

This course is an eclectic wander through art history. It consists of twenty two-hour talks starting in September 2018 and the topics are largely taken from exhibitions held in London during 2018. The aim is not to provide a guide to the exhibition but to use it as a starting point to discuss the topics raised and to show the major art works. An exhibition often contains 100 to 200 art works but in each two-hour talk I will focus on the 20 to 30 major works and I will often add works not shown in the exhibition to illustrate a point.

References and Copyright

- The talks are given to a small group of people and all the proceeds, after the cost of the hall is deducted, are given to charity.
- The notes are based on information found on the public websites of Wikipedia, Tate, National Gallery, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Khan Academy and the Art Story.
- If a talk uses information from specific books, websites or articles these are referenced at the beginning of each talk and in the 'References' section of the relevant page. The talks that are based on an exhibition use the booklets and book associated with the exhibition.
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- If I have forgotten to reference your work then please let me know and I will add a reference or delete the information.



Art History Revealed – Wednesday 26 September, half-term 31 October – 5 December, Wednesday 9 January – 13 March (no half-term)

Exhibitions in Start Date Order

1. Impressionism in London, Tate Britain, 2 November 2017 – 7 May 2018
2. Modigliani, Tate Modern, 23 November 2017 – 2 April 2018
3. Charles I: King and Collector, Royal Academy, 27 January – 15 April 2018
4. All Too Human Bacon, Freud and a century of painting life, Tate Britain, 28 February – 27 August 2018
5. Victorian Giants: The Birth of Art Photography, National Portrait Gallery, 1 March – 20 May 2018
6. Picasso 1932 - Love, Fame, Tragedy, Tate Modern, March 8 to September 9, 2018
7. Monet & Architecture, National Gallery, 9 April – 29 July 2018
8. Rodin and the Art of Ancient Greece, British Museum, 26 April – 29 July 2018
9. Aftermath Art in the Wake of World War One, Tate Britain, 5 June – 16 September 2018
10. The Great Spectacle: 250 Years of the Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy, 12 June 2018 – 19 August 2018
11. Mantegna and Bellini, National Gallery 1 October 2018 – 27 January 2019

12. Burne-Jones, Tate Britain, 24 October 2018 – 24 February 2019
13. Klimt/Schiele, Drawings from the Albertina Museum, Vienna, Royal Academy, 4 November 2018 – 3 February 2019
14. Lorenzo Lotto Portraits, 5 November 2018 – 10 February 2019
15. Gainsborough's Family Album, National Portrait Gallery, 22 November 2018 - 3 February 2019
16. Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). Tate Britain, March 2019. Van Gogh and Britain will be the first exhibition to take a new look at the artist through his relationship with Britain. It will explore how Van Gogh was inspired by British art, literature and culture throughout his career and how he in turn inspired British artists, from Walter Sickert to Francis Bacon.

Ideas

Gothic Revival, based on an Andrew Graham Dixon TV programme but without the references to the literature of the period

Etruscan Art – based on book

The Painting War: Michelangelo versus Leonardo – buy the novel *Oil and Marble*, not released until 5 July, 2018, and *The Lost Battles: Leonardo, Michelangelo and the Artistic Duel That Defined the Renaissance*

The Turner Prize – already done

London Galleries

Wallace

British Museum

Hayward

National Gallery

National Portrait Gallery

White Cube

Serpentine

Tate Britain

Tate Modern

Royal Academy

Estorics



Week 16: based on 'Lorenzo Lotto Portraits, National Gallery, 5 November 2018 – 10 February 2019'

- Exhibition on at the Prado first then the National Gallery. It contains 38 paintings, 10 drawings and 15 sculptures. See <https://www.museodelprado.es/en/whats-on/exhibition/lorenzo-lotto-portraits/4efeb6a-ba81-ab76-08b9-83363fb32538>
- Note that **Lotto** painted religious altarpieces and a wide range of other works but this talk **focuses on his portraits**.
- Lorenzo Lotto (Venice, 1480 – Loreto, 1557) was one of the most **unique and fascinating artists of the Italian Cinquecento**. His reputation has consistently grown among scholars and art lovers since **Bernard Berenson** (1865-1959, American art historian who specialised in the Renaissance) devoted the first monograph to him, *Lorenzo Lotto. An Essay in Constructive Criticism*, published in **1895**. Writing at the time of the emergence of Freudian psychoanalysis, Berenson saw Lotto as the **first portraitist to be interested in reflecting his sitters' states of mind, and as such the first modern one**. Although interest in the artist has been particularly notable since the 1980s, until now no exhibition has focused

exclusively on the portraits, making this project a pioneering one.

- The exhibition focuses on already known aspects of Lotto's portraiture such as their **varied typology, psychological depth and complex symbolism**. In addition, it explores other less familiar ones such as the artist's use of similar resources in his portraits and religious works, the importance of the objects present in the portraits as reflections of material culture of the day, and the creative process behind the realisation of these works.
- *Lorenzo Lotto: Portraits* also offers an unprecedented perspective on the artist's works through the presence in the galleries of objects similar to those seen in the portraits, in a reflection of material culture of the day. In addition, it looks at the way in which the artist conceived and executed his portraits and in this regard and given the lack of technical analyses of these works, the inclusion of drawings by him (rarely displayed alongside the paintings) are of particular importance.
- The variety of **typologies** (i.e. types of people) that Lotto employed; the **overt or concealed symbolism** within them; the **psychological depth** with which he imbued his models; and the **importance he gave to objects** in order to define their **status, interests and aspirations** all give these portraits a degree of profundity which allow Lotto to be seen as the artist who best reflected Italy at the time, a country experiencing a profound period of change
- Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57) was a **deeply religious artist** who entered into the personal lives of the saints he painted. In his lifetime he was **overshadowed by** the more famous Venetian artist, **Titian**. Lotto received scant attention from Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) an artist and pre-eminent biographer of the artists of the day.
- Discover the expressive sensitivity and immediacy of Lorenzo Lotto's portraits in the first UK exhibition of its kind
- Celebrated as one of the **greatest portraitists of the Italian Renaissance**, Lorenzo Lotto uniquely portrayed a cross section of middle-class sitters, among them clerics, merchants, and humanists.
- Lotto **depicted men, women, and children** in compositions rich in symbolism and imbued with great psychological depth. The prominent addition of objects which hinted at the social status, interests, and aspirations of his subjects added meaning to each work.
- With the inclusion of documents that have survived from Lotto's own account books, this exhibition provides extraordinary insight into the artist's individualistic style and the people he portrayed.
- From National Gallery, 'Lotto was one of the leading Venetian-trained painters of the earlier 16th century. He painted portraits and religious works exclusively. **His early works are strongly influenced by Giovanni Bellini**. Lotto was active in various places in Italy and absorbed a wide range of other **influences**, from

Lombard realism to Raphael. He was deeply religious and his late paintings become intensely spiritual.

- **Unable to compete with Titian, Lotto worked mainly outside Venice.** He is recorded at **Treviso in 1503, then in the Marche** (pronounced 'MARK-ay'), **and in Rome, probably in 1508.** From **1513 to 1525 he resided mainly at Bergamo** in Lombardy, where he painted several major altarpieces. A **period in Venice from 1526, with long absences,** was followed by his **retirement to a religious establishment at Loreto in 1552.**
- Lotto's later paintings are recorded in an account book and diary which he kept from 1538. His works are characterised by the use of deeply saturated colours, bold use of shadow, and a surprising expressive range, from the nearly caricatural to the lyrical. He is one of the most individualistic of the great Italian painters.'

Lorenzo Lotto Chronology

- c. 1480 Born in Venice.
- 1503 Recorded as a painter in legal documents in Treviso.
 - 20 September: date inscribed on reverse of *Virgin and Child with Saint Teter Martyr* (Museo e Gallerie Nazionali di Capodimonte, Naples).
 - 27 November: witnessed a will in Venice.
- 1505 Recorded in further documents in Treviso.
 - 1 July: inscribed date formerly on reverse of *Allegory of Vice and Virtue* (cat. 3).
- 1506 Inscribed date on *Assumption of the Virgin* (Duomo, Asoló) and apparently on *Saint Jerome in the Wilderness*.
 - 4 May: settlement of dispute over fee of recently completed altarpiece for Santa Cristina al Tiverone, parish church.
 - 17 June: in Recanati to sign contract for polyptych for San Domenico (Pinacoteca Comunale).
 - 18 October: renewed lease on house in Treviso before departing for Recanati.
- 1508 Inscribed date on San Domenico polyptych and on *Virgin and Child with Saints Ignatius of Antioch and Onuphrius* (Gallería Borghese, Rome).
- 1509 8 March and 18 September: payments from papal exchequer for work in Vatican Palace.
- 1511 27 October: began the *Entombment of Christ* for San Floriano, Jesi (Pinacoteca Civica).
- 1512 Inscribed date on Jesi *Entombment of Christ* and on *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*.
- 1513 15 May: began Martinengo altarpiece.
- 1515 Inscribed date on *The Penitent Saint Jerome*.

- 1516 Inscribed date on Martinengo altarpiece.
- 1517 Inscribed date on *Susannah and the Elders* (Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence).
- 1521 Inscribed date on altarpieces for Santo Spirito and San Bernardino, Bergamo, and on *Christ Bidding Farewell to His Mother, with Elisabetta Rota*.
- 1522 Inscribed date on *Virgin and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Catherine*.
- 1523 Inscribed date on Nativity, on *Marsilio Cassotti and His Bride Faustina*, and on *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*, with the Donor Niccolò Bonghi.
 - 11 December: signed contract in Jesi for Saint Lucy altarpiece (cats. 34-36) .
- 1524 Inscribed date on *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine, with Saints* and on frescoes in
 - Oratorio Suardi, Trescore.
 - 12 March and 16 June: began to design cycle of intarsias for choir of Santa Maria Maggiore, Bergamo.
 - 2 September: first of series of letters to Consorzio della Misericordia.
- 1525 Inscribed date on frescoes in San Michèle del Pozzo Bianco, Bergamo, and in San Giorgio at Credaro.
 - 20 December: arrived in Venice and took up lodgings at Santi Giovanni e Paolo.
- 1526 Inscribed date on *Virgin and Child with Saints Joseph and Jerome* for San Francesco al Monte, Jesi (Pinacoteca Civica) and *Christ Carrying the Cross*.
- 1527 Inscribed date on *Assumption of the Virgin* (parish church, Celana) and on *Andrea Odoni*.
- 1529 Inscribed date formerly legible on *Saint Nicholas in Glory with Saints John the Baptist and Lucy* for Santa Maria dei Carmini, Venice.
- 1531 29 September: served on committee appointed by the Arte dei Depentori (guild of painters) in Venice to administer a legacy left by Vincenzo Catena.
- 1532 16 March: last of series of letters to Consorzio della Misericordia in Bergamo.
 - Inscribed date on Saint Lucy altarpiece.
- 1533 28 January: made will in Venice (document lost).
 - Inscribed date on *Holy Family with Saint Catherine of Alexandria*.
 - Inscribed date on altarpiece for Sant'Agostino, Fermo (private collection, Rome).
 - August: began decoration of chapel of Palazzo dei Priori, Jesi.
- 1538 in August: began the *Virgin and Child with Saints* for Sant'Agostino, Ancona (Pinacoteca Civica, Ancona).
 - 16 November: earliest entry in the Libro di spese diverse.
- 1539 Inscribed date on the *Cingoli altarpiece* (Museo Civico, Cingoli).
 - 14 October: wrote to Cingoli from Macerata.
- 1540 31 January: back in Venice; lived in house of Mario d'Armano from 3 July.

- 1542 Inscribed date on *Saint Antoninus Giving Alms* (Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice).
 - 17/18 October: moved to Treviso; lived in house of Giovanni dal Saon.
- 1543/1544 Painted *Febo da Brescia* and *Laura da Pola* portraits (cats. 46-47).
- 1545 February to July: executed a *Pietà* for San Paolo, Treviso.
 - 12 December: returned to Venice.
- 1546 25 March: made will.
 - Inscribed date on altarpiece for San Giacomo deirOrio.
 - November: stayed in home of Bartolomeo Carpan during period of illness.
- 1546/1547 Executes *Fra Gregorio Belo*.
- 1549 in July: arrived in Ancona to paint an *Assumption* for San Francesco allé Scale.
- 1550 August: auction of paintings and drawings at Loggia dei Mercanti, Ancona.
- 1552 19 August: began altarpiece for Amici family in Duomo, Jesi.
 - 30 August: took up residence in Loreto.
- 1554 8 September: entered religious community at Santa Casa, Loreto.
- 1556 in September: final entry in Libro.
- 1557 9 July: Lotto recorded as already deceased.



- Lorenzo Lotto (Venice, about 1480 – Loreto, 1556/57) was one of **the great portraitists of the Renaissance** due to the variety of typologies that he employed, the psychological depth with which he endowed his sitters, and the judicious use that he made of objects in order to define the status, interests, and aspirations of his subjects. After his death **Lotto fell into almost complete obscurity until the late nineteenth century when Bernard Berenson (1856–1959) defined him as the first Italian painter to be interested in depicting states of mind and hence the first modern portraitist**. This interpretation, still considered valid, found fertile ground in a society increasingly interested in the most profound dimension of the individual.
- The catalogue of the exhibition, the first to be devoted to Lotto's portraits, follows this nomadic painter's footsteps from his native Venice to Treviso, Bergamo, Rome, and the Marche through portraits produced over the course of five decades. They reveal a variety of influences ranging from Antonello da Messina to Titian, Giovanni Bellini, Albrecht Dürer, Giorgione, Raphael, and Leonardo and some believe his master was Alvise Vivarini and see his influence. Lotto re-elaborated these references to formulate his own language, in which looks, gestures, and objects combine to transcend the sitters' physical description and social status and reveal their innermost emotions. With their powerful narrative potential, Lotto's

portraits encourage the viewer to speculate on the subjects' lives while testifying to the period of profound transformation experienced in Italy at that time.

- Lotto **was born and was trained in Venice** and had an **initial success** but **was later financially ruined by his excessive expenditure**. He lived and worked at the time of the High Renaissance and the start of the Mannerist period. He was not trained by the leading Venetian painter, Giovanni Bellini but was influenced by his work. Lotto was an idiosyncratic painter so was not accepted by the Venetian art world. It is thought by some that he was trained by Vivarini and was influenced Giovanni Bellini, Antonello da Messina and the German detailed 'warts and all' approach to portraiture. Treviso was on the major trade route from Germany and so he would have seen a lot of German portraiture as prints and would have met German artists.
- One of his earliest portraits is:
 - *Portrait of a Young man*, c. 1498 – 1500, 34.2 x 27.9 cm, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara - Pinacoteca di Arte Antica
- In c. **1503 to 1506** he lived in **Treviso** where he was described as 'a very famous painter'. He was commissioned to produce the
 - *Santa Cristina Altarpiece*
 - *Portrait of Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi*, 1505, 52 x 40 cm, Naples, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte
- He then went to **Asolo** in the Marche (pronounced 'MARK-ay') and painted crypto-portraits, portraits included in religious works.
 - *Assumption of the Virgin with Saints Anthony Abbot and Louis of Toulouse*, 1506, 175 x 165 cm, Asolo, cathedral de Santa Maria Assunta
- He then went to **Reconati** in the Marche and his work included intense emotion.
- In **1509-09** he visited **Rome** and **worked under Raphael on the Stanze in the Vatican**.
- From **1513/14-1525** he lived in **Bergamo** and this was the **high point of his personal life** and his career. He became the **city's leading artist** and this was the happiest time of his life. He produced portraits for the emerging middle-class and was known for his detail combined with clever symbolism. He won a major commission to produce the:
 - Colleoni Martinengo Altarpiece, 1513-16
 - San Spirito Altarpiece, 1521
 - *Micer Marsilio Cassotti and his wife Faustina*, 1523, 71 x 84 cm, Prado
- He produced his masterwork for the chapel Oratorio Suardi in the Trescore Bellneario not far from Bergamo and Brescia. It is a fresco with the figure of Christ apparently with long fingers. His work at this stage shows vitality and humour.
- In **1525 to 1533** he lived in **Venice** and was successful and although he never equalled his **rival Titian** he was a leading artists in the city.
 - *Portrait of a Dominican Frier*, 1526

- *Andrea Odoni*, 1527, 104.6 x 116.6 cm, Hampton Court, The Royal Collection, Lent by Her Majesty the Queen
- *Portrait of a Man with a Lizard*
- *Alms of Saint Antonius of Florence*
- From **1533 to 1545** he travelled a great deal in the Marche, Venice and **Treviso (1542-1545)**.
- In his last decade **1546 to 1556/57** he retired to Loreto.

Room1

- *Portrait of a Young man*, c. 1498 – 1500, 34.2 x 27.9 cm, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara - Pinacoteca di Arte Antica
- *Portrait of a Young Man with a Lamp*, c. 1506, 42.3 x 35.3 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie

Portrait Covers – in the first half of the sixteenth century personal portraits (not public portraits) were covered by a panel which was either hinged or slid into the frame. Few of these panels survive but those that do show they contained mostly allegorical themes.

- *Portrait of Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi*, 1505, 52 x 40 cm, Naples, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte
- *Allegory of Virtue and Vice*, 1505, 56.5 x 47.2 cm, Washington, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection, 1939.1.156. A drunken satyr on the right, a tree in the centre sprouting a fresh branch and with a shield at the base containing a lion. The lion was part of the seal of the Bishop. On the left a naked child holds dividers. The transparent shield on the tree contains the head of the Gorgon which may be a defence of the soul. A ship has sunk in a storm. It is a treatise on the human soul with its carnal desires and rational mind which in balance can lead to a mystical union with God signified by the mountain on the left with a winged cherub ascending it.
- In Asolo he produced: *The Virgin in Glory with Saints Anthony Abbot and Louis of Toulouse*, 1506, 175 x 165 cm, Asolo, cathedral de Santa Maria Assunta. A work that was influenced by Giovanni Bellini. It is possible the Virgin is a portrait of Caterina Cornaro, the ex-queen of Cypress and ruler of Asolo. Note the cypress tree she floats over (or is on the right).

Room 2

He lived in Bergamo from 1513-1525 and this was the high point of his personal life and his career. His portraits include material detail combined with symbolic language which suited the new aspiring middle class. He won the commission for the great altarpiece:

- *Assumption of the Virgin with Saints Anthony Abbot and Louis of Toulouse*, 1506, 175 x 165 cm, Asolo, cathedral de Santa Maria Assunta. He started to use a

landscape format for matrimonial works to include the husband and wife.

- *Marriage Portrait*, c. 1523–1524, 96 x 116 cm, Saint Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum. The scroll reads 'HOMO NUMQUAM' (Man never' (will neglect his wife). The squirrel asleep signifies constancy, the lapdog fidelity and the harsh wind outside the hardships of life. It is likely the couple were from the Cassotti family.
- *Virgin and Child and Saints Jerome, George, Sebastian, Bari, Anthony Abbott, Catherine of Alexandria* (1524). Painted for Marsillio Cassotti's bedroom.
- *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine with donor Nicolò Bonghi*, 1523, 172 x 143 cm, Bergamo, Accademia Carrara - Pinacoteca di Arte Antica. With Niccolò Boughi. The outside view was cut out of the painting early on.
- *Lucina Brembati*, 1523, Accademia Carrara of Bergamo. The rebus constructs her name by placing 'ci' in the moon or luna, making lu-ci-na. She has her hand on her stomach which may indicate she is pregnant. The weasel stole may refer to the legend that the mother of Hercules was turned into a weasel to make the birth easier.
- *Portrait of a Young Man with a Book*, 1526. Is he annoyed? Is he holding love poetry? Is it a marriage portrait?
- *Micer Marsilio Cassotti and his wife Faustina*, 1523, 71 x 84 cm, Prado. A painting of a merchant marrying up into aristocracy. The red wedding dress was typical. The gold chain means submission. The pendant on the chain has a butterfly chrysalis meaning that, like a butterfly, her offspring will emerge perfect. Is there humour? He has a smug expression and cupid is smiling.
- *Portrait of a Man with a Rosary*, c. 1518, 78.5 x 62 cm, Nivå, The Nivaagaard Collection
- *Physician Giovanni Agostino della Torre*, 1515-16. He is holding Galen. Note the fly on his handkerchief signifying mortality.

Room 3

Lotto returned to Venice. Towards the end of his life he lived in a confraternity as a lay member.

- Raimondi, engraving of Lucretia's Suicide after Raphael
- *Portrait of a Lady as Lucretia*, c. 1530-1533, 96.5 x 110.6 cm, The National Gallery. Possibly a portrait of Lucrezia Valier. The chain and ring indicate she is married and the empty chair that her husband is absent. She is holding a note reported as written by Lucretia which means 'Let no unchaste woman claim my example'.
- *Portrait of a Man*, c. 1535, 118 x 105 cm, Rome, Galleria Borghese. Saint George outside the window. Jasmine and rose petals on the table hiding a tiny skull.
- *Andrea Odoni*, 1527, 104.6 x 116.6 cm, Hampton Court, The Royal Collection, Lent by Her Majesty the Queen. The painting has a bust of Caesar one side and a statue of Ephesian Artemis (100-125 AD) and a standing figure leaning on a column (2nd century AD) the other side. He was a wealthy Venetian official who collected

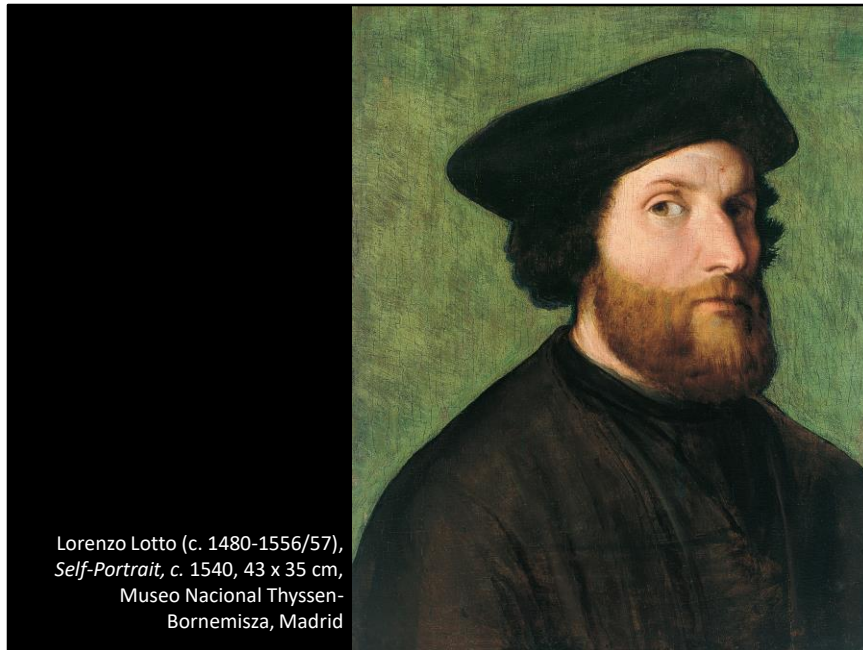
antiquities. There is an example of typical Lotto humour on the right, Hercules as a boy is peeing into the basin in which Venus is bathing.

- *Portrait of a Young Man with a Lizard*, 1528-30, 98 x 111 cm, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia. An image of melancholy. It was believed rose petals were a cure. The significance of the lizard is not clear it might mean a cold-blooded creature insensitive to love or a quick creature representing the fleeting moment. On the basis of the hunting horn, the lute, and a dead bird in the shadows behind the sitter, along with the items on the table, including the book, the two letters, the rose petals, and the lizard, scholars have constructed a moralizing narrative that casts the man as a sixteenth-century prodigal son who has abandoned the frivolous activities of youth – love, music, and hunting – for the responsibilities of adulthood
- *Bishop Thomas Nigris*, 1527
- *Portrait of a Dominican Friar*, 1526, possibly Marcontonio Luciani the treasurer of the friary.
- *Triple Portrait of a Goldsmith* (Bartolomeo Carpan?), about 1525–35. Oil on canvas, 52 x 79 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, Gemäldegalerie © KHM-Museumsverband. Possibly Bartolomeo Carpan. His profession of goldsmith is indicated by the box of rings. The three views are a demonstration that painting is equal to sculpture, a frequent discussion at the time.

Room 4 – the late years 1533-47. We have a lot of information about this period as he kept a diary in his accounts book. He lived beyond his means and had to auction his work in 1549. The auction did not raise much money. He was poor, unsuccessful, depressed and isolated but he produced the most penetrating portraits of the sixteenth century. The first portraits to show psychological depth. He eventually retired to a friary.

- *Brother Gregorio Belo of Vicenza*, 1547. A member of the 'Poor Hermits of St. Jerome'.
- *Portrait of an Architect*, 1536. Possibly Giovanni del Coro. The loose handling of the paint is typical of late Lotto.
- *Friar Angelo Ferretti as Saint Peter Martyr*, 1549. The book reads 'I believe in one God' and the cleaver in his head is based on stories of how St. Peter Martyr died.
- *The Alms of St. Antonius of Florence*, 1542. Lotto unusually for the period, paid poor citizens to sit for him. The man in red at the bottom may be a self-portrait. On his head he has laurel leaves although they are almost rubbed out. The Latin name is Laurentius which is the Latin version of his first name.
- *Portrait of a Man with a Felt Hat*, 1541. A frank, sensitive portrait of a man not as wealthy as those in Lotto's other portraits.
- *Portrait of an Elderly Gentleman with Gloves (liberale da Pinedel)*, 1542-1544, 90 x 75 cm, Milano, Pinacoteca di Brera. A gentl looking man but if it is Trevisan da Pinedel he was arrogant and ruthless.

- *Portrait of Giovanni della Volta with his Wife and Children*, 1547, 104.5 x 138 cm, National Gallery, Bequeathed by Miss Sarah Solly, 1879. Lotto's landlord and the portrait was part payment for the rent. It is unusual as the woman is in the position of power on his right.



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Self-Portrait*, c. 1540, 43 x 35 cm, Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

- “Within Lotto’s oeuvre both religious compositions and portraits occupy significant positions, and the **artist introduced notable innovations** in the latter genre. **Born in Venice**, it is not known with whom he trained but his earliest works reveal a considerable knowledge of contemporary Venetian art. Lotto was a **prolific artist** who worked in leading centres in the Veneto and the Marche, as well as in Rome and in Bergamo, where he produced particularly notable work between 1513 and 1525. A large amount of contemporary documentation has survived on Lotto’s life and work, including **letters, an account book** — the *Libro di spese diverse* (‘book of different expenses’) — as well as an extensive oeuvre, **much of it signed.**” (Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza website)
- **The idea that it is a self-portrait is a recent suggestion** due to the position of the head and the gaze which suggest he may be looking in a mirror. Lotto used this type of restrained portrait style for his earliest portraits. His usual curtain is replaced by an intense green tone that emphasizes the contrasting flesh colour of the face, itself framed in a dark ring of hat, hair and clothing.

Press release:

- Lorenzo Lotto Portraits brings together many of Lotto's best portraits spanning his entire career from collections around the world. These include such masterpieces as the '**Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi**' (1505) from the Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte in Naples, united with its striking allegorical cover from the National Gallery of Art, Washington; and the monumental altarpiece of '**The Alms of Saint Antoninus of Florence**' (1540–2) from the Basilica Santi Giovanni e Paulo in Venice coming to the UK for the first time. In this painting Lotto not only inserted portraits of members of the commissioning confraternity, but also, highly unusually, paid poor people to sit for him. Working during a time of profound change in Europe, Lotto was remarkable for depicting a wide variety of middle-class sitters, including clerics, merchants, artisans, and humanists.
- He portrayed men, women, and children in compositions **rich with symbolism and great psychological depth**. His works are characterised by **expressive sensitivity and immediacy and are also known for their deeply saturated colours and luxuriant handling of paint**.
- **Born in Venice**, Lotto travelled extensively and worked in different parts of Italy, most notably Treviso, Bergamo, Venice, and the Italian Marche. He spent his final years as a lay member of the confraternity of the Holy House at Loreto (1549–56.) In today's terms, his disposition in the later decades of his life would probably be described as **clinically depressed**. A **melancholic empathy** with his sitters is evident in his in late portraits.
- Staged broadly chronologically the exhibition starts with Lotto's earliest portraits before exploring the work from his most significant periods in Bergamo and Venice and ending with the late paintings. Unusually for a National Gallery exhibition objects related to those he depicted also are being displayed.
 - **Room one** explores Lotto's work from his time in **Treviso** (1503–6) and includes the '**Allegory**' (1505) from the National Gallery of Art, Washington and the spectacular '**Assumption of the Virgin with Saints Anthony Abbot and Louis of Toulouse**' (1506) from the Chiesa Prepositurale e Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta, Asolo.
 - **Room two**. Focusing on his Bergamasque period (1513–25), Room two contains the cleverly symbolic '**Lucina Brembati**' (about 1520–3) and '**The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with Niccolò Bonghi**' (1523) both from Bergamo's Accademia Carrara; as well as the '**Portrait of a Married Couple**' (1523–4) from the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, which has been cleaned on the occasion of the exhibition.
 - **Room three** is dedicated to works produced in Venice (1525–49) such as the famous likeness of the Venetian collector '**Andrea Odoni**' from the Royal Collection (1527), the National Gallery's own **Portrait of a Woman** inspired by Lucretia and the '**Portrait of a Young Man with a Lizard**' (1528–30) from the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.

- **The final room** celebrates the late work and includes the remarkably well preserved and affecting '**Portrait of a Man with a Felt Hat**' (1541?) from the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, as well as the altarpiece of '**The Alms of Saint Antoninus of Florence**' (1540–2).
- Objects relating to the portraits show how the meaning of Lotto's paintings extends from the sitter to their surroundings. Lotto painted these not so much to reflect a given sitter's opulence and wealth, but to help tell their story and reflect their identity. Among items on display are a carpet, sculpture, jewellery, clothing, and books.
- Lotto's reputation has consistently grown since the art historian Bernard Berenson published the first monograph on him in 1895. Writing during the emergence of Freudian psychoanalysis, Berenson saw Lotto as the first modern portraitist because of his interest in reflecting his sitters' states of mind. **"He seems always to have been able to define his feelings, emotions and ideals, instead of being a mere highway for them, this makes him pre-eminently a psychologist...The portraits all have the interest of personal confessions."**

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<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/lotto-lorenzo/self-portrait>
<http://artdaily.com/news/108798/First-ever-exhibition-of-portraits-by-the-Italian-artist-Lorenzo-Lotto-opens-in-London#.W-Km05P7Q0c>



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1500, 34.2 x 27.9 cm, oil on panel, Fondazione Accademia Carrara, Bergamo

Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1500, 34.2 x 27.9 cm, Fondazione Accademia Carrara, Bergamo

- '*Portrait of a young man* is the **least known of Lorenzo Lotto's paintings** in the Accademia Carrara. That it is not as famous as his other masterpieces is probably due to a subtle cerebral quality the work possesses. It is quite difficult to look at, with a **disconcerting simplicity and purity of line** that translate into a painting of **remarkable formal power**, almost **perfect in the scrupulous rendering of every detail**, yet achieving a luminous synthesis overall.
- Against an almost black background, the **smooth oval of a plump face** not long past adolescence is **almost angelic**, except for the eyes with their equivocal expression. Beneath **drowsy eyelids** that seem to veil the young man's gaze in a **turbid sensuality**, the eyes impose an enigmatic quality that is difficult to interpret. A black beret we can just make out against the background completes the geometric outline of the head. But its inclination creates a kind of incompatibility, making the perfect oval unstable on the equally perfect cylinder, almost a **marble column, that is the neck**. Framing the pale flesh tones, an **abundance of curls** like twisted copper shavings cascade from under the black cap. A **slender balustrade in light-coloured stone** closes the pictorial space. Two strips

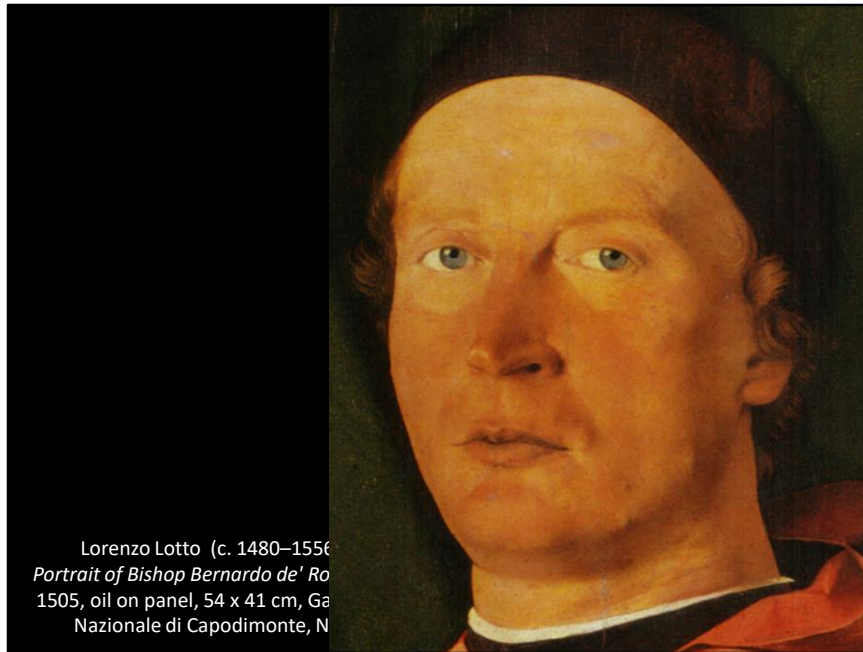
of slightly different widths, one with the light striking it and a darker one which appears perpendicular to the first, indicate a light source above the subject's head.

- The early provenance of this work is not known. It appears in catalogues of the Lochis collection between 1834 and 1858, **surprisingly attributed to Hans Holbein**. In addition it is listed as a **diptych** with another *Portrait of a young man* (now attributed to **Giovanni Bellini**) also in the Accademia Carrara. A more appropriate context is proposed by Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle in 1871, who briefly notes: 'this panel has Bellinesque and Antonellesque character'. In 1891 Giovanni Morelli reaffirmed the painting's Antonello-like atmosphere, but in the end opted for a possible attribution to Jacopo de Barbari—a hypothesis perhaps justified by the vaguely Northern Italian cold, detached approach to this image. But mainly the suggested attribution comes from an **inscription on the reverse** of the other panel in the presumed diptych, where Morelli made out '**Jacobus de...**' and assumed it to be the first part of the artist's name. It is thanks to the **truly remarkable perceptiveness** of Gustavo Frizzoni in 1897 that the painting is **recognised as the work of a young Lorenzo Lotto**. Since then there has been **substantial agreement** about the chronology, placing the painting among **Lotto's earliest works** between the last years of the fifteenth century and the early splendour of the Cinquecento. We are reminded of a little-known passage by Giorgio Vasari who remarks in reference to Lotto, in the 1550 edition of the *Lives*, that 'in his youth he was considered to be of fine complexion, clean-cut and immaculate'. It is hard to imagine a better way to describe Lotto's *Portrait of a young man*.' (National Gallery of Australia)



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Virgin and Child with Saint Peter Martyr*, 1503, 55 x 87 cm, National Museum of Capodimonte, Naples (not in the exhibition)

- This is Lotto's **earliest known devotional picture**. It **once contained a portrait of his patron Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi of Teviso** whose portrait we will see next. It was replaced by the infant Saint John the Baptist. The head of **Saint Peter Martyr** (also called Saint Peter of Verona who was struck on the head with an axe by assassins) **appears to be a portrait** as his features are so particular. Perhaps it is a Dominican priest he knew.
- A **close up of a brutal martyrdom is unusual at this time in a personal devotional piece**. This shows that from the beginning of his career he had intense personal religious beliefs and he was interested in the individual rather than the conventional stereotypes copied from model books.
- It was probably commissioned by bishop Bernardo de' Rossi. Art historians theorise that it was a votive offering for escaping a murder attempt planned for 29 September 1503.

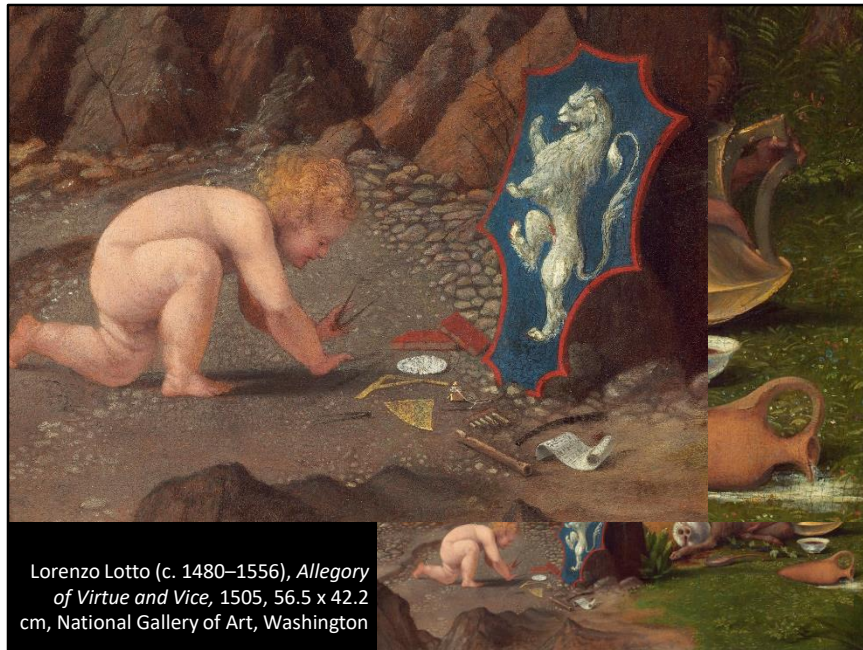


Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480–1556/57), *Portrait of Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi*, c. 1505, oil on panel, 52 x 40 cm, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples

- Despite his **problematical later career** he began in Treviso as a 'celebrated artist' and at the age of just 25 he won the patronage of **Bishop de' Rossi**.
- Lotto painted this when he was in **Treviso between 1503 and 1506** and it featured **a cover** with a door. This was common at the time but **very few have survived**. The inside of the door gave the title, signature and dates and the front had *Allegory of Virtues and Vices* painted on it. This painting is now at the National Gallery of Art in Washington.
- As in other portraits by Lotto, the subject is portrayed with a **striking realism**, including the reddish complexion, the hollows under the eyes, the expressive blue eyes and the minor skin imperfections. The curly hair is partially getting out from the black biretta (a square cap worn by Roman Catholic clergy). Such an attention to details was **inspired by Antonello da Messina**, in turn **influenced by the Flemish art** and perhaps directly by Northern European artists such as **Albrecht Dürer**, whose **drawings could have been seen by Lotto**. The red mantle is backed by a green embroidered drapery, a common element of Venetian painting of the period. The roll is perhaps an allusion to the sentence against the conjurers who

had attempted to de Rossi's life two years before.

- **Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi** was the son of **an important family of Parma** and he became archdeacon of Padua and with the help of the Republic of Venice Bishop of Belluno and eleven years later in 1499 Bishop of Treviso. He got into a **conflict with another family** and the plot against him failed but he was forced to leave and go to Rome. He returned twelve years later, got into **another fight** with members of his own family and died a few years later **possibly poisoned by his nephews**. His resolute or combative nature is indicated by his tightly clenched fist.
- **Portrait Covers** – in the first half of the sixteenth century personal portraits (not public portraits) were covered by a panel which was either hinged or slid into the frame. Few of these panels survive but those that do show they contained mostly allegorical themes. This portrait had the portrait cover shown in the next slide.

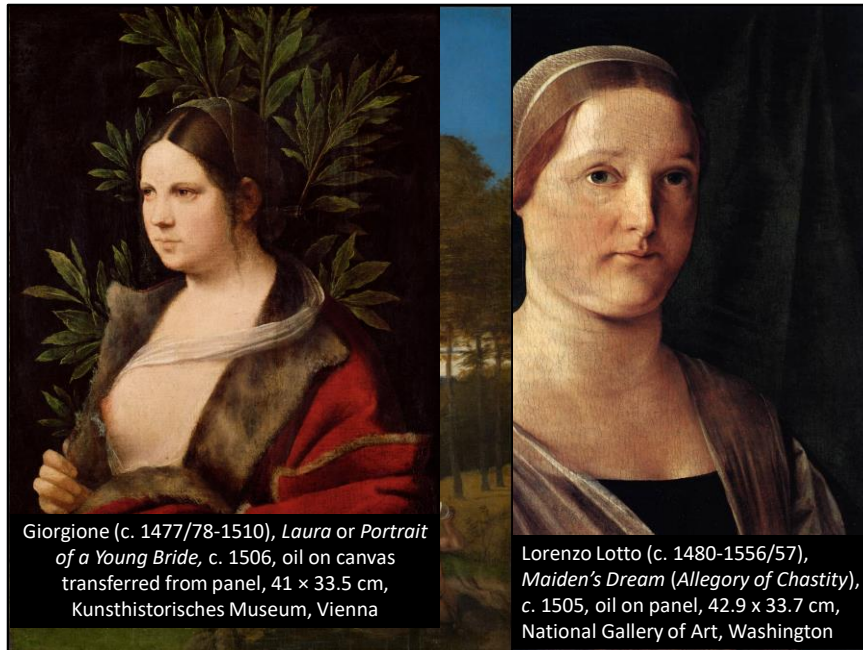


Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Allegory of Virtue and Vice*, 1505, 56.5 x 47.2 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington

- This is the image on the portrait cover of Bishop Bernardo. Lotto combines landscape with a portrait and uses the landscape to convey symbolic meaning that helps define the sitter's personal history, values and virtues.
- A **drunken satyr on the right**, a **tree in the centre sprouting a fresh branch** and with a **shield at the base containing a lion**. The lion was **part of the seal of the Bishop**. The satyr sits next to a white urn spilling wine onto the ground and a ladle containing milk and an earthenware urn spilling milk symbolizing the failure of good beginnings. On the left a **naked child holds dividers with instruments representing geometry and music, two of the liberal arts** and standing for intellectual activities. The **transparent shield on the tree contains the head of the Gorgon** which may be a **defence of the soul**. A **ship has sunk in a storm**. It is a treatise on the **human soul with its carnal desires and rational mind which in balance can lead to a mystical union with God signified by the mountain on the left with a winged cherub ascending it**.
- The painting originally formed the protective cover of the Portrait of Bernardo de' Rossi, the bishop of Treviso who was Lotto's patron at the time. When it was

opened to display the portrait, the inscription (on the reverse of the Allegory) would have been revealed the name, age, date and artist.

- The painting was brought to Parma when de' Rossi fled Treviso, and there it became part of the Farnese collection, from which it was bought in 1803; after a series of different possessors, it arrived in the United States in 1935, and was donated to National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC four years later.
- The painting is an allegoric scene with the bishop's coat of arms lying on a tree in the centre of the composition. The tree divides the latter in two parts corresponding to its two branches, one green and one dried. The former is associated to the allegory of Virtue, featuring a putto playing with **books (a symbol of wisdom)** and the symbols of the Liberal Arts.
- The right half shows a **drunk Silenus**, sleeping among **the symbols of vice**; to these, in the background, corresponds a **valley with an easy access, but dark and including a forest**, which is a **symbol of getting lost without the divine light**, as well as a **boat sinking** in a lake, a **symbol of failure**.
- The theme is perhaps **derived from an engraving by Albrecht Dürer *Hercules at the Crossroads* (1498)**, which also includes a similar central tree with moral symbols. Dürer prints were readily available in Treviso by this date.



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of a Lady*, c. 1506, oil on wood, 36 x 28 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon (not in the exhibition)

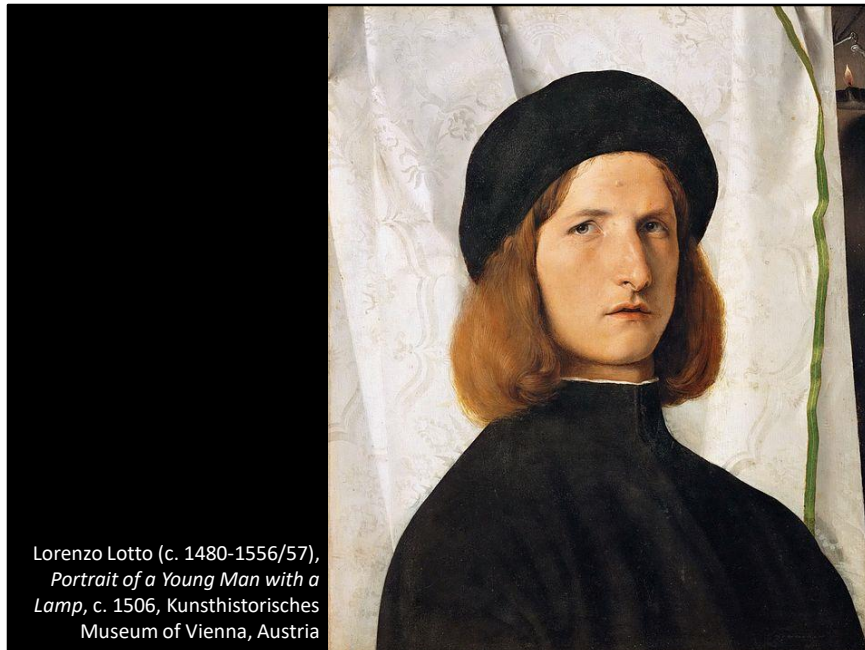
Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Maiden's Dream (Allegory of Chastity)*, c. 1505, oil on panel, 42.9 x 33.7 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington

Giorgione (c. 1477/78-1510), *Laura or Portrait of a Young Bride*, c. 1506, oil on canvas transferred from panel, 41 x 33.5 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

- **Lotto painted relatively few female portraits** of which the *Portrait of a Lady* is **the earliest** to survive. It shows a strong stylistic resemblance to the portrait of Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi. Like that portrait, this one may once have had a cover, the so-called ***Maiden's Dream*** in the National Gallery of Art, Washington.
- Until the late 19th century this portrait of an unidentified woman, who wears no jewellery and whose light brown hair is pulled back in a net cap, was attributed to **Hans Holbein the Younger**. It is an **unsparingly frank representation with no attempt to flatter** the sitter. Various suggestions have been made regarding the sitter's identity such as **Bishop Rossi's sister Giovanna**. Although she died in 1502 this could be a posthumous commission by Bishop Rossi as a memento of his dead sister.
- *Maiden's Dream* - The background landscape recalls **Dürer's watercolours and**

Giorgione's landscape paintings. A young woman in white and gold leans against a laurel tree in the centre, possibly referring to Daphne, **and ignores two satyrs** (one female, one male), symbolising **intoxication and lust**. A putto pours a **cascade of white flowers** over her. It can be read as a choice between **virtue and pleasure**, *virtus* and *voluptas*, the chaste maiden in repose, or the satyr couple, symbolic in the Renaissance of lust and even evil. It was considered quite appropriate to associate such moralizing themes with portraits.

- It can be contrasted with a portrait by Giorgione painted at the same time. **Laura formerly known as *Portrait of a Young Bride*** is either a **young bride** whose bared breast indicates fecundity or a **courtesan**. Many of the paintings in the Venetian tradition inspired by this painting were of figures to be read as courtesans, often posing as a mythological figure or the personification of an abstract quality. This work marked Giorgione's abandonment of Giovanni Bellini's style to embrace that of Leonardo.
- At this time a new type of portrait was being produced in Venice of **courtesans** in a state of undress **called 'Belle' or Beauties**. Their aim was **to titillate** whereas Lotto's portrait belongs to a small group of respectable female portraits.



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of a Young Man with a Lamp*, c. 1506, Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna, Austria

- The work is generally ascribed to **Lotto's stay in Treviso**.
- It shows an **extreme attention to details**, such as the **slight imperfections of the skin, the elongated nose, the soft hair**. The use of light and the composition are similar to other early work by Lotto, such as the *Portrait of Bishop Bernardo de' Rossi* (1505). The face is framed by the dark clothes and hat, painted over a **white brocade drapery** with a green border.
- On the right, an opening to a darker background shows a **lighted lamp**, a **symbol which could allude to the man's personality or deeds**, and which has been variously interpreted (from a reference to an evangelic episode, to an allegory of the **human life's shortness**, due the dimness of the flame).
- The subject has been identified as **Broccardo Malchiostro** (pronounced 'mal-chiostro'), the **young chancellor of the bishop of Treviso**, Bernardo de' Rossi, who **both risked their lives** in a plot in 1503. The decoration of the drapery would thus **symbolic**: it is a **brocade** (Italian 'broccato') with **thistle whose Italian name is cardo**, so 'broccato + cardo = Broccardo'. Such **hidden symbolism** is contained in several Lotto works, such as the *Portrait of Lucina Brembati*, painted during his

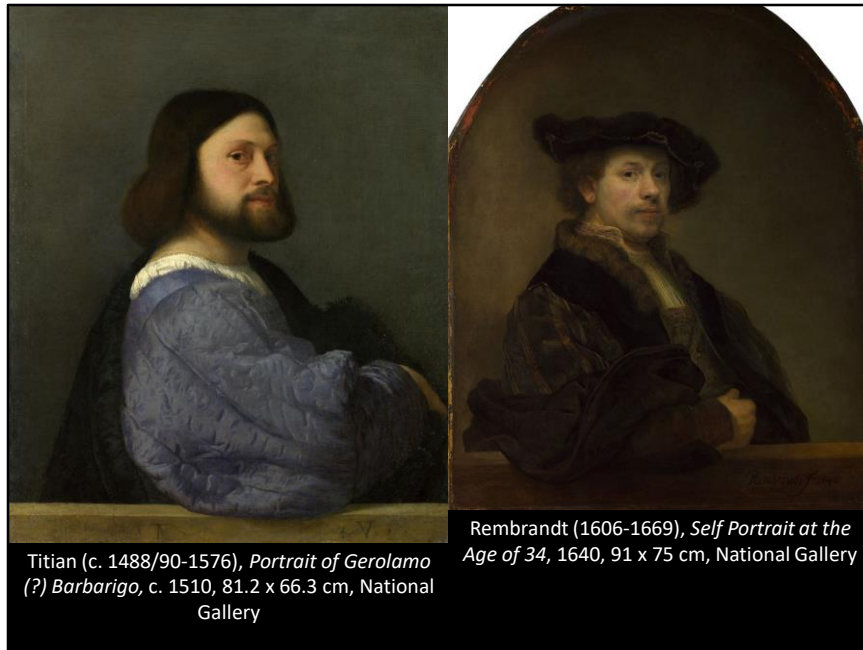
maturity.

Notes

- The burning lamp at the top right could be a symbol of Christian light. It could be a **reference to the Gospel of St. John, 1:1- 5:**
 - 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
 - 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
 - 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
 - 5 **And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.**
(King James version)
- The light is Jesus coming into the world and the darkness is the sinful world that did not comprehend the message of the gospels.

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<http://curiator.com/art/lorenzo-lotto/portrait-of-a-young-man-with-a-lamp-i>



Giorgione (c. 1477/78-1510), *Portrait of a Young Man (The Broccardo Portrait)*, c. 1508-10, 72.5 x 54 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

Titian (c. 1488/90-1576), *Portrait of Gerolamo (?) Barbarigo*, c. 1510, 81.2 x 66.3 cm, National Gallery. This portrait was eloquently described by Giorgio Vasari in his 1568 biography of Titian. He identified the man as a member of the Barbarigo, an aristocratic Venetian family. The most likely candidate is Gerolamo, who was 30 years old in 1509. He had numerous political and literary contacts and would have helped the young Titian on his path to success. The painting served as a model for the *Self Portrait at the Age of 34* by Rembrandt. This portrait shows Rembrandt at the height of his career, presenting himself in a self-assured pose wearing an elaborate costume in the fashion of the 16th century.

- Here I take a step back in order to put Lotto in context as I have mentioned a few other artists of the period without explain their significance of relationship to Lotto.

High Renaissance

- **High Renaissance** art flourished for about 35 years, from the early 1490s to 1527 when Rome was sacked by imperial troops, and it centred on **Rome and Florence**.

There were three towering figures:

- **Leonardo da Vinci** (1452–1519),
- **Michelangelo** (1475–1564),
- **Raphael** (1483–1520)
- To this school of art we must add and contrast the school of **Venetian art** whose most significant artist was **Titian** (c. 1488/90-1576) followed by **Bellini and Giorgione**.
- Titian was known as ‘**The Sun Amidst Small Stars**’ and his painting methods, particularly in the application and use of colour, would exercise a profound influence not only on painters of the late Italian Renaissance, but on future generations of Western art as indicated by this self-portrait by the Dutch artist **Rembrandt** over a hundred years later.
- Simplistically Florentine artists were concerned with design through drawing and the importance of knowledge and reason and Venetian artists with colour and the importance of emotion and feeling.
- **Late Renaissance or Mannerism** flourished from about **1520 to 1600** (in Italy) when it was replaced by the Baroque style. Italian Mannerist painters include **Jacopo da Pontormo** (1494-1557, born near Florence), **Agnolo Bronzino** (1503-1572, born in Florence) and **Tintoretto** although the late Venetian school of **Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese** pursued its own independent path.
- This was followed by **Italian Baroque** which includes painters such as **Annibale Carracci** (November 3, 1560 – July 15, 1609) of Bologna and **Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio** (28 September 1571 – 18 July 1610), **Orazio Gentileschi** (1563-1639) and his daughter **Artemisia Gentileschi** (1593-c. 1656).

Venetian artists

- **Giovanni Bellini** (c. 1430 – 26 November 1516) was an Italian Renaissance painter, probably the best known of the Bellini family of Venetian painters. His father was Jacopo Bellini, his brother was Gentile Bellini (who was more highly regarded than Giovanni during his lifetime, although the reverse is true today), and his brother-in-law was **Andrea Mantegna** (c. 1431-1506, born near Padua). He was considered to have revolutionized Venetian painting, moving it towards a more sensuous and colouristic style. Through the use of clear, slow-drying oil paints, Giovanni created deep, rich tints and detailed shadings. His sumptuous colouring and fluent, atmospheric landscapes had a great effect on the Venetian painting school, especially on his pupils Giorgione and Titian.
- **Giorgione** (born Giorgio Barbarelli da Castelfranco; c. 1477/78–1510) was an Italian painter of the Venetian school during the High Renaissance from Venice, whose career was ended by his **death at a little over 30**. Giorgione is known for the elusive poetic quality of his work, though only about **six surviving paintings** are firmly attributed to him. The uncertainty surrounding the identity and meaning of his work has made Giorgione one of the **most mysterious figures in European**

art. Together with Titian, who was probably slightly younger, he founded the distinctive Venetian school of Italian Renaissance painting, which achieves much of its effect through colour and mood, and is traditionally contrasted with Florentine painting, which relies on a more linear disegno-led style.

- **Lorenzo Lotto** (c. 1480-1556/57)
- **Titian**, born **Tiziano Vecelli** or Tiziano Vecellio (c. 1488/1490 – 27 August 1576) was the most important member of the 16th-century Venetian school. He was born in Pieve di Cadore, near Belluno, then in the Republic of Venice. During his lifetime he was often called **da Cadore**, taken from the place of his birth. Recognized by his contemporaries as "**The Sun Amidst Small Stars**" (recalling the famous final line of Dante's *Paradiso*), Titian was one of the most versatile of Italian painters, equally adept with portraits, landscape backgrounds, and mythological and religious subjects. His painting methods, particularly in the application and use of colour, would exercise a profound influence not only on painters of the late Italian Renaissance, but on future generations of Western art. His career was **successful from the start**, and he became sought after by patrons, initially from Venice and its possessions, then joined by the north Italian princes, and finally the Habsburgs and papacy. Along with Giorgione, he is considered a founder of the Venetian School of Italian Renaissance painting.
- **Tintoretto** (Jacopo Robusti, 1518-1594), born in Venice and a younger rival of Titian. He admired Titian but it is said Titian asked him to leave his school after a few weeks because of the originality of his drawings. Tintoretto painted with speed and boldness, known as *Il Furioso*.
- **Paolo Veronese** (Paolo Caliari, 1528-1588) born in Verona and thus known as 'Veronese'. He moved to Venice where he became a friend of Titian, received many commissions and overshadowing Tintoretto.

Notes

- There were many, many more excellent artists during the period whose lives are described in Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (1568), although he is biased towards Florentine artists.
- *Here vigour fail'd the tow'ring fantasy:
But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel
In even motion, by the Love impell'd,
That moves the sun in heav'n and all the stars.*
- Or, in another translation:
- *Here powers failed my high imagination:
But by now my desire and will were turned,
Like a balanced wheel rotated evenly,*

By the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.

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<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/titian-portrait-of-gerolamo-barbarigo>



Lorenzo Lotto, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, 1512, 20 x 15 cm, Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, Rome

Giorgione (1478–1510), *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, 1504, 144 × 68 cm, Hermitage Museum

Caravaggio (1571–1610), *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, c. 1598–1599, 145 x 195 cm, National Gallery of Ancient Art, Rome

Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1653), *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, 1614–1620, 199 × 162.5 cm, Uffizi Gallery

- Continuing with this brief story of art over the 16th and 17th centuries it is interesting to compare a single story, of Judith and Holofernes, as painted by **Lotto and Giorgione** and then, about one hundred years later, **Caravaggio and Artemesia Gentileschi**.
- The story of Judith is from the **Book of Judith**, in the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic version of the *Old Testament* and the Protestant *Apocrypha*. The story tells how Judith, a beautiful widow, is able to enter the tent of Holofernes because of his desire for her. **Holofernes was an Assyrian general** who was about to **destroy Judith's home**, the city of Bethulia (possibly fictional and derived from

‘Beth-el’, house of God or ‘betulah’ and ‘Jah’, God’s virgin). Overcome with drink, he passes out and is decapitated by Judith; his head is taken away in a basket (often depicted as being carried by an elderly female servant). Artists have mainly chosen one of two possible scenes (with or without the servant): the decapitation, with Holofernes lying on the bed, or Judith holding, carrying or standing near the head, often assisted by her maid.

- Note the development of dramatic lighting (chiaroscuro) and heightened emotion.
- **Council of Trent** (1545-1563) in Trento northern Italy. Prompted by the Protestant Reformation, it has been described as the embodiment of the Counter-Reformation. The Council issued condemnations of what it defined to be heresies committed by proponents of Protestantism, and also issued key statements and clarifications of the Church's doctrine and teachings. Although not explicitly stated one consequence was a new drive to create religious art and architecture with drama and theatricality to appeal to the people. Painting should be clear and intelligible and instruct and move. It must adhere to the Scriptures and encourage piety through its appeal to the emotions. This led to what we call Baroque art and architecture.



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *The Physician Giovanni Agostino della Torre and his Son, Niccolò*, 1513-16, 85 x 68.2 cm, National Gallery
 Acquired 1862

- Returning to Lotto and his portrait of a famous physician.
- “Having trained in Venice, probably with **Giovanni Bellini**, Lorenzo Lotto worked in Treviso (1503-1506), Recanati (1506-1508) and Rome (c. 1508-1510) before **settling in Bergamo in 1513/14**. There, between 1513 and 1526, he painted for influential families such as the Tassi, Bonghi, Brembati and Cassotti (whose portrait we will see later).” (Prado website)
- “**Giovanni Agostino della Torre**, a **Bergamo physician**, is known to have died in 1535, **aged 81**. He was therefore 61 at the time this portrait was painted; the likeness of his son Niccolò was **presumably added later by the painter**. The letter is inscribed: Dno Nicolao de la tur/re nobili bergom . . ./. . The foreground scroll is inscribed: Medicorum Esculapio/Joanni Augustino Ber/gomatj; amicosingmo/Bg.mj; on the book: Galienus.” (National Gallery website)
- Although the National Gallery believes the son was added later perhaps because of the awkward arrangement of the figures there is **no evidence of this** (according to Peter Humfrey in *Lorenzo Lotto*, p. 66).

- The physician was a man of considerable wealth and learning. The **scroll** refers to the way he was **addressed, 'Esculapio' or Aesculapius was the Greek god of healing**. In his other hand he holds a **book by Galen** an ancient author of medical textbooks. His son was also a powerful political figure at a time when Bergamo was under secure Venetian control.

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<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/lorenzo-lotto-giovanni-agostino-della-torre-and-his-son-niccolo>



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Marsilio Cassotti and his wife Faustina*, 1523, 71 x 84 cm, Prado

Provenance: Royal Collection (Real Alcázar, Madrid, pieza donde Su Majestad doría, 1686, s.n.; Palacio Real Nuevo, Madrid, tercera pieza de la Furriera, 1747, nº 167; Palacio del Buen Retiro, Madrid, Galería del Mediodía, 1772, nº 167).

- “In Bergamo ... between 1513 and 1526, he painted for influential families such as the Tassi, Bonghi, Brembati and **Cassotti**. The Cassotti, **wealthy textile merchants** originating from Valle Imagna, used the arts to demonstrate their **social ascent** and patronised painters such as Andrea Previtali and Lotto. Lotto **painted five works for Zanin Cassotti**, a leading member of the family, of which only the two destined for his **son Marsilio** have survived. They are *The Virgin with Saints* (Rome, Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Antica) and this portrait.” (Prado website)
- Lotto was a skilled portraitist and was aware of the work of Raphael and Giorgione. Lotto introduced a northern type of marital portrait into Italy with its greater psychological depth. This work was commissioned in 1523 by Zanin Cassotti to celebrate his son’s wedding. Lotto originally **priced it as 30 escudos but Zanin eventually acquired it for 20**. We do not know but Faustina may have been a member of the wealthy Assonica family and so through this marriage the Cassotti

merchant family established a link with the local aristocracy.

- The portrait is **rich in marriage symbolism**, **Cupid is placing a yoke on the young couple** in reference to their marriage obligations, from the **yoke grows a laurel, symbol of virtue and a reference to fidelity between spouses**. Lotto shows the high point of the wedding when **Marsilio places the wedding ring on the third finger of Faustina's left hand** making the viewer a witness to their vows. The third finger is selected as it related to a theory dating back to Saint Isidro of Seville (c. 530–636) that a vein in that finger runs **directly back to the heart**.
- “Faustina is **dressed in red, the preferred colour for Venetian brides**, and wears a **pearl necklace, symbol of the woman's submission to her husband**, known at the time as the ‘vinculum amoris’ (Latin for ‘bond of love’). She also **wears a cameo** with the image of **Faustina the Elder**, the **devoted wife** of the Emperor Antoninus Pius (138–161AD) and the embodiment of the **perfect spouse**. As was usually the case in marriage portraits, the **subordination of the woman to the man** explains Faustina's pose, which is **tilted and slight lower** than Marsilio's. This iconographic reading does not, however, explain the ultimate meaning of the work. Marsilio **married at the age of twenty-one (which was very young in Bergamo)**, a year after he was granted his independence by his father. The latter wished Lotto to depict the culminating moment of his **son's ‘caprice’, warning him** in the process that **marriage is always a yoke**, however light. Cesare Ripa represented marriage with a yoke in his *Iconology* of 1618. The **ironic tone of the painting**, already noted by Berenson, is **emphasised by Cupid's smile**, which is in principle surprising in the context of an act as solemn as a marriage ceremony.” (Prado website)
- If Berenson is correct this is the first consciously humorous interpretation of a psychological situation. At the time of the marriage Marsilio was still very young, just barely 21, when the average age of marriage was 30. The previous year his father had emancipated him, that is freed him from the obligation to be obedient to his father and granted him part of the family fortune, when the normal age was 25. His father paid for and so commissioned the painting and so any comic intent was the father's. Is he teasing the son who is in such a hurry to grow up with the advice regarding the yoke of responsibility he is taking on.

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<https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/micer-marsilio-cassotti-and-his-wife-faustina/799f6e5e-840c-4f33-b9d3-a952874c2293>



Attributed to Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of a Man Holding a Glove*, c. 1520-25, 58.8 x 47.7 cm, Royal Collection, King's Closet, Windsor Castle

Giorgione (1477/8-1510), *Portrait of a Young Man*, c. 1511, oil on panel, 69.4 x 53.5 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich

- “Lotto derived the idea of a figure **looking over his shoulder** from a **design of Giorgione**, known today through a later version in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Giorgione in turn seems here to have **been influenced by the writings and portraits of Leonardo da Vinci**. The meticulous realism of Lotto’s technique adds to the immediacy and communicative power of the portrait. The subject’s hand is thinly and freely painted, as is the gleam of his white collar at his neck and through the gap in his detachable sleeve. Like his fellow Venetians, **Lotto did not draw his designs** carefully on his painted surfaces; infra-red reflectography reveals no underdrawing here.” (Royal Collection website)
- The **attribution to Giorgione is debated**, some experts think it is the work of **Palma Vecchio** (1480–1528) or **Sebastiano del Piombo** (1485–1547). The identity of the sitter is also uncertain, some sources suggest it is a portrait of **Anton Fugger** (1493-1560, a German merchant known as the ‘Prince of merchants’), or perhaps Buffalmacco the painter (active c. 1315-1336, a similar portrait looking over the

shoulder in known by Wenceslas Hollar in the 17th-century).

References

<https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/404428/portrait-of-a-man-holding-a-glove>



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of Lucina Brembati*, c. 1521-1523, , 52.6 cm × 44.8 cm, Accademia Carrara, Bergamo

Wikipedia and the National Gallery of Australia:

- The work is known since **1882**, when the Accademia acquired it from a **private collection**. The subject was **identified later, after the rebus included in it was recognized**: the **moon** in the upper left background **contains the inscription "CI"**, which can be read as 'CI in Luna', e.g. 'LuCIna'; the Brembati coat of arms is contained in ring of the woman's left forefinger.
- The painting is a bust portrait, with the face slightly from three-quarters. Lucina wears rich clothes with gilt ribbons and shell-shaped embroideries, as well as several jewels including a necklace of pearls, and another with a **horn-shaped pendant**, which at the time was **used as a toothpick**.
- Lotto has taken a different approach than the one Titian and Palma the Elder took in their idealised portraits of the period. Lotto used a more realistic approach: this is shown in details such as the asymmetric face, the weighty chin, and the sharp nose. In this he followed the local tradition of painters such as Paolo Cavazzola.
- According to some scholars, the hand touching the womb could be an allusion to her pregnancy reinforced by her namesake the ancient goddess of birth Juno

Lucina. **The dead weasel** could symbolize **marital fidelity** or possibly a **threat to her pregnancy** neutralised by the gold hook pointed at the animal's head.

However, no children were reported to have been born between 1518 and 1523 and a weasel stole was very common at this time. The background includes a heavy red brocade drapery with a night sky.

- 'Lorenzo Lotto's portrait of a noblewoman of youthful appearance but no great beauty is rendered with a **delicate balance between admiration and apparent irony**. The sophistication of her dress conveys the sense of a **high social level**. Her **fashionable Venetian headwear**, *capigliara*, is scrupulously detailed—the fake hair plaited and secured with yellow silk bows, the coronet of pearls concealing the line of attachment to her own hair. The **pearls at her neck accentuate her pale skin**, emphasised against the rich black of her velvet dress and filmy white camisole edged in yellow ribbon with shell-shaped ornamentation.' (National Gallery of Australia)



Andrea Odoni, signed and dated 1527, 104.3 x 116.8 cm, Royal Collection

- When this was painted in 1527 Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57) had recently **returned to Venice** after spending thirteen years in Bergamo and he was seeking to impress the Venetians. It is seen as a deliberate **challenge to Titian**.
- There have been **many interpretations** of this painting which compares and contrasts **Rome and Venice, pagan and Christian beliefs, nature and artifice, the ancient and modern worlds and painting and sculpture**. The argument, known as *paragone* ('comparison') between which is the greater art painting or sculpture had been raging and is exemplified and discussed by the final talk on Michelangelo and Leonardo.
- "This portrait of the successful **Venetian merchant Andrea Odoni** (1488-1545) is one of the **most innovative and dynamic portraits of the Italian Renaissance** by Lorenzo Lotto, recently returned to Venice after **thirteen years in Bergamo** and anxious **to impress possible patrons in Venice**. The Venetian collector holds in one hand a **statuette of Diana of Ephesus, symbol of nature**, and with the other he clasps **a cross to his chest**. One of several interpretations of this gesture is that **Christianity takes precedence over nature and the pagan gods of antiquity**." (Royal Collection website)

- **Emperor Hadrian** was a great patron of the arts and so his bust may be there to suggest Odoni is also a great patron of the arts.
- It was recorded as seen in Odoni's bedroom in 1532.
- Giorgio Vasari mentioned the portrait 'che è molto bello' ('that is very beautiful').
- **Odoni was from Milan** and had become an **important member of Venice**. He built upon the **art collection of his uncle** to become a renowned collector. He collected ancient and modern statuary which one poet and satirist described as recreating Rome in Venice although his other comments suggest Odoni's house overstepped Venetian decorum.
- The unusual **almost square** format is filled with his bulky presence and with his collection. Most of the sculptures have been identified and were probably plaster casts of well-known originals. In the background from left to right:
 - *Hercules and Antaeus* (pronounced 'an-tea-us'), Antaeus derived his strength from the earth and so Hercules lifted him and killed him with a bear hug, the fragmentary group is in the Belvedere courtyard at the Vatican);
 - the standing figure with a lionskin identified at the time as *Emperor Commodus as Hercules* (Musei Vaticani, Rome);
 - a Bathing Venus;
 - *Hercules Mingens* ('Hercules Urinating', derived from a lost prototype) on the far right;
 - in the foreground there is the torso of Aphrodite that was in the Veneto in the mid 16th century, now Museo del Liviano, Padua;
 - a cast of the bust of Hadrian (probably made from the bust now in the Musei Capitolini, Rome rather than the bust in the Museo Nazionale, Naples)
 - and Odoni holds out a statuette of Artemis (Roman Diana, goddess of the hunt, the Moon, chastity and childbirth) in his right hand.

References

<https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/405776/andrea-odoni>



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Triple Portrait of a Goldsmith (Goldsmith Seen from Three Sides)* (Bartolomeo Carpan?), c. 1525/1535, 52 x 79 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

- This painting was previously attributed to other artists such as **Titian** until documentary evidence was found linking it to a painting of the same description in various collection inventories. In 1627 it was in the collection of Vincenzo II **Gonzaga**, who sold it to **Charles I** of Great Britain, upon whose execution it was auctioned to **Philip IV of Spain**. It eventually entered the **Habsburg collections in Austria** via inheritance - inventories show it has been in Vienna since at least 1733.
- Influenced by existing **medieval examples** of triple portraits and by a **lost triple portrait of Cesare Borgia by Leonardo da Vinci** (and itself an **influence on** the 1635-36 **Charles I in Three Positions by Van Dyck**), it shows the same man face on, in profile and from behind, all half-length.
- He is dressed in dark clothes, wears a ring on his right hand and in the front-on portrait **holds a small object**. That object was barely visible before restoration and had previously been interpreted as a **'lotto' or pack of cards, punning on the painter's surname** and suggesting it may have been a self-portrait. The painting was restored for a 1953 exhibition, demonstrating that the **object was instead a**

ring-box, suggesting the subject was a goldsmith. Further study has linked the subject with the **goldsmith Bartolomeo Carpan**, a **friend of Lotto's** and mentioned in the painter's *Libro di spese diverse* from 1538 onwards. No other documents support the theory, but if it is correct the "**tre visi**" or "**three faces**" of the portrait may be a **pun on Carpan's hometown, Treviso**. Another suggestion is that it represents Carpan with his two brothers Antonio and Vettore, also goldsmiths, although the heads appear too similar.

- Another reason for the triple portrait is that it contributes to the *paragone* ('comparison') debate on the relative merits of painting and sculpture. Leonardo argued that painting was better able to represent the colours and texture of nature and the triple portrait undermines the sculptors argument that their art can better show different viewpoints simultaneously. Giorgio Vasari argued that drawing is the father of all arts, and as such, the most important one.
- It has also been suggested it was painted as a guide for a sculptor producing a portrait bust of Carpan as the well known Florentine sculptor Jacopo Sansovino arrived in Venice in 1527 fleeing from the Sack of Rome. It is thought Sansovino met Lotto at this time and they became friends. However, it is unlikely a mere goldsmiths could commission a portrait bust let alone one from the renowned Sansovino.



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of a Woman inspired by Lucretia*, 1530-32, 96.5 x 110.6 cm, National Gallery

- Interpretations of this painting range from the sitter being a **respectable member of Venetian society to her being a courtesan**. The portrait may also be another **challenge to Titian** with its unusual, for Venice, **broad format**, is **dissonant colours** and the **emphasis on diagonals** giving a feeling of **instability**. All these aspects would have been **calculated by Lotto** to be different and to **draw attention to his work** and separate it from a typical Venetian portrait.
- “The woman who leans to the side **has not been conclusively identified**. Dressed in an elaborate and softly painted costume of gleaming **green and orange**, she directs attention to a drawing held in her left hand. This shows her Roman **namesake, Lucretia**, about to stab herself after she had been **raped by the son of King Tarquin**. The transparency of the paint reveals that Lotto **originally depicted Lucretia in colour**, not as a monochrome drawing. The portrait, while displaying the beauty of the sitter, also proclaims her virtue. The message is underlined by the **Latin inscription** on the paper on the table, taken from the Roman historian Livy: **NEC VILA IMPVDICA LVCRETIA EXEMPLO VIVAT** (**‘After Lucretia’s example let no violated woman live’**).” (National Gallery website). In other words she is

demanding all women acknowledge this sentiment, and by so doing, agree to marital fidelity and to cast aside any thoughts of treachery. Lucretia made her husband and father swear to avenge the deed and then killed herself. According to Roman legend, people were so outraged by the incident that they overthrew the monarchy and founded the Roman Republic.

- It has been suggested the woman in the painting was the wife of a Venetian nobleman called Lucretia Valier and this is possibly a wedding gift. The idea the woman is going to marry is also suggested by the bouquet of carnations.
- An alternative theory is that the painting is an **ironic joke as Lucretia was a common name used by prostitutes** and her jewels are loosely tucked into her bodice and her fur trimmed costume is slightly too lavish. The headdress is fake curls in the style of ancient Rome would add to the humour.
- X-rays and infra-red photography reveal that Lotto made a number of changes while painting this work. The drawing of Lucretia was originally a different composition and colour and at one stage the tablecloth and background were striped.



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of a Young Gentleman*, c. 1530-1532, 97 x 110 cm, Academia Gallery, Venice

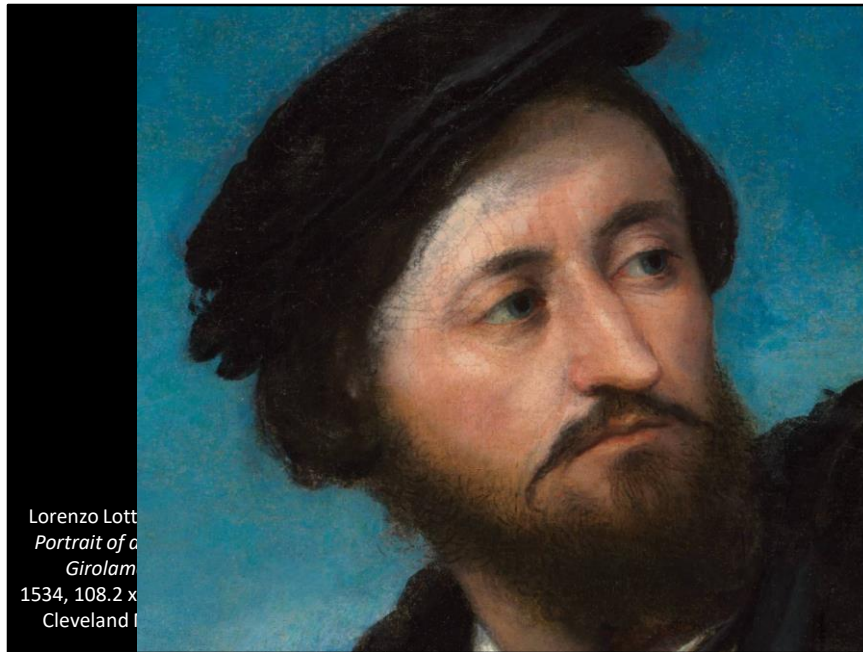
- One interpretation is, “The pale young man with his finely tapered face, is obviously **a lover of both music and hunting**, witness the mandola and the hunting horn hanging from the piece of furniture on the right, and is caught here in a moment of yearning thoughtfulness as his fingers leaf absent-mindedly through the pages of a large book. The natural light, entering through an invisible window, highlights the vibrant blacks and greys of his garments, the pale pink tones of his flesh and the blues of the table and just manages to penetrate the dark of the background in subdued illumination of the objects there, the finely turned ink-stand and the keys on the sideboard. The human figure too with its lack of any strong emotion, seems to participate in the arcane calm of this stupendous still life, the recently opened letter, the slow dropping of the rose petals, the silk shawl from whose folds darts a lizard. Such searching after human truth, veiled with melancholy, is at quite the opposite pole from the dignified idealization pursued by Titian in the portraits he painted at about the same time.” (Web Gallery of Art)
- Another opposing interpretation is, “It is known in Italian as *Giovane malato*,

literally ***The Ill Young Man*** - the flower with leaves is thought to be a symbol of disappointment in love or an illness, perhaps **melancholy**. The subject also **turns his back on worldly pleasures** (symbolised by a hunting horn, a dead bird and a lute). More so than in other works produced around the same time by the artist such as his ***Portrait of Andrea Odoni***, it shows Lotto moving beyond the influence of Titian with a more precise definition of details and contours.” (Wikipedia)

- Melancholia is associated with one of the four humours as defined by classical medicine. Illness was caused by an imbalance in the humours and personality types were determined by the dominant humour. According to Hippocrates and subsequent tradition, **melancholia was caused by an excess of black bile**, hence the name, which means ‘black bile’ in ancient Greek. In terms of the four elements it was associated with earth, with the season of autumn, with the spleen and with the planet Saturn, hence saturnine. It is associated with immense sadness, a note of despair and a sense of suffering but from the medieval period these attributes could be associated with imagination and creativity. The popular Neoplatonist and humanist **Marsilio Ficino** (1433–1499) transformed the medieval notion into a **mark of genius**. In the 15th and 16th centuries melancholy became an **indispensable aspect** of all those with **artistic or intellectual pretensions**. Painters were considered **by Vasari** and other writers to be especially **prone to melancholy** by the nature of their work, sometimes with good effects for their art in increased sensitivity and use of fantasy.

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https://www.finestresullarte.info/685n_i-ritratti-di-lorenzo-lotto-alla-pinacoteca-di-brera.php (use Google Chrome Translate)



Lorenzo Lotto (1480-1556), *Portrait of a Man, possibly Girolamo Rosati*, 1533-1534, 108.2 x 100.5 cm, The Cleveland Museum of Art

- “The gesture of the elegantly dressed man is a mystery. Is he rising from his chair to address someone or is he pointing to something outside the frame? His right hand rests on a **piece of paper (a letter?)**, while on the table are **clover—a symbol of abundance, good fortune, and happy marriage—and jasmine, associated with purity and love, further emphasized by the roses on the trellis**. There may have been a **companion portrait of the sitter’s bride**, to whom he acknowledges his devotion.
- Another recent interpretation identifies the sitter as **Girolamo Rosati, a high official in Fermo, on Italy’s east coast**. The paper may be a **design for one of his important architectural projects**, to which he may be pointing in the distance. The interrupted moment is a **naturalistic touch characteristic of Lotto**, quite distinct from the formality of the other Italian Renaissance portraits in the museum's collection. Though this portrait clearly articulates the man’s status, Lotto emphasizes his individuality and interiority as much as a socially constructed identity.” (The Cleveland Museum of Art)



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Venus and Cupid*, 1540, Oil on canvas, 92.4 x 11.4 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
 Titian (1490-1576), *The Andrians*, 1523 – 1526, 175 x 193 cm, Prado

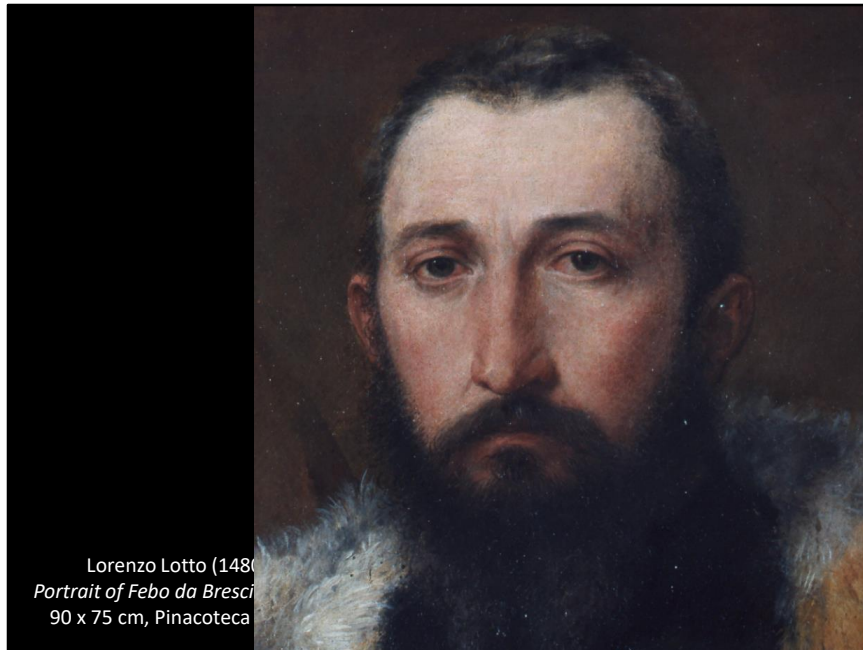
- “Of the countless Renaissance paintings of Venus and Cupid, few are as beautiful – and certainly none is quite so startling – as this **humorous wedding picture**. It is an **allegory** in which the **goddess of love, surrounded by symbols of fertility and conjugal fidelity, blesses a marriage**. With her **right hand Venus raises a myrtle wreath through which Cupid urinates**, with evident delight, onto her lap. His action may seem **ludicrous to us today**, but for Lotto ‘s contemporaries a **urinating child was an augury of good fortune**. It has been suggested that the picture was painted in 1540 for Lotto’s cousin, but an earlier date is also possible.” (Web Gallery of Art)
- Lotto’s *Venus and Cupid* is full of symbolism, much of it lost to us today. It shows **Cupid urinating (or some suggest ejaculating)** through a myrtle wreath onto a naked Venus. It is difficult to interpret the painting as a ‘pin-up’; in fact it is difficult to apply any current category. We know that the painting was a **marriage painting symbolizing good luck**. It is possible that Venus is a portrait of the bride and the Cupid peeing is intended to be a light-hearted symbol of good luck. **Peeing figures**,

especially putti and later men and women, are **so common in art** that Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, a French critic, **has written *Pissing Figures, 1280–2014***.

- Titian (1490-1576). Having delivered the *Bacchus and Ariadne* in **1523 Titian then painted *The Andrians***, also inspired by Philostratus (*Imagines* I, 25). The scene is set on the island of Andros, a place so **favoured by Bacchus that a stream flows with wine**. Gods, men and children unite in the celebration of the effects of wine, whose consumption, in Philostratus' words, '*makes men rich, dominant, generous to their friends, handsome and four cubits high*'. In the foreground a child is urinating.

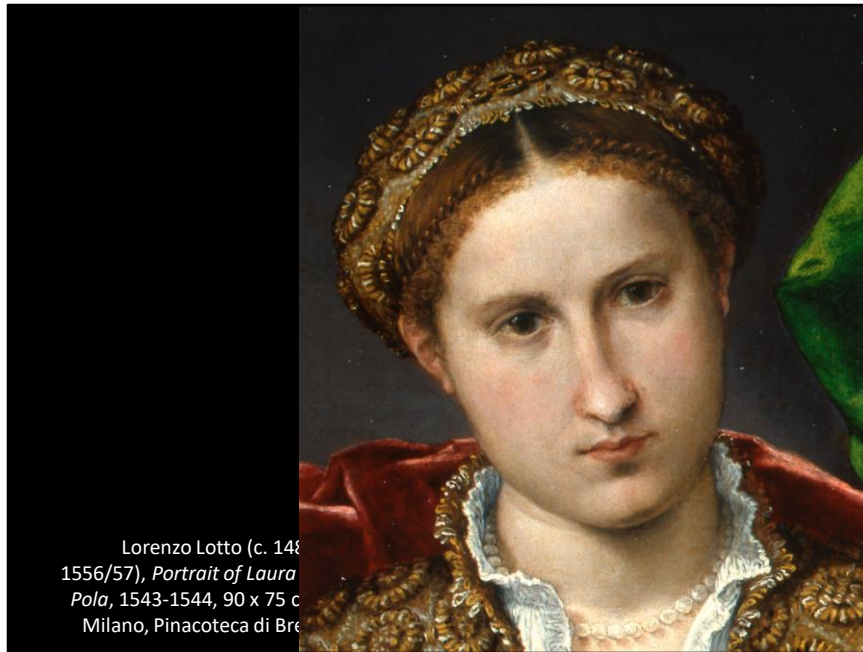
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Lorenzo Lotto (1480-1556), *Portrait of Febo da Brescia*, 1543-44, 82 x 78 cm, Pinacoteca di Brera

- 'The portrait of **Febo da Brescia**, an important member of the community of Treviso whose **high social rank is underlined by his elegant clothing**, can be dated to 1543-44 on the basis of the identification proposed by Bernard Berenson between the person portrayed and the "gentleman" who in 1543 owed the artist the payment "for two pictures of life-size half-length figures," i.e. his own likeness "and that of his wife mistress Laura de Puola". The slightly lower height of Febo's portrait with respect to that of his wife hanging next to it and the fact that his head is much closer to the frame suggest that the upper part of the canvas has been cut off.' (Brera Pinacoteca)
- Lotto represents an entire social class of which he creates a sensitive, penetrating and meticulous representation emulating Titian down to the skill with which he depicts the fur lining.
- This and the next painting is the only example of a pair of paintings by Lotto.

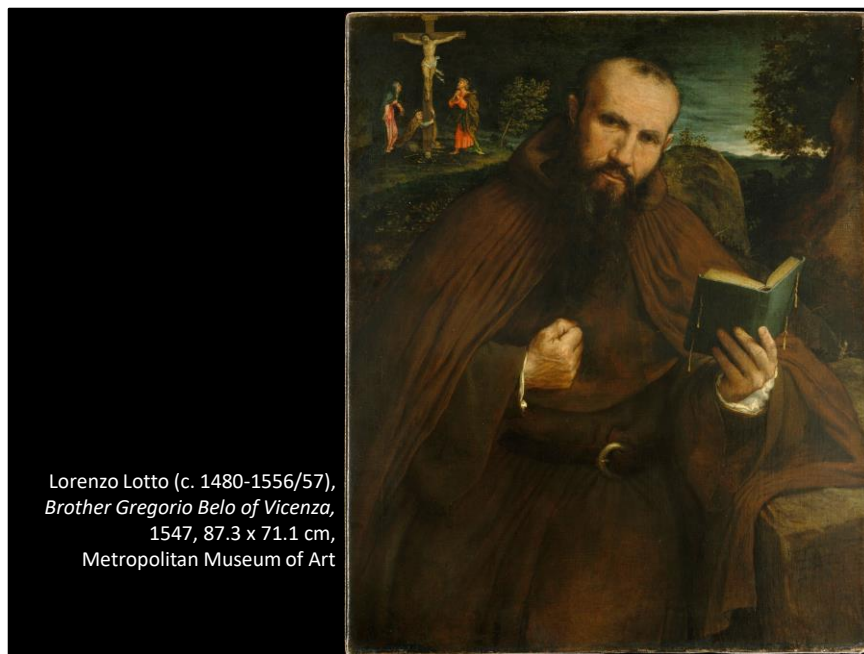


Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of Laura da Pola*, 1543-44, 90 x 75 cm, Milano, Pinacoteca di Brera

- 'Of the four portraits by Lorenzo Lotto in Brera, the ones representing Laura da Pola and her husband Febo da Brescia and the one believed to be of Liberale da Pinedel come from the Turinese collection of Count Castellane Harrach: put up for sale in 1859, they were purchased on behalf of the Pinacoteca by Francesco Hayez, in fear that they would be acquired for the National Gallery in London; in 1860, the cost of the operation was refunded to Brera by King Victor Emanuel II.
- The *Portrait of Laura da Pola* dates from Lotto's late maturity and its execution is documented: in **1543 the artist recorded in his expenses ledger** the commission he had received in Treviso "**for two pictures of life-size half-length figures**" and, in the March of 1544, complained about the payment made by Febo da Brescia, a fact that leads us to believe that the work was already finished by that date.
- The painting is regarded as **one of Lotto's highest achievements**, in which he was capable of giving pictorial form to the **numerous messages** that the client wanted to convey through her portrait: the latter, wife of one of the most prominent figures in Treviso, is presented in an **unassuming attitude**, leaning on a piece of furniture in her bedroom. Despite the informality of the setting, she is **wearing a**

dress of great refinement and displaying luxury objects like the fan of plumes with a gold chain and the precious rings, elements that permitted her contemporaries to recognize her immediately as a member of one of the city's highest-ranking families. Given that at the time **unmarried girls were not allowed to appear in public**, the portrait should also be seen as a **celebration of Laura's status as a married woman**, authorized to exhibit herself and the rank she has achieved thanks to the good marriage she has contracted.' (Brera Pinocoteca)

- The portraits of Laura da Pola and Febo da Brescia belong to the period in his career when Lotto was particularly active as a portraitist.
- Rather than painting monarchs and prelates, as did Titian, Lotto portrayed the local nobility, fixing their traits with an acute eye. He has painted her in an informal pose in her bedroom but surrounded by symbols of wealth.
- They were delivered in 1544 and after Febo's death in 1547 remained with his wife's descendants until her family died out in the 19th century. Both works were acquired in 1859 by the Pinacoteca di Brera, where they still hang. The cost of the paintings was reimbursed by the king of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele II in 1860.



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Brother Gregorio Belo of Vicenza*, 1547, 87.3 x 71.1 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art

- “Fra Gregorio was a member of the order of the Hieronymites, or Poor Hermits of Saint Jerome. The artist was friendly with members of this community in Venice and nearby Treviso, and was probably in harmony with their evangelical fervour and ideals. The friar expresses these ideals through his gestures, as he beats his chest (Saint Jerome was often depicted in this way), and by reading the Homilies of Saint Gregory the Great. This reading would have led him to meditate on the Crucifixion, shown in the background in a vignette of deeply felt emotion.” (Met website)
- A fifty-five year-old friar, whose name is inscribed in the stone in the lower right corner, is holding a book (Saint Gregory the Great's *Homilies on the Gospels*, 593 A.D.) and beating his chest. A landscape lit by the evening sky shows the crucified Christ with Mary, John the Evangelist and Mary Magdalen. According to his first modern biographer, Bernard Berenson, Lotto's portraits **‘have the interest of personal confessions. Never before or since has anyone brought out on the face more of the inner life.’** The fist and the crucifixion reflect the friar's meditations and reference Saint Jerome. This is a rare example of when the date and the sitter

are known. In Treviso Lotto's recorded in his account ledger on December 9, 1546 his agreement to paint a portrait of 'Fra Gregorio of Vicenza of the friars of Saint Sebastian of Venice' that would also include 'a crucifixion, the Madonna, Saint John, and the Magdalen'. Lotto purchased a canvas the same day and Fra Gregorio made payments on December 13, April 27 and March 5 and 7. Then on October 11, 1547, the painting was delivered to the vice-prior who made the final payment.

- In the 1540s the protestant religion was spreading across Europe and the Roman Catholic church's response was soon to be devised at the Council of Trent. The church had already clamped down on unorthodox practices and books but Gregory's *Homilies* was an approved book. Recent research suggests both Fra Gregorio Belo and Lotto were part of a religious community in Treviso that was drawn to a Protestant-inclined spirituality and so the approved book, the crucifixion with Adam's bones beneath and the penitential friar may all be evidence of a strict, Catholic orthodoxy.

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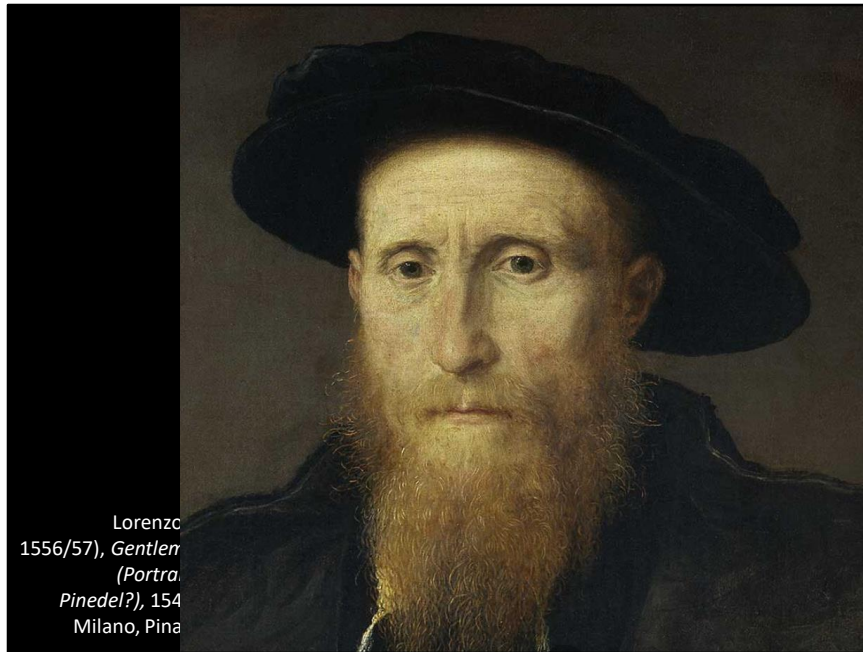


Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Portrait of Giovanni della Volta with his Wife and Children*, 1547, 104.5 x 138 cm, National Gallery

- A strange and haunting portrait full of mystery and anxiety. The painting is full of hands and gestures. The mother leans in but what should be her supporting hand is her daughters grabbing a cherry while taking another cherry from her mother's cupped hand. The father distractedly offers his prancing son a pair of cherries. The children are paired with their parents according to their sex. The cherries taken by the daughter suggest fertility and those held by the father **just out of reach** suggest he is teaching the boy restraint. The surreal landscape outside comes between them and includes a smoking volcano which may suggest the dangers of the outside world while inside the parents protectively hold their hands around their offspring.
- "This is probably a portrait of the **Venetian merchant, Giovanni della Volta and his family** described in Lotto's account book between 1538 and 1547. **No other portrait of a man, woman and two children by Lotto is known.** The action is focused on the **bowl of cherries** on the table. The mother offers cherries to her daughter, while the father offers them to his son, who seems to dance before him in the foreground. The table with its elaborately **patterned Turkish carpet** is

central to the painting. This is of a type frequently represented by Lotto (hence known as a '**Lotto carpet**') and has yellow arabesques on a red field, and a Kufic border." (National Gallery website)

- The **cherries are the fruits of Paradise and refer to the brevity of life** and its pleasures which may explain the air of melancholy or seriousness. The man could not have been conventional to have so seriously disregarded the conventional position of a wife.
- The carpet is an Anatolian carpet and he depicted them so often in his paintings that Turkish carpets became known as Lotto carpets.
- Lotto lived with the family in Venice and the artist's account books record a painting of that man and his family which was probably given **as part-payment of rent he owed when he moved in 1547**. Lotto had valued the portrait at 50 ducats 'both for merit and very fine colouring [or high grade colours] together with its cover'.



Lorenzo
1556/57), *Gentleman with Gloves*
(Portrait of Liberale da
Pinedel?), 1543?, 90 x 75 cm,
Milano, Pinacoteca di Brera

Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556/57), *Gentleman with Gloves* (Portrait of Liberale da Pinedel?), 1543?, 90 x 75 cm, Milano, Pinacoteca di Brera

- A masterpiece of renaissance art and regarded as one of the finest portraits painted by Lotto for the subtlety of the expression, the quality of the execution, at once bold and delicate. It was completed at the beginning of his **second period in Treviso** (1542-1545).
- It depicts a man of high social rank with meticulous detail and anatomical accuracy. Some art historians hold the subject to be Liberale da Pinedel, a portrait of whom was mentioned in Lotto's account books in 1543, shortly after the painter's arrival in Treviso, although Liberale would then only have been 47 or 48 years old, younger than the portrait's subject. The account books also mention portraits of the Mantuan Marcello Framberti and of Ludovico Avolante, the latter painted in 1544, both of whom are alternative candidates for *Gentleman with Gloves*.

Summary of Lotto's Life

- There is an entry in Lotto's account book which we think refers to this gentleman, 'No fee was given, but I rely on the honesty of the gentleman, finished **the**

painting is worth a fair price of 20 ducats. The gentleman is grave with pale skin and red hair and downcast introspective eyes. His black hat and coat were essential fashionable clothes for this period and Lotto shows us **every wrinkle and whisker of the ageing man**. Maybe the honesty of the portrait and its **failure to flatter** was its commercial downfall as **Lotto only received 10 ducats** four months later. It is also possible that Lotto never gave him a price as he seemed to rely on his skill as an artist resulting in the **payment he hoped for**. This method of working has been described as '**Classical neurotic behaviour**' when a person sets themselves up for **rejection and disappointment**. As a result Lotto's career went sideways rather than upwards and he eventually sunk into poverty. In 1546 he wrote, '**Art did not earn me what I spent**'. Following an unprofitable auction of his work, at the age of 72, **he entered a monastery in Loreto** as a lay brother maybe to ensure he received a square meal every day. He died in 1556 leaving no heirs.

- Lotto was described as a good and decent man. 'There is no envy in your breast, but rather you rejoice to see in masters of design certain matters with which you yourself seem unacquainted, when it comes to the brush.'



Art History Revealed – Wednesday 26 September, half-term 31 October – 5 December, Wednesday 9 January – 13 March (no half-term)

Exhibitions in Start Date Order

1. Impressionism in London, Tate Britain, 2 November 2017 – 7 May 2018
2. Modigliani, Tate Modern, 23 November 2017 – 2 April 2018
3. Charles I: King and Collector, Royal Academy, 27 January – 15 April 2018
4. All Too Human Bacon, Freud and a century of painting life, Tate Britain, 28 February – 27 August 2018
5. Victorian Giants: The Birth of Art Photography, National Portrait Gallery, 1 March – 20 May 2018
6. Picasso 1932 - Love, Fame, Tragedy, Tate Modern, March 8 to September 9, 2018
7. Monet & Architecture, National Gallery, 9 April – 29 July 2018
8. Rodin and the Art of Ancient Greece, British Museum, 26 April – 29 July 2018
9. Aftermath Art in the Wake of World War One, Tate Britain, 5 June – 16 September 2018
10. The Great Spectacle: 250 Years of the Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy, 12 June 2018 – 19 August 2018
11. Mantegna and Bellini, National Gallery 1 October 2018 – 27 January 2019

12. Burne-Jones, Tate Britain, 24 October 2018 – 24 February 2019
13. Klimt/Schiele, Drawings from the Albertina Museum, Vienna, Royal Academy, 4 November 2018 – 3 February 2019
- 14. Lorenzo Lotto Portraits, 5 November 2018 – 10 February 2019**
15. Gainsborough's Family Album, National Portrait Gallery, 22 November 2018 - 3 February 2019
16. Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). Tate Britain, March 2019. Van Gogh and Britain will be the first exhibition to take a new look at the artist through his relationship with Britain. It will explore how Van Gogh was inspired by British art, literature and culture throughout his career and how he in turn inspired British artists, from Walter Sickert to Francis Bacon.

Ideas

- Gothic Revival, based on an Andrew Graham Dixon TV programme but without the references to the literature of the period
- The Invention of Antiquity – refers to ideas in Mary Beard and John Henderson, *Classical Art from Greece to Rome*, Oxford History of Art Series, 2001, Nigel Spivey, *Understanding Greek Sculpture: Ancient Meanings, Modern Readings*, 1997 and John Boardman, *Greek Art*, Thames & Hudson, 1996
- The Painting War: Michelangelo versus Leonardo – described in the novel *Oil and Marble*, released on 5 July, 2018, and *The Lost Battles: Leonardo, Michelangelo and the Artistic Duel That Defined the Renaissance*
- The Turner Prize

London Galleries

Wallace
 British Museum
 Hayward
 National Gallery
 National Portrait Gallery
 White Cube
 Serpentine
 Tate Britain
 Tate Modern
 Royal Academy
 Estorick