barock," 26-28 September 2008.

⁹ "Signatures: Inscribing Identity in Italian Renaissance Art," *Viator* 32 (2001): 303-70 and "Signposts of Invention: Artists' Signatures in Italian Renaissance Art" *Art History* 29 (2006): 563-99, respectively.

identity and increased social status of the artist in the Renaissance. Goffen analyzed many different types of signatures, from *trecento* sculpture to sixteenth-century painting, and what they were intended to communicate about the artists. For Goffen, signatures are pronouncements of individual identity, which became increasingly important as emphasis on artists' individual genius, as opposed to hand-crafted group efforts, became more and more the ideal. Rubin frames her discussion of signature around the importance of how and where artists placed their signatures on their paintings or sculptures. By signing in specific places, like the sash across the Virgin's chest (Michelangelo's Vatican *Pietà*) or on the handle of an axe (Fra Filippo Lippi's *Adoration of the Child* from the Medici Chapel), they direct the viewer to understand how the artist positioned himself in relation to his subject. Dario Covi's study of inscriptions in fifteenth-century Florentine paintings and discussions of inscriptions on Netherlandish paintings by Linda Seidel and Karin Gludovatz have also pointed out the importance of addressing the types of represented objects and materials that were inscribed, a consideration that has shaped much of my study.¹⁰

Louisa Matthew's article on Venetian signatures (1998) provided a crucial starting point for my study by tracing various trends in signing practices in Renaissance Venice, like the increasing popularity of illusionistic signatures during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.¹¹ Although the article deals with various types of signatures, the author's characterization of *cartellini* as workshop trademarks informed my discussions

¹⁰ D. Covi, L. Seidel, *Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 11, and K. Gludovatz, "Der Name am Rahmen, der Maler im Bild. Künstlerselbstverständnis und Produktionskommentar in den Signaturen Jan van Eycks" *Weiner Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 54 (2005): 115-75. See also R. Goffen, "Raphael's Designer Labels" *Artibus et Historiae* 24 (2003): 123-42, 225. on the significance of the placement of the artist's signature.

¹¹ "The Painter's Presence: Signatures in Venetian Renaissance Pictures," *Art Bulletin* 80 (1998): 616-648.

of the commerce of Venetian paintings in the last two chapters. Matthew does not, however, explain the particular relevance of a paper motif.

Scholarship dealing with trompe-l'oeil painting and its reflexive qualities informed my characterization of the liminal placement of *cartellini* and their function as links between the painted object and the viewer. A seminal work is Ernst Gombrich's *Art and Illusion*, which, although it covers a far broader range of imagery than simply mimetic illusion, takes into account the viewer's share.¹² Monographs by Marie-Louise D'Otrange Mastai and Patrick Mauries trace the appearance of illusionism and trompe l'oeil in the history of Western art.¹³ The National Gallery of Art's exhibition catalog *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe-L'Oeil Painting* provided a theoretical basis for my discussions of illusionism and liminality.¹⁴ Crucial to my application of these ideas in the final chapter are studies by Klaus Krüger and Bret Rothstein of reflexivity and its implications for the functions and material status of religious paintings.¹⁵

As I noted above, scholarly discussions of the *cartellino* are rare. Millard Meiss was the first to address the origins and significance of the *cartellino*, pointing to the first known example as the dated scroll in Fra Filippo Lippi's *Tarquinta Madonna* (1434, fig.

¹² Other recent studies have also focused on response and reception, such as J. Shearman, *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); N. Land, *The Viewer as Poet: The Renaissance Response to Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State Press, 1994); H. Belting, *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, trans. M. Bartusis and R. Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: A. D. Caratzas, 1990); and idem., *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image in the Era before Art*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

¹³ *Illusion in Art* (New York: Abaris Books, 1975) and *Le Trompe-l'oeil: de l'Antiquité au XXe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), respectively.

¹⁴ S. Ebert-Schifferer, ed. (2002).

¹⁵ K. Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren: Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der Frühen Neuzeit in Italien* (Munich: W. Fink, 2001) and B. Rothstein, *Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

1) and suggesting it was inspired by Flemish models, specifically Eyckian paintings Lippi would have seen during his Paduan sojourn.¹⁶ Many later scholars, including Matthew, adopted this view, but Penny Jolly and later Rona Goffen both noted that the evidence points more toward a north Italian origin for the motif.¹⁷ To my knowledge, the first scholarly work that focused specifically on the *cartellino* is Zygmunt Wazbinski's brief article "Le 'Cartellino.' Origine et Avatar d'une Etiquette" of 1963.¹⁸ In it the author sketches a history of the *cartellino*, arguing that it probably originated in the Paduan studio of Francesco Squarcione. The author suggests that *cartellini* imitated real paper labels that Squarcione placed on the objects of his collection of ancient sculptural fragments and studio models, and that, furthermore, his many students may have wanted to use the *cartellino* by way of claiming their individual contributions within the large studio. While I agree with Wazbinski's assertion that the origin of the *cartellino* lies in the circle of Francesco Squarcione and that there were commercial reasons for painters to sign on *cartellini*, there is no evidence that the fictive motif was inspired by real practice.¹⁹ Patricia Fortini Brown offered a brief but insightful interpretation of *cartellini*

¹⁶ This suggestion first appeared in his 1956 article "Jan van Eyck and the Italian Renaissance" reprinted in *The Painter's Choice* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 25. Meiss reiterated this idea in *Mantegna as Illuminator* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), 28 and "Towards a More Comprehensive Renaissance Paleography" *Art Bulletin* 42 (1960): 102.

¹⁷ See P. H. Jolly, "Jan van Eyck and Saint Jerome: A Study of Eyckian Influence on Colantonio and Antonello da Messina in Quattrocento Naples" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1976), 243-45, in which the author suggests a north Italian origin, while R. Goffen, "Crossing the Alps: Portraiture in Renaissance Venice" in B. Aikema and B. L. Brown, eds., *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian* (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), 122, n. 55, suggests more specifically that Jacopo Bellini may have invented the device in the 1430s or '40s.

¹⁸ *Pantheon* 21 (1963): 278-83.

¹⁹ Wazbinski was the first to assert the Paduan origins of the *cartellino*. P. H. Jolly, 242-46, points to a north Italian origin. The recent exhibition catalogue *Antonello da Messina: Sicily's Renaissance Master* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005), 22, simply called the *cartellino*, which Antonello frequently used to sign his paintings after his first trip to northern Italy, "of Paduan derivation." Ruda (followed by Ames-Lewis, 1993, 186), linked Lippi's scroll to a signed and dated one in the Sienese Domenico di Bartolo's *Madonna and Child* (1433, Siena, Pinacoteca). M. Koster in "Italy and the North. A Florentine Perspective" in T.-H. Borchert, ed., *The Age of Van Eyck* (New York: Thames and Hudson,

as motifs whose liminal placement provides links between the past and the present and between the viewer and the painted representation.²⁰ Most recently, Debra Pincus has addressed the importance of the specific type of lettering Giovanni Bellini employed in signatures on two of his *cartellini*, citing the importance of the Venetian press of Aldus Manutius in Bellini's deliberate use of the italic hand.²¹

Chapter one evaluates these proposals of the *cartellino*'s origins, ultimately tracing them to mid-century Padua. The liminal placement of the *cartellino* and its documentary function relates, I argue, to the humanist recovery of antiquity that had attained a relatively long history and distinct character in the Veneto by the mid-fifteenth century. A favorite activity of Venetan humanists was the collection of epigraphs in sylloges; these books of inscriptions and drawings were shared with antiquarians and artists. Early painters of *cartellini*—Jacopo Bellini, as well as Andrea Mantegna and other students of the Paduan painter Francesco Squarcione—had both a proven interest in these sylloges and social and professional connections with their authors. I argue that by painting *cartellini*, these artists were making reference to the paper collecting practices of Venetan humanists.

Chapter two draws connections between the importance of the printing, copying, and decoration of books in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in Venice and its territories. The Veneto-Paduan school of miniature painting, which had strong ties to Squarcione's studio, represented the avant-garde in that field during the third quarter of

2002), 87 detracted somewhat from Meiss's view: "Van Eyck made a habit of inscribing his works on a trompe-l'oeil surface, often on a painted frame on the picture plane at the lower edge. Many Venetian painters took up the practice of including a *cartellino* with a signature; this was particularly the case with artists showing other signs of Eyckianism...But strictly speaking, an Eyckian model for the 'Tarquinia Madonna' cannot be cited."

²⁰ P. F. Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 191.

²¹ D. Pincus, "Giovanni Bellini's Humanist Signature: Pietro Bembo, Aldus Manutius and Humanism in Early Sixteenth-Century Venice" *Artibus et Historiae* 58 (2008): 89-119.

the fifteenth century, and paleographic studies in the Veneto had a profound impact on scribes and typographers. I explain the *cartellino*'s greatest popularity in Venice from the 1470s to the 1520s in the context of Venice's supremacy in printing during the same period. The humanist culture inhabited by painters, miniaturists, printers, scribes, and scholars guaranteed an environment of exchange and connections with the learned culture of humanism—with the book as its chosen form of expression—that would have been an association that painters would have wanted to flaunt in fashioning themselves as intellectuals.

Chapter three focuses on this project of self-fashioning through the act of signing *cartellini*. The signature was the artist's conscious statement proclaiming responsibility for the work; this habit was the natural outcome of the emerging attitude toward individualism and the increasing social status of artists. *Cartellini* communicated artistic identity, however, not only by announcing the artist's name, but also how and where the name appeared. In the third quarter of the fifteenth century, Venetian painters, notable among them Giovanni Bellini, adopted the *cartellino* for the majority of their signatures, making it a sign of Venetian collective identity; painters differentiated themselves with variations of *cartellini*, according to their placement, the content of their inscriptions, and their physical characteristics. This balancing of individual and collective identity was particularly important in the Venetian context, where socio-political ideals prioritized the civic good over individualism.

In chapter four I address the importance of *cartellini* as trompe-l'oeil motifs in assessing viewers' response to religious paintings. I consider the three main types of religious paintings produced by Venetian artists: small-scale panels for private devotion,

monumental altarpieces, and narrative cycles for the Venetian *scuole* (confraternities). I address the illusionistic and reflexive qualities of *cartellini* to reconstruct how they affected viewers' responses in the different contexts of the marketplace, domestic spaces, churches, and *scuole* meeting rooms. Finally, a brief epilogue addresses the afterlife of *cartellini* in Spanish painting of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the possible role the *cartellino* played in the emergence of trompe-l'oeil as an independent genre in seventeenth-century Dutch painting.

My dissertation presents the first comprehensive study of a large group of signatures of a particular visual type, addressing the often overlooked importance of the specific form of the signature, its content, and the placement of the artist's name. My research shows how Venetian Renaissance painters adopted modes of constructing identity in visual terms—they represented their names in specific ways to evoke their character, abilities, or intellect, depending on the language, types of letters, and represented materials of the signature. I trace the history of the *cartellino*, explaining its origins, its popularity, and its decline with socio-historical context and contemporary artistic theory. My analysis also asserts the important distinction between trompe-l'oeil illusionism and the traditional characterization of Renaissance naturalism involving perspectival constructions of space and three-dimensional treatment of form, two different modes of representation that art historians often conflate. This distinction has a significant bearing on how these pictures were understood by both artists and viewers. As inscribed labels placed in foreground spaces, *cartellini* were intended as liminal messages—a privileged mode of communication between artist and viewer.

Chapter 1: The *Cartellino*'s Origins in the Veneto

Fra Filippo Lippi's *Tarquinia Madonna* and Florentines in the Veneto

Art historians commonly identify the first *cartellino* as the small scroll in Fra Filippo Lippi's *Tarquinia Madonna* (also known as the *Corneto Madonna*, fig. 1), placed on the base of the Virgin's throne and dated 1437. According to this view, first asserted by Millard Meiss, the Florentine Lippi invented the *cartellino* in response to the illusionism of Eyckian paintings he saw in Padua during his sojourn there in 1434-1435.¹ Meiss specifically drew a relationship between Lippi's inscription on a crumpled piece of paper and Jan van Eyck's *Portrait of a Man* (or '*Leal Souvenir*,' fig. 2), which contains an epigraphic inscription on a battered, cracked stone parapet in front of the sitter. Meiss was certainly right to point out the delight in play of texture and illusionism featured both in the paintings of van Eyck and in the representation of *cartellini*. The worn stone of Jan van Eyck's portrait and the tattered appearance of Lippi's scroll refer in a general way to the same idea—that the inscribed materials of stone and paper have aged. Although these are important similarities that merit exploration (especially since many painters of *cartellini* sometimes employed epigraphic signatures),² the differences between the *cartellino* and the epigraphic signature, which first appeared in the London portrait, are as significant as their similarities. The 'carved' signature is evocative of antiquity and the durability of stone, while the *cartellino* contains portable and more ephemeral writing; the epigraphic signature seems to be carved into a stone surface, thus receding back into space, while the *cartellino* often seems to protrude into the viewer's space. Meiss's

¹ See "Jan van Eyck and the Italian Renaissance" in *The Painter's Choice* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 25 and *Mantegna as Illuminator* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), 28.

² For example, Giovanni Bellini, Carlo Crivelli, Mantegna, and Cima da Conegliano.

proposal is further complicated by the fact that no Eyckian paintings are actually documented in Padua in the first half of the fifteenth century.³ While Meiss identified Padua as significant in the origins of the *cartellino*, he did not explain the actual role played by the art of van Eyck in its development or the special popularity of the motif in Padua and later in Venice. The latter point is especially pertinent since the paintings of van Eyck and other Netherlandish masters were admired and collected throughout Italy, as well as by Italian expatriates in the north from the 1440s and '50s. Furthermore, the explanation for the *cartellino* as deriving from a fascination with illusionism is an oversimplification: there are more specific reasons for the use of this particular type of illusionistic motif.

In her article on signatures in Renaissance Venice, Louisa Matthew adopted some aspects of Meiss's view, pointing to Lippi's scroll as the earliest surviving *cartellino*, followed by Andrea Castagno's frescoes in the San Tarasio Chapel of San Zaccaria, Venice, signed and dated 1442 on fictive scrolls.⁴ The implication is that Lippi and Castagno brought the motif (or a variation of it) north, soon after which Jacopo Bellini and Antonio Vivarini adopted it and passed it on through their large circles of influence. This falls in line with Matthew's general argument that, as part of the broader Renaissance project of naturalism, signatures became more integrated into the three-

³ B. Aikema, "The Lure of the North: Netherlandish Art in Venetian Collections" in B. Aikema and B. L. Brown, eds., *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian* (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), 83.

⁴ L. Matthew, "The Painter's Presence: Signatures in Venetian Renaissance Pictures," *Art Bulletin* 80 (1998): 621. A similar view is taken in J. Martineau, ed., *Mantegna* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992) in reference to Mantegna's *Saint Mark in a Niche* (cat. no. 5): "There is also the possibility that Filippo Lippi painted a similar composition when he visited Padua in 1434-5...and it may be that the illusionistic *cartello* fixed to the stone parapet derives from that work, since the earliest appearance of the device occurs in Lippi's *Tarquinta Madonna* of 1437 (Palazzo Barberini, Rome). Castagno also signed his frescoes in San Zaccaria, Venice on a fictive *cartello*." For Castagno's Venetian sojourn, see F. Hartt, "The Earliest Works of Andrea del Castagno" *Art Bulletin* 41 (1959): 159-81, 225-36.

dimensional setting, occupying the same space as the painted figures so as not to disrupt the viewer's experience of the image. Florentine artists, like Lippi, Castagno, Paolo Uccello, and most notably Donatello (in Padua from 1443 to 1453), brought modern stylistic developments to Venice and the Veneto in the middle of the century. Although the influence of central Italians' presence in the Venetian Empire had an undeniable effect on local artists, this paradigm should not be applied to all innovations and developments. This line of thinking supposes that any new element that arose simultaneous to a certain stimulus was its direct result and furthermore that all Renaissance innovations arose in Florence and then spread to other centers. Second, it underestimates the significance of local traditions in order to assimilate a pictorial (and as we shall see, iconographic) innovation into an existing narrative of development instead of recognizing complex exchanges of ideas (rather than mere imitation of motifs) and parallel developments.

Countering these biases, Eliot Rowlands has argued that Lippi was influenced by Paduan and Venetian art, especially that of the trecento and early quattrocento, during his sojourn to Padua.⁵ Rowlands cited a particular type of throne that Lippi used after his stay in Padua that became popular in that region around the middle of the century. The author argued that the throne, traditionally believed to have been brought to the Veneto from Florence by Lippi, was actually a motif that Lippi borrowed from Paduan art. Likewise, Castagno's use of signed scrolls can be linked to his activity at San Marco. Around the same time Castagno was completing his frescoes in San Zaccaria, he was involved with the designs for mosaics narrating the life of the Virgin in the Mascoli Chapel in San

⁵ E. W. Rowlands, "Filippo Lippi and his Experience of Painting in the Veneto Region" *Artibus et Historiae* 19 (1989): 53-83.

Marco alongside Michele Giambono. Giambono signed and dated the mosaic vault, like Castagno, on two scrolls (“Michael ganbono venetus / fecit” on the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* and “fecit” at the bottom of the *Death of the Virgin*, see figs. 3, 4).⁶ While Castagno is not known to have signed other paintings, Giambono signed or otherwise inscribed several of his surviving paintings, like many of his Venetian contemporaries, sometimes on scrolls.⁷ These examples demonstrate that sources and direction of influence can be misinterpreted because of long-standing biases about the importance of artistic innovation in one region over another.⁸

Matthews’s model also ignores important differences between the kinds of integrated inscriptions and signatures seen in Florentine paintings and the *cartellino*. Typically Florentines fully integrated their signatures into the painted space, placing them on embroidered cloth, carved into stone architecture, or written on books or scrolls held by the figures.⁹ Filippo Lippi, for instance, signed his *Nativity* for the Medici Chapel (ca. 1459, fig. 5) on the handle of an axe, placed nearly perpendicular to the picture plane near the reclining Christ child (“FRATER PHILIPPVS. P”). Sometimes, a *cartellino* is also integrated, as if occupying space within the painted scene. This is usually the case with later Venetian examples, such as Giovanni Bellini’s *Nude with a Mirror* (1515, fig. 6), and notably, the few Florentine examples of a *cartellino*, such as Domenico

⁶ On the inscriptions, see M. Muraro, “The Statutes of the Venetian *Arti* and Mascoli Chapel” *Art Bulletin* 43 (1961): 263-74.

⁷ See for example, *Madonna and Child*, 1450s, Rome, Palazzo Barberini; *Saint James Polyptych*, Venice, Accademia, ca. 1455; *Coronation of the Virgin*, 1447-48, Venice, Accademia (the scroll overpainted with names of Giovanni d’Aleagna and Antonio Vivarini perhaps once contained Giambono’s name.)

⁸ Aikema also points out this bias regarding Florentine influence in “The Lure of the North” in B. Aikema and B. L. Brown, eds., 83.

⁹ D. Covi, *The Inscription in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1986), 12-16. Covi distinguishes two broad categories of inscriptions’ placement—“superimposed,” where the words float in an abstract fashion, and “composed,” that is, integrated. While some *cartellini* are “composed,” others fall into neither of Covi’s categories.

Ghirlandaio's *Portrait of Giovanna Tornabuoni* (fig. 7). Ghirlandaio's *cartellino* does not contain a signature, but praises the beauty of the sitter, who casts a shadow over the *cartellino* positioned on the wall behind her. Until the last years of the fifteenth century, *cartellini* far more commonly (almost exclusively, in fact) appeared in the extreme foregrounds of paintings, parallel to the picture plane. This positioning is often on a vertical surface, and together with the illusionism of *cartellini*, is a factor that makes their placement "in" or "out" of the painting uncertain. Other times painters leave no room for ambiguity, "affixing" their *cartellini* in portions of the painting where there is no vertical surface depicted, instead floating the *cartellino* in front of the scene and intending the *cartellino* to be understood as in a separate realm—on the viewer's side of the picture plane. One example of this kind of placement of the *cartellino* is in Pasqualino Veneto's *Virgin and Child with Mary Magdalen* of 1496 (fig. 8), where the *cartellino*, as in many other fifteenth-century examples, appears to be attached to a surface with red sealing wax. Here, however, the *cartellino* has been placed over a distant landscape, not a foreground stone plinth or throne. It must accordingly be understood as being "attached" to the canvas, and part of the viewer's realm. Thus, the *cartellino* cannot always be lumped together with other integrated signatures—that is, as a way for painters to inscribe their paintings without disrupting the naturalism of the scene. In fact, it can function in exactly the opposite way. Most important, however, the Florence-to-Veneto paradigm of the *cartellino*'s origins ignores the fact that neither Lippi nor Castagno would ever again use the *cartellino* or a signed or dated scroll in any other surviving painting; neither did Niccolò Pizzolo, a Paduan painter of Florentine tastes.¹⁰ The

¹⁰ On Pizzolo's early influences, especially that of Donatello and his lack of affinity with Squarcione, see R. Rearick "Nicolò Pizolo: Drawings and Sculptures" in A. De Nicolò Salmazo, *Francesco Squarcione*:

cartellino never caught on in central Italy, instead occurring nearly exclusively in paintings made in the Veneto from the late 1440s to the 1520s. If the *cartellino* was the invention of influential, well-regarded Florentine painters, as Meiss suggested, then why are the examples from central Italy so sparse? The more convincing scenario is that Lippi and Castagno were inspired by motifs they saw on their sojourns, imitated them, and upon their return to their native city—where pictorial tastes dictated the receding space of the Albertian ‘window’ and signature placement was therefore more integrated—they reverted back to local practice.

More recently, some scholars have re-evaluated changes that Lippi’s style underwent during his sojourn to Padua. Jeffrey Ruda has argued that many of the elements in the *Tarquinia Madonna* that Meiss and other scholars have attributed to northern influences, which according to Meiss Lippi would have been exposed to in Padua, can actually be traced to earlier Italian traditions.¹¹ Although other scholars, like Rowlands and Francis Ames-Lewis, maintain Lippi’s exposure to Netherlandish art in the 1430s, the idea that a motif employed by Jan van Eyck, the most famous and esteemed master of the *ars nova*, was copied in the fifteenth century only by Italians is incongruous, given that van Eyck’s compositions were so frequently copied in minute detail in the Low Countries.¹² As noted by Rowlands, however, Lippi would certainly

‘*pictorium gymnasiarcha singularis*’ (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 1999), 178; on the former see also G. Mariani Canova, “Alle origini del rinascimento padovano: Nicolò Pizolo” in L. Grossato, ed., *Da Giotto al Mantegna* (Milan: Electa, 1974), 75-77.

¹¹ J. Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi* (London: Phaidon, 1993), 126-30. See “Fra Filippo Lippi Studies: Naturalism, Style, and Iconography in Early Renaissance Art” (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 1979), 10-39 for a more detailed discussion of the problem of Netherlandish influence on Lippi. As Ames-Lewis notes, Ruda’s position has not been adopted by others. See “Painters in Padua and Netherlandish Art” in *Italianische Frürenaissance und Nordeuropäisches Spätmittelalter: Kunst der Frühen Neuzeit Europäischen Zusammenhang* (Munich: Hirmer, 1993), 191, n. 2.

¹² Other fifteenth-century Netherlandish painters, such as Petrus Christus (*A Goldsmith in His Shop*, 1449, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), Dieric Bouts (*Portrait of a Man*, 1462, National Gallery,

have been exposed to Paduan pictorial traditions of illusionistic play and inscription, and maybe even saw early lost examples of *cartellini* in the workshop of Francesco Squarcione.¹³ Squarcione was the most important figure in Paduan painting in the middle of the century, running a large workshop from at least 1431 until his death some time after 1468. Although none of Squarcione's few surviving paintings contains a *cartellino*, several of his students, including Andrea Mantegna, Giorgio Schiavone, Antonio Vivarini, and Marco Zoppo, used them frequently as the site of their signatures. Furthermore, it is important to note that Lippi's scroll lacks certain fundamental characteristics associated with the Paduan *cartellino*: its shape and placement within the scene are closer to that of a scroll than a rectangular label, and its inscription contains only the date of the painting without a signature.¹⁴

Therefore, it is much more likely that the *cartellino* originated in the Paduan school as a result of a combination of factors, one of which was a fascination with illusionistic effects, which painters would have seen not only in the still-life elements of

London), the Master of the Aix Annunciation (*Annunciation Altarpiece*, 1445, Church of the Magdalen, Aix-en-Provence), and Hans Memling, *Nieuwenhove Diptych* (1487, Bruges, Hospital of Saint John) used epigraphic inscriptions.

¹³ Contact between the two artists is documented by their shared arbitration in a contract for an altarpiece painted for the Padua cathedral. See R. Lightbown, *Mantegna* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986): 19. Lippi seems to have had a measure of influence over local artists, especially Squarcione and his student Giorgio Schiavone in certain poses in Madonna and Child pictures. See A. De Marchi, "Un raggio di luce su Filippo Lippi a Padova" *Nuovi Studi* 1 (1996): 5-23.

¹⁴ Ruda notes this formal difference. See J. Ruda, 1993, 128-29, where the author calls the object a "dated scroll," instead of a "cartellino," closer in form to Domenico di Bartolo's signed and dated scroll on his *Madonna of Humility* (1433, Siena, Pinacoteca) and to musical scrolls in the paintings of Gentile da Fabriano. Goffen points to the placement of Lippi's scroll, that is, within the painting and not seeming to be placed on its surface, especially given the fact that the painting has been cut down on all sides, exaggerating the scroll's position in the extreme foreground. See "Signatures: Inscribing Identity in Italian Renaissance Art," *Viator* 32 (2001): 315. P. H. Jolly suggests that Netherlandish influence in Lippi's paintings of the late 1430s, including his *Tarquinia Madonna*, may have resulted from Eyckian paintings he could have seen through Florentine mercantile contact with Bruges. See "Jan van Eyck and St. Jerome. A Study of Eyckian Influence on Colantonio and Antonello da Messina" (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1976), 76-77. While the date of the painting does refer to the painted object as opposed to its subject, in its form it belongs more in the group of transitional motifs—something between a *titulus* or scroll and a *cartellino*.

imported Netherlandish paintings and manuscripts, but also in the tradition of pictorial illusionism that in Padua extended back to the trecento.¹⁵ Although the origins of this taste are elusive, and can only in a general way be connected to Giotto's illusionistic conceits in the Arena Chapel frescoes,¹⁶ writings by mid-fifteenth century scientists based in Padua illustrate that research in optics at the university may have played a role in artists' interest in perspective and illusion. In the late Middle Ages, the Studium had been a great center in the study of optics and perspective, culminating in the authoritative treatise on perspective by Biagio da Parma of 1390; the local interest in the subject persisted into the sixteenth century with Gauricus's treatise on sculpture of 1504, not to mention the studies of Galileo in the 1590s.¹⁷

Some writers made overt connections between the study of optics in Padua and the practices of local painters. The physician Michele Savonarola, in his *De laudibus patavii*, compares the venerable Paduan Studium to the local school of painters (presumably Francesco Squarcione's, to be discussed in detail below) on the basis of painters' study of perspective. Giovanni Fontana, a Venetian-born physician, engineer, and mathematician who studied in Padua from ca. 1417-ca. 1421, is considered something of a precursor to Leonardo da Vinci. His researches, recorded in notebooks and manuscript treatises, covered various fields of learning and science, including

¹⁵ R. Lightbown, 22-23.

¹⁶ Particularly the two 'fictive chapels' and open cupboards with still-life arrangements on the chancel wall, as well as the cycle of Virtues and Vices on the lower walls in grisaille. See M. Krieger, "Zum Problem des Illusionismus im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert – ein Deutungsversuch" *Pantheon* 54 (1996): 6-7 and G. Radke, "Giotto and Architecture" in A. Derbes and M. Sandona, eds., *Cambridge Companion to Giotto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 76-102.

¹⁷ R. Klein, "Pomponius Gauricus on Perspective" *Art Bulletin* 43 (1961): 211-13.

optics.¹⁸ He wrote a treatise on painting dedicated to Jacopo Bellini, which is now lost but was mentioned in a treatise dated 1440, the *De trigono balistario*. Fontana also refers to his lost treatise in the *Liber de omnibus rebus naturalibus* of ca. 1454, in which Fontana discussed the “noble science of perspective” and the effect of light and shadow in the perception of distance (that is, lighter objects appear closer, while darker objects recede). From this observation, according to Fontana, painters like Jacopo Bellini developed rules so that “not only the parts of a single image painted on a surface should seem in relief, but also such that when they are looked at they should be believed to be putting a hand or foot outward...”¹⁹ This admiration not only for perspective used to depict receding depth in a picture, but also for the ability to portray projecting elements may help to explain the Paduan school’s fascination with trompe-l’oeil motifs like *cartellini*.

On the other hand, the taste for illusion alone does not explain the phenomenon of the *cartellino*. The function of the *cartellino* is not merely illusionistic play, since it also serves as a label, communicating information to viewers about the paintings’ manufacture, including most frequently the artist’s name, sometimes also a date, and occasionally a patron’s name. The decision to inscribe scraps of paper as opposed to other depicted materials, like clothing or stone, is also significant. The social context and artistic traditions of fifteenth-century Padua provide explanations for the flourishing of

¹⁸ In fact, Leonardo seems to have used Fontana as a source for some of his writings on perspective and the paragone. See R. Klein, 212, n. 8. On Fontana, see M. Clagett, “The Life and Works of Giovanni Fontana” *Annali dell’Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza di Firenze* 1 (1976): 5-28.

¹⁹ Excerpted and translated in C. Gilbert, *Italian Art, 1400-1500, Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980), 174-75.

the *cartellino* there in the 1440s, where Paduan painters were inclined to assimilate and reinvent various artistic influences simultaneously.²⁰

The question of Netherlandish influence

Even though the *cartellino* originated and flourished as an illusionistic motif in Padua and in the Veneto region, it is not impossible that the Netherlandish taste for illusion and inscription may have indirectly influenced the *cartellino*'s development. Cultural exchange between Italy and northern Europe was rich because of commercial and diplomatic ties and because of the mobility of artists and their works.²¹ Not only was Netherlandish art imported and collected in Italy in the fifteenth century, but some northern painters also traveled to Italy, allowing for the exchange of ideas and imagery across the Alps.²² The portability of Netherlandish tapestries and small panel or canvas paintings allowed Italian patrons to collect them even without direct contact with the artists. Commercial centers were also often the meeting places of different artistic traditions, as was the case in Venice, a city whose economy was distinctly mercantile, offering a marketplace for luxury items like paintings that could be considered another kind of novel or exotic objects that offered an alternative to local goods. Typically,

²⁰ Since so few of the paintings by Squarcione and his early students have survived, it is possible that the *cartellino* in its developed form emerged even earlier.

²¹ On artistic exchange between Italy and northern Europe in the Renaissance, see C. Harbison, *The Mirror of the Artist* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995), 155-167; B. Aikema and B. L. Brown, eds., *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian* (New York: Rizzoli, 1999); T.-H. Borchert, *The Age of Van Eyck: The Mediterranean World and Early Netherlandish Painting, 1430-1530* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2002); M. Meiss, 1976; P. Nuttall, *From Flanders and Florence: The Impact of Netherlandish Painting, 1400-1500* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); V. Schmidt, ed., *Italy and the Low Countries: Artistic Relations, the Fifteenth Century* (Florence: Centro Di, 1999); and P. H. Jolly, 1-79.

²² T.-H. Borchert, "The Mobility of Artists. Aspects of Cultural Transfer in Renaissance Europe" in *The Age of Van Eyck*, 33-45 and M. L. Evans, "Northern Artists in Italy during the Renaissance" *Bulletin for the Society for Renaissance Studies* 3 (1985): 7-23. Evans notes that no Italian artists are documented in the North in the crucial period in the development of Renaissance styles, ca. 1420 - ca. 1450.

princely courts were the sites of such interaction among artists and their diplomatic functions the primary vehicle for circulating artistic objects, either through gifts of pictures or other luxury objects or through the journeys of courtiers, often accompanied by painters.

Although the republic of Venice had no court, the position of the Veneto just south of the Brenner Pass meant that journeymen from the north frequented it. Similarly, the port city of Venice, a crossroads for merchants, foreign diplomats, and pilgrims traveling between Italy, northern Europe, and the eastern Mediterranean, was home to a cosmopolitan population of artists. The huge numbers of northerners in Venice (larger than in any other Italian city) led in turn to statutes for the Venetian *Arte dei Dipentori* (painters' guild) that placed restrictions on the sale and importation of art by foreign painters; beginning in the fourteenth century, foreign painters in the city were required to join the *arte*, paying twice the amount in dues as a native Venetian.²³ Fifteenth-century Paduan guild documents record the regular admission of Germans into the *fraglia* in the middle of the century.²⁴ The university in Padua, founded in 1222 and superseded only by the University of Bologna in age and prestige, was also a draw for foreigners. Thousands of students from northern Europe attended the university throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and along with them came their tastes, their collections of art, and perhaps even Northern artists who hoped to gain commissions from compatriots. Among this learned, upscale clientele, the admiration for Netherlandish painting was documented in literary sources.

²³ L. Matthew, "Working Abroad: Northern Artists in the Venetian Ambient" in B. Aikema and B. L. Brown, eds., 64.

²⁴ M. L. Evans, 18.

Italian humanists of the fifteenth century effusively praised Netherlandish painting for its verisimilitude and expressive force. Bartolomeo Fazio included Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden in his book *On Famous Men*, which he wrote at the court of Naples around 1455. In it, Fazio called Jan van Eyck “the leading painter of our time” and described his paintings in terms of their lifelikeness: a woman emerging from her bath is reflected in a mirror “in which you see whatever is represented as in a real mirror”; a donor portrait of Battista Lomellini is “portrayed exactly as she was”; the same painting (the Lomellini triptych, now lost, made for a Genoese merchant of that name and later acquired by King Alfonso of Naples) included a painting of Saint Jerome, showing him in a “library done with rare art,” seeming to have “complete books laid open in it.”²⁵

In Venice and the Veneto in the 1520s and 1530s, the Venetian collector and connoisseur Marcantonio Michiel compiled notes describing public and private art collections of various northern Italian cities, focusing especially on Padua and Venice. Although the nature of Michiel’s *Notizie* does not allow us to draw general conclusions about Venetian taste in the early sixteenth century, it does document the widespread presence of Netherlandish pictures and Michiel’s fascination with them.²⁶ Michiel especially noted when northern art exerted influence over Italian painters, giving only brief mention of Mantegna’s lost *Saint Benedict Altarpiece* in San Benedetto, Padua, and supplying a more detailed account of the obscure artist Gian Antonio Corona’s lost *Nativity* in the same church: “tratta da una tela Ponentina, over è fatta ad imitatione di Ponentini” (‘drawn after a northern canvas, or made in imitation of northerners’).²⁷

²⁵ M. Baxandall, “Bartholomaeus Facius on Painting” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 27 (1964): 102. For Italians’ praise of Netherlandish verisimilitude, see P. Nuttall, 35-38.

²⁶ See J. Fletcher, “Marcantonio Michiel, ‘che ha veduto assai’” *Burlington Magazine* 123 (1981): 606.

²⁷ M. A. Michiel, *Notizia d’opere del disegno* (Florence: Edifir, 2000), 32.

Italian commentators like Michiel and Fazio admired the workmanship of Netherlandish pictures, which they generally associated with the diligent attention to detail and mastery of the oil technique that allowed for the skilled rendering of textures and materials and realistic effects of light and color. Netherlandish masters exploited this skill by juxtaposing a variety of depicted materials (metal, glass, and rich fabrics), landscapes and interiors, and still-life elements in the foregrounds of their paintings.²⁸ The *cartellino*, while not actually employed in fifteenth-century Netherlandish painting, emerged in a context where Netherlandish paintings were admired for their virtuoso displays of texture and illusionism. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Paduan painters' approach to illusionism in using *cartellini* was qualitatively different from that of Netherlandish painters. In a general sense, the purpose of still life elements employed in Netherlandish paintings was to explain the religious content of an image or the personality of a portrait's sitter. *Cartellini*, on the other hand, were most often used to proclaim authorship and document paintings; instead of identifying or proclaiming the status of the figure portrayed, *cartellini* overtly draw attention to the artist's creative and manual skill. *Cartellini* were also frequently placed such that, in combination with their detailed description, they might be mistaken for real labels on the surfaces of the painted panels or canvases. Although highly naturalistic, Netherlandish painters of the fifteenth century generally did not attempt to subvert the painted artifice by breaking the spatial limits of the surface with projecting trompe-l'oeil elements.

As I discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Meiss drew a parallel between the *cartellino* and van Eyck's practice of signing his paintings on a trompe-l'oeil foreground

²⁸ P. Nuttall, 34-36.

surface, pointing out that painters of *cartellini* were influenced in other ways by Eyckian painting. With few exceptions, later art historians have adopted this view or have failed to detect its flaws.²⁹ Once again, we must be careful not to categorize the *cartellino* as Netherlandish just because painters who were in some ways influenced by Netherlandish art also used it. While it is true that van Eyck and van der Weyden often included inscriptions on their paintings (or sometimes their frames, as is the case with van Eyck) and that van Eyck also signed many of his paintings,³⁰ Paduan and Venetian painters had already established a tradition of signing and inscribing in the late trecento and early quattrocento. Paolo Veneziano, as well as many of his followers in the late fourteenth century, signed and dated several of his paintings, for example his *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Frick Collection (fig. 9), the cover of the Pala d'Oro for the high altar of San Marco, and the *Virgin and Child* in Cesena. Paolo's followers of the later fourteenth century, such as Lorenzo Veneziano, Catarino, and Giovanni da Bologna, likewise signed and dated their panels.³¹ In the first part of the fifteenth century, International Gothic painters in Venice signed the foregrounds or frames of their paintings, sometimes on scrolls.

Therefore, the tradition of inscribing and even signing paintings can be explained as growing out of this background and does not rely on the presence of inscribed and signed paintings from across the Alps. The desire to assign authorship and document

²⁹ See above, introduction, 7-8.

³⁰ For van Eyck's signatures, see K. Gludovatz, "Der Name am Rahmen, der Maler im Bild. Künstlerselbstverständnis und Produktionskommentar in den Signaturen Jan van Eycks" *Weiner Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 54 (2005): 115-75. For inscription in van Eyck's paintings, see L. Seidel, "Prologue: Self-Inscription" in *Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1-18. For van der Weyden, see A. Acres, "Rogier van der Weyden's Painted Texts" *Artibus et Historiae* 41 (2000): 75-109.

³¹ See F. D'Arcais, "Venezia" in *La pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. M. Lucco (Milan: Electa, 1992), vol. 1, 17-87.

paintings can be reasonably explained as parallel development in the contexts of the *ars nova* of the Low Countries and the Renaissance in Italy. Furthermore, although Jan van Eyck, Robert Campin, and Rogier van der Weyden especially exhibit an interest in inscribing their paintings, there are distinct and significant differences between the types of inscriptions used by van Eyck and van der Weyden and the *cartellino*.

In fact, these differences can help to illuminate interpretations of *cartellini* precisely because of their distinct and therefore presumably intentional departure from their precursors. Although Veneto painters, especially those who took pride in their own literacy and status, also used inscriptions, they did so with an approach that fundamentally differed from the Netherlandish examples they might have seen. The *cartellino* confronts the viewer with a message about the work of art—who made it and when; it furthermore asserts the painting’s status as an art object by inhabiting a liminal space that draws attention to the painting’s surface, that crucial meeting place that separates subject and object.

Italian painters had reason to distinguish themselves from their northern counterparts, and would have done so through the formal qualities of their paintings as well as the inscription of their names. Giovanni Bellini’s Brera *Pietà* (fig. 10) perhaps illustrates the rivalry between northern and Italian painters. A *cartellino* affixed to the stone parapet (or tomb?) in the foreground is a signature incorporated into verses from a Latin poem by Propertius (the first-century B.C.E. author of four books of elegies), “HAEC FERE QUUM GEMITUS TURGENTIA LUMINA PROMANT/ BELLINI POTERAT FLERE IOANNIS OPUS” (‘When these swelling eyes evoke groans this

work of Giovanni Bellini could shed tears’).³² Long recognized as a modern painter’s challenge to an ancient poet and therefore an allusion to the *paragone*, Bellini’s boast specifically comments on his ability to evoke such an intense emotional response from the viewer to the point of that the figures appear to cry real tears.³³ The inscription on the *cartellino* closely parallels the praise of Flemish painting by Italians. Both Fazio and the antiquarian Ciriaco d’Ancona lauded Rogier van der Weyden’s lost *Deposition* owned by Leonello d’Este for its fidelity to nature and power of expression. Fazio commented that the mourning figures were shown with “grief and tears so represented you would not think them other than real.”³⁴ Michelangelo is quoted as having said that “Flemish painting pleases the devout better than any painting of Italy, which will never cause him to shed a tear, whereas that of Flanders will cause him to shed many...”³⁵ He went on to explain the weaknesses of Flemish art in comparison to the proportion and harmony of Italian painting, but the belief that the Flemish style was more suited to devotional painting seemed to have been widespread and must have been irritating to Italian painters like Bellini, since small-scale devotional panels were his bread and butter.

In his Brera *Pietà*, Bellini was therefore proclaiming his abilities for expressivity, stating that not only would the painting evoke a response from the viewer, but also that the response would be so great as to be, in a way, reciprocated by the painting. Although Bellini sometimes used epigraphic inscriptions to sign his paintings, he may have thought that the *cartellino*, a local invention, was better suited for his boast than an epigraphic

³² Translation quoted in R. Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 71-72.

³³ See H. Belting, *Giovanni Bellini: La Pietà*, 2nd ed., trans. M. Pedrazzi (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 1996), esp. 30-32; N. Land, “The Voice of Art in Giovanni Bellini’s *Pietà* in Milan” *Source* 15/4 (1995): 14-17; D. Arasse, “Giovanni Bellini e les limites de la mimésis: La *Pietà* de la Brera” in *Künstlerischer Austausch=Artistic Exchange*, ed. T. W. Gaehtgens, (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), 503-09. See also my discussion of this *cartellino* in relation to the *paragone* of painting and poetry below in chapter 3, 122-27.

³⁴ On the piety of Flemish painting, see P. Nuttall, 231-251.

³⁵ Quoted in J. Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1985), 88.

inscription, of Flemish origin. Italian admiration for Netherlandish painting did not, of course, result in a complete adoption of Netherlandish style; instead, Italian artists adapted certain northern qualities to their local tastes and traditions.

The development of the *cartellino* out of other forms of inscription

The Venetian tradition of inscribing and signing paintings is an important component of the emergence of the *cartellino*, but the distinction between the *cartellino* and earlier ways of inscribing are significant. The first, the floating inscription, which originated in antiquity,³⁶ has an abstract quality somewhat at odds with early modern naturalism and was rare in the Renaissance. A classic example is the inclusion of words emanating from the mouth of the angel Gabriel in paintings of the Annunciation, as in Jacopo Bellini's altarpiece for the church of Sant' Alessandro, Brescia (early 1430s, fig. 11). The rich patterns of tapestries hanging on the back wall of the Virgin's room are interrupted by the dark strip pointing slightly upward from Gabriel's open mouth, inscribed in gilded letters, "PLENA GRATIA AVE," referring to the Hail Mary prayer to be said by the worshiper before the image. Similar indications of the religious significance of the image were inscribed on scrolls or banderoles, such as the common instance of John the Baptist holding a scroll with the words "Ecce agnus dei" ('Behold the lamb of God'), John's recognition of Christ as the Savior excerpted from John 1:36. Although they are of the same or similar materials, their shapes, physical qualities, and contents differ. The scroll is a curled parchment or paper originating in medieval painting, inscribed with liturgical texts or serving to identify figures by displaying their

³⁶ On Greek mosaics and vases in particular.

names or other words spoken or written by them. The *cartellino* is a smaller, rectangular sheet, often creased or torn, usually carrying a signature, and therefore identifying the artist as opposed to a painted figure. The shape of the *cartellino* appears also in *tituli* included in some paintings of the Crucifixion, attached to the cross and inscribed with the letters INRI. Although the shape of the cross's *titulus* is similar to that of *cartellini*, its role in the story of the Passion and its fully integrated placement make it more akin to the category of inscribed scrolls.

The emergence of the *cartellino* out of other signature forms can be observed in the work of several Veneto and Venetian painters in the first half of the fifteenth century. This is not to say that the development of the *cartellino* happened in a chronologically linear way and that the *cartellino* replaced the *titulus* or scroll over time; painters continued to use scrolls and *tituli* throughout the Renaissance, but after the middle of the fifteenth century, they generally did not carry signatures. Thus broad trends in the way Veneto painters of the late trecento and early quattrocento signed can help to explain the origins of the *cartellino* in that region.³⁷ When trecento artists signed their paintings, they often would 'float' them on the picture's surface, with no attempt to make the words appear as part of the painted scene. This was the mode most often employed by Paolo Veneziano and his followers, although they would sometimes also inscribe an object near the bottom of the picture, such as the base of a throne.

A more immediate precursor of the *cartellino* is the signed scroll, employed by several International Gothic painters active in Venice in the first half of the fifteenth century, like Jacobello del Fiore, Zanino di Pietro, Michele Giambono, Antonio Vivarini,

³⁷ The Venetian tradition of inscribing paintings is also outlined by L. Matthew, 1998, 617-20.

and Giovanni d'Alemagna. This type of scroll is more closely related in visual terms to Lippi's dated scroll than to *cartellini*, and it is quite possible that this type, which Lippi could have seen in contemporary paintings in Venice and Padua, was his source. One well-known example is Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d'Alemagna's *Coronation* (Venice, San Pantalon, fig. 12). The exuberant coils of the scroll in the immediate foreground call attention to the inscription, in Gothic lettering, "xpofol de ferara itaia. zuane e / antonio de muran pnse . 1444."³⁸ Another example is Zanino di Pietro's *Madonna and Child* of 1429 (fig. 13),³⁹ which contains a large signed and dated scroll across the bottom of the picture, each end curling outward toward the viewer, projecting from the picture plane as *cartellini* often do. Lippi's dated scroll in the Tarquinia Madonna is more closely related to this category of inscription than to the *cartellino*, because of its shape and its date, which refers to the painted object as opposed to the depicted scene.

Two altarpieces painted in Padua in the first decades of the fifteenth century, one dated 1408 and the other 1419, are striking examples in this development, mainly because of their early date and close similarity to the *cartellino*. Both have been attributed to a foreign master called Federico Tedesco, about whom very little is known except for the northern European heritage indicated by his surname. Documents locate his activity in Padua from 1395 to 1424.⁴⁰ His style is that of the International Gothic prevalent throughout Italy during the period, indicated by the elegance of the figures and

³⁸ Holgate has interpreted "xpofol de ferara" (Cristoforo da Ferrara) as the maker of the altarpiece's now lost frame based on old transcriptions (predating restoration in 1835) that record the fourth word as "intaia," indicating a carver. See I. Holgate, "Due pale d'altare di Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d'Alemagna: Le commissioni per San Moisè e San Pantalon" *Arte Veneta* 57 (2000): 86, n. 56.

³⁹ M. Lucco, ed., *La Pittural nel Veneto, Il Quattrocento* (Milan: Electa, 1989), vol. 1, 46.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 80-84, 344-45.

the patterns of the landscape and fabrics. The painting of 1408 (fig. 14) depicts the Virgin and Child surrounded by angels and kneeling donors in an outdoor setting, the foreground of the panel dominated by a large inscribed rectangular field of white with Gothic lettering in black. The inscription reads:

MCCCCVIII A DI VIII DI SEPTENBRIO. A LAVDE DE DIO E DE LAS
NOSTRA / MADRE VERGENE MARIA FO FATTA QVESTA ANCONA.DE
BEN / DE LA FRAIA A MADONNA SANTA MARIA DI SERVI IN EL
TEMPO DI /VENERENDI HOMINIS MESSER FRA FRANCESCO PRIOR
DEL DICTO ORDENE E DE MAISTRO / MICHIEL...TRAZAR...VARDIAN
DELLA DITTA FRAIA E DE MAISTRO BER...NASARO E DI COMPAGNI
DE LA DITA FRAIA.⁴¹

We therefore know that this painting, now in the Museo Civico of Padua, was painted for the Servite church of Padua of Santa Maria dei Servi. The inscription names the patrons of the painting, the prior Messer Fra Francesco and two of the order's members.

Another painting, dated 1419 (fig. 15), now in the Oratory of Santa Maria della Neve, is similar in composition, scale, and the content and method of the inscription: "CORCO DE SER AGNOLO DA MODO TAVERNARO / A FATO FARE QVOESTO LAVORIERO A HON / DE MESSER DOMINE DIO E DE SOA MARE MA / DONA SATA MARYA E DE TVTA SOA COPA / GNIA MCCCCXVIIIJ."⁴² These paintings are significant in the development of the *cartellino* because they offer a distinct formal alternative from the inscribed scroll. Although they are without certain characteristics of *cartellini* employed by Paduan painters of the middle of the century, such as a signature (they instead refer briefly to the subject, the patrons, and the placement and date of the

⁴¹ "1408, the eighth day of September. In praise of God and our Mother the Virgin mary I have made this altarpiece for the friary of Santa Maria dei Servi in the time of the venerable Messer Fra Francesco, prior of the said order and Maistro Michiel...Trazar...[g]uardian of the said friary and of Maistro Ber [?] nasaro and the brothers of the said friary." L. Grossato, cat. no. 71; M. Lucco, vol. 1, fig. 100.

⁴² "Corco de Ser Agnolo [da modo tavernaro] had this work made in honor of the Lord God and His Mother Our Lady Santa Maria and of all his brothers. 1409." L. Grossato, cat. no. 72; M. Lucco, vol. 1, fig. 101.

paintings' installation) and lack *cartellini*'s attentive description to the physical details of the illusion of paper or parchment, like creases and tears, they share their legibility and larger surface for inscribed words. The inscribed areas are painted white with black lettering, and they are rectangular in shape as opposed to curled like scrolls. The content of the inscriptions, which refers to the paintings as objects, specifically the dates of its making, their patrons, and the paintings' intended locations, is the most important factor in its correlation with *cartellini*, as it gives way to the viewer's recognition that the painting is not a divine vision but instead an artificial image of the divine, the joint effort of the painter and his patrons.

Francesco Squarcione, 'pictorum gymnasiarcha singularis'

Although these early paintings by Federico Tedesco are important precursors to the flourishing of the *cartellino* in the Veneto in the mid-fifteenth century, the locus for its popularity can be traced to the workshop of Squarcione in the 1440s. During this time the *cartellino* became fully realized as a motif, distinct from earlier inscribed surfaces in its form and its documentary function. These distinguishing characteristics can be explained by the intellectual milieu of Padua, and more specifically, by the role of Squarcione as a teacher, painter, and pivotal figure in Paduan painting who bridged intellectual and artistic circles in the city. Squarcione's studio was recognized as the center of new developments in painting in the region, thanks probably in large part to his collection of antiquities and other exempla that he used to attract and train students.

Squarcione claimed to have had one hundred thirty-seven pupils throughout his career, painters of diverse backgrounds from all over northern Italy. Roberto Longhi

asserted, “All that happened in Padua, Ferrara, and Venice from 1450 to 1470...had its start in that brigade of disparate vagabonds, sons of tailors, barbers, cobblers, and farmers who passed through the studio of Squarcione during those twenty years.”⁴³ As the central figure in Paduan painting, he would have also had contact with any contemporary artists who visited Padua. Although few extant paintings can be attributed to the master, we are able to glean considerable, if ambiguous, information about his studio through documents, early literary sources, and the activities of his many students.⁴⁴

Although there has been much scholarly debate regarding Squarcione’s technical abilities and artistic personality, contemporary sources provide pieces of information regarding his biography that are widely accepted. Squarcione was born probably in 1394. Despite his father’s position as a notary at the Carrara court, we know from early documents that he first worked with his uncle as a tailor and embroiderer. Squarcione is first mentioned as a painter in 1426, when he painted a lost altarpiece for an Olivetan monastery near Padua. In 1431 he took his first documented student. At some point before 1440, probably in the late 1420s, Squarcione traveled throughout Italy and Greece and presumably studied ancient and modern monuments, making drawings and collecting other ‘exempla’ he would later use in his school.⁴⁵ Throughout the 1430s and ‘40s

⁴³ The full passage reads, “Per quanto ciò possa sembrare fantastico, sento profondamente che tutto ciò avvenne tra Padova e Ferrara e Venezia tra il ’50 e il ’70—dalle pazzie più feroci del Tura e del Crivelli, alla dolorosa eleganza del giovane Giambellino, all’apparentemente rigorosa grammatica mantegnesca—ebbe la sua origine in quella brigata di disperati vagabondi, figli di sarti, di barbieri, di calzolai e di contadini, che passò in quei venti anni nello studio dello Squarcione.” R. Longhi, “Crivelli e Mantegna: Due mostre interferenti e la cultura artistica nel 1961” in *Ricerche sulla pittura Veneta, 1946-1969* (Florence: Sansoni, 1978), 146.

⁴⁴ For collected documents concerning Squarcione, see V. Lazzarini and A. Moschetti, *Documenti relativi alla pittura padovana nel secolo XV* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Arti Grafiche, 1908).

⁴⁵ Most scholars place this trip between 1426 and 1431, but Christiansen, following Deborah Lipton, argues for a date around 1437, when Ciriaco d’Ancona was documented in Athens. Since documents and early accounts give no dates for the trip, either date is feasible. In his 1431 contract with Michele di Bartolomeo, Squarcione promised to provide ‘exempla’ for his pupil, which he could have made on a journey or obtained from other artists in Padua. Christiansen seems to call into doubt the occurrence of the journey at

Squarcione continued to take students at his school near the Santo and complete a few minor commissions; training other painters was clearly the focus of his professional efforts. Squarcione is documented in the painter's *fraglia* (guild) of Padua from 1441 to 1463, at one point serving in an official capacity.⁴⁶ Having achieved considerable success by the 1440s, Squarcione bought a second home in Venice and lived there occasionally, sometimes with students. From 1449 to 1452 Squarcione executed his major surviving painting for the Paduan Leone de Lazara's altar in the Carmine (now Padua, Museo Civico, fig. 16). Squarcione's only other widely accepted attribution is his signed *Madonna and Child* in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin (fig. 17).⁴⁷ In the 1460s, he was given some notable commissions: from government officials of Padua, a model of the city, intarsia designs for the Santo, and, together with Jacopo Bellini, two narrative canvases (lost) for the Scuola Grande di San Marco, Venice.⁴⁸ More humble commissions included the designs for church furnishings and floors.⁴⁹ This wide range of activity can be explained by the structure of Squarcione's studio. According to contracts with his

all. He notes that "Squarcione's pictures show no evidence of a special interest in ancient art" and "what motivated Squarcione to make drawings after ancient monuments of dubious usefulness to his activity as a painter has never been satisfactorily explained." See K. Christiansen, "Early Works: Padua" in J. Martineau, ed., 111, n. 21. It is unclear what kind of explanation is necessary to justify an ambitious painter—a native of a city with a strong humanist tradition and ties to antiquity—to have an interest in making drawings of ancient monuments, given that ancient sculpture and architecture inspired painters throughout the fifteenth century. Furthermore, it is difficult to assess the influence of antique art on Squarcione on the basis of only two firm attributions.

⁴⁶ M. Muraro, "Francesco Squarcione pittore 'umanista'" in L. Grossato, 69.

⁴⁷ M. Boskovits attempted to assemble more attributions in "Una ricerca su Francesco Squarcione" *Paragone* 28 (1977): 40-70; M. Muraro, partly on the basis of Scardeone, attributed fragments of a fresco cycle on the exterior of S. Francesco to the painter in "A Cycle of Frescoes by Squarcione in Padua" *Burlington Magazine* 51 (1959): 89-96. A. Schmitt attributes to Squarcione a number of drawings in "Francesco Squarcione als Zeichner und Stecher" *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 25 (1974): 205-13. More recently see Mauro Lucco, "Appunti per una rilettura di Francesco Squarcione" in A. De Nicolò Salmazo, 1999, 110-11.

⁴⁸ For the *scuola* commission, see P. F. Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 269, document 3, an inventory of possessions of the *scuola* on 13 April 1466, which lists two canvases by the hand of 'maistro squarzon', one of which depicted the Passion.

⁴⁹ This has been cited as evidence of Squarcione's mediocre ability, but these kinds of decorative commissions would not have been uncommon in early Renaissance painting workshops. See Christiansen, 95.

students, in exchange for his instruction, Squarcione collected payments for his students' commissions. Therefore even though Squarcione's name appeared on the contracts, he could have appointed any number of his students to carry them out. He died between 1468, when he made his will, and 1472, and was buried in the church of San Francesco, Padua.⁵⁰

Other sources about Squarcione's life and career are vague or somewhat questionable, leading many scholars to question his level of knowledge and ability as a painter. Consequently, Squarcione's role in the development of Renaissance painting in north Italy is a topic of much debate. He is most often discussed in relation to his most famous student, Andrea Mantegna. According to Squarcione's detractors, he had little impact on Mantegna's artistic formation, and the younger artist instead took inspiration primarily from encounters with antique art and Florentine artists, particularly Donatello. The Florentine sculptor ran an extensive workshop in Padua while producing the bronze altar of the Santo and the equestrian monument of Erasmo da Narni ('Il Gattamelata') during Mantegna's early career. Thus many art historians tend to view Squarcione as a shrewd, even conniving, businessman of very limited artistic ability. This is perhaps too harsh a judgment; regardless of his mixed reputation as an artist, Squarcione was certainly a major player in the training of a generation of north Italian painters.⁵¹

Two early Paduan sources describe Squarcione's studio as a major cultural asset of the city without going so far as to praise his actual paintings. The first is Michele Savonarola's *De laudibus patavii* from the 1440s, in which the author referred to

⁵⁰ Scardeone's sixteenth-century biography of the painter, however, states that he died in his eighties. For a translation of the biography into Italian, see M. Collareta, "La 'vita' di Francesco Squarcione di Bernardino Scardeone" in A. De Nicolò Salmazo, 1999, 31-32. M. Muraro, 1974, 74 n. 21 transcribes the vita in Latin.

⁵¹ See R. Lightbown, 15-29, "Mantegna and Squarcione" for a balanced interpretation of the sources on Squarcione and his career. He also argued that Donatello's influence on Mantegna has been exaggerated.

Squarcione's "studium of painting; it provides a particular embellishment for our city."⁵²

Savonarola offered this praise of the studium as support for the high status of Paduan painting, and paralleled its importance to that of the liberal arts curriculum at Padua's university (also called the Studium). Interestingly, however, Savonarola, writing in the late 1440s, when Squarcione was still active, mentioned neither the master's name nor any of his paintings or designs. These omissions were perhaps an attempt to give greater credit to the studio as an institution as opposed to Squarcione's own artistic genius.

Bernardino Scardeone provided a more detailed account of the artist's studio in his *De antiquitate urbis Patavii et claris civibus Patavinis* (Basel 1560), a history of the city that includes brief biographies of artists active in Padua from the fourteenth century down to his own lifetime. According to Scardeone, his source for Squarcione's life was the artist's now lost autobiography. In accord with the patriotic tone of the history, Squarcione's biography is largely hortatory; Scardeone hailed Squarcione as the "father of painting" ('pictorum pater') but admitted that he was "certainly a man of greatest judgment in art, but...not much practiced."⁵³ Squarcione's reputation as an expert critic is borne out by his role as an arbiter in several documented cases, but the relative awkwardness of his surviving paintings as well as legal complaints made by at least three of Squarcione's students lend support to Scardeone's assessment that he lacked technical skill.⁵⁴ They

⁵² Quoted and translated in F. Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 57-58.

⁵³ "Fuit profecto vir maximi in ea arte iudicii: sed (ut fertur) non multae exercitationis." M. Muraro, 1974, 74 n. 21. Translation from K. Christiansen, 96. R. Lightbown, 16, rightly pointed out that this statement shows a level of detachment and objectivity from Scardeone, which Squarcione's critics have ignored. For the excerpt on Squarcione from Scardeone's text, see n. 39.

⁵⁴ On Squarcione as an authority and judge of art, see M. Muraro, "Donatello e Squarcione" in *Donatello e il Suo Tempo* (Florence: Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento, 1968), 389-90. In 1434, Squarcione and Filippo Lippi arbitrated in an agreement concerning an altarpiece for the Padua Cathedral. See R. Lightbown, 19. Squarcione also witnessed a 1466 contract between Pietro Calzetta and Bernardo Lazara for an altarpiece in the Santo. See A. De La Mare, "Bartolomeo Sanvito da Padova, copista e miniatore" in G.

also suggest that he exploited his more talented students by acting as their agent and collecting payment for their commissions. In 1447, after six years as Squarcione's pupil and adopted son, Mantegna sought independence from him at the age of only sixteen;⁵⁵ he later sued Squarcione for four hundred ducats, the estimated value of the commissions Mantegna had carried out as an apprentice, and was awarded about half that amount, still a considerable sum.⁵⁶ These legal records imply that Mantegna had been overworked and given little credit for the amount of revenue he brought to the studio.

After Mantegna's departure, Squarcione adopted the Bolognese painter Marco Zoppo in May of 1455, only to dissolve the relationship in October of the same year when Squarcione's second wife gave birth to a son, supplanting Zoppo as heir to the master's by then considerable estate.⁵⁷ Having lost out on his inheritance, Zoppo sought back pay for work he had done for Squarcione during his two-year apprenticeship: he sued for and was awarded twenty ducats' worth of paintings, relief sculptures, and medals from Squarcione's collection of exempla.⁵⁸ Most damning in terms of

Mariani Canova, *La miniatura a Padova dal medioevo al Settecento* (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, 1999), 495-96. Squarcione famously and officially criticized Mantegna's frescoes in the Ovetari Chapel, which the artist executed soon after leaving Squarcione's studio. See K. Christiansen, 108.

⁵⁵ K. Shaw and T. Coccia Shaw convincingly argued for a revision of Mantegna's date of birth, traditionally based on an inscription on his lost altarpiece for Santa Sofia, Padua, of 1448, stating his age as seventeen. The authors argue that the inscription was not authentic and that Mantegna was probably born in the later 1420s. D. Chambers, J. Martineau, and R. Signorini, "Mantegna and the Men of Letters" in J. Martineau, ed., 27, n. 24 argue that the Latin form of Mantegna's name (in other signatures of this early date given in Italian) as transcribed by Scardeone is consistent with Scardeone's text, written in Latin, and therefore reject this position. Shaw and Coccia Shaw, however, provide additional evidence that calls the inscription's reliability into question. See "Mantegna's Pre-1448 Years Reexamined: The S. Sofia Inscription" *Art Bulletin* 71 (1989): 47-57.

⁵⁶ K. Christiansen, 99 and H. Chapman, *Padua in the 1450s: Marco Zoppo and his Contemporaries* (London: British Museum, 1998), 22.

⁵⁷ According to an inventory of 1455-56, the studium then consisted of two rooms and a considerable collection of drawings, plaster casts, medals, and reliefs; Squarcione also had property in Venice. See R. Lightbown, 17.

⁵⁸ H. Chapman, 27-28. Armstrong had a different interpretation of the contract: Squarcione was to pay Zoppo twenty ducats for paintings that he had sold and in turn, Zoppo was to pay Squarcione for exempla he had gotten from Squarcione. See L. Armstrong, *The Paintings and Drawings of Marco Zoppo* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1976), 5.

Squarcione's artistic abilities, however, is a statement made by a Maestro Agnolo di Maestro Silvestro, who sued Squarcione for breach of contract since he had proved himself unable to teach the student the things he had promised, namely, a system of perspective. A slightly later contract for lessons on perspective and drawing the nude included more specific terms, written in Squarcione's hand specifying what he would teach his new pupil; perhaps he provided such an explanation because of earlier doubts about his expertise raised in the lawsuits.⁵⁹

Squarcione's meager catalog of paintings does little to refute such complaints regarding his lack of understanding of perspective and his technical ability, although admittedly a painter's talent and forty-year career cannot be adequately judged based on two paintings, namely the signed *Madonna and Child* in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, and the *De Lazara Polyptych*.⁶⁰ The latter especially has been criticized for its clumsy attempts to interpret innovations by Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d'Alemagna, specifically the *Nativity* polyptych of 1447 (Prague, National Gallery), and lack of skill in perspective.⁶¹ The polyptych consists of five panels set within an ornately carved and gilded frame. The center panel features the figure of Saint Jerome, seated at a desk set within landscape, with ruins of a classical building forming a backdrop for the figure. Jerome gazes upward, his face almost entirely abraded, propping his head up on a bent arm with his elbow resting on the open pages of a book (presumably the vulgate), which seem to curl and flutter in the wind. The unusual depiction of Jerome seems to conflate

⁵⁹ Contract of 1467 published in C. Gilbert, 33-34. Chapman, 29, suggests that Squarcione's convoluted description reveals his poor understanding of perspective.

⁶⁰ M. Muraro, 1974, 69-70 argues that no paintings by the artist survive from the 1460s, when Squarcione seems to have been very active and may have entered a second stylistic phase.

⁶¹ For this criticism, see, for example, K. Christiansen, 96. For an iconographic interpretation of the altarpiece and its relationship with the Prague altarpiece, see R. Callegari, "Opere e committenze d'arte rinascimentale a Padova" *Arte Veneta* 49 (1997): 7-11.

images of the scholar at work and the penitent in the wilderness. The lateral panels depict Saints Lucy, John the Baptist, Anthony Abbot, and Giustina, each standing on a square pedestal. Some of the odd flatness of the image probably relates to the condition (the surface is very damaged and the gold backdrops were added later), but nevertheless, the *De Lazara Polyptych* lacks the awareness of the modern developments seen in the contemporary work of Mantegna, Jacopo Bellini, and Antonio Vivarini.

This critique is less true of the Berlin *Madonna and Child*, which for this reason has been ascribed to a date late in Squarcione's life. This painting represents the Virgin standing in profile behind a stone parapet and embracing a muscular Christ child, who lifts his left foot and extends his right leg as if pushing himself up into his mother's arms. The mother and son are cheek-to-cheek, a motif that ultimately traces back to Glykophilousa ('sweet kiss') and Eleousa ('merciful') Byzantine icons and was also used by Donatello.⁶² A cloth of honor hangs behind them, beyond which we can see a distant landscape; Squarcione added decorative richness to the composition with a garland suspended across the top of the picture, a candelabrum, and the variegated surface of the stone parapet. The still-life element of an apple (also alluding to the Original Sin which Christ will redeem with his sacrifice) sitting on the parapet forms a bridge between the viewer and the sacred figures; it is in the stone at the center of the painting that Squarcione signed his name. This painting shares all of these features with numerous half-length religious pictures painted by Squarcione's students; this type has been

⁶² See, for example, Donatello's *Pazzi Madonna* (ca. 1417-18, Berlin, Staatliche Museen). The Byzantine type was adopted in late medieval Italian panel paintings, such as a fourteenth-century Venetian *Icon of the Virgin Eleousa with Dodekaorton Scenes and Saints*; a thirteenth-century Perugian altarpiece in H. C. Evans, ed., *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), cat. nos. 305, 290. For the adoption of the Byzantine Madonna types in Italy, see D. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the Fourteenth Century* (New York: G. Wittenborn, 1954), 38-44, 52-54.

therefore called “Squarcionesque.”⁶³ Although Squarcione’s example betrays classical and modern influences that may be lacking in the De Lazara altarpiece, the interaction of the two figures is awkward and overall the painting lacks the dimension seen in similar compositions by his students, like Marco Zoppo’s *Wimbourne Madonna* (ca. 1455, fig. 18).

While none of Squarcione’s achievements as a painter has ever been seen as revolutionary or even especially skillful, it is reasonably evident that he was well regarded as a teacher and cultural figure and that he achieved considerable social status and wealth during his lifetime.⁶⁴ Generally speaking, painting was a well-respected profession in Padua in the early fifteenth century, as attested by Savonarola’s comparison of it to the liberal arts, as well as the high esteem generated by Giotto ever since he sojourned in the city during the early fourteenth century to paint the Arena Chapel and a lost fresco cycle in the town hall of Padua, the Palazzo Ragione. At the Carrara court in the 1390s, Cennino Cennini wrote the first modern treatise on painting, and although his *Libro dell’Arte* lacks the theoretical character of Alberti’s *On Painting* (1435), Cennini’s discussion of *fantasia*, or imagination, established the role of the artist’s mind in the creation of art, and his ideas about the role of imitation in a painter’s training parallel contemporary humanists’ theories on teaching rhetoric.⁶⁵ As the leading figure in Paduan painting in the fifteenth century, Squarcione would have been viewed in the light of this high status of the visual arts.

⁶³ For the problematic use of this term, see L. Armstrong, chapter 1, “Early Works: Padua and Bologna, 1453-1463”, esp. 14-15, 19. See R. Callegari, 17-18 for a discussion of the *Madonna and Child*’s possible Venetian provenance and the possibility of another similar work (untraced) that was the source for an eighteenth century engraving by Francesco Novelli.

⁶⁴ R. Lightbown, 15.

⁶⁵ A. Bolland, “Art and Humanism in Renaissance Padua: Cennini, Vergerio, and Petrarch on Imitation” *Renaissance Quarterly* 49 (1996): 469-87.

The master's collection of exempla, which according to primary sources was extensive, varied, and valuable, was of vital importance in obtaining students and apprentices. Squarcione's earliest surviving contract with his student Michele di Bartolomeo confirms this, stipulating specifically that the master give the student "opportunity to study his exempla."⁶⁶ A contract of 1467 to teach a painter named Francesco illustrates how those exempla should be studied, the master promising to

always keep him with paper in his hand to provide him with a model, one after another, with various figures in lead white, and correct these models for him, and correct his mistakes so far as I can and he is capable...and if he should damage any drawing of mine the said Guzon [Francesco's father] is required to pay me its full worth...⁶⁷

The length of the course stipulated in the contract is only four months, and since the student's father was himself a painter, it seems that the student's time with Squarcione was meant to fill in gaps in his learning and give him a chance to study antique models. This characterization of the Padua "pictorie studium," in Savonarola's words, has led some scholars to call Squarcione's school the precursor to the modern academy of art.⁶⁸ Michael Baxandall appropriately linked Squarcione's educational practices to Gasparino Barzizza's humanist school, or gymnasium, in Padua in the early part of the century. Between 1407 and 1421 his students included Venetian patricians like Pietro Donato and Andrea Giuliani, and perhaps Alberti.⁶⁹ In a letter advising a friend on the instruction of a pupil, Barzizza wrote,

⁶⁶ Translation from R. Lightbown, 18.

⁶⁷ "...tegnirge senpre una cart d'asenpio in man una dopo l'altra de diverse figure toche di biacha e corezerge dicti asenpi dirge i fali, quanto a mi serà posibele e lui serà chapaze...e sel me guastase algun mio disegno chel dicto Guzon sia tenuto a pagarmelo a bona descrezion." See V. Lazzarini and A. Moschetti, 167. Translation from C. Gilbert, 34.

⁶⁸ See, for example, Lightbown, 19.

⁶⁹ M. Baxandall, "Guarino, Pisanello, and Manuel Chrysoloras" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 183-204.

I myself would have done what good painters practice toward their pupils; for when the apprentices are to be instructed by their master before having acquired a thorough grasp of the theory of painting, the painters follow the practice of giving them a number of fine drawings and pictures as models [*exemplaria*] for the art, and through these they can be brought to make a certain amount of progress even by themselves. So too in our own art of literature...I would have given Giovanni [the student] some famous letters as models...⁷⁰

Barzizza's description of the painter's training echoes Squarcione's collection of exempla and suggests a common approach, one dependent on Cicero, between literary and artistic education by a leading scholar and a leading painter.⁷¹ In fact, Scardeone even described Squarcione as "pictorum gymnasiarcha singularis et primus omnium sui temporis" ('extraordinary teacher of painting and first among all of his time'), evoking Barzizza's Paduan gymnasium. As noted above, the studio's appeal lay in Squarcione's collection of exempla, which seems to have been extraordinary in its size and variety of objects. It included three-dimensional plaster casts, presumably of antique sculpture, drawn exempla he had purchased and had made on his journey through Italy and Greece, as well as some antiquities like coins, gems, and perhaps a few fragments of antique sculpture.⁷² Although the practice of copying workshop models (in the form of model or pattern books) originated in the Middle Ages, Squarcione's contracts suggest that his students

⁷⁰ Quoted and translated in *ibid.*, 183.

⁷¹ On Squarcione's humanist approach to teaching, see also M. Muraro, 1974, esp. 70-72. E. Lincoln, *The Invention of the Italian Renaissance Printmaker* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 24-25, aptly characterized Squarcione's shop as a kind of hybrid of a studio, which supplied instruction in exchange for tuition, and a the more traditional concept of the *bottega*, with the master overseeing apprentices and selling their work under his own name.

⁷² For a 1455 description of Squarcione's 'studium,' see V. Lazzarini and A. Moschetti, document 38: "unum studium magnum in domo cum relevis, designis, et aliis rebus intus; unum studium parvum in domo dita "a relevis" cum omnibus rebus intus, spectantibus ad artem pictoriae, et picturis existentibus in eum." For a summary of primary sources related to Squarcione's collection, see G. Fiocco, "Il museo immaginario di Francesco Squarcione" *Memorie dell'Accademia Patavina di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti* 71 (1958-9): 1-16. For a recent argument against Fiocco's characterization of the collection, see I. Favaretto, "La raccolta di sculture antiche di Francesco Squarcione tra leggenda e realtà" in A. De Nicolò Salmazo, 1999, 233-44.

made drawn studies of exempla in order to “make a certain amount of progress” toward a classicizing style.

Therefore, even if Squarcione’s technical ability was lacking, the evidence paints him as an important, learned Paduan despite his humble beginnings. His shrewd business acumen and good aesthetic taste provided him with the means to transform his workshop into a noted cultural center. It is likely that Squarcione played some part in introducing Mantegna to his humanist friends; he may himself have been part of their circle. The prominence of Squarcione’s patrons attests to his social status, an impression further supported by the audience the painter had with the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III on a state visit to Padua in 1452 and Saint Bernardino’s visit to his studio in 1443. A poem by Andrea Michieli (ca. 1450-1510), nicknamed Strazzolo or Squarzola, attests to Squarcione’s fame. Michieli records the praising terms in which a Venetian patrician mistook him for Squarcione in a Paduan piazza: “Sete voi Squarzon, disse lo artista / pittore egregio a cui li altre se inchina?” (‘Are you Squarcione, he said, the artist, the excellent painter to whom others bow?’).⁷³ Furthermore, former students, including Marco Zoppo and Giorgio Schiavone continued to invoke Squarcione’s name in their signatures, attesting to the master’s reputation. After listing Squarcione’s most illustrious students, Scardeone wrote, “As for Squarcione, he did not acquire great wealth from his art, but rather a distinguished and notable fame.”⁷⁴

⁷³ Translation from B. Aikema, “The Fame of Francesco Squarcione” *Ateneo Veneto* (1977): 36. The author dismissed doubts about the identification of the “Squarzon” to which Michiel’s mistaken patrician referred. Some have interpreted this to mean Mantegna, who in his early career was sometimes called “Andrea Squarcione.” The vagueness and uncertain date of the poem make a persuasive argument difficult for either identification, but in any case, the use of Squarcione’s name, whether as his own or as his adopted son’s, indicate the painter’s reputation. M. Collareta, 29, n. 1, reads the line “Sete voi di Squarzon...”

⁷⁴ “A Squarzone autem ed arte sua non sunt partae multae divitiae, sed eximia potius et illustris fama.”

Humanism, Pliny, and fifteenth-century Paduan painting

The humanist milieu in Padua in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries offers some insight into the emergence of the *cartellino* in this context. The cultural elite of the city had embraced humanistic studies since the presence of Petrarch there in the last years of his life under the patronage of the Carrara lord Francesco il Vecchio. The late fourteenth century saw a period of considerable political upheaval in Padua, as the Carrara endured both internal and external threats to their power, and like many of their contemporary political leaders, sought to legitimize their power by evoking antique imagery, establishing continuity between themselves and Roman emperors.⁷⁵ Humanist scholars were resident at Padua's prestigious university (Studium), a leading educational institution in Italy that dominated the intellectual life of the Veneto. Humanists and antiquarians were attracted to the physical remnants of Padua's ancient past (as the Roman city Patavium), remains that were still visible or otherwise retrievable in the Renaissance. The intermittent presence of Gasparino Barzizza, Pietro Donato, Guarino da Verona, Ciriaco d'Ancona, Felice Feliciano, and Giovanni Marcanova in the Veneto in the first half of the fifteenth century exercised significant influence over local culture, including the visual arts. This is evident, as we shall see, not only in the adoption of classical motifs, but also in artists' training, education, and historical perspective.

To explore the ways in which humanist culture in Padua encouraged the emergence of the *cartellino* as an illusionistic motif and as a method of documenting the paintings on which it appeared, I shall use as an example Mantegna's *Saint Mark in a*

⁷⁵ D. Norman, "'Splendid models and examples from the past': Carrara Patronage of Art" in *Siena, Florence, and Padua. Art, Society, and Religion 1280-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), vol. 1, 155-75. For general history of the period, see B. Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara, 1318-1405* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

Niche (fig. 19), from the late 1440s. This is Mantegna's earliest firmly attributed painting, made just after his legal separation from Squarcione and roughly contemporary with his early work in the Ovetari Chapel. It includes one of the very earliest instances of a full-fledged *cartellino*⁷⁶ and employs several devices that would become characteristic of fifteenth-century Paduan painting: the use of architecture to demarcate the painted space from that of the viewer, the illusionistic swag of fruit, and of course the *cartellino* affixed to the front of the arched stone niche in the immediate foreground of the picture. A distant departure from traditional portraits of evangelists as authors, where the figure is seated at a desk, Mantegna has shown Mark half-length, visible through a niche, his head resting on his right hand and his bent elbow resting on and just protruding over the front edge of the parapet. On the right wall of the niche leans a book—presumably Mark's gospel—which also juts into the viewer's space; in the center sits an apple. The reflection of Mark's head into his halo emphasizes the physicality of the image, intimated also by the still-life elements and the Flemish-inspired details of jewels, fabrics, and book clasps. The *cartellino* (fig. 20) appears to be attached to the stone or the canvas with two daubs of wax on the left end and tacks on the right end and bears Mantegna's signature: "INCLITA MAGNANIMI VEN... / EVANGELISTA PAX TIBI M[ARC]E / ANDREA MANTEGNAE PICTORIS LABOR" ('Peace be to you, Mark, renowned Evangelist of magnanimous Venice').⁷⁷ The first two lines of the inscription assert Mark's local

⁷⁶ Other paintings with early *cartellini* have uncertain dates, so a specific chronology is impossible to establish. These examples include Jacopo Bellini's *Lovere Madonna and Child* (late 1440s-early 1450s), Bono da Ferrara's *Penitent Saint Jerome* (1440s?, National Gallery, London), and Antonio da Fabriano's *Saint Jerome in his Study* of 1451 (Baltimore, Walters Art Museum). On the basis of the Bono da Ferrara painting, Ames-Lewis suggests the origin of the *cartellino* in Ferrara. See F. Ames-Lewis, 1993, n. 2.

⁷⁷ The authenticity of the inscription has been doubted in the past, but recent examination and cleaning have confirmed that it is original. See J. Martineau, cat. no. 5 and D. Pincus, "Mark Gets the Message: Mantegna and the *Praedestinatio* in Fifteenth-Century Venice" *Artibus et Historiae* 18/35 (1997): 138-39 for the inscription's condition and translation. To my knowledge, the use of *labor* instead of *opus* is unique in

importance by referring, in an abbreviated form, to a passage from a medieval Venetian legend about the saint in which an angel tells him that Venice will be his burial place. The *cartellino*'s function is therefore to identify both the painter and Saint Mark. Given Mantegna's history as an exploited apprentice who, despite Squarcione's reputation, was a more talented painter than his master, it is likely that Mantegna was anxious to proclaim the painting as his own. He composed the inscription in Latin and used "labor" instead of the far more common "opus," perhaps implying the persistent work ethic of a perfectionist, not to mention his knowledge of Latin.⁷⁸

In a more general sense, the presence of a signature on Mantegna's *Saint Mark* alludes to the humanist preoccupation with fame and memorializing worthy deeds, manifested most fully in the composition of collected biographies of famous men from history, such as Petrarch's *De viris illustribus* (begun ca. 1337), which were based on similar laudatory works of antiquity like Plutarch's *Lives* and in turn inspired painted cycles or portrait collections in the same vein. Petrarch composed some of his biographies while living in Padua and had some part in the planning of the fresco cycle in the Sala Virorum Illustrium in the Palazzo Carrara, Padua (1367-79, destroyed).⁷⁹ Thus the Renaissance humanist valorization of fame had an early currency in Padua. A culture that praised and emulated great men (and less often women) of the past prompted the desire to document one's own achievements in order to preserve their memory. In the Renaissance, this issue especially concerned antiquarians, who understood the extent to

fifteenth-century signatures. In antique literature, the word was most often used to refer to labor, toil, or drudgery, but Vergil occasionally used the word to refer to the work of a poet or artist. See C. Lewis and C. Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), 1024.

⁷⁸ For the theme of labor in the visual arts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see K. Hermann-Fiore, "Il tema 'labor' nella creazione artistica del Rinascimento" in *Der Künstler über sich in seinem Werk*, ed. M. Winner (Weinheim: Acta Humaniora, 1992), 245-92.

⁷⁹ See T. E. Mommsen, "Petrarch and the Decoration in the Sala Virorum Illustrium in Padua" *Art Bulletin* 34 (1952): 95-116.

which the passage of time obscured details of the past, leaving artifacts and texts fragmentary. In many instances, humanists and antiquarians were frustrated by attempts to learn the history or author of a work of art or literature. They attempted, often unsuccessfully, to match up material remains with ancient texts, validating one source with the other, either by attempting to discover the authentic or otherwise reinvent a lost image of a mythological or historical subject.

While several ancient authors, such as Philostratus, Lucian, and Pausanias described a few of the monuments and art of the classical world, the Roman Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* was by far the most comprehensive text on this subject available in the fifteenth century. It was so popular that it was one of the first books printed in Italy, in Venice in 1469, and came out in fifteen more editions by the end of the century.⁸⁰ Written in the first century C.E., it provided a chronology of artists with anecdotal biography and descriptions of ancient works of art like the Laocoön, which was identified upon its rediscovery in 1506 based on Pliny's description. Renaissance artists also mined Pliny's text for subject matter, as in the case of Nicoletto da Modena's engraving depicting the Greek painter Apelles (fig. 21). In the print, Apelles gazes upon a board of four geometric shapes representing the four colors he used in his paintings, which Pliny asserts as a testament to the painter's talents.⁸¹

Pliny was also of particular interest to painters because he described ancient paintings, none of which were traced before the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

⁸⁰ C. Nauert, "Plinius" in F. E. Cranz and P. O. Kristeller, eds., *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries* (Washington, D. C., Catholic University of America Press, 1980), vol. IV, 307.

⁸¹ W. L. Strauss, ed. *The Illustrated Bartsch* (New York: Abaris, 1978), vol. 25, 190-92 and J. Gage, "A Locus Classicus of Colour Theory: The Fortunes of Apelles" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 44 (1981): 10-13.

Mantegna's close association with humanists in Padua and Venice ensures his knowledge of Pliny's *Natural History*, which was one of the most widely read texts of antiquity and part of humanist studies at Padua's university.⁸² As I discuss further in chapter three, signatures in general respond to the new historical awareness and cult of fame—by signing, artists ensured that their names would survive as part of their works of art. Pliny's discussion of ancient inscriptions was a possible source for Mantegna's *cartellino*. Although Pliny lamented the loss of histories of art by the obliteration of their inscriptions, he also referred to surviving inscriptions on Greek paintings and sculptures. In the preface, Pliny dedicated his encyclopedia to Emperor Titus Vespasian and introduced its contents. In order to show humility, Pliny explained that he wished to compare himself to Greek sculptors and painters who, despite the great admiration they won, signed their works with inscriptions like “Apelles faciebat” (‘Apelles was making this’), implying that the work was unfinished and imperfect.⁸³

Pliny's wording, “pendenti titulo inscripsisse,” is translated in modern English editions as “inscribed with a temporary title” or “inscribed with a provisional title.” *Titulo*, however, could also be interpreted as ‘labels’ and *pendenti* as ‘hanging.’⁸⁴ Since *cartellini* are often, like Mantegna's example, shown as if hung on a surface with wax

⁸² D. Chambers, J. Martineau, and R. Signorini, 9-10, suggest Pliny's influence also in regard to Mantegna's fascination with geology and rock formations.

⁸³ Art historians have used this passage to explain Renaissance artists' use of the imperfect verb *faciebat* when signing. See M. Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators. Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350-1450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 64; V. Juren, “Fecit Faciebat” *Revue de l'Art* 26 (1974): 27-30; R. Goffen, “Giovanni Bellini's *Nude with a Mirror*,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 1/2 (1991): 196, and N. Land, “Apelles in Venice: Bellini, Titian, Pino, and Esengren” *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 26 (2000): 161-76. I thank Sarah Blake McHam for directing me to Pliny's prefatory letter and its importance for Renaissance signatures; see her “Reflections of Pliny in Giovanni Bellini's *Woman with a Mirror*” *Artibus et Historiae* 58 (2008): 157-71 and forthcoming book, *Pliny and the Artistic Culture of the Italian Renaissance: The Legacy of the Natural History*.

⁸⁴ Cristoforo Landino's Italian translation is “pendente titolo scripto.” See C. Plinio Secondo, *Naturalis Historia* (Venice, 1476), unpaginated, folio 8r.

and partially detached, it is possible that painters of *cartellini* were playing on Pliny's description of ancient signatures. The pun lies in a paper label being something both hanging and temporary; the use of wax and the somewhat rumpled quality of the *cartellino* emphasize its precarious attachment to its backing, perhaps to tempt the viewer to try to reach out and tear it off. The choice of a material that lacks durability also alludes to the temporary nature of *cartellini*, a quality that is sometimes emphasized by the tears, wrinkles, creases of their 'paper' surfaces, and perhaps even the cases where *cartellini* were intentionally left blank as if the inscription had disappeared over time.⁸⁵

Although the *Natural History* was, as many later humanists would complain, much corrupted during the Middle Ages, and often condensed or published in sections according to discipline, the prefatory letter was standard and nearly always included in manuscript and printed editions. Although Mantegna does not use *faciebat*, Pliny's passage on 'pendenti titulo' may nonetheless help to explain Mantegna's use of *labor* instead of the more common *opus* in Renaissance signatures. After praising Greek artists for using the imperfect tense, Pliny noted just three instances of signatures using *fecit*: "In these cases it appears that the artist felt the most perfect satisfaction with his work, and

⁸⁵ I would like to thank Dr. Ann Kuttner for her insights on the temporary quality of labels on antique works of art, like mosaics, which were assembled and shipped, and therefore possibly labeled at an intermediary stage. This practice may relate to a Hellenistic mosaic that is signed on a *cartellino* (see below, 77-78). Pliny's discussion of signatures with *faciebat*, however, deals more figuratively with the idea of unfinished. Blank *cartellini* are not uncommon, although in many cases, the *cartellini* seem to have once had inscriptions that have since flaked off. At least one example, however, has a *cartellino* that may not have ever been inscribed: Marco Zoppo's *Madonna and Child* (1455, Paris, Louvre). The painting has two *cartellini*, one with well-preserved signature, the other blank and ripped through the center. Konrad Oberhuber, in his entry on Raphael's *Madonna di Foligno*, in which a *putto* holds a blank *tabula ansata*, points to Apelles' use of a blank label to 'sign' his works. He does not, however, cite any literary source for this, nor have I been able to locate one. See *Raphael: The Paintings* (New York: Prestel, 1999), 130. More convincing is Meyer zur Capellen (citing Andreas Tonnesmann), who interprets the blank tablet as symbolic of the human soul (which, according to Aristotle, is a *tabula rasa* at birth). See J. Meyer zur Capellen, *Raphael: A Critical Catalogue of His Paintings*, trans. S. Polter (Landschut: Arcos, 2001), vol. II, cat. no. 52. L. Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 70-73, discusses copyists' practice of sometimes eliminating the signature of the original artist in a print, but leaving its blank tablet.

hence these pieces have excited the envy of every one.”⁸⁶ Mantegna’s use of *labor* may be his way of finding a middle ground between the modest *faciebat* and the boastful *fecit*. *Labor* implies a complete work, but one made with great effort.

Mantegna’s use of a signed ‘pendenti titolo’ is further connected through its trompe-l’oeil effects to Pliny’s *Natural History*. Pliny’s accounts of ancient painters relate many anecdotes illustrating their technical abilities, including an informal competition between the Greek painters Zeuxis and Parrhasius. According to Pliny, Zeuxis represented grapes so convincingly that birds flew down to peck them; in response, Parrhasius exhibited a painting of a curtain depicted with such a degree of illusionism that Zeuxis asked the other painter to pull aside the curtain so he could judge his rival’s work. On discovering his mistake, Zeuxis conceded victory, since he himself had only tricked birds, but Parrhasius had tricked a painter.⁸⁷ Such stories, whether apocryphal or recounting real events, gained currency in the Renaissance and were meant to illustrate the artist’s technical ability as well as his talent in transcending social or professional hierarchies by fooling those of higher status. One example comes from an epigram by the humanist Raffaele Zovenzoni, a student of Guarino and resident of Venice, who wrote of Mantegna’s friend Marco Zoppo, “The fruits which Hercules handed to the Hesperides / Your painted panel gave to me, O Zoppo, / They deceived

⁸⁶ “Quo apparuit summam artis securitatem auctori placuisse, et ob id magna invidia fuere omnia ea.” Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 18-19. The English translation I quote here is from *Perseus Digital Library Project*. Ed. Gregory R. Crane. May 13, 2008. Tufts University. August 26, 2008. <<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>>. Rackham translates the passage “This made the artist appear to have assumed a supreme confidence in his art, and consequently all these works were very unpopular.” Landino’s Italian, which presumably reflected (and subsequently shaped) contemporary readings of the text reads, “Per laqual chosa si dimostra quanto allui piacessi la somma sicurtà nellarte. Et per questo tutte quelle furono in grande invidia.” See C. Plinio Secondo, folio 8v. Landino’s translation connotes, I believe, a more positive reception of the works inscribed “ille fecit” (made by so-and-so) than Rackham’s translation allows.

⁸⁷ K. Jex-Blake, *The Elder Pliny’s Chapters on the History of Art* (Chicago: Argonaut Publishers, 1968) 110-11.

your own daughter, Marco, and no wonder / Such fruits would draw Phidias' hand to them."⁸⁸ Like Parrhasius, Zoppo had the ability to trick even a great artist of antiquity. To show Giotto's primacy over his master Cimabue, Antonio Filarete's treatise on architecture, written in the 1460s, tells how the young apprentice used to paint flies that tricked Cimabue, who tried to shoo them away with a cloth.⁸⁹ Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, in his treatise on art written in 1584, likewise wrote how "Andrea Mantegna deceived his master with a fly painted above the eyebrow of a lion."⁹⁰ Although this anecdote may have been a literary device invented to form a link between Giotto and Mantegna, it is clear that the Paduan painter was concerned with illusionism, as illustrated in the still-life elements and protruding *cartellino* in his *Saint Mark*. Mantegna's familiarity with Pliny's discussion of signatures on 'pendenti titolo,' perhaps inspired him to create a trompe-l'oeil version of those ancient hanging labels.

Archaeology, paleography, and exempla

Ancient inscriptions played a key role in the recovery of antiquity for early Renaissance humanists and artists, and Mantegna was exceptional among fifteenth-century painters in the depth of his engagement with them. It has been noted that intellectuals of the Veneto, and of Padua in particular, displayed an especially 'archaeological' approach to the recovery of antiquity, focusing greater attention than their counterparts in other parts of Europe on existing material remains of ancient culture,

⁸⁸ Mantegna's friendship with Zoppo is mentioned by Vasari in his biography of Mantegna, see G. Vasari, *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architetti* (Milan: Società Tipografica de' Classici Italiani, 1807-1811), vol. VI, 219; the friendship is also mentioned in a letter from Zoppo to the Marchesa of Mantua, see H. Chapman, 31. Zovenzoni's poem is quoted and translated in C. Gilbert, 186-87.

⁸⁹ Book XXIII of Filarete, *Treatise on Architecture*, trans. J. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965). See also below, 168.

⁹⁰ Quoted in R. Lightbown, 24.

as opposed to works of literature.⁹¹ An early piece of evidence supporting this characterization was the excitement over the discovery in 1274 of the supposed bones of Antenor, one of the legendary Trojan founders of Padua, and of Livy, Roman historian and native son. The Paduan physician and inventor Giovanni Dondi dall'Orologio (1330-1389), also a friend of Petrarch, traveled to Rome in 1375, copying inscriptions and describing and measuring ancient ruins and buildings.⁹² In the visual arts, the focus on ruins and artifacts of antiquity manifested themselves in the interest in Roman numismatics, which led ultimately to the first Renaissance portrait medal made by a Paduan in the 1390s, depicting the lords Francesco I da Carrara and his son Francesco Novello.⁹³

Fifteenth-century humanists based in the Veneto not only focused their attention on collecting antiquities, especially epigraphs, but also on recording them. Although some antiquarians sought out ancient inscriptions for the sake of achieving greater aptitude and accuracy in Latin (and less often Greek) vocabulary and grammar, Ciriaco d'Ancona and his disciple Felice Feliciano were more interested in artifacts and monuments, because they were not capable of being corrupted through multiple copyings as most ancient texts had been. Ciriaco, the oldest and most enthusiastic of Renaissance epigraphers in north Italy, focused meticulously on the physical context and condition of inscriptions, making detailed (if amateurish) drawings of the monuments and fragments he saw (see fig. 22). Because of this documentary approach, Ciriaco has been called the “father of archaeological science” as the first in the modern era to recognize

⁹¹ S. G. Casu, “Antiquarian Culture in Padua during the Humanistic Age” in M. Gregori, ed., *In the Light of Apollo: The Italian Renaissance and Greece* (Athens: Hellenic Culture Organization, 2003), 245-47.

⁹² P. F. Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 50, 76.

⁹³ F. Ames-Lewis, 2000, 112 and P. F. Brown, 1996, 96-98.

the decay of monuments of the past (whether because of the passage of time or at the hands of looters) as an ongoing process that could be mitigated by archaeological records in the place of the monuments themselves.⁹⁴ Ciriaco traveled throughout Italy and Greece collecting the material for his sylloge, the six-volume *Commentaria*, which was mostly destroyed by fire in 1514. Ciriaco visited Padua in 1443 and made a copy of an earlier version of his collection for Bishop Pietro Donato, an avid book collector, and two Veneto epigraphers. Felice Feliciano, a Veronese humanist and scribe, and Giovanni Marcanova, a Paduan antiquarian and physician, subsequently compiled some of his inscriptions in their own sylloges. In order to augment their collections, Ciriaco and Feliciano were also known to have asked friends and acquaintances to make note of any inscriptions they came across.

The Veronese architect and engineer Fra Giocondo compiled a sylloge as well, and employed the Paduan scribe Bartolomeo Sanvito to make several copies of it.⁹⁵ The painter Jacopo Bellini also copied antiquities and epigraphs, incorporating them as inscriptions on imagined monuments he drew in one of his books of drawings.⁹⁶ Thus, the epigraphic material was collected and transmitted second-hand through letters, notebooks, and later through printed texts. In short, they engaged in what could be termed “paper collecting,” or the establishment of a repertory of ancient inscriptions that could be circulated and shared for readers’ enjoyment and edification about antiquity.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ S. G. Casu, “Travels in Greece in the Age of Humanism. Cristoforo Buondelmonti and Cyriacus of Ancona” in M. Gregori, 141 and P. F. Brown, 1996, 81, 83.

⁹⁵ J. Wardrop, *The Script of Humanism: Some Aspects of Humanistic Script, 1460-1560* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 27-29. Sanvito will be discussed further in the next chapter regarding paleography and typography in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

⁹⁶ P. F. Brown, 1996, 121-26.

⁹⁷ These efforts formed the basis for the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, a comprehensive collection of surviving and previously recorded Latin inscriptions from all parts of the Roman Empire, compiled and published by German scholars during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Although Mantegna had broad antiquarian interests, of particular significance for interpretation of *cartellini* is his fascination with epigraphy and paleography that developed through personal contact with antiquarians like Jacopo Bellini, Marcanova, and Feliciano.⁹⁸ Jacopo would become Mantegna's father-in-law in 1453, and the two were very likely in contact in the years before through Mantegna's activity in Venice. In 1460, the same year he wrote a treatise and pattern book on the Roman alphabet, Feliciano dedicated his 1463 sylloge and a poem to Mantegna in his earliest anthology of verses.⁹⁹ In September of 1464, Feliciano accompanied Mantegna, Marcanova, and Samuele da Tradate on a boating trip on Lake Garda, during which they searched for inscriptions and performed *all'antica* theatrics. But even back in the 1440s in Padua and Venice, Mantegna was already mixing in antiquarian circles, perhaps through introductions offered through his teacher Squarcione. Interestingly, the same years that Squarcione is supposed to have made his trip through Italy and Greece, Ciriaco made a similar trip abroad. The parallels between the two journeys are striking: both went with the purpose of seeing, collecting, and recording ancient monuments. While no conclusions can be made regarding contact or a shared journey, this common interest suggests the two men would have been interested in meeting one another.¹⁰⁰ Even if Ciriaco and Squarcione did not meet earlier, Ciriaco visited Padua in 1442-43 (during

⁹⁸ For an overview of Mantegna's relationship with humanists, see D. Chambers, J. Martineau, and R. Signorini in J. Martineau, ed., 18-30; more recently see also E. Barile, "Giovanni Marcanova e i suoi possibili incontri con Andrea Mantegna" in D. Banzato, et al., eds, 37-43. On Mantegna and paleography, see M. Meiss, "Toward a More Comprehensive Renaissance Paleography" *Art Bulletin* 42 (1960): 102-12 and idem. *Mantegna as Illuminator*, and more recently S. Zamponi, "Andrea Mantegna e la maiuscola antiquaria" in *Mantegna e Padova, 1445-1460*, ed. D. Banzato et al (Milan: Skira 2006), 73-79.

⁹⁹ Modena, Biblioteca Estense cod. a. N. 7. 28, folio 7r, cited in C. Mitchell, "Felice Feliciano Antiquarius" *Proceedings of the British Academy* 47 (1961): 199. On Feliciano, see also E. Karet, "Stefano da Verona, Felice Feliciano and the First Renaissance Collection of Drawings" *Arte Lombarda* 124 (1998): 31-51.

¹⁰⁰ S. G. Casu, 246.

Mantegna's apprenticeship) and may well have visited Squarcione's studio to see the collection of exempla.

Having traveled very little during his early career in Padua, Mantegna's experience of antiquity before executing *Saint Mark* would have been limited to locally available examples—coins, sculptural fragments, the crumbling Paduan arena. Therefore his vision of antique culture was largely filtered through secondary sources. This experience would have begun in Squarcione's studio, through the collection of drawings after antique sculpture, and continued through Mantegna's study of ancient inscriptions in sylloges and archaeological or otherwise classicizing drawings, like those in Jacopo Bellini's albums. Mantegna's interest in epigraphy and paleography is clearly evident in the surviving paintings of his Paduan period, most notably his frescoes in the Ovetari Chapel (ca. 1450-57). For example, in the fresco of *Saint James before Herod* (fig. 23), Mantegna includes a Roman triumphal arch as a backdrop for the scene. On it is an inscription, "T PVLLIO / TLLINO / IIIII V [...] / AV [...] / ALB [...] / E," perhaps taken from a sheet of inscribed Roman monuments Jacopo Bellini's Louvre album of drawings (fig. 24).¹⁰¹

Although it does not contain antique inscriptions, Mantegna's *Saint Mark* shows evidence of the painter's paleographic studies. I suggested above that the preface of Pliny's *Natural History* inspired Mantegna to employ the *cartellino* in order to promote his fame and imitate ancient signatures. By doing so on an inscribed piece of paper or parchment, I also argue that Mantegna was alluding to his knowledge of epigraphs at this

¹⁰¹M. Meiss, 1960, 105. P. F. Brown, 1996, 185, notes the "appeal of the sylloge of inscriptions in the atelier as well as to the humanist's study" in regard to the same inscription, which appeared also in Marcanova's sylloge and in a frontispiece of a printed Livy (1470) decorated for the Priuli family by the Master of the Putti.

early date through sustained contact and familiarity with humanists in the Veneto, who provided him with drawings and transcriptions. By choosing to inscribe this paper and layer it over the stone surface of the niche frontal in his *Saint Mark*, Mantegna employed the liminal *cartellino* to denote his study of ancient inscriptions through paper or parchment media. And unlike Mantegna's other surviving inscriptions, the lettering imitates not epigraphic Roman lettering, but the slightly earlier written majuscules employed by Ciriaco in the early 1440s and later modified by Feliciano for the first recension of his sylloge in the late 1450s (figs. 25, 26). This similarity demonstrates not only Mantegna's involvement with Feliciano but also his participation in the evolution of Venetan paleography.¹⁰²

Another stage of this development, slightly later than that of the *Saint Mark* inscription, is illustrated in the inscriptions in Mantegna's *Saint Euphemia* of 1454 (fig. 27). The altarpiece, whose patron and intended location are also unknown, shows the early Christian martyr standing under a stone arch, holding a lily in her left hand and a palm frond in her right. With the lion, who appears to inflict no harm by grasping the saint's right forearm in its mouth, and the sword piercing her chest, Mantegna alluded to the story of Euphemia's martyrdom, in which she is thrown to wild animals who refused to maul her, causing the frustrated executioner to stab her to death. Mantegna identifies the saint with an inscription at the top of the arch. The letters of "SANTA EVFEMIA" are arranged such that they are not obscured by the fictive garland of fruit and leaves. The painting is signed with another inscription, "OPVS ANDREAE MANTEGNAE /

¹⁰² M. Meiss, 1957, 72-73, places Mantegna in the center of these developments, affording him primacy over Feliciano in the development of the faceted epigraphic capital.

MCCCCLIII,” on a *cartellino* attached to the front of the plinth on which the saint stands (fig. 28).

Together with the inscriptions of the Ovetari Chapel, those on the *Saint Euphemia* mark a shift toward lettering imitating Roman imperial majuscules. Mantegna’s choice of lettering is not only a clear departure from the medieval styles used to inscribe late Gothic paintings of the Veneto, but the inscriptions in the *Saint Euphemia* also reveal the different developments in paleography happening in the Veneto and in Florence in the first half of the fifteenth century.¹⁰³ As compared to their counterparts in the *Saint Mark*, the letters in both inscriptions are truer to the form of Roman imperial majuscules.

Although the lettering of the epigraphic inscription and the *cartellino* on this painting are very similar, the fact that Mantegna chose the *cartellino* for his signature and painted the saint’s name as though it were carved into stone is meaningful. It shows that he distinguished between his own name, attached onto a protruding illusionistic motif that appears to be applied to and therefore separate from the image, and a carved inscription naming the saint embedded in the stone that surrounds her. Thus Mantegna self-consciously set up a comparison between the ‘antique’ mode with which he identified the fourth-century saint and the ‘modern’ material with which he named himself. This duality exemplifies Patricia Fortini Brown’s characterization of Venetian Renaissance artists’ approaches to the antique past. In one of these approaches, artists “could imply the separateness of the past, but provide access to it from the present, effectively pushing the present back into the past.”¹⁰⁴ This approach is more nuanced than other strategies of recasting the past in contemporary visual terms or of attempting to

¹⁰³ See M. Meiss, 1960, 102-04, especially on the differences between Florence and Padua, pointing to Donatello’s change in lettering style after his Paduan sojourn.

¹⁰⁴ P. F. Brown, 1996, 189.

recreate the past as something separate and distinct from the present. The *cartellino*, as both a liminal trompe-l'oeil element and as an object of the contemporary realm, separates, as well as provides a visual and temporal bridge between, the space and time of the Renaissance viewer and the antique past. Furthermore, Mantegna's use of different materials underlines this distinction.¹⁰⁵ Paper or parchment lacks the durability of stone, and is therefore necessarily from a more recent time. Mantegna, however, seems to have wanted to bring the two closer together by aging the *cartellino* with wrinkles while at the same time showing the epigraphic inscription as pristine and brightly gilded. In doing so, perhaps Mantegna intended to emphasize his painting's mediating role in bringing the past and the present closer together. The ancient past could be brought forth anew, reimagined and pristine, through the painter, here proudly named in a liminal space that stands at the spatial and temporal boundaries of the painted representation.

Conclusion

Thus we return to Meiss's comparison of Fra Filippo Lippi's dated *Tarquinia Madonna* and the epigraphic inscriptions of Jan van Eyck. The origins of the *cartellino* in Padua—not in the Netherlands or Florence—are confirmed by their emergence in Padua in the middle of the fifteenth century in the circle of Francesco Squarcione, their precedents in signatures and inscriptions in Gothic painting of Venice and the Veneto, and their connections to local epigraphic and antiquarian interests. By the last quarter of the fifteenth century, the motif was picked up by Venetian painters and spread to other parts of the *terraferma*. Padua, as one of the jewels of Venice's relatively new mainland

¹⁰⁵ M. Meiss, 1960, 103-04, also notes the differing styles of lettering. The *cartellino* employs a newer, more experimental majuscule.

empire, was valued especially for its ancient pedigree and its centuries-old university. In 1457, the Venetian Senate had mandated that only graduates of the Padua's Studium could hold public office, a reinforcement of a ducal letter of 1407 that forbade Venetian patricians from studying at any other university. While these resolutions were not always followed, they nonetheless created a situation in which social and cultural elites of the Renaissance period had strong ties to the mainland city.¹⁰⁶ As the visual arts became more aligned with intellectual developments, Venetian painters not surprisingly took cues from their Paduan counterparts. Frequent travel of artists, patrons, and paintings between Venice and Padua (not to mention other mainland cities), as in the case of Mantegna's *Saint Mark*, which was made for a Venetian patron, allowed for this exchange.¹⁰⁷

In fact, the early uses of the *cartellino* by artists trained in Padua constitute only a small fraction of Renaissance examples. It was in Venice that the *cartellino* became frequently used by Venetian masters around the same time Marco Zoppo moved there from Padua (ca. 1455), first by Bartolomeo Vivarini, who probably also trained with Squarcione.¹⁰⁸ Alvise Vivarini, Giovanni Bellini, Cima da Conegliano, Vittore Carpaccio, and their many followers scattered around the Veneto subsequently adopted the *cartellino*. Consequently, much of the remainder of this study (with the exception of discussions of Paduan miniaturists in the next chapter) will focus on the relevant trends in visual culture in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in Venice.

¹⁰⁶ P. Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 27-28. M. Lowry, *Nicholas Jenson and the Rise of Venetian Publishing* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 2-11 discusses the importance of Padua's Studium in the education of the better part of a generation of Venetian patricians.

¹⁰⁷ The patron for this painting is not known, but it has been suggested that it was a Venetian, based on the subject matter of Saint Mark, the city's patron. Mantegna may have painted it while staying in Venice, as he was known to do as Squarcione's assistant, or he could have painted it in Padua for a Venetian staying there or otherwise shipped it to Venice. See J. Martineau, cat. no. 5.

¹⁰⁸ R. Pallucchini, *I Vivarini* (Venice: Neri Pozza Editore, 1961), 24, 37.

Chapter 2: The manufacture and decoration of books in the Veneto during the Renaissance

The nature of intellectual exchange among Veneto antiquarians that I have argued was Paduan painters' inspiration for the representation of their signatures on paper or parchment motifs is part of a broader range of activities undertaken by humanists and intellectuals in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries that involved at their center the transmission of ideas as inscribed words on paper. Of particular importance for the region in the second half of the fifteenth century were important scribal innovations, inspired by the paleographic studies discussed in the previous chapter, the emergence of the Veneto-Paduan school of miniaturists, and the arrival of printing in Venice in 1469. Padua was a center of book illumination catering to scholars and Venetians drawn to the city by the university and government or ecclesiastical offices. In Venice and throughout the *terraferma*, these segments of the population, along with the wealthy and literate merchant class, were the consumers and patrons for books printed in Venice as well as for the manuscripts that continued to be produced well into the sixteenth century.¹ One

¹ L. Gerulaitis, *Printing and Publishing in Fifteenth-Century Venice* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1976), argues that his analysis of the Venetian publishing industry, i.e., its economic conditions and the types of books it produced, demonstrates that the market was dominated not by humanists but by the literate *cittadini*, for whom "practical learning was essentially a means of upward social mobility rather than a social goal—as was very often true in the case of humanists as well" (161). Although Venetian books were certainly read by a broader audience than the highly educated and scholars (who were often also wealthy aristocrats), the influence of this class in terms of cultural and social practices should not be underestimated. In any case, my argument that the *cartellino* is a reference to Venice's preeminence in printing relies as much on characterizing this reference as patriotic as it does to its intellectual pretensions. In addition, the attainment of knowledge (whether practical or esoteric) as a means of social climbing is central to my discussion of the *cartellino* in the next chapter as a demonstration of the literacy and learning of the artist.

factor relevant to the demand for books was the flourishing humanist culture in Venice and its empire. Books, whether written by hand or printed, were central to the lives of scholars, and the age's most reputable scholars and most learned rulers were renowned as bibliophiles and collectors of books. The invention of moveable type had a tremendous impact on the book industry, and in Venice this new technology found especially fertile ground. Soon after the first Italian press was established near Rome, John of Speyer (also known as Giovanni da Spira or Johannes de Speyer), a German printer, opened the first press in Venice in 1469, setting off a long and distinguished history of printing in the city; it would soon become the most important center of publishing in Europe.

The industry had a considerable impact on the region's visual arts, but it should be underlined that the introduction of printing to Italy did not cause an immediate change regarding the design and decoration of the books themselves. In fact, scholars of early printing have demonstrated a level of continuity between the design of manuscripts and printed books in the fifteenth century, countering arguments characterizing the printing press as bringing about immediate, radical shifts in the conception of the book.² The printing industry did, however, stimulate patronage for Venetan painters, especially those in Padua and Venice who were involved in the decoration of incunables and manuscripts with painted miniatures or woodcuts. Painters also were consumers of illustrated books and prints and used them as sources of visual motifs. The manufacture of books,

² S. Hindman and J. Farquhar, *Pen to Press: Illustrated Manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing* (Baltimore: Art Department, University of Maryland, 1977) and Hindman's introduction in *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, ca. 1450-1520* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991) reviewed by R. Clement in *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24 (1993): 706-07. The definitive work with which these studies take issue is E. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979). In an article responding to her critics, especially Adrian Johns, Eisenstein counters that her views have been overstated. See "An Unacknowledged Revolution Revisited" *American Historical Review* 107 (2002): 87-105.

reflective of the interests of the cultural and social elites, thus formed a bridge between painters and intellectuals, who collaborated to create complementary juxtapositions of text and image. I contend that painters welcomed and flaunted this association with the humanist movement by using the *cartellino* to sign their paintings. The depiction of a paper or parchment motif inscribed with lettering employing humanist script or classical majuscules, used by scribes and adopted and disseminated by typographers, consciously imitated the books in humanist patrons' libraries and local miniaturists' workshops.

The printing industry

The establishment of the printing press had a profound impact on the culture of literate segments of European society, enriching the scholar's experience with greater access to literary texts, and the subsequent scholarly activity these texts encouraged—commentaries, letters, and the like. Johann Gutenberg published the first printed book in the early 1450s in Mainz, and although he did not enjoy much commercial success himself, the technology he developed spread relatively quickly to major European commercial centers.³ Two German clerics, Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz, established the first Italian press in Subiaco, south of Rome, in 1465. Venice provided especially fertile ground for the new book printing industry because of a confluence of cultural, social, and economic factors. Venetian society projected an image of political and economic stability that was attractive to investors and entrepreneurs, themselves wealthy, enterprising Venetians. Second, the mercantile economy ensured

³ For the spread of printing in Europe, see L. Febvre and H.-J. Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800*, trans. D. Gerard (London & New York: Verso, 1997), 179-86. For the early printing of books in Italy, see B. Richardson, *Printing, Writers, and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

numerous established trade routes and relationships throughout the Mediterranean and northern Europe, therefore providing access to a huge market for the new products. Furthermore, by the middle of the fifteenth century there already existed a well-established humanist tradition that thrived on the production and exchange of books, practices that became much more efficient and frequent with the establishment of the printing press. Humanists were educators, translators, and authors, not to mention readers; each of these activities required or resulted in the publication of grammars, critical editions of ancient authors, translations, commentaries, treatises, and eventually works of vernacular literature. As Martin Davies asserted, “There was no humanism without books. They were the prime material on which the movement was founded and the natural medium through which it was transmitted.”⁴ The university town of Padua provided another ready market, and printers exploited existing channels through which manuscript textbooks were sold to students, either through university administrators or stationers’ shops (*cartolai*).⁵ Venetians were noted for their piety, and their religious practices and values also helped create demand for prayer books, Bibles, and saints’ lives; the clerical and monastic populations required patristic and other theological texts.⁶ The Camaldolese monks of San Michele in Isola, for example, immediately recognized the benefits of the press for monastic libraries. This forward-thinking group employed Mauro Codussi to redesign their church and monastery using Albertian principles at the

⁴ M. Davies, “Humanism in Script and Print in the Fifteenth Century” in *Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. J. Kraye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 47.

⁵ L. Gerulaitis, 10.

⁶ P. Humfrey, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 58 and idem., *Painting in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 24-25.

same time that they became some of John of Speyer's earliest customers.⁷ Thus Venice offered capital, infrastructure, and local demand that could absorb and promote the expanded supply offered by the printing press.

The Venetian printing industry seems to have been set in motion by one of the period's most famous bibliophiles, Basilios Bessarion. The Byzantine scholar had moved to Italy soon after the Councils of Ferrara and Florence (1438-39), which he had attended in the retinue of Emperor Palaeologus. He was made a cardinal by Eugenius IV and subsequently held various papal offices, remaining in Rome for much of the rest of his life. He is well known for promising his library to the Venetian state in 1468, effectively founding the city's public library at San Marco. In the 1460s Bessarion was in Rome lobbying Pius II Barbo (a Venetian) for the Papal States to lead an Italian alliance against the Turks; his gift of nearly a thousand precious manuscripts was an attempt to curry favor with Venetian statesmen. It was probably no coincidence that John of Speyer arrived in Venice to set up his press in the same year of Bessarion's promised gift to the Venetian state, and that the Speyer brothers seemed to have had connections with Cardinal Bessarion through their compatriots Sweynheym and Pannartz in Rome. Sweynheym and Pannartz moved their press from Subiaco to Rome in 1468, with Bessarion as an investor. John and Vindelinus of Speyer apparently came to Venice not directly from Germany, but through Rome, having fashioned (or perhaps purchased) their first roman type from Sweynheym and Pannartz. Bessarion's interest in printing lay in its ability to spread Greek learning and to warn Western Europe of the Turkish threat, a

⁷ The monastery's library had a Pliny printed by John of Speyer in 1469 and one of the monks, Nicolò da Malermi began an Italian translation of the Bible for John's press soon after. See M. Lowry, 1991, 110.

concern that was greatly intensified in 1453 with the fall of Constantinople.⁸ Bessarion's goals and his involvement in Venetian politics suggest his role in bringing the Speyer brothers to Venice to set up the city's first press. In 1469 Bessarion's political allies in Venice welcomed John of Speyer's enterprise by granting him exclusive rights to publish in Venetian territory for a period of five years. John's first Venetian editions, Cicero's *Epistolae ad familiares* and Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*, had already come out earlier the same year.⁹ Many early Venetian books were commissioned by or aimed at Venetian humanists; the wealth and sophisticated tastes of this clientele demanded that not only the content but the visual presentation and format of the books be of the highest quality.

Therefore, it was only natural that the first locally printed books caused a sensation among learned circles, evident by the size of the Speyer brothers' second printing of Cicero's *Epistolae* in a run of six hundred, a six-fold increase over its first printing just a year before.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, after John of Speyer's death in 1470 and the subsequent end of his press's monopoly, printers from Germany, France, and other parts of Italy flocked to Venice to open up printing houses. At least fifty printers were

⁸ On Bessarion's role in the establishment of the Venetian press, see M. Lowry, 1991, 1-21 and M. Zorzi, "Stampa, illustrazione libraria e le origini dell'incisione figurativa a Venezia" in M. Lucco, ed., *La pittura nel Veneto: Il Quattrocento* (Milan: Electa, 1989), 686 and M. Zorzi, "Bessarione e Venezia" in *Bessarione e l'umanesimo*, ed. G. Fiaccadori (Naples: Vivarium, 1994), 221. Similarly, M. Davies, 1996, 53-54, credits the humanist Nicholas of Cusa with bringing Sweynheym and Pannartz to Subiaco from Mainz in 1464.

⁹ Some scholars have argued that this privilege can be explained simply by a lack of foresight on the government's part and its failure to recognize printing's commercial possibilities, but Martin Lowry has suggested that John's monopoly had been a personal favor arranged by Bessarion and influential government officials, and was perhaps the reason that the privilege was not upheld for John's brother and partner Vindelino when John died in 1470. See L. Gerulaitis, 20-21. The complex web of political maneuvering that played a hand in the establishment of Venetian presses and the kinds of editions they first printed provide an alternative explanation to studies of early Venetian publishing that focus narrowly on economic and market forces at the exclusion of traditional patronage structures. Lowry argues that studies like Brown's and Gerulaitis's do not allow for the social and political factors that entered into investments in Venetian presses and points to the political and diplomatic activities of a tight-knit circle of patrician scholars in the first decade of printing in Venice. See Lowry, 1991, 1-21.

¹⁰ H. F. Brown, 27.

documented in Venice between the years 1470 and 1480.¹¹ One of them was the Frenchman Nicholas Jenson, whose incunables would become some of the most prized of the Renaissance. According to early sources, he had worked in the mints of Paris and Tours, and in 1458 was sent to Mainz by Charles VIII to learn printing. His printing activity in France is unknown, but he was in Venice before 1470, the date of his first edition. By his death in 1480, the Jenson press had put out a remarkable 155 editions. Jenson's financial success (he was called "richissimo" by Marin Sanudo¹²) and learned clientele brought social prestige, culminating in his nomination as Count Palatine in 1475 by Pope Sixtus IV, himself a scholar and book collector.¹³

The 1480s saw a considerable expansion in the number of presses and books published. With the death of Jenson and the increased output to a broader market, the aesthetic quality, however, of Venetian books declined. To cut costs, printers employed more compact types and reduced the books' size. The final period of the Venetian incunable, however, saw a revival of beautiful types and high-quality illustrations from the press of Aldus Manutius, who arrived in Venice in 1489 or 1490. Aldus was a humanist scholar who had studied with Guarino da Verona in Ferrara as well as with Pico della Mirandola in Rome and Florence; his circle of friends included Erasmus, Pietro Bembo, and the architect-antiquarian Fra Giocondo.¹⁴ The Aldine press was one of the most successful Venetian presses in the Renaissance, and was known for its fine critical editions and small, relatively inexpensive books designed for portability and standard to

¹¹ H. F. Brown, 28.

¹² See M. Lowry, 1991, 158 n. 40.

¹³ Ibid., 12-14.

¹⁴ On Aldus as a student of Guarino and friend of Pico, see M. Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius: Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979), 51-55. For Aldus's friendship with Erasmus, see D. J. Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice: Studies in the Dissemination of Greek Learning from Byzantium to Western Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), 256-78.

the humanist's library. They were printed in relatively large editions— sometimes a thousand copies compared with a typical print run of the time of two or three hundred. With Aldus, Bessarion's goal of spreading Greek learning through the press was realized, as Greek texts became the core of Aldus's output.¹⁵ Jenson's wealth and social status and Aldus's commercial success and role as an intellectual indicate the early importance and prestige of the printing industry among the Venetian cultural elite in the last third of the fifteenth century.

Part of the success of early Venetian printers was built upon their recognition of market demand for humanist texts, and subsequently, for religious texts and popular vernacular works for a broader market. In the first years of printing in Italy, classical and patristic texts dominated production; more than half of the editions produced were classical Latin texts or grammars. A crisis in the market in 1473, however, caused printers to reevaluate their output. A combination of political unrest in northern Italy, general economic problems, and the saturation of the market with classical Latin texts led to diversification in the following years. Printers began publishing more religious texts (including a significant number in the vernacular) and law books.¹⁶ Jenson in particular was able to stay in business and continually build up his output over the decade through shrewd business practices and a network of wealthy and high-ranking patrons.¹⁷ Although the Venetian printing industry experienced growing pains in its first two decades, by the

¹⁵ The first Greek books printed in Italy was Lascarius's Greek grammar published in Milan in 1474; a few other presses in Vicenza, Florence, and Venice also published some Greek texts in the 1480s. See H. F. Brown, 19-20, 42 and M. Lowry, 1979, 81-82. Aldus, however, was especially dedicated to Greek texts and greatly expanded the availability of Greek classics in print and was at the center of an informal Greek 'academy'. Ibid., 180-207, "Academic Dreams," in which Lowry argues that Aldus was more enthusiastic than successful in establishing an academy.

¹⁶ On the shift in the book market, see L. Gerulaitis, 23, 70 (Table 6). For a discussion of the broader economic and social issues in Venice in 1472-1473, see M. Lowry, 1991, 106-11.

¹⁷ M. Lowry, 1991, 111-13.

end of the century, its two hundred plus firms had printed more than three thousand editions, dwarfing production in all other European cities. In the 1470s the printing industry spread in the *terraferma*, to Padua and Treviso in 1471 and Vicenza in 1474.¹⁸

The Venetian State had a stake in this new, flourishing industry. After the initial monopoly granted to John of Speyer in 1469, the government intervened with various legal rights, called *privilegi* (privileges), intended to encourage the new industry and curb pirating. Some of these privileges were monopolies, but unlike the unusual case of John of Speyer, who was granted full rights to the entire industry in Venice, other monopolies were limited to the exclusive rights to produce a certain text or the works of a particular author. Other types of privileges were similar to patents, that is, sole rights to specific fonts, designs, or technological innovations.¹⁹ Venice was at the very forefront of copyright legislation, spurred by the peculiarities of the new industry.²⁰ Although often not enforced, Venetian privileges demonstrate contemporary concerns with authorship and the burgeoning idea of intellectual property as values that could be publicly recognized and also needed to be protected.

The development of a print culture brought attention to concerns paralleling (or perhaps arising from) the humanist emphasis on individual deeds and accomplishments and the concomitant phenomenon of artists' signatures. The desire to attribute a book to a specific person, whether he was the author in the true sense of the word or the individual who facilitated the text's publication, was also a concern of artists who signed their paintings. The printing industry's concerns with authorship and claiming responsibility

¹⁸ For early printing in the Venetian *terraferma*, see A. Colla, "Tipografi, Editori, e Libri a Padova, Treviso, Vicenza, Verona, Trento" in N. Pozza, ed., *La stampa degli incunaboli* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza Editore, 1984), 37-80.

¹⁹ On the different types of privileges and their early history, see H. F. Brown, 51-55.

²⁰ L. Gerulaitis, 33-34.

for a book are reflected in the use of colophons (which originated in the manuscript tradition) and the invention of the title page and printer's marks, each designed to address various individuals' roles in the completion of the book. Painters may have used the visual characteristics of the *cartellino*—its illusion of paper inscribed with styles of lettering associated with the Venetian press²¹—to refer in a general way to the printing industry's significance in their capital city, perhaps at the same time referring in a more complex way to the questions of authorship that surrounded printing.

The case of Albrecht Dürer sheds some light on the connection between the print industry and questions of authorship. The German artist Dürer was in Venice in 1505 and 1506, and seems to have been strongly influenced by his experience there, not only from a stylistic and technical point of view, but also through his experience of the social world of Venetian painters.²² Several incidents reveal Dürer's sensitivity to having his paintings and prints copied. In a letter he wrote from Venice to his humanist friend Wilibald Pirckheimer, the artist complained about criticisms leveled at him by local painters, who Dürer claimed hypocritically "copy my work in churches and wherever they can get find it."²³ Dürer also supplied a stern warning to potential copyists in the colophon of his woodcut *Life of the Virgin* of 1511: "Beware, you envious thieves of the work and invention of others, keep your thoughtless hands from these works of ours..."²⁴ According to Vasari, Dürer won a case he brought before the Venetian Signoria against the Bolognese printer Marcantonio Raimondi. Dürer accused Raimondi of copying his

²¹ See below, 78-86, on paleography and typography.

²² R. Fry, ed. *Dürer's Record of Journeys to Venice and the Low Countries* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995), 6.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ L. Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004), 39.

prints and his signature. He won a partial victory: the Signoria outlawed the forging of Dürer's signature, even though it allowed other artists to copy his images.²⁵

These two cases demonstrate the specific issues regarding the copying and authorship that the printing of images provoked, which in the Renaissance period was intimately tied to the printing of books.²⁶ Furthermore, the Signoria's ruling demonstrates the importance of signatures as they related to images in Venetian Renaissance society. Painters may have responded to these new concerns about authorship by signing their pictures; the role of the print culture in provoking this debate could have influenced them to sign in a way that evoked the printed word.

Printing had a more direct impact on the activities of miniature painters, who provide a significant social and professional link between the worlds of printers and that of artists. In the 1470s Venice experienced an increased demand for miniaturists. Even though the space allotted for decoration in printed books was less than in manuscripts, the larger numbers of printed books kept Venetian miniaturists busy through the first few decades of printing. Limitations of time and space, as well as the sustained relationships between miniaturists and printers, led to innovations in composition that would become standard formulas well after the era of hand-illuminated texts. These included the compact, symmetrical, classical architectural frontispiece and faceted initials set within square fields (*'littere mantiniane'*).²⁷ Although books' owners sometimes hired

²⁵ See J. Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 208-12.

²⁶ Early fifteenth-century woodcuts were often intended to be pasted into prayerbooks. Not until the sixteenth century were prints commonly made and sold independently from books, such as those by Dürer and Raimondi. An early example is Jacopo de' Barbari's monumental aerial view of Venice of 1500 (and a second version of 1505).

²⁷ L. Armstrong, *Renaissance Miniature Painters and Classical Imagery: The Master of the Putti and His Venetian Workshop* (London: Harvey Miller, 1981), 2 and idem., 1991, 189-200, describes various techniques employed to streamline the decorating process in the 1470s in Venice. Meiss called this type of

miniaturists, some printers also employed miniaturists as part of the printing shop, to execute miniatures and rubrication ordered by a buyer, or to have them painted on speculation.²⁸

Contact occurred not only in regard to miniaturists who specialized in hand-illumination and in the woodcut illustration of printed books, but through social contacts with humanist editors and printers. In 1475 Felice Feliciano, a scribe and antiquarian who was friendly with painters, ventured into printing.²⁹ Another notable example is the humanist and poet Raffaele Zovenzoni. He wrote a poem dedicated to Marco Zoppo praising his illusionistic skill, and Giovanni Bellini painted his portrait (fig. 29).³⁰ Zovenzoni also was in contact with the Veronese sculptor Antonio Rizzo and Giovanni's brother Gentile Bellini. With the advent of printing, Zovenzoni found a position as an editor for the Jenson press, as well as for the firms of Jenson's contemporaries and sometimes partners John of Cologne (Giovanni da Colonia) and Vindelinus of Speyer.³¹

Generally speaking, the familiarity that painters had with books is evident in many paintings where books are represented as attributes of saints or as embellishments

initial the *littera mantiniana*, arguing it was invented by Mantegna. See *Mantegna as Illuminator* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957). See also J. J. G. Alexander, "Initials in Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts: The Problem of the So-called 'Littera Mantiniana'" in *Studies in Italian Renaissance Manuscript Illumination* (London: Pindar, 2002), 169-98.

²⁸ Although patronage of miniatures for printed books sometimes came from the books' owners, it seems that some printers also employed miniaturists as part of the printing shop, to commission miniatures as ordered from a buyer or to have miniatures painted for books on speculation. See L. Armstrong, 1981, 3-5 and idem., 1991, in which Armstrong presents evidence that "printers and booksellers organized some of the hand embellishment for printed books prior to sale rather than, as in the more traditional situation, the buyer's arranging for the decoration after the purchase was guaranteed" (175).

²⁹ On Feliciano, see above, 53-58. For Feliciano as a printer, see also L. Armstrong, "Miniatures in Copies of Francesco Petrarca, *Libro degli Uomini Famosi*, Poiano, 1476, and the Lost Fresco Cycle in the Reggia Carrarese of Padua," *Studies of Renaissance Miniaturists in Venice* (London: Pindar Press, 2003), vol. 1, 175-212, and idem., "Marco Zoppo's *Parchment Book of Drawings* in the British Museum: Reflections on the 'all antica' Heads" in the same volume, 37-75.

³⁰ C. Gilbert, *Italian Art, 1400-1500: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980), 186-87. See above, p. 39.

³¹ M. Lowry, 1991, 54.

for portraits. As Jonathan Alexander noted, although books had long had a place in religious paintings, in the fifteenth century painters began to pay special attention to their physical characteristics as well as to the tools employed for copying them.³² One of the most recognized examples is that of Mantegna's *Saint Luke Altarpiece* (1453-54, Milan, Brera Gallery), commissioned by the reformed Benedictines at Santa Giustina, Padua. The polyptych shows various saints in the lateral panels and a *Pietà* over the main panel showing Saint Luke at his desk, presumably in the act of writing his Gospel. Mantegna reproduced a picture of a contemporary scribe at work, right down to the spatters of ink on the desk's underside and small wells of red and black ink.³³

Images of scholar saints, especially Saint Jerome, were popular in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These presumably conveyed the appearance of the furnishings and the display of a variety of scientific instruments, books, and papers in humanists' studies.³⁴ Several early *cartellini* appear in these paintings of scholars at study, such as Niccolò Colantonio's *Saint Jerome in his Study* (ca. 1445, fig. 82), Antonello da Messina's *Saint Jerome in his Study* (ca. 1476, fig. 55), and Bono da Ferrara, *Penitent Saint Jerome* (1440s, London, National Gallery). The inclusion of *cartellini* in these spaces allude to these bits of inscribed paper as part of the scholar's

³² J. J. G. Alexander, *The Painted Page: Italian Renaissance Book Illumination, 1450-1550* (New York: Prestel, 1994), 19.

³³ See above, pp. 40-46, for Mantegna's involvement with syllogists and scribes in his early career.

³⁴ For late medieval and Renaissance depictions of Saint Jerome in his study, see P. H. Jolly, "Jan van Eyck and Saint Jerome: A Study of Eyckian Influence on Colantonio and Antonello da Messina in Quattrocento Naples" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1976), H. Friedmann, *A Bestiary for Saint Jerome: Animal Symbolism in European Religious Art* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980), B. Ridderbos, *Saint and Symbol: Images of Saint Jerome in Early Italian Art* (Groninger, Netherlands: Bouma's Boekhuis, 1984), G. Barbera, *Antonello da Messina: San Girolamo nello Studio* (Naples: Electa, 2006), and B. Aikema and B. L. Brown, eds., *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian* (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), cat nos. 15-18. On humanists' studies in the Renaissance, see D. Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

environment, placed among books, notes, letters, and manuscripts, all materials necessary for studious activities. Their creases and sealing wax allude also to the folding and sealing of letters, an important literary form and scholarly activity among Renaissance humanists.³⁵ The fact that many of them are signed and that the motif itself gained currency as a locus for signatures attest to the Renaissance painter's desire to assert his own links with the literate, scholarly world of humanism.

The manufacture and availability of paper

The development of a print culture that would become so important to the humanist scholar's activities would not have been possible without the availability of a printing medium that was cheaper and more practical than parchment. Even though printers often used parchment for deluxe copies of certain editions, the success of the printing industry was contingent on the paper supply.³⁶ Although there is a chicken-and-egg debate regarding the increased manufacture of paper and the rise of woodcut printing and Gutenberg's press, there is no doubt that the paper industry had been established in Italy by the late thirteenth century as a result of contact with Arabic cultures in the

³⁵ Letter-writing became an important activity of humanists, beginning with Petrarch and continuing well into the sixteenth century, when scholars began publishing their letters in printed collections. Generally speaking, although this activity was significant both in terms of the scholarly circles in which painters of *cartellini* moved, and in terms of visual associations with *cartellini*, lacks the specific chronological parallel that the rise of the Veneto-Paduan school of book illumination and the rise of the Venice's printing industry had with the popularity of *cartellini*. An area for further investigation, however, might be portraits in which the sitter holds letters. Many of around the same time as the popularity of published collections of letters in the sixteenth century. For letter-writing in the Renaissance, see K. T. B. Butler, *The Gentlest Art in Renaissance Italy: An Anthology of Italian Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954); G. Constable, *Letters and Letter Collections* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976); F. Bethencourt and F. Egmond, eds., *Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); C. Clough, "The Cult of Antiquity: Letters and Letter Collections" in *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honor of Paul O. Kristeller*, ed. C. Clough (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), 33-67.

³⁶ J. J. G. Alexander, 1994, 36. Armstrong notes that many scholars have mistakenly assumed that paper copies were not illustrated. See "The Impact of Printing on Miniaturists in Venice after 1469" in S. Hindman, 1991, 189.

eastern Mediterranean and in Spain.³⁷ Before the invention of the printing press, there was a modest demand for paper in Europe for educational, mercantile, and record-keeping purposes. Not until the arrival of the press, however, did it become an acceptable substitute for parchment. The consequent demand led to manufacture on a scale that made paper relatively common and affordable. By the fifteenth century, paper had long been in limited use by Venetian businessmen, who, like merchants from other parts of Italy, promoted it as an alternative to parchment. Already in the middle of the fourteenth century, Fabriano was famous for its high-quality paper, and by the late fourteenth century, the industry had expanded substantially in Liguria, Lombardy, and the Veneto.³⁸ Paper mills were set up in Padua and Treviso in the second half of the fourteenth century, and this local supply of paper was one factor in attracting printers to Venice.³⁹ With the advent of the press in Venice, even more mills sprang up in northern Italy to meet its demands.

Even though the industry expanded substantially in conjunction with the printing industry, paper was still a valuable commodity, and the availability of high-quality paper was spotty. The shortage was felt even in 1373, almost a century before the first printing press in northern Italy, when the Venetian Senate outlawed the export of rags (the raw material of paper) from its territory.⁴⁰ Well into the sixteenth century, printers complained about the quality, quantity, and price of the supply.⁴¹ By many estimates, supplies of

³⁷ P. Schmidt, "The Multiple Image: The Beginnings of Printmaking, between Old Theories and New Approaches" in *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and their Public*, eds. P. Parshall and R. Schoch (Washington D. C., National Gallery of Art, 2005), 39-40.

³⁸ L. Febvre and H.-J. Martin, trans. D. Gerard, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800* (New York: Verso, 1997), 31-32.

³⁹ H. F. Brown, 24.

⁴⁰ L. Garulaitis, 12.

⁴¹ D. Landau and P. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 15, 17.

paper accounted for nearly half the total cost of printing an edition, that is, an amount roughly equivalent to the cost of months' worth of wages for skilled laborers to run the press as well as, in some cases, for well-educated scholars to edit the text.⁴² Paper was often included in contracts with investors, which stipulated that the investors supply the paper to cover up-front costs. Despite these problems, throughout the Renaissance period, high-quality Italian paper was considered the best in Europe, as is revealed in another of Albrecht Dürer's missives to Pirkheimer. The painter mentioned Pirkheimer's request for a ream of paper, among several other items for friends back home, like carnelian beads, feathers, and Greek books.⁴³ Dürer's shopping list speaks to the variety and abundance of the Venetian marketplace; the fact that the scholar wanted Venetian paper and that he counted it among such valuables is evidence of paper's high quality and value.

Painters shared scholars' interest in paper; during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, drawing became increasingly important in the artist's workshop. The growing availability and affordability of paper in the fourteenth century had an impact on artists' practice. Although drawing had been a part of the artist's training throughout the Middle Ages, the activity evolved into a vehicle for artistic creativity and a means to record, view, and exchange images of antique remains, the ideals that became central to artistic

⁴² L. Gerulaitis, 13; Lowry, 1991, 95; and B. Richardson, 169-70; see also M. Pollak, "Production Costs in Fifteenth-Century Printing" *Library Quarterly* 39 (1969): 318-33, in which the author estimates the costs of printing a 1486 edition of the works of Flavius Josephus by the Venetian printer Joannes Rubeus Vercellensis. His calculations are in units of labor-hours as opposed to currency; he cites labor costs as roughly equal to that of materials, although prices of materials would fall over the course of the century to constitute perhaps closer to one-third the cost of printing (327).

⁴³ R. Fry, 26. Although the artist tells his friend that he thinks that Venetian paper is not better than that which was available in Nuremburg, the letter nonetheless shows that Venetian paper was known abroad for its high quality.

activity in the period. As a result of these factors, paper was a Venetian commodity of particular importance and familiarity to painters.⁴⁴

The importance of the manufacture and sale of paper to the Venetian economy and its significance for workshop practices made the material an appropriate inclusion in Venetian paintings. As is often noted, the peculiar qualities of Venetian geography, history, and visual traditions had a bearing on the tastes of artists and patrons. The watery landscape and atmosphere of the lagoon; the Byzantine heritage of the city, most palpable at the religious center of the city, San Marco; the cosmopolitan population of the mercantile city, positioned between northern Europe, the Italian peninsula, various Mediterranean ports, and eastern trade and pilgrimage routes; and the Venetian marketplace with its great variety and quality of pigments all played a role in creating Venice's unique visual idiom.

Links have also been established between the mercantilism of Venetian society and Venetian artists' representation of local trades and products. For example, Venice's shipbuilding industry was reflected in the so-called ship's keel vault in churches throughout the Veneto; Venetian painters also frequently represented mirrors, another specialty of local craftsmen.⁴⁵ The manufacture of colored glass on the island of Murano spoke to Venetian's taste for saturated, jewel-like colors. Antonio and Bartolomeo Vivarini's paintings are characterized by these bold colors and the hard, sculptural quality of form; the Vivarini were themselves descended from glassmakers and often included "de Murano" in their signatures (fig. 30). Furthermore, Venetian painters and

⁴⁴ The importance of paper as a material associated with the visual arts will be further evaluated in chapter 3, in relation to artists' assertion of identity through the *cartellino*. See below, 141-44.

⁴⁵ K. Brown, *The Painter's Reflection: Self-Portraiture in Renaissance Venice, 1458-1625* (Florence: Olschki, 2000), 45-55.

glassmakers would have had contact through their visits to *vendecolori*, shops that sold pigments employed in painting and in coloring glass.⁴⁶ Although no such association has previously been made, I propose that this same kind of reference to other Venetian trades is at work in painters choosing to sign their names on slips of paper. The preeminence of Venetian books and paper provided painters with another visual motif that would allude to their connections with the city and its marketplace.

A similar instance of this phenomenon occurred at least once in the ancient world. In this case, a Greek mosaicist Hephaistion used a *cartellino* to sign a second-century B.C.E. pavement in the royal palace at Pergamon (fig. 31).⁴⁷ The fragment, now separated from the larger mosaic in which it originally appeared, was part of the border that once surrounded the central panel of the pavement. It depicts a rectangular piece of parchment attached to a white ground with dabs of red sealing wax at each corner (often a feature of *cartellini* as well). The lower right corner has torn loose from the wax and curls upward. The parchment is signed ΗΦΑΙΣΤΙΩΝ / ΕΠΟΙΕΙ ('Hephaistion was making me') and thus conforms to Pliny's claim that most ancient masters signed with the imperfect tense as a show of modesty.⁴⁸ The similarities between the mosaic fragment and the Renaissance *cartellino* are striking: both depict a similar object that the artist has used to incorporate his signature into the work, and both are virtuoso displays of illusionism, with the paper or parchment projecting outward. Furthermore, the choice of surface for the signature has significance in both cases: in Venice, the use of paper speaks to the

⁴⁶ B. Berrie and L. Matthew, "Venetian 'Colore': Artists at the Intersection of Technology and History" in D. A. Brown and S. Ferino-Pagden, eds., *Bellini, Giorgione, Titian and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting* (Washington, D. C.: National Gallery of Art, 2006), 302-03.

⁴⁷ K. Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 28-29. Thanks to Sarah Blake McHam for bringing the mosaic to my attention.

⁴⁸ This discussion of signatures appears in the preface to the *Natural History*.

manufacture, sale, and use of the material locally as fodder for the city's many printing presses, the mosaic alludes to Pergamon's important role as a center for the manufacture of parchment in antiquity. It was so well known for this industry that the city and the material were literally synonymous (a Latin word for parchment is *pergamena*).

Although there is no evidence that Renaissance artists could have known of this motif, we can draw parallels between the motivations that each artist would have had for using it.⁴⁹ The importance of parchment and paper for Pergamon and Venice, respectively, suggested their use as a motif for artists. How pleased Bellini or Mantegna might have been to know that they had independently, as if by their infusion with the classical spirit, arrived at a similar solution for signing as an ancient master.

Paleography and typography

Another way in which artists who inserted *cartellini* into their paintings seem to have been responding to the book industry is found in their imitation of contemporary developments in paleography, specifically the study of epigraphy, the subsequent revival of Roman majuscules in inscriptions and manuscripts, and the widespread adoption of the humanist script, or *lettera antica*.⁵⁰ These developments were intimately bound up with the development of typography, which was both influenced by revival of 'antique' letter

⁴⁹ K. Dunbabin, 29, states that part of the pavement from which this fragment was excavated in the late nineteenth century had been removed in antiquity, but I can find nothing in the literary record known in the Renaissance that describes the mosaic or any variations. I thank Ann Kuttner for her helpful response to my inquiry regarding the mosaic *cartellino*.

⁵⁰ On Renaissance paleography, see M. Meiss, "Toward a More Comprehensive Renaissance Paleography" *Art Bulletin* 42 (1960): 102-112, J. Wardrop, *The Script of Humanism: Some Aspects of Humanistic Script, 1460-1560* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), D. Covi, *The Inscription in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting* (New York: Garland Publishers, 1986), idem., "Lettering in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting" *Art Bulletin* 45 (1963): 1-17 and S. Zamponi, "Andrea Mantegna e la maiuscola antiquaria" in D. Banzato, A. De Nicolò Salmazo, and A. M. Spiazzi, eds., *Mantegna e Padova, 1445-1460* (Milan: Skira 2006), 73-79.

forms and helped disseminate them. The Florentines Niccolo Niccoli and Poggio Bracciolini, who, among others, first developed this style of miniscule in the early fifteenth century, based their miniscule on Petrarch's revision of the late medieval *bastarda* script. The motive for these changes was to achieve a more legible and antique letter style, even though the humanists' models for the *lettera antica* were actually Carolingian manuscripts.⁵¹ By the middle of the century, the humanist script had been adopted throughout the peninsula, enthusiastically so in the Veneto, which became the new focus of paleographic developments especially after the death of Poggio in 1459.⁵²

In the middle of the fifteenth century Renaissance paleography was also profoundly influenced by the study of Roman epigraphy. Studying, collecting, and recording ancient inscriptions were especially popular with antiquarians in the Veneto, who employed scribes and illuminators to compile and illustrate their collections.⁵³ Naturally scribes, especially those with antiquarian interests, were especially intrigued by antique inscriptions. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Feliciano compiled his own collection of inscriptions and also wrote the better part of two recensions of Giovanni Marcanova's *Collectio antiquitatum*.⁵⁴ The successful and prolific Paduan Bartolomeo Sanvito, and presumably other scribes in the Veneto, had contact with this circle and also had a hand in making copies of the sylloge of architect and antiquarian Fra Giocondo. Thus scribes bridged paleography and epigraphy by employing Roman epigraphic

⁵¹ On the development of the *lettera antica*, see J. Wardrop, 4-13; M. Davies, 1996, 47-51; and S. Morison, "Early Humanistic Script and the First Roman Type" *The Library* 24 (1943): 1-29; and J. J. G. Alexander, "The Humanistic Script" in *The Cambridge Illuminations: Ten Centuries of Book Production in the Medical West*, ed. P. Binski and S. Panayotova (London: Harvey Miller, 2005), 327-33.

⁵² J. Wardrop, 13.

⁵³ See above, 53-57.

⁵⁴ Biblioteca Vaticana Ms. 6852, dated 1463 and dedicated to Mantegna. Copies of Feliciano's sylloge are in the Biblioteca Marciana, cod. Lat. X 196 (3766) and Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, cod. 296; Marcanova's sylloges are in Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Cod. L. 515 (with a copy at Princeton University) and Bern, Bürgerbibliothek, Ms. B.42.

majuscules alongside humanist script; sylloges, with their drawings of antique monuments and imagined views of Rome, bridged epigraphy and manuscript illumination.⁵⁵

Feliciano and Sanvito were crucial figures in Renaissance paleography whose careers as scribes warrant brief discussion at this point. The earliest example of the Veronese Feliciano's autograph work dates to 1458, and he is documented as 'scriptor' in 1466, indicating his initial training as a scribe with a humanistic education.⁵⁶ From surviving letters and Feliciano's own writings, we know that he was an eccentric figure, a scribe, antiquarian, and poet, who, inspired by Ciriaco d'Ancona, developed an intense fascination with antiquity. He was in contact with the major Veneto humanist circles of the mid-fifteenth century and was a friend of artists Mantegna, Zoppo, and Giovanni Bellini.⁵⁷ He compiled a sylloge dated 1463, which included inscriptions taken from earlier sylloges by Ciriaco, Poggio, and others, and dedicated it to Mantegna. Feliciano also made drawings of antique remains; some examples of his draftsmanship illustrate the second recension (the Modena copy) of Giovanni Marcanova's sylloge, which he copied in Bologna ca. 1465 (fig. 32). The book also contains miniatures by Marco Zoppo and his workshop.

Feliciano famously wrote about a pseudo-archaeological excursion to find and record ancient inscriptions around the shores of Lake Garda undertaken with Mantegna, Marcanova, and another painter. In 1460, he wrote a treatise on the design of the Roman

⁵⁵ J. Wardrop, 8, 13-14

⁵⁶ C. Mitchell, "Felice Feliciano Antiquarius" *Proceedings of the British Academy* 47 (1961): 198-99.

⁵⁷ G. Fiocco, "Felice Feliciano amico degli artisti" *Archivio Veneto-Tridentino* 9 (1926): 188-99. Feliciano also collected drawings. See E. Karet, "Stefano da Verona, Felice Feliciano and the First Renaissance Collection of Drawings" *Arte Lombarda* 124 (1998): 31-51.

alphabet, another outcome of his epigraphic researches.⁵⁸ The text provides little instruction but offers models of well-proportioned Roman capitals, constructed using the circle and square. An important feature of Feliciano's capitals was their prismatic construction, making them project as three-dimensional forms (fig. 33). The monumentality of the faceted letters and the innovation they afforded in the design of initials led to their adoption first as hand-painted initials, and then in woodblock initials for printed books.⁵⁹ In a rare instance of a scribe coming to terms with the threat of printing and attempting to make a transition toward the new technology, Feliciano ventured into the printing industry.⁶⁰ In 1475 he entered into a partnership with Severino of Ferrara and the next year he and his business associate Innocente Zileto opened a press in Poiano, near Verona. Feliciano died a few years later, near Rome.

Unlike Feliciano, his slightly younger contemporary Sanvito had a long and rather distinguished career as a scribe, antiquarian, and sometime miniaturist. He spent his early career, during the late 1450s and 1460s, in his native Padua. An early example of Sanvito's work is a copy of Ptolemy's *Cosmographia* (fig. 34), commissioned by Jacopo Marcello as one of three diplomatic gifts sent to King René of Anjou in the 1450s.⁶¹ Around 1469 during the pontificate of the Venetian pope Paul II (Pietro Barbo) he went to Rome to join the household of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga. While there he exerted a profound influence on scribes active in Rome and Naples. Sanvito returned to the Veneto

⁵⁸ Original copy preserved in the Vatican Library, Codex Vat. Lat. 6852.

⁵⁹ M. Meiss, 1957, 68-69.

⁶⁰ Another example is Gerardo da Lisa, a scribe who opened the first press in Treviso in 1471. See A. Colla, 61.

⁶¹ For the history of the three manuscripts, see M. Meiss, 1957, who focuses on the Strabo (1459) and the *Passio Sancti Mauritii* (1453). For the Ptolemy, see G. Mariani Canova, *La miniatura a Padova dal medioevo al Settecento* (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, 1999), cat. no. 93. Meiss attributes miniatures in these books as the work of Mantegna. Although the hypothesis has gained little support in subsequent scholarship, it has stimulated scholarly interest in the miniatures. For the most up-to-date bibliography on the manuscripts, see D. Banzato et al. eds., cat. nos. 31a-d and 40a-b.

in 1501 and became canon of Monselice near Padua; his late work is marked by a shaky hand, the result of arthritis.⁶² Sanvito is credited with introducing the Roman Imperial capital into manuscripts copied in the Veneto. The circulation of these books, along with his long sojourn in Rome, helped to popularize his style throughout Italy. Also very influential was his ‘italic’ hand, a more compact version of the *lettera antica*, which Wardrop suggests may have inspired Aldus Manutius’s italic type.⁶³

Sanvito’s elite humanist patrons required him to collaborate frequently with miniaturists on their manuscripts, but he may have executed one drawing and several manuscripts’ miniatures himself. The earliest documentation of Sanvito’s activity is a contract dated October 1466 and written in his own hand, for which he and the painter Francesco Squarcione were witnesses. The contract was for an altarpiece to be painted for the patron Bernardo Lazara by Pietro Calzetta to be installed in the Chapel of Corpus Christi in the Santo, Padua. The altarpiece was to be modeled after a drawing by Nicolò Pizzolo, at the time in the possession of Squarcione; the contract included a copy of the drawing by Sanvito (fig. 35).⁶⁴ The scribe also sometimes had a hand in the illumination of the books he copied. In the years following James Wardrop’s seminal study on Sanvito, which focused on his activity as a scribe, scholars have identified several manuscripts for which Sanvito did all or part of the illumination; when he collaborated, it

⁶² On Sanvito, see J. Wardrop, 23-35, J. Ruyschaert, “Il copista Bartolomeo San Vito miniatore padovano a Roma dal 1469 al 1501” *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria* 109 (1986): 37-47, A. De la Mare, “Bartolomeo Sanvito da Padova, copista e miniatore” in G. Mariani Canova, 1999, 495-505, and S. De Kunert, “Un ignoto padovano e suo memoriale de’ primi anni del cinquecento (1505-1511)” *Bollettino del Museo Civico di Padova* 10 (1907): 1 ff, 64 ff.

⁶³ J. Wardrop, 35. See also N. Barker, “The Aldine Italic” in *Aldus Manutius and Renaissance Culture*, ed. D. S. Zeidberg (Florence: Olschki, 1998), 95-107 for a more recent and detailed analysis.

⁶⁴ See M. O’Malley, *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 201-5.

was often with Gaspare da Padova.⁶⁵ These activities confirming Sanvito's interest in antiquities are also revealed in his diary and through his contact with humanists and antiquarians like Aldus Manutius and Fra Giocondo. Sanvito carried out both the text and drawings for a copy of Fra Giocondo's sylloge made for Lorenzo de' Medici in the late 1480s.⁶⁶ Such manuscripts were crucial in the dissemination of antique epigraphic letter forms during the middle of the fifteenth century.⁶⁷

Renaissance paleography had a profound impact on the development of early typography. As noted above, the model for early incunabula was the manuscript book, so Italian typographers of the 1460s adapted the *lettera antica* and the Imperial Roman majuscule to form their Roman types. The first books printed by Venetian presses employed Roman types. It was not until the market crises of the 1470s when publishers sought profits in religious and vernacular texts, and deliberately turned to gothic types for them. Gothic type fonts were not only seen as more befitting of those genres of books, but they were more compact and therefore saved the printer production costs by requiring less paper. The Roman majuscule, however, remained the standard for humanist texts and thus was disseminated through printed texts produced in the publishing houses of Venice. The two most successful printers during the first fifty years of Venetian printing, Jenson and Aldus, were specifically identified with the beauty of their Roman types; Aldus was the first Italian printer to dispense with the gothic type entirely.⁶⁸ Aldus had a new Greek type cut, and one of his Roman types, cut by Il Griffo (Francesco Bologna) and first

⁶⁵ For manuscript illuminations attributed to Sanvito and Gaspare, see G. Mariani Canova, 1999, cat. nos. 122-124, 131, 134; Sanvito's other attributions include cat. nos. 121, 126-130, 168-170.

⁶⁶ J. Ruysschaert, 42.

⁶⁷ S. Zamponi, "Andrea Mantegna e la maiuscola antiquaria" in D. Banzato, et al., eds., 73.

⁶⁸ L. Gerulaitis, 13-14.

employed in 1495 for Pietro Bembo's *De Aetna*, is known today by the title or author of the book for which it was first employed.⁶⁹

The flourishing of Venetian typography and the development of antique lettering by scribes in the Veneto seems to have had an impact on painters, visible in the kinds of letters they often employed on their *cartellini*. Documented contact among scribes, epigraphers, printers, and artists involving the dissemination of letter forms and the production of books reveals what must have been a complex web of relationships among these professions. Such contact, along with the shared interest in the revival of the antique, led to the exchange of visual motifs and approaches. As discussed in the previous chapter, Mantegna was in contact with epigraphers and scribes during his early career in Padua, and their influence was revealed in the way he inscribed his paintings. These included Marcanova, Feliciano, and probably Sanvito, who would have had common acquaintances among Padua's antiquarians. Sanvito's Roman workshop employed the miniaturists Gaspare Padovano and Lauro Padovano. According to the Venetian connoisseur Marcantonio Michiel, Lauro had collaborated with Giovanni Bellini on an altarpiece dedicated to John the Evangelist for Santa Maria della Carità in the late 1460s.⁷⁰ Bellini may have also known Feliciano, who wrote an effusive letter praising the painter (perhaps just a rhetorical exercise) around 1475.⁷¹ Debra Pincus has recently and convincingly argued that Giovanni Bellini employed italic script for the signature on his portrait of Pietro Bembo (fig. 36) as a means of referring to the humanist's relationship with the Aldus Manutius, the first printer to employ italic type.

⁶⁹ M. Lowry, 1979, 135 and M. Davies, *Aldus Manutius: Printer and Publisher of Renaissance Venice* (London: British Library, 1995), 39.

⁷⁰ M. Michiel, *Notizia d'opere del disegno* (Florence: Edifir, 2000), 59.

⁷¹ G. Fiocco, 193-94.

Thus the specific forms of the letters held particular meaning to artist and sitter, both of whom demonstrated sophisticated tastes and learning in their associations with humanist penmanship.⁷²

In representative examples of Venetian *cartellini* in different decades of the fifteenth century, one can trace the changing styles of lettering, beginning with Bartolomeo Vivarini's early use of a narrow capital closer to Roman Republican lettering which had been adopted earlier in fifteenth-century Florence (figs. 37, 38), to Mantegna's and Zoppo's capitals imitating those of Feliciano and Sanvito, to the highly regular capitals of Carpaccio and Giovanni Bellini, which were likely influenced by the standardization of Roman type in the last two decades of the fifteenth century.⁷³

Conversely, the use of gothic lettering was exceptionally rare on *cartellini*. I know of only two examples: Michele Giambono's *Saint James Polyptych* (ca. 1455, Venice, Accademia), inscribed "MICHAL GANBONO PIXIT" and Jacopo da Valenza's *Madonna and Child Enthroned* (?1502, Serravalle di Vittore (Veneto), San Giovanni), which also exhibits stylistic anachronisms in its treatment of form and space. This suggests that painters employing *cartellini* were trying to evoke the lettering specifically associated with humanist scholarship and its appearance in manuscripts and in print.

Therefore, painters were using antique lettering, particularly the imperial Roman capital, which they seem to have been adapting from paleographic studies and printing, not directly from epigraphs. In some cases, these visual sources were made even more

⁷² D. Pincus, "Giovanni Bellini's Humanist Signature: Pietro Bembo, Aldus Manutius and Humanism in Early Sixteenth-Century Venice" *Artibus et Historiae* 58 (2008): 89-119, esp. 100-5.

⁷³ Marco Zoppo's capitals, especially in the early example of the Louvre *Madonna and Child*, are not as regular as Mantegna's (the Z, for example, is very wide, while the P is more narrow), but are nonetheless close in style to Feliciano's in the design if not in the proportion. As discussed in the previous chapter, Mantegna's early inscriptions show a variety of lettering styles. See above, 53-59.

apparent by the inclusion of decorative motifs commonly used by scribes. The Vicentine painter Giovanni Buonconsiglio (also called Il Maresalco) frequently signed with a large *cartellino* carrying his name and a small motif of a stem with three leaves. Likewise Carpaccio's signatures are also often accompanied by a small drawing of a leaf (fig. 39). These foliate embellishments are similar to decorations used by Feliciano and Sanvito in their manuscripts for frontispieces and initials.⁷⁴ Buonconsiglio often made the first letter of the inscription on his *cartellini* (the I of his first name) larger than the other letters, perhaps in imitation of decorative initials in manuscripts and printed books (fig. 40). Buonconsiglio seemed to have intended a reference to the book industry in the appearance of the inscription, the style of lettering, and the use of paper as the bearer of his signature. We can conclude that painters, through the type of lettering they employed on *cartellini*, were both influenced by, and making references to, the humanist visual culture of books.

The Veneto-Paduan school of miniaturists

The most common way through which artists found themselves connected with printers and scribes was in the decoration of manuscripts and printed books.⁷⁵ In the middle of the century the Paduan school developed its own distinctive classicizing miniature style, which was subsequently popularized in Venice, by miniaturists like the

⁷⁴ See J. Wardrop, plates 9, 10, 13, 21, 27, 32.

⁷⁵ The motifs that are especially relevant to my discussion appear in both manuscripts and incunables. Since the continuity between hand-illumination of incunables and manuscripts has been demonstrated, my discussion of miniatures of the period in question will make little distinction between the two types of books. See S. Hindman, 1991, 1-18.

so-called “Putti Master.”⁷⁶ While the situation differed in other centers of publishing, the rise of the printed book in Venice meant an increased demand for the services of miniaturists in the 1470s and 1480s. At the same time, the *cartellino* became common in Venetian painting. Professional ties between miniaturists and painters, along with fluid boundaries between these professions in the period, suggest that an inscribed parchment or paper motif may have been adopted by painters as a result of these links.

Venice and Padua were the primary centers of manuscript production in the Veneto in the first half of the fifteenth century and functioned as second-tier centers of illumination behind Florence and Milan.⁷⁷ Documentation and surviving works related to native illuminators in Venice and Padua before 1469 are rare, with the notable exceptions of Cristoforo Cortese (active ca. 1400-ca. 1440) and Leonardo Bellini of Venice, the nephew and student of Jacopo and cousin of Giovanni and Gentile.⁷⁸ The types of books produced in Venice, *ducali* (books presented to a newly elected doge), *mariegoli* (guild regulations), and liturgical books perpetuated a rather conservative Gothic style in the city until the advent of printing.

⁷⁶ On the Putti Master, see L. Armstrong, 1981; idem., 1991, G. Mariani Canova, “Le origini della miniatura rinascimentale veneta e il Maestro dei Putti (Marco Zoppo?)” *Arte Veneta* 20 (1966): 73-86; idem., 1999, 295-336; idem., *La miniatura veneta del Rinascimento, 1450-1500* (Venice: Alfieri, 1969).

⁷⁷ On manuscript and book illumination in Venice and the Veneto during late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, see the seminal text by G. Mariani Canova, 1969 and idem., 1999. Jonathan J. G. Alexander has also made several important contributions to the field, collected in his *Studies in Italian Renaissance Illumination* (2002). Lilian Armstrong’s scholarship has illuminated the importance of the illustration of printed books in the third quarter of the fifteenth century in Venice. See her collected essays, *Studies of Renaissance Miniaturists in Venice*. 2 vols. (London: Pindar Press, 2003) and L. Armstrong, 1981. Additional studies by these authors include G. Mariani Canova, “La bottega di Francesco Squarcione e i miniatori” in A. De Nicolò Salmazo, ed., *Francesco Squarcione: ‘pictorium gymnasiarcha singularis’* (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 1999), 217-32; idem., “Marco Zoppo e la miniatura” in *Marco Zoppo, Cento 1433-1478 Venezia: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi sulla pittura del Quattrocento padano*, ed. B. G. Vigi (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1993), 121-35; J. J. G. Alexander, 1994 (with essays by Mariani Canova and Armstrong). Another important contribution, particularly in the relationships between painters and miniaturists that it outlines, is M. Bonicatti, *Aspetti dell’umanesimo nella pittura veneta dal 1455 al 1515* (Rome: Cremonese, 1964).

⁷⁸ On this period in Venetian illumination, especially the work of Cortese, see G. Mariani Canova, “Miniatura e pittura in età tardogotica” in M. Lucco, 1989, vol. 1, 193-222.

Although this style persisted to some degree until the last quarter of the quattrocento, the middle of the century in Padua saw a period of innovation and development toward a distinctly classical style that would last until the end of the century.⁷⁹ Paduan artists were at the avant-garde of innovations in miniature painting, catering to local humanists in the university town. Francesco Squarcione's school, which included miniature painters, was a focal point of Padua's modern painting style, characterized by classicism and influenced by local humanists. It produced Mantegna, one of the most successful antiquarian artists of the Renaissance.⁸⁰ The arrivals of Girolamo da Cremona and Franco dei Russi in the early 1460s helped to invigorate the miniaturists' profession.⁸¹ Both miniaturists were employed in the late 1450s in Ferrara on the Bible of Borso d'Este, but Girolamo had probably trained in Francesco Squarcione's workshop in the early 1450s before his Ferrarese sojourn. Franco dei Russi, a native Mantuan, spent several years in the Veneto before leaving in the early 1470s to work in Federico da Montefeltro's scriptorium in Urbino. The two brought to the Veneto the Ferrarese taste for landscapes, jewel motifs, and rich colors.⁸²

Although some of the most talented miniaturists working in Padua in the 1450s are difficult to identify by name, the quality and influence of their work are clear. The most outstanding manuscripts of the period were those commissioned as gifts for King René d'Anjou by Jacopo Marcello, a Venetian patrician and governor of Padua. They include a copy of Guarino da Verona's Latin translation of Strabo's *Geographia* (1459,

⁷⁹ G. Mariani Canova, 1966, 73.

⁸⁰ On Squarcione and the importance of his school, see above, 33-45.

⁸¹ L. Armstrong, 1991, 176-77.

⁸² The period saw significant exchange between Paduan and Ferrarese miniaturists. See M. Salmi, "Riflessioni sulla civiltà figurativa di Ferrara nei suoi rapporti con Padova durante il primo Rinascimento" *Rivista dell'Arte* 34 (1959): 19-48.

Albi, Médiathèque Municipale Pierre-Amalric, ms 77) and the *Passio sancti Mauritii* (1453, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms 940). The diplomatic function of these gifts and the status of their recipient dictated the highest quality craftsmanship.⁸³ The illustrated manuscript of Strabo features two dedication scenes, one of Guarino presenting his text to Marcello (fig. 41) and the other of Marcello presenting the book to René (fig. 42), each in the modern, classicizing style that had become current in Padua in Squarcione's and Mantegna's circles. The decorated initials are also the first examples of the faceted Roman letter (Meiss's *littera mantiniana*) that is related to Feliciano's epigraphic research as presented slightly later in the *Alphabetum Romanum* (fig. 43).⁸⁴

These manuscripts signaled the primacy of Padua in the development of a modern school of miniature painting in the Veneto. In the view of the noted manuscript expert Giordana Mariani Canova, the illustrated page was the meeting point between the figurative and literary worlds, and pivotal to humanists' goal of achieving a unified approach to cultural revival.⁸⁵ Humanists' taste in the Veneto afforded particular importance to the aesthetic qualities of the books that they collected, produced, and commissioned. This is evident not only in their illustration, but also in the care that early printers working in Venice took in producing attractive volumes, which were large with beautiful and legible type and ample margins. Moreover, decorated deluxe texts

⁸³ On these manuscripts, see above, 81, n. 61.

⁸⁴ M. Meiss, 1957, 72-73, argues that the *littera mantiniana* and nearly contemporary inscriptions on Mantegna's paintings demonstrate a more advanced, proportional letter than those of Feliciano's *Alphabetum Romanum*, and therefore the direction of influence was from Mantegna to Feliciano.

⁸⁵ G. Mariani Canova, 1969, 11-12.

functioned as status symbols of the intellectual elite, which in Venice generally meant a group that also comprised the social and political elite.⁸⁶

The Veneto-Paduan style flourished in the 1470s because of the expanded possibilities offered by the printed book, but by the 1490s, the frequency of hand-painted miniatures was on the decline. This was part of a general shift in the printed book industry to reduce production costs in the increasingly competitive market in Venice. Whereas printers in the early period had been motivated to produce beautiful books that could compete with illuminated manuscripts, printers found that their customers in the ever-growing reading public preferred economy to attractiveness. Although miniaturists continued to decorate manuscripts and printed books for highly selective patrons into the sixteenth century, producing large folios with wide margins for decoration in large editions was no longer viable. Venetian printers had already introduced the use of woodcut border decoration and initials in the 1480s, but by the 1490s, full-page figural illustrations became preferred. In the last decade of the fifteenth century, Venetian presses produced some four hundred illustrated books.⁸⁷ A notable example, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, was published by Aldus in 1499. The book, a fantastic love story with antiquarian themes, is illustrated with high-quality woodcuts and remarkable for the close correspondence between text and images, indicating collaboration between the author, the elusive Francesco Colonna, and the woodcut designer, who remains anonymous but must have been an artist of some talent.⁸⁸ Apparently miniaturists who

⁸⁶ M. L. King, *Venetian Humanism in the Age of Patrician Dominance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

⁸⁷ See Prince d'Essling, *Les livres à figures vénitiens de la fin du XVe siècle et du commencement du XVIe siècle* (Florence: Olschki, 1907-14), 6 vols., for a catalogue of early Venetian illustrated books.

⁸⁸ On the relationship between the text and the woodcuts, see G. Pozzi, "Il *Polifilo* nella storia del libro illustrato" in *Giorgione e l'umanesimo Veneziano*, ed. R. Pallucchini (Florence: Olschki, 1981), vol. 1, 71-

did hand-painted illuminations, like the Putti Master and Benedetto Bordon, also became involved making woodcut designs. Before the early years of the sixteenth century, printed images were intimately bound up with book printing, although by the end of the century, Venetan artists like Mantegna and Jacopo de'Barbari were notable exceptions, making prints independent of books.⁸⁹ Therefore, the close connections between the visual artists and the book industry persisted into the early decades of the sixteenth century in Venice and the Veneto.

The architectural title page and the *cartiglio strappato*

The Veneto-Paduan version of the modern Renaissance miniature style was rooted in the archeological approach to antiquity in the Veneto, as opposed to the more philosophical attitudes in Florence. In contrast to the typical Florentine use of author portraits to illustrate the frontispieces of humanist texts, Venetan miniaturists sought to evoke the text's antiquity by representing imaginative renditions of classical monuments, specifically in the architectural frontispiece.⁹⁰ This motif, which became characteristic of Veneto-Paduan miniatures in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, generally consists of symmetrical classicizing architectural frame of columns resting on a plinth and

107. See also H. Szepe, "Desire in the Printed Dream of Poliphilo" *Art History* 19 (1996): 370-92; M. Gallo, "Aldo Manuzio e l'*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* del 1499" *Storia dell'Arte* 66 (1989): 143-57; and P. F. Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 207-22.

⁸⁹ Originally, woodcuts served as guides for miniaturists who, because of the speed at which books were printed, used various shortcuts to produce hand-painted miniatures. L. Armstrong, 1981, 26-29 and idem., "The Hand-Illumination of Printed Books" in J. J. G. Alexander, 1994, 45-46. For the close relationship between print (especially woodcuts) and the printed book in the Renaissance, see D. Landau and P. Parshall, 33-38.

⁹⁰ G. Mariani Canova, "Illuminated Miniatures – Vehicles for Antiquity" in *In the Light of Apollo: The Italian Renaissance and Greece*, ed. M. Gregori (Athens: Hellenic Culture Organization, 2003), 258-60. On the classical tradition of author portraits and their revival for pagan authors in fifteenth-century manuscripts, see J. Kubiski, "Uomini Illustri: The Revival of the Author Portrait in Renaissance Florence" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1993).

supporting an arch or pediment, all of which surround the block of text.⁹¹ It ultimately derived from illustrations in sylloges and was therefore firmly rooted in the antiquarian tastes of the Veneto. Scholars have cited drawings by Feliciano and his fellow Veronese architect and antiquarian Fra Giocondo that feature inscribed sarcophagi or altars as the inspiration for frontispieces and title pages with a symmetrical, classicizing architectural frame.⁹² One example that shows this development from drawings of inscribed monuments to the architectural title page is Feliciano's frontispiece for the Modena copy of Giovanni Marcanova's *Quaedam antiquitatum fragmenta* (fig. 44). It depicts a Roman stone tomb monument with an arched lid and inscriptions on one of its faces. Instead of a true Roman inscription, however, we read the title of the book and date.⁹³ From this model, illuminators began to use a self-consciously classical architectural vocabulary, which often deliberately evoked a Roman triumphal arch or gateway to frame the frontispiece's text (see fig. 45). Such motifs were occasionally repeated at other junctures in the text, such as the beginning of a chapter, but in almost every case, the choice of location suggests a purposeful allusion to a figurative gateway into the text.⁹⁴ The popularity of the device in northern Italy demonstrates the regional taste to evoke an antique sensibility as opposed to provide a visualization of the text.⁹⁵ The architectural frontispiece was especially important for the hand-illumination of printed books, such as

⁹¹ The most comprehensive study of the motif is L. Andrews, "Pergamene strappate e frontespizi: i frontespizi architettonici nell'epoca di primi libri a stampa" *Arte Veneta* 55 (1999): 7-29.

⁹² M. Corbett, "The Architectural Title Page" *Motif* 12 (1964): 49-52.

⁹³ See G. Mariani Canova, *La miniatura a Padova*, cat. no. 99. In this case, the content of the inscription relates to the image insofar that it is a generalized representation of a type of monument that Marcanova had researched for the epigraphs contained in the text.

⁹⁴ J. J. G. Alexander, *Italian Renaissance Illuminations* (New York: G. Braziller, 1977), 19.

⁹⁵ This idea is tied up with the *paragone* between painting and poetry. In this sense, the humanist reader did not want imagery to compete with the text, but to harmonize with it. See L. Armstrong, 1981, 51.

the work of the Putti Master and his associate the Master of the London Pliny.⁹⁶

Miniature painters seem to have sought an apposite visual vocabulary appropriate to the articulating a new sort of introduction to manuscripts and printed books, although it should be noted that the antiquarian architectural ‘gateway’ was employed in non-classical texts as well as those written by pagan authors.⁹⁷

The early history of the architectural frontispiece has been linked to Squarcione’s school because of compositional characteristics it shares with the Squarcionesque Madonna painting, which feature the Virgin shown in half length behind a stone parapet on which the Christ child is posed, all surrounded by classicizing architectural elements like those of the architectural frontispiece (fig. 18).⁹⁸ Supporting the connection is not only the common Paduan origin of the compositions, but also, more specifically, the links between Squarcione’s students and contemporary Venetan syllogists. As discussed in the previous chapter, the most modern developments in painting took place around Squarcione and his pupil Mantegna, largely due to Donatello’s influence and the rich local antiquarian culture. Epigraphers and antiquarians like Feliciano, Marcanova, and Fra Giocondo influenced Paduan painters of the mid-fifteenth century; I argue that the close associations between epigraphers, antiquarians, and artists in Padua led to artists’ adoption of the *cartellino* as a reference to antiquarians’ habits of collecting ancient inscriptions by transcribing them onto paper or parchment. Therefore the architectural

⁹⁶ On the Master of the London Pliny, see L. Armstrong, 1981, 30-49; G. Mariani Canova, *La miniatura a Padova*, 353-6; J. J. G. Alexander, 1994, cat. nos. 28, 46, 84, 90-92, 94-95; T. D’Urso, “Ancora due codici per il ‘Maestro del Plinio di Londra a Napoli’” *Rivista di Storia della Miniatura* 4 (1999): 151-60; B. Bentivoglio-Ravasio, “Maestro del Plinio di Londra” in *Dizionario Biografico dei Miniatori Italiani*, ed. M. Bollati (Milan: S. Bonnard, 2004), 642-51.

⁹⁷ L. Armstrong, 1981, 51, 19-22.

⁹⁸ M. Bonicatti, 8-15.

frontispiece, the Squarcionesque type of Madonna paintings, and the *cartellino* all seem to derive from the same circle of artists.

A variation of the architectural frontispiece, the *cartiglio strappato*, also shares characteristics with Squarcionesque painting. The *cartiglio strappato* ('torn scroll') is an illusionistic device that conceives of the text as a folio of parchment attached to the front of the architectural frame. A Paduan illuminator, the Tiptoft Master (named after his patron, an English student at Padua's Studium in the late 1450s) was the first to employ the device, which was then popularized by the Putti Master, a Paduan miniaturist who was active in Venice in the 1470s. Later artists like Girolamo da Cremona and Benedetto Bordon would develop a variation of the *cartiglio strappato* that de-emphasizes the architectural framework, enriching the composition with jewels and landscape scenes (fig. 46). The *cartiglio strappato* shares with Squarcionesque painting the taste for illusionistic, projecting elements, like garlands, fruit, and *cartellini*; the *cartellino* is especially relevant because it also creates the illusion of an inscribed surface of paper or parchment. The visual vocabulary they have in common suggests contact between Paduan painters and miniaturists.

The use of such similar devices in both monumental and miniature painting can be explained by contact between the professions, manifested most clearly in instances of figure painters executing (or overseeing within the workshop) commissions for miniatures. We know that a number of Squarcione's students, like Giorgio Schiavone, Carlo Crivelli, Dario da Treviso, and Marco Zoppo, worked secondarily as miniaturists, and that two students, Girolamo da Cremona and Giovanni Vendramin, worked solely as illuminators and often used the *cartiglio strappato*. Maurizio Bonicatti has even argued

that miniature painting was the foundation of the “Squarcionesque” humanistic painting style.⁹⁹ Mariani Canova has attributed one miniature to the young Mantegna, namely the *Christ Child* in a manuscript of Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Chronicon* dated 1450 (f. 13v, Venice, Marciana Library, ms Lat. IX, 1=3496), copied from a Carolingian manuscript brought to Padua from Basel by bishop Pietro Donato.¹⁰⁰

The Bellini workshop was also involved in miniature painting. Jacopo trained his nephew Leonardo Bellini, who was one of the most successful Venetian miniaturists of the mid-quattrocento. Jacopo and his workshop have also been connected with the *Passio sancti Mauritii* commissioned by Jacopo Marcello in 1457, particularly the standing figure of Saint Maurice (fig. 47) and the profile portrait of Marcello (fig. 48).¹⁰¹ A few illuminations have also been attributed to the young Giovanni Bellini, who in the late 1450s, during the period of intense activity and development in Paduan miniature painting, was in Padua working on the Gattamelata altarpiece with his father and brother Gentile. The two dedication scenes and some of the faceted initials in the Strabo manuscript commissioned by Jacopo Marcello in Padua in 1459 have been convincingly attributed to the young Giovanni Bellini, as has an author portrait, recently rediscovered and dated around 1475, for a manuscript collection of the humanist Raffaele Zovenzoni’s poems, *Istriasi* (fig. 29).¹⁰²

⁹⁹ On Squarcione and Paduan miniature painting, see G. Mariani Canova, “La bottega di Francesco Squarcione e i miniatori”, 217-32 and M. Bonicatti, 1964. On Giovanni Vendramin, see G. Mariani Canova, “Nuovi contributi per Giovanni Vendramin, miniatore padovano” *Miniatura* 1 (1988): 81-109.

¹⁰⁰ D. Banzato et al., eds., 64, cat. no. 17.

¹⁰¹ D. Banzato et al., eds., cat. no. 40a-b.

¹⁰² C. Joost-Gaugier, “A Pair of Miniatures by a Panel Painter: The Earliest Works of Giovanni Bellini?” *Paragone* 30/357 (1979): 48-71 and J. Fletcher, “The Painter and the Poet: Giovanni Bellini’s Portrait of Raffaele Zovenzoni Rediscovered” *Apollo* 134 (1991): 153-58. Joost-Gaugier’s attribution was accepted and supported by Mariani Canova, *La miniatura a Padova*, 220.

All these painters connected with miniature painting, except Dario da Treviso, used *cartellini* to sign their panel paintings. Their activity, it should be noted, was not marginal, but included some of the most forward developments in book illumination in Italy during the quattrocento. The preeminence of Padua in these developments and the activity of the aforementioned painters there in the 1450s and 1460s not only help to explain stylistic confluences between the two media, but also account for painters' use of *cartellini* as the vehicle for their signatures. These artists, by using a fictive slip of inscribed paper or parchment to sign their paintings, may have been evoking their activities as miniaturists. By placing their names directly on materials associated with these activities, they implied their own involvement in the manufacture of books.

Marco Zoppo

Marco Zoppo is an outstanding figure in the interplay between the worlds of the artist and the book because he was active as a painter, miniaturist, and designer of woodcuts, and his career and activities touch upon each of the broad topics discussed in this chapter. He began his documented career in Padua with Francesco Squarcione, and thereafter had contact with miniaturists as well as with humanists and patrons of books. He lived intermittently in Venice during the early years of printing, decorated several manuscripts, and designed woodcuts for a printed book. Significantly, Zoppo, along with Mantegna, Jacopo and Giovanni Bellini, and Bartolomeo Vivarini, was crucial to bringing the *cartellino* to Venice from its point of origin in Padua. He used a *cartellino* to sign three of twenty-four surviving paintings.¹⁰³ Through his example I hope to

¹⁰³ He signed another four paintings with epigraphic signatures. See L. Armstrong, 1976, cat. nos. 8, 14, 18, and 22.

demonstrate that the contact between professions played a role in the use of the *cartellino*, although I recognize that not all painters of *cartellini* were directly involved in the production of books. Painters in the Veneto would have been fully conscious of the benefits of making overt references to the book industry, drawing a relationship between art and learning. The *cartellino* was a means of achieving this effect, and in the last quarter of the fifteenth century became a kind of trademark of Venetan painters.

Like his friend Mantegna, Zoppo was a student and adopted son of Francesco Squarcione, the great entrepreneurial teacher of mid-fifteenth-century Padua. Zoppo was born near Bologna in the town of Cento, and is first documented there in 1452 when he was commissioned to gild a statue of the Virgin.¹⁰⁴ The next surviving documents deal with his adoption agreement with Squarcione (1455), which was dissolved within a few months. According to his classification as “master” in the document of 1452, Zoppo had had some training in Bologna prior to entering Squarcione’s studio in his early twenties, but his surviving paintings reveal that he fully absorbed the Squarcionesque style in the two years he worked in the studio. During this time he befriended Mantegna and Felice Feliciano. Zoppo’s friendship with the scribe is documented in a letter in which Feliciano compared Zoppo to the ancient painter Euphranor, and complained about the painter’s ferocious dogs.¹⁰⁵

His earliest known painting is the *Madonna and Child* in the Louvre (fig. 18), which probably dates to 1455. The painting is not dated, but based on the signature (“OPERA DEL ZOPPO DI SQUARCIO / NE”) and style, it likely belongs to his Paduan period or shortly thereafter. All Zoppo’s signed paintings after this date refer to his

¹⁰⁴ B. Giovannuccio Vigi, ed., 37.

¹⁰⁵ L. Armstrong, *The Paintings and Drawings of Marco Zoppo* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1976), 9-10 and document XIII, 333-34.

Bolognese origin rather than to his master. The legal proceedings ending Zoppo's adoption by Squarcione were carried out in Venice at the end of 1455. The next document tracing Zoppo's activity or location dates to 1461, when he was back in Bologna. There he executed a triptych for the chapel of the Collegio di Spagna in San Clemente (fig. 49) and a Crucifix in San Giuseppe fuori Porta Saragozza. By 1463 the painter had probably returned to Venice, since he was working for a Venetian patron at that date. He executed two major altarpieces there before the end of the decade, the high altarpiece for the church of Santa Giustina, Venice, dated 1468,¹⁰⁶ and an altarpiece for San Giovanni Battista, Pesaro, signed on a *cartellino* inscribed, "MARCO ZOPPO DA BOLO / GNIA PINSIT MCCCCLXXI / IN VENEXIA" (fig. 50).¹⁰⁷

Zoppo also left behind a large corpus of drawings, including original compositions and miscellaneous copies or interpretations of others' paintings and prints. Many of these drawings were once bound together in a sketchbook from which survive eleven drawings and the so-called *Parchment Book* of drawings in the British Museum (figs. 51, 52). Zoppo's interest in drawing and his probable conception of them as finished objects collected in books relates to his contact with Paduan and Venetian artists of the mid-fifteenth century. Jacopo Bellini assembled two large albums of drawings, unusual at the time because they were supposedly not conceived of as model-books or

¹⁰⁶ The altarpiece survives only in a few fragments of the lateral figures dispersed in the National Gallery, London, Walters Art Museum, and Ashmolean Museum, but was documented by Francesco Sansovino in 1581. See M. Lucco "Marco Zoppo nella pittura veneziana" in B. Giovanuccio Vigi, ed., 109-14.

¹⁰⁷ This altarpiece is also fragmentary, with the main panel in Berlin and the remaining fragments in the Museo Civico, Pesaro, the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, and Fondazione Cini, Venice. For a reconstruction, see P. Humfrey, "Marco Zoppo: La pala di Pesaro" in B. Giovanuccio Vigi, ed., 71-76. The painting is closely related to Giovanni Bellini's Pesaro altarpiece; which of them came first is a matter of debate. See *ibid.* and L. Armstrong, 1976, 75-110.

preparatory studies, but as finished pictures.¹⁰⁸ Squarcione's method of training pupils is also relevant, since he focused primarily on their mastery of drawing after his collection of modern and antique pictures and sculptures.

Zoppo's tenure in Squarcione's shop likely gave him experience in manuscript illumination and printmaking. Several of Squarcione's other students were active as miniaturists, and we can assume that miniature painting was part of his studio instruction. Another of Squarcione's pupils opened the first printing press in Padua in 1471.¹⁰⁹ We also know that Squarcione owned a copy of Pollaiuolo's engraving of the *Battle of the Ten Nudes* and a design for a print has been attributed to Squarcione himself, demonstrating an interest in (if not participation in) printing in the Padua studio. Therefore it is possible that Zoppo could have learned printing techniques (or at least design principles) during his apprenticeship.¹¹⁰

Zoppo worked as a miniaturist and a designer of woodcuts during sojourns in Venice and Bologna, although there is no direct evidence of this kind of activity during his early career. In both professions he collaborated with Feliciano. As a scribe, Feliciano was naturally deeply involved in the production of manuscripts; as noted above, he was also active as an epigrapher and illustrator of sylloges. Zoppo collaborated with Feliciano on his second recension of Marcanova's sylloge in Bologna ca. 1465. Feliciano copied the text and executed several drawings, while Zoppo has been credited with the illustrated mythological scenes and fantastic views of ancient Rome (fig. 53). He apparently

¹⁰⁸ For more detailed analysis of Jacopo's albums of drawings and extensive illustrations, see C. Eisler, *The Genius of Jacopo Bellini* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989), 77ff. On the function of the drawings, see below, 144, n. 76.

¹⁰⁹ A. Colla, 54-55. Lorenzo Canozzi, also known as Lorenzo del Coro because of his work alongside his brother Cristoforo on the intarsia for the choir stalls at the Santo and the cathedrals of Modena and Parma, also designed woodcuts.

¹¹⁰ A. Schmitt, "Squarcione als Zeichner und Stecher" *Münchner Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst* 25 (1974): 205-13.

specialized in classical and mythological scenes, and his other generally accepted manuscript illuminations fall in this category. One of them is the Virgil copied by Sanvito of about 1466 (Vatican Library, Lat. 5208).¹¹¹ The miniatures consist of various initials, a frontispiece to the *Eclogues* with putti holding a coat of arms, and three full-page miniatures introducing the *Eclogues* (folio 4v, *Orpheus Taming the Beasts*), the *Georgics* (folio 21v, *Worship of Bacchus and Ceres*, fig. 54), and the *Aeneid* (folio 64v, *Triumph of Mars*). Only the drawing of Orpheus directly relates to the text. It is an unusual miniature in its composition and medium (metalpoint on yellow dyed parchment). The style shows Zoppo was influenced by Paduan as well as Ferrarese sources, and exemplifies the innovation and talent that a monumental painter could bring to miniature painting. From the same period is the *Epistolae ad Atticum* (dated 1463, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms Lat. 11309), also copied by Sanvito and commissioned by the Venetian patrician Marcantonio Morosini (perhaps also the patron of the Virgil).

In the 1470s Feliciano was a partner in two printing firms, the first in Ferrara with Severino; the partnership produced five editions in the year 1475. In the following year, a partnership with Innocente Zileto in Poiano produced an edition of Donato's translation of Petrarch's *De Viris Illustribus*, entitled *Il Libro degli Uomini Famosi*. Lilian Armstrong has convincingly argued that Zoppo's drawings in the *Parchment Book* in the British Museum contain designs for the *Libro degli Uomini Famosi*.¹¹² On the rectos of its folios, the *Parchment Book* contains studies of bust-length figures in antiquarian

¹¹¹ G. Mariani Canova, 1999, cat. no. 95, J. J. G. Alexander, 1994, cat. no. 72, and idem., "A Virgil Illuminated by Marco Zoppo" *Burlington Magazine* 111/797 (1969): 514-17. Alexander identifies the scribe as Antonio Tophio, but Mariani Canova and De La Mare both identify him as Sanvito; on Zoppo as an illuminator, see also M. T. Fiorio, "Marco Zoppo et le livre padouan" *Revue de l'Art* 53 (1981): 65-73 and G. Mariani Canova, 1993, 121-35.

¹¹² L. Armstrong, "Marco Zoppo's *Parchment Book of Drawings* in the British Museum: Reflections on the 'all antica' Heads" *Studies of Renaissance Miniaturists in Venice* (London: Pindar Press, 2003), vol. 1, 37-75.

costume and on the versos, scenes showing figures with landscape or architectural backgrounds, some of them identifiable mythological narratives, and a *Virgin and Child*.

Thus Zoppo's relationship with bookmakers and copyists gave him another reason for employing the *cartellino* to sign his paintings. As a student of Squarcione and member of the circles of Mantegna, Marcanova, and Feliciano, he was part of the same milieu that I argued in the previous chapter gave rise to the use of the *cartellino* in the 1440s. The involvement in the book industry of members of these circles, like Feliciano and Zoppo, especially during printing's early years in the 1470s, adds another motivation for their use of the *cartellino*. Painters could thereby illustrate a link to bookmakers, and more broadly, the relationship between the visual arts and the enthusiasm towards learning that the Renaissance book represents.

Marco Zoppo and the Putti Master

The strong connections between the book industries that led to exchange of visual motifs can be illustrated through the example of the Putti Master, a miniaturist closely associated with Zoppo active in Venice during the 1470s, primarily in the decoration of printed books.¹¹³ He probably worked in Padua by the late 1460s, where he developed a style influenced by Mantegna and the city's resident community of Emilian and Lombard artists.¹¹⁴ Zoppo's most important period of production occurred between 1469 and ca. 1475, when he was as the head of a workshop of miniaturists in Venice. During this time he often worked for Nicholas Jenson's press and decorated numerous printed books and

¹¹³ See above, 89 n. 76.

¹¹⁴ L. Armstrong, 1981, 8-9.

manuscripts for patrician patrons.¹¹⁵ The Putti Master was formerly identified as Zoppo, but Armstrong argues instead that his affinity to Zoppo derived from a shared cultural and artistic milieu. Armstrong also opposes the theory that a formal teacher-student relationship existed between them.¹¹⁶ The Putti Master's miniatures, like Zoppo's, are characterized by antiquarian imagery; as his pseudonym implies, he often painted putti and other mythological figures and classicizing historiated initials. He also frequently employed the architectural frontispiece with a *cartiglio strappato*.¹¹⁷

Although the visual sources of the *cartiglio strappato* have been carefully studied and connected to the development of the engraved architectural title page, scholars have not sought to interpret the *cartiglio strappato* beyond observing its combination of classical elements and trompe-l'oeil illusionism.¹¹⁸ The *cartiglio strappato*, however, can illuminate our interpretation of the *cartellino* and furthermore demonstrate the degree to which Venetan miniaturists and monumental painters shared ideas and motifs.¹¹⁹ The common origin of both motifs around the middle of the century in the circle of Francesco Squarcione supports this view.

First of all, the *cartellino* and *cartiglio strappato* share some basic features: they represent a piece of paper or parchment that contains text, they function in the composition as a projecting trompe-l'oeil motif, and they often show signs of age or

¹¹⁵ Armstrong lists eighteen out of thirty-nine in her catalog; this suggests the possibility that Jenson, as opposed to the buyer of the book, hired the miniaturists. See L. Armstrong, 1981, 6.

¹¹⁶ G. Mariani Canova, 1966 and L. Armstrong, 1981, 7.

¹¹⁷ In at least seven surviving books. See L. Armstrong, 1981, 19.

¹¹⁸ J. J. G. Alexander, "Notes on Some Veneto-Paduan Illuminated Books of the Renaissance" in *Studies in Italian Renaissance Manuscript Illumination* (London: Pindar, 2002), 106. The idea is further fleshed out in L. Armstrong, 1981, 19-26. The two motifs are also juxtaposed by P. F. Brown, *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 192, 199-204.

¹¹⁹ Armstrong noted similarities in composition between the *cartiglio strappato* and the Squarcionesque Madonna picture, but she contrasted the projecting parchment with the figures of the Madonna and Child as opposed to trompe-l'oeil elements like the *cartellino*. See L. Armstrong, 1981, 23, 25.

wear, like creases, tears, and holes. The first characteristic can be attributed to the basic function of the book, as well as Paduan and Venetian artists' reasons for adopting the *cartellino*, that is, to link themselves with the culture of learning. In their illusionism and in their allusions to the passage of time, the *cartellino* and *cartiglio strappato* display a deeper and more nuanced similarity.

The *cartellino* and the *cartiglio strappato* are both motifs that, through their illusionistic play, occupy a liminal pictorial space. Besides having the result of drawing the viewer toward the picture by portraying an element that seems to protrude and invites closer inspection, this liminality presents the viewer with a question regarding the relationships between the layers of the painted object: the text (on the fictive parchment), the image 'beneath' it, and the real surface of the object itself. In this conception, the illusionistic element serves as a bridge between the world of the viewer or reader and another realm, whether it be the classical past—alluded to by the architectural frame or other classicizing motifs—or to a sacred space.

Take, for example, the Louvre *Madonna and Child* (fig. 18) by Marco Zoppo, an example of a Squarcionesque Madonna with a signed *cartellino*. The painting depicts the crowned Virgin sitting behind the parapet, nursing the Christ Child, an unusual fusion of Marian iconography showing the Virgin as both regal and humble. Her figure is framed by a stone niche with a fruit garland suspended from its center and held up at either end by a pair of putti. On each side of the Virgin sit three angels playing different musical instruments. On top of the stone parapet, near the center, sits a pile of three books crowned by a pear. Two *cartellini* occupy the liminal space projecting from the variegated stone parapet; the one left of center is signed "MARCO ZOPPO DI

SQUARCIO / NE” and the other, to the right of center, is blank and torn through the middle. Perhaps Zoppo was creating a visual pun on his master’s name—*squarcio* means “rip”—an association made more obvious by the splitting of Squarcione’s name across two lines, separating “SQUARCIO” from “NE.” The inscribed *cartellino* has four vertical creases, as if it had at one time been folded twice, as well as small tears, worn edges and upturned corners that seem to emerge from the painted surface.

These characteristics of the *cartellino* not only provide visual interest through illusionistic play, but also allude to different temporal realms of the painting as well as to the passage of time. The *cartellino*, inscribed with the painter’s and his master’s names, belongs to the mid-fifteenth century, while the subject and the architectural setting of the scene belong to the distant past. Through his signature Zoppo thus positions himself as a bridge between the distant past and the implied present that the viewer occupies. The worn condition of the *cartellino* suggests that the present—flimsy and corruptable like paper—has not attained the prestige and endurance of antiquity. On a more general level, it implies handling, and therefore the painter’s hand, which inscribed and applied the label to his painting.

A representation of the passage of time and layering of the composition is at work in frontispieces with the *cartiglio strappato*, such as the frontispiece of Book II of an edition of Pliny printed in Venice by Jenson in 1472 and now in the Biblioteca del Seminario, Padua (fig. 45).¹²⁰ The page consists of a classical architectural aedicule, with two pilasters supporting a pediment of two scrolls and resting on a rectangular plinth. Figures of putti occupy the top and bottom of the aedicule, including a battle scene on the

¹²⁰ See G. Mariani Canova, *La miniatura a Padova*, cat. no. 119 and L. Armstrong, 1981, cat. no. 14. (cod. K. I, folio 20r).

plinth and the trademark putto on a dolphin as a relief in the pediment. The text appears as if on a sheet of paper or parchment tied to finials at the top of the aedicule, beginning with a faceted initial M decorated with a scene of a putto and a dog. The miniature is done not in the typical medium of tempera, but with pen and ink and touches of wash. Soft blue shadows outline forms at the right and bottom of the composition and red is used on the coat of arms of the Macighi family. This type of decoration, which uses primarily dark lines on a light ground, harmonizes well with the printed page, and was a favorite medium of the Putti Master's workshop.¹²¹ The parchment, like Zoppo's *cartellino*, shows wear: small holes perforate the edges, which are irregular and worn.¹²² The classical framing of the text, however, is crisp and new. The only elements that appear in front of the parchment are two of the putti's clubs (which are similar in color to the parchment and in form closely resemble the torn edges to the left and right) and the top end of the coat of arms in the bottom center.

This contrast between the two layers of the composition can be interpreted as the miniaturist's representation of the printed text as an exercise of *renovatio* akin to the philological interests of contemporary humanists. The text, showing signs of wear and placed in a liminal space between the viewer and the renewed classical past, is presented as an encounter between past and present; the text itself has the authority and authenticity of antiquity and age, but the presentation of the text, with its printed letters and style of decoration, is new. Thus the book—and, consequently, the work of the miniaturist—is the reader's way of penetrating into the past through the present, represented by the

¹²¹ L. Armstrong, 1981, 10.

¹²² While less typical, a similar idea is at work in the illustrations for Johannes de Deo (?) *Columba, Tractatus asceticus* (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1590), initials and frontispieces which very clearly show the text as a layer over the classical scenes of the initials. See L. Armstrong, 1981, cat. no. 29 and ill. 61-66.

newness of the classical architectural frame. As with the *cartellino*, the artist is the conduit through which the viewer enters a different time and space.

Conclusion

The origins of the *cartellino* in Padua are contemporary with the establishment of a modern school of miniature painting in the 1450s, sharing with it aesthetic qualities and a view of the relationship between the antique past and the modern present as presented in the similar motifs of the *cartellino* and the *cartiglio strappato*. Furthermore, the greatest popularity of the *cartellino* mirrors the period of Venetian supremacy in the printing industry, from the 1470s to the 1520s, bracketed by the careers of Nicolas Jenson and Aldus Manutius. Painters of *cartellini* evoked the scholarly world of scholars, scribes and printers by employing a paper motif with lettering types these professionals popularized; the fact that these painters chose to sign their names on the *cartellino* I believe demonstrates their alliance with the humanist project of renewing the antique past.

As the sixteenth century wore on, the practice of hand-illustrating books became increasingly rare as woodcuts and eventually engravings became the standard. The printed book in Venice had lost the aura of its first flourishing. As the printing industry became more competitive, and as printed books flooded the market, printers sought newer, broader audiences. The *cartellino's* popularity waned at the same time. The practice of signing paintings, which also declined in the second quarter of the sixteenth century, partially accounts for the *cartellino's* demise, but the phenomenon also parallels a shift in the Venetian book industry. Venetian printers continued to flourish by

broadening their markets with cheaper books, but they were no longer known for special attention to the aesthetics of their wares. Instead they produced more inexpensive, practical, and popular books unlike the early days when they published handsomely produced folios with large margins for miniatures.¹²³ Thus the links that had been forged between painters and bookmakers in the late fifteenth century eroded. In fact, the last spate of *cartellini* occurred in the 1520s, just a few years after the death of Venice's greatest printer Aldus Manutius.

¹²³ For the Venetian printing industry in the later sixteenth century, see I. Fenlon, *The Ceremonial City: History, Memory and Myth in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 233-71.

Chapter 3: Signatures, Status, and the Identity of the Renaissance Painter

In 1529, Marcantonio Michiel visited the home of the patrician Antonio Pasqualino while compiling his catalog of artworks in Veneto collections and noted “the little picture of Saint Jerome reading in his study,” that is, Antonello da Messina’s *Saint Jerome* now in the National Gallery, London (fig. 55). The painting’s overall composition shows a departure from other contemporary examples of the theme. Antonello conceived of the picture as a view through a stone arch into a spacious, vaulted structure, at the center of which Jerome sits in his study, raised on a platform and sitting in profile reading a book on the desk in front of him. Behind the figure is a wall of shelves holding other books and assorted articles, and the architectural members of the surrounding space and the saint’s attribute, the lion, are silhouetted against views of a luminous landscape. In the foreground, on base of the stone arch, sit a partridge, and peacock, and a small bowl. The mixture of ‘northern’ qualities— finely rendered detail in oil paint, symbolic motifs, and landscape background—and Italian ones—the use of perspective, the openness of the space, and the figure in profile—caused confusion about the painting’s author. Michiel referred to Giannes (Jan van Eyck?), Hans Memling, and Jacometto Veneziano as possible authors, and seems to have looked for a signature to solve the mystery. As part of his description of the painting, Michiel wrote, “On the desk there is a fictive [*finta*] little label [*letterina*], unfolded, that seems to contain the name of the master, but if one looks at it more carefully, it does not contain any letters, as it is all

a deception.”¹ Indeed, the *cartellino* attached to Jerome’s desk, near the center of the composition, appears at a distance to bear an inscription, but on closer inspection contains only black scribbles imitating script. Although this example offered no help for Michiel in determining the artist of the painting, this comment reveals that a Renaissance viewer could recognize the *cartellino*’s most common function.

Since *cartellini* almost always serve as a vehicle for the artist’s signature, one of the most salient issues regarding the appearance of the *cartellino* in Renaissance painting is the simultaneous emergence of the individual artist’s identity and the related phenomenon of signatures. Signatures can communicate aspects of identity in various ways; illusionistic signatures (that is, signatures that appear on objects that are part of the painted illusion) offer further interpretive possibilities.² By the 1480s the *cartellino* had in many ways taken on meanings beyond those I ascribed to it in the previous chapters in explaining its origins in Padua, and spread to other parts of the Veneto, especially Venice, in the context of the humanistic pursuits of antiquarianism and because of contact between painters and the book industries. Although these conditions continued to influence culture in the Veneto during the entire period that local painters were using *cartellini*, I hope to demonstrate how they also served as expressions of the individual

¹ The text reads, “El quadretto del S. Hieronimo che nel studio legge, ... Nel scabello vi è finta una letterina attaccata aperta, che pare contener el nome del maestro, et nondimeno, se si riguarda sottilmente appresso, non contiene letra alcuna, ma è tutta finta.” M. Michiel, *Notizia d’opere del disegno* (Florence: Edifir, 2000), 56. The fact that Michiel claims to have expected to read something on the *cartellino* is interesting given the small scale of the painting, making the *cartellino* perhaps a centimeter wide. Another artist who painted feigned text is Carlo Crivelli, as in his depiction of Saint Thomas Aquinas in the *Demidoff Altarpiece* (1476, London, National Gallery). The saint holds in his left hand an open book, three folios of which are visible, containing rows of hashes and loops, which from far away look like script.

² On this approach to identity and self-fashioning in the Renaissance, see J. Woods-Marsden, “Introduction: collective identity/individual identity” in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. M. Rogers (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 1-15. Related to this is O. Calabrese’s discussion of identity as having quantitative and specific aspects in *Artists’ Self-Portraits*, trans. M. Shore (New York: Abbeville Press, 2005), 45.

artist's activity within groups with professional and civic significance. This assertion of collective identity was also the vehicle for asserting one's individual identity through his name, an identity which could be enhanced through the use of Roman letters, Latin spellings and phrases, references to patrons and other painters, and so on. *Cartellini* were thus capable of being packed with information about their painters' training, education, and technical ability; furthermore because of painters' tendency to repeat certain forms of *cartellini* and methods of inscription, *cartellini* could have functioned as product logos for artists' workshops. It is with this duality in mind that I shall discuss the relevance of *cartellini* in exploring their painters' identities, both as individuals and collectively. This balancing act was particularly important in Venetian society of the early Renaissance.

Renaissance signatures

The increased frequency and sophistication of illusionistic signatures is, in many ways, symptomatic of a set of interrelated currents that define the culture of the Renaissance beginning in the late fourteenth century: the humanist ideology; the value placed on the learning and accomplishments of individuals and the cult of fame; the intellectualization of the visual arts; and the desire of artists, patrons, and *litterati* to surpass their own antique models. The elevation of the visual arts from mechanical to liberal arts status was undertaken and promoted in this context, where Renaissance artists increasingly came to think of themselves as more than manual craftsmen. They played a key role in promoting the conscious revival of classical culture and its values as a

complement to the Christian culture of Europe. An artist's signature ensured that his identity was known and his skill and erudition were appreciated.³

Signatures in the Renaissance, however, were not necessarily intended as marks of authenticity—denoting ‘autograph’ works—as they are often considered. A signature, broadly speaking, identifies the person who is responsible for the work's existence. In the Renaissance, this could mean the person who either crafted the object with his hands or conceived it with his mind, or some combination of the two.⁴ In this respect, the question of what the signature on a work of art actually documents in various cases is a complicated matter. This issue reflects contemporary views about authorship during the period, which valued intellectual or creative responsibility over the manual aspects of production—the actual execution of the painting or sculpture. In the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, successful painters ran large workshops, and many commissions were either collaborative projects or, in the case of smaller, cheaper paintings, made on speculation by the master's apprentices. In any case, the painting might be signed with the master's name—under these circumstances, the signature does not signify an ‘autograph’ work. In fact, it could mean just the opposite, as is notably the case with altarpieces produced by Giotto's workshop in the early fourteenth century.⁵ Not only are

³ This is not to say that signatures became common in Renaissance Italy, nor that they were non-existent during the Middle Ages. Several well-known works of the *trecento* are signed (Giovanni Pisano's Pisa pulpit; Duccio's *Maestà*) and in the Renaissance, most paintings and sculptures went unsigned. There was, however, a significant increase in the number of signed works over the course of the fifteenth century. See R. Goffen, “Signatures: Inscribing Identity in Italian Renaissance Art,” *Viator* 32 (2001): 303-306 and C. Gilbert, “A Preface to Signatures (with Some Cases in Venice)” in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, 81.

⁴ F. Heinemann, *Giovanni Bellini e i belliniani* (Venice: Neri Pozza Editore, 1959), vol. 1, xvii, R. Goffen, 2001, 303 and 308 and F. Gibbons, “Practices in Giovanni Bellini's Workshop” *Pantheon* 23 (1965): 152.

⁵ Of the three surviving examples of Giotto's signature, (*Stigmatization of St. Francis*, Louvre, ca. 1300; *Coronation of the Virgin*, S. Croce, Florence, after 1328; *Madonna, Saints, and Angels*, S. Maria degli Angeli, Bologna, ca. 1330), the latter two (and possibly all three) seem to have been carried out in large part by assistants. See R. Goffen, 2001, 309-11, 313; C. Gilbert, 2004, 80.

these signing practices indicative of the conception of art production in the Renaissance, they also allude to the significance of the master's identity as a representation of artistic quality or style. As a general rule, the more famous a painter became and the higher the demand for his work, the more his assistants were involved in the execution of paintings.⁶

These non-autograph works nonetheless had value as products of the artist's intellect, if not his hand.⁷ Even if his hand did not execute the painting, it would not be uncommon for Giovanni Bellini's name, for example, to appear on a painting executed by workshop assistants, presumably with the knowledge of a buyer. Bellini was nonetheless understood to have been the author of the work, because it was done in his style and of a subject and format that he commonly made. In other words, the painting was his invention, if not his execution. The master's signature on paintings that were not completed by his hand furthermore indicated his primary importance in the workshop through procuring and executing commissions. The extensive use of assistants, particularly in the case of Bellini's large workshop, is indicated in the emphatic insistence by Isabella d'Este to have a work by Bellini's own hand.⁸ This request also indicates either Isabella's discernment in quality between autograph and workshop objects, or the value she placed on autograph works because of the artists' fame as opposed to (or in conjunction with) the appearance of the work of art itself.

⁶ This was certainly the case for Giovanni Bellini. On Titian's workshop, see B. Aikema, "Tiziano: genio in bottega" *Studi Tizianeschi* 4 (2006): 11-15; G. Tagliaferro, "La bottega di Tiziano: un percorso critico," *ibid.*, 16-52.

⁷ See P. Emison, *Creating the "Divine" Artist: From Dante to Michelangelo* (Boston: Brill, 2004), 258: "It is at least roughly true that the more famous an artist became, the less work he produced, especially autograph work which might possess the aura of a relic. Rather than funneling reverence onto relics touched by the divine artists, respect for the artist's *ingegno* endowed non-autograph versions with worth. The increasing presence of copies and reproductions of various kinds ensured that certain works were widely known beyond the limited circle having immediate access to commissioned works."

⁸ See N. Land, *The Viewer as Poet: The Renaissance Response to Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 102-106 and n. 88 below.

Competition, fame, and the individual

The elevated social status and fame of Renaissance artists were possible only in the context of a humanist culture in which the achievements and virtues of individuals were valued and commemorated in literature and in art. These values manifested themselves most conspicuously in the biographical collections and picture cycles of ‘famous men.’ Petrarch, who left a significant legacy in the Veneto after his residence in Padua in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, wrote one such collection of biographies of famous men and women. It served as the source for a fourteenth-century cycle of frescoes in Padua’s town hall (lost).⁹ While usually such praise was directed at ancient and modern military heroes, statesmen, and intellectuals, in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, artists and architects also began to garner similar attention. In the 1380s, the Florentine citizen Giovanni Villani wrote a history of famous Florentines, including Giotto, whom he praised for his genius.

In Venetian society of the fifteenth century, however, social hierarchies and political ideals shaped approaches to history writing and in turn the commemoration of artists. While Florentine humanism embraced individualism, Venetians, with their long history of republicanism, strong attachment to civic identity, and class hierarchy, responded more cautiously to these principles.¹⁰ Venetians’ guarded attitude toward

⁹ See T. E. Mommsen, “Petrarch and the Decoration in the Sala Virorum Illustrium in Padua” *Art Bulletin* 34 (1952): 95-116; on the classical tradition of famous men, see C. Joost-Gaugier, “Poggio and the Visual Tradition: *Uomini Famosi* in Classical Literary Description” *Artibus et Historiae* 12 (1985): 57-74; for a Venetian example see idem., “A Rediscovered Series of *Uomini Famosi* from Quattrocento Venice” *Art Bulletin* 58 (1976): 184-95, esp. 184-89 with a summary of the artistic and literary tradition from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries.

¹⁰ M. L. King, *Venetian Humanism in the Age of Patrician Dominance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) argues that Venetian humanism was a means of maintaining the status quo of the social hierarchy. Patricia Fortini Brown argued that these social conditions influenced both the Venetian approach

individualism in the late fifteenth century is evident in its tradition of portraiture, in which individual identity was suppressed in favor of the sitter's identification by family and class.¹¹ As a result of these prevailing attitudes, in which individual identity was tempered with city, class, and family associations, and in conjunction with the more persistent characterization of painting and sculpture as manual crafts, Venice lacked a tradition of artists' biography and autobiography. In fact, Giorgio Vasari wrote the earliest biographies of Venetian artists; earlier Venetian writing about art consisted of complimentary but perfunctory mentions of notable artists in chronicles and guidebooks, like Marin Sanudo's diaries, and Marcantonio Michiel's *notizie*, which are inventories and descriptions of buildings and monuments rather than lives of individual artists.¹² Because they lacked a tradition of artistic literature and humanist biography, Venetian painters may have been inspired to provide signatures as an alternative means of documenting their accomplishments.

Renaissance artists were aware of the many examples of lost or untraced art from antiquity through descriptions by ancient authors like Pliny and Philostratus. They also knew of numerous instances in which antique sculpture (and later painting, in Nero's

to history writing and to narrative painting and followed parallel developments. See P. F. Brown, 1988, 87-97.

¹¹ See R. Goffen, 1999 and A. Luchs, *Tullio Lombardo and Ideal Portrait Sculpture in Renaissance Venice, 1490-1530* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 18-20. For the parallel situation in the writing of family histories, see J. Grubb, "Memory and Identity: Why Venetians Didn't Keep *Ricordanze*" *Renaissance Studies* 8 (1994): 375-87. M. Gaier, *Facciate sacre a scopo profano: Venezia e la politica dei monumenti dal Quattrocento al Settecento* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2002), esp. 81-111, discusses the Venetian socio-political ideal in terms of the "negazione personale" in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

¹² See M. Sanuto, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis Venetae, ovvero La città di Venetia (1493-1530)*, A. Caracciolo Aricò, ed. (Milan: Cisalpino-Golardica, 1980) and M. A. Michiel, *Notizia d'opere del disegno* (Florence: Edifir, 2000). Exceptions are Bartolomeo Fazio's brief biography of Pisanello (a Veronese) in his *De viris illustribus* of 1456 and the Paduan Francesco Squarcione's lost autobiography, cited in Scardeone's history of Padua (published in 1560) with brief biographies of famous citizens. See above, 37-38. The sole artistic treatise by a fifteenth-century Venetian is Giovanni Fontana's lost work dedicated to Jacopo Bellini, written before 1440. See above 20-21.

Domus Aurea) were unearthed without certain knowledge of their makers. Pliny's *Natural History* played a central role in shaping Renaissance conceptions of the history of art, which comprise the final six books of his text. As Leonard Barkan's analysis shows, Pliny's history of art is based on the principles of fame and competition: artists were remembered through their achievements, which were judged according to comparison with other famous artists, whether contemporary, or, more often, remembered from history. Fame had to be transmitted, then, through a combination of image and text—the obliteration of inscriptions and signatures meant the loss of memory and therefore the probability of further decay.¹³ Pliny's observations on this phenomenon in the first century prophesied the difficulties in the Renaissance of identifying ancient art.

Perhaps this dissociation between image and identifying text called for the humanist Guarino da Verona's complaint that paintings were poor vehicles for transmitting fame because they were "sine litteris"—unlabelled—and not portable. Baxandall interpreted this statement in the context of the development of portrait medals by Pisanello around the same time.¹⁴ While lords undoubtedly used these medals to transmit their fame with inscribed, portable portraits, an additional interpretation relates to the transmission of the fame of the artist with signatures, which medals sometimes also included. Many of Pisanello's medals include a signature on the reverse, as in his portrait medal of Lionello d'Este, signed "OPVS / PISANI / PICTORIS" and dated "MCCCCXLIII." Pisanello identifies the sitter, shown in profile of the obverse, with an

¹³ L. Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 71-74.

¹⁴ M. Baxandall, "Guarino, Pisanello, and Manuel Chrysoloras." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 189. This comment appears in a letter of 1447 from Guarino to Alfonso V of Naples.

accompanying label (“LEONELLVS MARCHIO / ESTENSIS”) and identifies himself with a label inscribed over an allegory of the marchese’s marriage, a product of the painter’s invention.¹⁵ Pisanello’s label ensured that his authorship would be recognized and his fame would endure along with Leonello’s.

A *cartellino* performs the same function on a painting. The inclusion of a label that records the name of the painter directly on his product impedes the separation of the object from its necessary textual documentation that Pliny and Guarino lamented. At the same time, the *cartellino* makes a visual distinction between the image and the inscription by showing the label as something ‘added on’ to the painting. The fact that *cartellini* often show signs of wear may convey the painter’s own play on the transience of the artist’s fame as well; the vehicle for the artist’s name appears to be made of a fragile material that is decaying while the rest of the image remains intact. The most explicit example is probably Marco Zoppo’s Louvre *Madonna and Child*, which has two *cartellini*—one blank and torn through the center and the other noticeably creased, rumpled, and torn in three places (fig. 18). Most often, painters show effects of age on *cartellini* with folded, projecting corners, which both enhanced the illusionism of the motif and evoked careless handling (see, for example, figs. 18, 19, 27, 36, 39, 56, 58). Painters may also have alluded to the possibility of a label becoming separated from a work of art (and the resulting loss of the memory of the artist) by showing the *cartellino* attached to its backing with daubs of red sealing wax, with one corner having come loose (fig. 81).

¹⁵ On Renaissance portrait medals, see S. K. Scher, ed., *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), esp. cat no. 5 for the Leonello d’Este medal; for numerous examples of Pisanello’s signed medals, see P. Marini, ed. *Pisanello* (Milan: Electa, 1996), cat. nos. 77, 82-87, 89-91, 93, 96, 98, as well as cat. nos. 75 and 76, whose portraits commemorate the artist himself; in these instances, the signature is on the obverse, accompanying the self-portrait.

Two significant mid-sixteenth-century sources defend signatures precisely on the basis that they transmit the artist's fame. The first is Paolo Pino's *Dialogo di pittura* of 1548, the first art theoretical text by a Venetian author. At a time when painters were signing less and less, Pino saw it necessary to include a lengthy passage in his dialog concerning the practice. This passage was perhaps a line of self-defense, since he and his teacher Girolamo Savoldo signed some of their paintings, but it may relate more broadly to Venetian tradition.¹⁶ One of the interlocutors Lauro audaciously called Apelles's use of *faciebat* "foolishness" and the labeling of paintings "laughable." Fabio responded that signing paintings is praiseworthy because it documented the signer as a painter and promotes his fame. According to Lauro, the painter could then be honored for his virtues and deeds after his death, making him immortal. Lauro is so thoroughly convinced that he vowed thereafter to label all his paintings, "mock who may."¹⁷ Giorgio Vasari's account of Michelangelo's Vatican *Pietà* defended the sculptor's only signature, attributing the artist's subsequent success through the fame he achieved from the signed sculpture. Vasari was perhaps responding to criticism that the signature was too bold in its placement and falsely modest in its use of *faciebat*; the signature may have also seemed old-fashioned to a mid-sixteenth-century audience.¹⁸

¹⁶ See M. Pardo, "Testo e contesti del 'Dialogo di pittura'" in *Paolo Pino: Teorico d'arte e artista*, A. Mazza, ed. (Treviso: Grafica Italprint, 1992), 33-50. On Pino's signatures see A. Mazza "Due pale d'altare di Paolo Pino" in *ibid.*, 51-58; on Savoldo's signatures, see C. Gilbert, "Lo stile nelle firme del Savoldo" in *Giovanni Gerolamo Savoldo, pittore bresciano*, ed. G. Panazza (Brescia: Edizioni del Moretto, 1985), 21-28.

¹⁷ M. Pardo, "Paolo Pino's 'Dialogo di pittura': A Translation with Commentary" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1984), 355-56. Unexpectedly, Lauro, the speaker who initially mocked the use of labels with signatures, is the Venetian; Fabio is the Florentine. This may further emphasize the growing unpopularity of signing in Venice in the middle of the sixteenth century.

¹⁸ See R. Goffen, 2002, 117-19, for an interpretation of Vasari's differing accounts in the two editions of the *Life* of Michelangelo. In 1550, Vasari explained Michelangelo's signature as simply a show of pride in his work and the effort he had put into it; in 1568, however, after Michelangelo's death, Vasari revised his story to include third-hand information that he had gotten by letter. According to the anecdote, Michelangelo had overheard a group of Lombards talking about the sculpture as the work of Cristoforo

Venetian portraits present an interesting outcome of the Renaissance phenomenon of signatures. Inscribed independent portraits almost invariably provide the name of the artist as opposed to the sitter, whose commemoration, of course, is the primary function of the painting.¹⁹ Sometimes, as with Giovanni Bellini's signed *Portrait of Doge Leonardo Loredan* (ca. 1501-04, fig. 56), the identities of both artist and sitter survive, in this case because the sitter can be identified through comparison with portrait medals. Although the patrons and original owners of the portraits and their descendants would have remembered the sitters' identities through family history, today the subjects of many signed portraits cannot be identified.²⁰ Some of these pictures have been given colorful names to describe the anonymous but captivating likenesses, such as Antonello da Messina's *'Il Condottiere'* (fig. 57) or Carpaccio's *Two Venetian Ladies on a Terrace* (fig. 58), which for many years was called 'The Courtesans', a title coined by John Ruskin (a Victorian for whom the lavish and revealing dress signified the ladies' profession). Another anonymous portrait by Carpaccio, *'Il Cavaliere,'* depicts a knight in armor and contains two *cartellini* (fig. 59). One carries Carpaccio's signature and the date ("VICTOR CARPATHIUS / FINXIT / MDX"), and the other seems to refer to the sitter, although it does not provide his name: "MALO MORI / QUAM / FOEDARI" ('better

Solari and wanted to prevent future misattributions. L. Pestilli, "Michelangelo's Pietà: Lombard Critics and Plinian Sources" *Source* 19 (2000): 21-30, attributes Vasari's revision of the story to the author's desire to imitate Pliny's account of Apelles and the shoemaker. According to Pliny, Apelles used to display his paintings in public and stand out of sight so that he could hear others' opinions of his work. During one such instance, a shoemaker commented not only on Apelles' inaccurate portrayal of a sandal, but also the proportions of a figure. Apelles emerged and rebuked the lowly craftsman for overstepping the limits of his expertise. While this characterization is convincing, it does not take into account—nor does it contradict—the hypothesis that Vasari's changes to the story helped mount a defense for Michelangelo's controversial signature.

¹⁹ See E. Welch, "Naming Names: The Transience of Individual Identity in Fifteenth-Century Italian Portraiture" in *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance*, ed. L. Syson and N. Mann (London: British Museum, 1998), 91-103.

²⁰ For example, the original location for the portrait of Doge Loredan is not known, but scholars believe it would have adorned a family residence; in this case, the identity of the sitter would be known and remembered by its owners. See also below, 149-51.

death than dishonor'). The fact that these artists employed *cartellini* to sign pictures and not to name the sitters attests to the importance of the *cartellino* in alluding to the skill and identity of the artist. Perhaps Bellini, Carpaccio, and Antonello assumed that the identity of the sitter would be remembered, but their authorship of the image might not.²¹

Signatures helped make comparisons between artists possible; a Renaissance artist demonstrated his ability by equaling or surpassing the achievements of a peer. In Venice, painters were placed in comparison in various contexts: in public churches with many altarpieces, in private homes with collections of portraits and devotional paintings, and the meeting houses of some confraternities and in the Palazzo Ducale, where patrons had employed several artists on the same decorative campaign.²² A notable example is the commission for the narrative cycle for the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, begun ca. 1494, depicting various miracles performed by the *scuola*'s relic of the True Cross. The ten-year project resulted in nine canvases by Gentile Bellini, Giovanni Mansueti, Vittore Carpaccio, Lazzaro Bastiani, Benedetto Diana, and Pietro Perugino. The group represents a mixture of proven skill, foreign talent, and youthful promise, which the patrons presumably hoped would produce the best results. Gentile, the most experienced and famous of the painters, signed at least two of his three canvases for the cycle; Mansueti, in his first surviving narrative painting, signed his contribution as well,

²¹ On the proposed identities of the knight, see R. Goffen, "Carpaccio's Portrait of a Young Knight: Identity and Meaning" *Arte Veneta* 37 (1983): 47-48 (as a portrait of Antonio da Monetfeltro) and A. Gentili, "Forse, si può dare un nome al 'Cavaliere Thyssen'; e questo è il suo contesto" *Venezialtrove* 2 (2003): 122-39. In fact, the *cartellino* with the motto does not play a key role in the identification of the figure through the picture's complex iconography, since the motto is associated with the Order of the Ermine, in this painting also indicated by the white ermine that scampers by at the lower left.

²² See R. Goffen, 2002, 3-4 ff., in which the author demonstrates that the Renaissance "was an inherently rivalrous age that began with a competition [for the second set of Florence Baptistery doors]."

referring to himself as a disciple of Gentile.²³ By signing their paintings, artists invited viewers to compare the juxtaposed paintings and remember the name associated with the most outstanding examples.

Artists and intellectuals

The prestige of the visual arts in the Renaissance was closely connected to the intellectual elevation of painting, sculpture, and architecture. The view that the artist's imagination and intellect could be cultivated by study of ancient texts and the liberal arts was widely accepted in Renaissance artistic theory. Renaissance artists and theorists stressed the intellectual aspects of the visual arts, and furthermore argued that painting, sculpture, and architecture, traditionally associated with the mechanical arts, should themselves be added to the seven classical liberal arts (the Trivium of rhetoric, logic, and grammar, and the Quadrivium of geometry, arithmetic, music, and astronomy).²⁴ Naturally, these Renaissance writers sought the authority of ancient authors like Vitruvius and Pliny, who praised the accomplishments of ancient architects, painters, and sculptors.

²³ Gentile signed the *Procession in Piazza San Marco* and the *Miracle at the Bridge of San Lorenzo*, both on *cartellini*. The signature on Gentile's *Healing of Pietro dei Ludovici* may be apocryphal, since an inscription was not recorded in early sources. Carpaccio may have signed his *Healing of the Possessed Man by the Patriarch of Grado* (a.k.a. *Miracle at Rialto Bridge*). The absence of a signature is curious, given the nature of the commission and the fact that the painting dates just after his Saint Ursula cycle and altarpiece, which are signed on every canvas (eight of the nine on *cartellini*). The situation is perhaps explained by the canvas's condition—a portion of the lower left side was cut out when, in the sixteenth century, doors were added to the wall on which the painting hung. Carpaccio sometimes placed his signatures on *cartellini* at the lower left, as in three of his Saint Ursula paintings (*Departure of the Ambassadors*, *Return of the Ambassadors*, and *Arrival in Cologne*). For documents and a catalog of the cycle, see P. F. Brown, 1988, 282-86.

²⁴ On the social status of the artist in the Renaissance and the liberal arts, see J. Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) 19-24 and F. Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 17-35, 61-66, 74-79, 85-87, R. Wittkower, *The Artist and the Liberal Arts* (London: H.K. Lewis & Co., Ltd., 1952), and M. Garrard, "The Liberal Arts and Michelangelo's First Project for the Tomb of Julius II" *Viator* 15 (1984): 335-404.

Ancient writings about art inspired artists of the fifteenth century like Leon Battista Alberti, Cennino Cennini, and later, Leonardo da Vinci, among others, to write artistic treatises. In the varied contexts of their writings, each of them alluded to the importance of the artist's mind in making art and argued, to varying degrees, for the inclusion of painting among the liberal arts. Cennini's *Libro dell'Arte* was written at the threshold of the Renaissance in Italy (ca. 1400) and functioned primarily as a practical craftsman's guide to artistic techniques and materials. Cennini was head of a workshop in Padua and proudly claimed in his text that he had been trained in Florence by Agnolo Gaddi, a student of Giotto. Although most of the treatise's content is rather technical, Cennini cites the importance of the artist's imagination in composing pictures, comparing painting to poetry:

And it [painting] justly deserves to be enthroned next to theory, and to be crowned with poetry. The justice lies in this: that the poet, with his theory, though he has but one, it makes him worthy, is free to compose and bind together, or not, as he pleases, according to his inclination. In the same way, the painter is given freedom to compose a figure, standing, seated, half-man, half-horse, as he pleases, according to his imagination.²⁵

By the early fifteenth century, the characterization of painting as an intellectual activity had gained a foothold, most likely because of Giotto's renown.

As the century progressed, treatises positioned the intellect as central to the painter's practice by arguing the scientific basis of painting. In 1435, Alberti wrote his widely influential treatise on painting, *De Pictura*, presenting the first substantial step toward the elevation of the visual arts. It was widely circulated in manuscript copies (in Latin and the vernacular) throughout the Italian peninsula over the course of the

²⁵ C. Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook*, trans. D. V. Thompson (New York: Dover, 1960), 1-2.

century.²⁶ *De Pictura* aimed to make accessible to artists and patrons a humanistic and modern view of painting that had recently emerged in Florence. Alberti asserted the theoretical character of his text, distinguishing it from technical handbooks like Cennini's or histories: "...we are not telling stories like Pliny. We are, however, building anew an art of painting about which nothing, as I see it, has been written in this age."²⁷ Alberti's intellectual conception of painting depended on the nobility of the art in antiquity and the scientific foundation of linear perspective.²⁸ He advised that painters study the liberal arts and asserted that great artists required *ingegno*, meaning 'genius' or 'talent'—an innate quality, distinct from workmanship that could be learned.²⁹ Leonardo's treatise on painting, written in the 1490s, took as one of its major themes the intellectual nature of painting, primarily through his assertion that painting is scientific in its observation and imitation of nature. He also argues the primacy of painting in the *paragoni* between painting and sculpture and between painting and poetry. Leonardo visited Venice in 1500 and is thought to have inspired discussion of the *paragoni* there.³⁰

An unusual instance of a *cartellino* with a long poetic inscription illustrates the ways in which the *cartellino* could be used to make overt references to the *paragone* of painting and poetry and study of classical literature and culture. Giovanni Bellini's Brera *Pietà* (fig. 10) states the power of painting by addressing the viewer directly in the

²⁶ Coincidentally, *De Pictura* was not printed until 1540, even though it was widely read and studied, and Alberti's treatise on architecture was printed in Florence in 1486 (1485 Florentine style). See "Introduction" in L. B. Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. J. Rykwert, N. Leach, R. Tavernor (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), xviii. The first Italian translation in print was published in Venice in 1546.

²⁷ L. B. Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. J. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 65.

²⁸ On the honor of painting, see *ibid.*, 1966, 64. Alberti outlines linear perspective in Book I.

²⁹ For the antique sources of *ingenium* versus *ars* and the adoption of the former by humanists, see M. Baxandall, 1971, 15-17.

³⁰ On Leonardo in Venice, see *Leonardo and Venice* (Milan: Bompiani, 1992). For the painting and sculpture paragone in Venice, see n. 74, below.

painted inscription.³¹ The painting, dating probably to the late 1460s, represents a half-length painting of the dead Christ supported by the Virgin and John the Evangelist, standing in a landscape behind a stone parapet, presumably representing Christ's tomb. A *cartellino* appears at the center of the parapet's front edge, just below Christ's hand, which, in a state of rigor mortis, seems to gesture toward the inscription. It functions as a signature, since it includes Bellini's name, but incorporates a Latin poem by Propertius (a first-century B.C.E. author of four books of elegies), "HAEC FERE QVVM GEMITVS TVRGENTIA LVMINA PROMANT / BELLINI POTERAT FLERE IOANNIS OPVS" ('When these swelling eyes evoke groans this work of Giovanni Bellini could shed tears').³² Bellini brags, albeit figuratively, about his painting's success—the figures are so lifelike and expressive that the painting can evoke an emotional response (groans) from the viewer to the point of making the figures seem to cry real tears.

Not only did Bellini comment on the effectiveness of his painting as an inducement to piety, he further showed his knowledge of Latin (or, at least, his association with the author of the inscription).³³ More specifically, the artist implied aesthetic competition with poetry and with antiquity through his reference to Propertius. The inscription called upon the viewer to appreciate Bellini's talent at the same time he or she lamented the dead Christ. The *cartellino*, through its placement in the liminal

³¹ On this painting, see H. Belting, *Giovanni Bellini: La Pietà*, trans. M. Pedrazzi. (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 1996); O. Bätschmann, *Giovanni Bellini* (London: Reaktion, 2008), 96-100; D. Arasse, "Giovanni Bellini e les limites de la mimésis: La Pietà de la Brera" in *Künstlerischer Austausch=Artistic Exchange*, ed. T. W. Gaehtgens, (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), 503-09; N. Land, "The Voice of Art in Giovanni Bellini's *Pietà* in Milan" *Source* 14 (1995): 14-17.

³² Translation from R. Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 71-72. O. Bätschmann, 97-98, gives alternate interpretations, the first essentially the same as Goffen's: "Every time the swollen eyes elicit lamentations from [the beholder], this work of Bellini Giovanni could [and can] weep" and (taking, perhaps, a bit more license) "Since these swollen eyes consistently elicit lamentations from 'the beholder', this work by Bellini Giovanni had [and still has] the power to weep [itself]."

³³ The author of the painting or its patron is not known, although Bätschmann, 99, suggests Raffaele Zovenzoni as a possible candidate.

space between the viewer and the painted figures, its inscription, and its visual characteristics, is the focal point of the painter's assertion of skill and erudition. Although the *cartellino* in the Brera *Pietà* is nearly unique in its inclusion of poetic lines, many *cartellini* convey similar assertions, albeit in less obvious ways: they employ Latin verbs (like *faciebat* or *fecit*); the lettering of their inscriptions imitate classical epigraphy; and they generally allude to the *paragone* of painting and poetry through the juxtaposition of text and image.

The *paragone* between painting and poetry played a crucial role in situating painting as an intellectual pursuit and a liberal art. The comparison can be traced back to antiquity, and was adapted by humanists and painters alike during the Renaissance.³⁴ Bartolomeo Fazio, who had studied with Guarino da Verona in his youth, honors several artists in his *De viris illustribus* of 1456, which includes brief biographies of Pisanello of Verona and Gentile da Fabriano, who worked in Venice for a short period early in his career. In the Ferrarese humanist Angelo Decembrio's dialogue on art in his *De Politia Litteraria*, written in the 1450s, Guarino da Verona argues for the role of *ingenium* in painting as in poetry by asserting that in antiquity writing and painting were equated, as shown by the ancients' use of the word *scriptura* for both.³⁵

Illusionistic motifs challenged the view that words could imitate nature better than a painted image; the *cartellino* in particular visualized the written word as part of the painted image. Usually the words painted on *cartellini* contribute nothing to the story depicted or the representation of a holy figure or portrait. Conceptually the words and the

³⁴ See N. Land, 1991, "Ut Pictura Poësis and the Renaissance Response to Art" for an excellent synopsis of this debate and its participants in the Renaissance and their ancient predecessors.

³⁵ M. Baxandall, "A Dialogue on Art from the Court of Leonello d'Este: Angelo Decembrio's *De Politia Litteraria* Pars LXVIII" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 26 (1963): 324-25.

image are separated—the painted scene represents a time, place, and/or person distinct from the one the words of the *cartellino* describe. Take for example Giovanni Mansueti's *Arrest of Saint Mark* (1499, fig. 60), commissioned by the silkweavers' guild to decorate its chapel in the church of the Crociferi. The painting shows Saint Mark being led to prison in the left middle ground. The scene takes place in a richly adorned piazza in the center of which stands a raised platform with a vaulted canopy. Attached to the platform's steps, parallel to the picture plane, are two *cartellini*. Typical of Mansueti's style, the draperies, architectural settings, and even the figures' faces have a hard, refined quality reminiscent of Mansueti's contemporary, Cima da Conegliano. The paper of the *cartellini*, however, is meticulously rendered with creases and wrinkles. The upper *cartellino*, nearer the center of the image, reads, "IOANES DE MA / NSVETIS / . P." ('Giovanni Mansueti painted [it]') in Roman capitals. The lower *cartellino*, written in script, lists the names of the patrons and the date of the commission, 1499.³⁶ The image narrates the legend of Saint Mark, but the *cartellini* convey the essentials of the history of the commission, specifically the various individuals who brought it to fruition. The story being told, the arrest of Saint Mark, needs no textual enhancement.³⁷ Although the *cartellino* in Bellini's Brera *Pietà* refers to the image, it refers to its achievements as a

³⁶ "Ser Jaco de Simon, Ser Antto de Uaischo, Ser J de Bevilaqua, Ser Felip de Belttame, Ser Zuane de Zorzi, Ser Alberto Darin, Ser Fermo de Stefano, Ser Nicholo de Marcho, Ser Michiel Uerzo, Ser Alesio de Andrea, questio son li judexi e li provedador. 1499 adi 18.mazo." See S. Miller, "Giovanni Mansueti, A Little Master of the Venetian Quattrocento" *Revue Romaine d'Histoire de l'Art* 15 (178): 91.

³⁷ There are, of course, exceptions, such as Mantegna's *Saint Sebastian* in the Ca' d'Oro, which has a *cartellino* curled around a recently snuffed candle and inscribed on an unusually shaped *cartellino* (called by some authors a 'phylactery'), "NIL NISI DIVINUM STABILE / EST CAETERA FUMUS" ('Nothing but the divine is stable, all else is smoke'). Arasse suggests this inscription, in a place where one would expect to find the artist's signature, is a comment on the artist's bitterness in his old age. See "Signé Mantegna" *Beaux-Arts Magazine* 99 (1992): 67. Another well-known example is Domenico Ghirlandaio's *Portrait of Giovanna Tornabuoni* (1488, Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza), inscribed on a *cartellino*, "ARS VTINAM MORES / ANIMVM QVE EFFINGERE / POSSES PVLCHROR IN TER / RIS NVLLA TABELLA FORET / MCCCCLDDDVIII" ('O, art, if you were able to depict the conduct of the soul, no lovelier painting would exist on earth. 1488'). Unlike the liminally-placed *cartellini* of the Veneto, this Florentine example is firmly placed in the space of the sitter, who casts a shadow on it.

work of art, instead of describing or explicating its subject. *Cartellini*, as painted illusions of text, visualize the rivalry between language and image.

Although the theoretical writings of Alberti, Leonardo, Guarino, and Fazio no doubt influenced and reflected current attitudes among Venetan artistic circles, in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, much more of the contact between Venetian artists and intellectuals seems to have occurred on a more practical and social level than in courtly discourses and theoretical treatises. Although most painters were members of the artisan class (the Bellini and Carpaccio are notable exceptions), many Venetian artisans had considerable status and wealth and maintained social contacts with intellectuals through commercial activities and social networks, like the *scuole*.³⁸ Dürer wondered at the social status of painters in Venice, noting his elevated status there and his friendships with “men of sense, and scholarly, good lute-players, and pipers, connoisseurs in painting, men of much noble sentiment and honest virtue, and they show me much honor and friendship.”³⁹ As I discussed in the previous chapter, leading painters like Andrea Mantegna, Marco Zoppo, Giovanni Bellini, as well as numerous illuminators and illustrators, were friends of antiquarians and scholars or worked alongside them in their capacity as printers, editors, and scribes. The scribe and humanist Felice Feliciano was a friend of artists, as was the humanist Raffaello Zovenzoni, who worked as an editor in Venetian printing houses and also wrote poems praising Zoppo and the sculptor Antonio Rizzo, among others.⁴⁰

³⁸ On the heterogeneous class and professional makeup of the *scuole*, see D. Romano, *Patricians and Popolani: The Social Foundations of the Venetian Renaissance State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 107-112.

³⁹ R. Fry, 6.

⁴⁰ See above, 73-74.

In these intellectual circles, artists would have participated in and been exposed to the study of classical texts and their descriptions of ancient paintings and sculptures. Artists could demonstrate their knowledge of a classical source by re-imagining a work of art it described. One example is Giovanni Bellini's *Nude with a Mirror* (1515, figs. 6, 61), which contains a *cartellino* inscribed, "Joannes Bellinus faciebat M.D.X.V." in script matching Bellini's own hand.⁴¹ By using the Latin verb *faciebat* ('was making') in his signature, Bellini refers to Pliny the Elder's account of the signatures of ancient artists like Apelles and Polyclitus. In its subject matter and composition, Bellini's *Nude* also refers to two ancient works of art that Pliny described—one of Apelles's lost paintings of Venus, which Pliny reported was damaged, truncating the figure like Bellini did by cropping the figure's legs, and Praxiteles's Knidian Venus.⁴²

Artists' involvement with intellectuals is also evident in their archaeological pursuits. As we have seen in chapter one, the Venetan approach to antiquity placed special emphasis on the study of artifacts and monuments as opposed to literary and philosophical texts; therefore Venetan artists' expertise and interest allowed their close

⁴¹ R. Goffen, "Bellini's *Nude with a Mirror*" *Venezia Cinquecento* 1/2 (1991): 196. D. Pincus, "Giovanni Bellini's Humanist Signature: Pietro Bembo, Aldus Manutius and Humanism in Early Sixteenth-Century Venice" *Artibus et Historiae* 58 (2008): 111-12, doubts the authenticity of this signature, noting dissimilarities Bellini's signatures on the *Portrait of Pietro Bembo* and the *Feast of the Gods* in the shapes of the letters and the placement of the words on the *cartellino*, which in the *Nude* are placed on the top half of the sheet instead of centered on it. In my view, this may have to do with the method the artist used; instead of letters brushed over the white paint of the *cartellino*, the inscription of the *Nude* has been scratched into the white paint while it was still wet. Pincus also cites scholarly suspicion that the painting was finished by another artist after Bellini's death, a fact that would have special implications for the use of *faciebat* and Pliny's observation that the use of the imperfect verb implied "the work was only commenced and still imperfect, and that the artist might benefit by the criticisms that were made on it and alter any part that required it, if he had not been prevented by death. It is also a great mark of their modesty, that they inscribed their works as if they were the last which they had executed, and as still in hand at the time of their death." *Perseus Digital Library Project*. Ed. Gregory R. Crane. May 13, 2008. Tufts University. February 12, 2009 <<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>>.

⁴² See S. Blake McHam "Reflections of Pliny in Giovanni Bellini's *Woman with a Mirror*" *Artibus et Historiae* 58 (2008): 157-71. On Renaissance artists' use of the verb *faciebat*, see V. Juren, "Fecit Faciebat" *Revue de l'Art* 26 (1974): 27-30. The first known instance in the Renaissance is Michelangelo's Vatican *Pietà* (1499, Rome, St. Peter's). For the text itself, see Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), vol. 1, 16-19.

connection with humanists from an early date. The region's most well known antiquarian artist was Andrea Mantegna, who had contact with numerous collectors and epigraphers of Padua, Verona, and Venice from his earliest training in the studio of Francesco Squarcione. At the Gonzaga court, Mantegna advised Isabella d'Este on her collection of antiquities and also became a collector himself. The Bellini and Squarcione studios possessed collections of antiquities or painted and sculpted copies of them that were used as workshop models. Notable sculptors of the period restored fragmentary sculpture, including the Venetian Tullio Lombardo.⁴³ Numerous drawings by Venetan artists after the antique survive from the fifteenth century and constitute some of the earliest Italian drawings of the type. Outstanding among them is Jacopo Bellini's drawings of antiquities in his sketchbooks (fig. 24).⁴⁴ These were the visual counterparts to humanists' search for and study of ancient texts, aligning artists with the most learned scholars and powerful, wealthy nobles of the period. Artists' drawings after antique remains inspired their quotation in countless paintings and sculptures—this borrowing from antiquity was a sign of erudition of both artist and patron.

Venetian civic identity

So far I have contextualized the use of *cartellini* in terms of the Renaissance phenomenon of signatures as the outcome of the increasing social status of artists and intellectual status of the visual arts. Signed *cartellini*, however, have further implications

⁴³ For an early history of the restoration of antiquities in Italy, see O. Rossi Pinelli, "Chirurgia della memoria: Scultura, antica, e restauri storici" in *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana*, S. Settis, ed. (Turin: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1986), vol. 3, 181-250, esp. 181-220 on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. On Tullio Lombardo's activities as a restorer, see D. Pincus, "Tullio Lombardo as a Restorer of Antiquities: An Aspect of Fifteenth Century Venetian Antiquarianism" *Arte Veneta* 33 (1979): 29-42.

⁴⁴ See chapter 1 for more detailed discussion of antiquarianism in fifteenth-century Padua, with bibliography.

for the demonstration of identity because of their visual characteristics and iconographic associations. By signing on *cartellini*, painters added meaning to their signatures, and by extension, the expression of their identities. *Cartellini*, because they were adopted by a large group of painters, are expressions of membership in larger groups, and allude to civic, class, and professional identity.⁴⁵

The importance of collective identity was reflective of the socio-political context of republican Venice, in which the common good was idealized and individuals were to act in the interest of the state. This ideal became especially salient in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, when the social order was threatened by volatile politics on the Italian peninsula and the looming Turkish threat to the east. Allegiance to the social order in place since the Serrata of 1297, when the member families of the ruling patriciate were established, is evident in Venetian law, state histories, civic rituals, and professional and religious institutions, as well as in Venetian art. Thus, the *cartellino* can be interpreted as Venetian painters' attempt to balance Venetian civic ideals and individualistic self-promotion, by signing a motif that could allude not only to their individual identity but also to their *venezianità*.

During the third quarter of the fifteenth century, the *cartellino* became a recognizably Venetian motif. As I have argued, the *cartellino* had its origins in the *terraferma* city of Padua, specifically in the overlapping circles of Francesco Squarcione

⁴⁵ See L. Matthew, "The Painter's Presence: Signatures in Venetian Renaissance Pictures" *Art Bulletin* 80 (1998): 617-18: "Words continued to exercise their traditional functions even after they had been entirely subsumed into the painted illusion...[but] When words are part of the illusion, the painter has more leeway to enhance the significance of the image than he did when the ruling convention was simply to add the letters over the surface of the image or fit them within a section of the frame." A. Seidel, *Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait: Stories of an Icon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 5-8, addresses the value of interpreting the placement of Jan van Eyck's signatures, addressed in the recent article K. Gludovatz, "Der Name am Rahmen, der Maler im Bild. Künstlerselbstverständnis und Produktionskommentar in den Signaturen Jan van Eycks" *Weiner Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 54 (2005): 115-75.

and a number of antiquarian scholars and second as a popular motif because of its references to the book industries through the depiction of paper and parchment. The *cartellino* subsequently came to Venice as a result of strong cultural ties with Padua, with its scholarly clout, and spread because of its relevance for the most important new industry in the city. The printing industry, by the 1480s, may have become a point of civic pride. In the fifteenth century, printing was praised as not only a convenience, but a divine gift that could aid education and moral edification by making books more accessible; scholars also admired the craft for the speed and accuracy with which texts could be produced.⁴⁶ Not only would painters have wanted to flaunt their associations with scholarly culture through references to books and printing, but they may have also wanted to assert their pride in Venice as the greatest center of printing in all of Europe.

The popularity of the *cartellino* in Venice during this period can be partially explained by its use by some of the most influential and prolific Venetian painters of the period. Giovanni Bellini's use of the *cartellino* is especially important in light of the fact that the years of the painter's activity are nearly the same as the period of the *cartellino*'s popularity. Bellini's many students were in part responsible for this trend, since many of them adopted the *cartellino* in their independent careers. Also notable in the spread of the *cartellino* from Venice and Padua into other parts of the *terraferma* is the output of Bartolomeo Vivarini, whose altarpieces were shipped to distant parts of the empire and

⁴⁶ B. Richardson, "The Debates on Printing in Renaissance Italy" *La Bibliofilia* 100 (1998): 137-55. Although not all commentators praised printing, "printed books were not despised unless they were poorly reproduced" or they disseminated immoral content (143ff). For Venetian printing in the period under consideration here (1480s to 1520s), the former criticism, at least, would not have held water, given the generally recognized quality of the Venetian product. See above, 67-70.

signed and dated with *cartellini*.⁴⁷ At the height of the *cartellino*'s popularity, that is, during the 1480s and 90s, Vittore Carpaccio used *cartellini* for most of his signatures.⁴⁸

While some painters may simply have been imitating these Venetian masters by adopting their mode of signing, they may have also intended more specifically to advertise their work as the creation of a Venetian artist.

Foreign artists also imitated these masters, and the appearance of *cartellini* both in other parts of Italy and in northern Europe can be explained by the fact that influential painters adopted the *cartellino* during or after a Venetian sojourn.⁴⁹ One early example is the Sicilian painter Antonello da Messina, whose sojourn in Venice in 1475-1476, when he painted the *San Cassiano Altarpiece* (fig. 62), is well known. Scholars suspect, however, that he also made a trip to northern Italy, including Venice and Padua in the late 1460s, when he is absent from the documentary record in Messina.⁵⁰ Consistent with this

⁴⁷ In inscriptions on altarpieces made for export, Bartolomeo also stated the painting was done in Venice. For example, his altarpiece now in the Accademia Carrara, for the parish church of Scanzo (Bergamo) is signed, "FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTH / OLOMEVM VIVARINVM DE MURIANO / PINXIT 1488" ('Made in Venice by Bartolomeo Vivarini of Murano, painted 1488').

⁴⁸ According to a Muraro's list of inscriptions on Carpaccio's paintings, he signed forty extant works; thirty of them are signed on *cartellini*. See M. Muraro, *Carpaccio* (Florence: Edizioni d'Arte il Fiorino, 1966), 73-75. Muraro does not include blank *cartellini* that very likely once contained signatures on five paintings: *Christ in Gethsemane*, *Saint George and the Dragon*, and the *Triumph of Saint George* in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni and the *Preaching of Saint Stephen* (Paris, Louvre) and the *Stoning of Saint Stephen* (Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie) from the Scuola di Santo Stefano cycle. He also omits the signature "Victoris / Carpatij / Venetij / Opus" on the central panel of the polyptych in the cathedral of Zara (Zadar), which appears from published photographs to be on a *cartellino* in the lower left corner. This adjustment to Muraro's count would make the count thirty-six of forty-six, a slightly greater proportion.

⁴⁹ Although by my definition not *cartellini*, Lippi's dated scroll on the Tarquinia Madonna and Andrea Castagno's signed and dated scrolls in the San Tarasio Chapel are examples of a similar paradigm of an artist borrowing motifs of a foreign tradition during or after a sojourn there. See above, 14-15.

⁵⁰ See G. Barbera, *Antonello da Messina, Sicily's Renaissance Master* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art), 21-22, which discusses the first trip to north Italy and frequent use of *cartellini* in late 1460s. P. H. Jolly, 245-46, notes, "Antonello da Messina first uses a *cartellino* to sign and date a work in his 1465 *Christ Blessing*, and continues thereafter to make use of an inscribed *cartellino* on almost every painting he did." Jolly notes exceptions, most of which are fragmentary works or insecure attributions. The only firmly attributed painting belonging to the period in question (i.e., after 1465) and in good condition that Jolly lists as lacking a *cartellino* is the *Saint Sebastian* in Dresden of 1478-79. Restoration of this painting in 2004, however, uncovered a *cartellino* in the left foreground (figs. 67, 68). See A. Henning, "Il restauro del *San Sebastiano* di Antonello da Messina" in G. Poldi and G. C. F. Villa, eds., *Antonello da Messina* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2006), 77-87.

theory is the fact that every one of his securely attributed, intact paintings from after 1465 contains a *cartellino*. Albrecht Dürer adopted the *cartellino* while visiting Venice from late summer of 1505 to early 1507, in his *Feast of the Rosegarlands* (fig. 63, 64), *Christ among the Doctors* (fig. 65), and *Madonna with the Siskin* (fig. 66). Recently, Katherine Crawford Luber has argued that this period constituted Dürer's only visit to Venice, contesting the traditional view that it was his second trip to the city.⁵¹ Her conclusions are largely based on technical analysis of Dürer's paintings and the absence of documentation (visual or written) that confirms the artist's presence in the city in the 1490s. The fact that the painter adopted the *cartellino*, so strongly associated with Venice during this time, however, could also indicate that the painter was first exposed to this characteristic motif during his sojourn in Venice between 1505 and 1507, and adapted it in his own painting to convey his admiration of Venetian painters, particularly Giovanni Bellini.⁵²

Family and workshop in Venetian painting

The socio-economic conditions of Renaissance Venice are also relevant in terms of the formation of artistic identity and modes of signing in the more specific context of class hierarchy and professional guilds. As noted above, Venetian society was based on a relatively rigid class system and a conservative government, neither of which officially changed much from the late Middle Ages until the end of the Republic in the late

⁵¹ "Dürer's Mythic and Real Presence in Italy: An Argument against Two Separate Journeys" in *Albrecht Dürer and the Venetian Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 40-76.

⁵² K. Crawford Luber, 215, n. 16, noted four examples of prints that carry the artist's monogram, not the longer inscription he used in his paintings, on a slip of paper, which predate the 1506 journey. She explains Dürer's possible exposure to the motif through his knowledge, through prints or drawings, of works by Cima da Conegliano and Jacopo de' Barbari. In any case, all of the examples, both the prints and the later paintings, postdate Dürer's possible 'first' trip in 1494-95.

eighteenth century.⁵³ A small, elite, hereditary class of patricians served in the highest governmental and ecclesiastical offices. Unlike class distinctions in most of the rest of Europe, the patriciate was not composed of landed aristocracy, but instead made its wealth as merchants. Many of the middle class of *cittadini* ('citizens') were professional and economic equals to patricians; their lower position was defined by birth.⁵⁴ To prevent potential resentment among the *cittadini* because of this inequity, they were allowed to participate in governmental bureaucratic positions and in a few token high-ranking offices. The *popolani*, composed of laborers and artisans—the class to which artists typically belonged—were limited to participation in professional guilds, or *arti*, to achieve influence in the socioeconomic hierarchy. These lower classes, although excluded from influential government offices, were active citizens through their participation in *scuole* (confraternities). Only *cittadini* could serve in the highest offices of the major confraternities, the *scuole grandi*.

This stratified class system, which placed great importance on lineage, produced tenacious artistic traditions and an emphasis on large family workshops.⁵⁵ Therefore, one

⁵³ Historians have begun to revise the traditional characterization of the Venetian class hierarchy as a strictly defined caste system, beginning with the Serrata of 1296-97. See G. Rösch, "The Serrata of the Great Council and Venetian Society, 1286-1323" in *Venice Reconsidered: The history and Civilization of an Italian City-State, 1297-1797*, ed. J. Martin and D. Romano (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 67-88 and S. Chojnacki, "Identity and Ideology in Renaissance Venice: The Third Serrata" in *ibid.*, 263-94. Although there was some social mobility possible through economic status and intermarriage, social class remained largely hereditary and determined a Venetian's level of participation in civic life. The fact remains, however, that Venetians were class-conscious, particularly the patriciate, who had the most to gain from maintaining exclusive status.

⁵⁴ On the wealth and status of *cittadini*, see J. Grubb, "Elite Citizens" in J. Martin and D. Romano, eds., 339-64. Grubb begins by discussing different models of Venetian class since the sixteenth century, which vary in their division of society into two or three classes. On Venetian social class hierarchy, see above, n. 54; D. Romano 1987, esp. 27-38; B. Pullan, *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice: the Social Institutions of a Catholic State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); O. Logan, *Culture and Society in Venice, 1470-1790* (New York: Scribner, 1972), 21-39.

⁵⁵ For the dynastic nature of artist families in Venice, see H. Tietze, "Master and Workshop in the Venetian Renaissance" *Parnassus* 11/8 (1939): 34-35, 45. One benefit of this system provided the consolidation and

possible reason that Venetian artists signed their works in consistent forms, the most common of which was the *cartellino*, was to solidify their place as heirs to a long tradition, an appeal to conservative Venetian sensibilities. While the passing down of a workshop through generations of a family is certainly not unique to Renaissance Venice, the importance of the workshop and family for artists can be observed in the signatures of members of two of the most successful artistic dynasties of Renaissance Venice—the Bellini and the Vivarini. In both families, the *cartellino* was used by multiple generations, asserting themselves as individual masters and as members of an esteemed family or workshop.

The practice can be traced all the way back to Squarcione's studio in mid-fifteenth-century Padua. For Squarcione's students, the use of the *cartellino* may have served the purpose of advertising their background and connections, given that most early uses of the *cartellino* are associated with artists connected to Squarcione's Paduan studio in the mid-fifteenth century. The prestige of Squarcione's workshop was amplified with Mantegna's successes in the 1450s at the Ovetari Chapel and in the 1460s at the Gonzaga court, encouraging Squarcione's other students to continue to frequently sign their paintings.⁵⁶ In 1455 Marco Zoppo, even though he would soon leave Squarcione's employ on bad terms, signed his *Madonna and Child with Angels* "OPERA DEL ZOPPO DI SQUARCIO / NE." Another of Squarcione's students Giorgio Schiavone referred to his teacher in five of his surviving paintings from ca. 1456 to 1461, during his training with Squarcione. In his *Madonna and Child* of ca. 1460 (the central panel of a triptych for San Francesco, Padua, fig. 69), he signed a *cartellino* "OPVS SCLAVONI DALMAT

preservation of workshop resources, like drawings and exempla, which were passed down to sons or other relatives who would take over the activity of the shop.

⁵⁶ R. Lightbown, *Mantegna* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 21.

/ ICI SQUARCIONI” (‘Work of the Dalmatian Schiavone [student of] Squarcione’); a similar painting in the National Gallery, London is signed “OPVS SCLAVONI DISIPVLI / SQUARCIONI” (‘Work of Schiavone, disciple of Squarcione’), more explicitly stating his relationship to the master.

Alvise Vivarini, for example, was the third of the Vivarini line of painters, the son of Antonio and the nephew of Bartolomeo. Antonio never used the *cartellino*, but he did sign several paintings, sometimes on scrolls. Bartolomeo, on the other hand, frequently used *cartellini* to sign his paintings, as did the younger Alvise. Strong similarities between Bartolomeo’s and Alvise’s approaches to signing can be seen in Alvise’s *Madonna and Child with Six Saints* of 1480 (fig. 70) and Bartolomeo’s triptych for San Giovanni in Bragora of 1478 (fig. 71). Bartolomeo’s signature, “BARTHOLOMEVS VIVARINVS / DE MVRIANO PINXIT 1478,” like Alvise’s, “ALVIXE VIVAR / IN.P. MCCCCLXXX” give the painter’s name, the verb *pinxit* (abbreviated by Alvise in this instance) and the date of the altarpiece’s completion. Each painter placed his *cartellino* at the base of the throne near the center of the painting’s foreground. Alvise also adopted his uncle’s style of lettering and his unusual tendency to crowd the letters closely and leave no margins on the *cartellino*. Alvise, who struggled during much of his career to obtain and complete commissions because of illness, seemed to have relied on his family’s reputation in order to further his own.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ See J. Steer *Alvise Vivarini: His Art and Influence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 4, cites a signature on his earliest known work (1476, Montefiorino Polyptych, now in Urbino, Palazzo Ducale), which reads, “LVDOVICVS.VIVARINVS.MVRIANENSIS.” as evidence that Alvise wanted to position himself as an inheritor of the workshop’s traditions by referring to the origins of the Vivarini in Murano, even though Alvise probably never lived there. Consistent with what Steer calls Alvise’s ‘filling out’ of his uncle Bartolomeo’s style (5-6), Alvise’s later *cartellini* are rendered more three-dimensionally, as in his *Resurrection* (1498, San Giovanni in Bragora) and the *Madonna and Child with Saints* (1500, Amiens, Musée Picardie).

As I noted above, many of Giovanni Bellini's students such as Cima da Conegliano, Marco Marziale, Andrea Previtali, and Rocco Marconi, as well as followers like Bartolomeo Veneto and Marco Basaiti, signed their independent paintings with *cartellini*; not only were they asserting themselves as individual masters, they referred to their training by adopting their master's characteristic—and immediately recognizable—signing motif. Giovanni Mansueti also referred to himself as a 'discipuli' of Bellini (presumably Giovanni, for whom he worked occasionally as an assistant).⁵⁸ These types of signatures are assertions of the painter's identity as part of a larger group, in most cases, a workshop identified by the name of the master. The language that states this association is reinforced by their placement on *cartellini*, which in and of themselves help provide the association. The workshops with which Schiavone and Mansueti wanted to identify themselves had the appeal of being the most successful of their time and place.

In Venice, the *arte* of painters, like other Italian guilds, had its foundations in the Middle Ages, when professions organized themselves to protect their business interests and standardize practices. The painter's *arte*, as did others of its type, had strict regulations that dictated the stages of the artist's training and career, as well as limited the number of practicing painters and the importation of paintings and prints. It also outlawed anyone not a member of *arte* from practicing in the city.⁵⁹ Foreign artists who visited Venice, many of them from northern Europe, had to enroll in the *arte* in order to legally

⁵⁸ Mansueti's training is not documented, although he signed another painting, *Saint Matthew Enthroned with Saints*, (Venice, private collection), "Opus Joannis de Mansuetis Discipuli Johannis Bellinus." Gentile Bellini had some relationship to Mansueti, since he served as witness to Mansueti's wife's will, so the phrase "BELLINI DISCIPULI" in a canvas for the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista's *Legend of the True Cross*, the *Miracle of the Relic of the Holy Cross in Campo San Lio* (1494, Venice, Accademia) could refer to Gentile, who also contributed to the *True Cross* cycle. Some scholars have proposed that Mansueti trained with Lazzaro Bastiani. See S. Miller, 78. For the *True Cross* cycle, see P. F. Brown, 1988, 142-64, 282-86.

⁵⁹ See D. Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 5-7.

accept commissions.⁶⁰ In Venice, the Arte dei Dipentori was a group of many different types of painters, including those who painted playing cards, signs, and houses, as well as gilders and textile designers.⁶¹ Although the Arte dei Dipentori was therefore a large and diverse group, and as an institution officially maintained the artisan status of painters, its members shared a common goal of protecting the interests of local artisans and ensuring the quality of Venetian products.

Although Venetian painters were united by the *arte*, they nonetheless faced each other in a competitive art market. An individual workshop's success depended not only on gaining commissions for monumental paintings and portraits, but also on taking advantage of an open market for paintings, which served the relatively wealthy citizenry.⁶² In supplying wares to the open market, the painter needed to meet the demand for small-scale devotional paintings and distinguish his workshop's products from those of his competitors. A crucial component to the sale of paintings was the attractiveness of the impression they made while on display, and illusionistic motifs such as the *cartellino* offered painters the opportunity to demonstrate their skill.

Furthermore, the formal variations of *cartellini* allowed workshops to adopt standard forms that would potentially be associated with particular masters. The

⁶⁰ For foreign artists and guild restrictions in Venice, see M. Muraro, "The Statutes of the Venetian 'Arti' and the Mosaics of the Mascoli Chapel" *Art Bulletin* 43 (1961): 263-74; L. Matthew, "Working Abroad: Northern Artists in the Venetian Ambient" in *Renaissance Venice and the North*, B. Aikema et al., eds. (New York: Rizzoli, 2000), 61-69; M. L. Evans, "Northern Artists in Italy during the Renaissance" *Bulletin for the Society of Renaissance Studies* 3 (1985): 7-23, esp. 18; T.-H. Borchert, "The Mobility of Artists. Aspects of Cultural Transfer in Renaissance Europe" in *The Age of van Eyck: The Mediterranean World and Early Netherlandish Painting, 1430-1530* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002), 33-45.

⁶¹ D. Rosand, 7.

⁶² See L. Matthew, "Were There Open Markets for Pictures in Renaissance Venice?" in *The Art Market in Italy, 15th–17th Centuries*, ed. M. Fantoni et al. (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2003), 253-62. Matthew concludes that although the Venetian open market may have been more modest than those in cities like Bruges and Antwerp, the differences in commercial practices between northern Europe and Italy have been too sharply drawn (256).

cartellino, therefore, acted somewhat like a modern commercial logo.⁶³ Several Venetian workshops adopted standard forms; thus while the *cartellino* can be characterized as an assertion of Venetian identity, these variations demonstrate their function as trademarks of specific Venetian shops. Bartolomeo Vivarini consistently painted long, narrow strips attached to vertical surfaces with dots of red wax, bearing lengthy inscriptions in Roman capitals that included his full name, place of birth, the date of the painting, and for paintings destined for mainland cities, the assertion that they were made in Venice. Carpaccio used squarer sheets of paper, often with creases or projecting folded corners, with his Latinized name and often the date, written in Roman capitals. These standard forms performed a similar function to maker's marks, visual signs of quality that emerged from medieval guilds and craft traditions. These marks both identified the individual maker and guaranteed the quality of the product through the rules of the guild. The fairly standard placement of the *cartellino* in the foreground of the composition, usually attached to a vertical stone surface like a parapet or a throne, meant that viewers could know where to look for the artist's name; the specific form of the *cartellino* would make the particular workshop more recognizable, even if the inscription were illegible. Thus the *cartellino* allowed painters to identify themselves as the individual authors of their paintings, at the same time that they positioned themselves as heads of a workshop.

⁶³ L. Matthew 1998, 620, 624, 627. See also Z. Wazbinski, "Le 'cartellino': origine et avatars d'une etiquette" *Pantheon* 21 (1963): 278-83, esp. 280. The author argues that *cartellini* actually derive from the real practice of labeling works in the large workshop of the commercially savvy Francesco Squarcione, whose students subsequently adapted the practice by including illusionistic versions in their paintings. Although the reasoning of such a practice that Wazbinski presents is plausible, unfortunately he can cite no supporting evidence that Squarcione labeled his art collection with slips of paper. Perhaps an avenue for further exploration, however, is the less literal association that could be made between painted *cartellini* and the presence in the painter's workshop of accounting papers, contracts, or even bills of sale, all slips of paper inscribed with the artist's name and carrying a documentary function.

This marketing strategy paralleled the introduction of the title page in Venice's printing industry, the only feature of the printed book that was not borrowed from the manuscript tradition.⁶⁴ In her book tracing the development of title pages in incunabula, Margaret Smith demonstrates that title pages came into use as the result of the demands of mass production and marketing. Likely evolving out of a necessity to protect printed pages of unbound, unsold books in storage (unnecessary with commissioned and expeditiously bound manuscripts), title pages started as a means of identifying the contents of the unbound book, but quickly evolved into a method of marketing and promoting the printer's wares.⁶⁵ Venetian printers in the 1490s and early 1500s were particularly enthusiastic about the elaboration of the design of title pages with publication information, decorative borders, and printer's marks.⁶⁶ Although painting was a small industry and did not involve mass production, standard formats and subjects sold on the open market did expand in the later years of the fifteenth century. Thus Venetian printers and painters employed parallel strategies for the needs of the open market by 'signing' and adopting trademarks.

The painter's identity—workshop practices and *paragone*

The adoption of paper as a motif for signing was likely a way for painters to make reference to their own craft by inscribing their names on a fictive material that was, by the fifteenth century, commonly used in painter's workshops. Drawings had been part of

⁶⁴ L. Matthew, 1998, 627.

⁶⁵ M. M. Smith, *The Title Page: Its Early Development 1460-1510* (London: British Library, 2000), 22. The author even speculates, "It may well be that the *driving* force behind the development of the title-page was its advertising potential rather than its protecting and identifying functions. All three of these, protection, identification, and advertising are new needs brought with the advent of mass production."

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 24, 91ff.

the painter's studio practice in the Middle Ages in the form of pattern books and model books.⁶⁷ With the wider availability of paper in the fifteenth century, drawing became an important part of an artist's training and work as an assistant. Both Cennini's and Leonardo's treatises recommended that young painters copy drawings of masters in order to learn the principles of painting and develop a good style.⁶⁸ A contract between Squarcione and a new apprentice drawn up in 1467 named Francesco illustrates the importance of drawing in his studio, with the master promising to

always keep him with paper in his hand to provide him with a model, one after another, with various figures in lead white, and correct these models for him, and correct his mistakes so far as I can and he is capable...and if he should damage any drawing of mine the said Guzon [Francesco's father] is required to pay me its full worth...⁶⁹

Squarcione's collection of models and drawings included many studies of antiquities, which were valuable to artists who wanted to absorb the classical style. Making and acquiring drawings after the antique were ways that artists could study ancient art.

In the artistic ambient of Venice, which maintained its collective workshop character far longer than its counterparts in the rest of Italy, drawings provided a unifying, organizational "backbone" for workshop production.⁷⁰ Assistants in Giovanni Bellini's workshop employed cartoons and studies to execute half-length Madonnas; complex narrative scenes were composed and executed with numerous drawings of

⁶⁷ F. Ames-Lewis, *Drawing in Early Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 13-14.

⁶⁸ For the Cennini's advice on imitating masters, see A. Bolland, "Art and Humanism in Early renaissance Padua: Cennini, Vergerio, and Petrarch on Imitation" *Renaissance Quarterly* 49 (1996): 469-87. See also Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*, trans. A. Philip McMahon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 46.

⁶⁹ V. Lazzarini and A. Moschetti, 167. Translated by C. Gilbert, 1980, 34. On Squarcione's studio and exempla, see above, 37-39, 42-44.

⁷⁰ H. Tietze and E. Tietze-Contrat, *The Drawings of the Venetian Painters in the 15th and 16th Centuries* (New York: Hacker Books, 1979), 5.

different figural groups and portrait heads.⁷¹ Thus drawings might be viewed as the center of collective practice in the Venetian painter's workshop. Paper was the medium by which the collective activity of the workshop came together in the finished painting. By employing a paper motif to sign, painters were referring not only to the importance of the material in the painter's training and activity, but also to the process of bringing multiple hands into a work under the unifying leadership of the master, whose name graced the *cartellino*. As noted above, the adoption of trademark characteristics for *cartellini* of a particular shop—that is, the size and shape of the paper, its distinctive curls and creases, the lettering and form of the inscription—also alluded to the collective activity of the workshop. The visual character of the *cartellino* could have served as the apprentices' 'signature' alongside the master's.

Aside from serving this practical function within the workshop, drawings were also collected as valuable works of art in themselves. In the Veneto, drawings were sometimes conceived as completed compositions as opposed to preparatory studies, one category of which was highly finished portrait drawings.⁷² These drawings displayed the painter's skill and were valued accordingly, resulting in early drawings collections, some of them owned by noted Venetian patricians.⁷³ The Veronese antiquarian, scribe, and poet Felice Feliciano assembled the first known Renaissance collection of drawings, made

⁷¹ For the use of drawings in Giovanni Bellini's workshop, see F. Gibbons, 151-52, E. Tietze-Conrat, "An Unpublished *Madonna* by Giovanni Bellini and the Problem of Replicas in His Shop" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 33 (1948): 379-82, and K. Christiansen, "Giovanni Bellini and the Practice of Devotional Painting" in *Giovanni Bellini and the Art of Devotion*, ed. R. Kasl (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 2004), 9-22. For the use of drawings by Venetian painters for narrative compositions, see F. Ames-Lewis, 1990, 374-80.

⁷² F. Ames-Lewis, 1999, 680. The author argues that these drawings were originally employed as cartoons for painted portraits in narrative canvases, but their high quality stimulated patrons' requests for autonomous portrait drawings.

⁷³ F. Ames-Lewis, *Drawing in Early Renaissance Italy*, 12 and J. Byam Shaw, "Drawing in Venice" in *The Genius of Venice, 1500-1600*, J. Martineau and C. Hope, eds. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1983), 243.

possible through his many contacts with fifteenth-century artists in north Italy. The value Feliciano afforded the drawings is indicated by the collector's mark he inscribed on several sheets by the painter Stefano da Verona and his associates, and by the fact that the drawings, which are ink sketches executed on paper, were preserved at all.⁷⁴ In contrast, Jacopo Bellini's two large albums contain highly finished "drawn pictures," the will of Jacopo's wife calls part of her bequest to Gentile.⁷⁵ Unlike medieval model books or sketchbooks that were used as sources of motifs for paintings, Jacopo's albums were conceived as precious works of art in themselves.⁷⁶

In addition to referring to their training and practices as painters showcasing the importance of paper in their profession, in using a trompe-l'oeil device like a *cartellino*, painters also distinguished themselves from sculptors as part of the *paragone* between painting and sculpture. The main thrust of the argument involved the mimetic potential of each art (although other factors, such as durability of materials, difficulty of execution, and relationship to other arts were also raised).⁷⁷ Renaissance painters like Mantegna were known for representing the *paragoni* in their compositions, challenging the alleged advantages of sculpture with painted images. The artist seemed to be referring to the *paragone* in his *Saint Sebastian* in the Louvre (fig. 72), where the saint, shot through with

⁷⁴ E. Karet, "Stefano da Verona, Felice Feliciano, and the First Renaissance Collection of Drawings" *Arte Lombarda* 124 (1998): 31-51.

⁷⁵ J. Fletcher, 1998, 136.

⁷⁶ For Jacopo's albums, see C. Eisler and B. Degenhart and A. Schmitt, *Jacopo Bellini: The Louvre Album of Drawings*, trans. F. Mecklenburg (New York: Braziller, 1984). For their autonomous character, see C. Joost-Gaugier, "The 'Sketchbooks' of Jacopo Bellini Reconsidered" *Paragone* 297 (1974): 24-41. H. Tietze and E. Tietze-Conrat, 10-11, present a conflicting view, based not on the album as an object, but on the content of some of the individual folios, which are akin to drawings in model books.

⁷⁷ For a synopsis of the debate, see F. Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist*, 141-61; see P. Barocchi, ed. *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento* (Milan and Naples: R. Ricciardi, 1971), vol. I, 475ff for sixteenth-century writings on the subject, including selections by Leonardo, Vasari, Michelangelo, et al. In the 1460s Filarete incorporated the *paragone* into his architectural treatise. See *Treatise on Architecture*, J. Spencer, trans. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), Book XXIII.

arrows, is bound to a fragment of a ruinous arcade. Evoking also comparisons between the Christian present and pagan antiquity, Sebastian is shown standing on a pile of fragments of antique sculpture, including, near his own feet, the sandaled foot of a stone statue, obviously meant to contrast with the foot of the painted figure. Not only could Mantegna achieve what the sculptor could with paint, he can outdo the sculpture with a more lifelike foot in full color. Mantegna may also have intended a wry comment on the supposed durability of sculpture, so often used to argue the medium's superiority over painting, by showing the disembodied stone foot atop a heap of rubble.⁷⁸

According to Paolo Pino, Giorgione composed a painting to counter the standard argument in favor of sculpture: that a figure sculpted in the round could be seen from multiple viewpoints. Giorgione's painting depicted Saint George standing by a pool of water, with his shining armor on one side and a mirror on the other, the painting thereby providing views of all sides of the man's figure at once.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ For Mantegna and the *paragone*, see J. Martineau, ed., *Andrea Mantegna* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 394-416, esp. 395 on the Louvre *Saint Sebastian*. The painting can additionally be interpreted as a comment on the *paragone* of ancient and modern and of Christian and pagan.

⁷⁹ P. Pino, *Dialogo della pittura*, S. Falabella, ed. (Rome: Lithos, 2000), 126-27. G. Vasari, *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architetti* (Milan: Società Tipografica de' Classici Italiani, 1807-1811), vol. 7, 136-37 also describes the painting, but as Giorgione's rationale for creating it includes a conversation with Verrocchio, who argued the merits of sculpture over painting. Vasari's story is inaccurate because Giorgione was born around 1475 and therefore was still a child when Verrocchio was in Venice at work on the *Colleoni Monument* from 1486 to 1488. It is possible, however, that Vasari confused Verrocchio with the sculptors who completed the casting and pedestal after his death. See N. Land, "Giovanni Bellini, Jan van Eyck, and the Paragone of Painting and Sculpture" *Source* 19 (1999): 1-8, where the author calls into doubt the existence of Giorgione's painting of Saint George based not only on questionable documentary evidence, but on doubts about whether Venetian artists ca. 1500 even concerned themselves with the *paragone* between painting and sculpture. Although Land is correct to cast doubt on the dubious textual evidence, he does not adequately disprove the potential relevance of the *paragone* in Venice around the turn of the century. He points to Giovanni Bellini's *Nude with a Mirror*, which is often cited in comparison with Giorgione's *Saint George* and therefore also a reference to the *paragone*, as perhaps inspired not by Giorgione or by the *paragone*, but by a painting of a nude woman at her toilet and reflected in a mirror in a lost but documented painting by Jan van Eyck. Although this is an apt comparison, it does not discount the relevance of the *paragone* for Bellini or for van Eyck and does not take into consideration the proposal that van Eyck's representation of stone and sculpture (as in the Ghent Altarpiece or in the *Portrait of Tymotheos*) shows the artist's engagement with the debate. Pino's account of Giorgione's *Saint George* has also been questioned, since the description jibes more with paintings by Pino's contemporaries than with

Painters also employed pieces of stone as compositional devices, most commonly the stone parapet. It had become traditional in Venetian portraiture by the third quarter of the fifteenth century (used by Antonello da Messina, Giovanni Bellini, and Giorgione), inspired by northern European models and usually employed for portraits and half-length religious pictures.⁸⁰ These parapets are often the site for illusionistic signatures, whether epigraphic or on attached *cartellini*. Jan van Eyck was the first painter to employ epigraphic signatures (see, for example, his *Portrait of a Young Man* ('*Leal Souvenir*'), fig. 2). Painting a 'carved' inscription on fictive stone was another way of imitating a sculptor's work in paint. As an alternative to the *cartellino*, in his earlier works Giovanni Bellini often used the epigraphic signature, carved into the stone parapet he often used for his half-length devotional pictures and portraits. Mantegna similarly 'carved' his signature into stone in another *Saint Sebastian* of 1457-58 (fig. 73). In this case he placed his name, in Greek, on the ruinous architecture to the left of Sebastian's figure. Thus Mantegna's signature suggests that an ancient sculptor carved the fragments scattered on the ground.

The *cartellino* was a way of signing a painting that could emphasize the illusionistic merits of painting over sculpture even more emphatically than the epigraphic

Giorgione's extant paintings. See, for example, the *Portrait of a Man* ('*Gaston de Foix*') (ca. 1525, Paris, Louvre) by Savoldo, Pino's teacher, which shows multiple views of the sitter provided by mirrors. See critical commentary in S. Falabella, 61-62. Giorgione's oeuvre, however, in terms of subject matter, is not well understood, and we should not discount the relevance of the *paragone* for Venetian painters in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries based on a lack of textual evidence that might document it; Venice was certainly not culturally isolated, and in certain cases paintings themselves provide strong visual evidence of painters' awareness of the debate. A. Luchs, 74-75, suggests that the issue would have been salient in late fifteenth-century Venice because of the increasing popularity of sculpted devotional images, the traditional domain of painters.

⁸⁰ R. Goffen, "Icon and Vision: Giovanni Bellini's Half-Length Madonnas" *Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 499-505 and S. Ringbom, 42-43. Jacopo Bellini and members of the Paduan school adopted the half-length with a stone parapet in the late 1440s and 50s; Antonello da Messina also made frequent use of it in his portraits and devotional paintings.

signature, which receded back from the picture plane instead of projecting outward. By placing an illusionistic element in the extreme foreground of a painting and making it appear to project into the viewer's space, the painter could exhibit the ability of painters to achieve three-dimensionality, the primary advantage given to sculpture in achieving fidelity to nature. A particularly telling example is that of Carpaccio's signature in his *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, a painting for the cycle of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni (1502, fig. 74), inscribed on a projecting *cartellino* in the center foreground, "VICTOR CARPATIVS / FINGEBAT / MDII."

In his choice of the verb *fingebat*, Carpaccio employed a loaded term. For one, it is a verb in the imperfect tense, as Pliny had prescribed in the *Natural History* to denote the artist's modesty. In this case, however, Carpaccio chose *fingebat* (in three other examples, two of them with *cartellini*, he used *finxit*, in the perfect tense), from the infinitive *fingere*. Although the word had several meanings in ancient Latin texts and in humanist literature of the fifteenth century, its original meaning involved physically shaping or molding, and was typically applied to clay sculpture. *Fingere* was also the act of poets, who could form and mold ideas in the mind, and therefore, when applied to painting, can be associated with the artist's *fantasia*, or imaginative process. While Carpaccio may have known of these varied meanings when he signed with *fingebat*, it seems significant that in this one known instance he used the word on the illusionistic device of the *cartellino*. Carpaccio therefore implies in his use of *fingere*—and decidedly not the very similar *pingere*, 'to paint'—that he formed his paintings as a sculptor forms clay or stone, that is, in three dimensions.⁸¹

⁸¹ M. Muraro, *Carpaccio* (Florence: Edizioni dell'Arte Fiorino, 1966), 75-78, first noted Carpaccio's use of *fingere*. A.-M. Lecoq, "'Finxit: Le peintre comme 'fictor' au XVIe siècle" *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et*

The *cartellino*, and therefore also the word *fingebat* or *finxit*, seems to project toward the viewer, thus utilizing not just the fictive space receding back from the picture plane, but also the liminal space situated between the viewer and the painting. By playing up the three-dimensionality of his paintings I believe Carpaccio, along with other painters of *cartellini*, is invoking the *paragone* pitting sculpture against painting. Therefore painters were not only advertising their individual artistic skill in the portrayal of illusionistic elements, they were advertising more generally the abilities of painters to rival sculptors in creating three-dimensional images.

Giovanni Bellini, “the best painter of all”

Giovanni Bellini is the prime example of a Venetian artist who fully inhabited the context outlined above and employed the *cartellino* as an emblem of personal and collective identity. Bellini occupies a prominent place in the history of Venetian painting: active from the mid-fifteenth century until his death in 1516, Bellini’s long career bridged the achievements of his father and teacher Jacopo Bellini with the High Renaissance period of Giorgione and Titian. Giovanni is largely responsible for establishing the stylistic qualities of Venetian painting of his generation: a warm, unifying palette, the solemn yet charming dignity of his sacred works, and his focus on color as the key principle of design, in contrast to the preference for more sculptural and linear qualities typical of central Italian painters. His period of mature activity also coincides with the

Renaissance 37 (1975): 225-43, tentatively draws a potential relationship between Carpaccio’s use of *fingere* after 1502 and Leonardo’s visit to the city in 1500. As Lecoq and P. F. Brown note (following Martin Kemp, see *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio*, 217-18), Leonardo frequently used *fingere* in his notebooks to talk about the artist’s *fantasia* and production of *fantioni*. See also M. Baxandall, 1971, 10 quoting Cicero: “*Fingo* and *effingo*. *Fingo* refers, strictly speaking, to the potter or *figulus* who makes forms from clay. From this it is extended in a general way to other things skillfully made by a man’s talent and skill, especially if they are unusual or novel...”

period of greatest popularity of the *cartellino*. As a consummate Venetian painter and member of one of the city's artistic dynasties, Giovanni Bellini, therefore, serves as a good case study to investigate the particular meanings and functions of the *cartellino* to express artistic identity in Renaissance Venice.

Bellini was born probably around 1435 and trained by his father; his older brother Gentile was also a celebrated painter, and the two worked collaboratively at various times on large-scale narrative cycles. The Bellini family members were *cittadini*, and therefore of a higher class than the *popolani*, the class to which most painters belonged. This designation meant that the Bellini could serve as *scuola* and guild officers; Bellini's son Alvise served in high government offices. Besides the prestige this class status granted the Bellini, it also meant that their social world was one from which they could cultivate important patrons and gain prestigious civic commissions.⁸²

Bellini's stylistic development over his long career is characterized by the painter's ability to absorb numerous influences. His earliest artistic activity was naturally in Jacopo's workshop, and his earliest documented painting was the *Gattamelata Altarpiece* for the Santo in Padua, painted 1459-60.⁸³ According to an early source, the main panel was signed by Jacopo, Gentile, and Giovanni and dated 1460.⁸⁴ Despite Giovanni's training with his father, his first independent efforts clearly show the influence of Mantegna, with whom he had contact in the late 1450s through his activity in Padua and the marriage of his sister Nicolosia to Mantegna in 1453. Bellini's painting

⁸² J. Fletcher, "Bellini's Social World" in P. Humfrey, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Giovanni Bellini* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13. This was probably also a factor in Carpaccio's success in gaining *scuola* commissions, as he was also a *cittadino*.

⁸³ A panel depicting Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint Bernardino in the National Gallery, Washington has been proposed as the left wing of the altarpiece, attributed variously to Jacopo or to Jacopo and Gentile. See M. Boskovits and D. A. Brown, *Italian Paintings of the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 89-94.

⁸⁴ See R. Goffen, 1989, 8, n. 22 and Appendix 2 n. 6.

throughout the 1460s and early 1470s was affected by his contact with Mantegna, and some of Bellini's painting of this period, such as his *Presentation in the Temple* (fig. 75) and *Agony in the Garden* in the National Gallery, London, are based on Mantegna's compositions.⁸⁵ In the 1470s, however, Bellini adopted the *sacra conversazione* composition and turned from the sculptural and linear qualities of Mantegna's painting to a softer treatment of form and more luminous approach to light and color made possible by the use of oil paint. These shifts, prompted by the Sicilian painter Antonello da Messina, who caused a sensation in Venice with his *San Cassiano Altarpiece* of 1475, came to comprise the defining stylistic idiom of the Venetian Renaissance. Bellini subsequently became the unchallenged leader in religious painting and portraiture.

By the 1480s Bellini had solidified his position as the leading Venetian painter, surpassing his older brother in talent and innovation, if not yet in fame. In 1479 Giovanni replaced Gentile in the Doge's Palace, having been granted the prestigious commission to paint narrative canvases for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, which awarded him an annual salary. Although Gentile returned to Venice in 1481, resumed work in the Doge's Palace, and gained commissions for narrative cycles at the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista and the Scuola Grande di San Marco, Giovanni continued to surpass Gentile's achievements in the development of the modern Venetian Renaissance painting style. In 1483 the Venetian state granted Giovanni the title "painter of our Dominion"; he was also exempted from dues and membership in the painter's guild, an unprecedented action that confirms Giovanni's unquestionable primacy by that date. Commensurate with his position as the leading painter of the city, Giovanni operated

⁸⁵ See K. Christiansen, "Bellini and Mantegna" in P. Humfrey, ed., 2004, 48-74.

what is believed to have been the largest workshop of any painter in Italy.⁸⁶ It produced small-scale devotional works and portraits in large numbers, as well as some of Venice's most prized altarpieces, leaving Gentile and Vittore Carpaccio to lead in narrative cycles for the *scuole*.

The early sixteenth century saw Giorgione's arrival on the Venetian art scene. Even though his career was very short, he made a great impact on Venetian painting by adapting Leonardo's style to Venetian *colore*, advancing new genres, like pastoral and mythological scenes and allegorical portraits, and training Titian. Giorgione did not, however, achieve the prominence of Bellini, who in 1506 Albrecht Dürer deemed "old and yet...the best painter of all."⁸⁷ Bellini outlived the much younger Giorgione, and by continuously adapting to new developments, he maintained his leading position in Venetian painting right up until his death in 1516.

Bellini's *Portrait of Leonardo Loredan*

Bellini signed his paintings relatively frequently, with either an epigraphic signature or a *cartellino*, which he used almost exclusively after 1500. He employed *cartellini* throughout his long career and in several variations, but for the most part he adopted a standard form; most of Bellini's *cartellini* employ Roman majuscules and are inscribed in a cursory fashion, stating simply his name with Latinized spelling, as in his *Portrait of Leonardo Loredan*. Since this portrait is typical of Bellini's signing practices,

⁸⁶ On Giovanni's workshop, see F. Heinemann, which is well illustrated but contains numerous errors, as noted by A. Tempestini, "Bellini and His Collaborators" in P. Humfrey, ed., 2004, 256-71. See also F. Gibbons; K. Christiansen, "Giovanni Bellini and the Practice of Devotional Painting"; A. Gentili, "Giovanni Bellini, la bottega, i quadri di devozione" *Venezia Cinquecento* 1/2 (1991): 27-60; and J. Fletcher, 1998.

⁸⁷ R. Fry, ed., *Dürer's Record of Journeys to Venice and the Low Countries* (New York: Dover, 1995), 6.

I will use it to interpret how Bellini's social and economic contexts shaped his identity, and how his methods of signing his paintings reveal it.

Bellini painted the *Portrait of Leonardo Loredan* (fig. 56) in the early years of the sitter's reign as doge, between about 1501 and 1504.⁸⁸ He wears ceremonial robes and the *corno*, the traditional headdress of the doge. The sitter is shown in half-length, cut off below the shoulders by a stone parapet, a device the artist used frequently. The Bellini workshop popularized the stone parapet for both portraits and small-scale religious images, and as noted above, the compositional device was often the location of the artist's signature. The painting's *cartellino* is liminally placed as if attached to the stone parapet or perhaps the surface of the panel. It has three vertical creases, as if the paper had been folded up and just recently smoothed out, revealing the inscription, "IOANNES BELLINVS" in finely formed Roman capitals.

Through his use of the *cartellino*, Bellini not only identified himself as an individual artist, but also referred to his skills as a painter. By including an illusionistic motif, placed such that it appears to project out into the viewer's space, Bellini is demonstrating his ability to render three-dimensional form in response to the *paragone* with sculpture. To achieve the effect of a projecting form, Bellini has placed the *cartellino* in front of the stone parapet, which seems to define also the picture plane; therefore an object in front of it seems to be in the viewer's space. To enhance the effect, Bellini painted creases on the *cartellino* so that instead of lying flush against the parapet, the folds push it out. Bellini treatment of the figure also seems to refer to and participate in painting's competition with sculpture, since it calls to mind a sculpted portrait bust.

⁸⁸ On this painting, see R. Goffen, 1989, 205-10; D. Ferrara, "Il ritratto del Doge Leonardo Loredan: strategie dell'abito tra politica e religione" *Venezia Cinquecento* 1 (1991): 89-108.

This form of portraiture had been popular in ancient Rome and experienced a revival in fifteenth century Italy.⁸⁹ The doge's figure is cut off just below the shoulders, as was the style of contemporary portrait busts, and Bellini's treatment of the face and drapery has a stony quality. Nonetheless, Bellini's portrait undoubtedly captures the essence of the figure's character and achieves an extremely lifelike image through varied textures and subtle modulations of light and color, which were challenges to the limitations of sculpted portraits. Bellini was pronouncing his own technical ability as well as his craft's capacity for naturalism.

Bellini's adoption of the *cartellino* played a key role popularizing the motif in the Veneto through his influence on his own students as well as numerous other painters active in the region. Young Giovanni would have been exposed to the *cartellino* very early in his career through his father's paintings and the Bellini workshop's activity in Padua in the late 1450s; Bellini was also connected to the book culture of Venice and Padua through his activity as a miniaturist as well as through humanist acquaintances.⁹⁰ Bellini's place in the history of Renaissance art is rather limited geographically and lies firmly in the city of Venice. There is no documentary or stylistic evidence that Bellini ever traveled to Florence or Rome, and he may have ventured from his native region only once, to the Marches in the 1470s in connection with his *Coronation* altarpiece for San Francesco in Pesaro. Probably nearly all of Bellini's output was aimed toward Venetian patrons or customers, with the documented exceptions of the Pesaro *Coronation*, the

⁸⁹ On portrait busts in Renaissance Italy, see I. Lavin, "On the Sources and Meaning of the Italian Renaissance Portrait Bust" in *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, ed. S. Blake McHam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 60-78; A. Luchs, *Tullio Lombardo and Ideal Portrait Sculpture in Renaissance Venice, 1490-1530* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); J. Schuyler, "Studies of Florentine Quattrocento Portrait Busts" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1974); D. Lewis, "An Early Series of Dynastic Portrait Busts by Alessandro Vittoria" *Artibus et Historiae* 35 (1997): 113-34; and

⁹⁰ See above, 73-74, 82, 86-87.

Nativity he painted for Isabella d'Este (untraced), and the *Baptism* for Santa Corona, Vicenza (fig. 76). The numerous painters of Venice and the *terraferma* that Bellini trained or otherwise influenced adopted the *cartellino*, popularizing the motif especially in the 1490s and 1500s. Since he had achieved such a high position among painters of the early Venetian Renaissance, and because his career was so firmly tied to the city of Venice, the motifs Bellini employed took on the quality of *venezianità*.

The *cartellino*, in its specific features and its inscription, however, also expressed individual identity that was useful as a self-promoting tool. Although both Jacopo Bellini and Mantegna used the *cartellino* to sign some of their paintings from the 1440s and early 1450s, Giovanni did not begin to consistently use the *cartellino* until the 1470s, as he was reaching stylistic maturity independently of his father and brother, and had established his burgeoning workshop.⁹¹ While referring to his heritage and training, Bellini also forged what we would call today a 'brand.' It seems likely that Bellini began to standardize his signatures as a way of identifying his work in the Venetian marketplace. As mentioned above, Bellini was the head of the city's largest workshop, which specialized in producing small-scale devotional pictures and portraits for display in the home or in small chapels. Bellini's workshop developed standard compositions of devotional pictures and produced them for the open market. The *cartellino*, therefore, functioned as a workshop logo.

Bellini's relatively pragmatic approach to selling (literally or figuratively) his paintings provides a contrast to the situation of a Renaissance court artist, who enjoyed

⁹¹ I can locate only two exceptions: *Saint Jerome and the Lion*, attributed to Giovanni as one of his earliest surviving paintings (Birmingham, Barber Institute of Fine Arts) and the Brera *Pietà* of ca. 1465. Both are uncharacteristic of his later signatures, which differ from the *Saint Jerome* in spelling and from the *Pietà* in length. A *Transfiguration* (Museo Correr, ca. 1455-1460) includes a small white rectangle near the bottom of the panel inscribed with a quotation from Job.

the relatively steady patronage of a prince and entertained a narrower audience. On the other hand, Bellini seemed to have been a savvy businessman who understood the workings of the art market as well as possibilities for networking and gaining commissions available through the Venetian *scuole*, rather than achieving status and gaining commissions through connections with courtiers and princes and highly intellectual approaches to subject matter and composition. This may have been a practical strategy in light of the privileges Gentile received as the eldest son. Their mother bequeathed Jacopo's precious books of drawings to Gentile, who was the official painter of Venice in the 1470s. He was made a knight and sent on a diplomatic mission to Constantinople to the court of the Turkish Sultan Mehmet II in 1479. Gentile's high status, courtly connections, and his specialization in narrative cycles must have encouraged Giovanni to explore another route.

Bellini made the most of his status as a *cittadino* with membership in both the Scuola Grande di San Marco and the Scuola di San Cristoforo dei Mercanti, the merchants' *scuola*.⁹² Jacopo's master Gentile da Fabriano, as well as some notable patricians, had been members.⁹³ Giovanni did have a few humanist acquaintances, admirers, and patrons, among them Felice Feliciano, Ulisse Aleotti, and Raffaele Zovenzoni, and Pietro Bembo, but unlike Mantegna and some other contemporary artists, was not known to have particular expertise in classical history, literature, or collecting. Instead, at least part of Bellini's success can be traced to his relationships with other *cittadini* and to his business acumen; Bellini distinguished himself as a successful painter

⁹² The *scuole piccole* were often associated with particular professions and *arti*. See P. Humfrey and R. MacKenney, "The Venetian Trade Guilds as Patrons of Art in the Renaissance" *Burlington Magazine* 128/988 (1986): 317.

⁹³ J. Fletcher, 2004, 24.

by running a profitable workshop that produced high-quality paintings for the Venetian art market and stunning altarpieces and portraits for patrician donors and ecclesiastical patrons.

Bellini executed only a handful of mythological subjects, and his discomfort with complex allegorical subject matter is documented in his correspondence with agents of Isabella d'Este, who wanted him, as the best painter in Venice, to contribute a painting to her *camerino* to compare with the efforts of other great masters of the day.⁹⁴

Alternatively, Bellini developed a talent for touching devotional scenes, *sacre conversazioni*, and, of course, portraits. While these portraits were commissioned and not made for the open market, because they were displayed in patricians' palaces and viewed by visitors, they nonetheless advertised Giovanni Bellini's talent. The original location and the patron of the *Loredan* portrait are unknown, but it does not conform to official state portraiture of the time, which showed doges in strict profile or as supplicants to the Virgin or the lion of Saint Mark.⁹⁵ It very likely was commissioned for the home of Loredan or one of his relatives.

The Venetian practice of collecting and displaying portraits of family members may have been inspired by the similar display of lineage by Roman noble families of antiquity described by Pliny.⁹⁶ Vasari seemed to be especially impressed by this foreign

⁹⁴ The correspondence begins in November of 1496 with Isabella's request for a 'historia'; she later settles for a *Nativity*, which proved to be no less a headache for the patron, since the subject of most of the letters have to do with Bellini's slowness in completing the painting. Bellini finally fulfilled his agreement in the summer of 1505. See S. J. Campbell, *The Cabinet of Eros: Renaissance Mythological Painting and the Studiolo of Isabella d'Este* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 56-57, 280-301.

⁹⁵ On official portraiture of doges, see J. Meyer zur Capellen, "Zum venezianischen Dogenbildnis in der zweiten Hälfte des Quattrocento" *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 50 (1981): 70-86.

⁹⁶ See Pliny, *Historia Naturalis*, Book XXXV.ii. See H. Rackham, trans., *Natural History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), vol. 9, 263-65. For the influence of politics on Venetian portraiture, see R. Goffen, "Crossing the Alps: Portraiture in Renaissance Venice" in *Renaissance Venice and the North*, ed. B. Aikema et al. (New York: Rozzoli, 1999), esp. 115-17 and A. Luchs, 18-20. On Venetian portraits, see

practice: “Because he [Bellini] painted portraits from life, it became the custom in that city [Venice] that anyone who was anyone had his portrait painted by him or by other masters, as is evident in all the houses of Venice, which are chock-full of these portraits, in which one sees in painting up to the fourth generation of the family’s descendants.”⁹⁷ Although Vasari was probably exaggerating the extent of the practice and Bellini’s lone role in bringing it about, he makes clear Bellini’s success and popularity as a portraitist. Isabella d’Este also appreciated his talent in the genre; she asked to borrow a portrait by Leonardo to compare to “certain beautiful portraits by the hand of Giovanni Bellini.”⁹⁸ By adopting a standard signature that could function like a workshop logo and placing it on one of his specialties, Bellini was advertising to potential patrons or customers.

Conclusion

The *cartellino* was popular in Venice because it filled Venetian painters’ desire to express both individual and collective identity through their signatures. This dual function was important in the social milieu of Venice, which idealized collective civic and family identity over individual identity. Thus the motif of the *cartellino*, adopted by numerous Venetian painters of the Renaissance, allowed them to tout their individual

also D. Lewis; P. F. Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 16-19, 59-60.

⁹⁷ Translated and quoted in R. Goffen, 1989, 197. Vasari’s description of Venetian portrait collections is very similar to one in Pomponius Guaricus’s *De sculptura* of 1504: “and because he [Bellini] had always been involved with painting life portraits, it became the custom in that city [Venice] that anyone of stature had his portrait painted either by Giovanni or by other masters, so that there are numerous portraits in all the houses of Venice, and many noblemen have portraits of their ancestors and fathers to the fourth generation, and in some of the most noble households, there are portraits even farther back: a custom that has certainly always been most praiseworthy and was practiced by the ancients.” Translated and quoted in R. Goffen, 1999, 115. If some of the collections in the early sixteenth century had four generations represented, then it seems unlikely, if not impossible, that Bellini started the tradition. Marcantonio Michiel noted several portraits by Bellini in his notebooks documenting Venetian collections, but none of these have been traced.

⁹⁸ “Certi belli retracti de man di Zoanne Bellino.” See R. Goffen, 1989, Appendix 2, n. 27.

achievements while at the same time identifying themselves more generally as painters and as Venetians. Thus the *cartellino* was capable of denoting the painter's personal status, technical skill, and erudition, as well as his nationality, training, and professional allegiances. The illusionistic signature was especially suited to the task of communicating the qualities of the painter's identity, and the documentary function of signatures were of particular value to Renaissance art historians, chroniclers, and connoisseurs. Returning to Michiel's description of Antonello's *Saint Jerome*, it is important to note not only that Michiel recognized the function of the *cartellino* and looked there for the master's name, but furthermore that he was looking for the name of the painter at all and that he expected to find it on the painting. Michiel understood that in his role as a connoisseur, the identity of the painter was of crucial importance. As a historian, he saw the documentary value of a painting's signature in perpetuating the fame and memory of the painter. Michiel's report of varying opinions over the painting's authorship confirms the signature's significance.⁹⁹

Despite the function of signatures and their importance for promoting artists' fame, they became increasingly unpopular in sixteenth-century Venice. Venetian painted signatures drop off significantly after 1500, with only a few older painters, like Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio, and Alvise Vivarini, continuing to sign on a regular basis. Among the new generation, Titian, Lorenzo Lotto, and Gerolamo Savoldo are the few exceptions to the trend, signing more frequently than their contemporaries but still not nearly as often

⁹⁹ "...alcuni credono chel sii stato de mano de Antontello da Messina. Altri credono che la figura sii stata rifatta da Jacometto Venitiano ma li piu, e piu uerisimilmente, l'atribuiscono a Giances [Jan van Eyck], ouer al Memelin [Hans Memling] pittor antico Ponentino, et cusi mostra quella maniera, benchè el uolto è finito alla italiana; sicche pare de man de Jacometto." M. A. Michiel, 56.

as the older generation of Bellini and Carpaccio.¹⁰⁰ By the middle of the sixteenth century, as we have seen, both Vasari and Pino felt it necessary to defend the practice of signing. Possible reasons for this shift are generally traceable to the continuing modernization of Venetian painting and artistic theory.¹⁰¹ Painters were encouraged to eschew signatures, particularly *cartellini*, which were associated with an old-fashioned workshop mentality and craftsman status. Describing his collection of famous men's portraits in the 1540s, Paolo Giovio claimed that "just [...] by inspecting one of the better paintings we recognize at once the hand and brush of the artist."¹⁰² Contemporary taste leaned toward identifying a painter's work by style and virtuosity as opposed to his or her name.

¹⁰⁰ See C. Gilbert, "Some Findings on Early Works of Titian" *Art Bulletin* 62 (1980): 73-75, idem., "A preface to signatures (with some cases in Venice)" and idem., 1985. For the decreasing frequency of Venetian signatures in the sixteenth century, see L. Matthew, 1998, 641-42.

¹⁰¹ L. Matthew, 1998, 641, also points to the emergence of new genres of painting in sixteenth-century Venice (pastoral and mythological themes) as discouraging signatures because of the lack of established conventions as there were in religious painting and portraiture; furthermore, the "evocation of mood" that was part of the aim of pastoral pictures and mythological scenes precluded conceptual or formal "interruption" by a signature. She argues further that the inclusion of any kind of inscription "would have unduly restricted their suggestiveness" which allowed for the viewer to speculate on the picture's meaning. I find Matthew's other reasons (a focus on more sophisticated connoisseurship, workshop—and therefore craft—associations) much more convincing, since one could argue that conventions and placement of signatures could be easily adapted to landscapes and other narratives with little imaginative effort and that religious painting and portraiture were just as susceptible to "interruption" as other genres. It is also difficult to see how the artist's signature would have had a different effect on how the viewer might interpret these genres than it would have for a more traditional subject.

¹⁰² Translated and quoted in R. Goffen, 2002, 117. Interestingly, Giovio's impressive portrait collection featured actual (not painted) *cartellini* labeling each of the portraits. These *cartellini* named the sitters and briefly described their deeds. See L. Klinger Aleci, "Images of Identity: Italian Portrait Collections of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" in *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance*, ed. L. Syson and N. Mann (London: British Museum, 1998), 69.

Chapter 4: *Cartellini*, illusionism, and religious painting in Renaissance Venice

Of the 412 examples of paintings with *cartellini* by Italian artists that I have recorded, only twenty-nine depict secular subjects, nearly all of those portraits.¹ This is a high percentage even allowing for the fact that religious subjects account for the majority of paintings during the period. These statistics raise questions about the implications of *cartellini* in the context of religious art. Was there a particular set of reasons that painters employed the device so often on religious paintings? Or rather are these numbers the result of a coincidence of factors, such as the output of certain artists' workshops that preferred signing on *cartellini* and were especially prolific in producing altarpieces and other devotional images (like Giovanni Bellini's)? While it is difficult to determine exactly what motivated these artists to include *cartellini* on religious paintings especially, we can frame this practice within the broader trend that saw increasing interest in illusionism and in the use of reflexive motifs—those that are self-referential in calling attention to the painting's status as representation—in religious painting of the early modern period. This is significant in evaluating not only interpretations that the artist may have intended, but also in assessing contemporary viewer responses. It is not my aim to state conclusively that *cartellini* in and of themselves have a special and particular meaning as reflexive devices, but rather that they constitute one way that the paintings in

¹ The exceptions are Giovanni Bellini's *Feast of the Gods* (1514, Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art) and *Nude Woman with a Mirror* (dated 1515, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum) and Giorgione's *La Vecchia* (arguably also a portrait, ca. 1510, Venice, Accademia). See above, 120-21, 152-53, 156-57, for Venetian portraiture in relation to *cartellini*.

which they appear had ramifications for how viewers may have read these images in a devotional context.

The types of religious paintings made for Venetian audiences fall into three broad categories: paintings for private devotion, monumental altarpieces, and narrative cycles for the Venetian *scuole*. In each type, Venetian painters signed *cartellini*. Renaissance Venice enjoyed a rich pictorial tradition and patterns of consumption that can be explained by Venice's specific commercial, economic, geographic, socio-political, and religious conditions. The specific functions as expressed in religious texts and the physical settings of religious paintings can help reconstruct the viewer's experience, and primary sources relating to viewers' fascination with illusionism will also contribute to my interpretation of the *cartellino* as a liminal device, that is, a detail of the picture that intends to bridge the object and the subject. Underlying this assessment is the importance of Venice's mercantile atmosphere and its emphasis on visual appraisals of quality and the recognition of deception in the attempt to address how Venetians regarded illusionism in art. After addressing the religious context and pictorial implications of the illusionistic *cartellino*, I will explore the experiences of viewers as patrons and as worshippers as they apply to typical examples of private devotional images, monumental public altarpieces, and narrative cycles.

Illusion and reflexive painting—deception and discovery

As I discussed in the previous chapter, a signature was the painter's self-conscious statement of his responsibility for having made the painting, whether it was a true autograph work or executed by workshop assistants. In this way, the signature

proclaimed the image as a work of art by overtly referring to its maker. Trompe-l'oeil devices by themselves reveal to the viewer the artifice of the image through the process of deception and subsequent discovery. By using an illusionistic signature like the *cartellino*, the proclamation therefore becomes even more emphatic, since the placement of the device itself added to the reflexive qualities of the object.² In other words, the trompe-l'oeil *cartellino*, by appearing to be applied to the finished image, calls attention to the image's status as an object by calling attention to itself as a represented illusion and to the person responsible for the illusion.

Two sixteenth-century descriptions of paintings specifically mention *cartellini*, both of them focused especially on their illusionistic qualities. One is Marcantonio Michiel's description of Antonello da Messina's *Saint Jerome in His Study* (fig. 55), which devotes special attention to the "finta letterina" attached to Jerome's desk.³ *Fingere*, the Latin verb from which the participle *finta* is derived, means to form, shape or mold, as I discussed in the previous chapter regarding Carpaccio's signatures. As in Latin, in Italian, *fingere* could also mean to feign or to pretend; the participle in this case suggests 'false' or 'fake.' With his choice of this word, Michiel clearly meant to communicate the illusionism of Antonello's *cartellino*, which we can confirm by examination of the painting itself. The *cartellino*, attached to a surface parallel to the picture plane, seems to project outward into the viewer's space.

Pietro Summonte, a Neapolitan humanist and correspondent of Michiel, also provided a rare contemporary description of the illusionistic appearance of *cartellini*. His

² Although Rothstein distinguishes between "self-referential" devices (those which make reference to the artist) and "reflexive" ones (those which refer to the medium or execution), I use the terms interchangeably, since the artist's assertion of identity *within* the work of art seems inextricably bound up with the act of his execution and his manipulation of materials.

³ See above, 110-11.

letter to Michiel in 1524 described the life and career of the Neapolitan painter Colantonio for Michiel's planned history of painting (aborted when Vasari's *Lives* appeared in 1550). Summonte reported on the merits of one of Colantonio's few surviving paintings, his *Saint Jerome* (fig. 77), then in its original location in the church of San Lorenzo. Once the central panel of a polyptych, the picture shows the saint seated, removing a thorn from a lion's paw in a study littered with books, letters, and scraps of paper, at least two of which could rightly be called *cartellini*. The relevant part of Summonte's letter reads:

The figure of Saint Jerome sitting in a study, where there are many books of various shapes, with certain bits of paper fastened to the wall with wax, some of which seem to be separated from the wall as if they were sticking out in the air.⁴

Summonte described the deceptively illusionistic character of the majority of *cartellini*, especially their tendency to have curled up corners 'detached' from their surfaces, making the forms project out into space. Most often, *cartellini*, even if they *can* be understood as part of the painted scene—in this case, Jerome's study—are positioned parallel to the picture plane such that their presence either in the painting or in the viewer's space ('as if they were sticking out in the air') is ambiguous.⁵

The *cartellini* described in these two paintings are typical in terms of their placement and illusionism. Unusual, however, is the fact that neither of them carries a signature, which Michiel looked for in vain, only to be forced to speculate about the

⁴ "La figura di San Ieronimo che sede in un studio, dove son molti libri e si vari forma [...], con certe cartucce fixe nel muro con cera, delle quali alcuna pare sta seperata dal loco come si stesse in aere." For additional excerpts and analysis of the letter, see P. H. Jolly, "Jan van Eyck and Saint Jerome: A Study of Eyckian Influence on Colantonio and Antonello da Messina in Quattrocento Naples" (University of Pennsylvania, Ph.D. diss., 1976), 80-100 and F. Bologna, "Lettera di Pietro Summonte a Marcantonio Michiel" in *Libri per vedere. Le guide storico-artistiche della città di Napoli: Fonti testimonianze del gusto immagini di una città*, ed. F. Amirante et al. (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1995), 181-93.

⁵ That they are often 'attached' with red sealing wax also adds to the sense of ambiguity, since this was the way prints and other papers were attached to walls or furniture.

identity of the artist. This reaction can be attributed to Michiel's goal of cataloguing paintings for a projected history of painting and may reflect his own personal concerns as opposed to those of another kind of viewer of either small-scale works in domestic settings or monumental devotional works. The extent to which Michiel described the painting, however, is unusual in his *notizie*, which is generally constructed as a list of works of art with brief comments about who made them and where they were located. Despite the documentary nature of his letter, Summonte also provided a fairly lengthy description of Colantonio's painting, devoting several lines to the illusionism of the books and *cartucce*, which seem to project out toward the viewer.

From these responses to Antonello's and Colantonio's paintings we can presume that even if a period viewer was not interested in or able to comprehend the inscription on a *cartellino* fully, he would have been captivated and impressed by its illusionism and prompted to reflect on the skill of the artist. In cases of a trompe l'oeil *cartellino*, the viewer, in discovering the illusion, would have been fully confronted with the artifice of the painting. The illusionism of signed *cartellini*, therefore, made them doubly self-referential. For those viewers who were either illiterate or were not familiar with artistic personalities, and therefore maybe would not recognize the words on the *cartellino* as the name of the artist, the illusionism of the *cartellino* alone could serve its reflexive function.

The use of trompe-l'oeil devices is in some ways antithetical to our understanding of Renaissance artistic theory, since early modern paintings are usually conceived as "windows." According to this model, which Alberti prescribed in his treatise *On Painting* of 1436, the picture plane can be thought of either as a barrier between the viewer and the

image or as a permeable, fluid boundary that sets up the image as an extension of the real space of the viewer.⁶ In doing so, the painter did not literally trick the viewer's eyes, but instead appealed to his imagination by imitating his real experience of the natural world.

This distinction between illusionism and *trompe l'oeil* is crucial to our understanding of images that contain both pictorial modes, since they evoke different responses and therefore present a paradox to the viewer.⁷ The inclusion of a *trompe-l'oeil* element subverts the conception of the painted image as an extension of the viewer's space—the *cartellino* belongs in neither the receding space of the painting nor in the viewer's space, nor can it be 'attached' to an intangible plane.⁸ In painting *trompe-l'oeil* elements, artists overtly acknowledge the difference between naturalism and illusion and confront the attentive viewer with the idea that painting is both truthful and deceptive.

The question, then, is whether Renaissance viewers, whose visual experiences were so different from our own, would have made the same distinction. In the twenty-first century, we are frequently exposed to highly realistic images (like photographs) and are therefore perhaps less prone, one might argue, to visual deception. Giotto's pictures, which, to our eyes, seem naturalistic in certain respects but certainly not deceptive, may

⁶ See L. B. Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. J. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), esp. 56: [describing the process of beginning a drawing] "I inscribe a quadrangle of right angles, as large as I wish, which is considered to be an open window through which I see what I want to paint." Later explanations in the treatise describe a similar model, instead referring to the picture as an intersection of the visual pyramid. On the picture as window and its possible interpretations by Venetian painters, see J. Grave, "Reframing the 'finestra aperta'. Venetian Variations of the Comparison of Picture and Window" *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 72 (2009): 49-68. Not all of the author's visual analysis of the paintings he discusses is entirely convincing, but he does introduce valid points about ambiguous spatial constructions that can make window-like openings represented in paintings appear like paintings themselves.

⁷ M. L. D'Otrange Mastai, *Illusion in Art* (New York: Abaris Books, 1975), 8-17, discusses the distinction between illusionism and *trompe l'oeil*, the latter of which she defines more narrowly than I do here as autonomous or independent *trompe-l'oeil* paintings. I have instead used the term *trompe l'oeil* to designate images that are intended to deceive, whether they are part or whole of the work of art (that is, independent *trompe l'oeil*).

⁸ See J. Watkins, "Untricking the Eye: The Uncomfortable Legacy of Carlo Crivelli" *Art International* 5 (1989): 48-58. Watkins insightfully articulates the ability of illusionistic devices in the paintings of Carlo Crivelli to subvert the naturalism of his paintings—"untricking" the eye.

have fooled Renaissance viewers, as humanist writers report. As scholars like Michael Baxandall and Carl Goldstein have pointed out, however, humanists' written responses to art were often formulaic reprisals of ancient descriptions and panegyric texts.⁹ When they wrote about the naturalism of a painting or sculpture, they rarely deviated from standard comments about the lifelike qualities of figures or the illusion of real objects, which were often, no doubt, exaggerations. The characteristics of human vision and the well-entrenched pleasure in recognition of the real in representation and the concomitant appreciation of the artist's skill, suggest that Renaissance viewers' response to illusionism would have been rather similar to our own. The physiology of the human sense of sight renders the efficacy of pictorial illusion a matter not of a 'period eye' but of the physical conditions surrounding a painting that can affect the success or failure of an illusion, such as lighting, placement, distance from the viewer, and so on.¹⁰ The appreciation for and fascination with illusion cannot be assigned a physiological basis, but its occurrence in various forms in western literary and artistic traditions since classical antiquity argues for a reasonable continuity between the pleasure a modern viewer and one of the late fifteenth or sixteenth century might take in the execution and experience of visual trickery.¹¹

⁹ M. Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350-1450* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), C. Goldstein, "Writing History, Viewing Art: The Question of the Humanist's Eye" in *Antiquity and its Interpreters*, ed. A. Payne et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 285-96.

¹⁰ See W. Singer, "The Misperception of Reality" in *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe-l'Oeil Painting*, ed. S. Ebert-Schifferer (Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, 2002), 41-51.

¹¹ On the pervasive character of mimesis, see V. I. Stoichita, "Introduction" in *Künstlerischer Austausch=Artistic Exchange*, T. W. Gaehtgens, ed. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), vol. 2, 409-10; in the same volume, C. Gilbert "Grapes, Curtains, Human Beings: The Theory of Missed Mimesis" (413-22) addresses the issue of the lack of trompe-l'oeil paintings in the canon of great works of Western art, problematizing Norman Bryson's thesis that identifies mimesis as the primary test of good art in the history of the Western tradition. Gilbert's critique, however, is based not upon the broad popularity of certain types of art but on their presence in the canon and their physical survival. For Gilbert, the fact that few trompe-l'oeil paintings that are recorded in literary accounts of the early modern period survive is a testament to

The literary record of the period also demonstrates viewers' ability to distinguish between illusionism and trompe l'oeil. Comparing the poet's and the painter's abilities in his commentary on Dante's *Inferno*, Boccaccio wrote, "The painter endeavors that the figure painted by him... can deceive, either partly or wholly, the eyes of the viewer, making him believe to exist that which does not."¹² A painting might contain elements that are both trompe l'oeil (wholly deceptive) and illusionistic (partly deceptive), like an image of the Madonna and Child, naturalistically rendered in a perspectival space, with a trompe-l'oeil device like a *cartellino* added on as if applied to the painting's surface (fig. 8). In a treatise on painting that he dedicated to Jacopo Bellini, Giovanni Fontana, a Venetian scientist, praised Bellini for his ability to paint in such a way that certain parts of his paintings seem to project from the surface.¹³ Leonardo made a similar comment in his notebooks, marveling at the ability of paintings to trick the eye by depicting objects that seem to project out from a wall or some other surface.¹⁴

Renaissance painters' interest in trompe l'oeil may have originated in ancient writers' stories of the illusionistic power of antique painting, such as the informal competition between the Greek painters Zeuxis and Parrhasius, recounted in Pliny the

the lack of appreciation of these works of art. Charles Sterling notes that many Renaissance works of trompe l'oeil, as they were incorporated into wood furnishings or wainscoting, have been destroyed from use. See C. Sterling, *Still Life Painting: From Antiquity to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), 55. Furthermore, critiques about the dangerous nature of illusionistic images or their anti-intellectualism from Plato onward have been traditionally based upon the broad appeal of such imagery. See C. Levine, "Seductive Reflexivity: Ruskin's Dreaded Trompe L'Oeil," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 56 (1998): 366-75.

¹²Quoted in N. Land, 1994, 8.

¹³ C. Gilbert, 1980, 175.

¹⁴ Quoted in A. M. Lecoq, "'Tromper les yeux,' dissent-ils XVe – XVIe siècle" in *Le Trompe-l'oeil: De L'Antiquité au XXe siècle*, ed. P. Mauriès (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 68.

Elder's *Natural History*. According to Pliny, Zeuxis fooled birds with his painting of grapes, and Parrhasius outdid his rival with a painting of a curtain that tricked Zeuxis.¹⁵

In response to these ancient texts, humanist writers retold and rewrote such tales to praise their contemporaries. Boccaccio admired Giotto's ability to imitate anything in nature to such a high degree of similitude that "the sense of sight in men is in error, believing that to be true which was painted."¹⁶ The poet Raffaello Zovenzoni, resident of Venice and student of Guarino da Verona, wrote a verse praising Marco Zoppo's ability to deceive even the likes of Phidias, the great ancient Greek sculptor.¹⁷ Deception of another artist meant a challenge to his perception and therefore also his artistic judgment. In his treatise on architecture Filarete told how Giotto used to paint flies that tricked his master Cimabue, who would try to shoo them away. Filarete's story, repeated by Vasari in his life of Giotto, conveys Giotto's superiority to his master.¹⁸

The description and praise of naturalism and illusion would have inspired Renaissance painters to outdo their ancient counterparts and contemporaries, as demonstrated by the tradition of illusionistic intarsia, grisaille, and the use of *di sotto in sù* perspective and fictive architecture in mural painting. Less common, however, is the use of *trompe l'oeil*, or imagery that intended to deceive and was capable of tricking the eye. Of the *trompe-l'oeil* motifs employed by Renaissance painters, the *cartellino* was by

¹⁵ See above, 48-51. K. Jex-Blake, *The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art*. (Chicago: Argonaut Publishers, 1968) 110-11.

¹⁶ From the *Decameron*, quoted in N. Land, 6.

¹⁷ F. Ames-Lewis, 191.

¹⁸ See Book XXIII of Filarete, *Treatise on Architecture*, trans. J. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965). The story is repeated by Vasari in slightly different form: "Dicesi che stando Giotto giovinetto con Cimabue, dipinse una volta in sul naso d'una figura ch'esso Cimabue avea fatta una mosca tanto naturale, che tornando il maestro seguitare il lavoro, si rimise più di una volta a cacciarla con mano, pensando che fusse vera, prima che s'accorgesse dell'errore." ('It is said that Giotto, when he was a boy working with Cimabue, once painted a fly on the nose of a figure that Cimabue had made, so true to nature that his master, returning to his work, more than once started to drive it away with his hand, thinking that it was real, before he realized his mistake.') Vasari, Giorgio. *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architetti*. (Milan: Società Tipografica de' Classici Italiani, 1807), vol. 2, 316.

far the most common.¹⁹ The combination of trompe-l'oeil and naturalism raised questions about the nature of pictorial representation and its ability to deceive. The reflexive nature of trompe l'oeil lies in the viewer's dual experience of deception and discovery, which inevitably directs the viewer's response to wonder at the artist's skill.²⁰ The fact that Venetian painters used the *cartellino* as a reflexive motif primarily in religious paintings leads us to question how such a strategy may have related to their functions as devotional aids.

Theological debates concerning devotional images

Ambivalence toward the use of images in religious devotion had a long history in Christian theology, an attitude that persisted into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Venice itself never saw the rise of iconoclastic movements, and in fact devotional images proliferated during this period. This does not mean, however, that Venetian artists, patrons, and their theological advisors were unaware of or unmoved by these debates. In fact, the rich history of patronage of religious art during this period may be evidence of overt resistance to critiques of religious images. Instead of prohibiting the use of devotional images or abating their production, artists may have approached these issues through stylistic approaches and compositional devices. Although much of the basis for this theory as it can be applied to Italy relies on the visual evidence—the frequency and

¹⁹ Another type is the painted fly. I have recorded over twenty uses of trompe-l'oeil flies, many of which appear with religious subjects. See my "Painted Paradoxes: The *Trompe-l'Oeil* Fly in the Renaissance" *Athanas* 26 (2008): 7-13, with further bibliography. Members of the Paduan school frequently used illusionistic garlands, and Carlo Crivelli and Antonello da Messina occasionally depicted objects like flowers, candles, and rosary beads as *trompe-l'oeil* devices (see Carlo Crivelli's *Madonna della Candeletta*, Milan, Brera and the central panel of Antonello's *Saint Gregory Polyptych*, Messina, Museo Regionale).

²⁰ C. Levine, 366. V. Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) also explores reflexive themes, like representations of works of art and self-portraits, in European painting after the Reformation.

variety of numerous illusionistic devices artists deployed in religious paintings—and on theological texts from northern Europe, further research into theological writings in late fifteenth-century Veneto may yield valuable links between numerous reformers and reform movements associated with Venice during the period.²¹ In any case, the *cartellino*, which, as I argued in the first two chapters did not originate with any overt religious associations, may be considered one of various illusionistic devices that served to assert the artificiality of religious paintings, a strategy that some scholars have convincingly linked to debates over the use of images in religious devotion.

The use of religious images dates to the very beginnings of Christianity, and from early on, iconic cult images and narratives were afforded theological and didactic value.²²

²¹ The Benedictine convent of Santa Giustina in Padua underwent major reform in the early fifteenth century under the leadership of Ludovico Barbo; a century later, the reform of the Camaldolese order by Tommaso Giustiniani and Vincenzo Querini followed a similar path, advocating strict adherence to the order's original rule. See B. Collett, *Italian Benedictine Scholars and the Reformation: The Congregation of Santa Giustina of Padua* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); S. Bowd, *Reform before Reformation: Vincenzo Querini and the Religious Renaissance in Italy* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), and P. Meilman, *Titian and the Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 52-63. Lorenzo Giustiniani, the first patriarch of Venice, wrote various tracts in the late 1420s that called for monastic reform. See S. Tramontin, "La cultura monastica del Quattrocento dal primo patriarca Lorenzo Giustiniani ai Camaldolesi Paolo Giustiniani e Pietro Quirini" in *Storia della Cultura Veneta: Dal Primo Quattrocento al Concilio di Trento*, ed. G. Arnaldi and M. Pastore Stocchi (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1980), part 3, vol. I, 435-43. The three Venetian popes of the fifteenth century, Gregory XII Correr (1406-1417), Eugenius IV Condulmer (1431-1447), and Paul II Barbo (1464-1471) were also engaged in reformist policies. See D. Hay, *The Church in Italy in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 85-86. In the early sixteenth century, Lutheran ideas were current because of the large number of German residents in the city, and figures like Cardinal Gasparo Contarini and the so-called *spirituali* (a group of Venetian evangelists influenced by Protestant theology) actively promoted reform within the Catholic Church, paving the way for official Counter-Reformation policies in the middle of the century. On Contarini, see E. Gleason, *Gasparo Contarini: Venice, Rome, and Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). On the attitude of sixteenth-century Venetian reformers, Peter Humfrey notes, "The attitude toward sacred art of Paolo Giustiniani, Gasparo Contarini and the other spiritual mentors of Venetian Evangelism is not recorded; but it does indeed seem reasonable to infer from their outlook in general that they would have been at best indifferent to altarpieces, and at works hostile, associating them with a corrupt preoccupation with worldly display, and with a purely mechanical performance of devotions to the saints. But after the Council of Trent, hostility or indifference towards sacred images was no longer to be tolerated..." See P. Humfrey, "Altarpieces and Altar Decorations in Counter-Reformation Venice and the Veneto" *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996): 372.

²² For a summary of medieval theology regarding Christian art, see S. Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth-Century Painting* (Doornspijk, Netherlands: Davaco Publishers,

The church's views on the use of images were laid out by the sixth-century saint and pope Gregory the Great, who argued in favor of images because of their didactic function for the illiterate: "For what the Scripture teaches those who read...the image shows to those who cannot read but see; because in it even the ignorant see whom they ought to follow, in the image those who do not know letters are able to read."²³ Gregory's apologia clearly applied to narrative images, which could relate stories of the Bible and saints' lives to those who could not read them, but cult images presented a different problem in that worshippers might mistake them for idols. The defense of images of Christ and saints thus rested upon their classification as aids for worship as opposed to actual manifestations of the divine. Medieval and early modern theologians' and preachers' persistent warnings that images were mere representations of the divine acknowledge the confusion surrounding the nature of sacred imagery on the part of viewers.²⁴

Despite these arguments, detractors criticized religious images on various grounds throughout the Middle Ages and into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Extreme movements engaged in iconoclasm, while milder criticisms questioned the 'superstitious' belief in images and decorum in the representation of sacred subjects.²⁵ In Florence, the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola complained that the style of modern religious

1984), 11-22 and L. Ouspensky, "Origins of the Christian Image" in *Theology of the Icon*, trans. A. Gythiel and E. Meyendorff (Crestwood, NY: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992), vol. 1, 35-50.

²³ S. Ringbom, 1984, 12.

²⁴ R. Kasl, 75.

²⁵ The eighth and ninth centuries witnessed iconoclastic movements primarily in the east, but also in the Carolingian Empire. In the early fifteenth century, Jan Hus of Bohemia spoke out against the veneration of images. In sermons delivered in 1525, Martin Luther himself defended a modest use of imagery, however many of his followers disagreed. Ulrich Zwingli of Zurich, whose protestant sect eventually merged with Calvinism, was a staunch iconoclast, and in 1524 led a group of priests and civic officials to destroy systematically all the images in Zurich's churches. On the questions raised by Protestant reformers about religious images, see S. Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts: The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993). On iconoclasm, see also D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 378-428.

images distracted viewers from their rightful focus—the holy figures represented—instead admiring the artistry of the paintings. Although he promoted religious art for its edifying and didactic functions, Savonarola fired harsh criticism at the worldliness of contemporary art because it manifested and promoted corruption in the church. In 1497 and 1498 the friar led bonfires of the vanities in which he and his followers destroyed paintings they deemed inappropriate.²⁶ At about the same time, a Dominican friar visiting the Venetian church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo complained about statues of nudes and pagan figures on a dogal tomb, writing that they were both inappropriate for a sacred space and confusing to the layman.²⁷ In 1513 Venetian reformers at the Fifth Lateran Council ridiculed the procession or carrying of images on the person as a means of healing the sick or affecting the weather.²⁸ In his treatise on the ideal bishop, the Venetian reformer Cardinal Gasparo Contarini stated that the clergy must lead the common people back toward proper worship and away from the misuse of relics and sacred images that arose from superstitious beliefs.²⁹ Although these were not sweeping denouncements of religious imagery, they show fifteenth-century concerns with the decorum of religious art and how it was perceived and understood by the faithful.

Another line of criticism characterized devotional images as a distraction from, or a poor substitute for, true devotion. Saint Augustine, while acknowledging the

²⁶ H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image in the Era before Art*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 472. On Savonarola's influence on the visual arts, see also M. Hall, "Savonarola's Preaching and the Patronage of Art" in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, eds. T. Verdon and J. Henderson (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 493-522; R. M. Steinberg, *Fra Girolamo Savonarola, Florentine Art, and Renaissance Historiography* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1974); A. Nagel, *Michelangelo and the Reform of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁷ C. Gilbert, *Italian Art, 1400-1500: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980), 148.

²⁸ S. Bowd, 195.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 193-94.

importance of vision and the related use of images as aids for worship, idealized imageless devotion, that is, the knowledge of the divine in its pure and abstract form.³⁰ Augustine's tripartite division of human sight into corporeal (what the eye sees), spiritual (recalled or imagined mental images), and intellectual (perception of the abstract) provided the basis for the medieval conception of devotional practice. Later medieval theologians, like Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Bernard, discussed different types of vision to argue for imageless devotion. They and late medieval followers acknowledged that although the faithful could be inspired by mental images (derived from corporeal ones), they should be abandoned in order to achieve the highest experience of the divine.³¹ As Sixten Ringbom has noted, however, imageless devotion, while idealized in theology, was little practiced by laity or clergy; furthermore, works of art were intimately bound up with late medieval mystical experience as a locus for miracles and inspiration for visions.³²

Discussion of the proper role of religious images continued through the fifteenth century.³³ Bret Rothstein has drawn parallels between the ideal of imageless devotion and its appearance in writings by fifteenth-century theologians Jean Gerson and Jan van Ruusbroec and Netherlandish painters' approaches to religious subjects.³⁴ According to Rothstein, the importance placed on sight in religious experience, in conjunction with

³⁰ On imageless devotion, see S. Ringbom, 1984, 15-22.

³¹ S. Ringbom, 1984, 16-17.

³² S. Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions: Notes on the Place of Art in Late Medieval Private Piety" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 73 (1969): 160-70 and D. Freedberg, 283-316.

³³ J. Hamburger, "Seeing and Believing: The Suspicion of Sight and the Authentication of Vision in Late Medieval Art and Devotion" in *Imagination und Wirklichkeit: Zum Verhältnis von Mentalen und Realen Bildern in der Kunst der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. K. Krüger (Mainz: P. Von Zabern, 2000), 48, notes "...the expressions of skepticism regarding images, let alone outright hostility, running right through the fifteenth century, even within the religious mainstream, have been underplayed, as if the period were one of unabashed and unopposed iconophilia."

³⁴ B. Rothstein, *Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

writings idealizing imageless devotion, created a paradox for the contemporary painter. Although theologians (including Gerson and Ruusbroec) and patrons alike recognized that paintings were a practical part of religious devotion, they could not be fully accepted as such. Because paintings were limited by their status as physical objects, they could prevent ideal religious experience, which should rise above the physical world and be totally abstract.

As a result of this dilemma, Rothstein argues, early Netherlandish painters “pursued reflexivity to acknowledge the problematic nature of their trade and, at the same time, to define and promote themselves specifically in terms of it.”³⁵ In other words, painters addressed theological concerns about images by drawing attention to the physicality of the image rather than try to conceal it; in doing so they denied the viewer’s understanding of the image as an embodiment of the sacred and simultaneously asserted their own wit and technical skill. Painters carried this strategy out through, among other things, highly illusionistic rendering of materials (like fur, metal, jewels), the inclusion of reflections of figures “outside” the space of the painting (sometimes the painter or figures imagined in the position of the viewer), and signatures.³⁶

Klaus Krüger has detected similar strategies employed by Italian painters of the trecento painters, who called attention to the materiality of their images by inserting into their paintings passages employing outdated aesthetic styles and thereby disrupting the painted illusion. This duality created a tension that extended the object’s interpretation beyond the issue of the subject represented and its iconography. The effect is that the

³⁵ Ibid., 138.

³⁶ Ibid., “Senses of Painterly Strength,” 138-73.

image reflects its own physical existence.³⁷ Krüger has also addressed illusionism in early modern Italian painting as a reflexive strategy, citing texts expressing the ambivalence medieval theologians had toward devotional images.³⁸ Krüger argues that aesthetic illusion and self-referential themes that began to emerge in the late Middle Ages and continued to develop throughout the Renaissance positioned images such that viewers' experience of the work of art involved its recognition as object and as illusion. Late medieval and Renaissance painters used various strategies to evoke this response—fictive framing devices, directing gazes and gestures of figures toward the viewer, and trompe-l'oeil motifs transgressed the pictures' physical boundaries. This effect is particularly relevant to religious images because of their function as a bridge between the physical and sacred worlds. In other words, pictorial modes that evoked the materiality of the image and called attention to its physical boundaries emphasized the mediating role of these paintings.³⁹

Rothstein's and Krüger's arguments that painters employed reflexive strategies as a means of dealing with the limitations of devotional images corresponds with Belting's description of shifting attitudes toward religious images and the initiation of the "era of

³⁷ See K. Krüger, "Medium and Imagination: Aesthetic Aspects of Trecento Panel Painting" in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. V. M. Schmidt (Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, 2002), 57-81. Krüger states, "...[T]he visible, ancient ancestry of these images manifests itself as its own aesthetic category that clings to the image; it is an aura of the image's concrete existence as an object, able to develop beyond the question of the subject represented or its iconographic implications. What thereby comes to light is a dual character, or double aspect, inherent in the image. The first is that of the image as representation, that is, as a visual rendering of a holy person or religious subject...The second aspect, on the other hand, is that of the image as medium...Both aspects...relate to each other in a tense ambivalence. The less the beholder notices the material qualities of the image, the more suggestive will be the imaginary experience and timeless presence of the subject represented. In reverse, the illusion of presence disappears proportionally as the material qualities of the image come into sight" (59).

³⁸ See K. Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren: Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der Frühen Neuzeit in Italien* (Munich: W. Fink, 2001), 11-26. Krüger's analysis seems to rely largely on the wealth of visual evidence, i.e., the huge numbers of extant religious paintings from early modern Italy that employ illusionistic/reflexive strategies to assert the works' medial function.

³⁹ Ibid., esp. 27-79.

art,” during which images began to be admired more for their artistic value than for spiritual efficacy.⁴⁰ For Belting, the Protestant Reformation solidified the beginning of the era of art, resulting from what he calls the crisis of the image. Reformers insisted that the Holy Scripture was the only means of understanding God; their adherence to the doctrine of faith rendered donations for holy images unnecessary.⁴¹ In response to the criticism of religious images, which represented the bulk of subjects produced in the Renaissance, artists and theorists justified the objects as works of art. As such, paintings and sculptures of religious subjects, according to Belting, were viewed not as incarnations of holy figures, but as representations of artistic ideas.⁴² Although the Protestant Reformation presented clear challenges to artists of the sixteenth century, they were already prepared to meet it not only because of the historical ambivalence within the church regarding the role of images, but also as a consequence of already current notions of the status of the artist and the intellectual nature of the visual arts.⁴³

Thus while the talents of Venetian painters and the wealth of their patrons resulted in the proliferation of religious art during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the period was one of considerable debate regarding the proper place of images in devotional practice. Although iconoclastic movements never gained influence in Italy, and the painter’s profession was therefore never overtly threatened, Venetian painters

⁴⁰ F. Jacobs, “Rethinking the Divide: Cult Images and the Cult of Images” in *Renaissance Theory*, ed. J. Elkins and R. Williams (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), 95-114, points out the need to modify this paradigm in such a way that it addresses the continued creation and use of cult images in the Renaissance (i.e., the ‘era of art’).

⁴¹ H. Belting, 1994, 15.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 470ff. According to Belting, the conception of religious images as works of art is signaled by painters’ erudite references to literature and artistic theory.

⁴³ Belting demonstrates a shift in the conception of devotional images as art in fifteenth century Venice in his essay on Bellini’s Brera *Pietà*, whose *cartellino* is inscribed with a humanistic epigraph that praises the artist’s ability to evoke emotion from the viewer. See *Giovanni Bellini: La Pietà*, 2nd ed., trans. M. Pedrazzi (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 1996), esp. 29-32.

may have felt compelled to address the ideal of imageless devotion and the crisis of the image Protestant theology had brought about. I suggest that they may have done so by making overt references to their paintings' status as object of art as opposed to sacred image. Trompe-l'oeil *cartellini* both name the person responsible for the painting's invention and call attention to the surface of the painting, asserting its physicality.

Private devotional paintings

The three types of religious paintings made in Renaissance Venice address specific functional requirements and were made for different types of settings. The first type under consideration is the small-scale painting employed in the home for private devotion. Relatively new in the fifteenth century, small-scale devotional paintings and books of hours signaled the increasing importance of private devotion.⁴⁴ In Venice the most popular types were half-length images of the dead Christ or of the Virgin and Child.⁴⁵ The latter type became so popular that painters made them available on the open market, painting standard types on speculation. The paintings functioned as a visual aid for routine praying and seem to have been typically installed in bedrooms. Margaret Morse's research has shown, however, that some Venetians collected numerous images

⁴⁴ S. Ringbom, 1984, 30-39. See also M. Morse, "The Religious Visual Culture of the Renaissance Venetian *Casa*" *Renaissance Studies* 21 (2007): 151-84, with further bibliography, on the material culture of private devotion in Renaissance Italy. On Venetian lay piety in the late fifteenth century, see R. Chavasse, "Latin Lay Piety and Vernacular Lay Piety in Word and Image: Venice, 1471-early 1500s" *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996): 319-42.

⁴⁵ On private devotional half-length paintings in Venice, see H. Belting, 1996, esp. 20-28; R. Goffen, "Icon and Vision: Giovanni Bellini's Half-Length Madonnas" *Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 511-14; M. Morse; S. Ringbom, 1984, 107-16; and R. Kasl.

of the Virgin to install in various rooms; paintings of the *pietà*, saints, and even some moralizing narratives appeared in bedchambers and the more public areas of the *casa*.⁴⁶

Interiors like the one shown on the right end of Vittore Carpaccio's *Arrival of the Ambassadors in Britain* for the Scuola di Sant'Orsola (fig. 78) illustrate contemporary taste and practice. Saint Ursula and her father, who is listening to her demands regarding her marriage to a pagan prince, occupy a regal bedroom, decorated with a half-length painting of the Madonna and Child, with a gold background in the Byzantine style and a classicizing frame hung high on the back wall. The use of the half-length format (in the late fifteenth century sometimes extended horizontally to include saints and donors) and the fusion of Byzantine and classical stylistic elements are typical of this type of painting in Renaissance Venice.

The popularity of the standard type of devotional painting in Venice brought about a competitive open market. As I outlined in the previous chapter, part of artists' motivation for signing their paintings involved signatures' function as workshop logos in the art marketplace. Traditionally the study of artistic commerce during the Renaissance has focused on the artist-patron paradigm, in which each work was custom-made according to the patron's specifications. Venice, however, had an open marketplace for already completed paintings made on speculation. These paintings sold in the painter's shop or at outdoor fairs, which are documented from the early fourteenth to the sixteenth century. Regulated by both the painter's *arte* and the government, fairs gave an opportunity for artists to sell paintings and prints outside their shops. A document of 1441 attests to weekly fairs at San Marco and San Polo; an international fair, which

⁴⁶ M. Morse, 160-63. Sometimes paintings that seem to have originated as private devotional works ended up in public chapels. See *ibid.*, 159 and M. Douglas-Scott, "Giovanni Bellini's *Madonna and Child with Two Saints and a Donor* at Birmingham: A Proposal" *Venezia Cinquecento* 6 (1996): 5-21.

included foreigners, occurred as part of the city's celebration of the Feast of the Ascension, or the *Sensa*.⁴⁷

The signature of a well-known and well-respected artist in a sense guaranteed a certain level of quality. This is no doubt the case with Giovanni Bellini, who was the most successful painter in Venice for nearly four decades and ran a large workshop that produced scores of half-length Madonnas. Representative of this type is Bellini's *Madonna of the Pear* (or *Morelli Madonna*, ca. 1485, fig. 79). The painting shows the Virgin seated behind a stone parapet, holding the Christ child on her knee. Behind her hangs a cloth of honor, on either side of which spreads a landscape. A pear sits on top of the variegated stone parapet, which also holds on its front a creased *cartellino* signed "IOANNES BELLINVS / P." Its illusionism is enhanced by both the placement of the *cartellino* in the extreme foreground and the way it stands out from the parapet—the top right corner tips outward, and the crease farthest to the right pushes out, shown by the foreshortening of the letters "INVS." In the display of the marketplace, the *cartellino* on images of this type not only proclaimed the artist's name and the supposed quality of the painting, but also enhanced its visual interest.

A customer's or patron's ability to discern the quality of products for sale would have been a valuable skill in the Venetian emporium, where merchants sold and traded both locally made products and imports, some of them rather exotic. Contemporary accounts by Venetians and foreign visitors attest to the richness of the market's display.⁴⁸ These visual skills would have been necessary in the marketplace of Venice, which, as

⁴⁷ L. Matthew, "Were There Open Markets for Pictures in Renaissance Venice?" in *The Art Market in Italy, 15th–17th Centuries*, ed. M. Fantoni et al. (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2003), 253–62.

⁴⁸ See, for example, D. Chambers and B. Pullan, *Venice: A Documentary History, 1450–1630* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992), 167, 281ff.

Dürer testified to Willibald Pirckheimer, was filled with the “falsest knaves that live there” who inflate prices and try to cheat customers.⁴⁹ Shoppers required the visual skills to assess value and detect trickery or imitations.⁵⁰ *Cartellini* placed on panel paintings in the open market visualized the value placed on the ability to detect illusions in the marketplace. The illusionistic motif might therefore be read as both a painter’s assertion of quality and a flattering statement aimed at customers, since they prided themselves on their ability to assess the true quality and value of the product.

The value of these paintings lay not only in the quality of craftsmanship and materials, but also in their adherence to traditions of sacred imagery. Venetian half-length religious pictures had their immediate precedents in Byzantine icons. The Byzantine tradition was especially important in Venice because of its long history with the Byzantine east.⁵¹ This relationship, which dates back to the tenth century, permeates Venetian visual culture, perhaps most conspicuously in the ducal chapel of San Marco. San Marco was modeled after the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, and glittering Byzantine mosaics cover its interior walls and vaults. In the early years of the thirteenth century, during the Fourth Crusade, Venice seized Byzantine territories along the Adriatic and Aegean coasts, and Venetian troops sacked Constantinople. They made off with its ancient treasures, including four bronze horses, marble reliefs and other sculptures, and numerous icons and relics from the ancient capital’s churches that were

⁴⁹ R. Fry, ed., *Dürer’s Record of Journeys to Venice and the Low Countries*. (New York: Dover, 1995), 3.

⁵⁰ See P. Staiti, “Con Artists: Harnett, Haberle, and Their American Accomplices” in *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe-L’Oeil Painting*, ed. S. Ebert-Schifferer (Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, 2002), 95; B. Rothstein, 174ff, also addresses the development of these kinds of visual skills in the mercantile environment in fifteenth-century Low Countries.

⁵¹ R. Goffen, 1975, M. Georgopoulou, “Venice and the Byzantine Sphere” in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, ed. H. C. Evans (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), 489-94, O. Demus, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), D. Pincus, “Venice and the Two Romes: Byzantium and Rome as a Double Heritage in Venetian Cultural Politics” *Artibus et Historiae* 13 (1992): 101-14, and S. Bettini, et al., *Venezia e Bisanzio* (Milan: Electa, 1974).

brought to San Marco. Byzantium's influence in Venetian culture continued into the Renaissance, both fostered and reflected by the influx of Greek scholars into the city in the fifteenth century, especially after the fall of Constantinople to Turkish forces in 1453. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Venice was the leading center of Greek learning in Europe.⁵²

Venetians' taste for Byzantine forms is evident in the importation of icons from the empire's eastern territory of Crete, whose capital of Candia became an important center of icon production in the middle of the fifteenth century.⁵³ Venetians valued Byzantine icons because of their association of Byzantine culture with the prestige of both holiness and antiquity. Half-length Madonnas like Giovanni Bellini's are a fusion of revered Byzantine icons and Renaissance naturalism. The half-length format, in which the Virgin is shown behind a stone parapet on which she presents the Christ Child, ultimately derives from antique portraiture, adapted by Byzantine painters as an appropriate form for icons (a term that in Greek can mean both 'image' and 'portrait'). Half-length images would have been understood as appropriate for the depiction of holy figures because of the associations of the type with royalty. The half-length furthermore was associated with the most revered images of Christ and the Virgin—the *sudarium* of

⁵² See J. D. Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice: Studies in the Dissemination of Greek Learning from Byzantium to Western Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962); G. Fiaccadori, ed., *Bessarione e l'Umanesimo* (Naples: Vivarium 1994); M. Gregori, ed., *In the Light of Apollo: Italian Renaissance and Greece* (Athens: Hellenic Culture Organization, 2003), 405-17; and M. Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979).

⁵³ S. Bettini, *La pittura di icone cretese-veneziana e i madonneri* (Padua: Casa Editrice A. Milani, 1933); R. Goffen, 1975; M. Chatzidakis, "La peinture des 'madonneri' ou 'vénéto-crétose' et sa destination" in *Venezia: Centro di mediazione tra oriente e occidente (Secoli XV-XVI)*, ed. H.-G. Beck et al., (Florence: Olschki, 1977), vol. 2, 673-90 and S. Bettini, "Ascendenze e significato della pittura veneto-cretese" in idem., 691-703; M. Georgopoulou; M. Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, "L'arte dei pittori greci a Venezia nel Cinquecento" in M. Lucco, *La pittura nel Veneto. Il Cinquecento* (Milan: Electa, 1999), vol. 3, 1203-1260; and idem., "La pittura di icone a creta veneziana (secoli XV e XVI): Questioni di mecenatismo, iconografia e preferenze estetiche" in *Venezia e Creta. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Iraklion-Chaniá, 30 settembre –5 ottobre 1997*, ed. G. Ortalli, (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti, 1998), 459-507.

Veronica, imprinted with the portrait of Christ, and the portraits the Evangelist Saint Luke reportedly made of the Virgin.⁵⁴ One of Saint Luke's portraits was believed to be in San Marco, the *Nicopeia* that had been taken from Constantinople in 1204 (fig. 80).⁵⁵

The sacred value of icons supposedly made by the hand of Saint Luke is based on the truth of representation. Since the Virgin had posed for Saint Luke, he had captured a true likeness; an imitation of Saint Luke's images was not only a signal of the painter's piety but of his ability to create an image worthy of devotion. The issue of modern painters' deviation from Saint Luke's archetypes arose in the physician and chronicler Michele Savonarola's guidebook to Padua. He explained stylistic differences between two icons in the Prosdocimo Chapel in Santa Giustina and the Padua Cathedral, the former of which was said to be by Luke's hand and the latter a copy of an icon by Saint Luke by Giusto de' Menabuoi: "he avoided similarity to a work painted by such sacred hands by using new motifs."⁵⁶ Giusto thus demonstrated both his reverence and his inventiveness.

Giovanni Bellini's paintings have a similar effect. By imitating Saint Luke's image, but transforming it into a recognizable version of the natural world, Giovanni Bellini claims the truth of the image and his role as a successor of Saint Luke, while proclaiming it as his own creation by signing his name. Bellini's strategy seems to parallel that of fifteenth century Netherlandish painters, who, Rothstein argues, addressed the contested nature of religious imagery and promoted themselves socially and

⁵⁴ R. Goffen, 1975, 496-98.

⁵⁵ On the *Nicopeia*, see M. Schulz, "Die *Nicopeia* in San Marco: zur Geschichte und zum Typ der Ikone" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 91 (1998): 475-501; A. Rizzi, "Un'icona constantinopolitana del XII secolo a Venezia: La Madonna *Nicopeia*" *Thesaurismata* 17 (1980): 290-306; H. Belting 1994, 73-77, 195-207.

⁵⁶ H. Belting, 1994, 343. The popular cult of Luke in Padua dates to 1177, when the Evangelist's relics were found in Santa Giustina.

intellectually by creating reflexive images.⁵⁷ In other words, the painter attempted to evoke from the viewer an appreciation for his skill while simultaneously evading controversy about the role of images in religious devotion by proclaiming the image as art.

Painters' simultaneous assertion of skill and piety through reflexive characteristics is not limited to, but is certainly enhanced by, the *cartellino*, as Crivelli's *Madonna and Child* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 81) demonstrates. Although he spent much of his career in Dalmatia and the Marches, Crivelli was a native Venetian and identified himself as such throughout his career, often adding "Veneti" to his signature. He was born in the early 1430s to a painter father and spent his earliest years in his native city. At some point after 1457, when he served time in jail for adultery, Crivelli went to Padua where he was strongly influenced by Squarcionesque painters, combining their compositions and illusionistic motifs with his own taste for richness in line, texture, color, and detail. Crivelli often used trompe-l'oeil motifs, and went beyond the typical devices of the fruit garland and *cartellino* that he had learned from other painters during his sojourn in Padua. For example, in his *Madonna della Candeletta*, a small candle seems to hover in front of the Virgin's throne (fig. 82). Crivelli often enhanced the effect of relief and projection by using *pastiglia*, and, in at least one instance, actually included sculpted objects in the round: two gilt wood keys dangle in front of the left panel of Crivelli's altarpiece for San Domenico, Camerino, as if hanging from the painted Saint Peter's fingers (1482, fig. 83). The effect leaves the viewer to question the boundaries of

⁵⁷ B. Rothstein, 7. See also "Senses of Painterly Strength," 138-173.

the two-dimensional image.⁵⁸ In the *Madonna* in the Metropolitan Museum, Crivelli painted both a *cartellino* and a trompe-l'oeil fly, and demonstrates the painter's reflexive approach to private devotional paintings by calling attention to their artifice.

The composition is a typical Venetian half-length of the Virgin behind a stone parapet, on which the Christ child sits, grasping a goldfinch with both hands. Crivelli has filled the composition with sumptuous detail, like halos of gold and jewels, richly colored and textured fabrics, and the abundant swag of apples and cucumber behind the Virgin's head. The painting is signed on a creased *cartellino*, "OPVS KAROLI CRIVELLI VENETI." Dabs of red wax hold down three of the *cartellino*'s corners; the lower right corner has been stained red by wax that has since fallen off. The placement of the *cartellino* in front of the draped parapet makes its status ambiguous—is it meant to be attached to the yellow cloth or to the surface of the painting? The fly to the left of the Christ child may suggest the answer. Its disparity in scale with the depicted figures (the fly is approximately life size), together with its vertical position, show that it belongs not in the depicted space, but in our own; it rests not on the parapet but on the surface of the painting.⁵⁹

The reflexive qualities of the image lie not only in its trompe-l'oeil motifs, but in the way the gaze of the figures reflect back on the viewer his or her own act of looking at the painting. The painting would have hung on a wall well above eye-level; therefore Crivelli has shown both the Virgin and Child with their gazes cast downward, as if to

⁵⁸ On Crivelli's taste for trompe l'oeil, see N. Land, "Carlo Crivelli, Giovanni Bellini, and the Fictional Viewer," *Source* 18 (1998): 18-24, and J. Watkins.

⁵⁹ On the fly, see N. Land, "Giotto's Fly, Cimabue's Gesture, and a Madonna and Child by Carlo Crivelli" *Source* 15 (1996): 11-15.

look at the worshiper (or worshipers) below.⁶⁰ Christ peers to his left while the Virgin looks down to her right and directly at the fly in the lower left corner. Since the fly is on “our” side of the picture plane, perhaps Crivelli intended for us to imagine the Virgin’s ability to see into the earthly realm from her heavenly one. Crivelli’s use of *trompe l’oeil* has put the imagined barrier between the sacred realm and the real world in a state of flux.⁶¹

Occupying a liminal space between the viewer and the holy figures, the *cartellino* forms a visual link between the viewer’s space and the holy figures in that the parapet to which it is supposedly attached acts as both a barrier and a window onto the Virgin and Child. The signature’s placement alludes to the artist’s role as an intermediary between worshiper and divine. The *cartellino* and the fly are truthful deceptions, and as such they call attention to the artifice of the painting through faithful representation of nature. The painting is a comment on the paradox of mimetic painting: the same painting that purports to reveal truth through verisimilitude also deceives. The use of the signed *cartellino* on such depictions therefore asserts the object’s status as a representation. Nonetheless, the beauty and intimacy of the representation should inspire piety through an empathetic response to the sacred figures.

Public altarpieces

With the more traditional situation of a custom-made painting for an ecclesiastical patron, both institutional aims and the physical conditions of the worshiper’s experience

⁶⁰ See W. Wolters and N. Huse, 190-91, R. Lightbown, *Carlo Crivelli* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 261, 264-66.

⁶¹ P. Trutty-Coohill, “La eminentia in Antonello da Messina” *Antichità Viva* 21 (1982): 5-9 and N. Land, 1998.

at the altar present a somewhat different set of considerations. The history of the altarpiece in the Renaissance is particularly dynamic because of the large numbers of altarpieces produced during the period. In 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council affirmed the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and concluded that altars should be maintained with the dignity of their function; the altarpiece was one way of adorning the altar accordingly while at the same time providing visual emphasis for the site of the liturgy of the Eucharist. In subsequent writings, church officials dictated that an inscription or image indicate dedication of each altar.⁶² That an altarpiece could simultaneously meet both requirements made it a convenient choice, but was not prescribed by the Church. The quantity of altarpieces produced from the late Middle Ages on can also be explained by the profound influence of the mendicant orders, who saw the painted altarpiece as an important didactic and devotional tool.⁶³

The large number of churches in Venice—outdone in Christendom perhaps only by Rome—and their ornate interiors were noted by contemporary chroniclers.⁶⁴ The 137 churches of Venice in the Renaissance each had at least four or five subsidiary chapels, and the large mendicant churches of the Frari and Santi Giovanni e Paolo had as many as twenty.⁶⁵ Belting suggested that precisely the phenomenon of private devotion and its accompanying consumption of art led ecclesiastical patrons to ramp up investment in the ornament of churches.⁶⁶ On the other hand, many altars in Renaissance Venice were sponsored by the laity, either *scuole piccole* (minor confraternities) or wealthy mercantile

⁶² See J. Gardner, “Altars, Altarpieces, and Art History: Legislation and Usage” in *Italian Altarpieces, 1250-1550*, ed. E. Borsook and F. S. Gioffredi (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 5-11.

⁶³ P. Humfrey, 1993, 71.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 60

⁶⁶ H. Belting, 1994, 409-10.

families. Although private donors clearly were acting in the spiritual interests of themselves and their families, the clergy played a role in the commissioning of altarpieces and represented ecclesiastical interests and the needs of ordinary people.⁶⁷

In order to gauge a Renaissance viewer's response, I have chosen the example of Giovanni Bellini's *Baptism of Christ* in Santa Corona, Vicenza (fig. 84), one of few monumental altarpieces relevant to this study still in excellent condition and in its original location.⁶⁸ Furthermore, the setting of the church presents a common situation in terms of the altarpieces under consideration. Santa Corona is a Latin-cross church constructed in the thirteenth century in the Gothic style. It has shallow, vaulted aisles with several side altars and a high altar in the apse. Bellini's altarpiece is on the left wall of the nave, at the altar nearest the crossing. The frame, attributed to the local sculptor Rocco da Vicenza, is a richly ornamented classical aedicule, a strong visual focal point in the church.⁶⁹

Further enhancing the overall visual interest of the painting is its unquestionable beauty—Bellini's command of light, color, composition, and landscape all contribute to the painter's characteristic attributes of warmth and serenity. On either side of Christ, the rocky banks of the riverbed, rendered in extremely fine detail, dominate the foreground of the painting. On the front of the rocky outcropping on the right, on which stands John the Baptist, is a *cartellino* signed "IOANNES BELLINVS." Bellini further proclaims his identity, and perhaps also his piety, by signing the painting rather conspicuously directly

⁶⁷ P. Humfrey, 1993, 70-72.

⁶⁸ On the altarpiece, see R. Goffen, 1989, 163-71; S. Ciofetta, "Il *Battesimo di Cristo* di Giovanni Bellini: Patronato e devozione privata" *Venezia Cinquecento* 1 (1991): 61-88; *Bellini e Vicenza: Capolavori che ritornano* (Cittadella: Biblos, 2003).

⁶⁹ On the altar, see C. M. Dossi, "L'altare Graziani Garzadori in Santa Corona a Vicenza e un restauro di Antonio Lombardo" *Paragone* 48 (1997): 24-46.

below the saint of the same name. The *cartellino* is very finely rendered, even more illusionistic than those in his other paintings, with the careful formation of the letters and the minute handling of the paper's surface texture (fig. 85). Perhaps as an additional assertion of his mimetic skill, Bellini included, just to the left of the *cartellino* and perched on a twig, a parrot, a bird known for its uncanny ability as a mimic.⁷⁰

The visibility of altarpieces in various physical contexts is of crucial importance when considering the visual experience of small details of paintings. Although side altars were, by definition, spatially marginal compared to the high altar, they were often much more visually accessible to the laity.⁷¹ This is particularly true in smaller churches, whose space limitations precluded large stepped platforms and iron grates that sometimes surrounded side altars in larger structures and created distance between the lay worshiper and the altarpiece. The altar of Bellini's *Baptism* is on a low stepped platform extending just four or five feet out from the wall. The placement of the *cartellino* near the lower right corner of the painting meant that it is at about eye level for a viewer standing directly in front of the altar, and just above eye level for a viewer standing on the church floor. The *cartellino* is especially noticeable not only because of its placement in relation to the viewer, but in its proximity to the altar. Candles were placed on altars for the

⁷⁰ In Christian iconography, the parrot denotes the Incarnation, which was not physical, but was conveyed by the words of the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation. See H. Friedmann, *A Bestiary for Saint Jerome* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980), 281. S. Ciofetta, 67-69, explains the parrot as possibly referring to ancient stories of parrots uttering "Ave Caesar." In the fifteenth century, the parrot that said "Ave" was incorporated into Christian iconography as showing reverence to the Virgin. F. Rigon, "Un pappagallo al Battesimo" in *Bellini a Vicenza: Il Battesimo di Cristo in Santa Corona*, eds. M. E. Avagnina and G. C. F. Villa (Vicenza: Musei Civici, 2007), 25-35, argues that the parrot may have been a later addition.

⁷¹ Santa Corona once had a rood screen, but it seems to have been torn down in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, when the eastern end of the church was rebuilt and the choir was relocated. See G. Lorenzoni and G. Valenzano, "Pontile, jubé, tramezzo: alcune riflessioni sul tramezzo di Santa Corona a Vicenza" in *Immagine e ideologia: studi in onore di Arturo Carlo Quintavalle*, ed. A. Calzona, R. Campari, and M. Mussini (Milan: Electa, 2007), 313-17

celebration of mass on feast days, and were sometimes perpetually illuminated with candles at the behest of the donor.⁷² Candlelight, as well as the bright white color of the *cartellino* set in contrast to the shadows of the rocks surrounding it, would have made the *cartellino* visible even in a characteristically dim church interior.⁷³

Bellini's *cartellino* also stands out because it is incongruous with the landscape setting. Although a scrap of paper is a believable detail in Saint Jerome's study, for example, it is unexpected in an outdoor space; it does not fit into the scene. This fact could confront the viewer with one (or both, at different moments) of the following assumptions, either of them possible because of the *cartellino*'s liminal placement. First, the *cartellino* can be understood as an addition to the painting, a real slip of paper affixed to its surface, but appearing to be "sticking out in the air," as Summonte described Colantonio's *cartellini*.⁷⁴ Even if the viewer did not recognize the words as the name of the painter, he might have assumed that an inscribed bit of paper belongs at least as much in his own space as in that of the baptism of Christ. The appearance of projection into the viewer's space might have been enhanced by flickering candlelight, which could have made the paper appear to flutter. Second, the viewer might have viewed the *cartellino* as part of the painted scene and then attempted to decipher its meaning in light of the

⁷² Portions of the Gianbattista Garzadori's contract with the Dominicans of Santa Corona and his will are published in R. Goffen, 1989, 312-13, n. 62 and n. 63 and in S. Ciofetta, 77, 82. The contract stipulates that the priests will say mass at the altar for his soul and the souls of his sons and wife but no other specifics are related regarding the frequency of the masses or the maintenance of the altar.

⁷³ Most Venetian churches in the Renaissance would have received less natural light than they do now, since in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, windows were added in many of them. On the lighting of altarpieces, see P. Humfrey, 1993, 53-55. M. Leja, *Looking Askance: Skepticism and American Art from Eakins to Duchamp* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 133-34, discussed the lighting and other physical conditions of trompe-l'oeil paintings in nineteenth-century American saloons. Leja argues that the smoky, dim interiors would have made the painted illusions all the more convincing, and while the viewing of these paintings presents a quite different set of concerns than those of church altarpieces, the visual experience of illusion in less than optimal viewing conditions is relevant.

⁷⁴ See n. 25, above.

Baptism. If he recognized the words as identifying the painter, he might then have understood the *cartellino* as having been left by him at the scene of the baptism. The *cartellino* is a trace of the painter's presence and therefore proclaims his work as a truthful representation of what he had witnessed.

Both of these responses are enhanced by the illusionism and liminal placement of the *cartellino* and by the evidence of handling but not necessarily significant age: its turned up lower right corner, creases, and uneven surface are typical features of *cartellini*. The small tears in a piece of paper or parchment might have happened over a period of weeks or months; the creases, perhaps mere minutes.⁷⁵ The artist's act of signaling his presence *in* the scene of past event (a biblical scene or saint's life) or in a timeless assembly of sacred persons (*sacra conversazione*) creates a temporal rupture; by applying a piece of paper to the surface of the painting, he creates a spatial rupture.

Because of these inconsistencies in space and time, eventually either of these initial reactions would presumably lead the viewer to a third conclusion, which is that the bit of paper is an illusionistic device that, like the figures and landscape setting surrounding it, is part of the painted surface and that it has been intentionally placed there as a reflexive device. The viewer, if initially tricked, or at least intrigued by the illusion, would have been encouraged to move closer to the painting, perhaps even reaching out to touch it, in order to determine the pictorial status of the *cartellino*. The illusionism of the *cartellino* can compete with the painted scene's captivating beauty for the viewer's attention, and furthermore has the effect of drawing his attention to the fact of the painting as a representation.

⁷⁵ On the depiction of the passage of time, see A. Acres, "Small Physical History: The Trickling Past of Early Netherlandish Painting" in *Symbols of Time in the History of Art*, C. Heck and K. Lippincott, eds. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 7-25.

By employing both naturalism in the treatment of form (lighting the scene from a direction that matches the source of natural light in the church itself, and the use of perspectival depth to conceive of the painted scene as a space opening up beyond the church wall, with the architectural frame acting as a window frame) and trompe-l'oeil illusionism in one of its details, Bellini addressed two competing concerns regarding the spiritual efficacy of altarpieces. Although the scene portrayed is undoubtedly decorous, accurate, and easily understood by the lay Christian, its beauty and naturalism—valued qualities because they encourage devotion and offer exemplars for behavior—posed a potential problem, namely, veneration of the image as opposed to what it represented. A reflexive trompe-l'oeil element allowed for the viewer to contemplate Christ as the Redeemer of sins (which are washed away by baptism) while reminding her that the image is not the thing itself or a miraculous vision, but a painter's skillful (and pious) rendering.⁷⁶

Physical contexts that kept viewers at a distance, such as those side altars which were placed high from the church floor or cordoned off by grates, or high altarpieces that were both distant from the nave and blocked, at least for some viewers, by rood screens, created different viewing conditions.⁷⁷ In these cases, the effectiveness of a signed *cartellino* in communicating information about its maker is questionable, since most viewers would have been unable to make out the inscription. An example like Lazzaro Bastiani's *Saint Anthony Altarpiece* (ca. 1480, fig. 86), which was originally installed

⁷⁶ Although theologians' concerns seemed to stem more from cult or iconic images as opposed to narratives like Christ's baptism, Bellini's painting could be classified as a cult image of the Baptist as Christ's attribute. See C. Hope, 535-71.

⁷⁷ P. Humfrey, 1993, 34-36.

over the first altar on the right in the Frari, illustrates the point.⁷⁸ The church of the Franciscans in Venice, the Frari, unlike Santa Corona, is a capacious basilica characteristic of mendicant churches, which were built to accommodate large crowds.⁷⁹ The side altars, including the one that originally held Bastiani's painting, sit on high stepped platforms surrounded by stone architectural frames.

Unlike the *cartellino* in Bellini's *Baptism*, Bastiani's *cartellino* is small and illegible unless viewed from a very short distance. Its placement in the center foreground of the painting, that is, nearer to the viewer's eye level than the central figures, as well as its rather strange location on the trunk of a tree, nonetheless call attention to its presence. Although Bastiani's intention may have been simply to leave a record of his authorship on the painting, the effect may have been to encourage the viewer to move closer to the work in order to try to make out the inscription, just as Michiel was prompted to look more carefully at Antonello's *Saint Jerome* in order to try to read the *cartellino*.

Narrative cycles

In addition to the small-scale private devotional painting and the monumental altarpiece, Venice developed a local tradition of narrative cycles on canvas, many of

⁷⁸ On the altarpiece, see P. Humfrey, 1993, 95-96; L. Sartor, "Lazzaro Bastiani e i suoi committenti" *Arte Veneta* 50 (1997): 44. On Bastiani, see also P. F. Brown, 1988; S. G. Casu, "Lazzaro Bastiani: La produzione giovanile e della prima maturità" *Paragone* 47 (1996): 60-89; and P. Humfrey, "The Life of St. Jerome Cycle from the Scuola di San Gerolamo di Cannaregio" *Arte Veneta* 39 (1985): 41-46. In the seventeenth century, an elaborate sculptural program replaced the original altar; only the altarpiece and a wooden sculpture survive. See P. Rossi, "La decorazione scultorea dell'altare di Sant'Antonio ai Frari" *Arte Veneta* 60 (2003): 42-71. Although the exact original physical context of Bastiani's altarpiece is not known, the location of the altar at the immediate right of the main entrance places it in one of the less conspicuous areas of the church. Furthermore, the *cartellino* is so tiny that it is illegible unless one is standing within a foot or so of the painting's surface, closer than most viewers were likely to have ventured.

⁷⁹ On the Frari, see R. Goffen, *Piety and Patronage in Renaissance Venice: Bellini, Titian, and the Franciscans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), esp. 1-19 and U. Franzoi and D. Di Stefano, *Le Chiese di Venezia* (Milan: Electa, 1993), 33-46.

which were commissioned for the chapter houses of *scuole* and therefore depicted religious subjects.⁸⁰ This pictorial tradition has its roots in the fourteenth century. In 1365, a fresco cycle of scenes from the history of Venice was begun in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio of the Palazzo Ducale; the cycle was entirely replaced with paintings on canvas after the frescoes fell into ruin and again when a devastating fire gutted the hall in 1577.⁸¹ Unfortunately only a few surviving drawings attest to the appearance of either of the first two sets of canvases for the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, leaving a significant gap in our knowledge regarding the character of early Renaissance Venetian narrative painting.

Several of the *scuole* cycles, however, survive intact. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Venetian narrative painting flourished and developed a distinctive style. These paintings, many of them by Carpaccio, were often signed with *cartellini*. Aside from reasons of self-fashioning and self-promotion, in these cases *cartellini* may carry additional significance because of the religious and civic importance of the image and their viewing by a very specific audience.

The Venetian *scuole* were lay orders that performed charitable works and ritual processions, and acted as a social and religious counterpart to the *arti*. Since only patricians could serve in public offices, the *scuole* were important institutions for the Venetian bourgeoisie and sources of corporate lay patronage, since they commissioned

⁸⁰ Brown's book *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988) is an indispensable study on the subject and serves as the primary point of reference for my discussion of narrative cycles. Other general sources on the *scuola* cycles are P. Humfrey, "Pittura e devozione: La tradizione narrativa quattrocentesca" in *La pittura nel Veneto. Il Quattrocento*, ed. M. Lucco (Milan: Electa, 1989), 295-338 and T. Pignatti, *Le Scuole di Venezia* (Milan: Electa, 1981). F. Ames-Lewis, "The Image of Venice in Renaissance Narrative Painting" in *New Interpretations of Venetian renaissance Painting*, ed. idem (London: Birkbeck College, 1994), 17-29, provides an alternate reading to some of the pictures but in my view oversimplifies Brown's argument, which does not, as Ames-Lewis suggests, rule out interpretations of imagery as glorifying the Venetian state and perpetuating myth as opposed to history.

⁸¹ See P. F. Brown, 1988, 261-65 (the original fresco cycle), 272-79 (project of 1474).

chapter halls and their decorations. A *scuola*, if it could afford its own building, met in a chapter hall with offices and a meeting room, or *albergo*, which, beginning in the fifteenth century, was decorated with a painted cycle relevant to the dedication of the *scuola*.⁸² *Scuole* of more modest means (most of the *scuole piccole*) commissioned altarpieces for their chapels in Venice's churches.

Patricia Fortini Brown identified and contextualized the stylistic character of the Venetian narrative painting from the 1470s to 1530, calling it the "eyewitness style." The style, which parallels history and travel writing of the period, involves a wealth of minute detail in the topography of a place (whether a realistic portrayal of Venice or an imagined view of England) and in the depiction of mundane activities. These details threaten to overwhelm the narrative content, since the paintings often lack narrative focus. The overall effect and the apparent intention of the artist, however, is to lend to the scene both an air of truth and the sense that it is the result of the artist's fortuitous encounter with a holy event. Instead of a contrived scene, eyewitness painters aimed for a snapshot representing a piece of reality. Unlike the expressed purpose of other Christian narrative art, these stories were intended to document events, not to instruct viewers, who, as members of a specific audience, would have been familiar with the confraternity's own history and with the legends of its patron saints.

Perhaps the cycle that displays the eyewitness style most readily is that depicting various miracles performed by the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista's relic of the True Cross, commissioned to decorate the *scuola*'s *albergo*.⁸³ Instead of assigning the cycle to

⁸² For the tradition of narrative commissions at the *scuole*, see P. F. Brown, 1988, 42-50.

⁸³ See *ibid.*, 282-86; T. Pignatti, 41-66; J. Bernasconi, "The Dating of the Miracles of the Cross from the Scuola di San Giovanni Evangelista" *Arte Veneta* 35 (1981): 198-202; P. F. Brown, "An Incunabulum of the Miracles of the True Cross of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista" *Bollettino dei Musei*

a single painter, the *scuola* hired Gentile Bellini (three canvases), Giovanni Mansueti (two canvases), Lazzaro Bastiani, Benedetto Diana, Vittore Carpaccio, and the Umbrian painter Pietro Perugino (one canvas each). The cycle was apparently intended to be a collaborative and competitive scheme for the city's leading narrative painters. This alone may have inspired at least two of the painters to add signatures to their paintings in order to identify their individual contributions to the cycle so that they might be compared to their colleagues' work.⁸⁴ Gentile Bellini included a *cartellino* in all three of his paintings for the cycle; in the *Procession in Piazza San Marco*, Gentile has placed the *cartellino* in the center foreground, directly under the reliquary (fig. 87).⁸⁵ The *cartellino* not only gives the artist's name and the date of the work, but attests to his status as knight and to his piety.⁸⁶ But given the importance placed on these paintings as documents and the corollary inclusion of anachronistic witnesses, these illusionistic signatures may have been read by their audiences as testaments of the painter's role as a witness to the miracle.

Civici Veneziani 27 (1982): 5-8; S. Miller, "Giovanni Mansueti, A Little Master of the Venetian Quattrocento" *Revue Romaine d'Histoire de l'Art* 15 (1978): 77-115; H. F. Collins, "Time and Space in Gentile Bellini's Miracle of the Cross at the Ponte San Lorenzo (Portraits of Caterina Cornaro and Pietro Bembo)" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 100 (1982): 201-08; E. Rodini, "Describing Narrative in Gentile Bellini's Procession in Piazza San Marco" *Art History* 21 (1998): 26-44.

⁸⁴ The absence of a signature on Carpaccio's *Miracle at Rialto Bridge* for the True Cross cycle is curious: it is contemporary with his Saint Ursula cycle and altarpiece, which are signed on every canvas (eight of the nine on *cartellini*), and the commission for the cycle was shared with four other artists—Carpaccio presumably would have wanted to stake his claim there. The situation is perhaps explained by the canvas's condition—a portion of the lower left side was cut out when, in the sixteenth century, doors were added to the wall on which the painting hung. Carpaccio sometimes placed his signatures on *cartellini* at the lower left, as in three of his Saint Ursula paintings (*Departure of the Ambassadors*, *Return of the Ambassadors*, and *Arrival in Cologne*). On the condition of the *Miracle* canvas, see P. F. Brown, 1988, 284-85 (as *Healing of the Possessed Man by the Patriarch of Grado*).

⁸⁵ On this canvas, see P. F. Brown, "Painting and History in Renaissance Venice" *Art History* 7 (1984): 263-94; E. Rodini, 1989, 295-96; and J. Meyer zur Capellen, *Gentile Bellini* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1985), 70-77, cat. no. A19.

⁸⁶ Gentile's signatures are somewhat problematic: two of them, those on the *Procession* and the *Miracle at the Bridge of San Lorenzo*, have been overpainted and differ from early transcriptions; one, the *Healing of Pietro dei Ludovici*, is not recorded in early sources, casting doubt on its authenticity. Early documentation of the *Procession* signature, however, closely matches the existing inscription and therefore in a general sense closely matches an original signature. See P. F. Brown, 1988, 285-86.

This role is overtly stated in Mansueti's *Miracle of the Relic of the Holy Cross in Campo San Lio* (figs. 88, 89).⁸⁷ Consistent with the eyewitness style that characterized the True Cross cycle in particular, and of which Mansueti was a strong adherent, the scene is filled with anecdotal detail which serves to verify the truth of the miracle taking place. Mansueti's topographical depiction of the campo and its everyday activities is enhanced by the presence of numerous portraits of contemporaries. A self-portrait is among them, easily identifiable because he holds the *cartellino* signed "OPUS / JOANNIS D / MANSUETI / S VENETI / RECTE SENTENTIUM BELLI / NI DISCIPLI" ('The work of Giovanni Mansueti, Venetian, disciple of Bellini, believing rightly'). Mansueti not only proclaimed himself as a pious believer in the power of the relic and an associate of the *confratelli*, but also positioned himself as a witness to the miracle. Both attest to his qualifications as a painter of this scene. By placing his image and his signature, as well as portraits of contemporaries anachronistically within the scene, he collapses time and space; his presence at the scene demonstrates the truth of the painting, even if it does not reflect an objective reality. Not only do these devices assert the painter as a witness, they also make him a proxy for the viewer of the painting. Through Mansueti's painting, a *confratello* of San Giovanni Evangelista could also be a witness to the miracle; he, as viewer, could identify with the *confratelli* portrayed as witnesses.

The eyewitness style, however, was sometimes more subtle than in the paintings of the *True Cross*, as is evident in the later cycles of Carpaccio. Carpaccio's use of the *cartellino* varies from Mansueti's and demonstrates a different approach appropriate to

⁸⁷ On Mansueti, see S. Miller.

other types of narratives. Carpaccio is most associated with the narrative tradition, since he was the most prolific painter employed by the *scuole* and his career spanned the 1490s to 1520 when the genre flourished. His first documented commission was the cycle of nine canvases for the Scuola di Sant'Orsola (now in the Accademia) begun in 1490 when the artist was probably about twenty-five years old.⁸⁸ Information about Carpaccio's training and early career is elusive, and none of the paintings attributed to the artist before the Saint Ursula cycle is a narrative subject.⁸⁹ Carpaccio quickly became a specialist in narrative cycles, however, and executed three more complete cycles besides his canvas for the *True Cross* cycle.⁹⁰

Carpaccio used *cartellini* more frequently and in a more consistent manner than any other artist, painting more than three-quarters of his signatures on them. The use of *cartellini* is the most consistent aspect of his signatures, which vary widely in terms of content. Carpaccio spelled his name in several different ways and sometimes included a mixture of other elements, like his nationality, the date of the work, or one of the verbs *fingebat*, *faciebat*, *pinxit*, or *finxit*. Carpaccio likely had professional motives for signing so frequently—he would have wanted to make his work particularly recognizable in order to make a name for himself in the particular genre.⁹¹ He signed them multiple times within the same cycle to proclaim his responsibility for each of the paintings; perhaps because of the collaborative nature of earlier cycles, he wanted to communicate that he was the sole artist. Carpaccio may have been especially motivated to seek modes of self-

⁸⁸ For the Saint Ursula cycle, see P. F. Brown, 1988; L. Zorzi, *Carpaccio e la rappresentazione di Sant'Orsola: Ricerche sulla visualità dello spettacolo del Quattrocento* (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1988); M. Vickers, "Carpaccio and the West" *Byzantinische Forschungen* 21 (1995): 343-55; V. Sgarbi, *Carpaccio* (Milan: Fabbri, 1994), 64-93; T. Pignatti, 67-88.

⁸⁹ P. F. Brown, 1988, 57.

⁹⁰ Carpaccio also assisted Giovanni Bellini in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in 1507, according to a lost inscription. P. F. Brown, 1988, 275.
See P. F. Brown, 1988, 72-74.

promotion because of certain professional disappointments. He lost out on commissions from the Scuola Grande della Carità twice, to Benedetto Diana, in 1507 for a processional banner, and in a formal competition in 1504 to Pasqualino Veneto for a canvas of the *Presentation of the Virgin* (finally delivered by Titian in 1538). To have these much lesser-known painters chosen over him may have stoked his competitive spirit and his desire to advertise his talents in this particular type of commission.

Furthermore, the viewers of Carpaccio's *scuole* pictures constituted a rather specific demographic group, in contrast to the more general audience for half-length devotional pictures and public altarpieces. The artisans and merchants who populated the *scuole piccole* were participants and consumers in Venice's thriving mercantile economy and would have been especially attuned to appraising quality and craftsmanship; furthermore, they were a relatively literate part of the population. Carpaccio's *cartellini*, which tend to be relatively large, highly illusionistic, and placed in a liminal zone between the painting's illusion and its real surface, could be understood as trademarks of his work and guarantees of quality.

Seven of the nine canvases for the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni (1502-1507, in situ), depicting three scenes each from the lives of Saint George and Saint Jerome and one scene of Saint Tryphon (all saints venerated in Dalmatia, the homeland of the 'schiavoni'), are signed with *cartellini*.⁹² They always appear near the bottom of the paintings, and are therefore quite close to eye-level of the viewer. For example, the *Funeral of Saint Jerome* (fig. 74), the last painting in the cycle, on the right wall of the

⁹² On the San Giorgio degli Schiavoni cycle, see P. F. Brown, 1988; V. Sgarbi, 110-39; T. Pignatti, 99-118; G. Perocco, *Carpaccio: Le pitture alla San Giorgio degli Schiavoni* (Treviso: Canova, 1975); A. Gentili, *Le storie di Carpaccio: Venezia, i Turchi, gli Ebrei* (Venice: Marsilio Editore, 1996), 47-90; H. Roberts, "St. Augustine in 'St. Jerome's Study': Carpaccio's Painting and its Legendary Source" *Art Bulletin* 41 (1959): 283-97.

meeting room shows the body of Jerome lying across the center foreground on a stone slab, with mourning figures confined to the front plane although the painting depicts a deep space with grazing animals, palm trees, rather strange buildings, and distant mountains. At the center of the front ledge of the stone slab, directly under a lizard, is a *cartellino* that appears as though it had been folded in thirds width-wise, then affixed to the stone, such that the left and right thirds of the paper project outward at an angle.⁹³ It is signed “VICTOR CARPATHIUS / FINGEBAT / MDII.” Carpaccio is clearly showing off his illusionistic skill. He not only placed his signature on a trompe-l’oeil device, but he used the imperfect Latin verb *fingebat* (‘was forming’ or ‘was feigning’). The word connotes his powers of depicting three-dimensional forms as well as his self-conscious association with the great artists of ancient Greece whom, according to Pliny, almost always employed the imperfect tense.

The formal contrast with Mansueti’s *Miracle at San Lio* is instructive. By comparison, the composition of Carpaccio’s *Funeral of Saint Jerome* is sparse, with few anecdotal details and no crowds of bystanders; the narrative is clear with the main figure front and center. This approach is evident in his contemporary *Life of the Virgin* for the Scuola degli Albanesi and the slightly later *Life of Saint Stephen* for the Scuola di San Stefano.⁹⁴ Typical of Carpaccio’s paintings, the *cartellino* is conceived of as a detail separate from the space, not part of it. In light of the perception that the ancient legend of

⁹³ The lizard is presumably a reference to Jerome’s defense of lowly insects and reptiles as God’s creatures; in this particular case the placement of the lizard is interesting because animal forms sometimes used for bronze paperweights. These sculptures, often cast from real specimens, were a specialty of Paduan bronze workshops. See D. Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 131.

⁹⁴ For the Scuola degli Albanesi Cycle, see P. F. Brown, 1988, esp. 290-91; G. Nepi Scirè, ed., *Carpaccio Pittore di Storie* (Venice: Marsilio, 2004); T. Pignatti, 89-98. For the Saint Stephen Cycle, see P. F. Brown, 1988, esp. 296-98; V. Sgarbi, 170-80; T. Pignatti 119-29; S. Carboni, ed., *Venice and the Islamic World* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2007), cat. nos. 30, 31; A. Gentili, “Nuovi documenti e contesti per l’ultimo Carpaccio II: I teleri per la Scuola di San Stefano” *Artibus et Historiae* 18 (1988): 79-108.

a church father did not require the same kind of verification that more recent stories of miracles did,⁹⁵ the function of the *cartellino* as an assertion of painterly skill as opposed to the sign of the painter's presence as a witness is appropriate. The fact remains, however, that, with very few exceptions, *cartellini* were painted on either religious paintings or portraits, genres in which the truth of the depiction was valued most, as opposed to mythological and allegorical works, which are more likely to demonstrate the artist's imagination and knowledge and interpretation of antique literary and artistic sources.⁹⁶ The usual ambiguous placement of *cartellini* on surfaces parallel to the picture plane meant that when the *cartellino* was viewed as part of the represented space, it could be understood as the painter's assertion of his presence at the scene as a witness. When the *cartellino* was understood, however, as belonging to the viewer's space, it served as a reminder of the painter's skill in creating faithful representations.

Conclusion

Venetian painters' frequent insertion of *cartellini* meant that these artists consciously asserted the painted image as artifice. The fact that so often the motif appears in a religious context, provokes us to address possible viewer response in relation to the functions of these objects as devotional aids, or, as in the case of some narrative paintings for the *scuole*, documents of miraculous events. In each case, the placement of the *cartellino*, its relationship to the subject matter, and the conditions under which the painting was viewed all contribute to an assessment of how contemporary viewers might

⁹⁵ P. F. Brown, 1988, 189.

⁹⁶ The absence of Venetian history paintings, attributable in part to the destruction of the Sala del Maggior Consiglio cycles, limits a generalization about that genre.

have understood *cartellini*. The liminal nature of *cartellini* parallel the function of devotional paintings themselves as channels between the divine and earthly realms.

As the century progressed, Venetian painters either abandoned *cartellini* or included them in more integrated ways in the painted scene. Instead of painting them in liminal, ambiguous spaces, they placed them on tabletops or attached them to walls in the background.⁹⁷ Bellini's *Feast of the Gods* (1514, fig. 90, 91) can be used to demonstrate the shift: the *cartellino*, at the lower right, appears as if attached to the curving surface of a bucket, on the left side, thus receding away from us at an oblique angle.⁹⁸ *Pentimenti* at the top right and lower left corners of the *cartellino* reveal, however, that its bottom and top edges had run parallel to the bottom edge of the canvas, and therefore, would have been ambiguously situated parallel to the picture plane.⁹⁹ The effect of the liminally placed, illusionistic *cartellino* as a pronouncement of the artificiality of the image is lessened when it is clearly shown as belonging to the depicted space. One wonders what would have caused Bellini to change the position of the *cartellino* so that it lacked the kind of spatial ambiguity that was typical for his *cartellini*. Perhaps the choice has to do with the fact that this—and, significantly, perhaps, the nearly contemporary *Nude with a Mirror* (1515, fig. 6)—are two of Bellini's last paintings. By this date younger Venetians

⁹⁷ In portraits, some painters, instead of inscribing small scraps of paper, introduced text or signatures by depicting letters as part of a still life arrangement in a portrait or in the hands of a sitter, like Lorenzo Lotto's *Portrait of Giovanni Agostino della Torre and His Son* (1515, London, National Gallery) in which the painting is signed on the back of the chair in the lower right corner, and the sitters are identified by the inscription on the folded papers held by the central figure and a letter on the table behind him.

⁹⁸ On this painting, see R. Goffen, 1989, 240-47; C. Hope, "The 'Camerini d'Alabastro' of Alfonso d'Este" *Burlington Magazine* 113 (1971): 641-50, 712-21; W. S. Sheard, "Antonio Lombardo's Reliefs for Alfonso d'Este's Studio di Marmi: Their Significance and Impact on Titian" in *Titian 500*, ed. J. Manca (Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, 1993), 315-57; D. Bull and J. Plesters, *The Feast of the Gods: Conservation, Examination and Interpretation* (Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, 1990); D. Alan Brown and S. Ferino-Pagden, eds., *Bellini - Giorgione - Titian and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting* (Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, 2006), cat. no. 32.

⁹⁹ See D. A. Brown, "The *Pentimenti* in the *Feast of the Gods*" in J. Manca, ed., 291, which illustrates an x-radiograph of the painting. Although the author does not discuss the *pentimenti* on the *cartellino*, they are observable in the x-radiograph and with the naked eye.

had adopted formal and theoretical strategies that placed greater emphasis on the image as the result of an artist's skill, evoking reflexivity through trompe-l'oeil elements became less necessary. Alternatively, as the sixteenth century wore on, and the facture of paintings became more evident, as in the loose, sketchy qualities of Titian's late work and Tintoretto.

Conclusion

Early in its history, the *cartellino* was steeped in the humanist culture of the study of antiquities and the collection of books and later went on to become the most popular vehicle for Venetian painters' signatures in the early Renaissance period. The motif emerged, I argue, out of the context of the archeological and epigraphic interests of Venetian humanists and their habits of copying, collecting, and exchanging the remains of classical antiquity through hand-written sylloges. By depicting an inscribed scrap of paper or parchment in a liminal space, layered over the painted scene, early painters of *cartellini*, like Mantegna, were referring to the scholarly activities of their associates, friends, and patrons, while at the same time asserting the artist's mediating role in bringing the past into the present.

The *cartellino*, brought to Venice by contact with Padua—perhaps through Jacopo Bellini or one of his sons, or Bartolomeo Vivarini—became associated with the most successful and prolific workshops of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The popularity of the *cartellino* specifically in the region of the Veneto chronologically mirrors both the rise of the Veneto-Paduan school of book illumination and the flourishing of the Venetian printing industry. Painters would have wanted to flaunt their associations between the learned culture of books and the visual arts as a means of elevating their profession. The production of books required the services of painters to decorate their pages, and artists thus circulated among scribes, authors, editors, printers, and typographers. I argue that these associations encouraged painters to employ paper and parchment motifs, with letter styles that imitated those used in manuscript and

printed books, to sign their paintings. The relationship between the emergence of the *cartellino* and the involvement of artists in the book industries is further demonstrated by the importance of Padua and specifically the circle of Francesco Squarcione in both of these contexts.

Venetian painters of the third quarter of the fifteenth century, including some of the city's most successful masters, adopted the *cartellino* to sign more often than any other type. In doing so, they were able to assert artistic identity in numerous ways: the *cartellino* recalled intellectual and scholarly activities and the *paragone* between painting and poetry, and asserted the painters' illusionistic skill. The use of the *cartellino* as a kind of trademark identified the products of a particular workshop and also, more generally, indicated the work of Venetian artists. The illusionism and reflexive nature of *cartellini* raises special concerns in light of the fact that they appear nearly exclusively on religious paintings. The liminal placement of *cartellini*, it seems, parallels the function of the religious image as a bridge between spiritual and earthly realms; by signing his name to the device, the painter asserts his role as a mediator, making the spiritual visible and tangible.

The sharp decline in the occurrence of *cartellini* after 1530 can be explained by a number of factors. For one, this period saw Venice lose some of its earlier prestige as a producer of beautifully crafted books. As printers focused on cheaper production and texts with broader appeal, the demand for illuminators declined. There was still, however, a great demand for illustrators, and this led to increasing specialization within the pictorial arts. The Venetian book was seen less and less as a work of art in and of itself,

and generally speaking, monumental painters no longer painted miniatures or designed woodcuts.

This increased specialization is evident in the dealings of the *Arte dei Depentori* of Venice, the painter's guild. The earliest inkling that *figureri* (that is, monumental painters, or painters of figures) saw themselves as distinct from illuminators, painters of playing cards, sign painters, and mask makers, and so on was in 1511, when the painter Cima da Conegliano requested that the *figureri* be given an additional representative on the governing board of the *arte*, a distinction necessary because of their higher intellectual calling. Although this suggestion was met with great protest both from insulted members of the *arte* as well as from the conservative Venetian bureaucracy, the fact that Cima considered it a viable proposal speaks to the growing feeling within the profession that painters such as Cima, Giovanni Bellini, and Titian were distinct from the other *depentori*.¹ At the same time, the printing industry was undergoing significant changes as a result of legislative intervention by the Venetian government, which finally saw it necessary to regulate the industry in order to save it from further decline.² To the same end, the guild of printers and booksellers was founded in 1549, apparently resulting in a further specialization of the profession. Therefore the close connections between book production and painters that I outlined in the second chapter seemed to be weakening.

¹ Figure painters of Venice did not have their own organizing body until the foundation of the *Collegio dei Pittori* in 1682 in response to their 1679 petition to the Senate, which expressed frustration at being connected with "other mechanical arts of the city, with whom most of the figure painters refuse to associate." See D. Rosand, *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 7-10 (quote from p. 9).

² On the 'decline' of the industry, see H. F. Brown, 34-35, 51 in terms of the quality of printing; see also 56 and 64-65 on the decline in the quality and corruption of texts.

Part of the *cartellino*'s decline can also be attributed to the overall waning of signatures, discussed at the end of the third chapter as related to new characterizations of the signature as part of workshop practice, and therefore associated with craftsman status. Alongside this shift, and perhaps deriving from similar theoretical developments during the sixteenth century, is the infusion of north Italian art with the influence of central Italy, which did not share with Venice the taste for trompe-l'oeil illusionism.³ As Venetian painting developed under the leadership of Titian and the influence of recent developments in central Italy—Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael—painters increasingly abandoned the traditions of signing and trompe-l'oeil in favor of garnering and conveying their own status through the local version of High Renaissance classicism.

Therefore the interpretation of *cartellini* and accounting for their popularity and subsequent decline largely depends on their liminality. The functional aspect of *cartellini*, in conveying to the information about the painting's creation, is mirrored by this liminal placement, appearing to be added on to the completed painting. *Cartellini* appear to occupy a space between that of the viewer and the painted scene; by placing his name there, the artist demonstrates his role in bridging the represented realm and the space and time of the viewer. The effect of a device that makes overt references to the realm 'outside' the representation creates both spatial ambiguity and temporal dissonance. On the other hand, the *cartellino* asserts the painting as a conduit between the viewer and the subject represented—holy figures, the likeness of a real person, and occasionally the

³ Leonardo, to my knowledge, painted only one trompe l'oeil, namely his drawing of *Pods, Cherries, and Wood Strawberries* inspired by the spilled ink on one of the pages of his notebooks (ca. 1495, Paris, Bibliotheque de l'Institut de France). The only surviving central Italian examples of Renaissance paintings with trompe-l'oeil motifs of which I am aware are two paintings by Piero di Cosimo: *Mars and Venus*, which contains a fly and a butterfly which seem to alight on the surface of the painting (ca. 1490, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) and *Mary Magdalen* (1501, Rome, Palazzo Barberini) which has a projecting *cartellino*.

antique past. Therefore, the viewer is able to gain access to the represented world, but through the efforts of the skilled artist, who positions himself, by inscribing his name, within the border between them.

Epilogue: Later *cartellini* and trompe-l'oeil painting

My study has established that the phenomenon of *cartellini* flourished during a limited geographical and chronological range, specifically the Venetian Empire from the 1470s to the 1520s. Nevertheless, about fifteen percent of the examples I have collected (seventy-six out of 486, only twenty of these from Italy) lie outside this chronological limit, and about fifteen percent of the total were painted by non-Italian artists, mostly working after 1530 (see Appendix 3).¹ Some of the examples that date after 1530 are by Venetian painters like Titian, Girolamo Savoldo, and Lorenzo Lotto, who seem to have wanted to position themselves as the rightful heirs of Bellini and his contemporaries. Although the scope of my project did not permit more extensive investigation outside Renaissance Venice, in some ways the context I have outlined for *cartellini*'s use and reception applies to these other early modern European visual traditions. I hope to supply here a few suggestions as to possible sources and interpretations of the Venetian *cartellino*'s afterlife in the Netherlands and Spain during the Baroque period.

The same interest in and fascination with pictorial illusionism that inspired painters to employ *cartellini* persisted after the Renaissance period even as it fell from favor in Italy. Generally speaking, a taste for illusionism in the Netherlands and Spain, which eventually led to the establishment of still life and its offshoot trompe l'oeil as

¹ The only exceptions to this, that is, the only non-Italian artists who painted *cartellini* before the 1530s, were Hans Holbein, who began inserting *cartellini* in portraits of the late 1520s, and Albrecht Dürer, who employed *cartellini* in several prints and paintings between 1497 and 1514. Both were exposed to Italian art through the circulation of prints and drawings. Dürer made a documented sojourn to Venice in 1506 and traveled in northern Italy and Rome; Holbein is not documented in Italy, but scholars have proposed that he traveled there based on stylistic evidence and the sixteenth-century custom of northern painters touring Italy to study modern and antique art. See O. Bätschmann, *Hans Holbein*, trans. P. Griener (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 145-48.

independent genres, explains the effect of *cartellini* on Spanish and Dutch painters. The outcomes, however, were rather divergent.²

Outside of the Venetian Empire, the *cartellino* was by far most popular in Spain. El Greco was the first of at least three painters of Golden Age Spain who signed *cartellini* with some regularity, beginning with his arrival in Spain in the late 1570s.³ El Greco was a native of Crete, which in the sixteenth century was under Venetian dominion. Trained as a *madonnero*, or a painter of devotional panels of the Virgin in the “maniera greca,” El Greco came to Venice in 1567. During his two years there, he was deeply influenced by Tintoretto and Titian (perhaps even working in the latter’s studio), and readily absorbed western techniques, compositions, and iconography. El Greco then spent several years in Rome, and in 1577, departed for Toledo, where he spent the remainder of his career.

None of El Greco’s *cartellini* dates to his Venetian sojourn, although the period is universally acknowledged as the crucial moment of the painter’s development,

² Since my focus is on painting, I will not consider the numerous examples of *cartellini* or related illusionistic motifs in prints of the late sixteenth century and after. See S. M. Dixon, “The Sources and Fortunes of Piranesi’s Archeological Illustrations” *Art History* 25 (2002): 469-87, 567-68 and M. Hallett, “The Medley Print in Early Eighteenth-Century London” *Art History* 20 (1997): 214-37, 345.

³ El Greco’s *cartellini* may have been the source for Zurbarán and Velázquez, whom I will discuss below, but it would be difficult to pinpoint their sources precisely, given the complex web of exchange in the Mediterranean and northern Europe in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. By checking survey texts and exhibition and museum catalogs of Spanish painting from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, I have found a few rather isolated examples that predate El Greco’s arrival: Bartolomé Bermejo’s *Saint Michael* (1468, National Gallery, London), Workshop of Jaume Ferrer, *Saint Jerome* (1450s, Barcelona, Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya), Pedro Garcia de Benabarre, *Belcaire Altarpiece* (1470s, Barcelona, Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya), the Maestro de Xàtiva, *Saint Gerard* (ca. 1500, Xàtiva, San Pedro), Juan Fernandez de Navarrete, *Baptism of Christ* (ca. 1567, Madrid, Prado), Luis de Vargas, *Immaculate Conception* (1561, Seville, Cathedral). Two additional examples appear more like folded letters (which I have omitted from my lists of Flemish and Italian examples): Bartolomé Bermejo and Osona Workshop, *Virgin de Montserrat* (1480s, Acqui Terme, Cathedral) and Rodrigo de Osona, *Crucifixion* (1476, Valencia, San Nicolas). *Cartellini* by Bermejo, Benabarre, Jaume Ferrer, and the Maestro de Xàtiva can be explained in general terms through vigorous exchange in the Mediterranean in the mid-fifteenth century. See T.-H. Borchert, *The Age of Van Eyck: The Mediterranean World and Early Netherlandish Painting, 1430-1530* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2002) and *El Mundo de los Osona, ca. 1460-ca.1540*, (Valencia: Museo de Bellas Artes San Pio V, 1995), 70-77, which specifically points to Paduan influences on Rodrigo de Osona (especially in similarities to Mantegna, and to a lesser degree Marco Zoppo and Giovanni Bellini). For Bermejo’s travels, see *La pintura gótica hispano-flamenca: Bartolomé Bermejo y su época*, ed. S. Alcolea i Blanch (Barcelona: Museo Nacional d’Art de Catalunya, 2003), 19, 99-105; on the Maestro de Xàtiva’s relationship with Colantonio, see *El Mundo de los Osona, ca. 1460-ca.1540*, 41.

particularly in his attraction to Venetian color and tactility.⁴ Although, as we have, seen, the popularity of signatures and *cartellini* was declining in Venice in the late sixteenth century, El Greco would certainly have been aware of the Venetian tradition of signing *cartellini* through his experience of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century paintings in the city's churches and private collections. The two Venetian artists with whom he was most closely associated rarely employed the *cartellino* (Titian only three times and Tintoretto never at all). El Greco may have been compelled to assert his skill and his identity upon arrival in Spain, where artists had not gained the level of social status that he had just witnessed (if not participated in) in Venice and Rome. El Greco likely recognized that Renaissance Venetians' method and practice of signing, although by that time considered old-fashioned by many Italians, might convey his prestigious background and benefit him in Spain.

El Greco's difficulty adjusting to the art world of Spain is evident in the circumstances of two of the painter's first major commissions in Toledo, both of which are signed on *cartellini*. The first is the *Disrobing of Christ* (or *Espolio*), commissioned for the sacristy of the Toledo Cathedral (1577-79, fig. 92). According to the Spanish practice of the *tasación*, upon completion of the painting, a committee of experts who were chosen by both the artist and the patron appraised the work and negotiated a price. This practice put the artist, who had to pay all the up-front costs without a guarantee on his return, at a significant disadvantage. El Greco was no exception, and frustrated after more than two years of argument, the artist had to accept a price significantly less than

⁴ See L. Puppi, "El Greco in Italy and Italian Art" in *El Greco: Identity and Transformation*, J. Álvarez Lopera, ed. (Milan: Skira, 1999), 95-113.

what he had hoped.⁵ In any case, El Greco had clearly had high hopes for the success of his first Spanish commission: he had placed his name prominently on a *cartellino* at the bottom right corner, in one of the few areas of the composition devoid of figures and in the line of sight of the three Marys at the left.

Despite the animosity caused by this commission, El Greco managed to gain the royal commission for an altarpiece depicting the *Martyrdom of Saint Maurice* for the Escorial in 1580 (fig. 93). Perhaps as a snide comment on the poor reception of his *Disrobing of Christ*, he signed this painting again on a *cartellino*, this time held in the mouth of the snake. This has been interpreted as the destructive power of envy, symbolized by the snake, which coexists with (and, I would add, seems to consume) fame, represented by the *cartellino*.⁶ El Greco may have been implying unfair treatment of his earlier painting because of those envious of the painter's innovation (even though, as a newcomer to the country, he may have been overstating his fame).⁷ Unfortunately, the patrons did not get the message and rejected the painting, presumably for its anachronisms and unconventional interpretation of the narrative.⁸ In spite of these early struggles, El Greco eventually ran a large workshop in Toledo and frequently used the *cartellino* to bear his signature as a kind of trademark, as Venetian masters had done during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Velázquez's use of the *cartellino*, I believe, also had a self-promoting function, but, unlike El Greco, Velázquez had little trouble landing patrons. He was a prodigy in

⁵ El Greco's appraisers valued the painting at nine hundred ducats; the cathedral's at two hundred. El Greco eventually received 350 ducats. See J. Tomlinson, *From El Greco to Goya* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 43-45 and J. Brown, 1991, 73-74.

⁶ J. R. Buendía, "Humanismo y simbología en El Greco: El tema de la serpiente" in *El Greco: Italy and Spain*, J. Brown and J. M. P. Andrade, eds. (Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 1984), 40.

⁷ Another possible interpretation of this scheme is that fame, held up by envy, becomes infamy; in that case, El Greco may be trying to defend his poor reputation among patrons.

⁸ J. Brown, *The Golden Age of Painting in Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 75-76.

the workshop of Francisco Pacheco in Seville, and at the age of twenty-four entered the court of Philip IV, where he would spend virtually his entire career. Philip's patronage, as well as the painter's own efforts and intricate maneuvering at court, helped Velázquez achieve the high social status that had eluded most Spanish painters before him. He gradually worked his way up the court hierarchy and was eventually made Knight of the Order of Santiago, a type of honor that was usually refused for artists.⁹ Compared with other Spanish painters of the period, like Ribera or Zurbarán, he signed his pictures infrequently. It has been argued that Velázquez's special position at court did not necessitate the kind of self-promotion that other painters needed to gain commissions; furthermore, the painter deliberately distanced himself from the commercial aspects of painting, with which signatures were associated.¹⁰ Velázquez's self-promotion was therefore more nuanced, incited by his competition with foreign painters in the court of Philip IV. Even though he had done well for a Spanish painter, he no doubt felt the sting of Philip's deep admiration for the work of foreign painters like Titian, Tintoretto, Rubens, and Veronese.¹¹

All three of Velázquez's surviving paintings with *cartellini* were royal commissions; two of them, the *Surrender at Breda* and the *Equestrian Portrait of Philip IV* (both ca. 1635, figs. 94, 95) formed part of the decoration of the recently constructed Buen Retiro Palace (destroyed).¹² The new complex was to house part of the vast

⁹ J. Brown and C. Garrido, *Velázquez: The Technique of Genius* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 9-13.

¹⁰ K. Hellwig, "Las Firmas de Velázquez" *Boletín del Museo del Prado* 37 (2001): 21-46.

¹¹ J. Brown, 1991, 203-04.

¹² The third painting is the *Equestrian Portrait of Count-Duke Olivares* of about the same date but for an unknown location (now Madrid, Prado). For the construction, use, and decoration of Buen Retiro, see J. Brown and J. H. Elliott, *A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* 2nd rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003). Velázquez also signed *cartellini* on two lost paintings, both dating

collection of paintings assembled by Philip IV. In the 1660s a French visitor to Buen Retiro described the royal collection as unmatched, saying he “saw more pictures than walls,” the result of the king’s intense passion for painting (in which he dabbled himself).¹³ Many of the collection’s paintings were by foreigners (many of them Venetians), therefore, patron, artist, and spectator would have viewed Velázquez’s commissions for Buen Retiro in direct comparison and competition with foreign masters.

All three of Velázquez’s paintings with *cartellini* date to the years around 1635, five years after his lengthy Italian tour when he studied art and made purchases for the royal collection.¹⁴ During his 1629 visit to Venice, Velázquez no doubt saw fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Venetian paintings signed with *cartellini*. While El Greco seemed to have shared the motives of Venetian painters in using the device, Velázquez apparently wanted to distinguish himself from Venetian painters, not to imitate them. He intentionally left the *cartellini* blank, making the absence of a signature all the more noticeable, implicitly criticizing other painters’ need to sign in order to identify and promote themselves in their works. In that regard, his blank *cartellini* can be read as Velázquez’s calculated jab at Venetian painters.¹⁵

Velázquez’s contemporary Francisco de Zurbarán signed *cartellini* only on religious subjects (almost all of the artist’s output) and, unlike El Greco and Velázquez, fully exploited the illusionistic possibilities of the motif. Zurbarán’s use of the *cartellino*

before his Italian sojourn: an equestrian portrait of Philip IV (1625) and the *Expulsion of the Moriscos* (1627). See K. Hellwig, 29.

¹³ Translated and quoted in J. Brown, 1991, 205.

¹⁴ It is possible that he would have known some examples by El Greco or Venetian or ones in Spanish collections, but I have not been able to verify the presence of Venetian pictures predating Titian in Spain, with the exception of Mantegna’s *Death of the Virgin*, which was purchased for Philip IV from the collection of Charles I King of England in 1651, and does not have a *cartellino*. For Velázquez’s first trip to Italy, see S. Salort Pons, *Velázquez en Italia* (Madrid: Fundación de Apoyo a la Historia del Arte Hispánico, 2002), 34-79.

¹⁵ J. Brown and C. Garrido, 116.

is perhaps explained by his tendencies toward realism, as manifest in his straightforward treatment of the religious subjects, and by his commitment to the principles of Christian art as laid out by the Council of Trent.¹⁶ The Council's decree on the propriety of sacred images, issued in 1563, largely restated old defenses, such as that the honor shown to the image was transferred to the prototype, that narrative images were useful to the literate, and that religious images could provide models for behavior and induce piety. The Council also invoked the standard warnings against idolatry, stating that the viewer should be instructed to avoid confusion between the image and the prototype. This stipulation meant that the image should be understood not a literal representation of divinity but the artist's interpretation through colors and figures.¹⁷ While Venetian artists often placed *cartellini* parallel to the picture plane, but on a vertical element within the pictorial space that led to ambiguity about the *cartellino*'s placement in or on the picture, Zurbarán placed his *cartellini* as trompe-l'oeil elements as if they were real labels attached to the surface of the paintings (fig. 96). As I argued in chapter four, the effect of the *cartellino*'s inscription and illusionism is reflexive and therefore announces the image's status as art (that is, representation) to the viewer. The intention, therefore, might have been the avoidance of idolatrous viewing of the subject matter in accordance with strict adherence to orthodoxy demanded by Spanish ecclesiastical patrons.

¹⁶ On the pious character of Zurbarán's painting, see J. Brown "Patronage and Piety: Religious Imagery in the Art of Francisco de Zurbarán" in *Zurbarán*, ed. J. Baticle (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 1-24.

¹⁷ "And if at times it happens, when this is beneficial to the illiterate, that the stories and narratives of the Holy Scriptures are portrayed and exhibited, the people should be instructed that not for that reason is the divinity represented in picture as if it can be seen with bodily eyes or expressed in colors or figures. Furthermore, in the invocation of the saints, the veneration of relics, and the sacred use of images, all superstition shall be removed..." Decree concerning sacred art and the veneration of relics translated in R. Klein and H. Zerner, *Italian Art, 1500-1600, Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966), 120-22.

The adaptation of the *cartellino*, as one would naturally suspect, was rather different for Dutch painters, who were less tied to court and ecclesiastical patronage and pursued new types of subject matter. Major centers in the north were subject to similar cultural and commercial contexts that I laid out for Venice in chapters two and three, namely, the new printing industry, the rising social status of the artist, and an open market for paintings. German and Flemish painters who had direct or indirect contact with Venice adopted the *cartellino* and took it north, where it would have appealed to artists who favored illusionism and still-life details.¹⁸ Albrecht Dürer began signing *cartellini* in his paintings after his 1506 trip in Venice. Hans Holbein began using *cartellini* to label (not sign) and date portraits of the late 1520s, possibly after traveling to Italy (see fig. 97).¹⁹ The Dutch painter Jan van Scorel began using *cartellini* after a Venetian sojourn, bringing the motif back north to his studio, where it was subsequently adopted by his pupil Maarten van Heemskerck.²⁰

Cartellini seem to have had a bearing on the development of one of these new genres of painting in the Netherlands, independent trompe l'oeil, that is, paintings whose intention is to fool the viewer into believing (even if momentarily) that the painted depiction is real.²¹ Many of these early trompe-l'oeil paintings depicted letter racks (also

¹⁸ For travels of northern European artists in Venice, see C. Limentani Viridis, "Across the Alps and to the Lagoon. Northern Artists in Venice during the Sixteenth Century" in *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian*, B. Aikema et al., eds. (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), 71-75.

¹⁹ See n. 1.

²⁰ For Jan van Scorel and Maarten van Heemskerck, see, respectively, M. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, trans. H. Norden (Leyden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1967), vol. 12, 65-84 and vol. 13, 40-45.

²¹ C. Sterling, *Still Life Painting*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 59ff, traces the history of still life in the early modern period, citing the influence of antiquity and importance of wood intarsia and fictive sculpture in the early Renaissance. Sterling also supplies a standard definition of trompe l'oeil (152): "A *trompe-l'oeil* is a painting which sets out to make us forget the fact that it is a painting, which aspires to be a fragment of reality. To achieve this end it suggests not only spatial recession but also the space *in front* of the picture surface; it sets up a *continuity* between the space figured in the painting and the real space in

known as ‘quodlibets,’ from the Latin for ‘what you like’ because of the miscellaneous collection of objects found in them) that represented an assortment of letters, prints, and sometimes, small personal items attached to a vertical backing. Letter racks were popular trompe-l’oeil subjects in seventeenth-century Netherlands and later, in nineteenth-century America.²²

The first known letter rack was painted in late fifteenth-century Venice by Carpaccio as part of the first known independent trompe-l’oeil composition of the Renaissance. His *Letter Rack* (fig. 98) is the subject of much scholarship debating whether the painting is a fragment of a larger work. It is now commonly accepted that the *Letter Rack* (considered the verso of the painting), with a *Hunting on the Lagoon* on its front, matches up with the panel of *Two Venetian Ladies on a Terrace* (fig. 99), evident in the correspondence of the lilies’ stems, with the blooms appearing in the upper painting, and the vase in the lower panel, sitting on the terrace railing.²³ Recent scholarship cites technical and iconographic evidence to show that the paintings once composed one half of a shutter or door. If the shutter once covered a window or interior doorway, the side of the panel showing the ladies on a terrace with the hunting scene above would have appeared as a view out the window, falling in line with the Albertian model of composing a painting as though seeing it through a window. On the other hand, when the shutter was open, the *Letter Rack* presumably would have blended into the

which the spectator stands...It keeps the *exact dimensions* of nature. Lastly, it employs a smoothly blended, *invisible execution*” (emphasis in original).

²² See S. Ebert-Schifferer, ed. *Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe L’Oeil Painting* (Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 2002), cat. nos. 35-38, 40, 43, 45.

²³ The latest and most definitive study on this painting’s original arrangement is Y. Szafran, “Carpaccio’s ‘Hunting on the Lagoon’: a new perspective” *Burlington Magazine* 137/1104 (1995): 148-58. See also B. Aikema et al., 234-39, cat. no. 27.

surrounding walls.²⁴ Therefore, Carpaccio was uniting in the same work two opposing ideas of illusionism: a trompe-l'oeil, devoid of narrative and spatial depth and reflexive in nature, and a naturalistic narrative scene seen through a window. Even the still-life elements of vases, fruit, and flowers in *Two Venetian Ladies* are firmly embedded in the middle ground of the scene. The one exception is the *cartellino* held by the dog, bearing the signature “Opus Vjctorijs Carpatjo Venetj,” itself approaching the level of trompe l'oeil by its extreme foreground placement, and references to the artist's name and illusionistic skill. The curling corners of the *cartellino* tempt the viewer to reach out (part of the neurobiological reaction associated with trompe-l'oeil²⁵), but the two dogs, one holding the *cartellino* with his paw and grimacing and another that looks out at us warily, discourage such action.

About ten years after Carpaccio's two-sided work, Jacopo de' Barbari painted what is believed to be the first independent trompe-l'oeil painting,²⁶ firmly establishing the genre's roots in late fifteenth-century Venetian painting. Jacopo de'Barbari was born in Venice and trained probably with Alvise Vivarini in the 1490s. Barbari spent his later career in German and Netherlandish courts. He gained entrée into the Saxon court

²⁴ See S. Ebert-Schifferer, “Trompe l'Oeil: The Underestimated Trick” in S. Ebert-Schifferer, ed., 25-26, G. Goldner, “A Late Fifteenth Century Venetian Painting of a Bird Hunt” *J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 8 (1980): 27-28, Y. Szafran, 157-58. The physical evidence for the original function of the panels remains inconclusive, but it is very likely that the remaining panels constitute only three-eighths of the full scheme: two rectangular, vertical panels attached by iron hinges. It seems possible that the *Letter Rack*'s poor state of conservation and warping of the panel could be the result of that side of the shutter's longer exposure to moisture, sunlight, and changes in temperature as it may have being positioned in a window, facing the exterior. The painting, a portrait of women on one side with a trompe-l'oeil image on the verso, showing objects intended to identify the portrayed figures on a fictive stone background, has similarities with Leonardo's *Ginevra de' Benci*.

²⁵ See W. Singer, “The Misperception of Reality” in S. Ebert-Schifferer, ed., 45-46.

²⁶ Whether or not the painting was originally attached to another picture is disputed, although Levenson argues that there is no physical evidence of such a previous state of the panel. In addition, he points out that the panel, while difficult to explain in terms of the pictorial traditions from which it suddenly emerged, presents, iconographically speaking, a complete image. See J. Levenson, *Jacopo de' Barbari and Northern Art of the Early Sixteenth Century* (PhD dissertation, New York University, 1978), 194-202.

apparently through a letter of application to the duke (similar in purpose to Leonardo's well-known letter to Ludovico Sforza of Milan).²⁷ In the letter, he claimed that painting should be counted as the eighth liberal art and should be practiced by the rich and noble. Thus painters should be accepted as kept members of noble courts, a steady source of patronage not available in Barbari's native city.²⁸ Barbari is best known for his earliest monumental woodcut recording in meticulous detail a bird's eye view of Venice, printed about 1500, but his *Game Piece* (or *Still Life with a Partridge*, 1504, fig. 100) is also a *tour de force*, executed while Barbari was a member of the court of Frederick the Wise, elector of Saxony.²⁹ The painting shows a game bird hanging from a nail along with gauntlets and an arrow, which seem to project outward from a simulated wood panel. At the bottom hangs a folded *cartellino* signed: "Jac de barbari P / 1504." Under the inscription is a small caduceus, Barbari's emblem.

Although Venetian painters executed these two early trompe-l'oeil paintings, the genre did not gain popularity in Italy in the early modern period, and these two examples predate the first Dutch trompe-l'oeil paintings by a considerable margin.³⁰ Whatever the reasons for this gap, the Netherlands and Spain developed strong traditions of trompe l'oeil as a subset of the newly popular genre of still life painting. Letter racks and game

²⁷ It seems quite plausible that Barbari sought employment in the north in part, at least, to escape some of the stiff competition in Venice. Dürer reports in a letter to Pirckheimer (February 7, 1506) that: "there are many better painters here than Master Jacob, though Antonio Kolb [the publisher of Barbari's view of Venice] would take an oath that there was no better painter on earth than Jacob. Others sneer at him and say if he were any good, he would stay here." R. Fry, ed. *Dürer's Record of Journeys to Venice and the Low Countries* (New York: Dover, 1995), 7.

²⁸ P. Emison, 2004, 66 and J. Levenson, 9-10.

²⁹ On Barbari's *Bird's Eye View of Venice*, see J. Levenson, ed. *Circa 1492* (Washington, D. C.: National Gallery of Art, 1991), cat. no. 151 and S. Ferrari, *Jacopo de' Barbari: Un protagonista del Rinascimento tra Venezia e Dürer* (Milan: Mondadori, 2006), 150-54.

³⁰ A possible exception is Caravaggio's *Basket of Fruit* (ca. 1599, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana), which is sometimes characterized as a trompe-l'oeil still life.

pieces were common subjects in seventeenth-century Netherlands and in nineteenth-century America.³¹

Carpaccio's *Letter Rack* forms a link between *cartellini* and seventeenth-century Dutch letter racks. Carpaccio, as I have noted, frequently signed with *cartellini* and therefore would have associated illusionistic paper motifs with authorship; his *Letter Rack*, with its illusionistic, projecting jumble of folded papers attached to a stone surface, also bears visual similarities to Venetian *cartellini*. Another similarity between *cartellini* and this type of independent trompe-l'oeil painting lies in their shared reflexive qualities. Trompe-l'oeil paintings depicting paper objects often made reference to the artists' identities and high social status, just as *cartellini* served as markers of identity and status.³² These included not only letters, but also depictions of other works of art—drawings, engravings (and in the nineteenth century, photographs), which therefore alluded to artistic media and process, inviting the viewer to consider painting in relation to other media. Engravings were often the sites of the artist's signature, as in Cornelius Gijsbrechts's letter rack of 1668 (figs. 101, 102)

Given the similar illusionistic and self-referential nature of *cartellini* and trompe-l'oeil, as well as the specific (if exceptional) cases of Carpaccio and Barbari, it seems that the *cartellino* may have had some bearing on the emergence of independent trompe-

³¹ S. Ebert-Schifferer, 139-161, A. Frankenstein, *After the Hunt: William Harnett and Other American Still-Life Painters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), and O. Koester, ed., *Illusions: Gijsbrechts, Royal Master of Deception* (Coopenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst, 1999), cat. nos. 18, 23, 26-28, 39, 40, 47. There was presumably also a tradition, possibly started by Barbari, of trompe-l'oeil hunting trophies painted to decorate Saxon castles. See J. Levenson, 142-43 and B. Aikema et al., eds., *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Bellini, Dürer, and Titian* (New York: Rizzoli, 2000), cat. nos. 93, 94. It can be no coincidence that trompe-l'oeil paintings are often vanitas subjects—the transience of the deception, which is eventually discovered, parallels the fleeting pleasures of life. See A. Veca, "Honest Lies: The Meaning, Language, and Instruments of Trompe l'Oeil" in S. Ebert-Schifferer, ed., 61.

³² S. Ebert-Schifferer, 26 and C. Brusati, "Honorable Deceptions and Dubious Distinctions" in O. Koester, 50-54.

l'oeil.³³ Artists may have been inspired to paint trompe-l'oeil paintings of letter racks because of their direct observations of paintings with *cartellini*, or indirectly through Flemish “occupational portraits” that featured papers and letters attached to the wall behind the sitter which derived from the Italian tradition of scholarly portraits and depictions of Saint Jerome in his study, often sites of *cartellini* (see figs. 55, 77).³⁴ One such occupational portrait is the Antwerp painter Jan Gossaert's *Merchant* (1530s, fig. 103). With its highly illusionistic stacks of papers flanking the sitter's head, the painting, visually and chronologically, falls between Hans Holbein the Younger's portraits with *cartellini* on the walls behind the sitter (fig. 97) and trompe-l'oeil letter racks. Letter racks, like *cartellini*, make for effective visual deceptions because the illusion of a shallow space—in this case, sheets of paper backed by a flat supporting surface—is convincing because the flatness of the image conforms to that of the painting's surface. Paintings representing this shallow space lack the visual cues that allow human vision to distinguish flatness and spatial depth.³⁵

Despite these similarities, the differing contexts of early modern Europe and nineteenth-century America reveal an interesting contrast in artists' selection of paper motifs for visual trickery. The nineteenth-century American version of the letter rack included newspaper clippings, photographs, and popular prints. John Peto's *Office Board*

³³ Also acknowledged by R. Goffen, “Signatures: Inscribing Identity in Italian Renaissance Art” *Viator* 32 (2001): 314.

³⁴ C. Cuttler, “Holbein's Inscriptions” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24 (1993): 370. Cuttler, 372, lists possible sources for Holbein's *cartellini*, including Dürer, Grünewald (in the *Temptation of Saint Anthony* of the Isenheim Altarpiece, ca. 1512-16) or Hans Burgkmair's *Double Portrait of Hans and Barbara Schellenberger* (1505, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum). Cuttler notes that the motif was “conspicuous by its absence” in the Netherlands, which does not appear until 1522 in Bernard van Orley's *Virgin and Child* in the Prado. Holbein was influenced by Italian art and may have traveled there by the late 1520s, when he began to use the *cartellino*. Since by that time the *cartellino* was already in use by German painters, it is impossible to conclude with certainty Holbein's source or sources.

³⁵ W. Singer, “The Misperception of Reality” in S. Ebert-Schifferer, ed., 43.

for Smith Brothers Coal Company (1879, fig. 104) displays a hodge-podge of business cards, torn envelopes, a couple of periodicals, and postcards, including one at the center addressed to the artist. Like many torn or creased *cartellini*, these objects show evidence of handling and wear; Peto also seems to share with painters of *cartellini* the choice of a humble material so as to focus the viewer's attention not on the opulence of the depicted objects but on the display of mimetic skill.³⁶ Peto's haphazard assemblage of objects and the shabby character of the rack and the wood panel, however, seem to communicate not the prestige of age and the authority of the written and printed word, but the ubiquity and disposability of printed matter in industrial nineteenth-century America. While the different components of Peto's painting pose a series of questions, for instance, the contents of the orange envelope marked "IMPORTANT INFORMATION INSIDE," the *cartellino's* purpose was instead to convey answers—to record the identity of the artist.

³⁶ On the depiction of worn, aged objects to enhance illusion through texture, see also M. Leja, *Looking Askance: Skepticism and American Art from Eakins to Duchamp* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2004), 139-42.

Appendix 1: List of Italian paintings containing *cartellini*

Paintings are listed alphabetically by artist, followed by title, date, location, and the inscription. When the inscription could not be determined from published material, I have omitted this information; when a source stated the nature of the inscription's content without quoting it, I have included that information in brackets.

1. Agabiti, Pier Paolo, *Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and Sebastian*, 1497. Padua, Musei Civici. "Petri Pauli / Sa / xiferati / opu / s / M / CCCC / LXXXVII"
2. Agabiti, Pier Paolo, *Nativity*, 1511. Sassoferrato, Santa Maria del Piano
3. Agabiti, Pier Paolo, *Madonna and Child with Young Saint John the Baptist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, 1522. Urbino, Palazzo Ducale. [signature and date]
4. Agabiti, Pier Paolo, *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Esuperanzio*, Cingoli, San Niccolò
5. Alemanno, Pietro, *Madonna della Misericordia*, 1485. San Ginesio, Collegiata. "1485 die ultima mensis Junii hanc sacratissimam Figuram gloriosissimae Matris Dei Mariae de graciis fieri fecit alma Comunitas S. Genesii ad Laudem et gloriam ipsius gloriosissimae Virginis Mariae et advocatorium sanctorum suorum Genesii et Vincentii et totius comunitatis supradictae conservationem. Opus Petri Alamani."
6. Andrea da Murano, *Virgin and Child with Saints*, 1502. Mussolone. "OPVS ANDREAE / DE MVRANO [illegible date]"
7. Andrea del Sarto, *Charity*, 1518. Paris, Louvre. "ANDREAS. SARTUS. FLORENTINUS. ME PINXIT MDXVIII"
8. Angolo del Moro, Battista dell' (attr), *A Vision of the Holy Family near Verona*, 1581. Oberlin, OH, Allen Memorial Art Museum. "VERONA / Fatta nel monasterio / Santo Angolo / A 1581"
9. Anonymous Italian, *Sacra Conversazione*, 1510s? Venice, Santi Giovanni e Paolo (first altar on right)
10. Antonello da Messina, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Gregory and Benedict (Saint Gregory Polyptych)*, 1473, Messina, Museo Regionale. "Ano dm m. cccc. Sectuagesimo tercio / Antonellus messanensis me pinxit"
11. Antonello da Messina, *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1474. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. "1474 / antonellus messanus / me pinxit"
12. Antonello da Messina, *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1475. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. "147[?]/ Antonellus messaneus me pinxit"
13. Antonello da Messina, *Portrait of a Young Man (The Condottiere)*, 1475. Paris, Louvre. "1475 / Antonellus messaneus me / pinxit"
14. Antonello da Messina, *Crucifixion*, 1475. Antwerp, Musee Royal des Beaux-Arts. "1475 / Antontellus/ messaneus / me [...] pinxit"
15. Antonello da Messina, *Crucifixion*, 1475. London, National Gallery. "1475/antonellus messaneus / me pinxit"
16. Antonello da Messina, *Portrait of a Man (Trivulzio Portrait)*, 1476. Turin, Museo Civico. "1476 / antonellus messaneus / pinxit"

17. Antonello da Messina, *Ecce Homo*, 1470? New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. "[...] antonellus mess. n [...]pin[...]t"
18. Antonello da Messina, *Ecce Homo*, 1473? Piacenza, Collegio Alberoni. "147[3?] / Antonellus messaneus me pinxit"
19. Antonello da Messina, *Salvator Mundi*, 1475. London, National Gallery. "millesimo quatricentesimo sexstage / simo quinto VIII indi antonellus/ messaneus me pinxit"
20. Antonello da Messina, *Saint Jerome in His Study*, ca. 1475. London, National Gallery. [scribbles]
21. Antonio da Fabriano, *Saint Jerome in His Study*, 1451. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery. "1451"
22. Badile, Antonio, *Portrait of Frate Salvo Avanzi*. Venice, Accademia. "DECLARATIO SERM / NV TVORVM/ ILLUMINAT [?]"
23. Barbari, Jacopo de', *Portrait of Fra Luca Pacioli*, 1495. Naples, Capodimonte. "IACO. BAR VIGEN / NIS 1495"
24. Barbari, Jacopo de', *Game Piece*, ca. 1505. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlungen. "Jac de barbari P / 1504 / [caduceus]"
25. Bartolomeo di Gentile, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Two Female Saints*, 1504. Budapest, National Museum. "BARTOLOMEVS / M GENTILIS DE/ VRBINO PISIT/ AO MCCCC [?]"
26. Bartolomeo di Gentile, *Madonna and Child with Saints*. Montericcardo (Pesaro), Parish church. "BARTOLOMEVS. M. / GENTILIS. DE. / VRBINO. PINXIT / ANNO MCCCC[X?]III"
27. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Madonna and Child*, 1500. Collezione Donà dalle Rose.
28. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Madonna and Child*, 1502, Sold Sotheby's London 9.XII.1959, n. 59. "1502 9 / ap bartolamio mez ven / izian e mezo cremonexe"
29. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Madonna and Child*, 1505. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "1505 / BARTHOLOMEVS / VENETVS FACIE / BAT"
30. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Circumcision of Christ*, 1506. Paris, Louvre. "1506 / bartholomeus / da venetia"
31. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Lute Player*, 1520. Milan, Brera Gallery. "1520"
32. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1530. San Diego, Timken Art Gallery. "1530 / bartolo / mei / veneti"
33. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Madonna and Child*, 1500s, Ajaccio, Musee Fesch. "150[?] / adi 7 april/bortolamio s[...]o de z[...] be."
34. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Portrait of a Gentleman*, 1520s. Houston, Museum of Fine Art. [abraded, once contained date]
35. Bartolomeo Veneto, *Portrait of a Gentleman*, ca. 1518. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art. [abraded, probably once had signature and date]
36. Basaiti, Marco, *Christ in Gethsemane*, 1515. Venice, Accademia. "1510/ MARCUS [...]"
37. Basaiti, Marco, *Pietà*, 1527. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage. "MDXXVII/ M. BAXAITI F."
38. Basaiti, Marco, *Risen Christ*, 1510s. Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana.
39. Bassano, Leandro, *Confirmation of the Dominican Order*, 1606. Venice, Santi Giovanni e Paolo. "CONFIRMAT. ORD. / SUB HONORIO III / MCCXVI"

40. Bastiani, Lazzaro, *Saint Anthony of Padua Altarpiece*, ca. 1480. Accademia, Venice. [signature]
41. Bastiani, Lazzaro, *Deposition*, ca. 1480. Sant' Antonin.
42. Bastiani, Lazzaro, *Pietà with Angels*. Venice, San Giovanni in Bragora. [blank]
43. Bellini, Gentile, *Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani*, 1465. Venice, Accademia.
"MCCCCLXV/OPVS GENTILIS BELLINI/VENET"
44. Bellini, Gentile, *Procession in Piazza San Marco*, 1496. Venice, Accademia.
"MCCCLXXXVI/GENTILIS BELLINI VENETI EQVITIS CRVCIS/AMORE INCENSVS/OPVS"
45. Bellini, Gentile, *Miracle at Bridge of San Lorenzo*, 1500. Venice, Accademia.
"GENTILI BELLINI VENETI F./ MCCCC"
46. Bellini, Gentile, *Miracle of Pietro Ludovici*, 1501. Venice, Accademia.
"[GENTILIS] BELLIN [I] / VENETI F."
47. Bellini, Gentile, *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, ca. 1480. London, National Gallery. "OPVS. GENTILIS. BELLINI. EQVITIS."
48. Bellini, Giovanni, *Dead Christ with Virgin and Saints John the Evangelist, Mark, and Nicholas*, 1472. Venice, Palazzo Ducale. "IHOANES BELLINVS"
49. Bellini, Giovanni, *Ecstasy of Saint Francis*, 1480. New York, Frick Collection.
"IOANNES / BELLINVS"
50. Bellini, Giovanni, *San Zaccaria Altarpiece*, 1505. Venice, San Zaccaria.
"IOANNES BELLINVS / MCCCCCV"
51. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child with Two Saints and a Donor (Corbury Park Altarpiece)*, 1505. Birmingham, Art Gallery. "IOANNES BELLINVS / MCCCCCV"
52. Bellini, Giovanni, *San Giovanni Crisostomo Altarpiece*, 1513. Venice, San Giovanni Crisostomo, Altar of Saint Jerome. "MDXIII/IOANNES/BELLINVS P"
53. Bellini, Giovanni, *Feast of the Gods*, 1514. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, "joannes bellinus venetus / p MDXIII"
54. Bellini, Giovanni, *Nude with a Mirror*, 1515. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.
"ioannes bellinus/faciebat MDXV"
55. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child*, 1485-90. London, National Gallery.
"IOANNES / BELLINVS"
56. Bellini, Giovanni, *Baptism of Christ*, 1500-1502. Vicenza, Santa Corona.
"IOANNES / BELLINVS"
57. Bellini, Giovanni, *Portrait of Doge Leonardo Loredan*, 1501-4. London, National Gallery. "IOANNES BELLINVS"
58. Bellini, Giovanni, *Transfiguration of Christ*, ca. 1455-60. Venice, Museo Correr.
"MISERMEINI MEI SALTEM VOS AMICI MEI"
59. Bellini, Giovanni, *Saint Jerome in the Wilderness*, ca. 1459-60. Birmingham, Art Gallery. "IHOVANES BELINVS"
60. Bellini, Giovanni, *Dead Christ*, ca. 1460. Milan, Museo Poldi-Pezzoli.
"IOANNES BELLINVS"
61. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1460. Philadelphia, Museum of Art.
"IOANNES BELLINVS"
62. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1460? Pavia, Castello Visconteo.
"IOANNES BELLINVS P"

63. Bellini, Giovanni, *Pietà*, ca. 1465. Milan, Brera Gallery. "HAEC FERE QUUM GEMITUS TURGENTIA LUMINA PROMANT / BELLINI POTERAT FLERE IOANNIS OPUS"
64. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Sleeping Child*, ca. 1465-70. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. "IONNES BELINI / VS P"
65. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Sleeping Child Enthroned*, ca. 1470. Venice, Accademia. "IOANNES BELLI / NVS P"
66. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child (Lochis Madonna)*, ca. 1475. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "IOANNES BELLINVS"
67. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1475-80. Fort Worth, Kimball Art Museum. "IOANNES BELLINVS"
68. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1475-80. Venice, Madonna dell'Orto (stolen 1993). "IOANNES BELLINVS"
69. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child (Contarini Madonna)*, ca. 1475-80. Venice, Accademia. "IOANNVS BELLINVS"
70. Bellini, Giovanni, *Transfiguration*, ca. 1480. Naples, Capodimonte. "IOANNES BELLI"
71. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna of the Pear (Morelli Madonna)*, ca. 1485-90. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "IOANNES BELLINVS P"
72. Bellini, Giovanni, *San Giobbe Altarpiece*, ca. 1487. Venice, Accademia. "IOANNES / BELLINVS"
73. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna of Alzano*, ca. 1488. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "IONNES BELLINVS / P"
74. Bellini, Giovanni, *Sacra Conversazione*, ca. 1490. Bologna, private collection. "IOANNES/ BELLINVS"
75. Bellini, Giovanni, *Dead Christ*, ca. 1500. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. [abraded]
76. Bellini, Giovanni, *Cartellino* (fragment), ca. 1500. Venice, Accademia. "IOANNES BELLI / NVS ME PINXIT"
77. Bellini, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child with Donor*, ca. 1500-10? Ex-Princeton, Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection. "IOANNES / BELLINVS"
78. Bellini, Giovanni, *Portrait of Pietro Bembo*, ca. 1505. Hampton Court. "ioannes bellinus"
79. Bellini, Giovanni, *Portrait of a Dominican Friar as Saint Peter Martyr*, ca. 1510-6. London, National Gallery. [signed]
80. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and Paul and Donor (Cornbury Park Altarpiece)*, 1505. Birmingham, Museum and Art Gallery. "IOANNES BELLINVS / MCCCCCV"
81. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Madonna and Child with John the Baptist*, 1516. Venice, Galleria Querini-Stampalia. "Ioannes bellinus . p . / MDXVI"
82. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Madonna and Child*, 1516. Padua, Musei Civici. "Joannes bellinus f. / MDXVI"
83. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Madonna and Child*, 1470s. Rovigo, Pinacoteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi. "IOANNES BELLI / NVS.P."
84. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Circumcision of Christ*, ca. 1500. London, National Gallery. "IOANNES / BELLINVS"

85. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, ca. 1500. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. "IOANNES / BELLINVS"
86. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Death of Saint Peter Martyr*, ca. 1507. London, National Gallery. "Ioannes / Bellinus /.p[inxit]."
87. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Portrait of Fra Teodoro d'Urbino as Saint Dominic*, ca. 1515. London, National Gallery. "IOANIS BELLIN OP"
88. Bellini, Giovanni (workshop), *Madonna and Child with SS Paul and George*, late 1480s. Venice, Accademia. "IOANNES BELLINVS"
89. Bellini, Jacopo, *Crucifixion*, early 1440s. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio.
90. Bellini, Jacopo, *Virgin and Child*, late 1440s? Lovere, Museo Tadini. "iachobvs belinvs"
91. Bello, Marco, *Circumcision of Christ*. Roviggo, Pinacoteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi. "OPCS MARCI BELLI DIS / CIPVLI IOANNIS BELLINI"
92. Benaglio, Francesco, *Madonna and Child*, 1465-72. Rochester, NY, University of Rochester Memorial Art Gallery. "F[R]ANCISCVS BENALIVS PX"
93. Benaglio, Francesco, *Saint Jerome*, ca. 1470. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art. "Franciscus benalius Filius petri /Ablado"
94. Bernardino di Mariotto, *Madonna del Soccorso*, 1502? San Severino, Pinacoteca Civica. [signed and dated]
95. Bissolo, Francesco, *Coronation of Saint Catherine of Siena*, 1513-15. Venice, Accademia. "FRANCISCVS / BISOLLO"
96. Boccaccino, Boccaccio, *Sacra Conversazione*, ca. 1500-1. Venice, San Giuliano.
97. Boccaccino, Boccaccio, *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine with Saints*, ca. 1505. Venice, Accademia. "bochacinus"
98. Boccati, Giovanni, *Polyptych*, 1468. Belforte del Chienti, Sant'Eustachio. [signature and date]
99. Boldrini, Leonardo, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Jerome and Augustine*, Venice, Museo Correr. [abraded]
100. Bonascia, Bartolomeo, *Pietà*. Modena, Galleria Estense.
101. Bono da Ferrara (after Pisanello?), *Saint Jerome*, ca. 1440. London, National Gallery. ".bonvs. ferariensis. / .pisanj. disipvlvs."
102. Bonsignori, Francesco, *Madonna and Sleeping Child*, 1483. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio. "Franciscus Bonsignorius V[er] onensis p. / 1483"
103. Bonsignori, Francesco, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Onofrio, Jerome, Christopher, and a Bishop (Pala dal Bovo)*, 1484. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio. "Franciscus Bonsignorius V[er] onensis p. / 1484"
104. Bonsignori, Francesco, *Portrait of an Elderly Man*, 1487. London, National Gallery. "Franciscus. Bonsignorius. Veronensis. P. / 1487"
105. Bonsignori, Francesco, *Madonna and Child*. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio, Verona.
106. Bordon, Paris, *The Sacred Mysteries*, 1550-1. Treviso, Cathedral, Sacrestia dei Canonici.
107. Bordon, Paris, *Sacra Conversazione with Saints Francis and Jerome*, ca. 1525. Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Art Museum. "PARIS BORDONUS / TARVISINUS F."

108. Bordon, Paris, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Sebastian and Roch*, Valdobbiadene (Treviso), Santa Maria Assunta. [abraded]
109. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Two Saints* (fragment of *Santi Cosma e Damiano Altarpiece*), 1497. Venice, Accademia. "1497 adji 22 decembrio / Iones BoniChonsilji Mare/schalchus da vicenza p."
110. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*, 1502. Vicenza, Museo Civico. "JOANES . BONI CHONSILI PINSIT. ICCCCCII"
111. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and child Enthroned with Saints John the Baptist, Jerome, Peter and Paul, Augustine, and Sebastian*, 1507. Montagnana, Duomo. "IOANNES BONICONSILI P"
112. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and Child with Six Saints*, 1507. Montagnana, Duomo. " IOANNES BONCONSILIJ . P."
113. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and Child with Saints Sebastian and Roch*, 1511. Montagnana, Duomo. "MDXI.IOANNES BONICONSILII MARESCHAL / CO P"
114. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Saint Catherine with Saints Raphael and Nicola da Tolentino*, 1513. Montagnana, Duomo. "MDXIII. / IONIS. BONCON. / P."
115. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Six Saints*, 1519. Montecchio Maggiore, San Pietro. "M[CCCCC]XVIII. IONES BONIJCHOSIGLIJ"
116. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Pietà*, ca. 1490-2. Vicenza, Museo Civico. "JOANES BONCON/ SILI P. / MARESCHALCHO"
117. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and Child with Saints Catherine and John the Baptist*, ca. 1504-6. Venice, Accademia. "Ioanis boni consili Dito / mareschalcho"
118. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Catherine of Alexandria*, ca. 1505. Padua, Cassa di Risparmio. "ioannes boniconsilii dito mareschalcho p"
119. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Christ the Redeemer with Saints Erasmus and Secondo*, ca. 1505-6. Venice, Santo Spirito. "Joanes. Bonichonsilij / dito Mareschalcho / P"
120. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Circumcision of Christ*, ca. 1507-8. L'Aia, private collection. "JOANES DE BONI / CHONSILJI [...] ARE [...]CHO"
121. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Saint Sebastian Altarpiece*, ca. 1510. Venice, San Giacomo dell'Orio. "JOANES BONICHOSILI / DITO MARESCHALCio / P"
122. Buonconsiglio, Giovanni (Il Marescalco), *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Stephen*, ca. 1525-30. Warsaw, National Museum. "IONNES BONIJ. COSI / LIJ DIT[O] MARES[CA]L[C]HO. A.P."
123. Busati, Andrea, *Saint Anthony of Padua*, after 1499. Vicenza, Museo Civico. "Andreas Bussatis / Invenezia pinxit"
124. Busati, Andrea, *Pietà*, ca. 1513. London, National Gallery. "Andreas busatti f...t do / [s?] i[p?] ulus Joanne[s?] belinu[s?]"

125. Campi, Giulio, *Madonna and Child with Saints*. Milan, Brera Gallery.
126. Canozzi da Lendinara, Cristoforo, *Virgin and Child*, 1482. Modena, Galleria Estense. "CHRISTOPHORVS/DE LENDENARIA/OPVS 1482"
127. Cariani, Giovanni, *Portrait of Giovanni Antonio Caravaggio*, 1520-22. Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada. "IO CARIANVS/ DE BUSIS B[ER]GO / ME[N]SIA P[IN]XIT"
128. Caroto, Gianfrancesco, *Saint John on Patmos*, ca. 1520. Prague, Narodni Galerie. [blank]
129. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Arrival at Cologne*, 1490. Venice, Accademia. "OP VICTORIS CARPATIO / VENETI MCCCCLXXXX / SEPTEMBRIS"
130. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Apotheosis of Saint Ursula*, 1491. Venice, Accademia. "VICTORIS / CARPAT... / MDCCCCLXXXXI"
131. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Dream of Saint Ursula*, 1495. Venice, Accademia. "VICTOR CARP. F. / MCCCCLXXXXV"
132. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Departure of the Pilgrims*, 1495. Venice, Accademia. "VICTORIS / CARPATIO / VENETI / OPUS / MCCC [D]XXXXV"
133. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Sacrament of the Eucharist*, 1496. Udine, Museo Civico. "Victorjs Charpatjo/veneti opus/1496"
134. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, 1502. Venice, Scuola di S Giorgio dei Schiavoni. "VICTO CARPATHIUS / FINGEBAT / MDII"
135. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Annunciation*, 1504. Venice, Ca' d'Oro. "in tempo de Zuan De Nicolo Zimador e soi copagni. MCCCCCIII del mese d'april"
136. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Adoration of Christ Child with Donors*, 1505. Lisbon, Museo della Fondazione Gulbenkian. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS / MDV"
137. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Saint Thomas of Aquinas Enthroned with Saints Mark and Louis of Toulouse*, 1507. Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie. "OP / VICTOR / CARPATHIUS / MDVII"
138. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Calling of Saint Matthew*, 1507. Venice, Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni. "C[AR]PAT / IUS [VE]N[E]T[US] / MDII"
139. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Death of the Virgin*, 1508. Ferrara, Pinacoteca Nazionale. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS / VENETUS MDVIII"
140. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, 1510. Venice, Accademia. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS / MDX"
141. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Consecration of Saint Stephen*, 1511. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS / FINXIT MDXI"
142. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Saint Stephen Preaching*, 1514. Paris, Louvre. [abraded; once dated]
143. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand on Mount Ararat*, 1515. Venice, Accademia. "V CARPATHIUS / MDXV"
144. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Meeting of Joachim and Anna*, 1515. Venice, Accademia. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS/VENETUS OP. / MDXV"
145. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Madonna and Child with Saints Jerome, Joseph, Roch, Sebastian, Nazario and a Warrior Saint (Capodistria Altarpiece)*, 1516. Koper (Capodistria), Co-cathedral of the Assumption. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS/VENETUS PINXIT / MDXVI"

146. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Madonna and Child with Saints Ambrose, Peter, Francis, Anthony, Claire, and George*, 1518. Pirano (Istria), San Francesco. "VICTOR CARP[ATHIUS] / VENET[US] / MDXVIII"
147. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Pozzale Polyptych*, 1518, Pozzale di Cadore (Belluno), parish church of San Dionigi. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS / VENETUS PINXIT / MDXVIII"
148. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Averoldi Altarpiece*, 1518. (destroyed) "VICTOR CARPATHIUS VENETUS / MDXVIII"
149. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Saint Paul*, 1520. Chioggia (Venice), San Domenico. "VECTOR / CARPATHIUS / VENETUS PINXIT / MDXX"
150. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Stoning of Saint Stephen*, 1520. Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie. "VICTOR / CARPA[THIUS] / MDXX"
151. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Baptism of the Seleniti*, 1507-8. Venice, Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni. "VICTOR CARPA / [TIUS] / MDVII[?]"
152. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Portrait of a Knight*, 1510s. Madrid, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection. "VICTOR CARPATHIUS / MDX[?]" ; "MALO MORI / QUAM / FOEDARI"
153. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Ursula's Arrival in Rome*, ca. 1491-6. Venice, Accademia. "VICTORIS CAR / [P]ATIO VENETI / [O]PVS"
154. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Departure of the Ambassadors*, ca. 1494-1500. Venice, Accademia. "VICTORIS CAR / PACIO VENETI / [?]"
155. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Return of the English Ambassadors*, ca. 1494-99. Venice, Accademia. "VICTORIS / [?] / VEN[?] / OI [badly abraded]"
156. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Two Venetian Women*, ca. 1495. Venice, Accademia. "Opus Vjctorjs Carpatjo Venetj"
157. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Arrival of the Ambassadors in Britain*, ca. 1495-6. Venice, Accademia. "OP VICTORIS / CARPATIO / VENETI"
158. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Vision of Saint Augustine*, ca. 1502. Venice, Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni. "VICTOR / CARPATHIUS / FINGEBAT"
159. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Christ in Gethsemane*, ca. 1502. Venice, Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni. [illegible, abraded]
160. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Departure of Ceyx*, ca. 1502-7. London, National Gallery. [illegible, abraded]
161. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Saint George and the Dragon*, ca. 1504-7. Venice, Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni. [illegible, abraded]
162. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Triumph of Saint George*, ca. 1504-7. Venice, Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni, [illegible, abraded]
163. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Meditation on the Passion*, ca. 1510. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. "vjctorjs carpattjj / venettj opus" (legible only with infrared)
164. Carpaccio, Vittore, *Zara Polyptych*, ca. 1520. Zadar, Cathedral of Sant'Antastasia. "Victoris / Carpatij / Venetij / Opus"
165. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child with Saints and Donors*, 1484. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio.

166. Cima da Conegliano, *Virgin and Child with Saints (Madonna della Pergola)*, 1489, Vicenza, Museo Civico. “joanes baptista de coneglano fecit / 1489 a di p° mazo”
167. Cima da Conegliano, *Annunciation*, 1495. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage. “1495 / Laure...de S. Luc...da / uicco e. S. Jac.o de S.../ e S. Jeronimo de .../ e S. Piero de...zudici // joan baptista da / Conegliano fecit”
168. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child*, 1496. Udine, Museo Diocesano di Arte Sacra. “Joannis baptiste Coneglianensis opus / 1496 adi primo / auosto”
169. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child*, 1504. Este, Museo Nazionale Atestino. “Joannes baptistae Coneglan / nensis opus 1504”
170. Cima da Conegliano, *Saint Peter Martyr with Saints Nicholas of Bari and Benoit*, 1506. Milan, Brera Gallery. “joannis baptiste cima / coneglensis”
171. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child*, 1507. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio. “Jo...baptsa / C...sis / ...” (not original but reflects an earlier inscription)
172. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child with Saints George and James*, 1511. Caen, Musée des Beaux-Arts. “MDXI / Dno leonardo de S. [?] flore...plebani B.E.M. Eq [?] / [...]Jaco de derlicta helene et Anto de p [...]/ Johannes baptis...Coneglansis Opus”
173. Cima da Conegliano, *Capodistria Polyptych*, 1513. Capodistria, Sant’Anna. “Ioannes bapti[...]- 174. Cima da Conegliano, *Conegliano Altarpiece*, 1492-3. Conegliano, Duomo. “Clarissimi ac equestris ordinis viri francisci / quadrivii ducto auspicioque hec conspicis simulacra / joanne de la Pasqualina ...ambobus pie...fraternitatis prefectis MCCCLXXXIII / Joannis Bapte Coneglanensis opus”
- 175. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child*, 1496-9. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage. “[damaged] ..Conegli...”
- 176. Cima da Conegliano, *Incredulity of Saint Thomas*, 1502-5. London, National Gallery. “Joanes Baptiste Coneglane[n]sis / opus 1504”; “1504...[norio?] [i]n tep d[...] mo Beneto tentor f[u?] [a?] gnolo d[?] Radjo [...] Copagno E /panjgaja e p[er] pantinian [bauiero?] p[er] an /dres [...] nusa Consi [...] fo fata questa opera”
- 177. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Sleeping Child*, ca. 1485. Somerset, Montacute House. “joanes baptista choneglanesis”
- 178. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Francis*, ca. 1486-8. Dusseldorf, Kunstmuseum. “Ioannis baptiste Coneglan[en]sis / opus”
- 179. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Members of a Confraternity*, ca. 1486-8. Milan, Brera Gallery. “joanes baptista...”
- 180. Cima da Conegliano, *Pietà with Nicodemus, John the Baptist, and the Three Marys*, ca. 1489-92. Venice, Accademia. “joannis baptiste coneplanensis / opus”
- 181. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1495. Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale. “Joannis Baptistae Coneglianensis opus”
- 182. Cima da Conegliano, *Montini Altarpiece*, ca. 1495-7. Parma, Galleria Nazionale. “Joannes Baptista Coni / [...]nsis opus”

183. Cima da Conegliano, *Boldù Altarpiece*, ca. 1495-7. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. "Joannis baptiste Conegli / anesis opus"
184. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child with Saints Jerome and Louis of Toulouse*, ca. 1496-8. Venice, Accademia. "IOA. BAPT. CONEGL."
185. Cima da Conegliano, *Penitent Saint Jerome*, ca. 1500-5. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art/ "joannis b[a]ptist[e]"
186. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1500-3. Cardiff, National Museum of Wales. "Joannis baptiste Coneglianensis"
187. Cima da Conegliano, *Christ among the Church Doctors*, ca. 1504-5. Warsaw, National Museum. "Joannes Bapliste Coneglane[n]sis / opus"
188. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1506-8. Frankfurt, Stadelsches Institut. "Joanis baptiste Coneglan [ensi] s / opus"
189. Cima da Conegliano, *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Catherine*, ca. 1513-6. New York, Morgan Library. "Joannis baptiste coneglanensis / opus"
190. Cima da Conegliano, *Nativity with Saints Helen, Catherine, Raphael, Tobias, and Two Shepherds*. Santa Maria del Carmine. "Jo. Bapt... Coneglane[n]sis / opus"
191. Cima da Conegliano (workshop), *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Francis*, ca. 1486-8. Avignon, Musée du Petit Palais. "Joannis baptiste Coneglan[en]sis / opus"
192. Cima da Conegliano (workshop), *Madonna and Child with Saints Christina and Catherine*, ca. 1510s. Memphis, Brooks Memorial Art Gallery. "Joan[n]is. Baptiste. Coneglian. / opus"
193. Colantonio, Niccolò, *Saint Jerome in His Study*, ca. 1440-70. Naples, Capodimonte. [scribbles]
194. Crevalcore, Antonio da, *Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist*. Ferrara, Fondazione Cavallini Sgarbi. [signature]
195. Crivelli, Carlo, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints*, 1482. Milan, Brera Gallery. "OPVS. CAROLI. CRIVELLI. VENETI. / . M . 4 . 8 II."
196. Crivelli, Carlo, *Madonna and Child with Saints Jerome and Sebastian (Madonna della Rondine)*, after 1490. London, National Gallery. ". carolvs. crivellvs. venetvs. miles. pinxit"
197. Crivelli, Carlo, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1480. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. "OPUS KAROLI CRIVELLI VENETI"
198. Crivelli, Carlo, *Mary Magdalen*, late 1470s. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. "OPVS. KAROLI. CRIVELLI. VENET"
199. Diana, Benedetto, *Virgin and Child with Saints*, early 1500s. Venice, Accademia.
200. Donato de' Bardi, *Crucifixion*, ca. 1450. Savona, Museo Civico.
201. Dosso Dossi, *Buffone*, ca. 1510, Modena, Galleria Estense. "Sic"
202. Duia, Pietro, *Madonna and Child*. Venice, Museo Correr. "PIERO DVIA / P"
203. Facai, Michele, *Adoration of the Magi*, 1541. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio. [signed and dated]

204. Fogolino, Marcello, *Madonna and Saints Giobbe and Gottardo*, ca. 1505-8. Milan, Brera Gallery.
205. Fogolino, Marcello, *Adoration of the Magi*, ca. 1516. Vicenza, Museo Civico. "Marcellus / Fogollins / P"
206. Folchetti, Stefano, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Benedict, Roch, Sebastian, and Bernard*, 1492. San Ginesio, Museo Civico San Gentili. "HOC OPUS FACTUM FUIT / TEMPORE D.NI IOHANNIS / ABBATIS ANNO DOMINI / 1492"
207. Folchetti, Stefano, *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine with Saints Peter and Lawrence*, 1507. Urbisaglia, Collegiata church. "HOC OPUS PRO DIMIDIA / P PERFECTUM EST INDUSTRIA ET I / MPENSIS VENERABILIS DOMINI/ SANCTIS PLEBANI DE URBE / SALVIA UNA CUM OBLATI / ONIBUS ALIORUM - ALTERA P SUMPTIBUS ET PIETA-DE.../...SANCTI FRANCISCI EIUSDEM LOCI - FINITUM FUIT DIE / 7 AUGUSTIANNI 1507/ DEO FAVANTE / AUCOR DUIT STEFANUS / "FULCHICTI DE S[AN]C[T]O GENESIO"
208. Foppa, Vincenzo, *Penitent Saint Jerome*, 1450s. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "OPVS VNCE/ NTII. FOPPA"
209. Francesco di Simone da Santacroce, *Annunciation*, 1504. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "FRANCISCVS DE SANTA / CRVCIS FECIT 1504"
210. Francesco di Simone da Santacroce, *Lepreno Triptych*, 1506. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "HIS 1506 / FO FATA INTENPO DE SANRO DE ANTONIO DE' SANRO DITO / SERVA EC E VAN DE BORTOLA / MIO EC PONO DE [?]ONA[?]O [scratched] FRANCESCO DE SIMON DE SANTA CROSE FECIT"
211. Francia, Francesco and Bartolomeo Passerotti, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, 1510s/1580, Rome, Capitoline Museums. [signatures]
212. Franciabigio, *Portrait of a Scholar*, 1522. Berlin, Staatliche Museen.
213. Ghirlandaio, Benedetto, *Nativity*, ca. 1490-5. Aigueperse, Notre Dame.
214. Ghirlandaio, Domenico, *Portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi-Tornabuoni*, 1488. Lugano, Thyssen Collection. "ARS VTINAM MORES / ANIMUM QVE EFFINGERRE / POSSES / PVLCHROR IN TER / RIS NVLLATABELLA / FORET / MCCCCLXXXVIII"
215. Giambono, Michele, *Saint James Polyptych*, ca. 1455, Venice, Accademia. "MICHAL GANBONO PIXIT"
216. Giorgione, *La Vecchia*, 1500s. Venice, Accademia. "COL TEMPO"
217. Giovanni di Piamonte, *Madonna and Child with Saints*, Città di Castello, Church of the Servi di Maria.
218. Giovanni Paolo de' Agostini, *Pietà*, 1490s? Milan, Santa Maria alla Porta. [signature?] / faciebat (?)
219. Giovenone, Gerolamo, *Madonna and Child with Saints and Donors*, 1527. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. [signature and date]
220. Girolamo da Udine, *Coronation of the Virgin with Saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist*, ca. 1498-1511. Udine, Museo Civico. "Opus ieronimi Utinensis"

221. Girolamo dai Libri, *Madonna and Child with Saint Anne*, 1518. London, National Gallery. "HIERONIMUS A LIBRIS P."
222. Girolamo dal Toso, *Madonna and Child in Glory with Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Apollonia*, Vicenza, Museo Civico.
223. Girolamo di Giovanni da Camerino, *Madonna della Misericordia*, 1463. Camerino, Museo Civico. [date and signature]
224. Girolamo di Giovanni da Camerino, *Madonna and Child with Angels*, late 1450s. Urbino, Palazzo Ducale.
225. Girolamo di Giovanni da Camerino, *Madonna and Child with Angels*. Urbino, Palazzo Ducale.
226. Girolamo Strazzaroli da Aviano (Girolamo da Treviso), *Dormition of the Virgin*, 1478. Treviso, Cassa di Risparmio della Marca Trevigiana.
227. Girolamo Strazzaroli da Aviano (Girolamo da Treviso), *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints Sebastian and Roch*, 1487. Treviso, Duomo. "HIERONYMVS / TARVISIO PINXIT / MCCCCLXXXVII"
228. Girolamo Strazzaroli da Aviano (Girolamo da Treviso), *Sacra Conversazione*, 1494. Venice, Accademia. [signature and date]
229. Girolamo Strazzaroli da Aviano (Girolamo da Treviso), *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints*, 1490s. Treviso, Duomo, Sacrestia dei Canonici. "HIERONYMVS/ TARVISIO. P"
230. Girolamo Strazzaroli da Aviano (Girolamo da Treviso), *Saint Martin and the Poor Man*, ca. 1496. Paese, parish church.
231. Grammorseo, Pietro, *Baptism of Christ*, 1523. Turin, Galleria Sabauda. "PETRO GRAMMORSEO PINGEBAT MDXXIII"
232. Grammorseo, Pietro, *Madonna and Child with Two Saints*, 1524. Vercelli, Palazzo Acrivescovile. [signature and date]
233. Jacobello di Antonio, *Madonna and Child*, 1480. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "1480 XIII Ind. Mesis Decebris/ Jacobus Anto.lli filii(s) no. / humani pictoris me fecit"
234. Jacopo da Valenza, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Donors and Saints John the Baptist and Biagio*, 1484. Ceneda, Cathedral.
235. Jacopo da Valenza, *Salvator Mundi*, 1487. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "Iacopus de Valencia pin / xit hoc opus 1487"
236. Jacopo da Valenza, *Madonna Nursing Christ Child*, 1488. Venice, Museo Correr. "IACOBVS DE VALENCIA/PINXIT HOC OPVS 1488"
237. Jacopo da Valenza, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Francis, John the Baptist, Luciano (?) And Sebastian*, 1503. Berlin, Gemaldegalerie.
238. Jacopo da Valenza, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*, 1502? Serravalle di Vittorio Veneto, San Giovanni. [signature]
239. Jacopo da Valenza, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1500. Padua, Musei Civici. "Jacobus de Valenza P."
240. Jordanic, Petar, *Madonna and Child*, (artist active 1468-1504), Vienna, private collection.
241. Lippi, Filippino, *Vision of Saint Bernard*, late 1480s. Florence, Badia. "SVBSTINE / ET ABSTINE"

242. Lombardi, Marco and Giovanni Antonio da Cantù, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints (Assiano Triptych)*, late 1490s. Turin, private collection. [signature]
243. Lorenzo d'Alessandro, *Madonna and Child with Saints*. Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Arts. [blank]
244. Lotto, Lorenzo, *Assumption of the Virgin with Saints Anthony Abbot and Louis of Toulouse*, 1506. Asolo, Duomo. "LAURENT LOTVS / IUNIOR MD VI"
245. Lotto, Lorenzo, *Virgin and Child with Saints*, 1521. Bergamo, Santo Spirito. "L Lotus 1521"
246. Lotto, Lorenzo, *Christ Taking Leave of His Mother*, 1521. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. "Laurentio Lotto pittore 1521"
247. Lotto, Lorenzo, *Virgin and Child with Saints*, 1546. Venice, San Giacomo dell'Orio.
248. Lotto, Lorenzo, *Transfiguration of Christ*, ca. 1510-11. Recanati, Pinacoteca Comunale.
249. Lotto, Lorenzo, *Portrait of a Married Couple*, ca. 1524-5. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage. "HOMO NV../QVAM.."
250. Lotto, Lorenzo, *Portrait of Lucrezia Valier*, ca. 1533. London, National Gallery. "NEC VLLA IMPUDICA LV/ CRETIA EXEMPLO VIVET"
251. Luini, Bernardino (attr), *Madonna and Child with Saints Augustine and Margaret*, 1507. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André. "Bernardinus Mediolanensis"
252. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna and Child* (main panel of triptych), 1496. Certosa di Pavia, Santa Maria delle Grazie. "MACRINVS D. ALBA / FACIEBAT 1496"
253. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Angels and Saints*, 1498. Turin, Galleria Sabauda. "MACRINVS / FACIEBAT / 1498"
254. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna and Child Enthroned* (main panel of triptych), 1499. Tortona, Vescovado. "MACRINVS D. ALBA / FACIEBAT 1499"
255. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna and Child with Angels, Donors, and Saints Francis and Thomas Aquinas*, 1501. Alba, Municipio. "MACRINVS / FACIEBAT / 1501"
256. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna Adoring Sleeping Christ Child with Saints*, 1503. Crea, Santuario dell'Assunta. "HOC TIBI DIVA PARENS / POSVIT ET FACIETE MACRINO / BLADRATESIS OPVS / IOHES ILLE IACOBVS / 1503"
257. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna Adoring Sleeping Christ Child with Saints and Donor Amedeo di Romagnano*, 1505. Turin, Galleria Sabauda. "MACRINVS DE ALBA / PINXIT 1505"
258. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna and Child* (main panel of triptych), 1494-5. Turin, Museo Civico d'Arte Antica. "MACRINVS / FACIEBAT / 1495"
259. Macrino d'Alba, *Madonna and Child* (main panel of triptych), ca. 1505, Frankfurt, Städtisches Institut, Piedmont, MACRINVS / FACEIBAT
260. Maestro della Maddalena Assunta, *Assumption of Mary Magdalen*, 1500s. Ferrara, Pinacoteca Nazionale.

261. Mancini, Domenico, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with a Musical Angel*, 1511, Lendinara, Santa Sofia. "OPUS. DOMINICI. MANCINI/ VENETJS. P. 1511"
262. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Miracle at Bridge of San Lio*, 1494. Venice, Accademia. "OPUS /JOANNIS D/ MANSUETI/ S VENETI/ RECTE SENTENTIUM BELLI / NI DISCIPLI"
263. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Arrest of Saint Mark*, 1499. Vaduz, Collection of Prince of Liechtenstein. "IOANES DE MANSVETIS P."; "Ser Jaco de Simon, Ser Antto de Uaischo, Ser J de Bevilaqua, Ser Felip de Belttame, Ser Zuane de Zorzi, Ser Alberto Darin, Ser Fermo de Stefano, Ser Nicholo de Marcho, Ser Michiel Uerzo, Ser Alesio de Andrea, questio son li judexi e li provedador. 1499 adi 18.mazo"
264. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Saint Sebastian with Saints Roch, Liberale, Gregory, and Francis*, 1500. Venice, Accademia. "Hoc enim Johannis de Mansuetis opus est 1500"
265. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child with Saints and Donors*, 1518. Zianigo, parish church. "Joannes de Mansuetis Pinxit MCCCCCX8"
266. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Assumption*, 1490s. Padua, Musei Civici. [illegible, abraded]
267. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Saints Lawrence and Francis*, ca. 1500, Venice, Accademia. "Jerolimo Loredan"; "Lorenzo Barbaro"
268. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Healing of the Daughter of Benvegnudo de San Paolo*, ca. 1506. Venice, Accademia. "Spera bil [?] /nuno fram [?]/ fida 4 [?]"
269. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Saint Mark Raising Ananias*, ca. 1520s. Venice, Accademia. "B.MARCVS ANIANVM SANCIATVM...; IOANNES DE MA/SVETIS / FECIT"
270. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Arrest and Trial of Saint Mark*, ca. 1520s. Venice, Accademia. "IOANNES DE MANSVETIS FACIEBAT"
271. Mansueti, Giovanni, *Nativity*, early 16th c. Verona, Museo del Castelvecchio. "IOANNES DEM/ANSVETIS. P"
272. Mantegna, Andrea, *Saint Euphemia*, 1454. Naples, Capodimonte. "OPVS ANDREAE MANTEGNAE / MCCCCCLIII"
273. Mantegna, Andrea, *Saint Sebastian*, 1490. Venice, Ca' d'Oro. "NIL NISI DIVINUM STABILE / EST CAETERA FUMUS"
274. Mantegna, Andrea, *Ecce Homo*, ca. 1500. Paris, Musee Jacquemart-Andre. "CRVCIFIGE EVM / TOLLE EVM / CRVCIFIGE CRVC; CRVCIFIGE EVM / CRVCIFIGE TOLLE / EV CRVCIFIGE"
275. Mantegna, Andrea, *Saint Mark in a Niche*, late 1440s. Frankfurt, Stadelsches Institut. "INCLITA MAGNANIMI VEN... / EVANGELISTA PAX TIBI M[ARC]E / ANDREA MANTEGNAE PICTORIS LABOR"
276. Marconi, Rocco, *Christ in the House of Martha and Mary*, 1520s. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage. "ROCHVS / MARCHONIVS"
277. Marconi, Rocco, *Christ and the Adulteress*, ca. 1520. Venice, Accademia. "ROCHVS / MARCHONIVS"
278. Marconi, Rocco, *Transfigured Christ with Saints Peter and Andrew*, ca. 1524-5. Venice, Santi Giovanni e Paolo. "ROCHUS/ MARCONIVS"

279. Marescalchi, Pietro, *Saint Lawrence*. Kansas City Art Museum.
280. Marti, Agostino, *Virgin and Child with Saints*, 1513. Rome, Capitoline Museums. “iesus / Deo opt: max : matri sanctiss: [?] Dino Franscisco / Hisq coeteris o~s [...] ut fas erat [?]tg / ut potera' sumptur proprio [?]sacrundu' dicandrimq~ cura-/ m eqa Albertus malspina regulus : / A. N. D. M. D. x iy ~”
281. Marziale, Marco, *Circumcision of Christ*, 1499. Venice, Museo Correr. “PINXIT HOC OPVS MARCVS / MARCIALIS VENETVS ANNO / MCCCCCLXXXVIII”
282. Marziale, Marco, *Supper at Emmaus*, 1506. Venice, Accademia. “marcus mar [cc?]ialis / venetus / 1506”
283. Marziale, Marco, *Circumcision of Christ*, ca. 1500. London, National Gallery. [signature and date]
284. Massone, Giovanni, *Nativity with Saints Bernardino and Bonaventure*, ca. 1490-5. Savone, Pinacoteca.
285. Mazzuola (or Mazzola), Filippo, *Madonna and Child*, 1490s. Padua, Musei Civici. “Filipu[...]oanis”
286. Mazzuola (or Mazzola), Filippo, *Portrait of a Man*. Milan, Brera Gallery.
287. Mocetto, Girolamo, *Allegory of the Immaculate Conception*, 1500s. Hague, Dienst Verspreide Rijkcollecties. “HIERONIMVS / MOCETVS”
288. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Nativity*, 1500. Orgiano (Vicenza), parish church. “OPVS BARTO / LOMEI MONTA/ GNA / MCCCCC”
289. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Sebastian and Jerome*, 1507. Venice, Accademia.
290. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Mary Magdalen and Saints Jerome, Paula, Monica, and Augustine*, 1515, Vicenza, Santa Corona (Porto altar). “opus bartholomei / montagna”
291. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, 1515-20. Vicenza, Museo Civico.
292. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Onofrio*, ca. 1485. Vicenza, Museo Civico. “opus bartolomei”
293. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child with Four Saints*, ca. 1514. Padua, Santa Maria in Vanzo.
294. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Pietà with Saints Joseph, Mary Magdalen, and John the Evangelist*, Vicenza, Santuario di Monte Berico. [date and signature]
295. Montagna, Bartolomeo, *Saint Jerome in a Landscape*. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. “opus bartolomei / montagna”
296. Montagna, Bartolomeo and Benedetto, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1522. Cologne Veneta, chiesa arcipretale. [signature]
297. Montagnana, Jacopo da (attr), *Madonna and Child*. Philadelphia, Johnson Collection. “MEMENTO MEI / DEI GENETRIX”
298. Montagnana, Jacopo da (attr), *Annunciation*, late 1460s? Lugano, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection. “OPUS [...]”
299. Moretto da Brescia, *Santa Cecilia Altarpiece*, 1540. Verona, San Giorgio in Braida. [date]
300. Morganti, Pompeo, *Raising of Lazarus*, 1542? Filottrano (Ancona), San Francesco. “POMPEIVS/ MORGANTIS / FANENSIS / 1542”

301. Morone, Domenico, *Madonna and Child*, 1483. Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie. “yhs / Dominicus moronus / [pinxit] di XXVIII / apriliis MCCCC / - [L] XXXIII”
302. Morone, Francesco, *Madonna and Child with Saints Zeno and Nicolas*, 1502. Milan, Brera Gallery. “Franciscus filius m. dominici de Moroni pnxit. Dyi MCCC [...]II kl oc [...] bris”
303. Morone, Francesco, *Madonna and Child with Saints Joseph Anthony of Padua, Anne, and Francis*, 1520. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. “Franciscus Moronus / Vero: Ao 1520 pinxit”
304. Moroni, Giovan Battista, *Entombment*, 1566. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. “IO. BAPT / MORONVS P. / 1566”
305. Nardini, Dionisio, Girolamo, and Giacomo, *Pietà with Saints Francis and Anthony of Padua*, 1512. Sant’Angelo in Vado, San Francesco. [patrons’ names]
306. Ortolano, *Saints Sebastian, Demetrius, and Roch*, ca. 1520. London, National Gallery. “S. DEMET / RIVS”
307. Pagani, Vincenzo, *Madonna and Child with Saints*. Ostezzano, Parrochiale de Santa Maria del Soccorso.
308. Palma Vecchio, *Assumption of the Virgin*. Venice, Accademia. [blank]
309. Palma Vecchio, *Madonna Reading and Sleeping Christ Child*. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. “IACOBVS PALMA / [?]”
310. Palma Vecchio, *Holy Family with Saints John and Catherine*. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen.
311. Palmezzano, Marco, *Virgin and Child with Saints Catherine and Francis (Matelica Altarpiece)*, 1501. Matelica, San Francesco. “Marchus de Melotius Forolivensis [date]”
312. Palmezzano, Marco, *Pietà with Two Angels*, 1529. Venice, Ca’ d’Oro. “Marchus palmezanus/pictor foroliusen [?] faciebat / MCCCCCXX9”
313. Palmezzano, Marco, *Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist*, 1536. Padua, Musei Civici. “Marchus palemzanus/ pictor foroliviensis / fatiebat MCCCCCXXXVI”
314. Palmezzano, Marco, *Madonna and Child*, early 1490s. Padua, Musei Civici. “MARCUS FOROLIVI”
315. Palmezzano, Marco, *Christ Carrying the Cross with Two Tormenters*, early 1520s. Forlì, private collection. “[...]MARCHUS PALMIZANUS[...]
316. Palmezzano, Marco, *Crucifixion*. Avignon, Musée du Petit Palais.
317. Pasqualino Veneto, *Madonna and Child with Mary Magdalen*, 1496. Venice, Museo Correr. “Pasquilinus / Venetus / 1496”
318. Pasqualino Veneto, *Madonna and Child*, 1490s. Maastricht (Netherlands), Bonnefantenmuseum. “P . V . / .P.”
319. Passeris, Andrea de, *Madonna and Child Enthroned* (main panel of dispersed triptych), 1491. Ex-Oxford, Ashmolean Museum. “1491 DIXX. MA / RTIJ. ANDRE / AS. DE . PASSERI / S. PINXIT”
320. Passeris, Andrea de, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Peter and Thomas and Two Donors*, 1502. Como, Cathedral. “ANDREAS . . PASSE / RIS. PINXIT. 1502”

321. Pennacchi, Pier Maria, *Madonna and Child with Saints*. Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum (destroyed). [signature]
322. Permeniate, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child with Saints Augustine and John the Baptist*, early 16th c., Venice, Museo Correr. "IOANES PER / MENIATES / P"
323. Piero di Cosimo, *Mary Magdalen*, 1501. Rome, Palazzo Barberini.
324. Pietro da Vicenza, *Christ at the Column*. Venice, Museo Correr. "Petrus [sice vicinus?] / pincsit"
325. Pietro de Saliba, *Christ at the Column*. Venice, Accademia. "antonellus-messaneus / me pinxit"
326. Pino, Paolo, *Portrait of a Collector*, 1534. Chambéry, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire. "paulu sde pisis vene[...]/ faciebat 1534"
327. Pino, Paolo, *Madonna and Child with Saints*, 1565. Padua, San Francesco. "Paulus Pinnis Ven P. / M. D. [LXV]"
328. Pino, Paolo, *Saint Benedict between Saints Nicholas and Lawrence (Scrozè Altarpiece)*, ca. 1560? Scrozè, parish church. "PAVLVS PINO .P."
329. Pitati, Bonifazio de' (attr), *Madonna of the Tailors*, 1533. Venice, Accademia. "MDXXXIII / ADIVIII / NOVEB"
330. Pontormo, Jacopo, *Supper at Emmaus*, 1525. Florence, Uffizi Gallery. "1525"
331. Presutti, Giuliano, *Doubting Thomas*, ca. 1535? Fano, San Tommaso. "JULIAN PSUTI / FANI ORIUDUS / FACIEBAT / MDXLVI"
332. Previtali, Andrea, *Glory of Saint John the Baptist*, 1515. Bergamo, Santo Spirito. "ANDREAS. PRIVITALUS / PINXIT. MDXV."
333. Previtali, Andrea, *Trinity with Saint Augustine and Beato Giorgio da Cremona*, 1517, Almenno San Salvatore (Bergamo), San Nicola. "ANDREAS PRIVITALUS / FACIEBAT / M.D.XVII."
334. Previtali, Andrea, *Saint John the Baptist in the Desert*, 1521. Columbus, Gallery of Fine Arts. "Andreas privitalus faciebat / MDXXI"
335. Previtali, Andrea, *Saint Benedict*, 1524. Bergamo, Duomo. [signature]
336. Recamador, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Angels and Donors*, 1512. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. "IONNES [?] / [?] MDXII"
337. Santacroce, Girolamo da, *Trinity with Saints James and Jerome*, 1538. Padua, Musei Civici. "JACOBVS CAVCHVS ARCHI / EPISCOPVS CORCYRENSIS / M.D.XXXVIII"; "HIERONIMO. DA. SANTA. / CROCE. P."
338. Santi, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints John the Baptist, Francis, Jerome, and Sebastian with the Buffi Family*, 1489. Urbino, Palazzo Ducale. [signature]
339. Santi, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*, 1489. Montefiorentino, San Francesco. "CAROLVS OLIVVS PLANIANI COMES / DIVAE VIRGINI A RELIQVIS CELIT [?] / IOANNE SANCTO PICTORE / DEDICAVIT MCCCCLXXXVIII"
340. Santi, Giovanni, *Visitation*, late 1480s?, Fano, Santa Maria Nuova. "IOANNES/ SANTIS / DE VRBINO / [date]"
341. Savoldo, Gerolamo, *Portrait of "Gaston de Foix"*, ca. 1532. Paris, Louvre. "opera de jouani jeronimo de bressa di Savoldi"

342. Savoldo, Gerolamo, *Man with a Flute*, ca. 1539. Private collection.
[musical notation]
343. Schiavone, Giorgio, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*, 1456-7.
London, National Gallery. "OPVS. SCLAVONI. DISIPVLI./ SQVARCIONI."
344. Schiavone, Giorgio, *Virgin and Child*, 1458-60. London, National Gallery.
"OPVS. SCLAVONI. DISIPVLI./ SQVARCIONI."
345. Schiavone, Giorgio, *Portrait of a Man*, after 1456. Paris, Musée
Jacquemart-Andre. "Opus Sclavoni Dalmatici Squarconi"
346. Schiavone, Giorgio, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1460. Venice, Museo Correr.
"BC"
347. Schiavone, Giorgio, *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, ca. 1460. Berlin,
Gemäldegalerie. "OPVS. SCLAVONI. DALMAT/ ICI. SQUARCIONI."
348. Schiavone, Giorgio, *Madonna and Child with Two Angels*, ca. 1456-60.
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery.
349. Schiavone, Giorgio (attr), *Francesco Petrarca*. Sarasota, Ringling
Museum of Art. "FRANCISCVS PETRARC / HA LAVREATVS"
350. Schiavone, Giorgio, *Madonna and Child with Angels*. Turin, Galleria
Sabauda. "Opus sclauoni dalmatici/ Squarzoni s."
351. Sebastiano del Piombo, *Cardinal Bandinello Sauli and Three
Companions*, 1516. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art. "1516 / [...]S
Faciebat"
352. Sebastiano del Piombo, *Pietà*, 1516. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage.
"SEBASTIANVS / FACIEBAT / MDXVI 1516"
353. Sebastiano del Piombo, *Saint Sinibaldus*, ca. 1508-9. Venice, Accademia.
"S SINIBAL / DVS"
354. Sebastiano del Piombo, *Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist*, mid-
1520s. Prague, Narodni Galerie. "SEBASTIANVS / FACIEBAT"
355. Solario, Andrea, *Holy Family (Rest on Flight into Egypt)*, 1515. Milan,
Museo Poldi-Pezzoli, Milan.
356. Solario, Antonio, *Osimo Altarpiece*, 1505. Osimo, San Giuseppe da
Copertino.
357. Speranza, Giovanni, *Madonna and Child with Saints George, Augustine,
Anthony Abbot, and Sebastian*, 1503. Velo d' Astico (Vicenza), San Giorgio.
[signed and dated]
358. Speranza, Giovanni, *Nativity of the Virgin* (fragment of altarpiece of
Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints Joseph and Anthony of Padua), 1526.
Vicenza, Museo Civico. "Ioahnes speranza pinxit"
359. Speranza, Giovanni, *Assumption of the Virgin with Saints Thomas and
Jerome*, ca. 1500. Vicenza, Museo Civico. "joannes [?] / pinxit"
360. Titian, *Ancona Altarpiece*, 1520. Ancona, Pinacoteca Civica. "Aloyxius
gotus Ragusinus / fecit fieri / MDXX / Titianus Cadorinus pinsit"
361. Titian, *Allegory of the Battle of Lepanto*, 1572-5. Madrid, Prado.
362. Titian, *Bacchanal of the Andrians*, mid-1520s. Madrid, Prado. [musical
notation]; "TITIANUS F"

363. Verla, Francesco, *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine with Saints Lucy, Agatha, Joseph, and John the Baptist*, 1512. Schio, San Francesco. [signed and dated]
364. Vincenzo dai Destri (Vincenzo da Treviso), *Saint Erasmus Altarpiece*, 1503. Treviso, San Leonardo.
365. Vincenzo dai Destri (Vincenzo da Treviso), *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*. Venice, Museo Correr. "Vicentis deta [?]/[?]"
366. Vivarini, Alvise, *Treviso Altarpiece*, 1480. Venice, Accademia. "ALVVIXE VIVA / RIN P MCCCCLXXX"
367. Vivarini, Alvise, *Virgin and Child*, 1483. Barletta, Sant'Andrea. "ALVIXE VIVARI/MCCCCLXXXIII"
368. Vivarini, Alvise, *Madonna and Child with Saints Francis and Bernardino (Naples Triptych)*, 1485. Naples, Capodimonte. "ALVISE VIVARIN. P. / VENETIA 1485"
369. Vivarini, Alvise, *Portrait of a Man*, 1497. London, National Gallery. ".alovisiv(s).vivarinvs / de . mvriano.f /.1497"
370. Vivarini, Alvise, *Christ Blessing*, 1498. Milan, Brera Gallery. "ALVISIUS VIVARINVS / DE MVRIANO PIN / MCCC XXXXVIII"
371. Vivarini, Alvise, *Resurrection*, 1497-8. Venice, San Giovanni in Bragora. [illegible (abraded); once had signature and date]
372. Vivarini, Alvise, *Saint Jerome in a Landscape*, ca. 1476. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art. "LVDVVICVS VIVA / RINVS PINXIT"
373. Vivarini, Alvise, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1480. Vicenza, Collezione Conte Cesare Piovene. "Aluisius Vivarinus / pictor F."
374. Vivarini, Alvise, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1483. London, National Gallery. "ALVVIXI VIVARIN.P."
375. Vivarini, Alvise, *Belluno Altarpiece*, ca. 1485. Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich Museum (destroyed). "ALVVIXE . VIVARIN."
376. Vivarini, Alvise and ? Marco Basaiti, *Sacra Conversazione*, 1500. Amiens, Musée de Picardie. "ALOVISIVS VIVARINVS / DE MVRANO PINXIT / VENETIIS 1.500"
377. Vivarini, Alvise and Marco Basaiti, *Saint Ambrose Altarpiece*, ca. 1503. Venice, Frari. "[..] uod Vivarine tua[.....]nequisti[...].rcus basitus[...].prompsit opus"
378. Vivarini, Antonio, *Saint Anthony Abbot Altarpiece (Pesaro Polyptych)*, 1464. Rome, Vatican Pinacoteca.
379. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *San Giovanni da Capistrano*, 1459. Paris, Louvre. "OPVS BARTHOLOMEI. DE MVRNO. 1459."
380. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Naples Altarpiece*, 1465. Naples, Capodimonte. "OPVS BATOLOMEI/VIVARINI DE MVRANO 1469"
381. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Blessing Child*, 1471. Rome, Galleria Colonna. "OPVS FACTVM VENETISS PER BARTHOLO / MEVM VIVA RINVM DE MVRIANO MCCCCDLXXI"
382. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child (Davis Madonna)*, 1472. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

- “OPVS·FACTVM·PER·BARTHOLOMEV[M] / M[
JM·VIVA·RI[N]VM·DE·MVRIANO 1472”
383. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Saint Augustine Polyptych*, 1473. Venice, Santi Giovanni e Paolo. “BARTHOLOMEVS VIVARINVS DE/ MVRIANO PINXIT MCCCCLXXIII”
384. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Santa Maria Formosa Triptych*, 1473. Venice, Santa Maria Formosa. “BARTHOLOMEVS VIVARINVS DE / MVRIANO PINXIT MCCCCLXXIII”
385. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Saint Mark Polyptych*, 1474. Venice, Frari. “OPVS [?] BARTHOLOME V”
386. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Conversano Polyptych*, 1475. Venice, Accademia. “HOC OPVS SUMPTIBVS DOMNI ANTHONII DE CHARITATE CA / NONICI ECCLESIE / DE CONVERSANO IN FORMAM REDACTVM EST. 1475”
387. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Sacra Conversazione*, 1475. Lussingrande, parish church of Sant’ Antonio Abate. “OPVS FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTHOLOMEVM VIVARINVM DE MVRIANO”
388. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Bari Altarpiece*, 1476. Bari, San Nicola. “FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTHOLOMEVM/ VIVA RINVM DE MVRIANO PINXIT 1476”
389. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Saint Ambrose Altarpiece*, 1477. Venice, Accademia. “BARTHOLOMEVS VIVARINVS DE MVRIANO PINXIT 1477 and IACOBVS DE FAENCIE INCISIT”
390. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Bragora Triptych*, 1478. Venice, San Giovanni in Bragora. “BARTHOLOMEVS VIVARINVS / DE MVRIANO PINXIT 1478”
391. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Madonna Adoring Sleeping Christ Child*, 1481. San Francisco, De Young Memorial Museum. “BARTHOLOMEVS VIVARINVS / DE MVRIANO PINXIT 1.481”
392. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Ca’ Bernardo Triptych*, 1482. Venice, Frari.
393. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Saint Francis with Saints Michael, Anthony of Padua, Bernardino and Peter*, 1483. Bari, Museo Civico. “OPUS FACTUM FUIT VENETIIS PER BARTHOLOMEVM VIVARINVM DE MURIANO 1483”
394. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Death of the Virgin*, 1485. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. “[OPVS FAC]TVM·VENETIIS PE / [R BARTH]OLOMEVM·VIVA / [RINVM DE] MVRIANO.148[5]”
395. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Saint George Slaying the Dragon*, 1485. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. “FACTVM VENETIIS BARTHOLOMEVM / VIVA RINVM DEMVRIANO PINXIT 1485”
396. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, 1485. Almenno San Bartolomeo (Bergamo), San Bartolomeo di Tremozia. “FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTHOLOMEVS / VIVARINVM DE MVRIANO PINXIT 1485”
397. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Melzi d’Eril Polyptych*, 1486. Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana.
398. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and Archangel Michael, and the Trinity*, 1488. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara.

- “FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTH / OLOMEVM VIVARINVM DE MURIANO / PINXIT 1488”
399. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Saint Barbara*, 1490. Venice, Accademia. “BARTHOLOMEVS VIVARINVS/DE MVRANO PINXIT 1490”
400. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Polyptych of Saint James*, 1490. Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum. “OPVS FACTVM VENETIIS/PER BARTHOLOMEVIVA/RINVM DEMVRANO [?]”
401. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Polyptych of Saint John*, 1490. Florence, Contini Bonacossi Collection. “OVS FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTHOLOMEVM VIVA / RINVM DE MVRANO 1490”
402. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Saint Martin Triptych*, 1491. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. “OPVS FACTVM VENETIIS / PER BARTHOLOMEVM VIVA / RINVM DE MVRANO 1491”
403. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child with Saints Paul and Jerome*, ca. 1460. London, National Gallery. “OPVS BARTOLOMEI VIVARINI DEMVRANO”
404. Vivarini, Bartolomeo, *Madonna and Child*, late 1460s. Venice, Museo Correr. “BARTOLAM . VIVARI. / DE MVRAN.”
405. Vivarini, Bartolomeo (attr), *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1455. Berlin, Staatliche Museen.
406. Vivarini, Bartolomeo (workshop), *Annunciation*, 1472. Bari, Museo Provinciale. “OPVS FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTHOLO . MEVM VIVA RINVM DE MVRANO. 1472”
407. Vivarini, Bartolomeo (workshop), *Arbe Polyptych*, 1485. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. “FACTVM VENETIIS PER BARTHOLOMEVM VIVARINVM / DE MVRANO PINXIT MCCCCLXXXV”
408. Zaganelli, Francesco, *Saint Sebastian*, 1513. Ferrara, Pinacoteca Nazionale. “HIS 1513 / FRANCISCHUS DE / SAGANELLIS CHOTIG / LOLES[...]PINXIT”
409. Zenale, Bernardo, *Madonna and Child*. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. “BERNARDVS P”
410. Zoppo, Marco, *Pesaro Altarpiece*, 1471. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. “MARCO ZOPPO DA / BOLONIA / PINXIT MCCCCLXXI / VINEXIA”
411. Zoppo, Marco, *Madonna and Child with Angels*, ca. 1455. Paris, Louvre. OPERA DEL ZOPPO DI SQUARCIO/NE
412. Zoppo, Marco, *Collegio di Spagna Polyptych*, ca. 1460-5. Bologna, Collegio di Spagna. “MARCO DEL ZOPPO DA BOLO / NIA”

Appendix 2: Tables

Summary of findings:

To date, I have documented 412 Italian paintings with *cartellini*. Based on the place of significant activity or training of painters, over three quarters of the examples fall in Venice and the Veneto. Outside the Veneto, the motif appeared with similar frequency in Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, and Sicily (largely due to Antonello da Messina and his students), with slightly more examples (about six percent of the total) occurring in the Marches than in other regions outside the Veneto. The earliest surviving examples were painted in Venice, Padua, and Ferrara; as I argued in the first chapter, the evidence points strongly to a Paduan origin.

More than three quarters of the *cartellini* were painted between 1470 and 1530 (316 of the dated examples). The 1500s was the decade of most frequent occurrence, its number (86) accounting for approximately one fifth of the total.

The vast majority—more than eighty percent—of *cartellini* contain signatures. (This percentage excludes those examples whose inscriptions are no longer visible and were not recorded, as well as those whose inscriptions I am unable to glean from published photographs or catalogs; it might be assumed that a good number of these examples also contain or at one time contained signatures.) The second most common component of *cartellini*'s inscriptions is the date of the painting, usually accompanying a signature (141 examples).

The region to which each painting belongs has been determined by the location of the painter's home town as best as could be determined from published sources. In many cases, painters of *cartellini* were artists from other regions who are known to have worked in the Veneto or received some training there. These are accounted for in the final row of the table.

Region	#
Veneto	312
Marches	24
Lombardy*	18
Naples & Sicily	14
Emilia-Romagna	21
Piedmont & Liguria	12
Tuscany	8
Paintings by foreigners active in the Veneto	24

*Eight of these were made by painters from Brescia or Bergamo, which during the period in question were part of the Venetian Empire.

Dates of the paintings are determined according to the most recent authoritative scholarship available. Paintings whose dates I was unable to determine within a decade have been omitted from this tally.

Date (decade)	1440s	1450s	1460s	1470s	1480s	1490s	1500s	1510s	1520s	1530s	after 1540
#	4	15	17	35	52	56	86	53	34	10	10

Appendix 3: List of non-Italian paintings containing *cartellini*

Paintings are listed alphabetically by artist, followed by title, date, location, and the inscription. When the inscription could not be determined from published material, I have omitted this information; when a source stated the nature of the inscription's content without quoting it, I have included that information in brackets. (NB: Further research would certainly yield more examples in the circles of many of the painters listed.)

1. Anonymous French artist, *The Nymph of Fontainebleau* (copy after engraving by Pierre Milan and Rene Boyvin, after fresco by Rosso Fiorentino), 1575-1600. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. "O PHIDIAS O APELLES QVIDQVAM NE ORNATIVS VESTRIS TEMPORIBVS EXCOGITARI POTVIT EA SCVLPTVRA CVIVS HIC PICTVRAM CERNITIS QVAM / FRANCISCVS PRIMVS FRANCORVM REX POTENTISS BONARVM ARTIVM AC LITERARVM PATER SVB DIANÆ A VENATV COQVIESCETIS / ATQVE VRNAM FONTISBELLAQVÆ EFFVNDENTIS STATVA DOMI SVÆ INCHOATAM RELIQVIT"
2. Benabarre, Pedro Garcia de, *Virgin Enthroned* (from *Bellcaire Altarpiece*), 1470s. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, [signature and date, scratched out]
3. Bermejo, Bartolomé, *Saint Michael Triumphant over the Devil*, 1468. London, National Gallery. "Bartholomeus Rubeus"
4. Bermejo, Bartolome (with Osona workshop), *Triptych of the Virgin de Montserrat*, 1480s. Acqui Terme, cathedral. "ihs Bartolo meus Ru beus"
5. Burgkmair, Hans (the Elder), *Double Portrait of Hans and Barbara Schellenberger*, 1505. Cologne, Eallraf-Richartz-Museum. "19 IAR WAS ICH ALT / DA HET ICH DI GE / STALT / 150[1?]; "25 IAR WAS ICK ALT / DA HET ICK DIE GESTALT / 1505"
6. Dürer, Albrecht, *Saint Sebastian Bound to the Column*, 1500. Woodcut. "AD"
7. Dürer, Albrecht, *Saint Eustace*, 1501. Engraving. "AD"
8. Dürer, Albrecht, *Christ Among the Church Doctors*, 1506. Madrid, Prado. "1506 AD/opus qui[n]que dierum"
9. Dürer, Albrecht, *Feast of the Rose Garlands*, 1506. Prague, Narodni Gallery. "Exeqit quinque mestri spatio Albertus/Durer germanus/MDVI"
10. Dürer, Albrecht, *Madonna del Lucherino (Madonna with the Siskin)*, 1506. Berlin, Staatliche Museen.
11. Dürer, Albrecht, *Eve*, 1507. Madrid, Prado. [signed and dated]
12. Dürer, Albrecht, *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand*, 1508. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. "Iste / faciebat anno Domini 1508 / Albertus Durer alemanus"
13. Dürer, Albrecht, *Resurrection*, 1512. Engraving. "1512/AD"
14. Dürer, Albrecht, *Saint Thomas*, 1514. Engraving. "1514/AD"
15. Dürer, Albrecht, *Madonna al Muro*, 1514. Engraving. "1514/AD"
16. Dürer, Albrecht, *Saint Sebastian on a Tree*, 1500-2. Engraving. "AD"
17. Dürer, Albrecht, *Apollo and Diana*, 1502-3. Engraving. "AD"

18. Dürer, Albrecht, *Deposition* (Small Passion series), ca. 1509-10. Woodcut. "AD"
19. El Greco, *Assumption*, 1577. Chicago, Art Institute. "Domenikos Theotokopoulos e poiei"
20. El Greco, *Disrobing of Christ* (or *Espolio*), 1577-79. Toledo, Cathedral. [signature]
21. El Greco, *Martyrdom of Saint Maurice*, 1580-3. Madrid, Escorial. [signature]
22. El Greco, *Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata*, 1585-90. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery. "Domenikos Theotokopoulos e poiei"
23. El Greco, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1596-1600. Bucharest, Romanian National Museum. [signature]
24. El Greco, *Baptism of Christ*, 1596-1600. Madrid, Prado. [signature]
25. El Greco, *Saint Joseph and the Infant Christ*, 1597-99. Toledo, Chapel of St Joseph. [signature]
26. El Greco, *Saint Francis Standing in Meditation*, ca. 1580-5. Omaha, Joselyn Art Museum. "domenikos theotokopoulos"
27. El Greco, *Madonna and Child with Saint Anne*, ca. 1580-5. Toledo, Museo de Santa Cruz. [signature]
28. El Greco, *Saint Francis Meditating in a Cave*, ca. 1585-1590. Bilbao, Museo de Bellas Artes. "Domenikos Theotokoplis e poiei"
29. El Greco, *Ecstasy of Saint Francis with the Vision of the Crucifix*, ca. 1585-90. Madrid, Escorial. "Domenikos Theotokopoulos e poiei"
30. El Greco, *Saint Francis Standing in Meditation*, ca. 1590-5. Barcelona, Federico Torello. [signature]
31. El Greco, *Saint Andrew and Saint Francis*, ca. 1590-95. Madrid, Prado. [signature]
32. El Greco, *Saint Francis Kneeling in Meditation* (version of Bilbao *Saint Francis*), ca. 1595-1600. San Francisco, De Young Memorial Museum. "Domenikos Theotokopoulos e poiei"
33. El Greco, *Cardinal Fernando Nino de Guevara*, ca. 1600. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. [signature]
34. El Greco, *Saint Francis Meditating on Death with Brother Leo at his Feet*, ca. 1600-5. Geneva, Morris Collection. [signature]
35. El Greco, *Saint Francis Meditating on Death with Brother Leo*, ca. 1600-5. Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada. [signature]
36. El Greco, *Stigmatization of Saint Francis in the Presence of Brother Leo*, ca. 1600-5. Cadiz, Women's Hospital. [signature]
37. El Greco, *Penitent Saint Mary Magdalen*, ca. 1605-10. Bilbao, Felix Valdes Isaguirre. "domenikos[...]"
38. El Greco, *Stigmatization of Saint Francis in the Presence of Brother Leo*. Zumaya, Guipuzcoa, Zuloaga Collection. [signature]
39. Ferrer, Jaume (workshop), *Saint Jerome*, ca. 1450s. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya. [scribbles]
40. Heemskerck, Marten van, *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin*, 1532. Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum. [signature]
41. Heemskerck, Marten van, *Self-Portrait with Colosseum Behind*, 1553. London, Fitzwilliam Museum. [signature and date]

42. Heemskerck, Marten van, Frontispiece of *Inventiones Heemskerckianae ex Utroque Testamento*. Engraving.
43. Hephaestion, *Cartellino*, 2nd c. B.C.E.. Mosaic from Pergamon, Palace V. Berlin, Pergamon Museum. "Ephaestion epoiei "
44. Holbein, Hans (the Younger), *William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 1527. Paris, Louvre. "Anno Dm. MDXXVii Etatis fu[?] lxx"
45. Holbein, Hans (the Younger), *Sir Henry Guildford*, 1527. Windsor Castle, Royal Collection. "Anno. D. MCCCCCXXVII / Etatis Succ. xL ix:"
46. Holbein, Hans (the Younger), *Thomas Goldslace and his Son John*, 1528. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. "Anno Dm .MD XXVii"
47. Holbein, Hans (the Younger), *Portrait of Georg Gisze*, 1532. Berlin, Staatliche Museen. [date; age, name of sitter]
48. Holbein, Hans (the Younger), *Portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam*, ca. 1532. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
49. Maestro de Xativa, *Saint Gerard Giving Money to a Poor Man* (from *Altarpiece of Guerau de Castellvert*), ca. 1500. Xativa, Parish Church of S Pedro.
50. Mor, Anthonis, *Don Fernando Alvarez de Toledo y Pimentel, 3rd Duke of Alva*, 1549. New York, Hispanic Society of America. "Fernando de Toledo / [...] 1557"
51. Navarrete, Juan Fernandez de, *Baptism of Christ*, ca. 1567. Madrid, Prado. "IF"
52. Oostsanen, Jacob Cornelisz van (Jacob van Amsterdam), *Self-Portrait*, 1533. "IMA / 1533"
53. Orley, Barend van, *Virgin and Child*, 1522. Madrid, Prado. "BER. ORLEIV / FACIEBAT / AN 1522"
54. Osona, Rodrigo de, *Crucifixion*, 1476. Valencia, parish church of San Nicolas. "[...]odrigus dosona[...] / [...]ant"
55. Ribera, Jusepe, *Drunken Silenus*, 1626. Naples, Capodimonte. "Josephus de Ribera, Hispanus, Valentin / et adademicus Romanus faciebat / partenope [...]1626"
56. Ribera, Jusepe, *Communion of the Apostles*, 1651. Naples, Certosa di San Martino, choir. "Joseph de Ribera Hispanus Va / lentinus Accademicus romanus espanol F. 1651"
57. Sweerts, Michael, *Double Portrait*, ca. 1660-2. Malibu, Getty Institute. [English translation: "My Lord, see the way to salvation by the hand of Sweerts"]
58. Vargas, Luis de, *Allegory of the Immaculate Conception* (or *Triumph of the New Testament*), 1561. Seville, Cathedral. [signature and date]
59. Velázquez, Diego, *Equestrian Portrait of Count-Duke de Olivares*, ca. 1634-5. Madrid, Prado. [blank]
60. Velázquez, Diego, *Surrender of Breda*, ca. 1635-6. Madrid, Prado. [blank]
61. Velázquez, Diego, *Equestrian Portrait of Philip IV*, ca. 1635-6. Madrid, Prado. [blank]
62. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Christ on the Cross*, 1627. Chicago, Art Institute. "Fran^{co} Dezu fa[t?] 1627"
63. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Saint Serapion*, 1628. Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum. "B. Serapius / Fran^{co} de Zurbaran fabt. 1628"
64. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *The Mass of Fray Pedro de Cabanuelas*, 1638. Guadalupe, Sacristy, Monastery of San Jeronimo. [signature and date?]

65. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1638. Grenoble, Musée de Peinture et de Sculpture. "Franco de Zurbaran. Philip III[I] Regis Pictor Faciebat 1638 a. D."
66. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Ecstasy of Saint Francis*, 1639. London, National Gallery. [signature and date]
67. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Annunciation*, 1650. Philadelphia Museum of Art. "Franco de Zurbaran 1650"
68. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, 1653. Orleans, Cathedral. "Franco de Zurbar [an] / 1653"
69. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Virgin of the Immaculate Conception*, 1656. Collection of Placido Arango. "Franco de Zurburan fac / 1656"
70. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Veil of Saint Veronica*, 1658. Valladolid, Museo Nacional de Escultura. "Franco de Zurbaran / 1658"
71. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Virgin and Child with Saint John the Baptist*, 1658. San Diego Museum of Art. "Franco de Zurbaran / 1658"
72. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Saint Francis Kneeling with a Skull*, 1659. Collection of Placido Arango. "Franco de Zurbaran / 1659"
73. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Virgin of the Immaculate Conception*, 1661. Langon, Church of Saint Gervais et Saint Protas. "Fran de Zurburan f / 1661"
74. Zurbarán, Francisco de, *Virgin and Child with Saint John the Baptist*, 1662. Bilbao, Museo de Bellas Artes. "Fran de Zurburan f / 1662"

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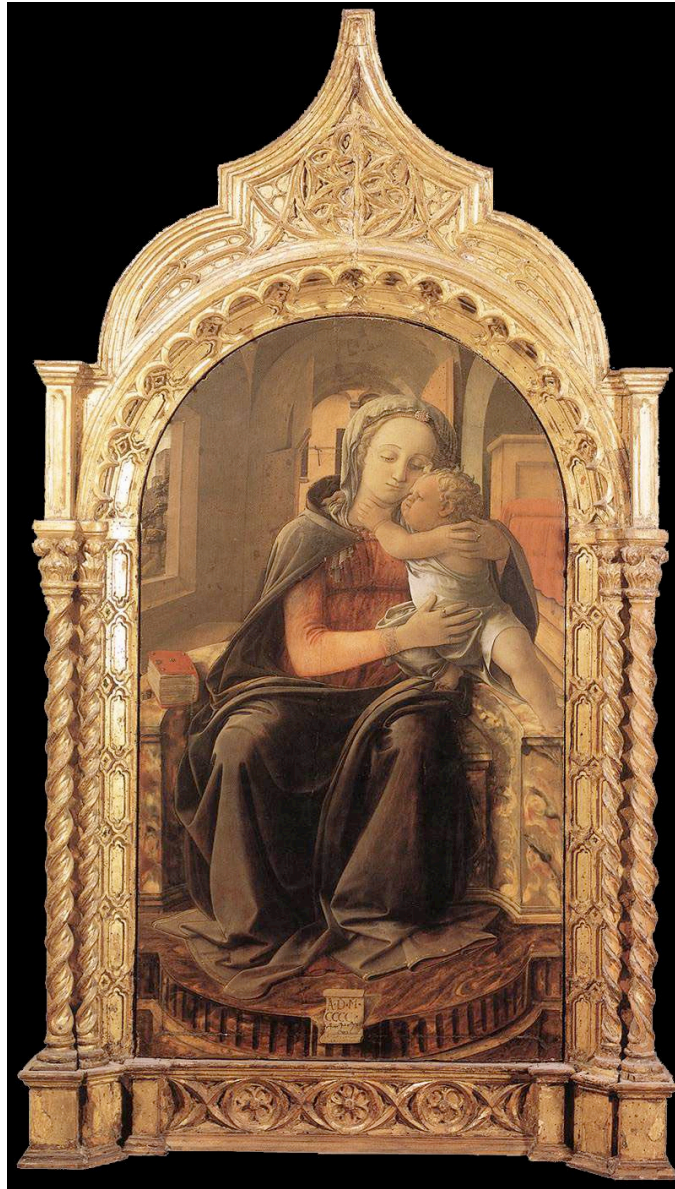
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1. Fra Filippo Lippi, *Tarquinia Madonna*,
1437. Rome, Palazzo Barberini



2. Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of a Man* ('*Leal Souvenir*'), 1432.
London, National Gallery



3. Michele Giambono, detail of *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, 1440s.
Venice, San Marco, Mascoli Chapel



4. Michele Giambono and Andrea del Castagno, detail of *Death of the Virgin*, 1440s.
Venice, San Marco, Mascoli Chapel



5. Filippo Lippi, *Nativity*, 1459. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie



6. Giovanni Bellini, *Nude with a Mirror*, 1515.
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum



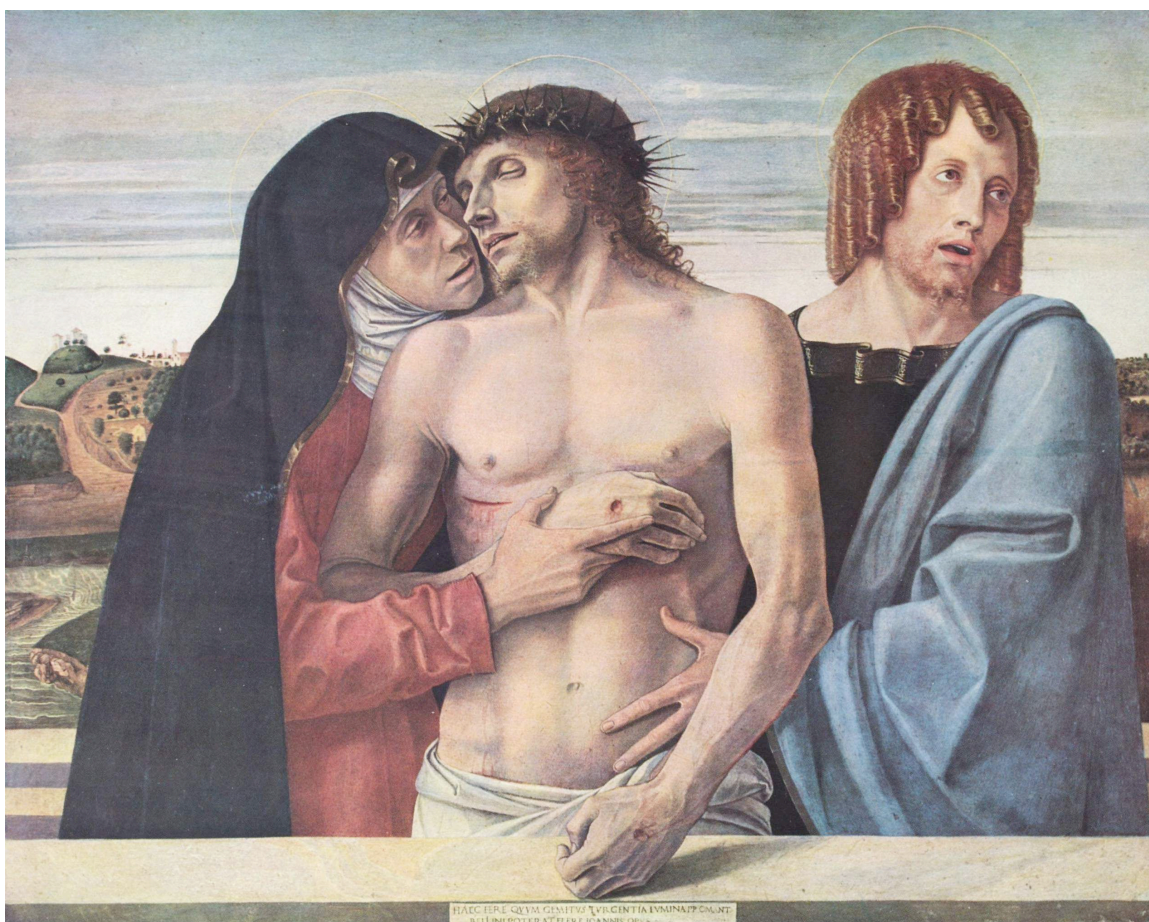
7. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Portrait of Giovanna Tornabuoni*, 1488.
Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza



8. Pasqualino Veneto, *Virgin and Child with Mary Magdalen*, 1496, Museo Correr



9. Paolo Veneziano, *Coronation of the Virgin*, 1358.
New York, Frick Collection



10. Giovanni Bellini, *Pietà*, 1460s. Milan, Brera Gallery



11. Jacopo Bellini, *Annunciation*, early 1430s. Brescia, Sant' Alessandro



12. Antonio Vivarini and Giovanni d'Alemagna, *Coronation*, 1444.
Venice, San Pantalon



13. Zanino di Pietro, *Madonna and Child*, 1429. Rome, Palazzo Venezia



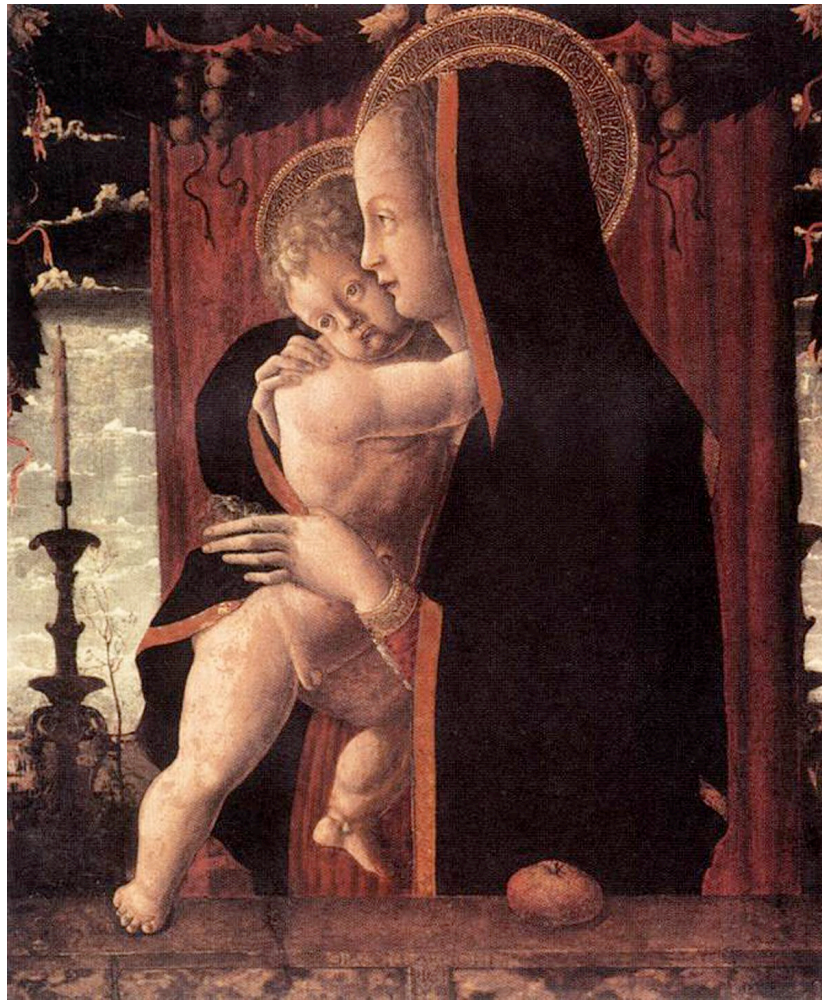
14. Attributed to Federico Tedesco, *Madonna of Humility*, 1408.
Padua, Museo Civico



15. Attributed to Federico Tedesco, *Madonna of Humility*, 1419.
Padua, Oratorio di S. Maria della Neve



16. Francesco Squarcione, *De Lazara Polyptych*, 1449-52. Padua, Museo Civico



17. Francesco Squarcione, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1460.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie



18. Marco Zoppo, *Madonna and Child* ('Wimbourne Madonna'), ca. 1455. Paris, Louvre



19. Andrea Mantegna, *Saint Mark in a Niche*, late 1440s. Frankfurt, Städelches Kunstinstitut



20. Detail of figure 19: *cartellino*



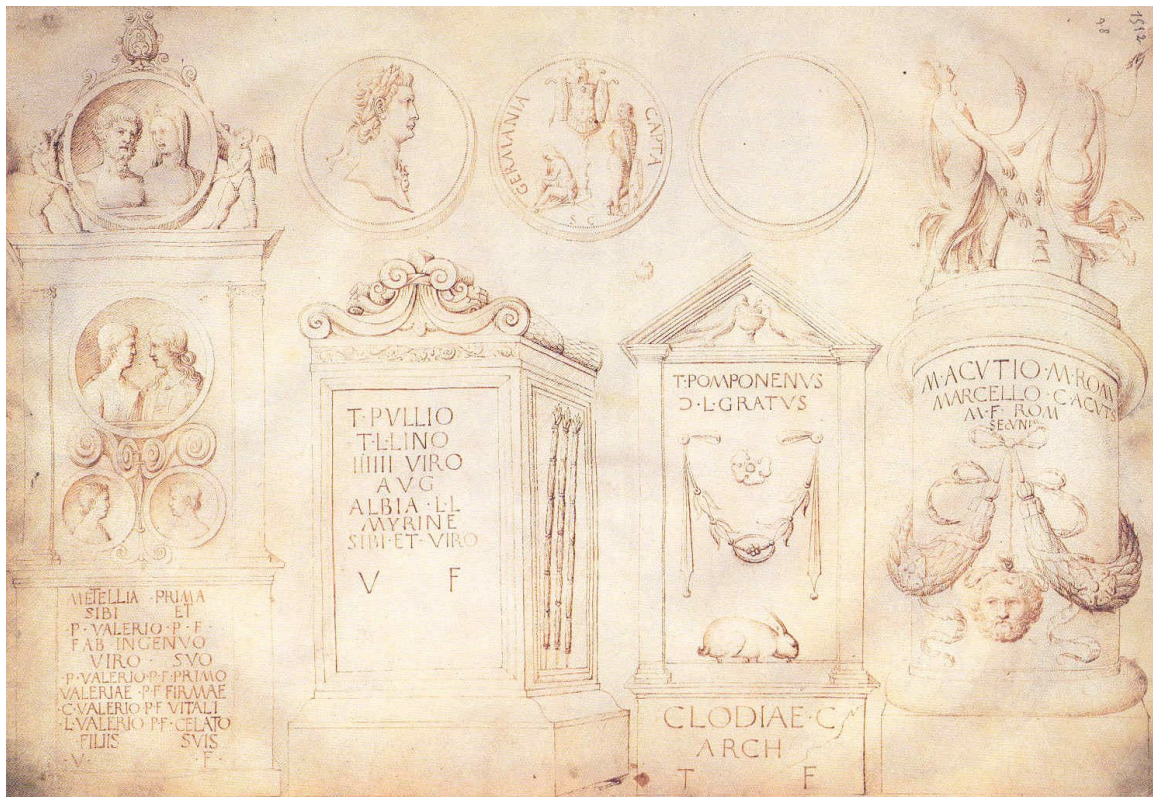
21. Nicoletto da Modena, *Apelles*, ca. 1507. engraving



22. Ciriaco d'Ancona, drawing of Hellenistic tomb relief from *Commentaria*, 1447-48. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Cod. Trotti 373, f. 115



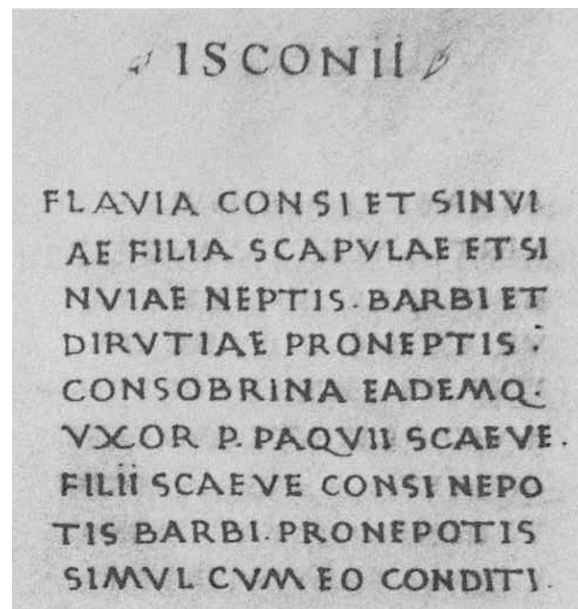
23. Mantegna, *Saint James before Herod*, ca. 1451. Padua, Church of the Eremitani, Ovetari Chapel (destroyed)



24. Jacopo Bellini, *Studies of Roman Tombs and Altars*, n.d. Louvre Album of Drawings, 48

PROVIDENTISSIMO·PRINCIPI·^{CIL}
 SENATVS·P·Q·R·QVOD·⁵⁸
 ACCESSVM·ITALIAE·HOC·
 ETIAM·ADDITO·EXPECVNIA·
 SVA·PORTV·TVTIOREM·
 NAVIGANTIBVS·REDDIDERIT·

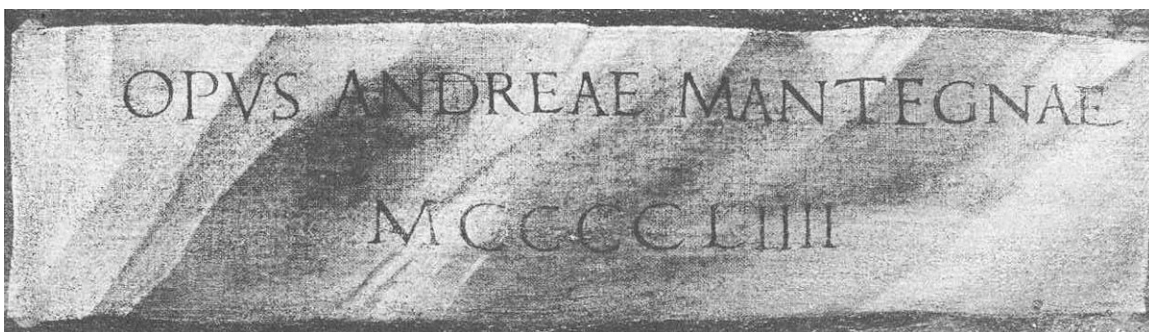
25. Ciriaco d'Ancona, page from sylloge, ca. 1443.
 Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Hamilton 254, f. 81



26. Follower of Ciriaco d'Ancona, page from
 sylloge of Giovanni Marcanova, 1457-60.
 Bern, Bürgerbibliothek, B 42, f. 22



27. Andrea Mantegna, *Saint Euphemia*, 1454.
Naples, Capodimonte



28. Detail of figure 27: *cartellino*



29. Attributed to Giovanni Bellini, *Portrait of Raffaele Zovenzoni*, ca. 1475. Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana



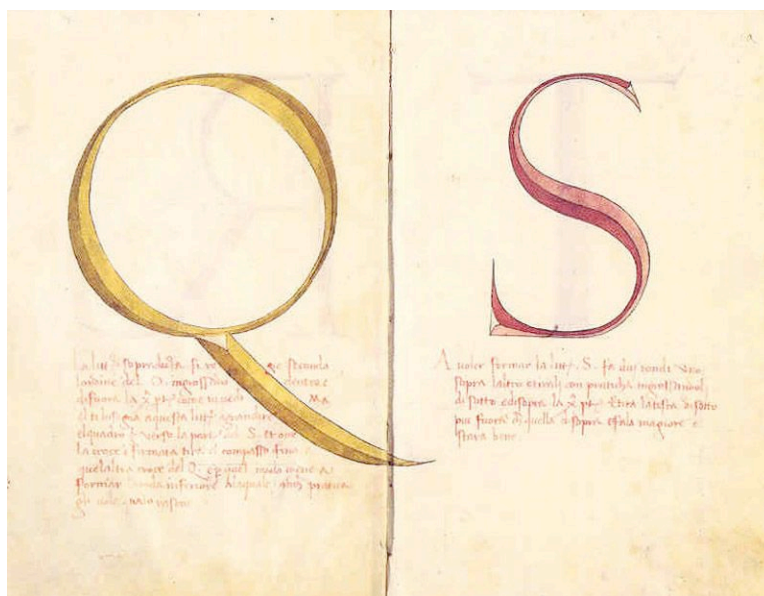
30. Bartolomeo Vivarini, *Madonna and Child with Saints and Man of Sorrows* (Frari Triptych), 1487. Venice, Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari



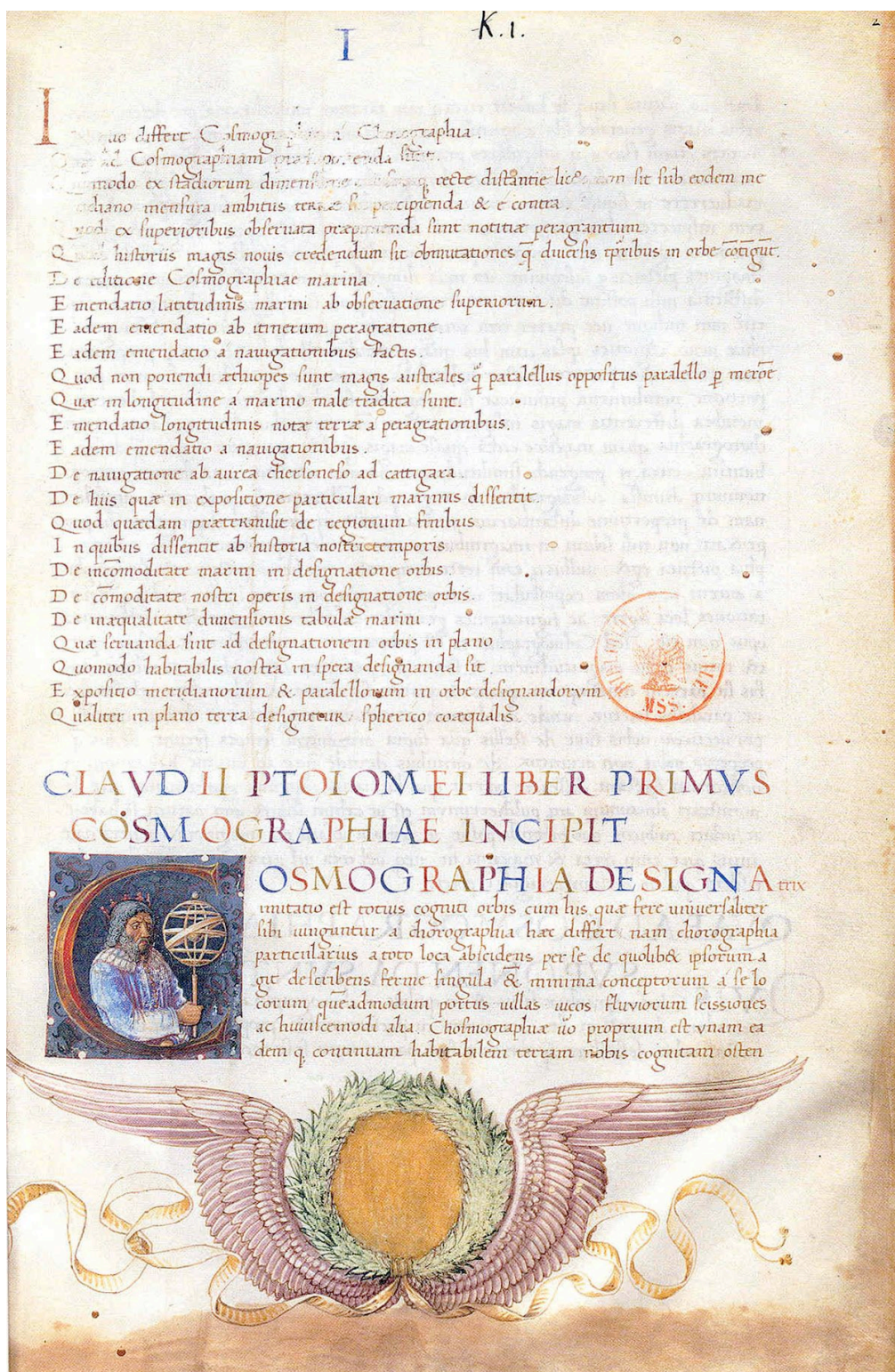
31. Hephaistion, mosaic fragment from Palace V, Pergamon, 2nd c. B.C.E.



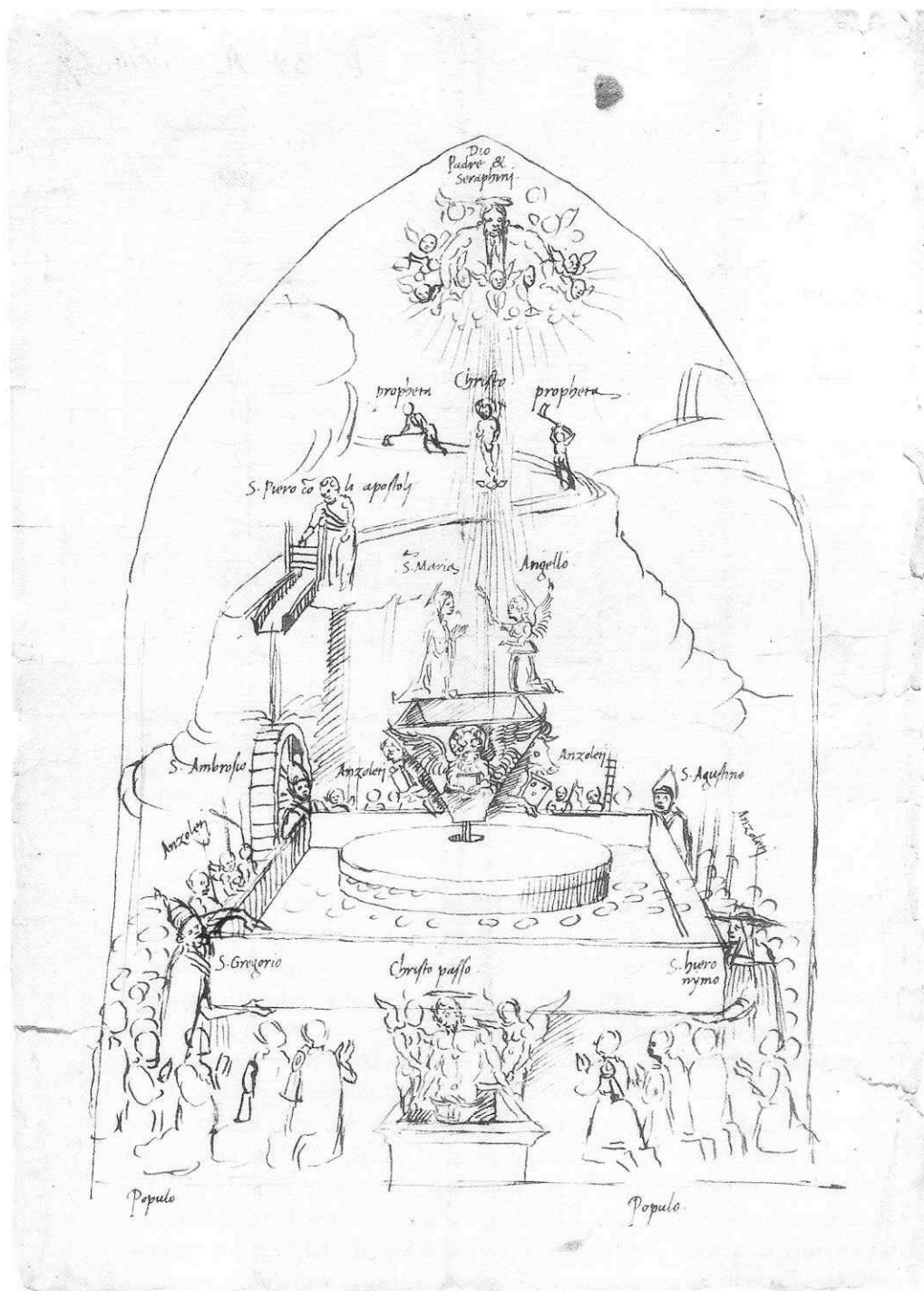
32. Attributed to Felice Feliciano, *Monument of Metellia Prima* from Giovanni Marcanova, *Quaedam antiquitatum fragmenta*, 1460s. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Cod. L. 515, f. 138v



33. Felice Feliciano, *Q* and *R* from *Alphabetum Romanum*, ca. 1460. Rome, Vatican Library, ms. 6852



34. Bartolomeo Sanvito, page from Ptolemy, *Cosmographia*, 1457.
 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Latin 17542, f. 1v



35. Bartolomeo Sanvito, sketch for contract between Bernardo de Lazara and Pietro Calzetta for the Corpus Christi altarpiece, 1466. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute.



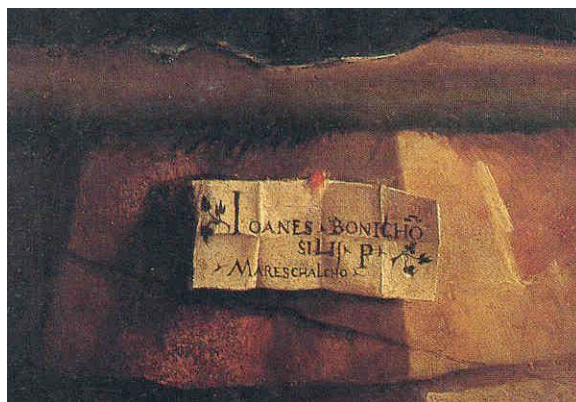
36. Giovanni Bellini, *Portrait of Pietro Bembo*, ca. 1505-6. Hampton Court



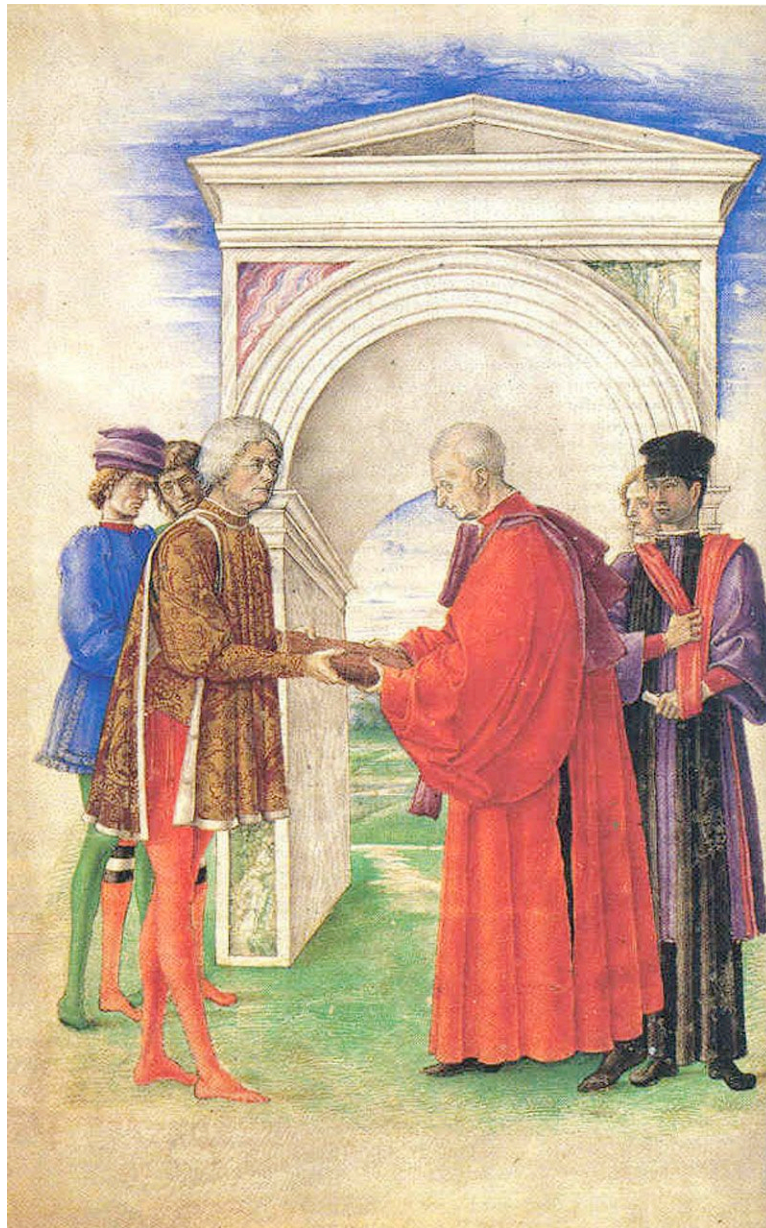
38: Detail of fig. 37



39. Vittore Carpaccio, *Presentation of the Virgin*, 1510.
Venice, Accademia. Detail of *cartellino*



40. Giovanni Buonconsiglio, *Pietà*, ca. 1495.
Vicenza, Museo Civico.
Detail of *cartellino*



41. Attributed to Giovanni Bellini, *Guarino da Verona Presenting his Translation to Jacopo Marcello* from Strabo, *Geographia*, 1459. Albi, Médiathèque Municipale Pierre-Amalric, ms 77, f. 3v



42. Attributed to Giovanni Bellini, *Jacopo Marcello Presenting the Manuscript to Rene d'Anjou* from Strabo, *Geographia*, 1459. Albi, Médiathèque Municipale Pierre-Amalric, ms 77, f. 4



43. Workshop of Giovanni Bellini, initial E, from Strabo, *Geographia*, 1459. Albi, Médiathèque Municipale Pierre-Amalric, ms 77, f. 1r



44. Felice Feliciano, frontispiece from Giovanni Marcanova, *Quaedam antiquitatum fragmenta*, Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Cod. L. 515, f. 1r



45. Master of the Putti, frontispiece for Book II of Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* (Venice, Nicholas Jenson, 1472). ca. 1472-74. Padua, Biblioteca del Seminario, cod. K. I, f. 20r



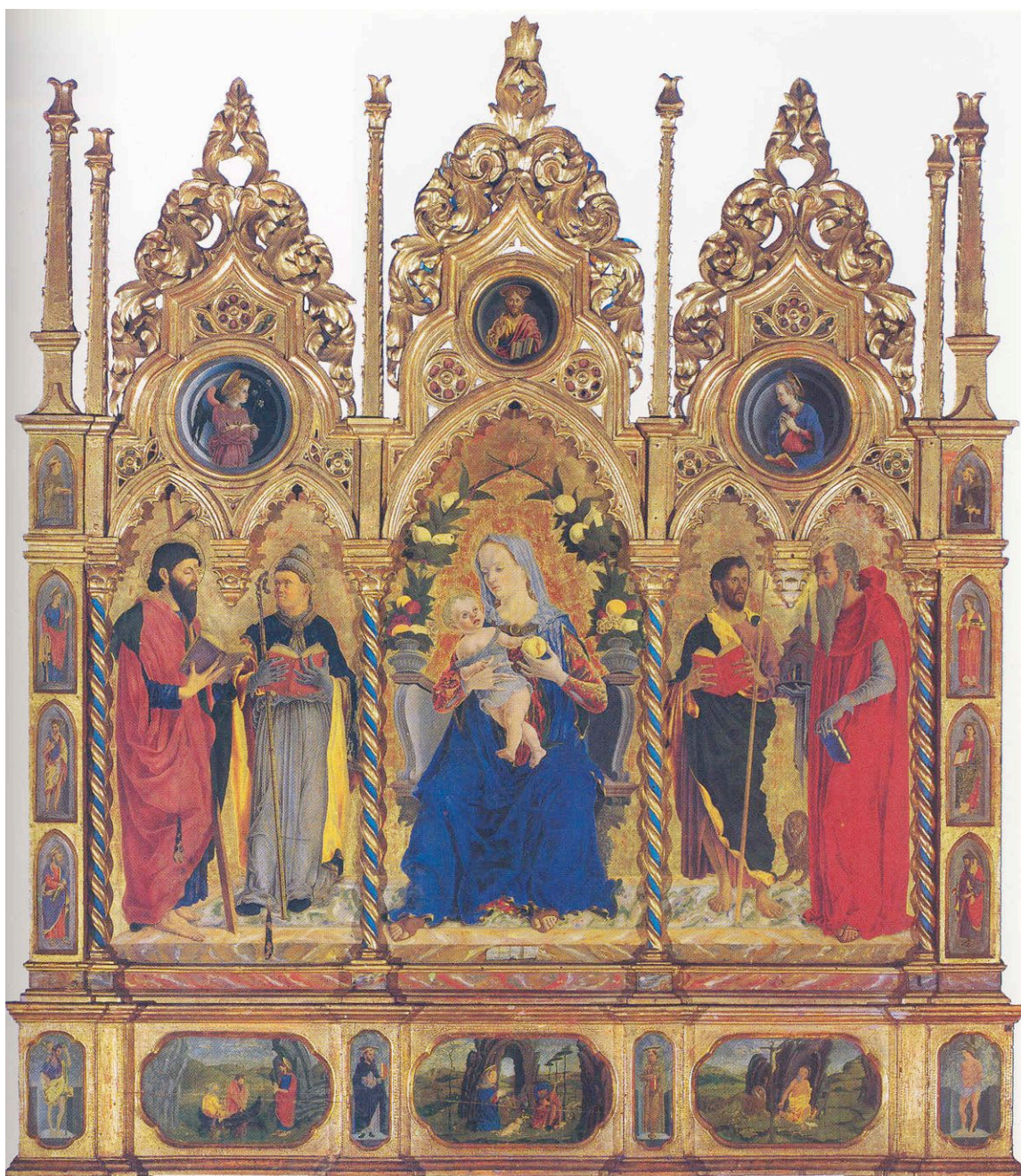
46. Girolamo da Cremona, frontispiece from Aristotle, *Opera*, with commentary by Averroës, ca. 1483. New York, Morgan Library, PML 21194, f. 2r



47. Workshop of Jacopo Bellini, *Saint Maurice* from *Passio Sancti Mauricii*, 1457. Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms 940, f. 34v



48. Workshop of Jacopo Bellini, *Portrait of Jacopo Marcello* from *Passio Sancti Mauricii*, 1457. Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms 940, f. 38v



49. Marco Zoppo, *Collegio di Spagna Triptych*, 1462. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie



50. Marco Zoppo, main panel of *Pesaro Altarpiece*, 1471. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie



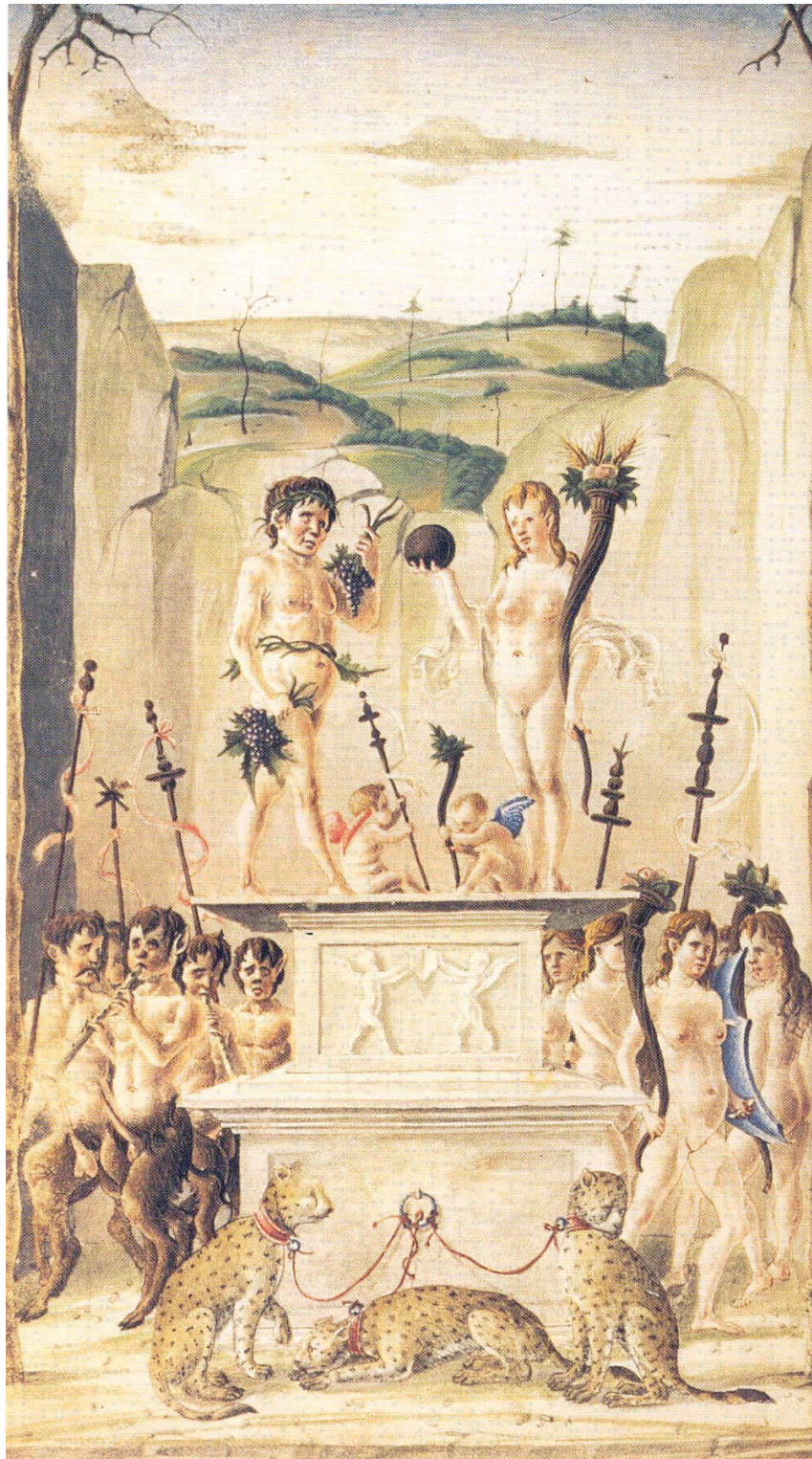
51. Marco Zoppo, *Male Head in Profile* from the *Parchment Sketchbook*, f. 13v.
London, British Museum



52. Marco Zoppo, *Death of Orpheus (?)*, from the *Parchment Sketchbook*, f. 21 r.
London, British Museum



53. Marco Zoppo, *View of Rome*, from Giovanni Marcanova, *Quaedam antiquitatum fragmenta*, ca. 1465. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Cod. L. 515, f. 23r



54. Marco Zoppo, *Ceres and Bacchus*, from Virgil, *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid*, ca. 1466. Rome, Vatican Library, Lat. 5208, f. 21v



55. Antonello da Messina, *Saint Jerome in His Study*, c.1475? London, National Gallery



56. Giovanni Bellini, *Portrait of Leonardo Loredan*, c. 1501-04.
London, National Gallery



57. Antonello da Messina, *Il Condottiere*, 1475. Paris, Louvre



58. Vittore Carpaccio, *Two Venetian Ladies on a Terrace*, ca. 1495.
Venice, Museo Correr



59. Vittore Carpaccio, *Il Cavaliere*, 1510. Madrid, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection



60. Giovanni Mansueti, *Arrest of Saint Mark*, 1499. Veduz, Collection of the Prince of Liechtenstein



61. Detail of fig. 6: *cartellino*



62. Antonello da Messina, *San Cassiano Altarpiece* (fragment), 1475.
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum



63. Albrecht Dürer, *Feast of the Rosegarlands*, 1506. Prague, National Gallery



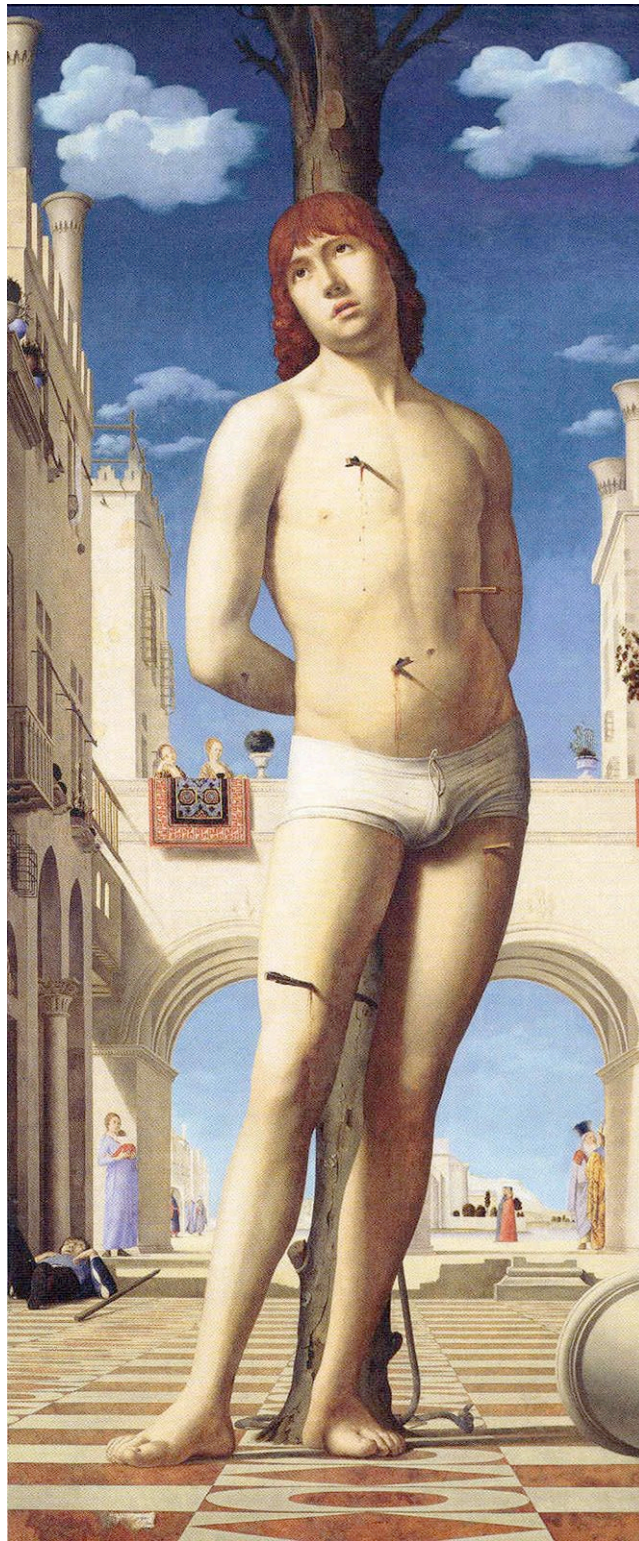
64. Detail of fig. 63: self-portrait



65. Albrecht Dürer, *Christ Among the Doctors*, 1506.
Madrid, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection



66. Albrecht Dürer, *Madonna with the Siskin*, 1506. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie



67. Antonello da Messina, *Saint Sebastian* (after restoration), 1478-1479. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister.



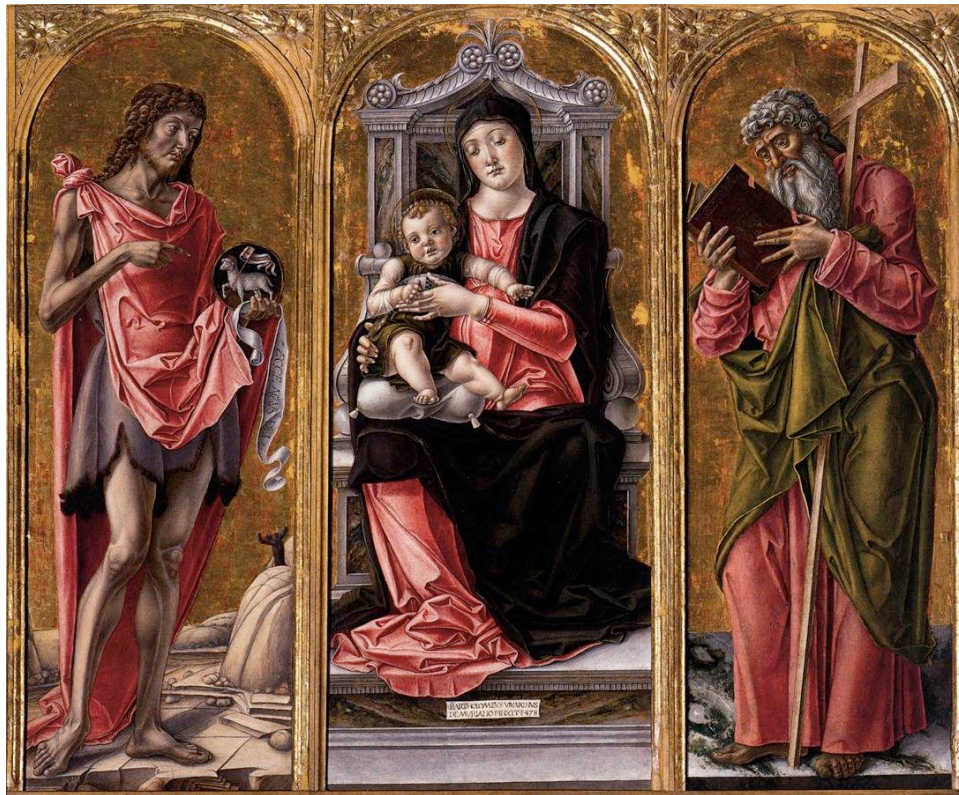
68. Detail of fig. 67: *cartellino* during cleaning



69. Giorgio Schiavone, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1460.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie



70. Alvise Vivarini, *Madonna and Child with Six Saints*, 1480.
Venice, Accademia, ex-Treviso, San Francesco



71. Bartolomeo Vivarini, triptych, 1478. Venice, San Giovanni in Bragora



72. Andrea Mantegna, *Saint Sebastian*, ca. 1480. Paris, Louvre



73. Andrea Mantegna, *Saint Sebastian*, ca. 1457-58.
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum



74. Vittore Carpaccio, *Funeral of Saint Jerome*, 1502.
Venice, Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni



75. Giovanni Bellini, *Presentation in the Temple*, ca. 1460.
Venice, Galleria Querini-Stampalia



76. Giovanni Bellini, *Baptism of Christ*, ca. 1500-05.
Vicenza, Santa Corona



77. Niccolò Colantonio, *Saint Jerome*, ca. 1444-45. Naples, Capodimonte



78. Vittore Carpaccio, detail of *Arrival of the Ambassadors in Britain*, ca. 1495.
Venice, Accademia



79. Giovanni Bellini, *Madonna of the Pear* (or *Morelli Madonna*),
ca. 1485. Bergamo, Accademia Carrara



80. Byzantine school, *Nicopeia*, first half of the twelfth century. Venice, San Marco



81. Carlo Crivelli, *Madonna and Child*, ca. 1480.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art



82. Carlo Crivelli, *Madonna della Candeletta*,
1490-92. Milan, Brera



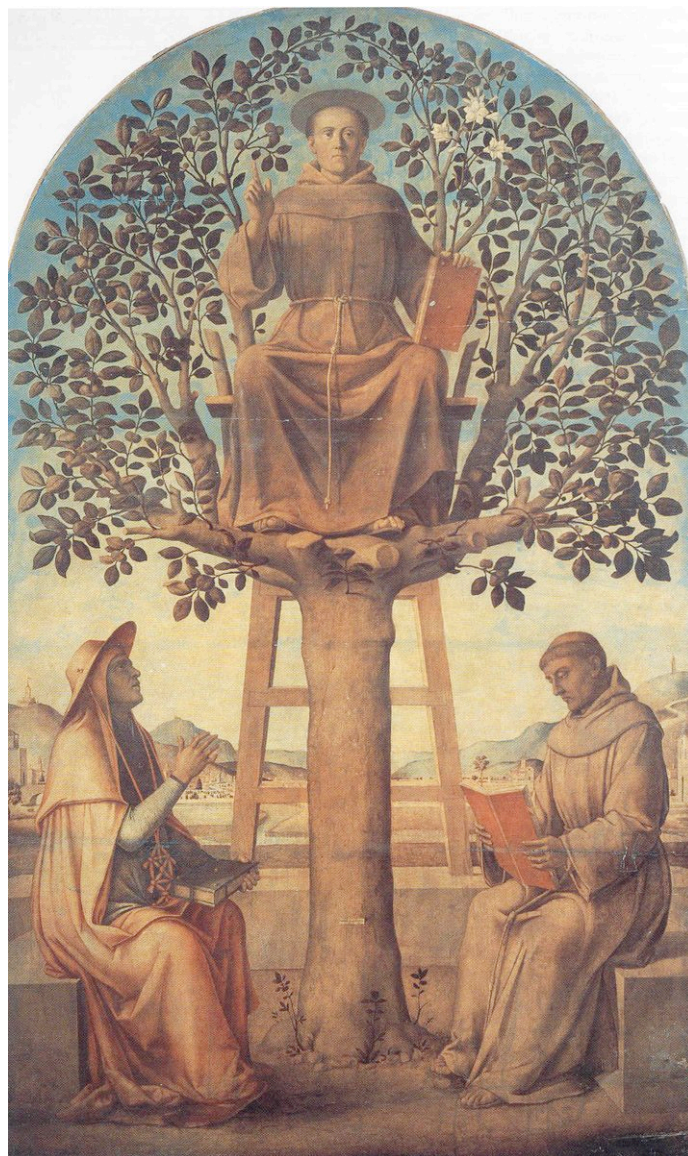
83. Carlo Crivelli, left wing of altarpiece for San Domenico, Camerino, 1482. Milan, Brera



84. Rocco da Vicenza, Garzadori Altar with Giovanni Bellini's *Baptism of Christ*, ca. 1500. Vicenza, Santa Corona



Detail of fig. 85: *cartellino*

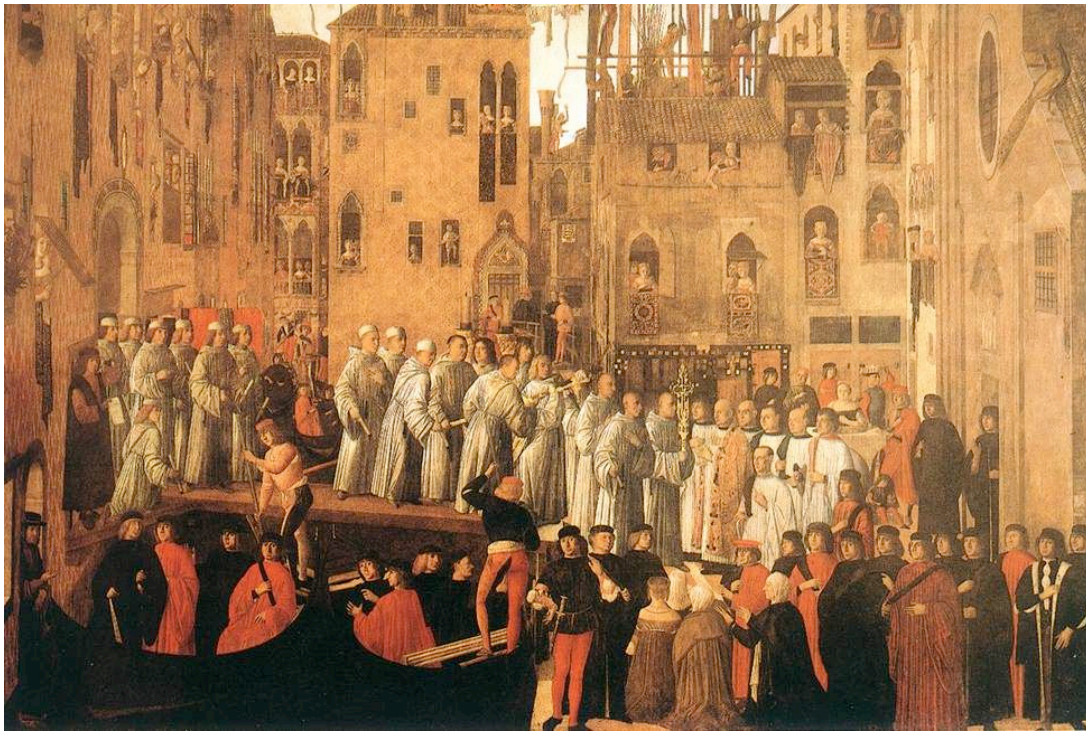


88. Lazzaro Bastiani, *Saint Anthony Altarpiece*, ca. 1480.
Venice, Accademia

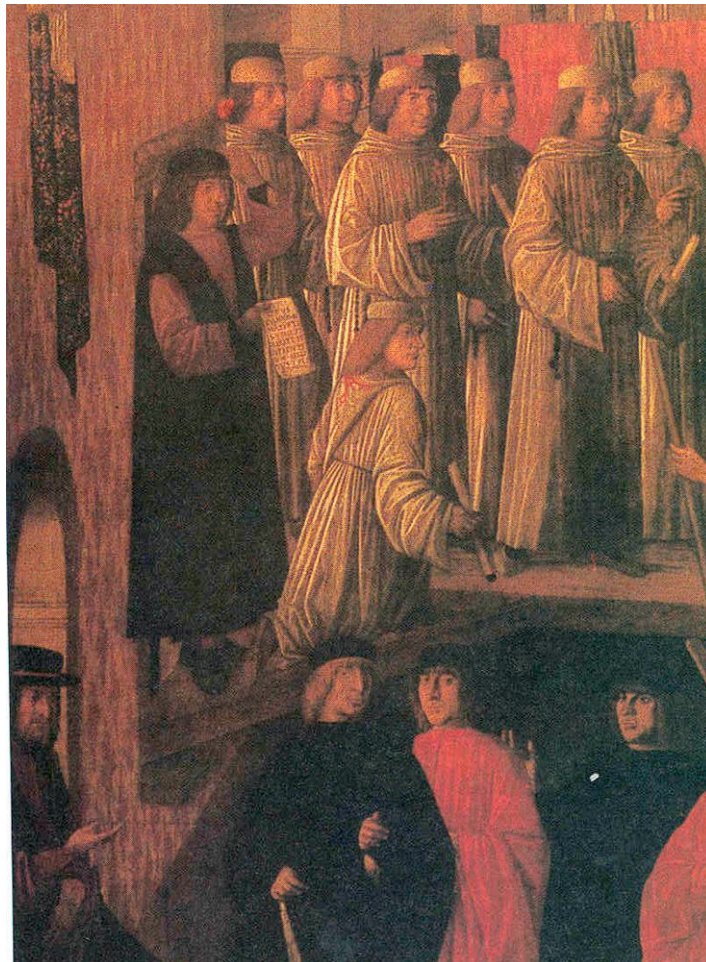


87. Gentile Bellini, *Procession in Piazza San Marco*, 1496. Venice, Accademia





88. Giovanni Mansueti, *Miracle of the Relic of the Holy Cross in Campo San Lio*, 1494.
Venice, Accademia



89. Detail of fig. 88: self-portrait



90. Giovanni Bellini and Titian, *Feast of the Gods*, 1514/1529. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art



91. Detail of figure 90: *cartellino*



92. El Greco (Domenikos Theotokopolous), *Disrobing of Christ*, 1577-79. Toledo, Cathedral, Sacristy



93. El Greco (Domenikos Theotokopoulos), *Martyrdom of Saint Maurice*, 1580-81, Madrid, Escorial, Chapter House



94. Diego Velázquez, *Surrender at Breda*, ca. 1635. Madrid, Prado



95. Diego Velázquez, *Equestrian Portrait of Philip IV*, ca. 1635. Madrid, Prado



96. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Madonna and Child with Saint John the Baptist*, 1662. Bilbao, Museo de Belles Artes



97. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Portrait of George Gisze*,
1532. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie



98. Vittore Carpaccio, *Letter Rack* (verso of *Hunt on the Lagoon*),
ca. 1495. Malibu, CA, J. Paul Getty Museum



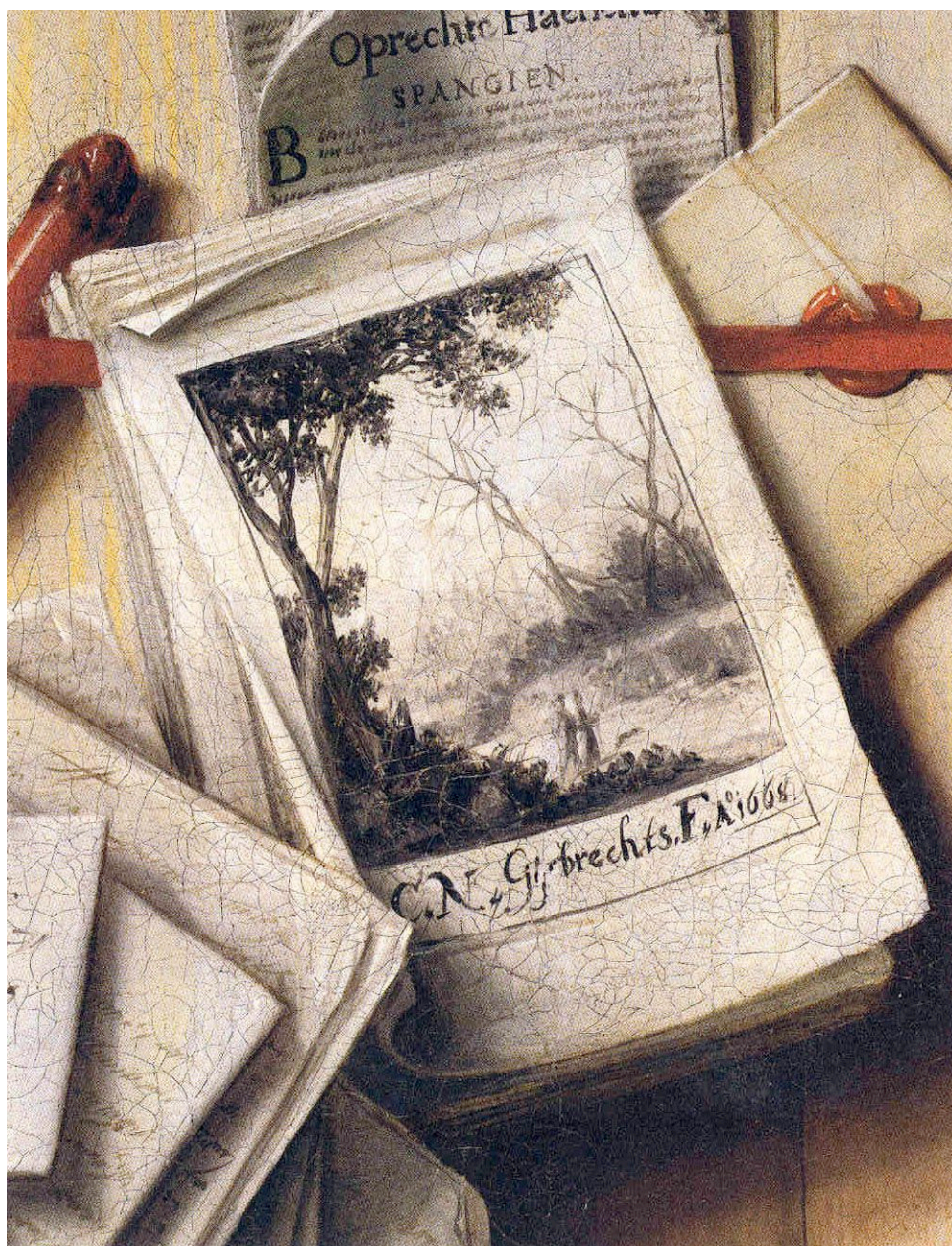
99. Reconstruction of Carpaccio's *Two Venetian Ladies on a Terrace* and *Hunt on the Lagoon*



100. Jacopo de' Barbari, *Game Piece*, 1504. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen



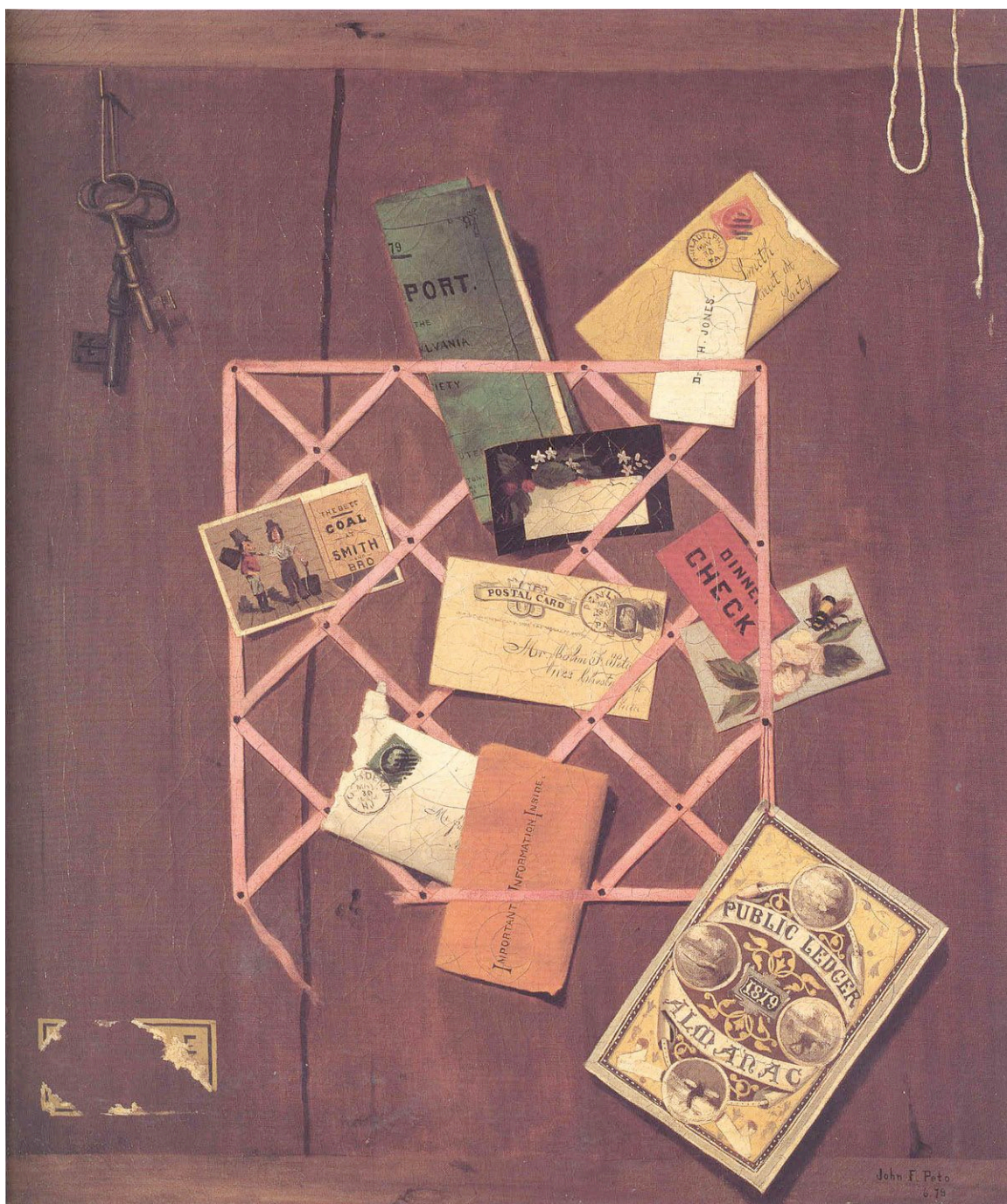
101. Cornelius Gijsbrechts, *Trompe l'Oeil—Board Partition with Letter Rack and Music Book*, 1668. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst



102. Detail of fig 101: engraving with signature and date



103. Jan Gossaert, *Portrait of a Merchant*, 1530s.
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art



104. John Peto, *Office Board for Smith Brothers Coal Company*, 1879. Andover, MA, Addison Gallery of American Art

CURRICULUM VITA

KANDICE A. RAWLINGS

Education

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
2009 Ph.D. Art History
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Teaching

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Summer 2008, Summer Session Instructor, Rutgers University (Art 106: Survey of Western Art, Renaissance to Contemporary)

Fall 2007, Teaching Assistant, Rutgers University Writing Program (101: Expository Writing)

Summer 2007, Summer Session Instructor, Rutgers University (Art 309: Masaccio and His Contemporaries)

Fall 2006, Teaching Assistant, Rutgers University Writing Program (101: Expository Writing)

Summer 2006, Art History Instructor, Rutgers University Department of Italian Study Abroad Program in Urbino, Italy (Art 309: Masaccio and His Contemporaries and Art 310: High Renaissance in Italy)

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Spring 2005, Teaching Assistant, Rutgers University (Art 106: Survey of Western Art, Renaissance to Contemporary)

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Other Professional Experience

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January - May 2005, Intern, Education Department, Frick Collection

January 2004 - June 2005, Photography Researcher, Cambridge University Press

Spring 2004, Visual Resources Collection Staff, Department of Art History, Rutgers University

June 2003, Intern, Decorative Arts Department of the Brooklyn Museum of Art

2002-2003 Academic Year, Visual Resources Collection Staff, Department of Art History, Rutgers University

Publications

“Painted Paradoxes: The *Trompe-L’Oeil* Fly in the Renaissance,” *Athanos* 26 (2008): 7-13.

Rutgers Art Review, volume 23 (2007), co-editor

“Susanna as an Exemplum for Chastity in Renaissance Florence,” *La Fusta* XIII (2004-2005): 59-66