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Letters

To the Editor:
In Margaret Morgan Grasselli’s article, “Landscape Drawings by François Le Moyne, Some Old, Some New” (Master Drawings, 34, 1996, pp. 365–74), an interesting drawing is reproduced as Figure 2, showing a view of Venice. The site represented is not “near the entrance of the Cannaregio,” but the Ponte dei Pugni, seen from the Campo di San Barnaba, with, in the background, the campanile of the church of S. Maria del Carmine. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the popular Guerra dei Pugni (War of the Fists) was staged on this bridge. It was the subject of various contemporary paintings and prints (see R. C. Davis, The War of the Fists. Popular Culture and Public Violence in Late Renaissance Venice, New York, 1994). Le Moyne’s drawing may be the first rendering of this suggestive angle of Venezia minore at a more peaceful moment.

Bernard Aikema
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To the Editor:
Since the publication of my review of Sophie Raux’s Catalogue des dessins français du XVIIe siècle de Claude Gillot à Hubert Robert, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Lille, 1995 (in Master Drawings, 35, 1997, pp. 73–77), it has become possible to identify one of the anonymous drawings—number 92, listed in the catalogue as “anonymous, circle of François-Jérôme Chantereau (ca. 1712–1757)?”—as an early work by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (here Fig. 1). The drawing had long been classified as the work of Etienne Jeaurat (1699–1789) following an old inscription on the sheet. Raux had considered both Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre (1714–1789) and Chantereau as possible candidates before deciding to publish the sheet as anonymous.

An etching with engraving in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. no. 53.600.250), reverses the composition of the Lille drawing, elaborating the foreground details. The inscription reads, greuze inv. / françoise Deschamps sculpt, alerting us to the fact that the print is a very early work by Catherine-Françoise Deschamps Beauvarlet (1737–1769), made before her marriage to the more famous printmaker Jacques-Firmin Beauvarlet, after which date her prints would bear her married name. Jean Martin listed the drawing as number 170 in his 1908 catalogue raisonné (presumably having only seen the print) as “Mediate debout tenant un Enfant, dessin gravé par Françoise Deschamps, en 1758,” although his source for this date is unclear.

The style of the drawing is atypical for Greuze, who tended to use more stumping and less parallel hatching in his black chalk figure studies. It dates in all likelihood to his Italian trip of 1755–57 in the company of Louis Gougenot, abbé de Chezal-Benoît, and shares the elongated proportions of his ink-and-wash costume drawings made in various Italian cities that would later be engraved by the Moitte family. Greuze was equally proficient at supplying the print market with images of picturesque beggars, especially women and children. In addition to the Lille sheet, one could point to a pair of aquatints of similar subjects made by François-Philippe Charpentier (1734–1817) after drawings by Greuze (Etude de Mandiants [sic] and Paysanne italienne, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York [inv. no. 53.600.222–23]). These depictions of ragged figures, more so than the costume plates, relate to Greuze’s early genre paintings and may have been an interest of his patron as well, for Gougenot refers to Greuze in his diary as a “jeune peintre de Bambochades” (quoted in E. Munhall, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, 1976, p. 52).

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

To Our Readers:
Due to an editing error, the incorrect street name appears twice in Danuta Batorska’s article, “Grimaldi’s Drawings for Vault Decorations in Two Rooms of the Palazzo Nuñez,” published in the April issue of Volume 35, 1997. On page 43, second paragraph, first line, and again on page 45, first paragraph, tenth line, it should read “via Borgognona” instead of “via Condotti.”