

# ‘Others see it yet otherwise’: *disegno* and *pictura* in a Flemish gallery interior

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13. *The interior of a picture gallery with personifications of Pictura and Disegno*, by an anonymous Flemish painter. Late 1620s. Copper, 56.5 by 82.2 cm. (Private collection, New York).

WHILE MANY SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY paintings of Flemish gallery interiors are known to have been collaborative efforts, documentary evidence concerning the genesis of specific examples is extremely scant. Studies of important gallery interiors, from Willem van Haecht's *Cabinet of Cornelis van der Geest* in the Rubenshuis, Antwerp, to the *Five senses* series by Jan Brueghel and Rubens in the Museo del Prado, Madrid, are often challenged by this lack of documentation. Based on newly discovered documentary and visual evidence, this article demonstrates the crucial role played by the mathematician

and architect Mutio Oddi of Urbino in the radical transformation of a relatively conventional drawing of a gallery interior containing a group of conversing connoisseurs into an exquisitely executed and highly unusual painting, with a powerful emphasis on mathematics and astronomy and their relationship to painting and the arts. The genesis of this interior, as we shall show, owes much to the foundation of the Ambrosian Accademia del Disegno in Milan.

On 28th March 1629 the engineer Giovanni Battista Caravaggio wrote from Milan to his former tutor, Mutio Oddi, to

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describe a visit he had paid to the house of the German merchant Peter Linder:

Three days ago, spurred on in part by my duty and in part by curiosity, I went to visit Signor Pietro Linder [. . .]. He offered to show me various beautiful objects in his study, where, as well as the little ivory statues and others of less noble material, and the casket arranged beautifully with various mathematical instruments, I saw in particular, among many other paintings which had appeared since I was there last, a painting of decent size in which a gallery is shown in perspective, adorned with various paintings, depicted with no less study than skill, both in the extreme diligence used in them, and in that one can see imitated there the styles of different individual painters. Three tables are then depicted in a well-proportioned position, on which are various beautifully feigned mathematical instruments, concave mirrors, crystal lenses, pieces of prints, demonstrations and mathematical figures, and finally various medals, among which I saw the one with the image of your Lordship represented there with better fortune than the good Signor Pietro had with the cast, as in addition to displaying an extremely good likeness of your Lordship, there are also the letters that spell your name, carried out with such precision that, however small they may be, they can be read without difficulty. In sum it appeared to be that this painting, both for the *inventione*, which I understood to be in a large part due to your Lordship, and for the work, was worthy of the cabinet of any great prince.<sup>1</sup>

It is almost certain that Caravaggio's letter refers to an anonymous Flemish gallery interior (Fig. 13) now in a private collection in New York. It was formerly in the Thomas Mellon Evans collection and previously belonged to the Viennese Rothschilds.<sup>2</sup> Referred to here as the *Linder gallery interior*, the painting, executed on copper, depicts a vaulted gallery in perspective, with an open portico looking out over an Italianate garden containing a fountain and an obelisk. The walls of the room are hung with paintings in the styles of Flemish and Italian artists. Three tables bear an impressive array of mathematical instruments, drawings and diagrams. Sculptural works, including both copies of classical sculptures and recent works such as Giambologna's *Bull*, as well as musical instruments, are also present in the gallery. A bookcase contains a volume of Euclid. A coat of arms visible in the



14. Detail of Fig. 13 showing the Linder coat of arms.



15. The Linder coat of arms. (From O. Neubecker: *Grosses Wappen-Bilder-Lexikon der bürgerlichen Geschlechter Deutschlands, Österreichs und der Schweiz*, Augsburg 1992, p. 518).

window at the top left-hand side of the painting is identifiable as that of the Linder family (Figs. 14 and 15). Taken together, the coat of arms, the letter from Caravaggio and a double-portrait by the Milanese artist Daniele Crespi (discussed below) confirm that the painting was commissioned and owned by Peter Linder, a German merchant resident in Milan who studied mathematics with Mutio Oddi and later became consul of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice.<sup>3</sup> The letters 'MVTIUS ODDVS URB . . .' from the portrait medal of Oddi described in Caravaggio's letter are just legible in the centre of the table (Figs. 16 and 17). Surprisingly unmentioned in Caravaggio's letter are two figures who dominate the foreground of the painting: an elderly bearded man wearing a tabard, identified as *disegno* (Drawing), and a female figure in classical garb, with paintbrushes, mallet, maulstick and a book, and wearing a bay wreath and a sun pendant, identified as a personification of *pictura* (Painting).<sup>4</sup> According to Caravaggio's letter, Oddi himself was largely responsible for the subject-matter of the painting, making it probable that it was commissioned when Oddi and Linder were both in Milan between 1621, when Oddi began teaching Linder military architecture and sundials, and 1625, when Oddi left Milan for Lucca.<sup>5</sup> Given that the painting includes Johannes Kepler's *Tabulae Rudolphinae* (1627) and that the portrait medal of

<sup>1</sup> Letter from G.B. Caravaggio to Mutio Oddi, Milan, 28th March 1629; Urbino, Biblioteca Universitaria Urbino (hereafter cited as BUU), Fondo Congregazione Carità (hereafter cited as FCC), busta 47, fascicolo VI, fols. 793r-v; see Appendix below.

<sup>2</sup> Sale Christie's, New York, 22nd May 1998, lot 8. For a preliminary, unpublished study of this painting, see M.J. Gorman: *Interior with Personifications of Painting (Pictura) and Drawing (Disegno), Elements of an Interpretation*, (2000) <http://www.stanford.edu/~mgorman/picturaweb/report.htm>. The present collaboration emerged when A. Marr discovered the Caravaggio letter to Oddi in Urbino and worked with Gorman to establish its connection to the *Linder gallery interior*. The article draws on Gorman's earlier unpublished report on the painting and Marr's research on Oddi and the Milanese milieu; see A. Marr: 'Architects, Engineers, and Instruments: Technology and the Book in Late Renaissance Europe' (unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Oxford, 2005), chapters 5 and 6. The file on the painting in the archive of the Newhouse Galleries, New York, where the painting is attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder, gives its earlier provenance as the Rothschild collection, Vienna; this provenance is confirmed by the presence in the inventory of paintings seized from Alfons von Rothschild by the Nazis

of an '*Intérieur eines Gelehrten und Kunstsammlers, Oel-Kupfer*' attributed to Frans Francken (London, Rothschild archives, 'Nazi inventory'). Following its recovery by the Allies, the painting was sold by Baroness Clarice Sebag-Montefiore to Fred Mont, who bought it for Rosenberg and Stiebel in 1957, before it was acquired by Newhouse.

<sup>3</sup> On Oddi, see L. Servolini: 'Muzio Oddi architetto urbinato del Seicento', *Urbino*, 2nd series 6 (1932), pp. 7-27; E. Gamba and V. Montebelli: *Le scienze a Urbino nel tardo Rinascimento*, Urbino 1988; S. Eiche and A. Marr: *I Gheribizzi di Muzio Oddi*, Urbino 2005, esp. pp. 69-79; Marr, *op. cit.* (note 2), chapters 5 and 6; *idem*: 'The Production and Distribution of Mutio Oddi's *Dello squadra*', in S. Kusukawa and I. Maclean, eds.: *Transmitting Knowledge: Words, Images and Instruments in Early Modern Europe*, Oxford 2006, pp. 165-192. For Linder's role as consul of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, see H. Simonsfeld: *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venedig und die Deutsch-Venetianischen Handelsbeziehungen*, Stuttgart 1887, I, p. 429, and II, pp. 179 and 210.

<sup>4</sup> They are identified as such in the Christie's sale catalogue, *op. cit.* (note 2).

<sup>5</sup> For Oddi's teaching of Linder, see Marr, *op. cit.* (note 2), chapter 6; Marr provides a list of Oddi's pupils and the subjects they studied in his Appendix 6.



16. Portrait medal of Mutio Oddi. 1627. (From P.A. Gaetani: *Museum Mazzuchellianum, seu numismata virorum doctrina praestantium, Venice 1761–63*).



17. Detail of Fig. 16 showing portrait medal (top right) bearing the faint inscription 'MUTIUS ODDI . . . URB'.

Oddi was not cast until 1627, we can be reasonably certain that the painting was only completed after that year.

The Flemish gallery interiors of the first two decades of the seventeenth century are notable for their encyclopaedism, including *naturalia* – flowers, nautilus shells and coral – alongside paintings, sculpture, globes, charts and compasses, as well as living creatures such as monkeys, parrots and dogs.<sup>6</sup> The *Linder gallery interior* is atypical in this respect, for no *naturalia* are included within the gallery space, and special prominence is given to mathematical instruments. The two red tables in the painting – one on the left, the other on the right – each bear related instruments. On the left-hand table, a sixteenth-century German ebony-and-gilt metal table-clock, probably from Augsburg, is paired with another German table-clock on the right-hand side. A pair of compasses on the left-hand table is set against a beam compass used for drawing arcs of long-radius circles. A gunner's level on the left, possibly by Ulrich Schniep (very similar to an unsigned instrument in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna),<sup>7</sup> is set against a triangulation instrument, comparable in function to one developed by Jost Bürgi for military surveying, and similar to an instrument that appears in Jan Brueghel the Younger's *Allegory of Sight (Venus and Cupid in a picture gallery)* in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Finally, an armillary sphere on the left is

paired with a concave mirror on the right, adjacent to a small double-portrait (discussed below), pitting the representation of the cosmos against introspection.

Displayed on the central octagonal table (Fig. 18), perspectively inconsistent with the rest of the painting, are a celestial globe that can probably be attributed to Willem Jansz. Blaeu, an Arsenius astrolabe, a Jacob's Staff for astronomical measurements, a Galileian 'Geometric and Military Compass' with an alidade (not found in Galileo's original instrument) and a perspective instrument similar to that invented by the Nuremberg goldsmith Wentzel Jamnitzer, with a perspective view of a colonnade.<sup>8</sup> The octagonal table also displays a variety of compasses, pens, an inkwell, lenses, an hourglass and an open book of drawings on which rests an engraving that can be identified as the *Martyrdom of St Catherine* by the Master MZ. In addition to the medal representing Oddi, the portrait medals can be identified as representations of Albrecht Dürer, Michelangelo Buonarroti, the physician, astrologer and mathematician Girolamo Cardano, the jurist and emblematiser Andrea Alciati and the architect Donato Bramante.<sup>9</sup> Two of the books behind and to the right of the celestial globe are identifiable as the *Tabulae Rudolphinae* (1627) and *Harmonices Mundi* (1619), both by Johannes Kepler (Fig. 18; the title of the uppermost book is illegible). At the front of the table is a

<sup>6</sup> On the emergence of the genre, see Z. Filipczak: *Picturing Art in Antwerp 1550–1700*, Princeton 1987; S. Speth-Holterhoff: *Les Peintres Flamands de Cabinets d'Amateurs au XVIIe Siècle*, Brussels 1957; E. Honig: 'The beholder as work of art: A study in the location of value in seventeenth-century Flemish painting', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* (1995), pp. 253–97; U. Härting: 'Doctrina et Pietas: über frühe Galeriebilder', *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (1993), pp. 95–133.

<sup>7</sup> Geschützaufsatz, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Kammer, inv. no. 731.

<sup>8</sup> The description of the instruments builds on that of the Christie's catalogue, *op. cit.* (note 2). For similar astrolabes, see K. van Cleempoel: *A Catalogue Raisonné of Scientific Instruments from the Louvain School, 1530 to 1600*, Turnhout 2002, pp. 50 and 137–41.

<sup>9</sup> The medals are: Albrecht Dürer, by Mathes Gabel, 1528; inscribed on recto: ALBERTI DVRERI AETATIS SVAE LVI; see M. Mende: *Dürer-Medaillen: Münzen, Medaillen, Plaketten von Dürer, auf Dürer, nach Dürer*, Nuremberg 1983, no. 34; Michelangelo Buonarroti, by Leone Leoni; inscribed: MICHAELANGELVS BONARROTIVS FLOR[ENTINVS] AET[ATI]S S[VAE] ANN[II] 88; see C.C. Wilson: *Renaissance Small Bronze Sculpture and Associated Decorative Arts at the National Gallery of Art*, Washington 1983, p. 133, no. 20; Girolamo

Cardano, physician, astrologer and philosopher, attributed to Leone Leoni, c. 1550; inscription on circumference: HIER[ONYMUS] CARDANVS AETATIS AN[NO] XLVIII; see Wilson, *ibid.*, p. 133, no. 21; Donato Bramante, formerly attributed to Caradosso but described as a self-portrait in S.K. Scher: *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance*, London 1994, no. 33. Oddi is known to have owned a copy; see F. Sangiorgi: 'Fermignano a Bramante "Hastrubaldino"', in M. Luni, ed.: *Castrum Fermignano, castello del Ducato di Urbino*, Pesaro 1993, pp. 231–63, esp. p. 252; see also: '[. . .] testificano ancora messer Flaminio Caccialepi et Innocentio Pagani d'haver visto una medaglia con l'impronta et l'effigie del detto Bramante, con lettere attorno di questa guisa: "Bramante Asdrovaldinus", et una della sudette medaglie l'ha il signor Mutio Oddi d'Urbino, architetto hora di Lucca'; BUU, FCC, MS Urbino 60, fol. 87v; Andrea Alciati, legal scholar and author of the *Emblemata*, by Jean Second, c. 1533; inscribed: ANDREAS ALCIATVS IVRECVSVLTVS COMES PALATINVS; see J. Simonis: *L'Art du Médailleur en Belgique*, Brussels 1900, p. 74 and pl. III; and Mutio Oddi, by unknown artist, 1627; inscribed: MUTIUS ODDVS VRBINAS MATEM[ATICVS]. ET ARCHIT[ECTVS]. AE[TATIS] S[VAE]. AN[NO] LVIII; see P.A. Gaetani: *Museum Mazzuchellianum, seu numismata virorum doctrina praestantium, Venice 1761–63*.



18. Detail of Fig.13 showing central octagonal table.

diagram depicting three cosmic systems, the geocentric Ptolemaic system, the heliocentric Copernican system and the geoheliocentric Tyconic system, beneath which is the prominent inscription 'ALY ET ALIA VIDENT' ('Others see it yet otherwise'), presumably in reference to the different interpretations of the cosmos under debate in the years leading up to Galileo's trial. Partially hidden behind the diagram of the cosmic systems is an astrological geniture. Together, the instruments and associated objects represented on the three tables in the foreground of the painting provide a visual catalogue of the mathematical arts and of *disegno*.

The two allegorical figures in the painting can be related to another gallery interior, attributed to Adriaen van Stalbeem, which has been identified by Matthias Winner as an allegory of *pictura* and *disegno* (Fig.19).<sup>10</sup> A striking feature of the *Linder gallery interior*, in contrast to the Stalbeem painting, is that the mathematical arts are portrayed as being of primary importance, even a constituent of *disegno*. It seems highly likely that this emphasis in the Linder painting was the direct result of Mutio Oddi's involvement in the composition and his

concurrent involvement in introducing perspective into the curriculum studied by some students attending the Ambrosian Accademia del Disegno.<sup>11</sup> The *Linder gallery interior* appears to make a strong claim for the various mathematical arts, from astrology to surveying and astronomy, as branches of *disegno*, whether occupied in the delineation of the heavens or the production of perspectival views.

If we accept the suggestion that the figure representing *disegno* appears to be a portrait, following the conventions of the scholar portraits frequently found in early gallery interiors, then the question arises of the identity of the figure portrayed. The predominance of astronomical instruments, the geniture and the cosmic systems indicate that this might be a portrait of an astronomer. The known authorship of two books on the central table, as well as a certain physiognomic resemblance, suggest that this may be intended as a representation of Johannes Kepler (1571–1630). A vignette in the frontispiece of the *Tabulae Rudolphinae*, engraved by Georg Celer after a design by Kepler himself, includes a portrait of the great astronomer wearing a tabard and skull-cap, and with a

<sup>10</sup> Sale Christie's, London, 13th December 1974 (previously sold at Christie's London as by Jan Brueghel the Elder, 23rd July 1954), lot 174: *The interior of a picture gallery with allegorical figures*, by Adriaen van Stalbeem; see M. Winner: 'Die Quellen der Pictura-Allegorien in gemalten Bildergalerie des 17. Jahrhunderts zu Antwerpen', Ph.D. diss. (University of Cologne), 1957, pp.41–60. An almost identical interior, lacking the allegorical figures, is reproduced in E. Honig: *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp*, New Haven and London 1998, p.204. The current

whereabouts of both are unknown. Honig shows that it was common for figures in such paintings to be added later by a different artist.

<sup>11</sup> See Marr, *op. cit.* (note 2), chapter 6, and *idem* 2006, *op. cit.* (note 3) pp.75–76.

<sup>12</sup> On Kepler's *Tabulae Rudolphinae*, see M. Caspar: *Kepler*, transl. C.D. Hellman, New York 1993, pp.308–18. Oddi's papers reveal an interest in astronomy, although a connection with Kepler is not known. For Linder's interest in Galileo and in telescopes, see letter from Fulgenzio Micanzio to Galileo Galilei, Venice, 30th April 1639, in



19. *The interior of a picture gallery with allegorical figures*, by Adriaen van Stalbeem. Panel, 72.9 by 104.1 cm. (Whereabouts unknown).



20. Detail from frontispiece of *Tabulae Rudolphinae* showing a portrait of Johannes Kepler, by Georg Celer. 1627. Engraving. (Courtesy of the Bundy Library, Cambridge, MA; now relocated to the Huntington Library, Pasadena).

pronounced nose, furrowed brow and sharp features, seated at a table. The portrait appears on the podium of an imaginary temple dedicated to Urania, the muse of astronomy (Fig.20). Apart from the length of the beard, there are sufficient similarities between this, the last known portrait of Kepler, and the male figure in the *Linder gallery interior* to suggest that the artist, who apparently had access to the portrait of Kepler in his *Tabulae Rudolphinae*, may have used Kepler to personify a highly mathematical conception of *disegno*. The centrality of the cosmic diagrams with the phrase 'Others see it yet otherwise' also points to Kepler. The publication of his long-awaited *Tabulae Rudolphinae* at the end of 1627 had a tremendous impact on astronomers and astrologers throughout Europe, providing them with planetary tables derived from Tycho's observations and Kepler's planetary models, and replacing the Alphonsine Tables as the standard astronomical tables. Both Oddi and Linder were interested in astronomy and were very likely to have been familiar with Kepler's works.<sup>12</sup>

The Royal Collection, Windsor, contains a drawing (inv. no.RL 12983; Fig.21) that bears a striking resemblance to the *Linder gallery interior*. Attributed to Frans Francken the Younger (1581–1642), it appears to have been acquired during the reign of George III as 'by some Flemish master', and the attribution to Francken cannot be taken as secure.<sup>13</sup> In keeping with numerous Antwerp gallery interiors from the studios of Francken and his contemporaries, the drawing depicts three men discussing a painting that rests on a chair. Alongside the group is an octagonal table, on which are a globe, some mathematical instruments, writing instruments

and papers. As in the *Linder gallery interior*, the walls are hung with paintings and there are several pieces of sculpture in the room. The resemblances between the compositional sketches of these paintings in the Windsor drawing and those on the walls in the *Linder gallery interior* suggest that the drawing was executed before the painting, possibly by the same artist.<sup>14</sup>

An intriguing detail of the *Linder gallery interior* is a small double-portrait on the table at the right-hand side of the painting (Fig.22). A balding man, on the left, points to a perspectival drawing. A younger man, on the right, looks at the drawing. In his left hand is a palette, and in his right hand is a paintbrush, which he is using to paint. On close inspection, the drawing can be seen to represent the perspectival scheme shared by the Windsor drawing and the *Linder interior*. The artist on the right-hand side, we are led to conclude, is painting the picture itself, and it is probable that this double-portrait is a representation of the patron and painter, while also underlining the dependence of *pictura* on perspectival *disegno*. This double-portrait can be closely connected to a painting attributed to Daniele Crespi, dated by Nancy Ward Neilson in her catalogue raisonné of Crespi's work to c.1625 (Fig.24). Oddi, on the left, can be identified by comparison with an engraving by Johannes Troschel executed in 1624 (Fig.23) and an undated portrait attributed to Claudio Ridolfi, now in the Casa natale di Raffaello, Urbino.<sup>15</sup> He is showing Linder a diagram relating to the geometry of burning mirrors. Also on the table, covered with a Near Eastern rug, are a mirror, which can be seen by the position of the reflection to be concave, an ornamental inkwell and a beam compass.

A. Favaro, ed.: *Le Opere di Galileo Galilei*, Florence 1929–39, XVIII, no.3872.

<sup>13</sup> The similarity is noted in Winner, *op. cit.* (note 10) p.41. Speth-Holterhoff, *op. cit.* (note 6), p.111, describes the drawing and re-attributes it to Willem van Haecht but does not discuss the painting. On the Windsor drawing, see L. van Puyvelde: *The Flemish Drawings at Windsor Castle*, London 1942, no.222; and C. White and C. Crawley: *The Dutch and Flemish Drawings of the Fifteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle*, Cambridge 1994, no.361.

<sup>14</sup> See Gorman, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp.3–6.

<sup>15</sup> See Marr 2006, *op. cit.* (note 3), p.75, for the identification of this work as a double-portrait of Oddi and Linder. A pair of portraits attributed to Crespi, identical to the figures in the double-portrait, suggest that more than one version of the Oddi–Linder portrait may have been created in the mid-1620s. See F. Frangi and A. Morandetti, eds.: *Maestri del '600 e del '700 lombardo nella collezione Koelliker*, Milan 2006, pp.76–79.



21. *Interior of a Picture Gallery*, by an anonymous Flemish artist. Pen and brown ink with brown wash over graphite, 39.7 by 60.6 cm. (Royal Collection, Windsor).



22. Detail of Fig. 13 showing double-portrait.

Presumably the artist has depicted Oddi giving Linder a lesson on burning mirrors.

There is a striking compositional similarity between the double-portrait in the *Linder gallery interior* and the painting by Crespi. Moreover, the beam compass and concave mirror depicted by Crespi are identical to the mirror (viewed from the back) and the beam compass adjacent to the double-portrait on the right-hand table in the Linder interior. The figure on the right-hand side in the Crespi painting bears a distinct resemblance to the figure on the left-hand side in the double-portrait in the Linder interior, here identified as

Peter Linder. The composition of the Crespi double-portrait does not particularly evoke Italian portraiture of the period, being more akin to the groups of scholars portrayed in Flemish gallery interiors. Like Linder, Crespi, who has been described as 'the only first-rate artist' to have studied at Cardinal Federico Borromeo's Accademia del Disegno in Milan, studied the mathematical arts with Oddi, commencing instruction in perspective with him on 12th June 1621.<sup>16</sup>

The presence of the concave mirror and beam compass in both paintings, central to the theme of the Crespi painting but extraneous to the double-portrait in the *Linder gallery interior*, suggests that these instruments may have been owned by Linder. While it is tempting to suppose that the figure on the right in the double-portrait contained within the Linder painting is a self-portrait of the artist, the attribution of the picture remains problematic. A note dated 10th May 1623, written by Oddi and related to his dealings in mathematical instruments, reads: 'to Signor Pietro Linder for the Fleming, two compasses, one small and the other medium-length'.<sup>17</sup> The only Flemish painter of gallery interiors known to have been present in Milan between 1621 and 1625, when the commission is likely to have taken place, is Jan Brueghel the Younger. Brueghel arrived in the city on 20th June 1622, and stayed briefly at the house of Ercole Bianchi, the author of works on mathematics who is known to have studied the subject with Oddi. Bianchi was active as an agent for Borromeo in dealings with Jan Brueghel the Elder and other Flemish artists whose works were keenly sought by the cardinal, and who travelled frequently between Milan and Antwerp. Brueghel's arrival in Milan followed only a few months after the first meeting of the Borromeo Accademia del Disegno at the Ambrosiana. In 1625, on hearing the news of his father's death, Brueghel the Younger returned to Antwerp.<sup>18</sup> While it seems feasible that his presence in Milan may have been connected in some way to the commissioning of the *Linder gallery interior*, the quality of the painting is substantially better than Jan Brueghel the Younger's work, and is stylistically more consistent with the collaborations between Jan Brueghel the Elder and Hendrick van Balen, although the presence of the *Tabulae Rudolphinae* and the Oddi medal imply that it must have been completed after the death of Jan Brueghel the Elder in 1625. The frequent interchange of commissions between Antwerp and Milan, facilitated by Bianchi, and the fact that most Flemish gallery interiors were collaborative works, further complicates the question of attribution.

Oddi's role in the composition of the *Linder gallery interior* is of particular interest as an example of a close collaboration between a mathematical practitioner and a painter.<sup>19</sup> The choice of the allegorical theme of *disegno* and *pictura* is certain to have struck a topical note in Milan during the period of the creation of the Ambrosian Accademia del Disegno,

<sup>16</sup> P.M. Jones: *Federico Borromeo and The Ambrosiana: Art, Patronage and Reform in Seventeenth-Century Milan*, Cambridge 1993, p.49. The literature on Crespi is extensive, but see, *inter alia*, G. Nicodemi: *Daniele Crespi*, Busto Arsizio 1914, rev. ed. 1930; G. Pacciarotti: *Il pittore Daniele Crespi*, Busto Arsizio 1988; N.W. Neilson: *Daniele Crespi*, Soncino 1996, especially the extensive bibliography; A. Spirit, ed.: *Daniele Crespi in grande pittore seicento lombardo*, Milan 2006. For Crespi's education, see *ibid.* and F. Frangi: 'Milano circa 1620: L'Accademia di Federico Borromeo', *Nuovi Studi: Rivista di arte antica e moderna* 1 (1996), pp.125–48, although neither is

aware of the fact that he was taught by Oddi (see note 5 above).

<sup>17</sup> BUU, FCC, busta 53, fascicolo 3, fol.26r, cited in Marr 2006, *op. cit.* (note 3), Appendix 5.

<sup>18</sup> For Jan Brueghel the Younger's trip to Italy, see M. Vaes: 'Le Journal de Jean Breughel II', *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 7 (1926–27), pp.152–223.

<sup>19</sup> In his youth Oddi was apprenticed as a painter to Federico Barocci, although this ended when it became clear that Oddi had problems with his vision. Oddi maintained an interest in art throughout his career and seems to have bought and sold

23. *Portrait of Mutio Oddi*, by Johannes Troschel. 1624. Engraving, from M. Oddi: *Degli horologi solari*, Milan 1614.



24. *Portrait of Mutio Oddi and Peter Linder*, by Daniele Crespi. c.1625. Canvas. (Private collection, Milan).

which was informed both by Zuccaro's theoretical writings and by Borromeo's predilection for Flemish art, particularly the works of Jan Brueghel the Elder. Some of the striking compositional differences between the Windsor drawing, with its typical group of connoisseurs in conversation, and the *Linder gallery interior*, with its wealth of mathematical references and complex allegory, may well be due to Oddi. In this respect it is important to mention Oddi's role not only as a mathematical instructor (whose pupils included Linder, Crespi, Ercole Bianchi and Giovanna Borromeo, Federico's niece) but also in arranging transactions between the master instrument-maker, Lorenzo Vagnarelli, and his clientele for mathematical instruments, produced by the renowned *Officina degli Strumenti Matematici* in Urbino.<sup>20</sup> Oddi facilitated the purchase by several of his pupils of the fine instruments produced by this workshop. It is possible that many of the instruments depicted in the painting could have originated from the Urbino workshop. For example, the Galilean compass with alidade on the octagonal table could be related to a version of the Galilean compass known to have been made by the *Officina*, while the different compasses and pens depicted could relate to the large numbers of drawing instruments and compasses produced by the workshop and purchased by Oddi's pupils, including Linder.<sup>21</sup>

The creation of the *Linder gallery interior* was clearly a complex, collaborative venture. The relationships between Linder, Oddi, Crespi, Bianchi and the anonymous Flemish painter serve as a forceful reminder that transactions between patron and artist often relied on intermediaries, and that friendship could play a vital role in bringing an artistic

project to fruition. Mutio Oddi's contribution is particularly noteworthy. His social circle and his intellectual and artistic interests facilitated the production of a painting that constitutes an extraordinarily rich example of the dialogue between the culture of the Antwerp '*liefhebbers der schilderyen*' and the Milanese artistic milieu surrounding the creation of the *Ambrosian Accademia del Disegno*. His involvement, moreover, almost certainly accounts for the *Linder gallery interior's* unusually strong claim for the importance of mathematical instruction and scientific instruments to practising artists in the early seventeenth century.

## Appendix

Excerpt of letter from Giovanni Battista Caravaggio to Mutio Oddi (in Lucca), Milan, 28th March 1629 (Urbino, Biblioteca Universitaria, Fondo Congregazione Carità, busta 47, fascicolo VI, fols.793r-v).

Fui trè giorni sono, mosso in parte dal mio dovere, et in parte dalla curiosità, à visitare il Sig Pietro Linder; dove dubito, che mancassi nell'uno, per la troppa occasione ch'hebbi di sodisfare all'altra. Mi si offerse di vedere in quel suo studio varie cose bellissime, dove oltre le statuette d'Avorio, e altre di materia meno nobile, oltre ilscrigno concertato vaghissimamente per il ricovero di varij instrumenti matematiche, vidi particolarmente, tra molt'altre pitture accresciute dà che io no ero stato colà dentro, un quadro d'honesta grandezza nel quale viene rapresentata in prospettiva una galeria adorna di varie pitture, rapresentate con non minor studio, che arte, si per vedere la diligenza estrema usata in esse, come per vedervi, a certo modo, imitate le maniere di varij pittori singolari, vengono poi nel medesimo in sito molto proportionato espresse tre tavole, sopra dalle quali sono finti legiadriamente varij strumenti matematici, specchi concavi, lenti di Christallo, pezzi di stampe, dimostrationi, e figure matematiche, e finalmente varie medaglie, trà le quali vi è quella con l'immagine di V.S. rapresentata colà dentro, con miglior fortuna di quella che realmente non hà potuto conseguire il buon Sig. Pietro d'haverla nel getto, poiche colà oltre il poterlisi, da chi n'hà qualche mediocre cognitione, raffigurar V.S. assai bene, vi sono poi le lettere, ch'esprimono il nome, fatte con tanta esattezza, che, quantunque picciole, vi si possono però leggere assai commodamente; in somma, mi parve cotal quadro e per l'inventione, ch'intesi essere in gran parte di V.S., e per il lavoro degno del gabinetto di qualsivoglia gran Principe; mi fece parimenti vedere le diligenze singolari che egli hà usate per la riuscita della medaglia di V.S., e mi assicurò di volervene aggiungere di nuove per veder pure di conseguire il desiderato intento: Posso dire con verita, che come ammirai il di lui afetto singolare per trouar in qualche parte compenso al molto merito di V.S., così mi arrossi di me stesso che essendogli io tenuto per tantè, e si grandi obbligationi non vaglia però in che far dimostrazione d'una minime gratitudine; benchè mi consoli in parte il pensare, che, non essendo peccato nisi uoluntaria, doue non habbi difetto di uolere, possa credere, che da persona discrete come V.S. mi debba esser compatita l'impotenza.

works by Barocci's pupils; see F. Sangiorgi: *Committenze Milanese a Federico Barocci e alla sua Scuola nel Carteggio Vincenzi della Biblioteca Universitaria di Urbino*, Urbino 1982.

<sup>20</sup> Although founded by Federico Barocci's brother Simone in the 1620s, the *Officina* was under the management of Lorenzo Vagnarelli; see S.A. Bedini: 'The Barocci Dynasty: Urbino's Artisans of Science 1550-1650', in F. Vetrano, ed.: *The Science of the Dukedom of Urbino*, Urbino 2001, pp.7-97.

<sup>21</sup> See Marr 2006, *op. cit.* (note 3), Appendix 5, for a transcript of Oddi's records of his business dealings with Vagnarelli and his clients.