



ROBERT SIMON FINE ART

Fede Galizia
(Milan, 1578 – 1630)

A Silver Tazza “Alzata” with Figs and a Melon

Oil on panel, transferred to canvas
11 ½ x 15 ½ inches (29.2 x 39.4 cm)



22 EAST 80TH STREET · NEW YORK · NY · 10075
TEL: 212-288-9712 FAX: 212-202-4786

BY APPOINTMENT AT: SATIS HOUSE · 53 TOWER HILL ROAD EAST · TUXEDO PARK · NY · 10987
TEL: 845-351-2339 FAX: 845-351-4332

RBS@ROBERTSIMON.COM WWW.ROBERTSIMON.COM

Provenance: Infante Don Sebastián Gabriel de Borbón y Braganza (1811–1875), Madrid and later Pau (recorded in the 1835 inventory of his collection when sequestered by the Spanish state and returned to him in 1861¹); by descent to:

Pedro de Alcántara de Borbón, Duque of Dúrcal (1862–1892); his sale, American Art Association, New York, 10–11 April 1889, lot 26 or 27; where acquired by:

Walter Wallace, New York

Sir William van Horne (1843–1915), Montreal, Canada; by descent to his wife:

Lucy Adaline Hurd Van Horne (1837–1929), Montreal, Canada; by descent to her daughter:

Lucy Adaline “Addie” Van Horne (1868–1941), Montreal, Canada; by descent to her nephew:

William Cornelius Covenhaven Van Horne (1907–1946), Montreal, Canada; and by descent to his wife:

Margaret van Horne (d. 1987), Montreal, Canada²

With Silvano Lodi, Campione d’Italia, by 1989

With M. Roy Fisher Fine Arts, New York, 1993–1994; from whom acquired by:

Private Collection, Massachusetts, 1994–2022

Exhibited: Museo de la Trinidad, Madrid, ca. 1838–1861, no. 93.

“Selection from the Collection of Paintings of the Late Sir William Van Horne,” Art Association of Montreal, 16 October – 5 November 1933, no. 26.

Literature: *Catalogue abrégé des tableaux exposés dans les salons de l’ancien asile de Pau appartenant aux héritiers de feu Mgr l’Infant don Sébastien de Bourbon et Braganca*, Pau, 1876, p. 77, no. 687.

Valerian von Loga, “The Spanish Pictures of Sir William van Horne’s collection in Montreal,” *Art in America*, vol. 1, no. 2 (April 1913), p. 92, unillustrated.

Exhibition, A Selection from the Collection of Paintings of the Late Sir William Van Horne, K.C.M.G., 1843–1915, Art Association of Montreal, Montreal, 1933, p. 6, cat. no. 26.

Mercedes Agueda, “La Colección de Pinturas del Infante Don Sebastián Gabriel,” *Boletín del Museo del Prado*, vol. 3, no. 8 (1982), p. 109, no. 97 in the 1835 inventory of paintings confiscated from Don Sebastián Gabriel.

Mauro Natale and Alessandro Morandotti, “La Natura Morta in Lombardia,” in *La natura morta in Italia*, ed. Federico Zeri, Milan, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 201–202, fig. 220.

Alessandro Morandotti, “Fede Galizia,” in *La natura morta in Italia*, ed. Federico Zeri, Milan, 1989, vol. 1, p. 222.

Flavio Caroli, *Fede Galizia*, Turin, 1989, pp. 87–88, cat. no. 29, illustrated.

Museo del Prado: Inventario General de Pinturas, vol. 2, “El Museo de la Trinidad,” Madrid, 1991, p. 644, no. 645, as anonymous: “*Tabla. Un bodegon en q^e se va una salvilla con brevas y abajo una calabaza partida.*”

M. Roy Fisher Fine Arts Inc., *A Selection of Old Master Paintings & Sculpture*, New York, 1993, pp. 34–35.

The International Fine Art Fair: Renaissance through Impressionism, New York, 1994, p. 44.

Sam Segal, “An early still life by Fede Galizia,” *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 40 (March 1998), pp. 169–170, fig. 10.

José Juan Pérez Preciado, *El Marqués de Leganés y las Artes*, PhD dissertation, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2008, vol. 2, pp. 262–263.

Ángel Aterido Fernández, *Juan Fernández el Labrador: Naturalezas Muertas*, exh. cat., Madrid, 2013, p. 69.

Giovanni Agosti and Jacopo Stoffa, in *Fede Galizia: Mirabile Pittoressa*, exh. cat., eds. Giovanni Agosti, Luciana Giacomelli, and Jacopo Stoppa, Trento, 2022, p. 309.

Fede Galizia occupies a singular position in the history of Italian painting. The daughter of the painter Nunzio Galizia, with whom she trained, Fede is not only the earliest documented Italian female artist to specialize in still-lives, but also the author of the earliest signed and dated purely still-life painting produced by an Italian artist. That painting, dated 1602, was formerly in the Anholt collection in Amsterdam but has

unfortunately been lost for nearly a century (Fig. 1).³ Fede's only other signed and dated still life of 1607 postdates this work by only a few years (Fig. 2). Although she is also documented as a painter of religious compositions and portraits, very few examples of these types survive. Fede Galizia's still-lives today constitute the majority of her surviving *oeuvre*, and they are the works for which she is best known—though these too are exceptionally rare and highly prized.

Fede's paintings of 1602 and 1607 together form the keystones for our understanding of her activity as a still-life painter. In these we encounter her early and unwavering commitment to the compositional format that is so successful and familiar in her works—fully frontal displays of fruits (usually no more than two kinds) laid out on a table and placed on a stand or in a vessel, invariably closely cropped and set close to the pictorial plane. We also witness in these two paintings the transformation in style that Fede underwent in but a few years, from the nascent idiom in the Arnholt still-life to the fully realized polish and harmonious balance of the 1607 painting.



Fig. 1. Fede Galizia, *Silver Tazza "Alzata" with Plums with Vine Leaves, Pears, and a Rose*, signed in monogram and dated 1602, oil on panel, 9 ½ x 12 ⅛ inches, formerly Anholt Collection, Amsterdam.



Fig. 2. Fede Galizia, *A Crystal Fruit Stand with Peaches, Quinces, and Jasmine Flowers*, signed in monogram and dated 1607, oil on panel, 31.2 x 42.5 cm, formerly Sotheby's, London.⁴

Our painting is a distinguished example of Fede's artistic production, likely executed in the period between her two known dated works. The silver *tazza alzata* in the Arnholt painting reappears here—as it does in several of Fede's early still lifes—and takes on greater prominence in the composition. The figs are cracked and painted in a deep purple hue that signals their ripeness. They are surmounted and surrounded by several fig leaves, including a small branch to which two juvenile figs are still attached. An enticing half of an opened fig rests on the ledge beneath the *tazza*—ready to be visually plucked and savored by the viewer. At right a cut melon is opened to reveal its flesh and seeds. While the presence of the signature *tazza* might suggest the painting to be one of Fede's earlier works, the fully-developed style, high degree of finish, brilliant coloration, and elegant composition place this work among her more mature works, close in date to

the 1607 still-life. Fede's great sensitivity to light and shadow—visible both in the glimmering silver and the gentle shadows cast by the opened fig and melon—is also here fully on display. The dark strip along the front edge of the ledge is another salient characteristic of her works, seen as well in the 1607 still life.

A painting related to the present work has long been known in the art-historical literature (Fig. 3). While repeating the essential composition, it adds two walnuts and the missing slice of the melon. It was first published by Federico Zeri with an attribution to Federico Barocci—one based on a spurious inscription on the reverse of the panel. That old attribution has since been discounted by scholars, and though considered by some as by a follower of the artist, the authorship of the painting has recently been returned to Fede herself.⁵



Fig. 3. Fede Galizia, *Silver Tazza "Alzata" with Figs, a Melon, and Walnuts*, oil on panel, 28 x 39 cm, Private Collection.

Fede Galizia was not only an accomplished artist, but a pioneer, given that she was one of the earliest painters involved in the adoption and development of still-life painting as a genre on the Italian peninsula. Only a few independent still-life paintings predate her work, Caravaggio's *Basket of Fruit* (Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana) from ca. 1599–1600 being the most celebrated. Her influence on her contemporaries was significant, perhaps seen most prominently in the still-life paintings of Panfilo Nuvolone (ca. 1581–1631). And like the works of her younger contemporary, Orsola Maddalena Caccia (1596–1676), Fede's still-life paintings are imbued with a sense of reverence and spirituality, reflecting the belief that nature is the manifestation of divine creativity.

A collector's brand—the monogram SG with a crown—is inset into the verso of the frame. This emblem, transferred from the original panel support, is that of Don Sebastián Gabriel de Borbón y Braganza, who formed one of the most important collections in Spain of his day. The verso also displays an inscription in red paint "117

LABRADOR,” referring to the Spanish still-life painter Juan Labrador, to whom the painting was attributed when in Sebastián Gabriel’s collection. The provenance from Sebastián Gabriel de Borbón y Braganza’s collection until today is unbroken. In 1835 his paintings were confiscated by the Spanish government for political reasons and entered the Museo Nacional de la Trinidad (which later merged with the Museo del Prado). However, in 1861 they were restituted upon his recognition of Isabella II as Queen of Spain. Seven years later Sebastián Gabriel left Spain for France, taking his collection first to Paris and then to Pau, where it appears in his collection catalogue of 1876.⁶ The painting remained with his family, descending to his son Pedro de Alcántara de Borbón, Duque of Dúrcal, until he sent it to New York to be auctioned in 1889. The painting was purchased at that time by the New York dealer William Wallace, who sold it to the Montreal collector Sir William Van Horne.⁷ It was later in the collection of the still-life specialist collector-dealer Silvano Lodi and has most recently been in a private Massachusetts collection for nearly thirty years.

¹ Entry from the 1835 inventory from the Getty Provenance Index: “[No.] 97 Otro en tabla de 1 pie de alto por 1 y 5 pies de ancho. Es un Frutero compuesto de una salvilla con brevas, y un melón. Está restaurado por Bueno y tiene marco tallado y dorado Juan Labrador.” [a panel one foot high by one foot 5 inches wide. It is a fruit still life composed of a salver with figs and a melon. It was restored by Bueno and has a carved and gilt frame. Juan Labrador].

² Following William C.C. van Horne’s death, ownership of the collection remained with his wife Margaret, as they had no heir. Margaret managed the collection for over 40 years. Numerous paintings were sold in various auctions over the course of this period. She lived in the Van Horne mansion in Montreal until its demolition in 1972. When Margaret died in 1987, the remaining works in the collection passed to her brother Matthew Hannon, and upon his death in 1988, they passed to his heirs.

³ Curt Benedict published and recorded the inscription on the painting in 1938. See: Curt Benedict, “Un peintre oublié de natures mortes – Osias Beert,” in *L’amour de l’art*, vol. 19, 1938, pp. 309, 313, cat. no. 1, fig. 14. A replica of this painting was formerly in the Silvano Lodi collection, for which see: Mauro Natale and Alessandro Morandotti, “La Natura Morta in Lombardia,” in *La natura morta in Italia*, ed. Federico Zeri, 1989, vol. 1, p. 204, fig. 225.

⁴ <https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/old-master-british-paintings-evening-sale-115033/lot.29.html>.

⁵ Federico Zeri, “Una natura morta di Federico Barocci,” in *Notizie da Palazzo Albani* vol. 12, no. 1-2, 1983, pp. 161-163, fig. 1-2; Luigi Salerno, *La Natura Morta Italiana: 1560-1805*, Rome, 1984, p. 60, fig. 15.3; Andrea Emiliani, *Federico Barocci*, Bologna, 1985, vol. 2, p. 291; Laura Teza, “La Natura Morta in Umbria e nelle Marche,” in *La natura morta in Italia*, 1989, vol. 2, pp. 612-649, figs. 723-724; Flavio Caroli, *Fede Galizia*, Turin, 1989, p. 91, cat. no. 47, illustrated; and Jacopo Stoppa, in *Fede Galizia: Mirabile Pittoressa*, exh. cat., eds. Giovanni Agosti, Luciana Giacomelli, and Jacopo Stoppa, Trento, 2022, p. 301, fig. 127.

⁶ *Catalogue abrégé des tableaux exposés dans les salons de l’ancien asile de Pau appartenant aux héritiers de feu Mgr l’Infant don Sébastien de Bourbon et Bragançe*, Pau, 1876, p. 77, no. 687. The other painting formerly attributed to Labrador in the collection—with which our *Fede Galizia* had been paired by Sebastián Gabriel de Borbón y Braganza, and which remained with it until both were sold out of the Van Horne collection—appears in this catalogue on p. 65 as no. 568. Although the dimensions of both paintings attributed to Labrador are identical in the catalogue, ours is identifiable as no. 687 because it described as being on panel, whereas the other painting is on canvas.

⁷ The painted number 117 on the reverse appears to be the Van Horne collection number, as indicated by a label also on the reverse.