



Jacopo Tintoretto  
Venetian, 1518 or 1519 - 1594

## Summer

c. 1546/1548

oil on canvas

overall: 105.7 x 193 cm (41 5/8 x 76 in.)

framed: 139.07 x 224.16 x 11.43 cm (54 3/4 x 88 1/4 x 4 1/2 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.90

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### ENTRY

*Summer* is one of three known paintings from a cycle by Jacopo Tintoretto depicting the personifications of the four Seasons. The other two are *Spring* (Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk) [fig. 1] [1] and *Autumn* (private collection) [fig. 2]; [2] there is no trace of *Winter*. All three of the surviving Seasons feature powerful, Michelangesque figures, combined with a decorative elegance that is especially prominent in *Summer*, in the undulating line of stalks of grain silhouetted against the sky, the lacy grape leaves and clustered grapes, and the exquisitely rendered birds.

Summer is represented as Ceres, goddess of agriculture, with her attribute, stalks of wheat. [3] Of the other two surviving Seasons, Spring is Flora, decked with flowers, while Autumn is a youthful god, probably Vertumnus, reclining among branches or vines with a large squash or gourd. In Venetian paintings of this period, Winter was typically personified as a white-bearded older man (Hyems, Boreas, Saturn, or Vulcan). [4]

Carlo Ridolfi describes a decorative cycle by Tintoretto in the Casa Barbo a San Pantaleone in which "one sees in the paneling (*intavolato*) of a room a *capriccio* of

dreams and some divinities in the heavens, with various images of the things brought to the minds of mortals in their sleep, and the four Seasons personified in the surrounding area (*nel recinto*)." [5] The central painting of this ensemble is unmistakably the octagonal *Allegory of the Dreams of Men* (Detroit Institute of Arts) [fig. 3], [6] an illusionistic ceiling painting designed to be seen from below (*di sotto in sù*), making it clear that Ridolfi's reference to the *intavolato* means a decorative ceiling framework. Despite its current title, taken from Ridolfi's description, the allegory represented in the Detroit picture seems to be concerned primarily with time and fortune. It involves a complicated network of symbols which, when considered together, comment upon the interaction of human dreams and desires, fortune, and the great cycles governing heaven and earth. [7] The depiction of the Seasons surrounding the central allegory would have complemented the motif of cyclical change.

Not all scholars have agreed that the Gallery's *Summer* and the other two surviving Seasons come from the Barbo ensemble, or indeed that they are autograph works by Jacopo Tintoretto. [8] Nevertheless, the evidence for a shared origin with the *Allegory of the Dreams of Men* is strong. The Seasons were originally elongated octagons in format, like the *Allegory*. The figure types and pictorial technique are similar in all four pictures. An exhibition at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1994 that brought together the Detroit, Norfolk, and Washington pictures confirmed their compatibility in color and scale. [9] Moreover, although these works have been dated variously from the mid-1550s through the late 1570s, the Seasons can be identified as autograph works by Jacopo from the period leading up to his triumphant *Miracle of the Slave* of 1548. They show numerous links to such pictures as the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* (Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford; documented to 1545), *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* (Alte Pinakothek, Munich), *Venus, Vulcan, and Cupid* (Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, Florence), and the *Last Supper* (San Marcuola, Venice; dated 1547). [10] Summer's features particularly resemble those of Minerva in the Hartford ceiling and Venus in the Munich and Pitti paintings. Whatever doubts scholars have had about the autograph nature of *Summer* can be explained by the fact that it is a relatively early work, and thus different in style and technique from his paintings after 1550. [11] The central *Allegory* is painted somewhat more broadly than the Seasons. The major figure in the lower part of the canvas is seen in shadow against a bright background, a device that the artist used in the *Miracle of the Slave* and frequently thereafter. It is possible that Tintoretto executed the centerpiece in 1548 or shortly thereafter, even in the early 1550s.

As in his other youthful works, Tintoretto's Casa Barbo ensemble demonstrates a clear intent to show off his mastery of the most up-to-date central Italian manner. Here the primary source of inspiration can be identified as Giorgio Vasari. During his Venetian stay of 1541–1542, Vasari produced paintings for a ceiling in the Palazzo Corner, from which several allegorical figures survive, among them *Patience* (Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice) [fig. 4]. [12] Like Tintoretto's surviving *Seasons*, Vasari's paintings employ a slightly reduced point of view and are at once heroic and elegantly decorative. In its facial type and curly hair, Vasari's *Patience* shows a close resemblance to Tintoretto's *Summer*. Even closer connections can be seen between other paintings in Tintoretto's cycle and Vasari's Palazzo Corner ceiling. For example, Tintoretto's *Spring* and *Autumn* show similarities in pose and figure type to *Judas* (now Casa Vasari, Arezzo) [fig. 5], which may have originally been part of the *Allegory of Hope* in Vasari's cycle. Tintoretto's *Allegory of the Dreams of Men* is analogous to the central *Allegory of Charity* from Vasari's ceiling (now Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice) in its basic composition and many of the component figures. Similar allegorical figures also appear on the ceilings of Vasari's own house in Arezzo, which he decorated in the mid- to late 1540s. [13] Thus the Casa Barbo ensemble can be seen as reflecting the very latest central Italian taste of circa 1546–1548. Tintoretto would have been aware of Vasari's productions after he left Venice through Pietro Aretino, a close friend of Vasari and an early sponsor of Tintoretto.

Recent archival findings by Stefania Mason have clarified that the Casa Barbo was occupied at midcentury by three brothers, Zuan Francesco, Jacopo, and Alessandro. Francesco and Jacopo were both noted for their culture and erudition and associated with Aretino's literary circle. Francesco was a historian and collector of antique coins and medals. Jacopo was a poet and scholar to whom Lodovico Dolce dedicated his translation of Seneca's tragedy *Thyestes* in 1543 and addressed a letter published in 1552. Alessandro played an active role in Venice's political life, holding a number of important offices. The brothers lived together under a *fidecommeso*, an arrangement that ensured that the family's patrimony would be passed down through a single male heir: Zuan Francesco's eldest son, Faustino, who would inherit the palace and carry the name forward. In 1557, Faustino's uncle Alessandro, in his will, noted that at some unspecified time he had spent 212 *ducats* in restoring the house at San Pantalon that would go to Faustino on the condition that Faustino not raise the rent for Alessandro's wife and stepson as long as they wished to live there. Faustino married in 1548, and his upcoming

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wedding could have provided the impetus for the decoration of the house that he would inherit as the future head of the family; nevertheless, the stylistic evidence suggests that if that was the case, the ensemble was begun somewhat before the actual wedding, although it might not have been completed until 1548 or later. [14] The Barbo family had produced a pope several generations earlier (Paul II), a factor that may have inspired them to adopt a central Italian–oriented artistic patronage. [15]

Ridolfi’s description of the Casa Barbo ensemble, which states that the Seasons were “nel recinto,” or in the area surrounding the central allegory, does not make clear whether they were originally high on the wall, at the frieze level, canted at an angle on a vault, or flat on the ceiling. Any of these seems possible. The slightly reduced point of view would have worked in all three positions; although similar figures tend to appear flat on the ceiling in Venetian ensembles of the mid- and later 16th century, there are occasional examples set on vaults and on the wall at the frieze level. [16]

Robert Echols

March 21, 2019

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## COMPARATIVE FIGURES



**fig. 1** Jacopo Tintoretto, *Spring*, c. 1546/1548, oil on canvas, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.



**fig. 2** Jacopo Tintoretto, *Autumn*, c. 1546/1548, oil on canvas, Private Collection



**fig. 3** Jacopo Tintoretto, *Allegory of the Dreams of Men*, c. 1546/1548, oil on canvas, Detroit Institute of Arts



**fig. 4** Giorgio Vasari, *Patience*, 1542, oil on panel, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. Su concessione del Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo. Museo Nazionale Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia © Archivio fotografico G.A.VE



**fig. 5** Giorgio Vasari, *Judas*, 1542, oil on panel, Casa Vasari, Arezzo. Su concessione del Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo. Soprintendenza archeologia belle arti e paesaggio per le province di Siena Grosseto e Arezzo. Photo: Alessandro Benci

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## NOTES

- [1] No. 71.1301, 106 × 195 cm. Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1: cat. no. 209; 2: fig. 275; 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), no. 39. According to Chrysler Museum files, the painting was acquired by Walter P. Chrysler Jr. from Newhouse Galleries in 1958, and was previously in a private collection in Southern France.
- [2] 102 × 210 cm. Sotheby's, New York, May 22, 2018, lot 81. The picture was first published by Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1: no. 211; 2: fig. 277, tentatively identified as *Winter*. See Miguel Falomir, ed., *Tintoretto* (Madrid, 2007), fig. 106; 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), no. 41.
- [3] Other elements appear in the picture that are not attributes of Ceres. Grapes are usually linked with autumn rather than summer, although a general association with the idea of harvest does not seem out of place.

The appearance of the parrot cannot be easily explained. In Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (first published in 1593), the parrot is an attribute of eloquence; see Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Siena, 1613), 207–209. It is possible that the parrot here may have played a role in the complex allegory of the ceiling ensemble, discussed elsewhere in this entry. Perhaps, because of its association with tropical climates, it is intended to suggest the heat of summer, or it may appear solely for decorative purposes, to add color and a touch of luxury and exoticism to the painting. Parrots appear occasionally as pets in later 16th-century paintings, for example in Veronese's frescoes showing members of the Barbaro household in the *sala* of the Villa Maser, 1561. See generally Richard Verdi, *The Parrot in Art: From Dürer to Elizabeth Butterworth* (Milan and London, 2007).

- [4] The fact that the third surviving season is shown among bare branches leads to some ambiguity about whether he is intended to represent autumn or winter, although the presence of the squash and the fact that the figure is a youth and not an old man make the former seem more likely. For a discussion of the representation of the Seasons by Tintoretto's contemporaries, see Bertina Suida Manning, "Two 'Seasons' by Jacopo Tintoretto," in *Studies in the History of Art Dedicated to William E. Suida on His Eightieth Birthday* (London, 1959), 253. On the ceiling of the *albergo* in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, and on the ceiling of the *Atrio Quadrato* in the Palazzo Ducale, Tintoretto represented the Seasons as four putti; see Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1: nos. 255–258 and 266–269; 2: figs. 339–342 and 353–356. In the four Seasons that decorate the clockface in the Sala del Collegio in the Palazzo Ducale, designed by Tintoretto and executed (in grisaille) by his studio, Winter is a female deity crowned with a crescent, probably Diana. The other personifications on the clockface appear to be Flora, Ceres, and Vertumnus (again, a youth with a squash). See Pallucchini and Rossi, *Tintoretto*, 1:221–222, no. 421; 2:570, fig. 539. A pair of paintings by a Tintoretto follower in the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, shows, in one painting, Spring as a seated, dressed female figure in the foreground, with Summer in the background as a female figure cutting wheat, and in the other, Winter as a nude old man in the foreground, with Autumn in the background as a nude youth bending down the limbs of a tree; Pallucchini and Rossi, *Tintoretto*, 1: cat. nos. 153–154, 2: figs. 202–203; 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. C66–C67. Three paintings of *Spring*, *Summer*, and *Winter* by another Tintoretto follower in the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, show the Seasons as Flora, Ceres, and an old man, probably Hyems, respectively; Pallucchini and Rossi, *Tintoretto*, 1: nos.

A33–A35; 2: figs. 660–662. In addition to the Casa Barbo group discussed elsewhere in this entry, Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero Le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti, e dello stato* (Venice, 1648), 2:43; Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero Le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti, e dello stato*, ed. Detlev von Hadeln (Berlin, 1924), 2:52, mentions another ensemble in which Tintoretto depicts the Seasons, in the house of Giovanni da Pesaro at San Stae; there they are not personified, but represented by depictions of typical activities associated with each season. Given Tintoretto's dependence in this ensemble on a ceiling design by Giorgio Vasari (discussed elsewhere in this entry), it is worth noting that the latter included personifications of the Seasons in his designs for the ceiling of the Sala di Opi (Chamber of Opis), Palazzo Vecchio, Florence: there Spring and Summer are female, of a type generally similar to the Gallery's picture, while Autumn is a youth and Winter is an old man. Although the Sala di Opi postdates Tintoretto's Casa Barbo ensemble by some years (the decoration of the rooms was not begun until 1555), it is possible that the young Tintoretto had access to earlier drawings by Vasari depicting the Seasons.

- [5] “In casa Barba a San Pantaleone miransi nell'intavolato d'una stanza un capriccio de' sogni, & alcuni Deità in un Cielo, con varie imagini delle cose apportate nel sonno alle menti de' mortali, e le quattro stagioni in figura nel recinto.” Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero Le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti, e dello stato* (Venice, 1648), 2:46; Carlo Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero Le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti, e dello stato*, ed. Detlev von Hadeln (Berlin, 1924), 2:55.
- [6] Like the three paintings of the Seasons (see Entry notes 1–2), the *Allegory of the Dreams of Men* also first appeared on the art market in the 20th century; it was purchased in 1921 from the Lucerne Fine Arts Co. (Steinmeyer). Information from curatorial files, Detroit Institute of Arts.
- [7] The protagonists include Saturn, the personification of Time; his son, Opportunity or Good Fortune, balanced on the crystal sphere before him; a mask and poppies, symbols of sleep; the winged goddess Fame, holding her trumpet, accompanied by a lion, the emblem of the Barbo family; and in the heavens, with the signs of the zodiac, Jupiter and two goddesses, possibly Juno, who bestows wealth upon mortals, or alternatively Urania, the muse of Astronomy, and Venus, or alternatively Erato, muse of lyric poetry. See Robert Echols, “Jacopo nel corso, presso al palio”: Dal soffitto per l'Aretino al *Miracolo dello Schiavo*,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Paola Rossi and Lionello Puppi (Padua, 1996), 78–79. For an alternate interpretation, see Francesco Gandolfo, *Il “Dolce Tempo”: Mistica, ermetismo e sogno nel Cinquecento* (Rome, 1978).
- [8] Bertina Suida Manning, the first to publish *Spring* and *Summer*, connected them with the Barbo ensemble, which she dated to the early 1550s. See



Bertina Suida Manning, “Two ‘Seasons’ by Jacopo Tintoretto,” in *Studies in the History of Art Dedicated to William E. Suida on His Eightieth Birthday* (London, 1959), 253–257. Jürgen Schulz disagreed, arguing surprisingly and without explanation that the Seasons did not originate as part of a ceiling ensemble and are much later than the Detroit *Allegory*, which he dates to c. 1556. See Jürgen Schulz, *Venetian Painted Ceilings of the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1968), 117–118. Rodolfo Pallucchini, “Inediti di Jacopo Tintoretto,” *Arte Veneta* 23 (1969): 46, accepted the attribution to Tintoretto, although his primary comparison (the *Annunciation to the Wife of Manoah*, now Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid), is best considered a Tintoretto studio product of c. 1580; see Robert Echols and Frederick Ilichman, “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), 97. Pierluigi De Vecchi, *L’opera completa del Tintoretto* (Milan, 1970), 165, accepted *Spring* and *Summer*, along with the Detroit painting, as part of the Barbo ensemble, which he dated to c. 1565/1566, but flagged all three as painted “con collaborazione.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings* (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:470–471, was tentative about the association of *Summer* with the Barbo ensemble and raised the possibility of an attribution to Domenico Tintoretto around 1600 as an alternative to Jacopo in the early 1550s, citing a verbal opinion by Terisio Pignatti from 1964 that *Summer* is by Domenico. Paola Rossi, in Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1:176, 199–200, nos. 209–211, 328, argued that the Seasons date from 1555/1558, while the Detroit *Allegory* dates from 1575/1577, and thus they cannot be from the same ensemble. Echols explored the connections between the Seasons, the Detroit *Allegory*, and Tintoretto’s other youthful works, as summarized in this entry, arguing that they originated in the Barbo ensemble and date from c. 1546, a conclusion reflected in Echols and Ilichman, “Toward a New Tintoretto Catalogue.” See Robert Echols, “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting 1538–1548” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1993), 181–191; Robert Echols, “‘Jacopo nel corso, presso al palio’: Dal soffitto per l’Aretino al *Miracolo dello Schiavo*,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Paola Rossi and Lionello Puppi (Padua, 1996), 78–79; Robert Echols, in *Tintoretto*, ed. Miguel Falomir (Madrid, 2007), 204–208; and Echols and Ilichman, “Toward a New Tintoretto Catalogue,” 122–123, nos. 38–41.

[9] See Exhibition History.

[10] On the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas*, see Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1: cat. no. 82; Miguel Falomir, ed., *Tintoretto* (Madrid, 2007), cat. no. 4. *Venus and Mars*

*Surprised by Vulcan* and *Venus, Vulcan, and Cupid* are generally dated to the 1550s (see Pallucchini and Rossi, *Tintoretto*, 1: cat. nos. 155, 167), but are best seen as works of the 1540s; see Robert Echols, “Jacopo Tintoretto and Venetian Painting 1538–1548” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1993), 161–167; W. R. Rearick, *Il disegno veneziano del Cinquecento* (Milan, 2001), 118–119; Robert Echols, in *Tintoretto*, ed. Miguel Falomir (Madrid, 2007), 200–203, cat. no. 5; 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. 36 and 37.

- [11] Joyce Plesters, an expert in Tintoretto’s technique, after reviewing paint cross sections and other documentation relating to the *Allegory of the Dreams of Men*, concluded that the painting’s technique was consistent with a date shortly before the *Miracle of the Slave* (discussion with Robert Echols and Julie Moreno, Mellon Conservation Fellow, Detroit Institute of Arts, June 4–5, 1993, Venice, documented in Moreno’s report on her research travel, in NGA conservation files).
- [12] Jürgen Schulz, “Vasari at Venice,” *The Burlington Magazine* 103 (1961): 507–511; Liana De Girolami Cheney, “Vasari’s Early Decorative Cycles: The Venetian Commissions, Part II,” *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 29 (2003): 23–58; Giulio Manieri Elia, “La ‘Fede’ di Giorgio Vasari e il soffitto della ‘Camera Nova’ a Palazzo Corner-Spinelli,” *Ricche minere* 1 (2014): 71–79; Luisa Caporossi and Rossella Cavigli, “Vasari at Venice: The ‘Suicide of Judas’ at Arezzo, Another Addendum to the Corner Ceiling,” *The Burlington Magazine* 158 (2016): 10–12.
- [13] For these and other connections to works by Vasari, see Robert Echols, “Jacopo nel corso, presso al palio’: Dal soffitto per l’Aretino al *Miracolo dello Schiavo*,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Paola Rossi and Lionello Puppi (Padua, 1996), 78–79.
- [14] Mason’s findings appear in her essay “Tintoretto the Venetian” in *Tintoretto: Artist of Renaissance Venice*, ed. Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman (New Haven, 2018), 36–61. *Spring*, in particular, with its inflated, mannerist figure type, is inconsistent with Tintoretto’s work after 1548. The figure of Opportunity in the *Allegory of the Dreams of Men*, by contrast, presented in deep shadow against a bright sky, does recall the executioner in *Miracle of the Slave*. These and the other comparisons cited suggest that Tintoretto may have begun the Barbo project around 1546 or 1547 and completed it in 1548. As a general matter, after 1548, Tintoretto was much less reliant on wholesale quotations from central Italian sources, and it seems unlikely he would have followed Vasari’s model so closely.

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- [15] Robert Echols, “Jacopo nel corso, presso al palio”: Dal soffitto per l’Aretino al *Miracolo dello Schiavo*,” in *Jacopo Tintoretto nel quarto centenario della morte: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi*, ed. Paola Rossi and Lionello Puppi (Padua, 1996), 78–79.
- [16] For example, on Tintoretto’s ceiling for the *albergo* of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco of 1564, the central illusionistic painting is surrounded by decorative panels, among which are reclining figures seen from a point of view similar to that in the Seasons; see Rodolfo Pallucchini and Paola Rossi, *Tintoretto: Le opere sacre e profane* (Venice, 1982), 1: nos. 272–275 and 277–280; 2: figs. 359–372, 364–367. Most analogous figures in the Palazzo Ducale, Venice, also appear flat on the ceiling, although as Suida Manning noted, the Sala del Anticollegio and other rooms in the palace do have horizontal paintings at the frieze level. Bertina Suida Manning, “Two ‘Seasons’ by Jacopo Tintoretto,” in *Studies in the History of Art Dedicated to William E. Suida on His Eightieth Birthday* (London, 1959), 257. While the wooden framework for Vasari’s Palazzo Corner paintings is now lost, the appearance of the fictive moldings in the paintings suggests that they were flat on the ceiling; see Jürgen Schulz, “Vasari at Venice,” *The Burlington Magazine* 103 (1961): 507. In Vasari’s house in Arezzo, similar allegorical figures appear surrounding central illusionistic panels both flat on the ceiling and at the frieze level in the Chamber of Fortune, which also includes personifications of the Seasons as part of a complex allegory; among those appearing at the frieze level are some virtually identical to figures from the Palazzo Corner. See Liana Cheney, *The Homes of Giorgio Vasari* (New York, 2006), 120–135, figs. 30 and 31 (at frieze level), 32 and 33 (flat on the ceiling).

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a piece of medium-weight fabric with a twill weave. Plain-weave fabric has been added at the corners to convert the original shape of an elongated octagon into a rectangle. Additional fabric has been added at the top (2.5 centimeters) and bottom (4 centimeters) edges. Tintoretto did not use a ground to prepare the canvas. Instead, he drew the design directly on the fabric in black paint, then drew it again in layers of warm white and brown paint. [1] Infrared examination at 1.1 to 1.8 microns shows the black liquid underpainting and brown underlayers, and x-radiographs show the white underpainting. [2] Tintoretto made adjustments to the figure’s position, twisting her body so that her right hip was raised up and her left leg was bent. He also adjusted the position of her right arm and the fingers of her left hand. Pentimenti can also be seen in the leaves and the

grapes. Tintoretto applied the paint fairly thinly using a combination of wet-into-wet and wet-over-dry brushwork. There is some impasto in the highlights. He used glazes in the drapery and the foliage. [3]

The painting is in good condition overall. Some abrasion is apparent, most notably in the left background, where the canvas threads are visible. A 12-centimeter circular tear is located in the sky and grapes at the top of the picture near the left corner. In 1959–1960 Mario Modestini applied varnish and retouched the painting. By 2016 that varnish had discolored and the painting was treated again between 2016 and 2018 to remove it and to reduce an earlier discolored varnish that had only been selectively removed in the past.

Joanna Dunn and Robert Echols based on the examination reports by Michael Swicklik and Joanna Dunn

March 21, 2019

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The preparatory layers were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department using cross sections and scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy-dispersive spectrometry (see report dated February 6, 2017, in NGA conservation files). The white layers were predominantly comprised of lead white, with a small amount of vermilion.
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H and J astronomy filters.
- [3] The pigments were analyzed by the NGA Scientific Research department with x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy and scanning electron microscopy in conjunction with energy-dispersive spectrometry (see report dated February 6, 2017, in NGA conservation files). The pigments found are consistent with those used by Tintoretto and other artists of the period.
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## PROVENANCE

Casa Barbo a San Pantaleone, Venice, by 1648.[1] possibly private collection, southern France.[2] (Frederick Mont, Inc., New York), by 1956; sold February 1957 the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[3] gift 1961 to NGA.

[1] In a 1648 publication, Carlo Ridolfi describes a decorative cycle of paintings by Tintoretto: “In casa Barba a San Pantaleone miransi nell’intavolato d’una stanza un capriccio de’ sogni, & alcuni Deità in un Cielo, con varie imagini delle cose apportate nel sonno alle menti de’ mortali, e le quattro stagioni in figura nel recinto” (“...one sees in the paneling [*intavolato*] of a room a capriccio of dreams and some divinities in the heavens, with various images of the things brought to the minds of mortals in their sleep, and the four Seasons personified in the surrounding area [‘nel recinto’]”). Three of the paintings depicting the personifications of the four Seasons are known: *Spring* (Chrysler Museum of Art, Norkolk), the NGA painting, and *Autumn* (private collection); *Winter* is unlocated. See: Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell’arte, overo Le vite de gl’illustri pittori veneti, e dello Stato*, 2 vols., Venice, 1648: 2:46; Ridolfi, *Le maraviglie dell’arte, overo Le vite de gl’illustri pittori veneti, e dello Stato* (Venice, 1648), edited by Detlev von Hadeln, 2 vols., Berlin, 1914-1924: 2(1924):55.

Tintoretto may have begun the paintings at Casa Barbo around 1546 or 1547, and completed them in 1548. It was in 1548 that Faustino Barbo married, and because he was the designated heir to the palace, the occasion may have been the impetus for a restoration and decoration of the family house that was noted in Faustino’s uncle’s will of 1557. For details, and additional discussion of the Barbo family in residence at the Casa Barbo in the mid-16th century, see Stefania Mason, “Tintoretto the Venetian,” in *Tintoretto: Artist of Renaissance Venice*, edited by Robert Echols and Frederick Ilchman, exh. cat., Palazzo Ducale, Venice; National Gallery of Art, Washington, New Haven, 2018: 36-61.

[2] The central painting in the cycle described by Ridolfi, *Allegory of the Dreams of Men* (Detroit Institute of Art), as well as another of the surrounding personifications of the Seasons, *Spring* (see note 1), were both previously in a collection in southern France. The Detroit painting was acquired from this unknown collection by the dealers Mont and Newhouse in 1957, and the Norfolk painting was acquired by Walter Chrysler from Newhouse Galleries in 1958. Mont frequently worked with the Newhouse Galleries, so it is very possible the NGA painting shares this provenance. (Information provided by Robert Echols, email of 11 June 2010, in NGA curatorial files.)

[3] Betty Mont wrote to Guy Emerson of the Kress Foundation on 5 November 1956 that they had "a splendid painting by Tintoretto" in their studio. The invoice from Frederick Mont & Company to the Kress Foundation, for four paintings including the Tintoretto (called "Allegorie of Summer"), is dated 14 February 1957; three payments for the group were completed in September of the same year. (Copies of the letter and invoice are in NGA curatorial files.)

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1960 Titian, Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese with a group of sixteenth-century Venetian drawings, Art Gallery of Toronto, 1960, no. 11, repro.

1994 Allegory of the Dreams of Men, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1994, no catalogue.

2007 Tintoretto, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, 2007, no. 6, repro.

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