



Fig. 1 Height of binding 625 mm

Jackson, John Baptist

London *circa* 1701 – *circa* 1780 Newcastle-on-Tyne

Titiani Vecelii, Pauli Caliarrii, Jacobi Robusti, et Jacobi de Ponte; Opera Selectiora a Joanne Baptista Jackson, Anglo; Ligno coelata et coloribus adumbrata.

Venice, Giovanni Battista Pasquali, 1745

FOLIO (613 × 470 mm), letterpress title-page with woodcut vignette and twenty-four sheets of chiaroscuro woodcut prints, the complete suite, reproducing seventeen subjects (two subjects each taking three sheets and three subjects each taking two sheets).¹ One woodcut printed using two blocks, four printed from three blocks, and twelve printed from four blocks.

PROVENANCE Leonard B. Schlosser (d. 1991) — Sotheby's, 'Fine books and manuscripts including the Leonard B. Schlosser Collection of Illustrated Books', New York, 8 June 1992, lot 432 — Charles Sebag-Montefiore, exlibris.

The sheets trimmed by the binder well outside the border line (average margin 40 mm). Repaired tear in the fore-edge of the title-page, spotting in some margins, otherwise excellent impressions in fine state of preservation.

BINDING brown pasteboards; calligraphic lettering-piece on upper cover.

A SUITE OF CHIAROSCURO WOODCUTS reproducing seventeen works of art by great Venetian painters of the sixteenth century, then in churches and lay confraternities of Venice and its environs, or in the private collection of the series' principal patron, Consul Joseph Smith. Three prints have a certain documentary value as the originals are now lost; two others are of interest because the originals have been cut down (Titian's 'Virgin in the Clouds with Six Saints') or restored (Tintoretto's 'Miracle of Saint Mark').

¹ The twenty-four prints appear in the album in this sequence (Kainen numbers): K-17; K-28; K-21; K-20; K-24, left sheet K-24, right sheet; K-16; K-19; K-18; K-22, left sheet; K-22, right sheet; K-22, centre sheet; K-26; K-27; K-25, left sheet; K-25, centre sheet; K-25, right sheet; K-23, left sheet; K-23, right sheet; K-30; K-32; right sheet; K-32, left sheet; K-31; K-29. The same confused order ('Crucifixion' bound left-right-centre and the 'Dives and Lazarus' bound right-left) is found in the album in the Scottish National Gallery, P 2853.



Fig. 2 Titian's 'St Peter Martyr' altarpiece (Basilica dei SS. Giovanni e Paolo, destroyed by fire in 1867). Chiaroscuro woodcut printed from four blocks (reduced from 545 × 334 mm)



Fig. 3 'The Holy Family and Four Saints', after Veronese. Chiaroscuro woodcut by J.B. Jackson, printed from four blocks (reduced from 560 × 340 mm)

The chiaroscuro woodcut process developed in response to a demand for reproductions of monochromatic wash drawings and until Jackson began to experiment with the technique, had not been used for the interpretation of oil paintings. Jackson's first chiaroscuro woodcut is 'Christ giving the Keys to Saint Peter' after a drawing by Raphael, executed in Paris in 1727 for the *Recueil Crozat*, an album of reproductions of drawings and paintings in the best French collections.

After his arrival in Venice in 1731, Jackson was occupied primarily in making conventional woodcuts to decorate or illustrate books printed by Baglioni, Pezzana, and others. Receiving encouragement from Antonio Maria Zanetti, he also made several chiaroscuro woodcuts after old master drawings and prints, and in 1735 he printed on a cylinder press set up in his own house 'The Judgment of Salomon' after Rubens, the first chiaroscuro woodcut to reproduce a painting in a full range of tones. In 1738 Jackson reproduced two works in Consul Smith's collection by the chiaroscuro method, a bronze statue of Neptune after Giambologna, and a small painting by Rembrandt, 'Descent from the Cross' (now National Gallery, London).

Well-satisfied by these prints, Consul Smith proposed to Jackson that he undertake a series of large chiaroscuro woodcuts after Venetian masters. The series was to be sold as a bound volume from the shop operated for Smith by Giovanni Battista Pasquali. Finance came from Smith, his friends Charles Frederick and Smart Lethieullier, and other English residents in Venice. Jackson began work in 1739 and for the next four and a half years he was wholly occupied with planning, cutting, and proofing the blocks from which the 'Venetian set' ultimately was printed in 1745.²

In order to preserve the detail and grandeur of the originals, Jackson worked in a large format, using three sheets of paper for each of the two largest paintings (546 × 1248 mm, 547 × 1278 mm) and two sheets to reproduce three paintings (565 × 900 mm, 584 × 850 mm, 559 × 762 mm). Jackson sought a rich decorative effect and did not repeat literally the colours of the paintings. The key blocks he printed in a soft grey or buff colour and the three additional blocks in brown-ochre or grey-green ranges, ending each impression with a dark colour that defined the shadows and described the contours of the figures. Leaving the white of the paper to shine through for small areas of highlight, Jackson claimed to achieve ten tints through the overlapping of the transparent colours. The cylinder press enabled him to exert such pressure that the tints became deeply embossed in the paper, adding cast shadows to the range of printed tones.

² Jacob Kainen, *John Baptist Jackson. Eighteenth-century master of the color woodcut* (Washington, DC 1962), pp.76–82 nos. 16–32; Colin Franklin, *Book collecting as one of the fine arts* (Aldershot 1996), pp.38–50.

Most of the works reproduced are easily traceable, but three chosen from Consul Smith's own collection are now lost. The first prints to be executed, dated 1739, reproduce Titian's 'Death of Saint Peter Martyr' (formerly SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, destroyed by fire in 1867; see **Fig. 2**); Tintoretto's 'Massacre of the Innocents' (Scuola di S. Rocco, Venice); Veronese's 'The Presentation in the Temple' (S. Sebastiano, Venice); Jacopo Bassano's 'The Entombment' (S. Maria in Vanzo, Padua); and Veronese's 'Holy Family with Four Saints' (formerly S. Zaccaria, Venice, now Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice; see **Fig. 3**).

Two prints are dated 1740, Veronese's 'Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine' (formerly S. Caterina, Venice, now Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice) and his 'Marriage at Cana' (formerly S. Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, now Louvre, Paris). Two prints are dated 1741, Tintoretto's 'Crucifixion' (Scuola di S. Rocco, Venice) and Veronese's 'Finding of Moses' (formerly Consul Smith collection, now lost: not to be identified with the partial copy by Sebastiano Ricci that passed from Smith to George III and is now at Hampton Court). Three prints are dated 1742, Titian's 'Presentation in the Temple' (formerly Scuola Grande di S. Maria della Carità, Venice, now Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice), his 'Virgin in the Clouds with Six Saints' (formerly S. Nicolò dei Frari, now Pinacoteca Vaticana), and Leandro Bassano's 'Raising of Lazarus' (now Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice).

Three prints are dated 1743, Jacopo Bassano's 'Christ on the Mount of Olives' (now Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice), Jacopo Bassano's drawing 'Dives and Lazarus' (formerly Consul Smith collection, now lost), and Francesco Bassano's 'Melchisedech blessing Abraham' (formerly Consul Smith collection, possibly to be identified with a picture sold by Christie's in 1982).³ Finally, two prints are undated, Tintoretto's 'Miracle of Saint Mark' (formerly 'Scuola di S. Rocco, Venice; now Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice) and Titian's 'Descent of the Holy Spirit' (S. Maria della Salute, Venice).

In recent years, these chiaroscuro woodcuts have featured in exhibitions devoted to reproductive printmaking generally,⁴ and in exhibitions of reproductive prints after Veronese,⁵

³ Enrica Pan and Michele Cordaro, *Jacopo Bassano e l'incisione. La fortuna dell'arte bassanesca nella grafica di riproduzione dal XVI al XIX secolo*, catalogue of an exhibition, Museo Civico (Bassano del Grappa 1992), no. 110.

⁴ Christopher Lloyd, *Art and its images: an exhibition of printed books containing engraved illustrations after Italian painting*, Bodleian Library (Oxford 1975), no. 14; David Alexander and Richard T. Godfrey, *Painters and engraving: the reproductive print from Hogarth to Wilkie*, Yale Center for British Art (New Haven 1980), no. 22; Susan Lambert, *The image multiplied: five centuries of printed reproductions of paintings and drawings*, Victoria & Albert Museum (London 1987), no. 79.

⁵ Paolo Ticozzi, *Paolo Veronese e i suoi incisori*, Museo Correr (Venice 1977), nos. 62–66. Paolo Ticozzi, *Immagini dal Veronese. Incisioni dal sec. XVI al XIX dalle collezioni del Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe*, Villa alla Farnesina alla Lungara (Rome 1978), nos. 110–113.

Tintoretto,⁶ Titian,⁷ and Bassano.⁸ Individual prints have been shown in exhibitions of chiaroscuro woodcuts and of colour printing, notably those organised by the Institut Néerlandais in Paris and Rotterdam in 1965,⁹ Yale Center for British Art in New Haven in 1978,¹⁰ Indiana University Art Museum in Bloomington in 1989,¹¹ and Hunterian Art Gallery in Glasgow in 1994.¹² The entire suite was exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Peterborough in 1983¹³ and at the Museo Biblioteca Archivio di Bassano del Grappa in 1996.¹⁴ The set of four pearwood blocks cut for Bassano's 'The Entombment' was exhibited in Bassano del Grappa in 1990.¹⁵

⁶ Paolo Ticozzi, *Immagini dal Tintoretto. Stampe dal XVI al XIX secolo nelle collezioni del Gabinetto delle Stampe, Villa alla Farnesina alla Lungara* (Rome 1982), nos. 63–65. Maria Agnese Chiari, *Jacopo Tintoretto e i suoi incisori*, Palazzo Ducale (Venice 1994), nos. 87–89.

⁷ Maria Agnese Chiari, *Incisioni da Tiziano. Catalogo del fondo grafico a stampa del Museo Correr* (Venice 1982), nos. 181–183; *Chiaroscuro woodcuts: from Frits Lugt collection in Paris*, National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo (Tokyo 2005), no. 83.

⁸ Pan and Cordano, *op. cit.*, nos. 108–113.

⁹ Carlos van Hasselt, *Clairs-obscurs: gravures sur bois imprimées en couleurs de 1500 à 1800 provenant de collections hollandaises*, Institut Néerlandais and Musée Boymans-van Beuningen (Paris 1965), nos. 273–277.

¹⁰ Joan M. Friedman, *Color Printing in England 1486–1870*, Yale Center for British Art (New Haven 1978), pp.5–6.

¹¹ Adelheid M. Gealt, *Beyond black & white: chiaroscuro prints from Indiana collections*, Indiana University Art Museum (Bloomington 1989).

¹² Martin J. Hopkinson, *Colour & line: five centuries of colour woodcuts*, Hunterian Art Gallery (Glasgow 1994), nos. 17–21 (the Newdigate copy, sold by Christie's, 'Important old master prints', London, 1 July 1987, lot 321, where purchased by an English private collector from whom acquired by the University of Glasgow for £8000; see *National Art-collections Fund Review* 1992, p.152 no. 3728).

¹³ *John Baptist Jackson: the Venetian set*, Art Gallery of Ontario, Peterborough (Toronto 1983).

¹⁴ Giorgio Mastrapasqua, *John Baptist Jackson (1701–1780): Chiaroscuro dalla collezione Remondini del Museo biblioteca archivio di Bassano del Grappa* (Venice 1996), pp.43–83.

¹⁵ Mario Infelise and Paola Marini, *Remondini: un editore del Settecento* (Milan 1990), p.265, no. 17. Four blocks for 'The Entombment' are illustrated by Mastrapasqua, *op. cit.*, p.31.

Complete sets of the prints are rare and we notice just six passing through the auction sale rooms in the last forty-five years.¹⁶ Loosely inserted in the copy are trial proof impressions of three blocks, representing Veronese's 'Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine' and two sheets, pasted together, forming the 'Marriage of Cana' (see Fig. 4). Two comparable proof impressions, also printed in grey ink, are in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (reproduced by Kainen, *op. cit.*, pp.37–38).



Fig. 4 Trial proof of the key block of 'The Marriage at Cana', after Veronese. Chiaroscuro woodcut (on two sheets, 610 × 835 mm joined)

¹⁶ The present set; and sets sold by Karl & Faber, Munich, 11 December 1968; Sotheby's, London, 28 February 1972, lot 57; Christie's, London, 1 July 1987, lot 321 (now Hunterian Art Gallery, Glasgow, see above note 12); Sotheby's, London, 26 April 1979, lot 386; Sotheby's, London, 1 December 1986, lot 69 (now Scottish National Gallery, P 2853).