

SALVATORE ROSA

(Naples 1615- 1673 Rome)

Saint Francis of Assisi in Ecstasy

Pen and brown ink, brown wash over black chalk

7 x 5 cm

Bears the stamps of collections on the mount: lower left Giuseppe Vallardi (L. 1223); lower right Marie Marignane (L.1848) and lower Hubert Georges François Marignane (L. 5120)

Provenance:

Collection Giuseppe Vallardi (1784-1863);

Collection Marie Marignane, wife of Jacques Patissou;

Collection Hubert Georges François Marignane (1921-2002);

Private collection, France.



Salvator Rosa was a highly individualistic and unconventional figure in the Baroque era. His drawings, like his paintings, display a unique energy and a rebellious spirit that set him apart from many of his contemporaries.

This drawing, with its lively brushwork and dynamic composition, exhibits qualities that are in keeping with the Italian Baroque tradition. Previously given to Van Dyck, this sheet shows a real proximity in style, technique and theme to the works of Salvator Rosa; let's consider some key points.

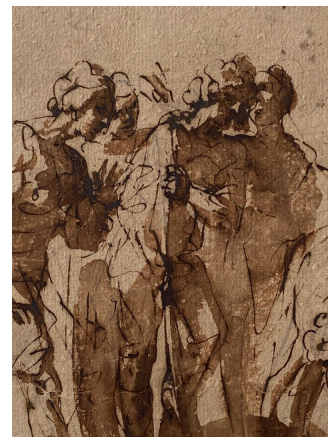
The scene appears here to be dramatic, with figures arranged in a dynamic diagonal movement, which was common in Baroque compositions. Rosa, known for his dramatic and often fantastical subjects, frequently portrayed religious scenes with a sense of tension and movement. If you look

at Rosa's drawings and etchings, especially those done with pen and ink, they often convey a sense of restless energy, and his lines could be free-flowing, similar to what is seen here.

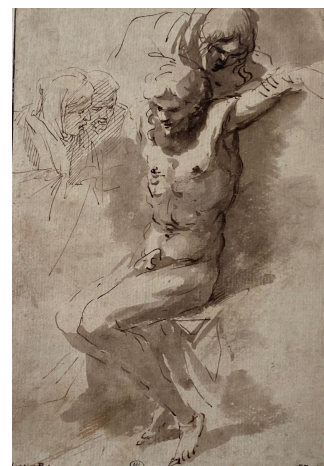
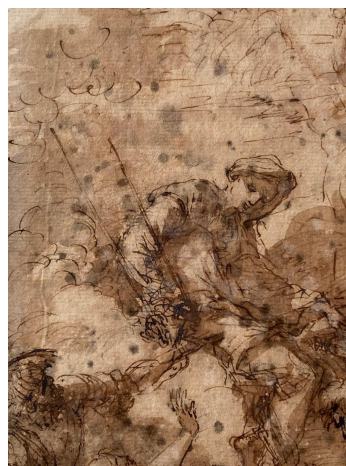
Rosa's drawings often feature dramatic, diagonally structured compositions, which create a strong sense of movement and tension. This is in line with the Baroque penchant for dynamic, emotionally charged works. His compositions often appear theatrical, with figures posed in exaggerated gestures and arranged in such a way that the scene feels as if it is unfolding in the moment. There's an emphasis on storytelling, often through dramatic moments like in our drawing.

Here, the medium seems to be a combination of wash and ink or possibly sepia. Rosa often used similar techniques for his sketches, allowing him to achieve both broad, tonal effects and sharp, intricate details. The quick, energetic handling of the ink and wash seems reminiscent of Rosa's approach, especially the way he rendered figures with a somewhat sketchy, fluid outline while building depth through washes. He would often use a darker ink line to define key contours and then add tonal washes, which contributed to a sense of depth and volume in his compositions. This contrast creates a lively interplay between line and shading.

The treatment of the figures' faces and their slightly loose anatomy also resembles some of Rosa's known drawings. Rosa's figures often show a rugged and somewhat exaggerated quality, especially in their facial expressions and movements. See for instance the drawings in the Louvre museum below:



Salvatore Rosa, *Romulus and Remus suckled by the she-wolf, under the gaze of many characters*, pen and brown ink, brown wash over black chalk on beige paper, 24,2 x 40,8 cm, collections : Saint-Morys; INV. 9732;



Salvatore Rosa, *Allegory of Justice*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, black chalk, bears an inscription in pen and brown ink lower left « S. Rosa », 29,7 x 19,7 cm, collections : Saint-Morys,

INV 9734; and Salvatore Rosa, *Half-nude man sustained by a man*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, 19,7 x 13,5 cm, collections : Saint-Morys, INV 9750.

The atmospheric background, with swirling elements and dramatic poses, could be associated with Rosa's typical focus on the emotional and chaotic elements of his scenes. Rosa's sketches, particularly in his mature phase, often exhibit a raw and expressive quality, with dramatic contrasts of light and dark. He favored creating dramatic, almost theatrical scenes.

The boldness and somewhat tumultuous energy in this drawing fit the temperament of Rosa's work, especially when compared to his known pen and wash compositions.

Comparing this drawing closely with known sketches by Rosa in major collections (such as the British Museum or the Louvre) solidify this attribution. Rosa's preparatory sketches, especially in wash and ink, share a lot of compositional and technical similarities with this drawing. See for instance:



Salvatore Rosa, *Woman with helmet and staff in her left hand sitting on a cloud (Athena), below a standing soldier in armor blinking up at her*, 1660/1661, pen and brown ink, brown wash, 17 x 17,6 cm, Leipzig Museum der Bildenden Künste, Inv.-Nr.NI.8494; and « *Humanitatis Fragilitatis* », 1656/1657, pen and brown ink, brown wash, 20,2 x 17,3 cm, bears an inscription in pen and brown ink « a. Chigi », Leipzig Museum der Bildenden Künste, Inv.-Nr.NI.8493.

Born in Naples in 1615, Salvator Rosa is best known today as an Italian Baroque painter, whose romanticized landscapes and history paintings, often set in dark and untamed nature, exerted considerable influence from the 17th century into the early 19th century. In his lifetime he was among the most famous painters, known for his flamboyant personality, and regarded as an accomplished poet, satirist, actor, musician, and printmaker, as well.

He was the son of a surveyor; it was originally intended that he pursue a scholarly career, but his native talent soon inclined him more to the art of painting, in which he seems to have been largely self-taught. Salvator showed a preference for the arts and secretly worked with his maternal uncle Paolo Greco to learn about painting. He soon transferred himself to the tutelage of his brother-in-law Francesco Fracanzano, a pupil of Ribera, and afterward to either Aniello Falcone.

In 1635 at the age of twenty Salvator set out for Rome, not so much to complete his very fragmentary training as to satisfy his already raging ambition. Arriving in Florence in 1640, Rosa immediately devoted himself to the satisfaction of his vigorous (though not very judicious) southern ambition. Considering himself a genius, Rosa sought to make himself the talk of the town by any means possible. In Florence he stood at the apex of his success; this is reflected in the fact that he was able to raise the prices for his work considerably without loss of commissions. But despite his success in Florence and the great interest in his activities expressed

by the Florentine court, Rosa felt irresistibly drawn to Rome. At the end of 1648, after a preliminary journey to Volterra, he took his final leave from Florence and, except for a few brief trips, spent the rest of his life in Rome. Rosa was a facile draftsman, able to capture the essential characteristics with a few strokes. It is by no means to his discredit that, even in his later work, one detects an improvisational manner, the lingering traces of his self-training as a youth.

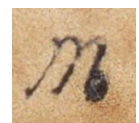
Our drawing bears the stamps of three famous collections on the mount: lower left Giuseppe Vallardi (L. 1223); lower right Marie Marignane (L.1848) and lower Hubert Georges François Marignane (L. 5120).



Giuseppe Vallardi (1784-1863), prints and drawings dealer, was artistic advisor to the Ambrosian Library in Milan and honorary curator of the *Cabinet Archinto*, in the same city. In 1856, he sold to the Louvre Museum, for 35,000 francs, a very large volume containing 378 drawings that were then believed to be almost all by Leonardo da Vinci, but since recognized as by Pisanello; this collection came from the *Anguisciola*, *Resta*, *Monti* and *Stef. M. Pezzoni* collections. Many of his Italian drawings also came to the Berlin Cabinet. Part of his collection, notably his Rembrandt prints, passed into the cabinet of his nephew, the knight A. D. of Turin, a cabinet dispersed in 1860, in the two sales reported below. In 1830 he published a catalogue of his paintings, written and illustrated by himself; in the same year the work *Disegni originali di Leonardo da Vinci incisi da C. G. Gerli* appeared, with interesting notes by Vallardi who, in 1855, published and commented on the drawings that he himself possessed of the master.



Marie Marignane, sister of Maurice Marignane (L.1872), has, like her brother, a private collection of drawings representing old masters from different schools.



Hubert Marignane (1921-2002) is the son of Maurice Marignane (L.1872) and Odette Marie Joséphine Courtoux. He is also the nephew of Marie Marignane-Patisson (L.1848). According to a note in the archives of the Fondation Custodia, he was an insurance agent and had married one of the daughters of the archaeologist Waldemar Deonna of Geneva. But according to his death certificate, he was single. Hubert Marignane opted for a new collector stamp (L.5120), probably around the year 1960 because it appears on drawings included in the composite sale of 13-15 June 1960 in Geneva, under the direction of Nicolas Rauch. Indeed, 53 numbers are indicated in the catalogue of this sale as coming from « *H. de Marignane* ». Most of them bear this new collector mark as can be seen from the reproductions in the catalogue.



In summary, the qualities of the present drawing—the technique, the expressive brushwork, and the dramatic composition—are consistent with Salvatore Rosa's work. It is marked by his energy, freedom, and expressiveness. Its bold use of pen, ink, and wash, combined with a penchant for dramatic, embodies the tumultuous spirit of the Baroque, with an emphasis on emotion, movement, and contrast between light and dark.