

**THE WORK OF TITIAN:  
REPRODUCED  
IN OVER TWO  
HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649736867

The Work of Titian: Reproduced in Over Two Hundred Illustrations by Titian & Oskar Fischel

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

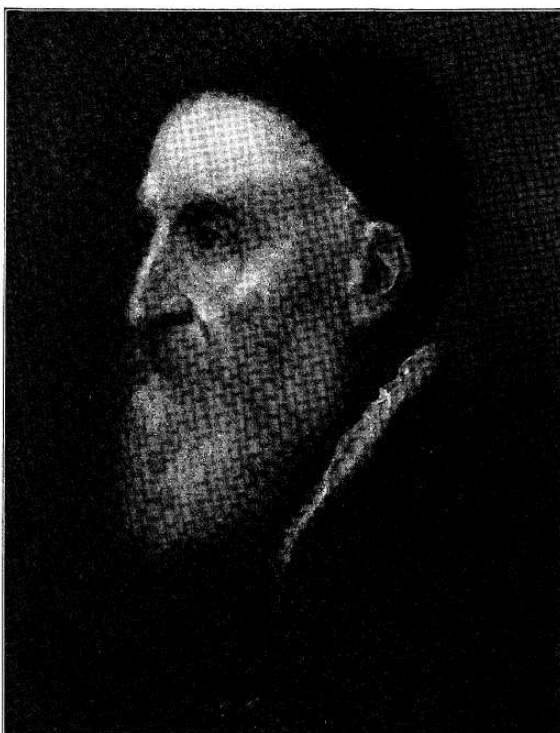
[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**TITIAN & OSKAR FISCHER**

**THE WORK OF TITIAN:  
REPRODUCED  
IN OVER TWO  
HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS**



TITIAN



Albrecht, Prado-Museum

Selbstporträt

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

Portrait de l'artiste peint par lui-même

*Tiziano Veselli*  
THE WORK OF  
TITIAN

REPRODUCED IN  
OVER TWO HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION  
ABRIDGED FROM  
OSKER FISCHER

NEW YORK  
BRENTANO'S  
MCMXIII

Stacks  
Gift  
Lib. Mrs. Katharine Hawley  
11-13-62

# TITIAN

## HIS LIFE AND HIS ART

TITIAN was born in the little town of Pieve di Cadore in the mountains of Cadore where the road leads by the green cliffs of the Dolomites past the foaming Pieve, from Italy to the Tyrol. The valley and the village are both commanded by a fortress. Mountains and forests, green slopes and ancient castles, were thus the first impressions of the outer world made on the young painter, and they remained with him, with the other associations of his birthplace, throughout his life.

Among the hardy people of the village who left their mountain homes to cut timber in the woods, the Vecellio family had been prominent for many generations. Gregorio Vecellio, the father of Titian, had for half his life served the republic of Venice as a soldier. When his son was born to him in 1476 or 1477, Vecellio stood at the head of the little community of Pieve di Cadore. Honors rather than wealth were thus the traditional possession of the family; so that it probably was nothing strange to the father when he found his son had elected to become an artist.

It was not to be expected that an aspiring young artist could learn much from the local painters of saints. But in those days tuition began at an early age; so that when Titian was nine years old he was sent with his older brother, Francesco, to Venice, where a brother of their father lived. So little is known of this period of the artist's life that we have no real information even of the names of his teachers. It is, however, immaterial whether he acquired the rudiments of his art from Sebastiano Zuccati, as one authority says, or from Giovanni Bellini, as Vasari has it. It is sufficient to know that when we hear of him again he is thirty years of age, and competing with the greatest in his art.

Much stress has often been laid on the influence of the variegated, busy, sea-girt Venice, on the village-born lad. Undoubtedly there must have been some influence wrought by a change from the mountains of his home to the utterly different landscape of a seashore and its busy mart. In his Alpine home the world about changed only



with the changing of the skies; in the city of canals every step brought him to a new picture. It was then a market for all nations, and the whole city, from the Turkish Fondaco to the Rialto and from the Rialto to the Riva de' Schiavoni, was rich in the splendor of colors. Dresses, cloths, carpets, all of the highly variegated tints met the eye everywhere. A taste for color was seen even in the architecture of the city, and the great St. Mark's was built of many-colored antique marble from the Levant, overspun with gold mosaic. It was quite common to cover the marble of the façades of the churches and palaces with colors, and even the plainest of structures was adorned with glazed stone. The pursuit of painting in a city of this character seems the most natural of pursuits; and in this city of glory did Bellini, Titian and Paolo Veronese work.

When Titian entered on his Venetian life its art was mainly concerned with reflecting its multi-colored sides. For this progress as for many other departures it had to thank the continent. Old Jacopo Bellini, with his sons, Gentile and Giovanni, had worked in Padua where that genius of the early renaissance in upper Italy, Andrea Mantegna, opened a new world to art. Fate was doubly kind in sending Antonello da Messina to follow Mantegna, and to bring, perhaps from Flanders, the art of oil-painting. Gentile Bellini painted the sunny square of St. Mark's with the sparkling mosaic of its church, and the glittering processions and groups which filled it. Giovanni painted altar pictures with meek-looking Madonnas, dreamy saints, or angels floating about the mother of God. Antonello, in his portraits of young Venetians, for the first time drew attention by the speaking expression of eye and glance.

He who was born to be a painter was bound to become one in Venice even though he had no teacher. It was in such an atmosphere that Titian grew; and when he stepped out into the open he took his place by the side of the masters of the Renaissance.

The studio of Giovanni Bellini has been honored as the cradle in which this new art was nursed. Out of it came Giorgione, Palma, Sebastiano, and perhaps Titian; even the old master himself, in his later portraits, helped along the coming of the new time. When, in his twenty-second year, Giorgione was carried off by a plague in 1510, he had already painted the way for Venetian art for the next decade. His work was taken up by Titian who, though he was forty before he attained the full powers of his genius, became in the end the greatest of the Venetian masters in art.

The earliest painting which can with any certainty be ascribed

to Titian, deals with an historical event. Under the command of Jacopo Pesaro, a Papal fleet, to which Venice had contributed a large contingent, had sailed, in 1502, against the Turks and took from them the island of Santa Maura (Leukadia). Twenty years later the victory was commemorated in the famous Madonna of the House of Pesaro. But at the time the Venetian marshal had himself painted as kneeling before St. Peter while holding the flag of the Borgias just handed him by the Pope, and receiving the blessing of the saint. In the background is seen the fleet ready to set sail. This painting was Titian's work, and it may be noted how the profiles of the kneeling Pesaro and the kneeling Alexander VI. both stand out vividly against the background of the harbor with its short, curling waves and the sky above it showing the morning sun just risen. Titian had become familiar with such landscapes through the work of old Bellini, and above all through Giorgione; and he expressed similar effects in the early small pictures of Madonnas which were flanked either by figures of saints or landscapes.

The symmetry and formal arrangement of composition, so characteristic of the early Renaissance painter, Titian began to break through, even if slightly, in the Gipsy-Madonna, now in Vienna. The face is gently leaning to one side, the child stands to the right, and the background is two-thirds covered by a green curtain. A soft light falls on the bent head, lighting up the forehead and eyelids and leaving the eyes in dreamy darkness. There is the same solemn clearness found in the Madonna of Castelfranco by Giorgione. In the Madonna with the Cherries the symmetrical arrangement of Bellini has been followed; but the beauty of the figures and the almost buoyant manner of the children imparts a new life into the picture. What was but indicated in the Pesaro picture—namely, the change from an assembly of solemn figures into a spirited group—becomes now the rule. The light is now divided among the groups and imparts a new feeling, even though Titian still adheres to the conventional symmetry. No Florentine, however, would have dared to place the head of the chief figure in shadow, and yet without such a half-light the expression would never have shown so spiritual. The figure was the thank-offering for the passing of the pestilence which threatened Venice in 1504.

In 1507 there took place in Venice one of those open competitions in which the Italian Renaissance is so rich. The Fondaco de' Tedeschi, the market-hall of the Germans, close to the Rialto and the daily rendezvous of the citizens, nobility and merchants, had been

newly erected after a fire. For its chapel, Dürer had painted his great picture of the Festival of the Roses. The Venetians did not permit foreigners to employ precious material in decorating their buildings, so that it was decided to have frescoes for the façade. The order for this was divided between Giorgione and Titian, so that the former was given the front facing the canal while the latter was apportioned the side facing a little street. It may be that Giorgione himself had a hand in this division of labor.

Of these first attempts at Venetian Renaissance, unfortunately, nothing remains to us. The sea air and the northern wind are deleterious to frescoes, even in interiors, and as early as the seventeenth century these frescoes of the Fondaco had become mere blotches, even to the loving, searching eye of the enthusiastic Burckhart.

Of the quality of Venetian art at this time we may obtain some idea by noting and measuring the influence it had on those foreign artists of this age who were undoubtedly affected by it. Albrecht Dürer lived and worked in Venice from 1505 to 1507. His Child John, in the Berlin Madonna, brings flowers as he did cherries in the Titian Madonna. In his small Dresden "Crucifixion" the revival is beginning to assert itself in a struggle with nature that would have been impossible but for Giorgione. In 1508, Fra Bartolommeo is already forgetting the almost plastic forms of his groups, and shows a fine feeling for soft shadows, and he harks back to Florence with his treasure of half-lights. Unfortunately this flowering of art in Venice occurred at a time of great affliction for the city. The pestilence of 1510, to which Giorgione fell a victim, drove its artists away, while the War of the Liga carried Venice to the very verge of ruin. Sebastiano went to Rome and Titian to Padua. There he remained for some time and atoned to us for the loss of the Fondaco frescoes in some fine monumental paintings.

Of the series of frescoes in the Scuola del Carmine in Padua only the "Meeting of John and Anna" over the golden gate is Titian's. The landscape in the background with its architecture appears somewhat out of order, and affects the main group unfavorably. The scenes from the life of St. Anthony, however, in the Scuola del Santo, are dramatic and appealing. The large picture shows the child, at the bidding of the saint, testifying to the faithfulness of the mother. The vivid motions, the lifelike expression of the figures, the shamed husband, the dignified bearing of the innocent wife, the saint still kneeling in the joy of the fulfilment of his prayer, are all magnificent. In the third picture the soft light like that of a summer's evening is