

The 'Cornaro Family Tree' as a Tool for Identifying Cornaro Family Portraits

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Abstract : This paper builds on the speaker's recent identification of an early sixteenth-century painting in the National Gallery of Ireland as containing rare portraits of Giorgio Cornaro (brother of Caterina, Queen of Cyprus) and his son Cardinal Francesco. It resolves similar long-standing confusion regarding the identities of sitters in related works by Titian, Raphael and Bernini, in works such as the Cornaro Triple Portrait in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, Man with a Falcon in The Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Head of a Cardinal, Wilton House, Wiltshire and The Cornaro Chapel, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome, by using an overlooked seventeenth-century painted Cornaro family tree, from Palazzo Corner-Mocenigo, as a tool for identifying these and other sitters in disputed portraits of one of Renaissance Venice's wealthiest and most influential patrician families. In so doing, it will cast new light on Titian's development as a portraitist and the extent to which important paintings commissioned by the Cornaro survived fires at two family palaces in Venice in the 1530s. It will also showcase the associations Raphael had with the Cornaro cardinal and will present new evidence relating to the likenesses Bernini fashioned for the Cornaro Chapel in 1647-52.

Keywords : Venice, portraits, titian, genealogy, Bernini, family tree, Raphael, venetian family, cornaro, sixteenth century Venice, portraiture

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