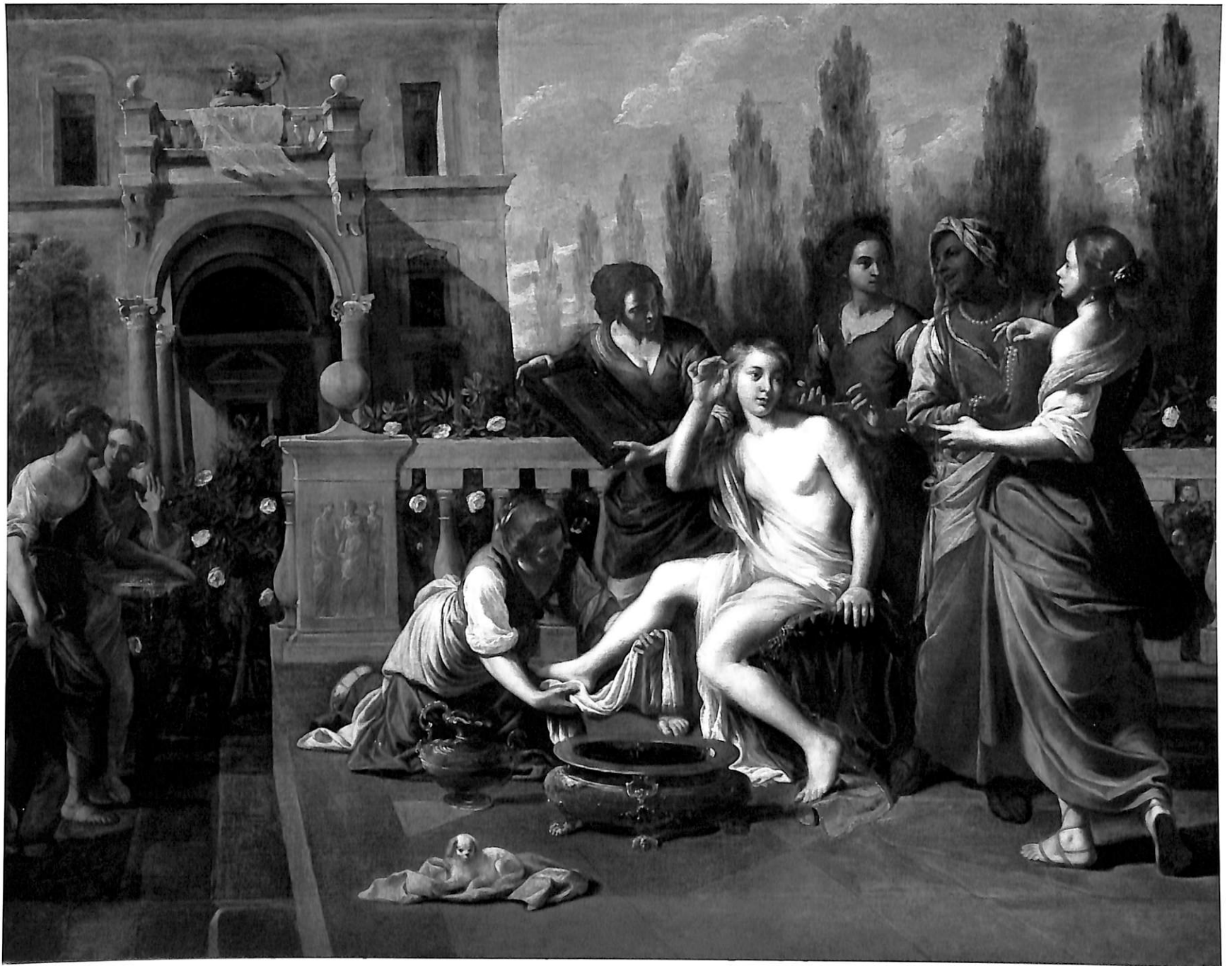




[Gargiulo, Bathsheba at the Bath]

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LAW OFFICES

ASBJORN R. LUNDE

230 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017

December 9, 1976

The John and Mabel Ringling Museum
of Art
P. O. Box 1838
Sarasota, Florida 33578

Attention: Mr. Richard S. Carroll
Director

Dear Sirs:

Confirming our recent conversations, I would be pleased to give you, without any conditions or restrictions, the following Italian 17th Century Baroque painting (Neapolitan School):

The Toilet of Bathsheba by Bernardo
Cavallino. The picture measures 33-1/4"
by 45-1/2" and is on canvas.

A black and white photograph of the painting is sent to you herewith, along with a photostat of a certificate with respect to the painting by Giuliano Briganti. In his certificate, Briganti draws attention to The Triumph of David, No. 155 in your collection. Your painting was originally attributed, I believe, to Cavallino but has since been considered to be by Domenico Gargiulo (Micco Spadaro). Briganti thinks that the two paintings may have formed part of a larger series of paintings on the life of David and it is of course quite possible that the several paintings may be wholly or partly by different hands. You will, I am sure, note the close connection between the figure on the extreme right in each of the two paintings.

Prof. Zeri has seen the painting several times and, while he first thought that my painting might be a particularly fine example by Gargiulo, keeping in mind the reattribution of your painting to Gargiulo, he nevertheless on reflection considered the work to be an excellent example of Cavallino's work. This opinion has also been endorsed verbally by Denis Mahon on the basis of photographs, both black and white and color, which I showed him a couple of years ago in London.

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The John and Mabel Ringling
Museum of Art

-2-

December 9, 1976

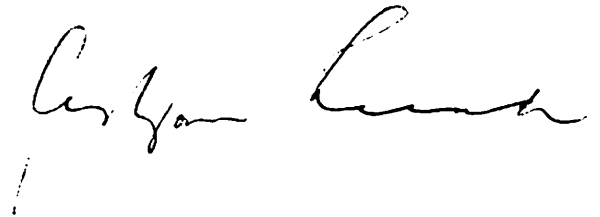
Prof. Zeri pointed out that the figure of Bathsheba, particularly the face, shoulders and hands, had been over-painted to a degree. This overpainting was removed earlier this year by a good restorer in New York, Mrs. Gertrud Blumel, and I think that the removal of the overpainting and subsequent restoration (which is not shown in the enclosed photograph, which was taken earlier) have enhanced the painting considerably.

The picture was bought from the Acquavella Galleries in New York around 1963.

It seems to me that this painting, having such a close connection with No. 155 already in your collection, might prove a valuable addition to your Museum and I look forward to hearing from you as to whether or not you agree.

Sincerely yours,

ARL/jw
Enclosures



2/11/78

BETTY

FOR THE CAVALLINO FILE:

SHE SUGGESTS THAT THE DAVID AND BATHSHEBA BY CAVALLINO IS REALLY
BY GARGIULO (SEE OUR GARGUILO, TRIUMPH OF DAVID)

WW

Ann Sutherland Harris

December 29, 1980

Professor Peter Tomory on a visit this date suggests a definite attribution to Gargiulo.

BT

I have examined the photograph of the painting depicting Bathsheba at the Bath and consider it to be by Bernardo Cavallino. It is closely related to a painting by Cavallino (now attributed to Gargiulo. Trans.) depicting the Triumph of David in the Ringling Museum Sarasota (No. 155). The dimensions are almost the same (the small difference in height suggests that the Sarasota painting has been trimmed by a few centimetres at the bottom). That the subjects of both are taken from the story of David and there are striking stylistic affinities (compare the leading assistant on the right of the Bath of Bathsheba with the figure of the young Israelite on the right of the Triumph of David) suggest the two paintings are parts of the same series illustrating the life of David. I consider that the painting which is in excellent condition, must be dated on the last period of the artist's life.

(signed) Giuliano Brigante

Ho esaminato il dipinto qui riprodotto raffigurante Betsabea al Bagno e lo ritengo opera di Bernardo Cavallino. E in stretta relazione con un quadro del Cavallino raffigurante il trionfo di David su Golia del Pingling Museum di Sarasota (N° 155). Le dimensioni pressochè eguali (la piccola differenza in altezza può far supporre che il dipinto di Sarasota sia stato tagliato di pochi centimetri nella parte inferiore), il soggetto tolto in ambedue i casi dalla storia di David e soprattutto le impressionanti affinità stilistiche (si confronti la prima assistente a destra al Bagno di Betsabea con la figura di giovane israelita a destra nel trionfo di David), fanno supporre che i due dipinti facessero parte di una stessa serie illustrante la vita di David. Ritengo che il dipinto, in ottimo stato di conservazione, debba datarsi dell'ultimo periodo dell'attività dell'artista.

Giuliano Briganti