

# Galerie Canesso

Tableaux anciens



GIOVANNI BATTISTA BEINASCHI

FOSSANO, C. 1634 ~ NAPLES, 1688

## *Saint Paul*

OIL ON CANVAS, 49  $\frac{1}{4}$  × 39  $\frac{3}{8}$  IN (125 × 100 CM)

AS INDICATED BY A LABEL glued into the back of the picture at an early date,<sup>1</sup> our *Saint Paul* was accompanied by a *Saint Peter*,<sup>2</sup> its likely pendant, with which it shared the same history until they were both put up for public auction in 1990.

Francesco Petrucci has confirmed the authorship of Beinaschi, publishing the work in the addenda section of the monograph he co-wrote with Vincenzo Pacelli. According to the scholar, the canvas was painted when the artist was still in his early period, in about 1660. Indeed, the style is not yet influenced by Neapolitan painting, instead displaying an enduring link with Giovanni Lanfranco (1582-1647) and Gian Domenico Cerrini (1609-1681). The saint is depicted frontally, an

open book on his lap and his right hand raised heavenward: one can imagine him in the midst of a sermon. The cold light, in dynamic contrast with areas of shadow, lends drama to the figure, and the absence of setting and the presence of ample draperies show close adherence to the Baroque style.

Beinaschi was trained in Turin, his native region, and then in Rome, where he made copies after Annibale Carracci and Giovanni Lanfranco. He settled in Naples in 1664 and remained there until his death. In 1677-1678 he returned to Rome to work with Giacinto Brandi on the decoration of the Basilica of Santi Ambrogio e Carlo al Corso. ▲ v.D.

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#### PROVENANCE

It appears that this painting was given by Pope Clement XIII to the Archbishop of Besançon, Antoine Cleradins de Choiseul Beaupré (1707-1774), who bequeathed it to Saint Paul's Abbey in that city. When the Abbey was destroyed the painting was taken to the church of Saint Maurice, and thence sold with its probable pendant canvas, *Saint Peter*, as stated on the label glued onto the back of the picture at an early date. Monaco, Christie's sale, 15 June 1990, lot 32, illus. (attributed to Beinaschi); Paris, private collection.

#### LITERATURE

Vincenzo Pacelli and Francesco Petrucci, *Giovan Battista Beinaschi. Pittore barocco tra Roma e Napoli*, Rome, 2011, p. 348, Ad. 7 (as *God the Father*).

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| 1. The back of the canvas bears an eighteenth-century label with the following inscription: "ce tableu avec son pendant St Pierre ont été donné par le .../ au Cardinal de Choiseul Archevêque de Besançon lorsqu'il est allé chercher/la barrette à Rome. Cette tradition est certaine. Un vieillard | contemporain/ du Cardinal et qui fut toujours employé dans les églises a certifié que ces deux/ tableaux qui ont toujours fait l'admiration des connaisseurs avaient été donnés/ en don à l'Abbaye de St Paul à Besançon. Mais lorsque cette abbaye fut/ supprimée ont transporta tous les tableaux qui y | étaient à l'église St Maurice./ Le grand nombre de ces tableaux fit qu'on choisit les plus apparens et d'une/ plus grande dimension en proportion avec l'étendue et la hauteur du Vaisseau/ de l'église; les autres au nombre desquels se trouvaient St Pierre et St Paul/ furent relégués dans un coin et | vendus pour faire un tableau de/ patron./ Mathieu..."   |
|   |   |  | 2. <i>Saint Peter</i> , the probable pendant of our canvas, measures 124 × 98 cm. It was auctioned at Christie's in Monaco on 15 June 1990, lot 31 (attributed to Beinaschi). |