An Early Friend of Degas in Florence: A Newly-Identified Portrait Drawing of Degas by Giovanni Fattori

ON 4th August 1858, Edgar Degas arrived in Florence as the guest of his aunt and uncle Bellelli.1 Intending at first to stop only briefly on his way home to France, he subsequently decided to stay and await the return of his aunt Laura, who had been called before his arrival to the bedside of her ailing father in Naples. Despite the frequent and insistent summons by his own father over the next months, Degas, a usually dutiful son, repeatedly put off his departure for home, and did not in fact leave Florence until the end of March 1859, some eight months after his arrival.2 The important rôle which this Florentine sojourn played in Degas’s early development has long been recognized by students of Degas’s art, and much has been written about the activities and circumstances which induced him to prolong his stay: his relationship with the members of the Bellelli family and the evolution of his ambitious group portrait of them;3 his extensive activity as a copyist after works by Quattrocento masters in the museums and churches of Florence;4 and his friendship with Gustave Moreau,5 the French painter with whom he had become acquainted in Rome and whose arrival in Florence, Degas père correctly predicted in a letter of 30th November, ‘va te retenir encore, je le vois bien.’6

Considerable attention has been paid too to Degas’s contacts in later years with Florentine artists and critics like Telemaco Signorini and Diego Martelli, whose acquaintance he would first have made during this early stay in Florence.7 But the actual extent and significance of these initial contacts with local artists have been largely neglected, due to the scantiness of the documentation which has been available. The only firm evidence, in fact, which has been adduced to support the contention that Degas mixed with his Florentine contemporaries has consisted of two brief passages in a book which was written by Telemaco Signorini and published in 1893, a book chronicling the history of the renowned Caffè Michelangiolo, popular meeting-place of artists and patriots in Florence during the 1830’s and early ’60’s. ‘Nel 1855,’ wrote Signorini, ‘feci anch’io la mia prima comparsa al Michelangiolo insieme con Odoardo Borrani, e vennero con noi Degas e Morot [sic], Tissot e Lafenestre . . .’8 And further on, enumerating the artists from all over the world who had once gathered at the Caffè, Signorini lists again: ‘Dalla Francia quattro giovani studenti oggi notissimi nel mondo dell’arte, il Degas, il Morot [sic], il Tissot e Lafenestre . . .’9 In addition, the artist Baccio Maria Bacci, a late student of the Tuscan painter Giovanni Fattori, has referred upon several occasions in his writings on the Macchiaiol to a particular friendship between Fattori and Degas during the latter’s first trip to Florence,10 and he has mentioned too the existence of a portrait of Fattori, now lost, which Degas had painted, presumably during that period.11 Lacking further evidence, however, scholars have ignored the possibility of a friendship between Degas and Fattori, a possibility rendered impossible, it might be supposed, by the enormous differences in their backgrounds and personalities. The appearance, however, of new evidence, presented below, lends credibility at last to Bacci’s report, and helps to shed some light on a personal aspect of Degas’s early experience in Florence about which hitherto very little has been known.

Among the more than 200 drawings by Giovanni Fattori in the Museo Civico at Lehhorn, recently restored, catalogued and exhibited under the auspices of the Soprintendenza alle Gallerie di Roma II, is a portrait drawing in pencil of a dapper young man who stands, full-length, with his left hand in his trouser pocket and his right hand grasping the watch chain suspended from his vest, in a pose not unrelated to the conventions of contemporary photography (Fig.32).12

Identified in the catalogue of the Rome exhibition simply as ‘ritratto d’uomo in piedi,’ this drawing is unmistakably a portrait of the young Edgar Degas. Appearing on the verso side of a sheet of drawings which can be dated c.1860 on.

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2 For a general account of these events, see P.-A. LEMOISNE: Degas et son ére., vols., Paris [1946 ff.], I, pp.29 ff. (Works herein catalogued will be cited below as L. with number.) On 2nd April 1859, Degas was in Genoa, presumably on his way home to Paris. Known from inscription in Bibliothèque Nationale, De-3271 d’ép.éve, carnet 16, p.41 (hereafter cited as B.N., carnet 16, etc.), cited in REFF [1965], p.612 and n.61.
6 LEMOISNE, I, p.51.
9 Ibid., pp.120–21. (Modern edition, p.167.)
10 B. M. BACCI: L’Odietto dei Macchiaioli e Diego Martelli, Florence [1969], pp.45, 106; also in SIGNORINI: Caricaturisti (ed. BACCI [1952], pp.119–120, n.1). In a letter of 24th April 1972 to the author, Bacci writes that Matilde Gioli Bartolommei, herself a writer, painter and very good friend of Martelli and Fattori, ‘hanno un disegno inedito nel fondo dei Macchiaioli e amici del Degas.’
12 D. DURRIE: Disegni di Giovanni Fattori del Museo Civico di Livorno, Rome [1970], p.21: No.52 verso, matita su carta grigio verde, mm.236 by 188.
both stylistic and thematic grounds, it might have been drawn by Fattori from a photograph during the early '60s, or more probably, judging from the naturalness and immediacy of the interpretation, from life, during Degas's second stay in Florence in April of 1860. Although this smiling and relaxed figure contrasts sharply with the relatively large, elongated head with its high, domed forehead and deep-set eyes, particularly close in this drawing to the image that Degas would present of himself in the early '60s, as in the Degas salvant (L.105) of about 1862, or Degas's double portrait of himself and the painter De Valernes (L.116) of around 1864 (Fig.33).

Degas's little-known early friendship with Giovanni Fattori, now substantiated by the appearance of this drawing, follows in one respect a pattern which recurs in Degas's early relationships. Acclimated to his father's conservative but highly cultivated circle of acquaintances, Degas, in his youth, tended to seek out friends who were often considerably older than himself. At the time of his meeting with Fattori, Degas was twenty-five years of age, eight years younger than the Tuscan painter who was then thirty-three. Unlike the other older men whose companionship Degas had sought, however, Fattori was in no position to enlighten or to instruct his young friend, whose worldly and cultural experience was already far wider and more varied than his own. In defining the nature and significance of their friendship, therefore, it becomes most meaningful to think not in terms of influence, given or received in either direction, but rather of affinity, a temporary affinity which was based upon similarities in visual temperament and in stage of artistic development. At no later date would Degas and Fattori, men from very different social and intellectual backgrounds, have ever again found themselves so entirely in the same situation as when they met, in 1858, each groping to establish his artistic identity and each struggling with virtually identical problems and conflicts of values and goals; and at no later date, we may assume, could such a friendship between them have ever developed.

Born in Leghorn on 6th September 1825, Giovanni Fattori, as he was wont to stress in later autobiographical statements, was the son of simple, working-class people, and received an early education of the most rudimentary variety. In 1846, at the age of twenty-one, he went to Florence to begin a period of study under Giuseppe Bezzuoli, the Director of Painting at the Florentine Academy, and this period of formal study lasted probably until Bezzuoli's death in 1855. The major portion of Fattori's extant œuvre dates from 1859 on, after the artist had reached his mid-thirties, while his activity in Florence from 1846-59 is known to us today only through a relatively small number of paintings, most of them portraits of family and friends, preserved by the families of the sitters. In these works of his student days, Fattori appears to have been concerned primarily with mastering the conventions of traditional high art, as, for example, in a stiff and rather awkward portrait of his nephews painted in 1848 (M.1), a highly self-conscious attempt on the part of the young artist to utilize the props and conventions of the grand portrait tradition. By 1854, however, in his self-portrait of that year (Fig.34), Fattori's style displays new confidence and energy, particularly in the plastic vigour of the modelling, revealing the influence of his admired teacher Bezzuoli, whose tastes are also reflected in the very few examples of older art, both of them portraits, which we know that Fattori chose to copy on a formal basis during these years: in 1855, the portrait of 'Giulio Secondo opera di Raffaello,' and in 1856, 'la Bella di Tiziano,' both in the Palatine Gallery. At the same time that he was endeavouring to assimilate the traditions of formal portraiture from conventional sources, however, Fattori was also giving expression, on a more informal level, to tastes and interests of a very different order, as in the portrait of a middle-aged male peasant, dated 5th February 1850 and dedicated 'all'amico Vangi' (M.5), in which is revealed, already fully developed, the acuity and realism of Fattori's characteristic mode of observation. This powerful realism of vision is a tendency which persists throughout Fattori's career, and though it becomes dominant particularly in the later decades of his life, it exists as an undercurrent, as a disturbing and unsettling factor, even during his earliest years as an academic student.

Throughout the 1850's, Fattori was an habitué of the Caffè Michelangiolo on via Larga, where in the room reserved for the artists nightly discussions revolved around the issues of Italian national unification and the 'latest' artistic trends from France. Through a few of the artists...
who frequented the Caffè and who had visited Paris in 1855 for the Universal Exposition – the Florentine, Serafino De Tivoli, and the Neapolitans, Domenico Morelli and Saverio Altamura – the younger local artists had heard about the Barbizon School and about Decamps. And although they were not yet thought of as a coherent group and had not as yet been called the ‘Macchiaioli,’ by 1858–59 they were already talking quite freely about the macchia, or ‘effect,’ a romantic concept which meant for them the practice of organizing their compositions in strong, clear, light and dark tonal patterns through which poetic feeling might be evoked and communicated. Some of them had also begun to make their first timid attempts at sketching landscape motifs directly from nature, so that, gradually, by the late 1850’s, the principle of the macchia had become associated for many of them with a commitment to the direct study of natural ‘effects’ or patterns of illumination as the formal and expressive bases of their studio work.22

Although the writings of the French social theorist, Proudhon, were known to Florentine painters during the late 1850’s,23 there is no evidence that the Florentines were aware at this time of the work of Courbet. When Degas arrived in Florence, even the most progressive among them were still producing and exhibiting pictures on romantic literary and historical themes, and it was not in fact until the early 1860’s, after the military campaigns of 1859 in particular, that the Florentines began to turn with any consistency towards contemporary rural and urban life for their themes. Realism, though it shortly would become so, was not yet an issue among Florentine artists in 1858–59, and there is consequently no basis upon which to speculate, as Phoebe Pool has done, that the Macchiaioli could have furnished for Degas an early contact with ‘realistic doctrines of painting, which, in France, may have been too much associated with Courbet and Proudhon to attract a follower of Ingres who was also politically conservative.24 It is misleading, too, to suggest as Pool does here that the discussions to which Degas was exposed at the Caffè Michelangelo were devoid of radical political content. Surely Degas could not have been unaware of the political tone and affiliations of the Caffè, where political plots and schemes were hatched regularly during this unsettled period25 and where he may even have been conducted initially by his uncle, the Baron Bellelli, himself a political exile from Naples who was extremely active in the cause of Italian unification.26

Interesting, rather, is the fact that despite the political radicalism of the Caffè, Degas nevertheless did frequent it, taking advantage perhaps upon this occasion of the absence of paternal supervision briefly to explore and to spread his wings in Florence in a manner which would not then have been possible for him at home.27

On the artistic level, however, the discussions which took place at the Caffè Michelangelo and which featured during these years a retardataire preoccupation with the principles of Barbizon Romanticism could have provided no revelations for the partisan Degas, who might indeed have found himself called upon in this milieu to enlighten his new and provincially isolated acquaintances with news of more recent artistic developments from the French capital. In Fattori, certainly, Degas seems to have chosen from this Florentine circle a friend who was among those least affected by the prevailing local concern with poetic chiaroscuro in painting. There is little to indicate, in fact, that Giovanni Fattori ever really consciously assimilated the romantic theory of expression and effect to which older artists like Morelli and a number of the younger Florentine ‘progressives’ like Signorini and Cabianca then subscribed. The ‘silenzioso’ of Fattori, as he was later called,28 was never much given to intellectualizing about his art, and even if the theoretical aspects of the new esthetic did not go over his head entirely, it is not unlikely that he would have dismissed them as unnecessarily esoteric. When the crisis in his own artistic development occurred, in fact, during the years between 1859 and 1861, the major issues at stake for the modernist painter in Fattori’s mind seem to have resolved themselves rather simplistically into a series of purely thematic distinctions. During this period when, as he later somewhat misleadingly put it, he found himself struggling ‘fra il realismo macchia e il romanticismo,’29 the decisive influence on Fattori by his own account was the Roman painter, Giovanni (Nino) Costa, who arrived in Florence in 1859, at a time when Fattori was just completing his Maria Stuarda al campo di Crockstone (Fig. 96), a popular romantic theme,30 treated pictorially by the young artist in a manner which depends clearly, both in compositional conception and descriptive details, upon the major history paintings of Fattori’s late and revered teacher, Bezzuoli.31 When Costa first visited Fattori’s studio, probably well after Degas’s departure, in the summer or autumn of 1859,32 Fattori had already for some

23 In the chronological outline for his autobiography, Signorini, under the year 1855, wrote: ‘Leggo Proudhon e divengo apostata delle idee mazziniane’ (R. Somaré: Telemaco Signorini, Milan [1966], p.265).
25 An habitué of the Caffè during these years, for example, was Beppe Dolci, the Florentine baker who was one of the leaders of the peaceful revolution of 27 April 1859 that saw the final expulsion of the Grand Duke from Florence. See Signorini: Caricaturist [1952], pp.50, 59, and n.1.
26 A supporter of Cavour, the Baron Bellelli had been exiled from Naples as a result of his activities during the Revolution of 1848. He settled first in France, from 1849 to 1859, and then in Florence where he collaborated with Marchese Luigi Draconetti to found the influential political journal, Il Risorgimento. Later, he served as Senator in the newly established Kingdom of Italy until his death in 1864. See R. Ramondi: Degas e la sua famiglia in Napoli, 1799–1917, Naples [1958], pp.224–44.
27 The loud and informal atmosphere of the artists’ gatherings at the Caffè Michelangelo is described by Signorini: Caricaturist, passim. Caricatural drawing, one of the favourite pastimes among the artists here, was also of some interest to Degas during these years. See the drawings in B.N. carnet 16, pp.105–106 and B.N. carnet 19, pp.96–105, used by Degas during his first and second visits to Florence respectively (cited by Reff [1965], pp.612, 613 and n.68); also, B.N. carnet 16, p.76.
29 Letter to Gustave Uzielli of 17th February 1904. In VITTI: Lettere, p.44.
30 Degas in the 1850’s seems to have shared Fattori’s youthful taste for this romantic and potentially melodramatic theme. In a notebook of 1855, there is evidence of his familiarity with a stage version of it (B.N. carnet 19, p.6) as well as a record of his enthusiasm for the Italian actress Adelaide Ristori whom he drew ‘in her black dress in Maria Stuart’ (carnet 10, p.87) (J. B. BOGS: ‘Degas Notebooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale’, The Burlington Magazine, C [1956], pp.165–167 and notes 99, 31).
31 In particular, Bezzuoli’s L’Entrata di Carlo VIII in Firenze (Galleria fiorentina d’arte moderna), a work then well-known and highly respected locally as the artist’s masterpiece.
32 Costa stepped in Florence, out of curiosity about the Caffè Michelangelo, on his way south from Aosta where he had been serving as a volunteer with a cavalry regiment. He then settled in Florence and remained there for short trips until c.1870 (see G. CARANDENTE: I. Macchiaioli, Rome [1956], pp.31–39).
time been sketching independently out-of-doors, but it was apparently only with the advice and encouragement which Costa provided that he could finally be induced to turn consistently to contemporary themes and to the practice of constructing his finished pictures on the basis of *plein air* studies. In particular, a group of recent studies of the French soldiers who had been camped in the Cascine in May and June of 1859 now served Fattori as sources for his *Campo Italiano dopo la Battaglia di Magenta* (Fig. 37), the painting with which, again at Costa’s urging, he entered and won a major, Government-sponsored competition during the winter of 1859–60, a painting which, in his own view, marked the beginning of his career as a mature and independent artist. A comparison between this picture and the earlier *Maria Stuarda*, however, both standard frieze-like compositions painted with the same careful attention to accuracy and authenticity of costuming and historical detail, suggests that the nature of Fattori’s conversion at this stage was more purely thematic rather than stylistic in any significant sense, a choice in essence of which costumes his figures were going to wear. Imbued by his academic training with the idea that a painter’s highest function and responsibility is to paint history, it is not surprising that when Fattori ‘found himself’ during these years as a modern ‘Realist’, it was in the realm of painting contemporary battle scenes, the one aspect of contemporary Italian experience which could perhaps most legitimately be classified, in the traditional sense, as an historical event.

Despite the greater range of his cultural experience and background, there was much that Edgar Degas shared with Giovanni Fattori in terms of his values and the broad pattern of his artistic training and development which may help us to understand the basis for his early friendship with this Italian painter. A brief glance at Degas’s *œuvre* prior to his arrival in Florence in August of 1858 reminds us, for example, that portraiture — in particular, the problem of mastering the devices of traditional formal portraiture — was the major preoccupation for Degas during the earliest part of his career, much as it had been for Fattori. At the same time, like Fattori, he displayed quite early in his art a curiosity and awareness in regard to contemporary life — revealed, for example, by his sketches of Provençal peasant women done in the south of France in 1855 — as well as an acute eye, more generally speaking, for the visual facts of the world around him, evidenced not only by such early genre pieces as the *Mendiate Romaine* and the *Vieille Italienne* painted in Rome in 1857 (L.28, 29) but also by Degas’s formal portrait of the same period, as in the portrait of his grandfather, René-Hilaire De Gas, painted that same year (L.27). At the time of their meeting, in other words, Degas, like Fattori, was a young artist who had recently emerged from formal training with a fixed idea of the nature of traditional high art, who was endowed at the same time with a gift for realistic observation and was gradually developing a visual awareness of the contemporary scene — opposing tendencies which eventually would have to come into conflict. It is interesting that for both Fattori and Degas, history painting would shortly become the embodiment of this conflict, to be tackled and dealt with inevitably as part of their development within the tradition which had shaped them and to which they aspired. And for both, the concept of history as well as the formal demands of traditional history painting provided the bridge which would ultimately assist them in making what was for each of them a very difficult and momentous transition to themes of contemporary life. As writers, for example, have often pointed out about the *Young Spartans* (L.70), one of the series of history paintings to which Degas devoted his major efforts during the early 1860’s, the adolescent boys with their strange haircuts and the girls with their pug noses bear a striking resemblance to the street urchins of contemporary Paris and are far from classical in their physical type. Yet Degas’s sources for this work, it has been pointed out, were consistently classical, before successive repainting, carried out during the early ’60’s, gradually altered the appropriately classical forms and clear linear style which may still be observed in the artist’s preparatory studies for the work as well as in X-ray photographs of the canvas itself. While at work on a painting like this one, Degas, interestingly enough, was at the same time also making his first outright approach to themes from contemporary life, struggling, as Fattori had done, to reconcile contemporary subject-matter with official standards and modes. Significantly, the first of such themes to attract him was horseracing, a theme which requires very traditional elements — equestrian figures in a landscape — and which may in this sense have represented for Degas an aspect of modernity not so far removed in its pictorial possibilities and implications from the processions, parades and battle scenes of history painting and a more traditional conception of high art.

While the relationship between Degas and Fattori provided neither with an experience which would substantively alter the course of his future development, there occurs, nevertheless, in the work of each during this period of their contact, an isolated instance of unique or unusual activity which may indicate an immediate though limited amount of mutual influence. It is interesting, for example, that the handful of drawings extant by Fattori after works of older art all date from this period around 1859, around the time, that is, of his acquaintance with Degas, whose extensive activity as a copyist, particularly during the years from 1853 to 1861, is of course well known. We can discern, moreover, in the few extant drawings by Fattori of this type, all copies after works by masters of the Florentine Quattrocento and early Cinquecento, an attitude and a mode of procedure very similar to that observed in the majority of Degas’s copies after older art. In such published drawings by Fattori as

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38 See **Dubre**: *Disegni di Fattori*, pp.13–16, for presentation of the documents which establish the chronology of Fattori’s involvement in the competition and the progress of his work on the painting.


41 **P. SLOANE**: *French Painting Between the Past and the Present*, Princeton [1951], p.205; also, **REWALD**: *op. cit.*, p.58.

42 **REFF** [1964], p.257 and notes 71, 72, 73.

43 The importance which Degas attached to this painting is suggested by the fact that it remained in his studio, in sight on an easel, during the artist’s last year (‘Je rappelle encore cette tendresse qu’il avail, en ses dernières années, pour l’ancienne toile qu’il avait placée sur un chevalet. Les jeunes filles du Sport se défient les jeunes gens à la lice.’ n. HALÉVY: *Degas partit ...*, Paris-Genève [1960], p.163).

44 E.g., **LEMOISNE**: *Nos.75, 76, 71, 72, 73.*

45 **REFF** [1965], p.242, and **REFF** [1964], p.250 and n.6.

46 **REFF** [1963], p.247.
that of a group of onlookers from a Ghirlandaio fresco in Santa Trinita, the St Francis Raising a Child from the Dead, or the study of two male heads in profile from a fresco by Masaccio, reworked by Filippino Lippi, in the Brancacci Chapel, or that of a male onlooker from a scene in Andrea del Sarto’s Life of St. Filippo Benizzi (the Healing of the Sick Children by the Garments of the Saint) in the Chiostrino dei Voti di SS. Annunziata, illustrated here (Fig.35).41 Fattori, like Degas, chose consistently to focus upon a marginal fragment from a large Renaissance composition, a fragment which appealed to him as an isolated formal problem, divorced from the broader thematic context of the original work as a whole. It is of interest, similarly, to find in notebooks used by Degas during and immediately following the Florentine sojourn of 1858–59 a series of sketches devoted to soldiers,42 a theme uncommon in Degas’s œuvre43 but prominent in Fattori’s production from 1859 on.44 Rapid sketches of single figures or composed groups, some actively engaged in military combat (e.g., Fig.38), Degas’s drawings, deriving from the report of Raffet’s printer and biographer, Denis A. M. Raffet.45 A close friend and companion to the Russian Prince Anatole Demidoff, with whom he had travelled to the Crimea in 1837 and to Spain in 1847, Raffet was a frequent guest at Demidoff’s Villa outside of Florence, to which the Macchiaioli company of several other Italian artists who were also exhibiting at the Salon — among them, Francesco Gioli, who later wrote of his companions’ enthusiasm on that trip to France for “tutta l’arte del 1830, che più ci interessava”46 — Fattori would probably not have found himself moving at this time in the same circles as his former friend Degas, and even had they met, it is unlikely that there would still have been any common ground between them. Although he considered himself a ‘Realist’, Fattori’s work and attitudes

40 Degas’s interest in Raffet at this time is demonstrated too by his drawing in B.N. carnet 16, p.92 after a lithograph by Raffet, the Young Cowgirl Woman (see REFF [1964], p.297), as well as the inscription which appears on p.8 of the same notebook: ‘Jeune femme Karazina — Raffet 1840 — Crinite (notebook used in Florence, Genoa and Paris, 1859–60; see REFF [1965], p.612).

With the arrival of French troops in Florence in May of 1859, some two months after Degas’s departure from the city, Raffet, planning an album on the current French campaign in Italy, was observed sketching the soldiers in the regiment of Girolamo Bonaparte who were quartered at the Cascine from 28th May to 16th June. Raffet’s activities here, recorded and commented upon by local observers (e.g., MARIO FORES: Un chirurgio antiquario ed i suoi tempi, Florence, 1958, p.115, and S. CIALFI: L’arte a Firenze nella seconda metà del novecento, Firenze, 1958, p.133), stirred considerable interest among local artists, some of whom, including Fattori, were encouraged by his example to undertake their own, on-the-spot sketches of the soldiers and their daily activities. The artistic repercussions of these events as well as the ever-growing vogue for contemporary military subjects which Raffet had partially helped to inspire in Florence might still have been felt by Degas on his return to that city in April of 1860, for at the exhibition of the Promotrice, which opened that year on 30th April (Monitore Toscano, No.105, 24 April 1860, pp.20–21), two pictures were exhibited by local artists on the theme of the French soldiers camped at the Cascine (GARDIELLI, op. cit., p.133), and Fattori himself had just recently entered his bozzetto for the Battaglia di Magenta in the Ricasoli competition, the favourable outcome of which would be announced in the Monitore Toscano on 12th May 1860 (see DURBE: Disegni di Fattori, p.14).

41 Signorini was in Paris in 1861, 1873–74, 1878, 1879, 1881 and 1884 (see his autobiographical letter written in 1862 to the President of the R. Accademia di S.A. in Firenze: SCARPETTA, op. cit., p.71; also, VITAL, Lettere, pp.113–17); Martelli took three trips to Paris, in 1862–63, 1868, and 1878–79 (see ‘Dati biografici’ in Scritti d’arte di Diego Martelli, ed. A. KOSCHETTO, Florence [1952], p.53).

42 Probably for the purpose of settling the estate of his father, Auguste de Gas. Degas had also travelled to Italy in December of 1873 to see his father who was then ill and who died in Naples in February of 1874 (CARANNE, op. cit., p.113).

43 Known from a letter written by Camille Desboutin to Telemaque Signorini, dated 16th April 1875: ‘Mon cher Signorini... Degas a eu bien de la chance de pouvoir retourner dans votre brillante Italie... Je sais pas Degas que vous travaillez fructueusement et originellement. Il a été très frappé de vos tendances artistiques, et votre tableau des Folles l’a tout à fait enchanté comme une œuvre forte et originelle...’ (SOMARE: Signorini, p.96).

44 Catalogo della XI Biennale [1914], p.116; cited by VITALI: Lettere, p.96, n.2.
28. Velvet, polychrome, Mughal 1650-60. (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, No.71.13.)

29. Detail from the Velvet reproduced in Fig.28.

30. Mughal painting of Europeans, seventeenth century. (Victoria and Albert Museum)

31. Detail from Shāh Jahān nāma, f. 97v. (Royal Library, Windsor Castle)
32. Edgar Degas, by Giovanni Fattori. c.1860. Pencil, 24.6 by 18.8 cm. (Museo Civico, Leghorn.) Photo: Soprintendenza alle Gallerie, Roma II.

33. Degas and De Valernes, by Edgar Degas. c.1864. Canvas, 116 by 84 cm. (Musée du Louvre.) Photo: Bulloz.

34. Self-Portrait, by Giovanni Fattori. 1854. Canvas, 59 by 46.5 cm. (Galleria d’Arte Moderna, Florence.) Photo: Alinari.

35. Copy of figure from Andrea del Sarto’s ‘Healing of the Sick Children by the Garments of S. Filippo Benizzi in the Chiostro dei Voti of S. Annunziata in Florence, by Giovanni Fattori. c.1859. Pencil, 28.9 by 21.8 cm. (Museo Civico, Leghorn.) Photo: Soprintendenza alle Gallerie, Roma, II.


38. Soldiers Charging, by Edgar Degas. c.1859. Pencil, 14.3 by 10 cm. (Bibliothèque Nationale Dc. 327d réserve, carnet 16 p.78.)

39. Soldiers Charging, by Giovanni Fattori. c.1859. Pencil and brown ink, 21 by 30.7 cm. (Museo Civico, Leghorn.) Photo: Soprintendenza alle Gallerie, Roma II.
40. Portrait of the Castrato Farinelli, by Jacopo Amigoni. Canvas, 277 by 186 cm. (Museum of the Romanian Socialist Republic, Bucharest.)

41. Mercury and Argus, by Jacopo Amigoni. Canvas, 60 by 63 cm. (Tate Gallery.)

42. Mercury and Argus, by Jacopo Amigoni. Canvas, 76 by 63.5 cm. (Gemäldegalerie, Dresden.)
towards art had diverged greatly from Degas’s since the days of their earlier and altogether temporary affinity. Since 1869 a professor of painting at the Florentine Academy, Fattori’s reputation had been built locally during the 1860’s and ’70’s upon the basis of a number of large and grandiose depictions of the major battles of the Italian Risorgimento. Although he branched out subsequently to other themes from contemporary Italian life – in the mid ’60’s, groups of dignified and statuesque Tuscan peasant women, serenely at work in the fields (e.g. M.631, 696, 640, 643), and later, during the ’80’s and ’90’s in particular, monumentalized recordings of what, for the artist, were socially significant aspects of contemporary history.

Shorter Notices

Jacopo Amigoni in England

BY ADRIAN BAIRD

The portrait1 (Fig.40) by Jacopo Amigoni of his friend, the celebrated castrato Farinelli, has long been known from the engraving made of it in London by Joseph Wagner. The painting itself was apparently taken with him back to Italy by Farinelli when he eventually returned home; it was later acquired by Felix Bamberg, who sold it to King Carol I of Romania in 1889; it reached its present home, the Museum of the Romanian Socialist Republic in 1949.2 The execution of the painting can be dated precisely between 1734, when Farinelli first came to England and 1736, when Amigoni and Farinelli left London for France.

Farinelli’s success in England was explosive, and the box-office takings from his two years in this country paid for the building of a villa which Burney says he named ‘The English Folly’. His depiction in the portrait is in the best operatic style, the.

To judge from the handwriting and contents, the list was made by the Assessor of Antiquities, Alessandro Bracci, for the new Commissioner of Antiquities, Giovanni Battista Visconti, appointed shortly after the death of Winckelmann, in 1768.2 The document has interest partly because of the names and addresses, a selection and ordering that reads like a cicerone’s round of major art galleries from the Pincio through the Campo Marzo. Various of the antiquarians were best known as excavators [6, 13, 14], agents [5, 11, 14], restorers [1, 3, 7, 8, 10], or journeymen-craftsmen [4, 9, 15, 16]; but all trafficked in ancient sculptures, with

1 Vatican Library, Ferrajoli MSS, folio 969, No.38, p.326 and verso. The first and last entries are transcribed in the inventory of the collection by F. A. Berra: Codices Ferrajoli, Vatican [1966], III, p.372.

2 Many notes and signatures in the handwritings of Bracci as Assessor (1764–86) can be compared on the same export petitions submitted by dealers in art to the papal Camera Romana in Rome during the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

G. B. Visconti’s Projected Sources for the Museo Clementino

BY SEYMOUR HOWARD

Among the Visconti papers in the Vatican Ferrajoli manuscripts is an untitled sheet identifying the important antiquarian dealers active in Rome during the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

1 Oil on canvas, 277 by 186 cm., Bucharest Gallery inventory 671/8637 G.G. Information kindly supplied by M. Anatole Teodosiu of the Bucharest Gallery.

2 Oil on canvas, 76 by 63-5 cm., Dresden Gallery inventory 5553a (under Pellegrini).

3 Information supplied by Dr A. Walther of the Dresden Gallery.