



Circle of Jacopo Tintoretto (Probably Lambert Sustris)

Anonymous Artist

Jacopo Tintoretto

Venetian, 1518 or 1519 - 1594

Lambert Sustris

Dutch, 1515 - probably after 1591

Christ at the Sea of Galilee

c. 1570s

oil on canvas

overall: 117.1 x 169.2 cm (46 1/8 x 66 5/8 in.)

framed: 155.3 x 207 cm (61 1/8 x 81 1/2 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.27

ENTRY

The high quality of *Christ at the Sea of Galilee* has always been recognized.

Seascapes are rare in Venetian painting, and here the turbulent waters, with their flickering highlights, as well as the blustering clouds and the play of light on the distant shore, are rendered with a painterly brio that has in retrospect evoked the names of Théodore Géricault and Eugène Delacroix. [1] The disjunction between the vigor of the landscape and the sketchy and attenuated figure of Christ, apparently unfinished in some passages, contributes to a mystical, almost hallucinatory effect that has been compared to some of Jacopo Tintoretto's great paintings at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. [2] Most scholars have considered the picture to be an autograph work by Tintoretto, and many have ranked it among his masterpieces. Nevertheless, the painting is so fundamentally different from Tintoretto's art that it can be removed from his autograph oeuvre without hesitation.

The picture has never been located convincingly in Tintoretto's oeuvre: datings have ranged from August L. Mayer's 1546/1555, through Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi's 1558/1562 and Terisio Pignatti's later 1570s, to Tintoretto's last years, 1591/1594, as favored by Lionello Venturi, Erich von der Bercken, and Pierluigi De Vecchi. [3] Nor has the attribution gone unquestioned.

In 1948, Hans Tietze gave the picture to El Greco, a conclusion reached by Manolis Chatzidakis in 1950 as well. [4] In a lengthy written statement in NGA curatorial files, Tietze and Erika Tietze-Conrat argued convincingly that the essential invention, the figure types, the technique, and the coloring of the picture are alien to Tintoretto at every stage of his career. As the Tietzes noted, Tintoretto's art is always based primarily on the human figure and conveys a fundamental sense of the underlying structure and mechanics of the body, which is absent here. [5] Moreover, in Tintoretto's paintings, to quote the Tietzes, water is never "in itself an independent means of expression. . . . It is simply the milieu in which some event takes place. In the Washington picture, the sea is not a detail, but the subject of the painting." [6] The painting's unusually thin pictorial technique, employing virtually no impasto, is also uncharacteristic of Tintoretto. [7] On the other hand, while the Tietzes' attribution to El Greco accords with the picture's mannerist elements and high quality, the technique, in particular the lack of impasto, is equally inconsistent with that of the Cretan painter. [8]

As the present writer has argued elsewhere, the best explanation for the picture's peculiar genius lies in an attribution to the Amsterdam-born painter Lambert Sustris during his later career in Venice, a period which has remained mysterious and largely unexplored. [9] Born around 1515, Sustris is recorded in Rome in 1536, and within a year or two he had settled in Venice. His paintings there show him to be extremely versatile, moving comfortably back and forth between the conventions of central Italian mannerism, Titian (in whose studio he is reported to have worked), and northern literalism. [10] In the 1540s he was active as a painter of fresco cycles decorating palaces and villas on the Venetian *terraferma*, and he seems to have played a role in developing the characteristic domestic decoration style there, especially its landscape components, which combine the Roman antiquarian landscapes of Polidoro da Caravaggio with elements of northern panorama and Venetian pastoral lyricism [fig. 1]. [11] He is also recorded by early sources as one of the northern artists who worked in Tintoretto's studio, as well as Titian's, painting landscapes. [12] Giorgio Vasari's 1568 *Lives* implies that Lambert was still alive but no longer in Venice, and his career is not usually discussed beyond this point. [13]

However, as first noted by Arthur Peltzer, there are indications that he continued to work in Venice, at least occasionally, for more than three decades and received payments there under the name of “Alberto d’Olanda” for three official portraits in 1591 that Tintoretto was unable to complete. (Sustris signed paintings as Alberto earlier in his career, and he is identified by the name in at least two documents.) [14] Many direct links between paintings previously attributed to Tintoretto and works by Lambert suggest that during this later phase of his career, Sustris had an association of some kind with Tintoretto. Although the structure of Tintoretto’s studio remains unclear, it seems likely that he had some associates who worked there relatively independently. Northern artists particularly seemed to have gravitated to the Tintoretto bottega. [15] Lambert Sustris may well have been one of them.

The attribution of the Gallery’s painting to Lambert Sustris is based upon strong similarities in works by Lambert to the figure of Christ, the small figures of the apostles, and the landscape. The attenuated figure of Christ, with his rectangular-shaped head, follows the mannerist conventions that Sustris frequently used in his early paintings. Because of the sketchiness of the figure, especially close connections can be found in Lambert’s drawings. For example, in a drawing depicting a *Sacrifice to Priapus* (Albertina, Vienna) [fig. 2], a female nude seen from the rear is articulated in exactly the same manner as the figure of Christ, especially in the definition of the back, the shoulders, the calves, and the feet, as well as the distinctive mannerist facial profile. [16] Christ’s exaggeratedly extended finger reflects a morphological trait that appears in the central figure in armor in the *Sacrifice to Priapus* and numerous other drawings and paintings (see fig. 1) by Sustris. [17] The little figures of the apostles in the boat are analogous to those who populate Lambert’s frescoed landscapes, and even closer to figures in his drawings, where the sketchily rendered faces frequently show the same hollow-eyed, skull-like appearance and summary treatment of the limbs. They are particularly close to a compositional sketch for a Roman triumph (Gabinetto dei Disegni, Uffizi, Florence) [fig. 3]. [18]

The landscape in the Gallery’s picture shows striking similarities to Lambert’s Paduan frescoes (for example, one at the Villa Godi at Lonedo, Lugo di Vicenza; see fig. 1), especially in the treatment of the receding shoreline, the swaths of yellow and green defining the hills in the middle distance, the tree stump, the puffy clouds, and even the boat itself. [19] In addition, the panoramic landscape lying beneath the current painting, though visible only through x-radiography and

infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns [fig. 4], [20] can also be linked to Lambert's paintings. As in his Paduan frescoes and other works, the architecture includes both classicizing and contemporary buildings. Among them are several that replicate structures in Lambert's paintings—for example, a triple-arched bridge with exact counterparts in his fresco cycles. [21] While it is not possible to make judgments about attribution based on the incomplete image of the unfinished portrait painted over the panoramic landscape, what can be seen of the portrait through infrared reflectography is generally consistent with both Lambert's earlier document portraits and the 1591 paintings by "Alberto d'Olanda," while the x-radiographs reveal that it lacks the bold brushwork that Tintoretto typically used to sketch in the structural forms of the head when he began his portraits. [22]

Tintoretto specialists have remained mostly silent about the attribution of the *Christ at the Sea of Galilee* since it has been linked to Sustis. [23] While the attribution to Sustis cannot be confirmed with certainty, the picture is surely the work of a painter who fits Sustis's profile: one who was active in Venice in the second half of the cinquecento; probably having some association with Tintoretto and certainly aware of his oeuvre and types; familiar with the iconography of northern painting; and painting in a mode that combines mannerist figure types with the landscape style characteristic of Venetian villa decorations of the 1540s.

Christ's pose is loosely related to several other paintings from the Tintoretto studio, including two versions of the *Raising of Lazarus*, datable to 1573 (private collection) and 1576 (Katharinenkirche, Lübeck). [24] The Gallery's painting can be tentatively dated to around the 1570s on the theory that there must be some relationship among the pictures.

The painting represents one of Christ's several earthly manifestations following the Resurrection, his appearance on the shore of Lake Galilee on the occasion traditionally known as the second "miraculous draught of fishes." As recounted in John 21:1–13, seven apostles had fished all night in a boat on Lake Galilee, without success. At dawn, Christ appeared at the shore and told them to cast their nets to the right side of the boat, where the catch would be plentiful. When Peter recognized Christ, he cast himself into the water to swim to the shore. The subject is more frequent in northern than in Italian painting, and the composition of the Washington painting, with its panoramic landscape, is characteristically northern in type. [25] The Gallery's picture has sometimes been seen as representing Christ walking on the water during a storm, and Peter about to attempt to follow his example, as told in Matthew 14:22–29. [26] Nevertheless, the iconography of the



painting as a whole makes it clear that the subject is indeed the occasion described in John 21: Christ is standing on the shore, as evidenced by the rocks and vegetation at his feet; there are seven apostles on the boat (not twelve as in the scene of Christ walking on the water); the apostles are casting the net off the right side of the boat; and the sky suggests that the event takes place at sunrise.

In 16th-century Venice, biblical narrative pictures of this size and format were often hung in the large central halls (*portego* or *sala*) of private palaces. [27]

Robert Echols

March 21, 2019

COMPARATIVE FIGURES



fig. 1 Lambert Sustris, *Landscape*, 1549/1551, fresco,
Lonedo di Lugo di Vicenza, Villa Godi Valmarana, Sala dei
Cesari. © Bibliotheca Hertziana / Foto: Bartsch, Tatjana



fig. 2 Lambert Sustris, *Sacrifice to Priapus*, 1540s, ink and
wash on paper, The Albertina Museum, Vienna. Photo ©
Albertina, Vienna



fig. 3 Lambert Sustris, *A Roman Triumph*, 1540s, ink and wash, with white heightening, on paper, Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe, Gallerie degli Uffizi, Florence. Photo: Gabinetto Fotografico delle Gallerie degli Uffizi



fig. 4 Infrared reflectogram, Circle of Jacopo Tintoretto (Probably Lambert Sustris), *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, c. 1570s, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

NOTES

- [1] Tancred Borenius, "A Seascape by Tintoretto," *Apollo* 2 (July–December 1925): 249.
- [2] For example, Terisio Pignatti, in *Golden Century of Venetian Painting* (Los Angeles, 1979), 106.
- [3] Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1:178–179, cat. no. 224; Terisio Pignatti, in *Golden Century of Venetian Painting* (Los Angeles, 1979), 106; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 411; Erich von der Bercken, *Die Gemälde des Jacopo Tintoretto* (Munich, 1942), 88, 118; Pierluigi De Vecchi, *L'opera completa del Tintoretto* (Milan, 1970), 133, no. 290. A copy of August L. Mayer's manuscript opinion of 1925 is in NGA curatorial files.
- [4] Hans Tietze, *Tintoretto: The Paintings and Drawings* (New York, 1948), 381 (and see also the manuscript opinion by Hans Tietze and Erika Tietze-Conrat quoted below, at note 5); Manolis Chatzidakis, "O Domenikos Theotokopoulos kai e kretiké zographiké," *Kretika Chronika* 4 (1950): 371–440; see also Harold Wethey, *El Greco and His School* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), 1:90 n. 113, citing Chatzidakis. Hans Tietze, *Treasures of the Great National Galleries; An Introduction to the Paintings in the Famous Museums of the Western World* (New York, 1954), 115, 125, is less definitive on the

attribution, noting that the picture is “ascribed to Tintoretto, but may also be considered as a possible El Greco.”

- [5] As Hans Tietze and Erika Tietze-Conrat wrote, in Tintoretto’s figure’s one can always “discern a drawing which explains everything. . . . [Here] Christ is an apparition. Instead of a head between his shoulders, instead of skull, eye and mouth to say words, there is only a profile, or more exactly the shadow of a profile.” An example that shows how differently Tintoretto treats a comparable figure is provided in the *Finding of the Body of Saint Mark* (Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan); see Robert Echols, “Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 94.
- [6] A prominent example of Tintoretto’s treatment of a stormy sea is provided by *Saint Mark Rescues a Saracen* (Gallerie dell’Accademia, Venice). Although cited by Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings* (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:645, and Terisio Pignatti, in *Golden Century of Venetian Painting* (Los Angeles, 1979), 106, as providing a comparison to the Gallery’s painting, the treatment is utterly different there: the sea is rendered with long, curving strokes of white representing the foam over a dark blue background. The prominent use of green earth as the primary pigment in the seascape in *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, noted in the scientific analysis report (see Technical Summary, note 3), is uncharacteristic of Tintoretto and other Venetian painters; it is more common among fresco painters. See Robert Echols, “Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 149 n. 109, and the sources cited there.
- [7] The thinness of the paint layers is especially striking given that there are essentially three paintings on top of one another. On Tintoretto’s pictorial technique, see Jill Dunkerton, “Tintoretto’s Painting Technique,” in *Tintoretto*, ed. Miguel Falomir (Madrid, 2007), 139–158; Joyce Plesters, “Preliminary Observations on the Technique and Materials of Tintoretto,” in *Conservation and Restoration of Pictorial Art*, ed. Norman Bromelle and Perry Smith (London, 1976), 7–26. Plesters has stated that she never believed the Gallery’s painting to be by Tintoretto (letter to Robert Echols, February 7, 1994, copy in NGA curatorial files).
- [8] Among those scholars attributing the painting to Tintoretto, a number have seen a connection to El Greco, stressing the importance of the painting as an influence on the latter and noting how Tintoretto anticipated some of El Greco’s effects; see Georg Gronau’s manuscript opinion of April 28, 1935, transcribed in NGA curatorial files; Harold Wethey, *El Greco and His School* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), 1:90 n. 113; Denys Sutton, “Venetian Painting of the Golden Age,” *Apollo* 110 (1979): 386; Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1:179.

- [9] Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 93–149.
- [10] Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 96–102, and bibliography at note 10; Bert W. Meijer, in *Venezia da stato a mito* (Venice, 1997), 133–135, 141–143, 532–537; Vincenzo Mancini, *Lambert Sustris a Padova: La Villa Bigolin a Selvazzano* (Selvazzano Dentro, 1993).
- [11] Vincenzo Mancini, *Lambert Sustris a Padova: La Villa Bigolin a Selvazzano* (Selvazzano Dentro, 1993), 35–37; Bert W. Meijer, "Lambert Sustris in Padua: Fresco's en tekeningen," *Oud Holland* 107 (1993): 9–10.
- [12] "Lamberto si trattenne per qualche tempo in Venetia, servendo medesimamente alcuna volta à Titiano & al Tintoretto nel far paesi." Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero Le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti, e dello stato* (Venice, 1648), 1:204–205; Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero Le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti, e dello stato*, ed. Detlev von Hadeln (Berlin, 1914), 1:225.
- [13] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence, 1906), 7:586
- [14] The list of the Venetian painter's guild includes the name "Alberto Fiammingo," and no other name that could reasonably refer to Lambert Sustris. In addition, the visual evidence provided by the three documented "Alberto" portraits of 1591 is consistent with what Lambert might be expected to have produced some four decades after his documented portraits, now working in a more Tintoretto-influenced mode. Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 102–110. On Lambert Sustris as "Albert d'Ollanda," see Arthur Peltzer, "Chi è il pittore 'Alberto de Ollanda,'" *Arte Veneta* 4 (1950): 118–122; see also Bert W. Meijer, in *Venezia da stato a mito* (Venice, 1997), 134–135.
- [15] Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 110–113, 124–137; Bert W. Meijer, "Flemish and Dutch Artists in Venetian Workshops: The Case of Jacopo Tintoretto," in *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Dürer, Bellini and Titian*, ed. Bernard Aikema and Beverly Louise Brown (Milan, 1999), 133–143; Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman, "Toward a New Tintoretto Catalogue, with a Checklist of Revised Attributions and a New Chronology," in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Actas del congreso internacional/Proceedings of the International Symposium, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, February 26–27, 2007* (Madrid, 2009), 107–109.
- [16] See Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the

Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): figs. 8, 9a, and 9b. For other comparable figures, see 113 and figs. 10 and 14 in the same article.

- [17] See Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): figs. 8, 10, 13, and 14.
- [18] See Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 121, fig. 14, identified by Vincenzo Mancini, *Lambert Sustris a Padova: La Villa Bigolin a Selvazzano* (Selvazzano Dentro, 1993), 47, fig. 40. See also Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and . . . Lambert Sustris," figs. 15a, 15b, and 15c.
- [19] Another example is provided by the decoration of the Villa dei Vescovi at Luvigliano. See Robert Echols, "Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris," *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 98, 145 n. 25, 146 n. 32, figs. 12 and 13; Vincenzo Mancini, *Lambert Sustris a Padova: La Villa Bigolin a Selvazzano* (Selvazzano Dentro, 1993), 73, 136–137; Bert W. Meijer, "Lambert Sustris in Padua: Fresco's en tekeningen," *Oud Holland* 107 (1993): 5.
- [20] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.
- [21] See Vincenzo Mancini, *Lambert Sustris a Padova: La Villa Bigolin a Selvazzano* (Selvazzano Dentro, 1993), figs. 33, 34, and 78.
- [22] For example, in *A Procurator of Saint Mark's*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1952.5.79.
- [23] Bert W. Meijer, "Flemish and Dutch Artists in Venetian Workshops: The Case of Jacopo Tintoretto," in *Renaissance Venice and the North: Crosscurrents in the Time of Dürer, Bellini and Titian*, ed. Bernard Aikema and Beverly Louise Brown (Milan, 1999), 143, rejected Echols's attribution to Sustris of several other paintings previously assigned to Tintoretto, without explanation, while attributing the landscapes in these pictures to northern painters. He did not, however, include *Christ at the Sea of Galilee* among the group that he discussed. Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman, "Toward a New Tintoretto Catalogue, with a Checklist of Revised Attributions and a New Chronology," in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Actas del congreso internacional/Proceedings of the International Symposium, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, February 26–27, 2007* (Madrid, 2009), 149, no. C90, reaffirmed the Sustris attribution. They placed the picture in their "Circle of Tintoretto" checklist rather than considering it a studio work, stating, "Although it is possible that this picture was executed [by Sustris] in Tintoretto's studio, it is far more distinctive than related works . . . which exemplify the Tintoretto studio 'house style.' Given its exceptionally high

quality and the individuality of its style, an attribution to ‘studio of Tintoretto’ as an alternative to Sustris would not be appropriate in this case, and therefore we do not include it with the related works in the studio category.” Guillaume Cassegrain, *Tintoret* (Paris, 2010), 45, cited the painting as an example of the complexities involved in the Tintoretto catalog, arguing that it might represent either an “exercise in style” on the part of Tintoretto, a departure from his usual manner, or the work of a northern painter in Tintoretto’s studio, such as Sustris.

- [24] Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1: cat. nos. 327 and 357; Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman, “Toward a New Tintoretto Catalogue, with a Checklist of Revised Attributions and a New Chronology,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto: Actas del congreso internacional/Proceedings of the International Symposium, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, February 26–27, 2007* (Madrid, 2009), nos. 159 and 172. A *Miraculous Draught of Fishes* (private collection; offered Christie’s, New York, May 31, 1991, lot 62) by a Tintoretto follower shows a very similar pose; see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane*, 1: cat. no. 197; Echols and Ilchman, “Toward a New Tintoretto Catalogue,” no. C79.
- [25] An early prototype appears in Konrad Witz’s *Saint Peter Altarpiece* of 1444 (Musées d’Art et d’Histoire, Geneva). Mid-16th-century examples include Pieter Brueghel the Elder, *Landscape with Christ at the Sea of Galilee* (private collection, England), 1553, and Maerten van Heemskerck, *Christ on the Sea of Tiberias* (Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, England), 1567; see Fritz Grossman, *Bruegel: The Paintings*, 2nd ed. (London, 1966), 1: pl. 2; and Rainald Grosshans, *Maerten van Heemskerck: Die Gemälde* (Berlin, 1980), cat. no. 100, fig. 156. A composition particularly close to that in the Washington painting occurs in the background of a print after Lambert Lombard illustrating the *Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes*, dated 1555; see Robert Echols, “Tintoretto, *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, and the Unknown Later Career of Lambert Sustris,” *Venezia Cinquecento* 6, no. 12 (1996): 126, fig. 16 (detail); and Walter S. Gibson, *Mirror of the Earth: The World Landscape in Sixteenth-Century Flemish Painting* (Princeton, NJ, 1989), 33, fig. 2.59.
- [26] While early ascriptions of this latter subject to the present painting may have been based on the fact that it appears to show Christ with one foot on the surface of the water, Anna Pallucchini, followed by Pallucchini and Rossi, insisted on the stormy water as the defining element. The subject has been identified as Christ walking on the water by Tancred Borenius, “A Seascape by Tintoretto,” *Apollo* 2 (July–December 1925): 249; Lionello Venturi, *Pittura italiana in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 411 (“Christ saving Peter”); Harold Wethey, *El Greco and His School* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), 1:90 n. 113; Anna Pallucchini, *National Gallery, Washington: Musei del Mondo* (Milan, 1968), 5;

and Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1:178–179, cat. no. 224.

[27] Monika Schmitter, “The *Quadro da Portego* in Sixteenth-Century Venetian Art,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (2011): 693–751.

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is formed of four irregularly sized pieces of similar, medium-weight, twill canvas that have been sewn together. A large piece in the center has been augmented with a thin strip to the right extending the entire height of the painting, ranging from 8.25 centimeters in width at the bottom to 10.5 centimeters at the top; a strip to the left of 37–37.5 centimeters in width extending the entire height of the primary fabric; and a narrow strip along the bottom spanning the left addition and the primary fabric, but ending before the addition on the right, which ranges from 2 centimeters in height on the left to 6.25 centimeters in height on the right. The entire composite has been lined to two pieces of plain-weave fabric.

All four pieces of canvas were prepared with a gesso ground followed by a layer of glue. [1] The paint was applied directly on this gesso and glue priming, with no imprimatura layer, though one cross section showed a layer consisting of a mixture of materials observed in paintings from the Tintoretto studio and identified as “palette scraping.” [2] The forms were outlined first in dry white paint. The paint films are generally thin and the structure is less complex than is usually found in Venetian paintings. Occasionally the outline of the figure was reemphasized after the form was painted. Christ’s red robe was painted over the white crest of a wave. Christ’s foot appears to be unfinished. The following pigments have been identified: azurite, smalt, red lake, vermilion, red lead, lead tin yellow, orpiment, green earth, iron earths, umber, lead white, and lamp black (possible, in sketch for underlying portrait, see below). [3] Beneath the current composition are two other unfinished paintings painted perpendicular to the current composition. The first is a landscape, which does not appear to have progressed past the initial painted sketch. On top of this is a portrait of a man, of which the initial sketch can be seen clearly with infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 1.8 microns [fig. 1]. [4] The flesh tones and highlights appear white in the x-radiographs.

The paint is abraded in many places, and discrete losses to paint and ground are scattered throughout, particularly along the seam joins and edges of the painting.

The painting was relined, cleaned, and restored by Stephen Pichetto in 1944. In 1993–1995, it was treated again to remove or reduce discolored varnish and extensive retouching and to inpaint the abrasion.

Robert Echols and Joanna Dunn based on the examination report by Paula De Cristofaro and the treatment report by Susanna Griswold

March 21, 2019

TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES



fig. 1 Infrared reflectogram, Circle of Jacopo Tintoretto (Probably Lambert Sustris), *Christ at the Sea of Galilee*, c. 1570s, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The materials of the painting were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross sections in conjunction with scanning electron microscopy with energy dispersive x-ray microanalysis (SEM-EDS), x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF), x-ray powder diffraction (XRD), and polarized light microscopy. (See report dated September 27, 1995, in NGA conservation files.)
- [2] Jill Dunkerton, "Tintoretto's Painting Technique," in *Tintoretto*, ed. Miguel Falomir (Madrid, 2007), 153.

[3] Analysis also indicated the possible presence of copper resinate green.
(See report dated September 27, 1995, in NGA conservation files.)

[4] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane
InSb camera fitted with an H astronomy filter.

PROVENANCE

Count Joseph Gallotti.[1] (Durlacher Brothers, New York).[2] Arthur Sachs [1880-1975], New York, by 1925;[3] sold March 1943 through (Jacques Seligmann & Co., New York) and (Moses & Singer, New York) to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[4] gift 1952 to NGA.

[1] This name appears on an undated prospectus for the painting in NGA curatorial files. The painting was not in the Gallotti sale at Hôtel Drouot, Paris, on 28 June 1905.

[2] There is no record of this painting in the extant Durlacher stockbooks at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

[3] Tancred Borenius, "A Seascape by Tintoretto," *Apollo* 2 (July-December 1925): 249.

[4] The painting is recorded as being with the dealer Jacques Seligman in New York by Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XVI–XVIII Century*, London, 1973: 53, and in Germain Seligman, *Merchants of Art: 1880-1960, Eighty Years of Professional Collecting*, New York, 1961: pl. 87. However, according to Seligmann records, the firm did not own the picture but acted for Sachs in its sale (Seligmann Papers, Archives of American Art, Washington: Series 2.1, Collectors Files, Box 204, folder 1, copy in NGA curatorial files). The bill of sale to the Kress Foundation for two paintings, dated 25 March 1943 and including Tintoretto's "Christ on Lake of Galilee," is on Moses & Singer letterhead and indicates that the sale is from "Mr. Arthur Sachs c/o Moses & Singer" (copy in NGA curatorial files). See also The Kress Collection Digital Archive, <https://kress.nga.gov/Detail/objects/508>.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1927 Loan to display with permanent collection, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1927.

1932 Loan to display with permanent collection, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1932-1933.

1933 A Century of Progress Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, Art Institute of Chicago, 1933, no. 135, repro., as *Christ on the Lake of Galilee*.

1934 Landscape Paintings, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1934, no. 5, as *Christ Walking on the Water*.

1935 Loan to display with permanent collection, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1935-1938.

1938 Exhibition of Venetian Painting From the Fifteenth Century through the Eighteenth Century, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, June-July 1938, no. 66, repro., as *Christ on the Sea at Galilee*.

1938 Religious Art, an exhibition of fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth-century paintings; sculpture, illuminated manuscripts, metalwork, rosaries, textiles, stained glass and prints, Baltimore Museum of Art, 1938-1939, no. 35, repro.

1938 Venetian Paintings of the 15th & 16th Centuries, M. Knoedler and Company, New York, April 1938, no. 16, repro., as *Christ on the Sea of Galilee*.

1939 A Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Jacopo Robusti, il Tintoretto, 1519-1594, Durlacher Brothers, New York, February-March 1939, no. 5, as *Christ on the Sea of Galilee*.

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculptures from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, May-October 1939, no. 377, repro.

1942 Loan to display with permanent collection, Society of Liberal Arts, Joslyn Memorial (now Joslyn Art Museum), Omaha, 1942-1943.

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 825.

1979 The Golden Century of Venetian Painting, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1979-1980, no. 36, repro.

1988 Loan to display with permanent collection, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen, 1988-1989.

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- 1933 Venturi, Lionello. *Italian Paintings in America*. Translated by Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott. 3 vols. New York and Milan, 1933: 3:no. 555, as Tintoretto.
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- 1944 Frankfurter, Alfred M. *The Kress Collection in the National Gallery*. New York, 1944: 55, repro., as *Christ Walking on the Sea*.
- 1945 *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1945 (reprinted 1947, 1949): 130, repro.
- 1948 Tietze, Hans. *Tintoretto: The Paintings and Drawings*. New York, 1948: 381, as El Greco.
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- 1951 Einstein, Lewis. *Looking at Italian Pictures in the National Gallery of Art*. Washington, 1951: 98-99, repro.
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To cite: Robert Echols, "Anonymous Artist, Jacopo Tintoretto, Lambert Sustris/*Christ at the Sea of Galilee*/c. 1570s," *Italian Paintings of the Sixteenth Century*, NGA Online Editions, <https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/41637> (accessed September 18, 2024).