

“*Maestra mia*”: Artemisia Gentileschi, Diana di Rosa and Women Artists within Seventeenth-Century Neapolitan Workshops

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Abstract

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This thesis examines the artists Artemisia Gentileschi and Diana di Rosa to re-evaluate the fortunes of female painters in Naples during the first half of the seventeenth century. Using the methodology termed “Thinking from Women’s Lives,” the thesis aims to analyze previously known archival evidence and to address gaps within it concerning the lives and artistic education of these two women, particularly their role in teaching their daughters to paint. The thesis then challenges the persistent attribution of paintings to single artists in the context of the Neapolitan workshop. Based on the reconstruction of a highly familial and consolidated Neapolitan workshop structure, it appears likely that larger, multi-figure paintings were completed by many more artists than just the individual artists named or the occasionally noted “workshop” suggests. Through this examination, the thesis points to evidence for a proliferation of female artists in seventeenth-century Naples whose historical presence has been rendered absent by the structure of the archive and art history’s longstanding investment in the single-authored painting. The thesis concludes by calling for expanding methodologies to highlight the work and lives of these women.

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In her novel *Artemisia*, art historian Lucia Lopresti (1895-1985), under the pseudonym of Anna Banti, features not only Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1656)¹, but a lesser-known woman painter in Naples, Diana di Rosa (1602-1643).² Lopresti features multiple interactions between the artists, portraying them as competitors before reflecting on their solidarity. The moment of solidarity occurs when Lopresti interprets one of Artemisia's works, the *Allegory of Painting* (Fig. 1), as Artemisia painting Diana di Rosa at work. While Artemisia paints, she recalls herself visiting Diana di Rosa in the workshop of Massimo Stanzione (1585-1656), where Diana is fervently painting. Later, Diana visits Artemisia at her home, where she states with reverence: "There are dozens of male painters, but only one woman painter, *Maestra mia*..."³

Lopresti wrote *Artemisia*, a work of historical "fiction," following the loss of the manuscript for her monograph on the artist, which built heavily on her research as an art historian. The novel has received mixed feedback from contemporary art historians due to liberties taken in interpreting Artemisia's life and art.⁴ Yet scholars such as Susanna Scarparo have stated that *Artemisia* is not a work of historical fiction: the act of rewriting a "nonfiction" manuscript as "fiction" is Lopresti rejecting the "clear-cut boundaries between the historical

All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

¹ The death date of Artemisia Gentileschi is not known for certain, as a death certificate or burial place has yet to be discovered. However, in 1656 a devastating plague would sweep through Naples, killing many of the artists discussed in this thesis. Therefore, for many artists such as Artemisia, their death is marked within the same year as the plague if no known documentation has emerged from after the date.

² Diana di Rosa is written about by Lopresti, and later biographer Bernardo De Dominici, as Annella di Rosa: a nickname for which there is evidence in inventories. Due to its conflation with another nickname, Annella di Massimo (Massimo's Annella) Diana di Rosa will be referred to as Diana throughout this thesis.

³ "Pittori ce n'è a dozzine, ma c'è una pittrice sola, Maestra mia," Anna Banti, *Artemisia* (Milano: Tascabili Bompiani, 1989), 179.

⁴ Examples include Mary Garrard and later Judith Mann, who would refer to the novel as part of the "delimiting framework" of Artemisia's historiography, "which plagues us still." Judith W. Mann, "Artemisia and Orazio Gentileschi," in *Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi*, eds. Keith Christiansen and Judith Mann (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 249; Mary Garrard, "Artemisia and Susanna," in *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany*, eds. Norma Broude and Mary Garrard (New York: Harper and Row, 1982): 171.

novel, autobiography, biography, and fiction.”⁵ Lopresti set out to reconstruct Artemisia’s life and art from her paintings and archival research, but the destruction of Lopresti’s manuscript led to the novel. The book does not merely narrate the life of Artemisia but operates as a performance of the challenges of historical reconstruction between the character of Artemisia and the art historian (the “narrator,” of the novel).

While the scene between Artemisia Gentileschi and Diana di Rosa is essential to the novel, the artists’ first interaction takes place at a reception for a patron, where Artemisia hosts many Neapolitan artists including Massimo Stanzione and Jusepe di Ribera (1591-1652) as well as Diana. Planning to impress everyone with her humility, Artemisia instead spends the party acting coldly to Diana, while telling other guests about how tragic it is that Diana’s husband beats her.⁶ Afterwards, as Artemisia lays in bed, she reflects on her actions as that of a lesser woman and imagines turning to two male onlookers at the party, and scolding them for their amusement:

Look at these women...two of the best, the strongest, who most resemble exemplary men. See how they have been driven to being false and disloyal to one another in the world that you have created for your use and pleasure. We are so few and so besieged that we can no longer recognize, understand or even respect one another as you men do.⁷

Here, Artemisia recognizes her own actions (and Lopresti’s writing) as a product of the patriarchal society which would pit Artemisia and Diana against one another, in their own lives

⁵ Susanna Scarparo, “‘Artemisia’: The Invention of a ‘Real’ Woman,” *Italica* 79, no. 3 (Autumn 2002): 365.

⁶ Banti, *Artemisia*, 97-99.

⁷“Vedete queste femmine...le migliori, le più forte quelle che più somigliano ai valentuomini: come son ridotte finite e sleali fra loro, nel mondo che voi avete creato, per vostro uso e comodità. Siamo così poche e insidiate che non sappiamo più riconoscerci e intenderci o almeno rispettarci come voi vi rispettate.” Translated by Shirley D’Ardia Caracciolo. Banti, *Artemisia*, 101; Anna Banti, *Artemisia*, trans. Shirley D’Ardia Caracciolo (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 107.

and afterlives. Later, Artemisia painting Diana into her *Allegory of Painting* rebels against the initial narrative, demonstrating Artemisia's remembrance of Diana, and Diana's respect for her true *Maestra*.

Lucia Lopresti's writing also undermines Artemisia's singularity, as the only woman painter, something which has been increasingly disproven throughout continuing scholarship. Despite this, the two women have rarely been considered in relation to one another as contemporary artists. When they do appear, they are often framed as competitors.⁸ While it is extraordinary to imagine the story of two women artists working alongside one another in Naples, there is evidence that they were far from alone.

The two women have very different historiographies. Artemisia Gentileschi has, particularly since the work of Lucia Lopresti and her husband Roberto Longhi, one of the largest historiographies among early modern woman artists.⁹ Three of the most recent works on Artemisia Gentileschi are Sheila Barker's monograph *Artemisia Gentileschi* (2022),¹⁰ the exhibition and catalog for *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli* (2022)¹¹ and *Artemisia Gentileschi and the Business of Art* (2024).¹² Specifically, *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli* is a catalog which aimed to uncover more about the artist's often neglected Neapolitan period, uncovering and

⁸ In *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*, Giuseppe Porzio introduces Diana di Rosa alongside Artemisia Gentileschi by designating her as a "concurrente," of the artist. Giuseppe Porzio, "Artemisia a Napoli. Notivà, problemi, prospettive," in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*, eds. Antonio Ernesto Denunzio and Giuseppe Porzio (Milan: Skira, 2022), 27.

⁹ Roberto Longhi would write about both Orazio Gentileschi, Artemisia's father, and Artemisia Gentileschi in his essay "Gentileschi: padre e figlia." Roberto Longhi, *Gentileschi: padre e figlia* (Milan: Abscondita, 2011).

¹⁰ Sheila Barker, *Artemisia Gentileschi* (Los Angeles: Getty Publishing, 2022).

¹¹ Antonio Ernesto Denunzio and Giuseppe Porzio, eds. *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli* (Milan: Skira, 2022).

¹² Christopher Marshall, *Artemisia Gentileschi and the Business of Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2024).

publishing archival sources with the hope of uncovering a “true” narrative of the artist’s activity.¹³

In contrast to the ample bibliography on Artemisia Gentileschi, the life and art of Diana di Rosa has only recently started to be examined. The oldest mention of the artist in art historical writing is the biography by Bernardo De Dominici (1683-1759), published in the mid-eighteenth century. Diana di Rosa would later be mentioned in survey works such as *Women Artists in All Ages and Countries* or other similar nineteenth- and twentieth-century sources, yet these simply reinforced the partly fictional tales of De Dominici.¹⁴ In the early twentieth century, archival discoveries made by Ulisse Prota-Giurleo¹⁵ and Roberto Longhi¹⁶ on prominent male artists of Naples yielded limited information on the life of Diana, dispelling some of De Dominici’s previous assessments. Beyond this, Diana has been mentioned in works on Artemisia Gentileschi,¹⁷ or on the Neapolitan school of Massimo Stanzione.¹⁸ Most recently, she was featured as an artist in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*, before the first monograph dedicated to her was written in 2023 by Giuseppe Porzio.¹⁹

¹³ “tuttavia noi siamo consapevoli che solo la ricerca archivistica consente di ristabilire la verità della narrazione,” Candida Carrino, “Introduzione,” in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*, eds. Antonio Ernesto Denunzio and Giuseppe Porzio (Milan: Skira, 2022), 15.

¹⁴ E. F. Ellet, *Women Artists in All Ages and Countries* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1859), 74-78.

¹⁵ Ulisse Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare di artisti napoletani del secolo XVII* (Naples: Rivista Municipale, 1952).

¹⁶ Longhi specifically references a painting which is no longer extant as bearing the initials of “ADR,” believed to stand for Annella di Rosa. However, scholars attest that the image of the now lost painting printed in the article does not show a clear monogram visible. Roberto Longhi “G. B. Spinelli e i naturalisti napoletani del Seicento,” *Paragone Arte* 20 (1969): 49; Giuseppe Porzio, *Diana di Rosa: “bellissima, onestissima, virtuosa dipintrice” nella Napoli del Seicento* (Naples: Porcini, 2023), 31, n. 50.

¹⁷ Often briefly, in reference to other painters in the Neapolitan arena with which Artemisia would have interacted. Riccardo Lattuada, “Unknown Paintings by Artemisia in Naples, and New Points Regarding her Daily Life and Bottega,” in *Artemisia Gentileschi in a Changing Light*, ed. Sheila Barker (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 206.

¹⁸ Thomas Willette, “La scuola stanzionesca,” in *Massimo Stanzione: L’opera complete* (Naples: Electa, 1992), 121-151; Achille de Ragione, *Massimo Stanzione e la sua scuola* (Naples: Napoli Arte, 2010).

¹⁹ Denunzio and Porzio, eds. *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*; Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*.

Many of the limits behind the historiography of Artemisia Gentileschi and Diana di Rosa in Naples have to do with the location itself. Following the destruction of her manuscript and loss of her original work, Lopresti was forced to turn to alternative methods of writing history: methods which, when designated as “fiction,” are misunderstood as not belonging to the category of “scholarship.” Yet Lopresti’s adaptation due to the loss of resources is analogous to the need for alternative methodologies for archival interpretation and art historical scholarship in Naples. The contemporary archives of the city have major gaps and omissions due to the historical circumstances of the city and region in the early seventeenth century (1600-1656) and subsequent periods.

In addition to gaps in the archive, scholars such as Giuseppe Porzio cite the reason for the lack of scholarship on Diana di Rosa being “the Southern question.”²⁰ The perception of Naples is often, as scholars such as Helen Hills have stressed, that the city has been constantly in flux, and while historical narratives attempt to simplify or define it, it remains a place of contradiction and conflict²¹ or a place of “missed opportunities.”²² These complexities are due to the political, social and environmental factors which create the lack of a complete Neapolitan archive, and consequently its fragmented and debated historiography. The region of Naples was subjected to French rule before its seizure in 1495 by Charles of Aragon, which initiated a long period of Spanish rule.²³ This created a de-centralized archive of textual and visual materials, which exist

²⁰ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 35.

²¹ This relates to many different perspectives on Naples as city, place, and time, its artistic styles and artists, its architecture, and many more. John Marino has also identified a list of the ten “contested” topics of Naples. For further information, see: Helen Hills, “Introduction: Directions to Baroque Naples,” *Open Arts Journal* 6 (Winter 2017-2018): 2; John A. Marino, “Constructing the Past of Early Modern Naples: Sources and Historiographies,” in *A Companion to Early Modern Naples*, ed. Tommaso Astarita (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 28.

²² For more, see: Anna Maria Rao, “‘Missed Opportunities,’ in the History of Naples,” in *New Approaches to Naples c. 1500-1800: The Power of Place*, eds. Melissa Calaresu and Helen Hills (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 203.

²³ Ronald G. Musto, “Introduction: Naples in Myth and History,” in *Naples*, eds. Marcia B. Hall and Thomas Willette (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 6.

in Naples, France, and Spain for the early modern period. Within this tumultuous political climate, the population of Naples grew exponentially under Spanish rule and its ruling class gained a great amount of wealth, in contrast with the incredible poverty and overcrowding of its residents.²⁴ These factors, among many others, led to the Revolt of Masaniello in 1647, when a Neapolitan fishmonger named Tommaso Aniello led a working-class revolt against the Spanish viceroyalty in response to years of excessive taxes and misgoverning.²⁵

Finally, against the background of political discord, the region's three major volcanoes—Mount Vesuvius, Ischia, and Campi Flegrei—have created a history rife with natural disasters. Eruptions and earthquakes have destroyed or dislocated assorted paintings and archival documents. Likewise, the bombing of the city during World War II and later raiding and destruction of the archives destroyed many documents, a parallel to Lucia Lopresti sitting in the ruins of Florence, mourning the loss of her manuscript.²⁶ This lack of a cohesive archive and negative historical perceptions of the city have created a difficult area for research—something even more challenging when attempting to uncover women artists.

This thesis interrogates archival documents and a number of paintings by Artemisia Gentileschi and Diana di Rosa with a methodology termed “Thinking from Women’s Lives.” The name of this methodology comes from a theoretical approach to feminist epistemology established by sociologist Sandra Harding, who argued that the attempted insertion of women into bodies of knowledge which have been developed to omit them is a nearly impossible endeavor.²⁷ “Thinking from Women’s Lives” is a more productive way to not only highlight

²⁴ Musto, “Introduction,” 8.

²⁵ Marshall, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 151-152.

²⁶ Marino, “Constructing the Past of Early Modern Naples,” 18.

²⁷ Sandra G. Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women’s Lives* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 113.

women's lives but also the experience of all people throughout history. Harding made several key points, including arguing that women's perspectives offer a more precise view of everyday life, which in the present context will serve to create a more accurate historical narrative of the production of art and the life of all artists in early modern Naples.²⁸

Harding's approach, while interdisciplinary, is highly theoretical, yet the points which she makes echo the central issues of feminist art history. In her 1993 article on Italian composer and singer Francesca Caccini, Suzanne Cusick uses Harding's approach in relation to archival documents in order to challenge a period biography that reported Caccini's death several years prior to her actual death.²⁹ Cusick outlines Harding's approach as one which allows her to "read with different eyes the sources others have read before me, to ask different questions of traditional archive sources, and thus to find some answers."³⁰ My thesis aims to approach existing archival sources and gaps using this methodology, acknowledging that while the life, work, and production of women may be absent from the archive, their opportunities and education were not as inaccessible or uncommon as has often been maintained.

Recent scholarship such as Babette Bohn's groundbreaking *Women Artists, Their Patrons, and Their Publics in Early Modern Bologna* has emphasized that in places such as Bologna, the proliferation of women artists was significant.³¹ This work has been continued in exhibitions such as *Roma Pittrice*, whose archival discoveries spotlight a significant number of women artists within Rome.³² Here, the scholarship has begun the work of creating non-

²⁸ Harding, *Whose Science?*, 128-130.

²⁹ Suzanne Cusick, "Thinking from Women's Lives': Francesca Caccini after 1627," *The Musical Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (Autumn 1993): 484-507.

³⁰ Cusick, "Thinking from Women's Lives," 486.

³¹ Babette Bohn, *Women Artists, Their Patrons, and Their Publics in Early Modern Bologna* (State College: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021).

³² Ilaria Miarelli Mariani and Raffaella Morselli, eds., *Roma Pittrice: Artiste al lavoro tra XVI e XIX secolo* (Roma: Officina libraria, 2024).

monographic art historical studies for women artists, resisting the idea of the singular woman artist which itself serves to reinforce patriarchal narratives. Paris Spies-Gans has recently argued against the narrative of exceptionalism, emphasizing that the barriers to women artists were often, or entirely, permeable, and that while seeking to insert women into the art historical canon we reinforce the problems of the canon which made this difficult in the first place.³³ Her argument echoes that of Harding, insisting that the largest problems for feminist epistemology lie in the perception of “barriers” for women, which often were overcome not just by the exceptional individual but many women artists.

Considering this approach, this thesis uses two women artists, Artemisia Gentileschi and Diana di Rosa, to examine how to re-evaluate and re-interpret existing archival documents and works for these artists. In doing so, I am arguing for the presence of other women artists in Naples, who currently lack extant archival documents or paintings which “prove” their activity, and I am advocating for the continuing of work around these gaps to highlight the significant number of women artists in Naples. First, I will present the familial structure of the Neapolitan workshops, something which exists in other cities such as Venice, but whose expansion in Naples allowed for many women artists to operate in areas largely absent from the historical archive.³⁴ Scholars have noted a lack of women artists in Naples, which is currently believed to be the city with the fewest women artists on the Italian peninsula in the seventeenth century. It has been

³³ Paris Spies-Gans, “Why Do We Think There Have Been No Great Women Artists? Revisiting Linda Nochlin and the Archive,” *Art Bulletin* 104, no. 4 (November 2022): 70-94.

³⁴ The volume *Women Artists in Venice and the Veneto* examines this well, particularly Chapter 5, which highlights how women artists worked heavily within their own families, however the surviving documents do not reflect the women’s contribution to the work. Maria Adank, “Artists and Artisans in the Account Books of Marino Grimani, Patrician and Doge of Venice (Late Sixteenth-Early Seventeenth Centuries),” in *Women Artists and Artisans in Venice and the Veneto, 1400-1750: Uncovering the Female Presence*, ed. Tracy E. Cooper (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2024), 111-136.

suggested that this was due to the inability of women to study art outside of their families.³⁵ I argue instead that there was in fact little need for women to study outside the home. Women artists in Naples operated in deeply intertwined familial workshops, creating a unique overlap of the traditional domestic space and the workshop. By reexamining archival documents which relate to the lives of Diana di Rosa, Artemisia Gentileschi, and their families, another picture emerges regarding Diana di Rosa's artistic education, and Diana and Artemisia's training of their daughters in painting, one that refutes the traditional narrative of the need for a male family artist to offer artistic education. Next, I intend to revisit the attribution debates that have characterized much scholarship on Neapolitan painting, arguing for a re-examination of larger, public artworks as heavily collaborative endeavors that represent the work of many hands, named and unnamed, in the workshop. The overlap of the workshop and home led to multiple artists, men and women, contributing to larger collaborative commissions, while the archival record and the later art historiography report only a single name, in accordance with the longstanding art historical practice which, while often aligned with historical convention, will be challenged throughout this thesis. In doing so, I hope to not only offer new insights to the scholarship on Artemisia Gentileschi and Diana di Rosa as individuals but also to point to the existence of a greater number of women artists in Naples whom we might incorporate into art history through more expansive methodological approaches.

Teacher or Parent? Family Connections within Neapolitan Workshops

Arguably the largest source of information within the historiography for the lives of artists in Baroque Naples comes from the Neapolitan artistic biographer Bernardo De Dominici.

³⁵ Babette Bohn, "La Serenissima in Context: Women Artists in Venice and Beyond," in *Women Artists and Artisans in Venice and the Veneto, 1400-1750: Uncovering the Female Presence*, ed. Tracy E. Cooper (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2024), 31.

First published in three volumes between 1742-1745, the *Vite dei pittori, scultori e architetti napoletani* serves as a written record of Neapolitan artists.³⁶ While art historians recognize the heavily anecdotal and often outright fictional stories created by De Dominici, scholars continue to grapple with how best to make use of his half-truths, generally opting to either believe his statements completely or ignore them outright, depending on often limited corroborating evidence. Among the many artists in this book, Diana di Rosa is one of only three women artists to have a full biography, the others being Mariangela Criscuolo and Luisa Capamozza.³⁷ Artemisia Gentileschi, a non-Neapolitan painter, is repeatedly mentioned in the lives of artists such as Bernardo Cavallino, Onofrio Palombo, Massimo Stanzione, and Domenico Gargiulo.³⁸ For the biographies of these women and the artists of the early seventeenth century, De Dominici relied heavily on a manuscript supposedly written by painter Massimo Stanzione, contributing to a view of the period centered around Stanzione and his workshop.³⁹

In Diana di Rosa's biography, De Dominici describes many points regarding her life and artworks, on which her early reputation and limited historiography are based. These include her training, and several works of art—many of which are credited not only to her hand, but that of Stanzione.⁴⁰ The most infamous anecdote is her death at the hand of her jealous husband

³⁶ Artists from as early as antiquity are discussed, leading up to the 18th century during which De Dominici claims to have personally known painters such as Paolo de Matteis and Francesco Solimena. Andrea Zezza, *Bernardo De Dominici e le vite degli artisti napoletani: genial imbroglione o conoscitore rigoroso?* (Milan: Officina Libraria, 2017), 18, 64.

³⁷ Bernardo De Dominici, *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletani*, eds. Fiorella Sricchia Santoro and Andrea Zezza (Napoli: Artstudio Paparo, 2017) 2: 835-839, 3: 169-174.

³⁸ De'Dominici, *Vite*, 2: 895, 1017-1018, 3: 64, 84, 384.

³⁹ This document is supposedly a manuscript by Massimo Stanzione called "Vite e Memorie" and was provided to him by Niccolo Marigliano, a student of Giuseppe Marullo, who was a student of Stanzione. Zezza, *Bernardo De Dominici*, 70-71.

⁴⁰ "ed altri lo dicono di Annella sua moglie ritoccato dal Massimo" De'Dominici, *Vite*, 3:188; "Una S. Agata di nove palmi e sette...e figurate di mano di Diannella, retoccata per mano di Massimo," as listed in an inventory of Giuseppe Carafa c. 1648. Gerard Laborit and Antonio Delfino, *Italian Inventories I: Collections of Paintings in Naples*, eds. Carol Togneri Dowd and Anna Cera Sones (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1992), 76.

Agostino Beltrano, an episode which was greatly dramatized, becoming the subject of later plays, writings and paintings.⁴¹ Nevertheless, many scholars dismiss this tale outright, citing her death certificate, which while not explicitly stating the cause of death, suggests illness.⁴²

While scholars such as Julia K. Dabbs have examined the implications of this anecdote, this thesis instead aims to challenge our perception of two other aspects of De Dominici's story.⁴³ First is his assessment of how Diana di Rosa learned how to paint, and how this relates to ideas concerning the education of Neapolitan artists. The second is the identification of Diana di Rosa's students, which despite the unreliability of the biographer, proves illuminating to establish Diana di Rosa as a teacher and to subsequently examine Artemisia Gentileschi's education of her daughter, Prudenzia.

To be read alongside De Dominici's *Vite* is a group of archival documents found in Naples, specifically those published by Ulisse Prota-Giurleo in *Un complesso familiare di artisti napoletani del Seicento*, which offered one of the first views into the artists' quarter whose workshop connections were strengthened through familial ties.⁴⁴ The book focuses on the male figures within the family, including Tommaso de Rosa, Cesare and Marcello Marullo, Filippo Vitale, and later generations—most artists who, according to De Dominici, were followers of Massimo Stanzione.⁴⁵ The residences of these artists were in the “Quartiere della Carita,”

⁴¹ De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 191; For an overview on the afterlives of Diana di Rosa, see: Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 15-20.

⁴² While, as some scholars point out, there is no confirmation that Diana died from in her own bed from illness, her death certificate reveals the presence of confessors which suggest a death unlike the brutal sudden violence proposed by De Dominici. Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 9; Willette, “La scuola stanzionesca,” 124.

⁴³ Julia K. Dabbs, “Sex, Lies and Anecdotes: Gender Relations in the Life Stories of Italian Women Artists, 1550-1800,” *Aurora: The Journal of the History of Art* 6 (2005): 17-37; Julia K. Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists 1550-1800: An Anthology* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 239-241.

⁴⁴ It is important to note that scholars such as Zezza see the scholarship of Prota-Giurleo as that which entirely resists the work of De Dominici, by uncovering archival documents to prove his falsities. Zezza, *Bernardo De Dominici*, 55; Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*.

⁴⁵ Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 3-12.

centered around the Piazza della Carita and Monastero del Monteoliveto, with connection to Via Toledo, a central business street of Naples.⁴⁶ Within this quarter, artists and artisans would marry their sons and daughters to other families, consolidating the workshops, and creating a family tree where nearly every artist was somehow connected to another, either via intermarriage, as godparents, or as legal witnesses to professional and personal contracts.⁴⁷ These connections consolidated commissions, kept business from competitors, and created a central location for art dealing.⁴⁸ Despite its exclusivity, it is important to note that this quarter was not impenetrable to those from outside of it, or the city—for example, the Spaniard Juan (Giovanni) Dò was an apprentice of Jusepe di Ribera and was born in Valencia, Spain before moving to Naples in 1623. In January 1626, Juan Dò married Maria Grazia de Rosa (daughter of Tommaso de Rosa, sister of Diana and Pacecco de Rosa). The marriage would be witnessed by Giambattista Caracciolo and Jusepe di Ribera.⁴⁹ These familial connections support the idea of the consolidation of artists while also demonstrating a more intricate history of Naples, where the dichotomies of Stanzone and Ribera’s physical workshops or artistic styles may not be as separate as the historiography once believed.

The familial structure of workshops in Naples therefore created a space which blurred the lines between the home and the business—something noted by art historians such as Marshall.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ When Artemisia moved to the city, she would live nearby, renting multiple residences during her time in Naples, near the Church of Santa Maria del Consiglio and Church of Santa Maria di Montecalvio. Christopher Marshall, *Baroque Naples and the Industry of Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 13; Luigi Abetti, “Appendice B,” in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*, eds. Antonio Ernesto Denunzio and Giuseppe Porzio (Milan: Skira, 2022), 101.

⁴⁷ This family tree includes not only painters but also other artisans such as gilders. For example, several painters I will discuss, Agostino Beltrano, Fillippo Vitale, and Aniello Falcone, were all sons of gilders who were apprenticed and later became painters. Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 6.

⁴⁸ Marshall, *Baroque Naples*, 13.

⁴⁹ Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 8.

⁵⁰ Marshall interprets these connections largely through the lens of creating more tightly intertwined business dealings and alliances – and consequently, how failed marriages can result in loss of commissions. For anecdotes and further information, see: Marshall, *Baroque Naples*, 15-16.

What is underexamined, however, is how a consolidation of workshops, and the consequent overlapping of many artists and the physical space which they occupied, greatly disrupts common narratives in the historiography of early modern Italian art. Biographers such as De Dominici shaped narratives which prize individual artistic genius—hence a Neapolitan historiography centering around Stanzione and the creation of apocryphal legends for artists such as Diana di Rosa. Linda Nochlin famously critiqued this concept, noting the ideation of the male genius as an impediment for the creation of great women artists.⁵¹ Traditions such as De Dominici’s have supported a historiography of early seventeenth century Naples which centers works of scholarship around individual artists, while factoring in vague assumptions of artistic influence from their family members.⁵² The artists explored throughout this thesis—including not only Diana di Rosa and Artemisia Gentileschi, but artists such as Agostino Beltrano and Pacecco de Rosa—are mostly examined as autonomous artists or as students and workers within Stanzione’s workshop.⁵³ Painters were likely both independent workers and affiliates of a large workshop; however, as will later be explored in this thesis, we must reconsider the production of paintings, specifically larger, multi-figure commissions, as heavily collaborative efforts, whose authorship was not limited to a single artist. This thesis does not aim to identify, through connoisseurship or any related methodologies, every artist who contributed to each painting, but it does aim to disrupt the single-artist canon, recognizing the school and workshop structure established by De Dominici as less hierarchical and more collaborative, and encouraging a less

⁵¹ Linda Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists? (1971)” in *Women, Art and Power and Other Essays*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988), 155-158.

⁵² Immediate examples include Diana di Rosa’s receiving influence from Filippo Vitale and Agostino Beltrano, Pacecco de Rosa accepting the influence of Filippo Vitale, Massimo Stanzione, and Andrea Vaccaro, the influence of Bernardo Cavallino, Massimo Stanzione and Onofrio Palombo on Artemisia Gentileschi (and vice versa), and many more. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 31-35; Vincenzo Pacelli, *Giovan Francesco de Rosa detto Pacecco de Rosa* (Napoli: Paparo Edizioni, 2008), 19, 33, 53, 65; Porzio, “Artemisia a Napoli,” 29-39.

⁵³ Marshall, *Baroque Naples*, 48-49; Willette, “La scuola stanzionesca,” 121.

monographic view of Neapolitan Seicento painting. Finally, we will examine how the artistic connections defined by De Dominici often derived from the familial connections the artists had with one another; terms such as teacher most often also meant parent.

This structure, while involving legal contracts and formal agreements, created a space for interaction and collaboration not recorded in archival materials. It is within these spaces that women artists suffered historiographical neglect, as the blurring between the home and workshop allowed greater responsibilities within their family's artistic production, ranging from the work of a workshop assistant—grinding pigments and preparing canvases—to artistic education of the younger children, to making smaller paintings. Women are not completely absent from the archive—in fact, alongside documents pertaining to Diana di Rosa, we have numerous inventory records of additional women artists, some known and some unknown, and their apprenticeships.⁵⁴ However, through the methodology of “Thinking From Women’s Lives,” and careful parsing of the insights given to us by De Dominici, we may uncover even more evidence for the organization of Neapolitan workshops during the early 17th century, and women’s roles—both spoken and unspoken—within them.

⁵⁴A document, published by Prota-Giurleo as a way of documenting the arrival of painter Tommaso de Rosa (father of Diana and Pacecco di Rosa) in Naples, demonstrates one such example which took place on May 28, 1591. This document outlines the apprenticeship of the fifteen-year-old Giulia Piccardo, daughter of Cassiodoro Piccardo, to Flemish painter Wensel Cobergher. With a lack of additional information about those involved, it is unknown who the given artist or artisan, as well as apprentice were: however, the language, which contracts Giulia to serve Wensel for six years, does imply some type of formal apprenticeship. In addition to this, there are numerous women to be found in inventories of 17th century Naples alone, both established painters, and lesser-known names such as Giovanna Garzoni, Mariangela de Mattesi, Teresa del Po, Elena Recco, and more. Prota-Giurleo, *Complesso familiare*, 3; Laborit and Delfino, *Italian Inventories I: Collections of Paintings in Naples*, 80, 102, 374-375, 284-287, 315-325.

The Artistic Training of Diana di Rosa and Her Students

The entangled web of familial ties outlined by Prota-Giurleo is one in which Diana di Rosa was deeply enmeshed. She was born to the painter Tommaso de Rosa (1570-1610)⁵⁵ and Caterina de Mauro (1582-1654), who was the sister of the painters Marcello and Cesare de Mauro.⁵⁶ Diana had three other siblings: Gian Luca (who would die as an infant), Lucrezia (1600-1656), Maria Grazia (1605-1656), and Giovanni Francesco, or Pacecco de Rosa (1607-1656).⁵⁷ Tommaso de Rosa would die in 1612, and Caterina de Mauro remarried the painter Filippo Vitale (1585-1650), who was the son of a Neapolitan gilder, but was apprenticed as a painter to Carlo Selitto (1581-1614).⁵⁸

Bernardo De Dominici's account of Diana di Rosa's artistic training states that she first began her education under her brother, Pacecco de Rosa, who De Dominici mistakenly identifies as Diana's uncle. Having learned how to "draw the first elements" from Pacecco, Diana caught the attention of Massimo Stanzione, who wanted her as his student.⁵⁹ From there, Diana would remain in Stanzione's workshop until her death in 1643.⁶⁰ This entire narrative is highly unlikely, given the existing archival evidence and the fact that Diana was five years older than her brother.

While many dismiss De Dominici outright, he wasn't completely incorrect: De Dominici's misidentification of Pacecco as Diana's uncle is due to the fact that Diana worked with her uncle

⁵⁵ Tommaso de Rosa was originally from Campagna d'Eboli, although he would be in Naples as early as 1591. Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 3.

⁵⁶ Caterina's sister, Isabella de Mauro, would marry painter Gaspare del Popolo. Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 3-4.

⁵⁷ Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 4.

⁵⁸ Brigitte Daprà, Denise Pagano, Lilia Rocco, et. al, "Biografie," in *Il secolo d'oro della pittura napoletana: da Battistello a Luca Giordano, pittori del seicento nei musei di Napoli*, ed. Elio de Rosa (Napoli: Il Mattino, 1994), 33-34.

⁵⁹ "disegnò i primi elementi," De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 187.

⁶⁰ De Dominici, *Vite*, 3:187.

Gaspare del Popolo (husband of Caterina de Mauro's sister, Isabella de Mauro) at the age of eighteen.⁶¹ Most art historians see De Dominici's tale as a complete falsehood and instead cite Gaspare as Diana's earliest teacher.⁶² However, as Prota-Giurleo stated while discussing the training of Diana and Pacecco, both children likely learned how to paint and draw from their stepfather, Filippo Vitale, as there "was no need to leave the house to learn."⁶³ A more likely interpretation of the apprenticeship documents informed by the integrated workshop practices of Naples reinforces Prota-Giurleo's insight that the earliest artistic training of Diana di Rosa took place in the workshop of Tommaso de Rosa, and later Filippo Vitale, before taking on a more formal role for her uncle, Gaspare del Popolo.

The document cited as an "apprenticeship"⁶⁴ or "advanced junior apprenticeship"⁶⁵ details that Diana di Rosa, age nineteen, promises "her works and services" to Gaspare de Popolo to serve him in "his art of painting."⁶⁶ During a period of three years, she was not allowed to marry or enter a convent, but she was given housing, food, clothing, and an annual salary of one hundred and fifty ducats.⁶⁷ The language of this contract is standard but Diana's age and salary are significant departures from other period apprenticeship contracts.

⁶¹ Gaspare del Popolo was first apprenticed to Tommaso de Rosa, as revealed by the contract published by Prota-Giurleo. He would later marry Isabella de Mauro, the sister of his master's wife, becoming a brother-in-law to Caterina de Mauro and Tommaso de Rosa. He remains an artist for whom we have few current artworks, and someone that De Dominici never identifies. This is interesting, given his prominence in several archival documents surrounding the family and Neapolitan artists during the 17th century. Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 4; Francesca Sebastiani, "Una tela poco conosciuta di Gaspare De Populo (1618) a Turi," in *Interventi sulla "questione meridionale*, ed. Francesco Abbate (Rome: Donzelli, 2005): 173-174; Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 21, 97

⁶² Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 21.

⁶³ "non c'era bisogno di uscir di casa per imparare." Prota-Giurleo, *Un complesso familiare*, 8.

⁶⁴ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 97.

⁶⁵ Marshall, *Baroque Naples*, 14.

⁶⁶ "opera et servitia sue persone...in eius arte pictoris." Document Number 4, November 23, 1621. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 97.

⁶⁷ Document Number 4, November 23, 1621. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 97.

We can examine Diana's unique contract further through a comparison of the contract of Agostino Beltrano (1607-1656) to Gaspare del Popolo. Agostino Beltrano would later marry Diana di Rosa, a marriage which was likely facilitated by Gaspare, who would assist in funding the dowry for his niece.⁶⁸ The given contract is between Francesco Beltrano, Agostino's father, and Gaspare del Popolo, as Agostino was only fourteen years old in 1621. Instead of a three-year contract, Agostino is contracted for six years and will serve Gaspare in return for housing, food, and clothing.⁶⁹ There is no salary in this contract, reflecting the more standard practice of the time—the younger age of Agostino, a longer period, and the exchange of work for only housing, food and basic needs.

The contrast between Diana's contract with Gaspare and Agostino's contract demonstrates that what is often referred to as Diana's "apprenticeship" was less an initial training and more of a work opportunity. Having developed her talent in painting, possibly with her father Tommaso de Rosa, but more likely with Filippo Vitale, Diana was entrusted to Gaspare once she came of age. Documents demonstrate that Diana and Gaspare's relationship transcended their trade, given that Gaspare would write Diana into his will two years later,⁷⁰ act as her guardian in her wedding, and contribute 200 ducats to her dowry.⁷¹ Following the marriage of Agostino and

⁶⁸ Document Number 6, January 20, 1626. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 98.

⁶⁹ Document Number 3, January 9, 1621. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 96-97.

⁷⁰ In this will, Diana is given 50 ducats upon his death, and 50 ducats later for "per lo ben servire." It is later instructed for her to be given 10 ducats a year until her own death. Document Number 5, August 10, 1623. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 98.

⁷¹ It is important to note that Prota-Giurleo identifies Filippo Vitale as a contributor to Diana's dowry as well, although it is unclear where this is demonstrated in the contract itself. The provisions made for Gaspare's contribution are explicit, however there seems to be no mention of the name of Vitale. In the marriage agreement, the money of Diana's dowry is highly regulated, requiring it to be spent in ways which are for the care of Diana herself, and if the marriage should be dissolved, the dowry in question is to be paid back to Diana. There is another document, following Diana's death, which details the highly specific ways in which the children of Diana and Agostino should be provided for financially, due to Diana's acknowledged monetary income which contributed to the family's total income. Do these two documents operate within the normal legal practices of the day, or do they demonstrate more agency given to Diana, and likewise, a level of economic mistrust to Agostino by those around

Diana, the couple would again be contracted to work for Gaspare del Popolo for five years, in return for a salary, housing, food, and a provision for illnesses or medical leave.⁷² The contracts between Diana and Gaspare, and later Diana and Agostino with Gaspare, defy the traditional apprenticeship and should be read as documents which advocate for the presence of multiple autonomous artists in the same workshop, collaborating on the same paintings. In this arrangement in which Diana and Agostino were given a salary, payments would be made only to Gaspare del Popolo for the paintings, but he was rarely the only one executing them.

In support of my argument regarding Diana's artistic training, there is a key painting to note: the *Saint Cecilia* (Fig. 2) recently acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. This painting is signed (Fig. 3) nearly illegibly by the artist, with a text often agreed to read "Io, Diana di Rosa/Sor di Giovanni." Giovanni is believed to refer to her brother Pacecco de Rosa, whose full name is Giovanni Francesco. In his book on Diana di Rosa, Giuseppe Porzio reads this signature as a definitive declaration from the artist, proving that her brother was her most influential artistic source and educator.⁷³ However, in regards to the interpretation which Porzio champions, one in which Diana views her brother as her peer or teacher in the early workshop and references him to identify her training and associations, a visual analysis of this painting suggests an alternate interpretation.

As the saint sits on the chair in front of her organ, a smaller figure, barely reaching above her waist, stands at the foot of her chair. A tiny angel, whose soft skin is painted with strokes of overlapping yellow, white, and brown and has a soft blush which passes over its nose and onto

him? Document Number 6, January 20, 1626 and Document Number 27, January 7, 1644. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 98-101, 109-112.

⁷² This leave is what Porzio identifies as a form of maternal leave for Diana. Document Number 8, November 8, 1627. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa* 101-103.

⁷³ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 35.

its rounded cheeks. Its hair is blond and short, with visible strokes of color which lead down to the silky yet tight curls surrounding the base of its neck. On its back, the colors of its skin and their vertical strokes fade into a palette of darker grays and whites, as the illusion of smooth skin becomes the texture of feathered wings. On the rest of the body, strategic shadows and lines become folds of skin, as Diana emphasizes a youthful fleshiness.

While a first glance of the painting sees this figure as a heavenly messenger delivering the next sheet of music with a different composition of notes and illegible lyrics, Diana has seated her angel directly below the Saint. While Saint Cecilia does not acknowledge its presence, the traditional attributes of the *putto*—its soft, curled hair, wings, and fleshy figure—shift into a young child, standing at their mother's feet. When we examine the figures alongside one another, the left hand of the angel holds the music, but its right remains pointed to the sky, its thumb pulled slightly into its palm while its fingers become an exact imitation of the Saint's. This child watches their mother's prayerful and artistic actions and imitates them exactly. The child's eyes gaze upwards, making studious contact not with Cecilia's face, but with her left hand, while it carefully matches its hand to capture the same positioning. In a moment of the prayer for the saint, the viewer watches as the young angel takes a lesson: a lesson which can be understood as the saint's prayer, her voice, her actions, or the art itself, as a way of educating a young child through imitation.

This depiction of imitation in Diana di Rosa's *Saint Cecilia* figures a possible scenario of early artistic training at a young age—a method of observation and imitation, as young children observe their elders at work. Instead of this painting representing Pacecco as the artistic educator, or at least peer, of Diana, as many scholars have suggested, an attentive visual reading reveals the education of a young child. This context presents this signature not as the identification of the

women artist through her often more visible or well-known male peer, but instead as Diana's assertion of her place as a role model and teacher in the workshop where her younger brother, the now well-known artist, learned from her guidance.

De Dominici and archival sources provide us with further evidence which supports Diana di Rosa's role as an artistic teacher. Artistic education and heritage were a central feature of the biographies of artists in the early modern world, and De Dominici's *Vite* was certainly no exception. In fact, scholars believe that the documentation of artistic academies in Naples was a key motivation of De Dominici's writing.⁷⁴ However, instead of the formal academies and discipleship which De Dominici aimed to form, Neapolitan painting heavily relied on the familial connections of artists, resulting in both formal and informal apprenticeships.

De Dominici specifies that Diana di Rosa had several students and was a very talented teacher.⁷⁵ He identifies two of her students:

Catarina, who painted various devotional figures in oil, but never exhibited them in public....[and] the other [who] became a nun and applied herself to miniatures, making diverse little figurative scenes in the middle of garlands of flowers, painted by the young Giuseppe Recco.⁷⁶ This [latter] one survived the plague of 1656, but the other was taken in the prime of her life and her work.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Zezza, *Bernardo De Dominici*, 25.

⁷⁵ Mariangela Criscuolo is credited as an artistic teacher for men and women as well and potentially even the teacher of the artist Luisa Capamozza. De Dominici, *Vite*, 2: 839.

⁷⁶ While still-life painting is typically a subject matter ascribed more to female painters, the idea that this student painted with Giuseppe Recco, and the larger context of still-life painting in Naples, is less gendered and more prominent than other Italian cities of the period. For an introduction of the financial fortunes and market of still-life painting in Naples, see: Christopher R. Marshall, "More Beautiful than Life Itself": The Early Commercial and Critical Fortunes of Neapolitan Baroque Still-Life Painting," *Open Arts Journal* 6 (Winter 2017/18): 130-145.

⁷⁷ "Due solamente con la di lei direzione fecero qualche profitto, una chiamata Catarina, la quale dipinse ad olio varie figure devote, ma non espose nulla in pubblico, l'atra si monacò, e attese alla miniatura, facendo diverse istoriette in mezzo ad alcune ghirlande di fiori, che dipingeva Giuseppe Recco allor giovane." English translation by Julia K. Dabbs. De Dominici, *Vite*, 3:189; Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists*, 244.

Neither of these students have been identified. Despite this, with our knowledge that apprenticeships and education often took place within the family, documents pertaining to the children of Diana di Rosa and Agostino Beltrano may offer some insight.

Diana di Rosa and Agostino Beltrano had six children throughout the course of their marriage but would raise seven children together. This includes the first daughter, Agatha Orsola Beltrano whose birth certificate lists the mother of the child as Vittoria Grausa, Agostino Beltrano's mother, meaning that the mother of Agatha likely remained anonymous.⁷⁸ This is likely not a transcription error of the document either, because in Agatha's monastic vows to the Monastero di San Giovanni Battista, the parents of Agatha as written in her baptismal certificate are identified again as Agostino Beltrano and Vittoria Grausa.⁷⁹ While Agatha was most likely simply born out of wedlock, those same monastic vows attest to her life and artistic training, where she was raised as the daughter of Agostino Beltrano and Diana di Rosa.

In a paragraph within the vows describing Agatha's childhood, it states that spouses Agostino Beltrano and Diana di Rosa have lived together in a house within the *ottina*, or district, of Santa Maria Donnalbina, and that they have a daughter named Agatha Beltrano.⁸⁰ Separate

⁷⁸ "A di detto [*sc.* 15 January 1628] per me sudetto curato [*sc.* Vincenzo Amalfitano] fu baptizzata Agata Ursola figlia d'Agostino Balarano [*sic.*] et Vittoria Grassa [*sic.*]" The transcriber acknowledges the misspelling of Vittoria Grausa (written as Grassa), but aside from this, the parentage of Agata is never acknowledged in the book where it is printed. As such, whether this is a transcription error, and Diana di Rosa, or another woman, is the mother of Agatha is unsure. However, it is unlikely to be a transcription error, as it reappears in later documents pertaining to Agatha Orsola. Document Number 10, January 15, 1628. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 103, 108.

⁷⁹ "per me sudetto curato fu battiza Agata Orsola figlia di Agostino Balorano [*sic.*] et Vittoria Grassa [*sic.*]" Two other times in this document she is identified as a "daughter of," and both times, only Agostino is named - "figlia di Augustinello [*sic.*]," and "figlia di Agostino Basorano [*sic.*]." Document Number 25, September 19-October 7, 1643. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 108-09.

⁸⁰ "Si fa fede per noi sottoscritti capitanei conplateari dell'ottina di Santa Maria Don Alvino [Donnalbina] a chi la presente spetta o sarà quaomodolibet presentata qualmente in detta nostra ottina per molto tempo hanno habitato Agostino Beltrano et Diana di Rosa coniugi," This is followed up by the phrase "li quali hanno una loro figliola nomine Agatella Beltrano d'anni quindici incirca," which only serves to further complicate the identification of Agata's mother. This thesis does not seek to answer this, however. Document Number 25, September 19-October 7, 1643. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 108.

records from 1637-1638 attest to this, showing Agostino paying rent to the nearby Monastery of Monteoliveto, within the artist's quarter and the *ottina* of Santa Maria Donnalbina.⁸¹ Later in the vows, after listing the house of Agatha and identifying her as a having a “good life and morals,”⁸² there are the signatures of members of this *ottina*: a list of about seventeen names, most notable being Massimo Stanzione, Filippo Vitale (Diana's step-father), Juan Dó (husband of Maria Grazia, Diana's sister), and Aniello Falcone (husband of Orsola Vitale, Diana's step-sister).⁸³ The names and location listed within the paragraph assure us that not only was the young Agatha raised as the daughter of Agostino Beltrano and Diana di Rosa, but she and her family lived close to and interacted with the most prominent Neapolitan painters of the time, so much so that they could attest to her personal character.

The circumstances of Agatha's life and her entrance into the convent reminds us of the second student of Diana's identified by De Dominicis—a nun with no name, who painted figurative miniatures within garlands executed by the young Giuseppe Recco. This information creates a tenuous base for an argument, but as I will suggest later, evidence regarding the other student, “Catarina,” makes Agatha's identification as one of Diana di Rosa's students appear likely. In his monograph on Diana di Rosa, Giuseppe Porzio includes a footnote which describes the daughter of Agostino Beltrano and Diana di Rosa, Cristina Beltrano, as having extant paintings, although of dubious quality.⁸⁴ While the footnote only discusses a *Holy Family with Saint Anne and Saint Joachim*, there are four paintings that can be found on the Catalogo

⁸¹ The house is identified as “casa di Corcione.” Document Number 20, August 7, 1637. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 106.

⁸² “sua bona vita et costume,” Document Number 25, September 19-October 7, 1643. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 108.

⁸³ The names selected here demonstrate the consolidation of painters, who were either or both connected to the family, as well as living and interacting with the family regularly. Dr. Carlo Corcione, likely the owner of the house where the family lives (identified as “casa di Corcione” in separate documents), is included, and additional names such as Carlo Vitale (likely the brother of Filippo, and great-uncle to Agatha). Document Number 25, September 19-October 7, 1643. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 108.

⁸⁴ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 25, n. 34.

Generale dei Beni Culturali website, each signed and dated between 1681-1695. The earliest of these works, a *Praying Madonna* (Fig. 4), was logged in 1980 in the Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista and is reported as being signed and dated on the back of the canvas “Cristina/Beltrano/P. 1681.”⁸⁵ This oil painting measures 36 x 47 cm. It is unknown if this painting remains in its given location, although a color photograph of it from 2005 shows the canvas in disrepair. Nevertheless, the Madonna can still be seen, her chest facing the lower left corner of the canvas, wearing a vibrant red dress, as her head bows and her fingertips meet in prayer. The details and lines on the face of the Madonna are lightened, as a sharp nose and brow line is juxtaposed with a soft round eyelid, a brush of pink on her cheeks, and soft red lips. Her hair is long and curly under the veil, and frames her face, as do the soft curls which cascade down her shoulders, covered by the skillful working of her sheer veil. Her fingers are delicate and thin, and alongside the beauty of the sheer veil, the faint blushes of pink of her eyelids and lips recall similar highlights in Diana di Rosa’s *Saint Cecilia*.

The three other paintings cataloged have black and white photos and are listed in Gragnano. The size, subject matter, and limited entries for each of them—a Madonna and child with saints, a holy family, and a kneeling saint—suggest pieces which hung in churches.⁸⁶ Their location in Gragnano, and a changed signature of Cristina Desiderio, rather than Beltrano, points to the possibility that the artist’s move to the town to the southeast of Naples may have been due

⁸⁵ The painting is logged as Neapolitan painting, but the filing body is for the region of Abruzzo. If it is for the Church of San Giovanni Battista in Naples, this would be the same church at which her sister, Agatha, was a nun. “Madonna Orante (dipinto, opera isolate) di Beltrano Cristina – produzione napoletana (sec. XVII),” *Catalogo generale dei Beni Culturali*, Ministero della Cultura, last updated 2005, <https://www.catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/1300211770/>.

⁸⁶ The image of this saint cites a book written by Alfonso Liguori which highlights the art in Gragnano. While the website entries attest to the signature of “C. Beltrano,” the book reports the signature of “G. Beltrano.” While this does not serve to negate the authorship of Cristina for the rest of her works, which are reportedly signed, this signature could potentially belong to Giuseppe Beltrano, son of Diana and Agostino. There is another entry in this same book for a separate painting, not given to Cristina, also signed G. Beltrano. Alfonso Liguori, *Gragnano: Memorie, Archeologiche, e Storiche* (Naples: Scuola Tipografica Pontifica, 1955), 204, 203.

to marriage, although this reasoning is never made explicit in the catalog entries.⁸⁷ The student of Diana di Rosa called “Catarina” by De Dominici’s appears likely to have been a misidentification of Cristina. His noting of only her painting of devotional figures on oil may have been true, but due to his limited knowledge of works outside of Naples itself, these additional, larger works were probably unknown to him.⁸⁸

Alongside these two daughters, our final consideration for the students of Diana di Rosa and Agostino Beltrano comes not from De Dominici’s biography of Diana, who is only noted by him as teaching women, but rather from the biography of the disciples of Massimo Stanzione.⁸⁹ This single entry includes the shorter biographies of artists such as Pacecco de Rosa, Agostino Beltrano, and Giuseppe Beltrano.⁹⁰ Giuseppe Beltrano is identified by De Dominici as the brother of Agostino, an identification echoed in a historiography which notes a lack of extant works or documentation for the artist.⁹¹ While Giuseppe Beltrano the brother of Agostino, remains unknown, Giuseppe Beltrano the son of Agostino Beltrano and Diana di Rosa, was born in 1636, as we can see from his baptismal certificate.⁹² De Dominici assigns Giuseppe as a disciple of Stanzione, but the *Vita* of Giuseppe refers to his work alongside Agostino, and the continuing of commissions left by the (supposedly) exiled Agostino.⁹³ Further research may be

⁸⁷ “Madonna con personaggi che implorano il suo aiuto (dipinto) di Beltrano Cristina (sec. XVII),” *Catalogo generale dei Beni Culturali*, Ministero della Cultura, last updated 2005, <https://www.catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/1500004181/>.

⁸⁸ It has been acknowledged that De Dominici’s knowledge of artworks outside of the city of Naples is very limited. Zezza, *Bernardo De Dominici*, 59.

⁸⁹ De Dominici would not attribute specific male artists to female teachers, as he gives insight in his biography of Mariangela Criscuolo, stating that she had some “[male] disciples, who are unknown to us,” but later identifies that many young women were sent to her to learn not only painting but primarily due to her perceived virtue. This is repeated in attestations of Diana di Rosa, where she was not only a talented painter, but a beautiful and virtuous woman as well. For Mariangela Criscuolo: De Dominici, *Vite*, 2: 839; translation and further detail by: Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists*, 229. For Diana di Rosa, see: De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 189.

⁹⁰ De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 193.

⁹¹ De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 217, n. 70.

⁹² Document Number 19, October 11, 1636. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 105-106.

⁹³ De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 216-218.

needed to investigate the identification of Giuseppe, but given De Dominici's known inaccuracies and based upon the familial artistic relations demonstrated here, Giuseppe Beltrano was likely the son and student of Agostino Beltrano and Diana di Rosa.

This thesis does not make the argument that Diana served as the sole teacher for her children—as previously noted, several other artists, including Agostino, would have a hand in their training, particularly for Cristina and Giuseppe after Diana's death in 1643. Nevertheless, De Dominici's identification of Diana di Rosa as the sole teacher of these young women remains an important testimony, one which transcends the art historical norms that frequently assume that the training of women artists was done by male family members.

Artemisia Gentileschi and the Artistic Education of Prudenzia Stiattești

By identifying the Neapolitan practice of formal and informal familial apprenticeships and highlighting one way in which women in Naples worked as artistic educators, we can now examine the possibilities for Artemisia Gentileschi training her daughter, Prudenzia. Similarly to Diana di Rosa, we begin with one of Artemisia Gentileschi's paintings from her Neapolitan period: *The Birth of Saint John the Baptist* (Fig. 18).

Artemisia Gentileschi's *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* is praised for its unique centering of the midwives, rather than Elizabeth and Zachariah, who are relegated to the background of the canvas, or altogether removed.⁹⁴ Artemisia's composition centers the scene around its main protagonist, the newborn Saint John, yet he is surrounded by four midwives, whose gazes lock with one another's in a series of exchanges as they perform a cooperative series of actions to clean and wrap the newborn. Perhaps the most notable of these interactions is between two of the

⁹⁴ Barker, *Artemisia*, 91-93.

women—the first wearing a brick red dress with a green headscarf, who is the eldest of the group. Leaning forward in as she sits, her arms hold the young baby, stretching to reach over the top of the copper tub. Her gaze leads the viewer’s eye towards the woman whom she is wordlessly instructing—the second woman, clothed in blue and a dark yellow, who kneels next to the tub with her sleeves rolled up, one hand disappearing into the clear water. As the elder woman wordlessly instructs the other midwife, the two women surrounding them—one sitting to the right of the elder, and the other standing behind holding more water, observe the interaction and engage with the elder’s instructions.

Artemisia’s painting centers female education in the context of the religious scene, although it does not focus on mere imitation. Here, the participants are older, as the elder woman shares her knowledge and experience with a younger woman, who serves as an active participant. While perhaps not doing so consciously, this painting nevertheless reflects on female-led artistic education. The biography of Artemisia Gentileschi by Cristofano Bronzini, first published by Sheila Barker, offers a precedent for Artemisia’s ideas about matrilineal artistic education.⁹⁵ Written during Artemisia’s years in Florence from 1613-1620, Bronzini’s biography offers a fictionalized account of Artemisia’s own training that, as Barker has argued, was shaped through consultation with Artemisia herself. In this biography, Artemisia’s father, Orazio Gentileschi—the painter from whom she received much of her training in painting—is presented as an impediment to her earliest artistic education. Instead, Artemisia’s earliest artistic work is the lengthening and embroidering of a skirt made for her by her mother, Prudenzia Gentileschi—the young Artemisia literally and metaphorically continuing her mother’s artistic talent. Later, the

⁹⁵ Sheila Barker, “The First Biography of Artemisia Gentileschi,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 60, n. 3 (2018): 404-435.

biography portrays Orazio as resisting Artemisia's artistic development, and it is the abbess and nuns at a convent in Trastevere in which he has placed her who facilitate her further education.⁹⁶ As Barker has persuasively suggested, these fabricated elements of the biography should be read as a statement of self-fashioning by the artist. Among many other aspects of this biography, this part was designed to encourage the idea of Artemisia's born inclination towards art alongside a system of matrilineal artistic descent.⁹⁷

Bronzini's biography thus offers a textual precedent that can inform our thinking about Artemisia's training of her own daughter, Prudenzia—fittingly named after her grandmother. There are references to the artistic production of Prudenzia Stiattești in the primary sources, but these currently begin only after their move to Naples in 1629.⁹⁸ Prudenzia may have learned the rudiments of drawing and painting throughout her childhood, but Artemisia's publicization of her daughter's talent does not emerge until after their move to Naples. In addition to Artemisia's creation of her own matrilineal artistic heritage in Florence, could her promotion and statements regarding Prudenzia's training be due to her observations of the women such as Diana di Rosa working in Neapolitan workshops?

⁹⁶ Barker, "The First Biography," 415-416.

⁹⁷ Barker, "The First Biography," 420-423.

⁹⁸ Letters identified in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli* in 2022 pointed to the departure of Artemisia (and presumably Prudenzia) for Naples in 1630. In a follow-up publication in 2023 Domenico Antonio D'Alessandro and Giuseppe Porzio stated that the aforementioned letters, from a Spanish nobleman Benavides in Venice to the then-viceroy of Naples, the Duke of Alcalá, likely referred to Giovanna Garzoni as the "pintora," not Artemisia. Another document discovered shows the transference of Artemisia's power of attorney to a local parish priest in January of 1629, which the authors believe highlights an imminent departure, and an arrival in Naples which they believe likely took place between the spring and summer of 1629. As such, this date currently stands as the most likely year for the arrival of Artemisia in Naples. Documents I.1a-I.1e, Domenico Antonio D'Alessandro and Giuseppe Porzio "Appendice A: Documenti per la biografia napoletana di Artemisia," in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*, eds. Antonio Ernesto Denunzio and Giuseppe Porzio (Milan: Skira, 2022), 91-92; Domenico Antonio D'Alessandro and Giuseppe Porzio, "Da Venezia a Napoli. Ancora sugli arrivi di Artemisia e di Giovanna Garzoni," in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli: Studi e documenti*, eds. Antonio Ernesto Denunzio and Giuseppe Porzio (Naples: UniorPress, 2023), 13-15.

Artemisia Gentileschi had a total of five children with her husband, Pierantonio Stiattești, although only one of them—Prudenzia Palmira Stiattești—survived until adulthood. Following their arrival in Naples in 1629, Artemisia begins mentioning her daughter’s artistic production to her patrons, and firsthand accounts of visitors to Artemisia’s home report on Prudenzia’s artistic and musical talents. In 1634, Bullen Reymes, an English diplomat who resided in Paris, visited Naples, with recommendation letters from Orazio Gentileschi, who was then at the English court.⁹⁹ Entries from Reymes’ diaries record his two visits to Artemisia’s Neapolitan residence. On March 18, 1634, Reymes visits Artemisia’s home for the second time, “where I heard her daughter playing the spinet, and then she painted.”¹⁰⁰ In addition to the visits of Reymes, Artemisia would later promise in a letter to Andrea Cioli to send (together with her own painting of Saint Catherine) “a preliminary work completed by my daughter,” with a quick remark that she hopes he will not make fun of it.¹⁰¹ At this point, Prudenzia is eighteen, and based on Artemisia’s comment on her daughter’s work, Prudenzia’s formal training seems to have only just begun.

This is the earliest evidence which we see for Prudenzia’s artistic training and career. The next mention of her and what has most preoccupied scholars is her marriage. In two separate letters written in 1636 and 1637 to Cassiano dal Pozzo, Artemisia expresses her wish to marry the now twenty-year-old but makes it clear that she lacks the money for her daughter’s dowry.¹⁰² However, this topic does not reappear in the letters of Artemisia until twelve years later, in 1649.

⁹⁹ Documents I.3, I.4, March 15 and 18, 1634. Alessandro and Porzio, “Appendice A,” 92.

¹⁰⁰ “ou je entendu sa fille jouer de épinette et alor elle peint,” Document I.4, March 18, 1634. Alessandro and Porzio, “Appendice A,” 94-95.

¹⁰¹ “et anco in compagnia un premitio fatto dalla mia figolia, si no’ se ne farà burla,” Letter to Cavalier Andrea Cioli from Artemisia Gentileschi, December 11, 1635. Francesco Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia* (Rome: De Luca, 2021), 136.

¹⁰² Letters to Cavalier Cassiano dal Pozzo from Artemisia Gentileschi, October 24, 1637 and November 24, 1637. Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 140.

In a letter to her patron Don Antonio Ruffo, Artemisia remarks that she has just married her daughter off to a Knight of the Order of Saint James.¹⁰³ Having not named her daughter in either of these letters, the gap of twelve years between these letters has led several scholars to speculate that Artemisia had a second daughter while in Naples with her lover, Francesco Maria Maringhi.¹⁰⁴ Yet recently uncovered archival evidence has confirmed the marriage of Prudenzia, which puts this theory to rest.

The *processi matrimoniali* states that Prudenzia Palmira Stiattești was married to Antonio de Napoli y Merolla on February 6, 1649, about a month before Artemisia's letter to Ruffo.¹⁰⁵ In the document, it is revealed that the couple had met each other about twenty years earlier, likely when Prudenzia and Artemisia first arrived in Naples in 1629.¹⁰⁶ It is also reported that the couple had lived together for several years, and that Prudenzia was recovering in her mother's home after giving birth to the couple's son, Biagio de Napoli, only a few days prior.¹⁰⁷ Given that Prudenzia had just given birth to a son out of wedlock, an immediate marriage seemed necessary, and the proceedings state this, emphasizing the importance of protecting the bride's honor.¹⁰⁸ The

¹⁰³ "mia signora figlia, la quale hoggi l'ho maritata con un Cavalier dell'Abito di San Giacomo," There is currently no evidence which proves or disproves that Prudenzia's husband was a part of this order. Letter to Don Antonio Ruffo from Artemisia Gentileschi, March 13, 1649. Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 149.

¹⁰⁴ There has also been recently uncovered evidence that demonstrates that Maringhi likely was no longer living with Artemisia around 1638. In addition to this, archival evidence has been found of the baptism of Maringhi's child, Nicolò Raimondo, with his spouse, Anna Closa de Cavalieri, occurring in 1649. These theories of a second daughter were initially advanced by Mary Garrard, for example in her monograph, and continued in Lapierre's novel as well. Document III.1, January 13, 1649. Alessandro and Porzio, "Appendice A," 100; Mary Garrard, *Artemisia Gentileschi and the Image of the Female Hero in Baroque Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 391, n. 4; Alexandra Lapierre, *Artemisia: A Novel* (New York: Grove Atlantic, 1999), 438.

¹⁰⁵ Merolla is the maiden name of Antonio de Napoli's mother: it is used here due to its appearance in identifying Antonio in the marriage proceedings and certificate, as well as future sources, to be discussed. The designation of "y" written in documents suggests a Spanish heritage, although we have no further indication of Antonio's heritage within the marriage documents. Document II.1, February 9, 1649. Alessandro and Porzio, "Appendice A," 96-98.

¹⁰⁶ This makes Prudenzia around thirteen when she first became acquainted with her future husband. "della sposa e del future marito, conosciutisi circa venti'anni prima," Document II.1, February 9, 1649. Alessandro and Porzio, "Appendice A," 96.

¹⁰⁷ "verum contrahentes sunt concubinarii a multo tempore et sponsa generavit filium ex concubinato, proinde iacet in lecto," Document II.1, February 9, 1649. Alessandro and Porzio, "Appendice A," 97.

¹⁰⁸ Document II.1, February 9, 1649. Alessandro and Porzio, "Appendice A," 96-97.

fact that the couple was already living together suggests that Artemisia, while having set her sights on marriage for Prudenzia and Antonio in 1637, was unable to fulfill her wishes. This may have been due in part to the financial strain she expressed to Cassiano dal Pozzo, but Artemisia's publicization of her daughter's artistic capability, and observations of a heavily collaborative Neapolitan workshop structure raise the possibility that Prudenzia's own skills may have made Artemisia reluctant to marry off her workshop assistant immediately. Thus, up to the time of the marriage, Prudenzia's artistic career would have taken place inside her mother's workshop, and consequently under her mother's name, although there is archival evidence that may point towards some of Prudenzia's artistic production.

First, there is a bank payment dated September 5, 1648, from Don Fabrizio Ruffo, Prince of Bagnara, for 30 ducats, paid to Artemisia Gentileschi for "a painting."¹⁰⁹ While we have no additional details of this commission, the end of the payment asks "for her [Artemisia] to Antonio de Napoli y Merolla, for the same [amount]."¹¹⁰ When reprinted in 2022, this addendum of a payment from Artemisia to Antonio is interpreted as a small amount of the larger fee for Prudenzia's dowry.¹¹¹ However, there are several other payments where Artemisia directly transfers the amount she is being paid for her painting, and in those payments, the money is to be paid to known artistic collaborators or contributors to the commission, such as Onofrio Palumbo, or to third party agents such as Giovanni Battista Tasca and Andrea Maffetti.¹¹² Additionally, the same formula for the transfer of the payment is seen routinely in payments between other Neapolitan painters and their direct collaborators. So why would a transfer on an individual

¹⁰⁹ Abetti, "Appendice B," 108.

¹¹⁰ "et per lei ad Antonio de Napoli y Merolla per altritanti." Document 7, September 5, 1648. Abetti, "Appendice B," 108.

¹¹¹ Renato Ruotolo, "Artemisia e I suoi collezionisti a Napoli. Precisazioni e note biografiche," in *Artemisia Gentileschi a Napoli*, eds. Antonio Ernesto Denunzio and Giuseppe Porzio (Milan: Skira, 2022), 73.

¹¹² Document 17, January 3, 1653 and Document 9, October 13, 1649. Abetti, "Appendice B," 108.

payment for a painting be connected to Prudenzia's dowry? A likelier conclusion is that the payment was for a contribution made by Antonio de Napoli to the work in some capacity.

The mystery of who Antonio de Napoli was remains unsolved at the moment, and in the absence of further information, we do not know if he was, as Artemisia claimed, in the nobility, or similarly, if he was an artist. If he was an artist, and potential collaborator, it seems likely that we would have already seen evidence of his works or name in the Neapolitan archive, and he would likely have been connected to the familial system of Neapolitan artists. However, there is currently a lack of decisive evidence for either role. While at the time of the payment, Prudenzia remained unmarried to Antonio de Napoli, the marriage proceedings had recorded them living together for years. Instead of a payment to Antonio for his artistic services, I propose that this payment was instead to Prudenzia. The known cohabitation of the couple, paired with evidence of Prudenzia's artistic training, creates a unique possibility that this may be the beginning of the proof that we have for Prudenzia's hand in Artemisia's works, as well as her own.

While this recorded payment is from Don Fabrizio Ruffo, the nephew of another patron of Artemisia's, Don Antonio Ruffo, there may also be evidence for works by Prudenzia in the inventory of Don Antonio Ruffo's collection. An inventory of the collection, which references works by Artemisia alluded to in her letters to the patron, such as the *Galatea*, and *Diana at her Bath*, also contains an entry for a "Madalena, meza figura, di palmi 4 e 5, d' Antonio Napolitano."¹¹³ Unlike the majority of the inventory entries in which "napoletano" is given to indicate an artist's origin, here "Napolitano" is distinctively capitalized as if a surname.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Rosa De Gennaro, *Per Il Collezionismo del Seicento in Sicilia: L'Inventario di Antonio Ruffo Principe della Scaletta* (Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore, 2003), 65, 119.

¹¹⁴ Two entries down, for example, is a painting listed by "Di Nuntio Rosso napolitano." The distinction of the capitalization suggests the last name Napolitano. De Gennaro, *Per Il Collezionismo del Seicento in Sicilia*, 119.

Together with the payment to Antonio just discussed, this inventory may constitute evidence regarding Prudenzia's artistic production during the time she was living with her future husband, Antonio de Napoli.

The possibility that this painting of the Magdalen was produced by Prudenzia, and not by her husband, can be furthered by a letter to Don Antonio Ruffo, dated March 13, 1649. Here, Artemisia not only alludes to Prudenzia's marriage, but promises to send a self-portrait with "works by my lady daughter."¹¹⁵ Could a half-figure of a Magdalene be the perfect example of such a work? The bank statement, dated about a year earlier, only strengthens this claim. While not legally married at the time, it is clear Prudenzia resided with, and likely was the financial responsibility of her future husband. Were the rewards of her artistic production, after occurring under her mother's name, then given to her future husband? Was she producing artwork as means of an income, and even possibly her dowry, of which there is currently no evidence? If so, payments made to her husband, and by extension, potential misattribution based on such paperwork, may begin to illuminate Prudenzia's artistic career, which while originally having been overshadowed by her mother, may then have taken place under her husband's name, just as Suzanne Cusick found to be the case for Francesca Caccini.¹¹⁶

Workshop Collaboration in Neapolitan Paintings and the Church of the *Pieta dei Turchini*

Following an examination of how the familial connections and close-knit structure in Neapolitan workshops fostered different opportunities for artistic education by and for women artists, I will now consider the implications of this for the production of Neapolitan paintings,

¹¹⁵ "il mio ritratto insieme [a] qualche operetta della mia signora figlia," Letter to Don Antonio Ruffo from Artemisia Gentileschi, March 13, 1649. Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 149.

¹¹⁶ Cusick, "'Thinking from Women's Lives,'" 491-500.

specifically larger canvases destined for churches and series done for private patrons. Here, I will propose that the structure of Neapolitan workshops creates a method of production for larger commissions or artworks to have been completed by any number of artists, related or within the workshop, whose names would not have been recorded, and this method of production complicates and challenges our standard practices of connoisseurship and attribution. Through this examination, I will underscore the ways that art history's ongoing preference for attributing artworks to single artists and for using single names for illustration captions, even when they were often completed by multiple hands, creates an obstacle to women artists receiving credit for a lifetime of work.

De Dominici's creation of a Neapolitan history which prized individual artists and their schools was not simply an eighteenth-century biographical convention or a critical preference, it was a feature of the archive itself. The majority of works of art were commissions documented by signatures, payment documents, and inventories, most of which specify single artists. These pieces of evidence are not to be ignored but rather re-interpreted to demonstrate that the production of Neapolitan painting relied heavily on collaborative practices, while the documentation and payment of commissions relied on the name and reputation of single artists. While this collaboration level, in many cases, has been acknowledged, its implementation into analysis, labeling, or understanding of these works remains limited—a practice essential in identifying contributions of women artists, whose work may have been limited to such collaborative contributions. Through an examination of what archival evidence we have and don't have, historiographical debates on attribution, and a reading of the layout of the decoration of the church of the *Pieta dei Turchini* as a mirror of and model for workshop collaboration in Naples, I seek to offer an alternative perspective on the authorship of these paintings and on how

the search for a single author instead obscures the identity of those involved.¹¹⁷ Continuing with this collaborative lens on Neapolitan painting, we will examine Artemisia Gentileschi's entrance into these practices, examining the language of her letters to suggest how she defined her authorship despite collaboration—and in turn, how we may define it within her paintings.

The number of paintings ascribed to Diana di Rosa is significantly fewer than the works of Artemisia Gentileschi from her Neapolitan period. Several of the few attributions for Diana di Rosa come from De Dominici, who identifies some paintings within churches such as the *Pieta dei Turchini* or *Santa Maria della Sanita*.¹¹⁸ Diana's name also appears in several inventories of from the seventeenth century, although these entries can only rarely be connected to specific paintings.¹¹⁹ Finally, the *Saint Cecilia* at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston bears the signature of the artist but limited provenance, and remaining works assigned to her oeuvre are based upon either stylistic attribution or now lost evidence.¹²⁰ The works of Artemisia Gentileschi in Naples are more plentiful, with signed paintings such as her *Annunciation* (Fig. 5), or *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* (Fig. 18) and documentation for her works at the Cathedral of Pozzuoli, among many others. Scarcely documented copies of her Neapolitan compositions are also sold frequently on the art market as autograph works, despite their questionable quality. Despite the contrasts

¹¹⁷ While a different argument, it is worth noting the work of Jesse Locker, whose article on the "Master of the Annunciation to the Shepherds," seeks to engage with the work of the artist rather than the artist's identity, acknowledging that the debates about authorship often limit the work of early modern Neapolitan art history. Jesse Locker, "I'm Still Learning': 'The Painter's Studio' by the Master of the Annunciation to the Shepherds," *Atribus et Historiae* 40, no. 79 (2019): 167-190.

¹¹⁸ In the Church of Sanità, De Dominici identifies the extant work of *Saint Blaise* as the early collaboration of the Agostino Beltrano and Diana di Rosa, demonstrating their unity of style. De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 188.

¹¹⁹ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 116-120.

¹²⁰ Examples of these works include a *Marriage of the Virgin* which was part of a series from the church of San Giovanni Maggiore, but now remains in the Museo Diocesano of Naples, which was identified in 2006, as the hand of Diana di Rosa, due to the similarity of physiognomic features also found in the works from the *Pieta dei Turchini*. This includes a painting of Noah bearing the signature "ADR," attributed to Diana di Rosa (Annella di Rosa) by Roberto Longhi, although this painting is now lost, and scholars debate whether its assessment was ever true. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 32-33.

between the surviving works and documentation available for Diana di Rosa and Artemisia Gentileschi, considering their two careers together proves fruitful for highlighting the ways their careers unfolded in the specific Neapolitan context of workshop collaboration.

Before discussing Artemisia as an artist influenced by the practice of Neapolitan collaboration, we must establish the level of collaboration which the Neapolitan artists used. We will do this by scrutinizing several of the paintings within the church of the Pietà dei Turchini, works often assigned to artists including Diana di Rosa, Filippo Vitale, and Agostino Beltrano, among others. Here, we will argue that while the paintings named here may not have been completed within the same year, or by all the artists mentioned, the proximity of the artists and their works—relationally, physically, and artistically—make this church the perfect lens through which to see more clearly this level of workshop collaboration.

The completed decoration of this church spans hundreds of years, from the sixteenth century through the nineteenth, although here we will focus on the works estimated to have been created in the 1630s and 1640s. The iconographic program throughout the church is not cohesive, with most of the paintings having been an amalgamation of individual commissions for chapels or separate areas, such as the ceiling, and donations.¹²¹ We will first begin by reviewing briefly the historiography of each painting, observing that in each case when works have been given single authors, this results in inconclusive and continuing debates of connoisseurship, often aggravated by a lack of documentation. Rather than taking a stance among these separate attributions, I argue that it is the notion of the single author itself that makes the question of authorship impossible to answer.

¹²¹ Vincenzo Pacelli, “La pittura naturalistica nella chiesa e nell’ex oratorio dei Turchini,” in *Santa Maria dell Pietà dei Turchini* (Naples: Paparo Edizioni, 2005), 45.

De Dominici ascribes two works to Diana di Rosa within the church: the *Birth of the Virgin* (Fig. 6) and *Death of the Virgin* (Fig. 7), which he describes as on the ceiling of the church.¹²² De Dominici states that Massimo Stanzione intervened with the regents of the church to grant Diana this commission, in exchange for Stanzione promising his own assistance, if needed. As reported by De Dominici, the reception of these works was tremendous, and aspects of the coloring, drawing, and composition led many to believe they were retouched by Stanzione.¹²³ The paintings are believed to be those of the same subject which hang on the left and right sides of the altar in the church today, although their change of location had never been documented.¹²⁴ While Porzio assigns these works to Diana's corpus with the intervention of Beltrano,¹²⁵ others have chosen to dismiss Diana's authorship due to stylistic inconsistencies with the rest of Diana's limited oeuvre.¹²⁶ The documentation for these paintings is a payment of 20 ducats made to painter Giuseppe Marullo, a little known artist who De Dominici names as a follower of Stanzione,¹²⁷ for "all the paintings," on the ceiling of the church.¹²⁸ This payment has been understood in the secondary literature as including Diana di Rosa's *Birth* and *Death of the*

¹²² "Annella represented in one of the two paintings, that is the first [when] entering the church, the *Birth of the Blessed Virgin*, and in the other, which is the last towards the high altar, she represented the death, or the repose of the same." "Annella l'incombenza, rappresentò in uno de de'due quadri, ch'è il primo entrando in chiesa, la Nascita della Beata Vergine, e nell'altro, che è l'ultimo verso l'altare maggiore, figurò la Morte, o sia il riposo della medesima." English translation by Julia K. Dabbs. Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists* 243-244; De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 188.

¹²³ "The perfection of these paintings, both in the drawing, the composition, and in the beautiful coloring, cause everyone to believe that they were retouched by the cavaliere." "La perfezione di questi quadri, così nel disegno, nel componimento, e nel bel colorito, fa credere a tutti ch'essi fossero ritoccati dal cavaliere." English translation by Julia K. Dabbs. Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists*, 244; De Dominici, *Vite*, 3:188.

¹²⁴ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 27.

¹²⁵ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 27.

¹²⁶ Most commonly, the works are given to Giuseppe Marullo, or within the school of Filippo Vitale. For further information and bibliography, see Willette, "La scuola Stanzione," 124, n. 52.

¹²⁷ As demonstrated, many figures who De Dominici identifies are given incorrect names or associations with the known artists. Further research here is required, but a lack of evidence about Marullo may be due to a simple lack of documentation, or it may be another error of identification or name by De Dominici that we must carefully examine.

¹²⁸ "de tutti li quatri fatti consignati per sevittio della intenpiatura della loro chiesa," Earlier in his book Porzio notes that the payment itself was first published by Eduardo Nappi in 1993 and notes the intervention within Diana's paintings of Marullo as well as Beltrano, citing this payment. Document 28, September 28, 1646. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 27, n. 37, 112.

Virgin, even though it is dated to 1646—three years after her death.¹²⁹ So while many scholars record the author of these paintings as Diana di Rosa, the debated possibilities so far include the noting contributions of single artists such as Beltrano to Diana’s work, or altogether omitting a named artist and labeling the paintings as the circle of Filippo Vitale.¹³⁰ The payment document, De Dominici’s claims of Diana’s authorship, and debates among scholars due to connoisseurship offer no clear answers, leaving even more questions.

De Dominici also records the work of several other artists from the 1630-1640s in the *Pieta dei Turchini*. First there are paintings by Andrea Vaccaro, the cousin of Agostino Beltrano. Andrea Vaccaro became a member of the governors for the conservatory and church, and would later paint several works alongside his son Nicola Vaccaro and Giacomo Farelli for the Great Chapel of St. Anne in the church, which were completed in the 1650s and documented.¹³¹ However, it is his paintings in the Chapel of San Charles Borromeo depicting *Christ in Front of Pilate*, (Fig. 8) *The Crowning with Thorns*, and the *Flagellation* (Fig. 9) that De Dominici identifies,¹³² alongside another painting of the *Road to Calvary* (Fig. 10) which is given to the school of Vaccaro.¹³³ These paintings, while having no secure date, are estimated to have preceded the series done by Vaccaro and his students for the Chapel of St. Anne. The dubious quality of the works, noted by De Dominici,¹³⁴ had led to conflicting views on attribution

¹²⁹ Pacelli, “La pittura naturalistica,” 60; Document 28, September 28, 1646. Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 112.

¹³⁰ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 33; Pacelli, “La pittura naturalistica,” 63.

¹³¹ Anna K. Tuck-Scala, *Andrea Vaccaro, Naples 1604-1670* (Naples: Paparo Edizioni, 2012), 49.

¹³² “il conservatoria della Pietà de’ Turchini...si veggono quattro quadri, i quali rappresentano varii dolorosi misteri della Passione del Nostro Redentore, e sono, uno la Flagellazione alla colonna, e di contro vi è la Coronazione di spine; siegue più a basso la Condanna dell’ingiusto Pilato, e dirimpetto quando portra la Croce in spalla, e questi non sono della bontà dell’altre opere già descritte.” De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 273.

¹³³ These paintings are argued by authors such as Pacelli to belong to the same period of the 1660s as Vaccaro’s works in the Chapel of Saint Anne: however, the contemporary labeling does not consistently reflect these dates. De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 273, n. 34; Pacelli, “La pittura naturalistica,” 72.

¹³⁴ De Dominici states that these works are “non sono della bontà dell’altre opere già descritte.” De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 273.

between Vaccaro and his school —a group which likely, of course, included his several documented and undocumented collaborators, such as his son and other artists.¹³⁵ The quality of the paintings once again leads us to believe that these works are likely not the autonomous work of Andrea Vaccaro, but rather the work of several artists recorded inside his workshop, and potentially beyond.

In addition to Vaccaro, there is a painting in the church commonly attributed to Filippo Vitale, Diana di Rosa's stepfather, a *Guardian Angel* (Fig. 11) in the chapel of the same name. The documentary evidence for this painting is for its donation in 1641, when the Compagnia dell'Oratorio purchased the chapel, and donated the painting, with no record of its author, to adorn it.¹³⁶ De Dominicis identified its author as Giuseppe Marullo, who he states had also completed several frescoes on columns within the church, which are no longer extant.¹³⁷ Nineteenth-century writer Luigi Catalini, in his *Le chiese di Napoli* later associates the *Guardian Angel* with the work of Annella (Diana) de Rosa,¹³⁸ but contemporary art historians attribute the work to Filippo Vitale.¹³⁹ However, scholars have identified the potential of Diana's contribution to the work, due to her proximity to her stepfather.¹⁴⁰ Once again, debates of connoisseurship

¹³⁵ There are several collaborators which Andrea Vaccaro would work with throughout his career, including his son Nicola Vaccaro, and established from remaining payments, or apprenticeship contracts and including artists such as Giacomo Farelli or Andrea de Lione. Additionally, frescoing in another chapel of the Church was done by Onofrio de Lione, brother of Andrea de Lione. Tuck-Scala, *Andrea Vaccaro*, 166-167, 173, 176; Pacelli, *La pittura naturalistica*, 66.

¹³⁶ Eduardo Nappi, "Il Conservatorio e la Chiesa della Pietà dei Turchini," in *Richerche sul '600 napoletano: saggi e documenti per la storia dell'arte*, Vol. 12 (Milan: L & T, 1993), 86, 104.

¹³⁷ "così anche i quadri della soffitta della Pietà de' Turchini, nella quale chiesa dopo alcun tempo ei dipinse l'Angelo custode per la cappella de' Corrieri con la storia del figliuol Tobia, che prende il pesce, dipinta a fresco, e ne' pilieri san Gabriello e san Rafaello di chiaro scuro" De Dominicis, *Vite*, 3: 204-5, n. 27

¹³⁸ Luigi Catalini, *Le chiese di Napoli: descrizione, storica ed artistica dell'architetto* (Naples: Stamperia Strada Salvatore, 1853) 2: 145.

¹³⁹ Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 27; Willette, "La scuola stanzionesca," 126.

¹⁴⁰ The potential of Diana's contribution to the *Guardian Angel* is not made explicit, however Willette does note, in giving the *Birth and Death of the Virgin* to Vitale, that Diana's hand would have potentially contributed to these works, due to Diana and Vitale's proximity in the workshop. It is important to note that the date of the painting's execution is not concrete, and Diana's proximity to Vitale, is often only cited before her apprenticeship, or marriage,

have struggled to address effectively the level of collaboration that was likely present in this work, as the workshops of Filippo Vitale, Diana di Rosa, and Giuseppe Marullo were not, as previously argued, wholly separate entities, even after Diana's marriage.

In the Chapel of St. Nicolas of Bari are a series of frescoes attributed to Diana's husband, Agostino Beltrano,¹⁴¹ although previously ascribed to other artists by Catalini.¹⁴² Beyond this, De Dominicis names a *Nativity* by artist Juan Dò, husband to Diana's sister, Maria Grazia di Rosa.¹⁴³ This painting is no longer extant, although there is a work of the *Adoration of the Shepherds* within the church¹⁴⁴ which has been debated as either the work of Juan Dò, another Valencian artist, or an anonymous artist.¹⁴⁵ Alongside all of the previously discussed works are several estimated from 1640 which hang today in the church but are scarcely discussed and labeled as anonymous.

The limited attribution history of each of the works highlighted above is meant to introduce the proposed authors and the convoluted afterlives of these works, whose attributions have yet to be determined through a procedure of considering individual artists. It also highlights the importance of the connections between the artists, as previously established through

although this author argues that even after or during these periods, she may have contributed to any of her family's works. Willette, "La scuola stanzionesca," 124.

¹⁴¹ These works are given this attribution due to documentary evidence which survives of payments to Beltrano for the work – however, this still does not mean he worked unassisted. Nappi, "Il Conservatorio," 85, 100.

¹⁴² Catalini identifies Balducci as the author of the frescoes. Catalini, *Le chiese di Napoli*, II: 145.

¹⁴³ "don Giovan Do...si osserva nel bel quadro della Nascita del Redentore, situato ora nella sagrestia della Pietà de'Turchini," De Dominicis, *Vite*, 3: 37-38.

¹⁴⁴ While this painting is widely agreed to be the *Adoration of the Shepherds* within the Church offices today, there is a painting in the Museum of the Academy of Beautiful Arts in Spain which is often identified as the missing Turchini canvas as well. In 2017, the painting which De Dominicis alludes to was argued by Viviana Farini as to be the *Adoration of the Shepherds* still within the Church, and which was completed by Juan Dò. Flavia Ferrante, "Giovanni [Juan] Do," in *Civiltà del Seicento a Napoli*, ed. Nicola Spinosa (Naples: Electa, 1984), 259; Viviana Farini, "Un disegno e un new quadro per l'autore della'Adorazione dei pastori' della Pietà dei Turchini a Napoli ('Juan Dò')," in *Il disegno tra Napoli, Firenze e Roma ai tempi di Salvator Rosa: atti del convegno internazionale di studi: Museo civico Gaetano Filangieri, Napoli, Museo Correale di Terranova, Sorrento, Pio Monte della Misericordia, Napoli*, ed. Viviana Farini (Cava de'Tirreni: Areablu Edizioni, 2017), 47-48.

¹⁴⁵ For further information on the historiography of these debates, see Pacelli, "La pittura naturalistica," 51-52.

attending to their familial ties, and then the further blurring of individual workshops, with strict rosters of artists. Finally, we will use the lens of these works and their placement within the church to more abstractly envision the collaboration present in each canvas, as it mirrors the artists: their individuality, ensconced in separate chapels, but more broadly their collaboration and overlap, co-existing in one space.

While this thesis and the historiography it addresses discuss specific paintings, walking through the church itself allows us to view several of the works—their placement, the stylistic and iconographic inconsistencies, and their damage or movement due to time—in a way which mirrors the collaborative practices used to make many of them. Walking down the left side of the church, the first chapel welcomes you, with its art cordoned into the darkened space. The Chapel of Saint Charles Borromeo holds an altarpiece framed by four paintings, labeled at the entrance of the chapel: a *Christ in Front of Pilate*, *Crowning of Thorns*, *On the Way to Calvary*, and *Flagellation* all labeled as Andrea Vaccaro. While the uniform labeling of each of these works identifies the authorship of Andrea Vaccaro, our previous knowledge of historiographical debates complicates this simple narrative.

The work of the cousin of Andrea Vaccaro, Agostino Beltrano, is only a few doors down, with frescoes decorating the Chapel of Saint Nicolas of Bari. On the ceiling, two round frescoes frame the one in the center, an image of Saint Nicholas in glory, with a large crack running down the center of it: a mythic remnant of the earthquake which destroyed the ceiling of the church. Slightly closer, only a single door (or chapel) down, is the *Guardian Angel*: labeled as a work by Filippo Vitale, the father-in-law of Agostino Beltrano, with continuing debate over the contributions of Filippo's stepchildren, Diana and Pacecco de Rosa, to the painting. Overlooking all these paintings above the high altar are the *Birth and Death of the Virgin*, historically ascribed

to Diana di Rosa, yet sometimes given to her stepfather Filippo Vitale, or husband Agostino Beltrano. Each of these works: given to Vaccaro, Beltrano, Vitale, di Rosa, are ensconced in their own chapels or spaces, yet still merely “steps” away from each other in artistic style as well as physical proximity.¹⁴⁶

The physical arrangement of these works offers a model for envisioning the production of these works, as the product of closely related artists, who worked closely together on larger public canvases and demonstrate a cohesive style. As previously demonstrated, art historians have acknowledged several hands in each of the canvases, however, it is likely that the authorship goes beyond those acknowledged. The proposed level of collaboration is also difficult to pinpoint, as except for connoisseurship, there is only limited or no explicit evidence of collaboration within the traditional archive. Even the most skilled connoisseurship has inherent limitations, however, as it presumes that the artists painted in a way that made their hands distinguishable from one another. De Dominici refutes this hypothesis, naming numerous artists whose hands are known to be indistinguishable from one another: for example, both Giuseppe Marullo and Diana di Rosa could produce works indistinguishable from that of Massimo Stanzione,¹⁴⁷ Diana di Rosa and Agostino Beltrano’s style was also uniform,¹⁴⁸ and Juan Dò perfectly imitated his master, Jusepe di Ribera.¹⁴⁹ While De Dominici is often hyperbolic, it would make sense that the artists mastered each other’s the styles to work together with

¹⁴⁶ Alongside the connections previously established in this thesis, Andrea Vaccaro notably worked with his son in his workshop; in addition, Lucrezia de Rosa (sister of Diana) was the godmother of Andrea’s illegitimate daughter, and both Andrea and his son Nicola would witness the marriage of Anna Do, the daughter of Maria Grazia de Rosa and Juan Dò. Tuck-Scala, *Andrea Vaccaro*, 47, 163.

¹⁴⁷ “Questo è il caso appunto di Giuseppe Marullo, al quale fortemente dispiacque che le sue opere fosser credute di Massimo suo maestro,” For Diana di Rosa, see footnote 122. De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 203.

¹⁴⁸ De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 188.

¹⁴⁹ “Don Giovanni, [Juan] questi fu tanto verace imitatore del Ribera suo maestro, che le copie erano prese per originali,” De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 37.

uniformity, although they may not have painted like this consistently.¹⁵⁰ This idea is corroborated by the scholarship, which presents a web of unknowns, of attributions and re-attributions, based on connoisseurship due to a lack of primary evidence, and the movement of works in the nineteenth century and perhaps even prior.¹⁵¹ The overlap and indistinguishability of artist's hands as analyzed by De Dominicis and seen in a struggling historiography further supports the centrality of workshop collaboration in Naples, which was particularly important for larger, multi-figure compositions, as will be further discussed below in relation to the oeuvre of Artemisia Gentileschi. While many of these concepts are sometimes acknowledged by scholars, they have yet to be implemented: as we have seen, the labeling and analysis of the works in both the art history literature and the church still defaults to single authors.

Through the model of workshop collaboration, we might also re-examine the extant documentation, specifically the payment made to Marullo in 1646 for “all of the paintings.”¹⁵² While payment records often identify a single artist, this would allow for a patron to pay one artist while the work could be completed by multiple artists. Additionally, within many artist payments in Naples during the given period, a transferring of payments between artists can be seen—a practice which often is connected to artistic collaboration, though not in all cases.¹⁵³ The

¹⁵⁰ The issue of artists painting both uniformly, and with their separate styles is corroborated in the scholarship of Artemisia Gentileschi. When Joachim von Sandrart visits her workshop, he praises her paintings and her designs. However, he also attests that she “made very good *Contrafâte*.” This may refer to her ability to imitate other artists which she would work alongside in their own work but is a statement which deserves further consideration. Joachim von Sandrart, *Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste von 1675*, ed. by A. R. Peltzer (Farnborough: Gregg International Publishers, 1971), 290.

¹⁵¹ Catalini describes the work being done on the Church in the 19th century and discusses the removal of the works of Diana di Rosa which were once on the ceiling of the Church, although were later removed. Catalini, *Le chiese di Napoli*, 2:143.

¹⁵² “de tutti li quatri,” Porzio, *Diana di Rosa*, 112.

¹⁵³ In some payment records, money is transferred by artists such as Artemisia Gentileschi, Andrea Vaccaro, and Massimo Stanzione to primarily male collaborators, or others involved in art dealing, although this is not to suggest that this was the only way to share the profits of this work. Often it is phrased: ‘e per lui/lei/esso ad ____ per altritanti.’ Document Number 17, January 3, 1653. Abetti, “Appendice B,” 110-111; Tuck-Scala, *Andrea Vaccaro*, 176, 179; Willette, “La scuola stanzionesca,” 130.

close proximity of the artists would allow them to work together on larger canvases or series, but the standard methods of documentation and payment in Naples only recorded the names of a few artists in the payment or commission documents.

While the suggestion of workshop collaboration may seem to diminish the scarce autograph work of Diana di Rosa or other women artists, it instead serves as a lens to identify further the contributions of Diana and other women within the family as co-authors of many works attributed solely to the male artists. Scholars have suggested this, asserting that much of Diana's work is dispersed among the oeuvres of Beltrano and Stanzione, submerged within collaboration inherent in Neapolitan painting.¹⁵⁴ Despite this acknowledgement, little has been done to confront this issue, and scholarship continues to perpetuate it through assigning single authorship to most works. Alongside the children of couples such as Diana di Rosa and Agostino Beltrano, as previously demonstrated, women like Grazia de Rosa, sister of Pacecco and Diana di Rosa, and wife of Juan Dò, or Lucrezia di Rosa, who would never marry or enter the convent, living instead with her brother Pacecco de Rosa, were likely contributors to the works of these artists in various capacities, although history would never record them.¹⁵⁵ While methodologies like connoisseurship require the starting point of a single autograph painting to discover the works of a woman artist, the close collaborations among Neapolitan painters in the seventeenth century do not allow this. Nevertheless, we must pursue alternative and more expansive art historical methodologies, potentially looking beyond those used to study early modern Italy, to further the understanding of the artistic production of these and other women artists.

¹⁵⁴ As mentioned by Willette, who concurs with the earlier hypothesis of scholar Raffaello Causa. Willette, *La scuola stanzionesca*, 124 n. 50.

¹⁵⁵ Prota-Giurleo, *Il complesso familiare*, 8.

Artemisia Gentileschi: Singular Woman Artist and Collaborator

Workshop collaboration among close-knit Neapolitan artists was not limited to those who lived in the city for most of their lives. This level of collaboration is something which Artemisia Gentileschi would adhere to, becoming one of the few non-Neapolitan artists to integrate successfully.¹⁵⁶ Echoing the historiography of many Neapolitan artists, collaboration is widely accepted within a few Neapolitan works by Artemisia, but the methods by which we examine these works remain uncertain. Specifically, works such as Artemisia's *Bathsheba* (Fig. 12) are now accepted as collaborations with Viviano Codazzi and Domenico Gargiulo, although this acknowledgement is rarely reflected in the labeling or analysis of these works.¹⁵⁷ Another collaborative work is the painting of *Lot and His Daughters* (Fig. 13), now attributed to Artemisia, although scholars such as Marshall have attempted to identify individual figural contributions by Bernardo Cavallino and Agostino Beltrano.¹⁵⁸

Alongside these paintings, scholarship regarding Artemisia's workshop practices towards the end of her career increasingly argue for collaboration; however, the degree of collaboration and its execution has yet to be decided. Riccardo Lattuada has argued that the level of collaboration in Artemisia's workshop after the year 1635 was so high that "Artemisia's name

¹⁵⁶ This was no small feat: De Dominici records several anecdotes of the fierce competition between Neapolitan artists and those brought in by patrons to complete other highly competitive commissions. Specifically, we know of the contract of the Chapel of the Treasury of Saint Januarius in Naples, which resulted in both Guido Reni and Cavalier D'Arpino being chased out of the city. While Artemisia clearly assimilated despite her status as an outsider brought in by Spanish patrons, we also have evidence such as her letter from 1630, where she asks for permission for her cleric to obtain a gun due to her feeling unsafe. With no additional evidence, it is uncertain, yet possible, that Artemisia may have experienced the same tensions as the earlier artists in the early years of her arrival. Marshall, *Baroque Naples*, 34-39; Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 107.

¹⁵⁷ This is largely due to De Dominici's commentary: "Due quadri grandi con figure al naturale, che esprimono le storie di Betsabea e Susanna, che sembran di mano di Guido son dipinti dalla famosa Artemisia Gentileschi, e l'architettura di Viviano, con gli arbori e vedute dello Spadaro [Domenico Gargiulo]." De Dominici, *Vite*, 3: 384.

¹⁵⁸ Marshall, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 204-205.

was a brand under which a number of Neapolitan painters operated.”¹⁵⁹ Porzio stressed a perception of stylistic incoherency in later works by Artemisia, echoing the idea that her name became a sort of trademark rather than pointing to her sole authorship.¹⁶⁰ Marshall highlights Artemisia’s workshop in Naples as a fluid environment through which junior artists would constantly rotate, although he rejects ideas presented by Lattuada which states that she would have flaunted this level of collaboration.¹⁶¹ With increasing attempts to parse and identify not only the level of collaboration in the workshop and works of Artemisia, but how that collaboration occurred, shifts in our methodological approaches are needed which have yet to occur. Yet for Artemisia, her autonomous identity as an artist was not something invented by De Dominici or later created by the historiography. She had a carefully cultivated reputation, which she maintained during her Neapolitan era, including her signatures on several of her works. How could she, while maintaining her fierce independence, have possibly become a part of such a large, integrated workshop like those typical of Naples?

The best way to analyze this change, I suggest, is through Artemisia’s most prominent commissions during her time in Naples, many of which were part of a series undertaken with Neapolitan artists.¹⁶² These include the Buen Retiro Canvases, which we will be discussing here, for which Artemisia Gentileschi painted the *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* (Fig. 18). However, it should be noted that an equally important commission to examine from this period would be the

¹⁵⁹ Lattuada, “Unknown Paintings by Artemisia in Naples,” 204.

¹⁶⁰ Porzio notes that all works are now given the title of “Artemisia,” to register that trademark, even when there is clear intervention by other assistants. Porzio, “Artemisia a Napoli,” 29.

¹⁶¹ Marshall, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 205-206.

¹⁶² Within these series, the scholarship has since proposed that many of her commissions were due to the “influence,” or “intervention,” of prominent Neapolitan painters such as Massimo Stanzione. The extent to which this influence was exerted, where it came from, and why it would have been necessary for Artemisia to require an intervention, given that she was brought to Naples by the very same Spanish patrons who commissioned her, is currently debated. Porzio, “Artemisia a Napoli,” 27-28.

canvases for the Cathedral of Pozzuoli, including Artemisia's *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig. 14), *Saint Januarius in the Amphitheatre* (Fig. 15), and *Saints Proculus and Nicea* (Fig. 16).¹⁶³ By examining the series of Buen Retiro canvases as a product of Neapolitan workshop collaboration, including artists beyond those named in the documents, and by re-examining Artemisia's letters, we begin to garner a deeper understanding of how she maintained her authorship while navigating a changing demand for paintings that required many more figures and more elaborate background features.

The Buen Retiro series consists of six paintings depicting the life of John the Baptist, with documentation identifying the artists as Artemisia Gentileschi, Massimo Stanzione, and Paolo Finoglia.¹⁶⁴ The paintings were first recorded in 1656-1659, when they were identified as individual paintings of the history of Saint John the Baptist by Massimo Stanzione (Figs. 17, 19-21), and a *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* by Artemisia Gentileschi (Fig. 18).¹⁶⁵ A 1701 inventory would record these paintings as a series, with their respective authors, noting an additional scene by Paolo Finoglia of John the Baptist in prison.¹⁶⁶ Since the earliest documentation for these paintings is from 1656, in documents from Spanish archives, the date of execution for these paintings in Naples and precise knowledge of how they were painted is more difficult to determine.

¹⁶³ While not to be discussed here, the canvases for the Cathedral of Pozzuoli, assigned to authors such as Massimo Stanzione, Agostino Beltrano, Jusepe di Ribera, Paolo Finoglio, and others, are an incredibly important commission with the potential to be examined as part of the workshop collaboration established here.

¹⁶⁴ R. Ward Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi and the Authority of Art: Critical Reading and Catalogue Raisonné* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 249-256.

¹⁶⁵ "El cavallero Máximo grandissimo pintor...En el Buen Retiro está la historia de S. Ju de su mano, cosa famosa..." and "Pintora de Roma [Artemisia Gentileschi]; desta mujer trajo el Duque de Alcalá a España algunas famosas pinturas. En el Buen Retiro desta Corte ay una pintura del Nacimiento de San Juan, que es cosa excelente. Prosigue con sus pinturas esta Historia el Caballero Máximo." As quoted in Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 249.

¹⁶⁶ All listings of the paintings in this inventory, included the full four by Massimo Stanzione, and the one painting done by Finoglia and Artemisia can be found in Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 249-250.

In his catalogue raisonné on Artemisia Gentileschi, R. Ward Bissell compiled previous mentions of the Buen Retiro series to speculate on these issues. Like Antonio Vannugli, Bissell believed the paintings to have been destined for the chapel in the Hermitage of San Juan, a building on the grounds of the Buen Retiro but not in the palace itself, although the works would later be moved into the palace and recorded there.¹⁶⁷ They are believed to have been commissioned by the Count-Duke of Olivares, through his brother-in-law the Duke of Monterrey, who was the viceroy of Naples at the time (1631-1637).¹⁶⁸ As both Vannugli and Bissell noted, the precise measurements of the paintings create a unique and specific scheme, suggest that the commission involved detailed measurements.¹⁶⁹ The specificity of these measurements and the iconographic series, alongside other stylistic ideas discussed by Bissell, lead to the likely conclusion of close collaboration between the artists—Artemisia, Finoglia, and Stanzione—and allowed for a more precise dating: Bissell believes the work was commissioned in spring of 1633 and completed at the earliest in fall of 1633, when the construction of the Hermitage was complete, but likely no later than 1634.¹⁷⁰

Bissell acknowledges the level of collaboration, stating: “What is clear is that the artists consulted with one another at every turn and—given the deadline under which they had to operate—may have contributed to one another’s pictures.”¹⁷¹ Beyond this, he elaborates that artists such as Bernardo Cavallino may have even contributed individual figures to some of Stanzione’s canvases, and cites inspiration for certain figural types as coming from the Master of

¹⁶⁷ Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 251-252.

¹⁶⁸ Antonio Vannugli, “Stanzione, Gentileschi, Finoglia: le *Storie di San Giovanna Battista* per il Buen Retiro,” *Storia dell’Arte* 80 (1994): 68.

¹⁶⁹ For further potential schemata discussing their hanging and location, see Vannugli, “Stanzione, Gentileschi, Finoglia,” 65-69, Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 251-253.

¹⁷⁰ Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 254.

¹⁷¹ Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 254.

the Annunciation to the Shepherds.¹⁷² Bissell’s analysis echoes the ideas of close collaboration between Neapolitan artists—even suggesting that Stanzione received the commission, and enlisted Finoglia and Artemisia to help.¹⁷³ While echoing previous arguments made in this thesis—that the idea of execution of larger commissions in Naples was rarely limited to a single name, although it may have been done so for payments and ease of commissioning—these conclusions regarding collaboration may be too limited. The canvases were likely not just collaborations between the three artists assigned to individual canvases, but among many more painters within their shared and overlapping workshop spaces.

The Buen Retiro canvases are the earliest record of Artemisia’s entrance into the Neapolitan workshop structure. In addition to the documentary evidence which outlines her work with Stanzione and Finoglia, there is another important note in the 1701 inventories of the works. Here Artemisia Gentileschi is named as the daughter of Massimo Stanzione.¹⁷⁴ While clearly not a factual statement, it is interesting that this connection was recorded as such by the Spanish patrons, once again conflating our idea of artistic genealogy with the familial in the context of early 17th century Naples.

To visually examine Artemisia’s *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* as a truly collaborative work, we may look at the progression of Artemisia’s Neapolitan canvases throughout her career: not through the more common debates over her stylistic changes, often categorized largely by a shedding of Artemisia’s “Caravaggism,” but through a recognition of the significant features

¹⁷² Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 255.

¹⁷³ Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 250-251.

¹⁷⁴ “de mano de Artemise Gentileschi hija del Cauallero Maximo,” As quoted in Bissell, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 250.

within the canvases, and the method by which they were made.¹⁷⁵ Through this, we can observe these changes to not only recognize collaborative practices, but to identify Artemisia's hand within them. The first of Artemisia's securely attributed Neapolitan canvases is her *Annunciation* (Fig. 5). Signed and dated in 1630, the painting is a simple composition: the right foreground features an angel kneeling in front of the Virgin, who stands a step above the angel but is bent at the waist, in a gesture of prayerful humility. These two figures are the dominant features of the entire painting: at the incredible size of 257 cm tall, there are limited additional features except in the area above the angel's left hand. There, a white dove emerges from the parted clouds, its light illuminating the scene, as seraphim assist the heavenly messenger. The background, like many of her early canvases, remains shrouded completely in darkness, with the only sense of space coming from the single step stretching across the foreground, which creates a sense of hierarchy and separation between the two central figures.

This painting was likely a major ecclesiastical commission in Naples, its dimensions suggesting it was an altarpiece, although for which church is unknown.¹⁷⁶ Yet limited background, basic iconography, and few figures are characteristic of many of Artemisia's earlier and securely documented works, here argued to have limited if no substantial intervention in its painting by other artists, except perhaps Prudenzia. *The Birth of Saint John the Baptist* serves as

¹⁷⁵ Garrard had earlier noted the changes in Artemisia's Neapolitan canvases as becoming more "graceful and 'feminine'" although this changed is ascribed to Artemisia's age. Locker further examines this, redefining the work of Artemisia in Naples as something "sweeter, more devout, and in early modern art-critical language, more 'feminine.'" Locker notes this shift as a consequence of Bolognese influence in Naples, and the preferred style for Spanish patrons. However, these ideas of Artemisia's shifting style are not wholly popular among art historians, who view what is widely understood as Artemisia's shedding of "Caravaggism" as a disappointing change. Garrard, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 136; Jesse Locker, *Artemisia Gentileschi and the Language of Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 4, 12, 16.

¹⁷⁶ Marshall, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 154.

the major turning point for her paintings, due to its increased number of figures and inclusion of additional background features. Yet despite this, we can still find her hand in this painting.

As previously discussed, *The Birth of Saint John the Baptist* features a group of midwives as its central focus: first is a woman who sits on the right of the group on a rickety and worn chair. While the other midwives communicate with one another, she looks on—observing the scene with thoughtfulness, or perhaps in awe of the miraculous young child, as she holds several towels but makes no effort to assist the other midwives. To her left, the midwife in the dark green headdress leans above the basin, holding the baby St. John, as she engages in a wordless exchange with the younger midwife, who tests the water with her hands. Behind these three figures, the final midwife towers over the group with a new basin of water, glancing towards the elder midwife for further instruction.

The background on the upper right of the canvas opens into an architectural feature: an arched hallway, with precisely rendered brick detailing on the sides, a stone doorway, and a balcony with a columned railing. On the far left of the canvas sits Zachariah, in front of his wife, Elizabeth, whose face is clearly aged and tired in the bed, and who is attended by another female midwife, who dips a towel into a basin of water, gazing at the tired mother. The background which accommodates the central and left side of the canvas has a wall with limited detailing, and a curtain which is also shrouded in darkness. While the condition of the background and the figures of Elizabeth and the midwife may be due to age and state of conservation, there is a notable darkness which shrouds them in comparison to the figures in the foreground of the canvas, who are portrayed in more direct light.

Some of the suggested collaboration here can be seen amongst the background figures and the architectural features on the right of the canvas—both features which, when added to the

canvas, create cohesion within the series. The contrast of lighting between the central and the background figures, who are shrouded in darkness, can be seen not only in the *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* but also in other works of the series such as *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist* (Fig. 21). In the *Birth of Saint John the Baptist*, Elizabeth and her midwife are shrouded in a level of light which is notably different from that of Zacharias and the other midwives: the two women, while having identifiable facial features, clothing, towels and blankets, lack the level of detail of the foreground figures. Their colors remain subdued in the relative darkness; the shawl of the midwife, for example, is a solid color. This contrasts with the figure of Zachariah, whose robe of brick red shifts tone in the lighting, as does the seated midwife's finer shawl, whose silk texture varies colors in the light from pink to yellow. A clear divide between the central figures and background figures is maintained throughout all five remaining canvases: in the *Beheading of Saint John*, the left background of the canvas holds two women, whose faces are partly obscured in the darkness as well as by the sharp, shining steel of the executioner's sword. The contrast of the sword-wielding executioner, whose form catches the light through the rippling muscles on his back and left arm, tensed and prepared, makes the lack of detail in the rendering of the two background women even more evident. Barely visible, yet in the center of the background, two other prisoners look on at John the Baptist's beheading, afforded the same basic color, yet none of the dimensionality offered to those figures in the light. As Artemisia's canvas includes an increasing number of figures and architectural features, we see Stanzione's canvases stylistically imitating the effects of light which gives Artemisia's foreground figures their dimensionality and details.

These observations suggest the involvement of many hands in each of these paintings given to Artemisia and Stanzione: any artists within proximity, including artists such as Diana

and Pacecco de Rosa, Agostino Beltrano, Prudenzia Stiattești, Cristina, Agatha, and Giuseppe Beltrano, and any number of artists within the family, Artemisia's workshop, and Stanzone's school, including unnamed artists who may have painted background figures for their entire careers. This work within the Buen Retiro canvases allow us to identify the influence of Neapolitan collaborative practice on Artemisia's art within the city.

A persistent issue which occurs in arguing for this theory is the level of artistic identity which Artemisia cultivated for herself. This laid the foundation for the scholarship on Artemisia, which has focused on her self-portraits and her signatures, and their role in her art and artistic commissions.¹⁷⁷ Importantly, the *Birth of John the Baptist* was signed—and done so in such an explosive manner, as Artemisia's name lies on the ground in front of Zachariah: a reference to the elder, robbed of speech, declaring the name of his son but only after having written Artemisia's own. How does Artemisia claim her authorship if she allowed others to contribute to parts of her composition such as background figures or other architectural features? Instead of accepting the signature as a deception meant to maintain Artemisia's authorship, through examinations of her prior work and her letters describing her practice, I will argue how Artemisia still saw herself the painting's author despite the contributions of other artists.

As we discussed with Artemisia's earliest Neapolitan work, the *Annunciation*, the staple of her pre-Naples canvases were one to three figures, flush against the foreground of the painting. She would include varied but limited backgrounds: an ornate chair in her *Mary Magdalene* (Fig. 22), the bed for her bloody *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (Fig. 23), or detailed

¹⁷⁷ Some of the prominent examples include studies on Artemisia's signatures, biographies, and self-portraits: Judith W. Mann, "Identity Signs: Meanings and Methods in Artemisia Gentileschi's Signatures," *Renaissance Studies* 23, no. 1 (February 2009): 71-107; Barker, "The First Biography of Artemisia Gentileschi; Mary Garrard, "The Fictive Self: Musicians and Magdalenes," in *Artemisia Gentileschi and Feminism in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020).

curtains and fabrics in her *Judith and Her Maidservant* (Fig 24). Despite the considerable size of some of these canvases, very rarely if ever would Artemisia produce more complex compositions such as scenes with many figures, detailed perspectival settings, or backgrounds which went beyond the essential features of a scene rather than fading into complete darkness. From these early paintings and other evidence I will examine, it appears that Artemisia associated her claims to authorship with the planning of her canvases and her production of central foreground figures whose lighting, engaging details, dimensionality and colorful draperies attested to her virtuosity. These figures are those which she painted from life, a technique which she would maintain from her earliest beginnings as a follower of Caravaggio and continue to maintain throughout her Neapolitan work. There is an important distinction to be made here, which is vital in understanding Artemisia's Neapolitan work: often it is stated that Artemisia shed her "Caravaggism" in her Neapolitan period due to a change of "style."¹⁷⁸ Here I will argue instead that her Caravaggism was a technique that was successfully inserted amongst the practice of preparatory sketches, and her innovation allows for the marriage of the two previously constructed binaries of preparatory sketches and drawings and "from-life" painting.¹⁷⁹

Alongside her signature in the *Birth of Saint John the Baptist*, Artemisia asserted her authorship in numerous letters and payments, where canvases are designated to have been "by

¹⁷⁸ See footnote 177 for historiography.

¹⁷⁹ This identification of Artemisia's technique as an adherence to that of Caravaggio (and how I understand Caravaggio's artistic technique) comes from the research of Dr. Estelle Lingo, which I was introduced to in a seminar on "Caravaggism as Image-Making Technology," and which is discussed in her article "Caravaggio, Alberti, and Narcissian Disegno," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 35-62. Here, Dr. Lingo argues for Caravaggio as an innovator whose technique of painting (not to be confused with his style) from the model is a form of receptive *disegno*, rather than its antithesis, as suggested in the systematic repression of his work by later commentators. My full understanding of Caravaggism through this definition has been informed by exchanges I have had with Dr. Lingo regarding her forthcoming book *To Destroy Caravaggio*.

her hand.”¹⁸⁰ Two specific parts of Artemisia’s letters to patron Don Antonio Ruffo, cited often within her historiography, can perhaps illuminate which work Artemisia prized as hers, and how the authorship defined by Artemisia still allowed for additional painters to assist with her canvases. In a letter to Ruffo on November 13, 1649, Artemisia refuses to send him her preparatory sketches. She states that she had once had a nasty trick played on her, when after sending a patron these sketches, another artist was hired to paint the altarpiece, presumably for less money, based on Artemisia’s own sketches.¹⁸¹ Sheila Barker has identified this altarpiece as the *Purgatory*, painted by artist Giovanni Andrea Coppola, for the church of Saint Agatha in Gallipoli.¹⁸² When describing the theft, Artemisia relates that, once the composition (*inventione*) with its lights and darks and the arrangement of planes are completed in her sketches, “the rest is nothing.”¹⁸³ Later in the letter, she refuses to cut the cost of the *Galatea* she is working on for Ruffo because of the great cost to find nude women to model for her.¹⁸⁴ From Artemisia’s proclamations, it seems that once the figures of her compositions, drawn from life, were arranged to her satisfaction, and given proper distribution of shadow and light, that any other artist could complete the work yet it would still be Artemisia’s. While background figures, whose shadow dictates their lessening detail, and background features such as the architectural structures of Codazzi, may all be added to a work, Artemisia herself identifies important and essential aspects

¹⁸⁰ “di sua mano.” A payment which was made to Artemisia from patron Antonio Galisio, before being directly transferred to Onofrio Palombo, a common method of paying collaborators. As printed in: Abetti, “Appendice B,” 110.

¹⁸¹ Letter to Don Antonio Ruffo from Artemisia Gentileschi, November 13, 1649. Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 156.

¹⁸² Barker, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 116.

¹⁸³ Letter to Don Antonio Ruffo from Artemisia Gentileschi, November 13, 1649. “perché quando è fatta l’inventione, et stabilito con li suoi chiarai et uscuri, e fundati sui loro piani tutto il resto ei baia,” Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 156.

¹⁸⁴ “che gè va figure ignude et femmine di grandissimo stipendio et gran rompimento di capo e delle volte quando se ritrova qualche cosa di bono me pelano a pelo rinverso...” Barker has also identified Artemisia’s use of the ‘realistic’ female nude as one way which Artemisia celebrated real women, rather than the idealized nudes so often seen. Letter to Don Antonio Ruffo from Artemisia Gentileschi, November 13, 1649. Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 156; Barker, *Artemisia Gentileschi*, 123.

of painting, which include the compositional sketches and central figures (often those in the foreground) painted from life by the master.¹⁸⁵ This shows a more dynamic sense of authorship for Artemisia. Her anecdote regarding her sketches demonstrates that while she viewed the practice of compositional planning as essential to her authorship, and enough to claim it as her own, her continued requests and usage of models to paint from life also demonstrate her involvement in the painting of her canvases as well. Here, we see Artemisia continuing her practice of painting from the model in Naples, integrating it with the needs of her workshop and demands of her patrons. As Artemisia plans her larger canvases, she also integrates figures painted from life by the master's hand, those typically central to the scene and in the foreground. She successfully integrates these figures within her larger works and defines her authorship as a unique combination of compositional planning and from-life painting.

Looking again the *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* from this perspective, we can identify the figures arranged on the first plane, but particularly the four women surrounding John the Baptist: appropriately illuminated, highlighted, textured, their colors and details precise. These figures, according to the artist, as well as the overall planning completed in the sketching of the composition are core to Artemisia's work and alone warrant her signature. The additions are parts which help tie her work into the series, such as the architectural feature and addition of several figures in the background, and while she planned their arrangement, the execution of these figures in paint may have been the work of herself and that of several other artists, and perhaps Prudenzia. We can see this through her signature itself: while noted for its placement in front of Zachariah, its place in the foreground is very telling. The *Annunciation* bears a similar placement

¹⁸⁵ Alongside our knowledge from primary sources of Artemisia's from-life painting, Sandrart attests to Artemisia's skilled drawings as well. Von Sandrart, *Academie*, 290.

of the signature, moving it to the foreground, instead of on one of many architectural features where she had previously placed her signature. This may also serve as a clue to reflect Artemisia's claim to the unique authorship of her work, which relies both on the overall planning of the composition, but also the figures in the foreground, many who were likely painted from models, denoting the master's hand. The contrast of central and background figures can also be seen in the Pozzuoli altarpieces, where the figures on the central plane greatly contrast to the detail of those behind them. Other paintings, such as her *Bathsheba* and *Lot and His Daughters* reflect her initial formula: three figures, foregrounded in the canvas, but the increasingly detailed backgrounds are completed with the help of additional specialists, as stated by De Dominici and highlighted by other scholars.

An important aspect to consider regarding the method of collaboration sketched here is that while it allows for collaboration within the picture, it does not include multiple copies of her work of the sort continually appearing on the art market today. Artemisia stated in another letter to Ruffo that her compositions are unique: "and never has a repetition of an *inventione* been found in my paintings, even in a single hand."¹⁸⁶ While some scholars dismiss this as an overstated claim of authentication made for a patron, for her works in Naples this might very well be true.¹⁸⁷ The workshop consolidation in Naples, as well as frequent public exhibitions of the artist's works, even those done for private patrons, would have allowed her canvases to be viewed by many other artists, in progress and complete.¹⁸⁸ Repeated copies of paintings which bear similarities in their compositional layout, although differing quality, likely are not copies

¹⁸⁶ "et mai si è travato ne'quadri miei corrispondentia d'inventione etiam in d'una mano." Letter to Don Antonio Ruffo from Artemisia Gentileschi, November 13, 1649. Solinas, *Lettere di Artemisia*, 155.

¹⁸⁷ Lattuada, "Unknown Paintings by Artemisia in Naples," 201.

¹⁸⁸ Marshall, *Baroque Naples*, 236-244.

which were done by Artemisia, or commissioned from her workshop, but independent works produced by the plethora of artists, named and unnamed, in the Neapolitan Baroque art market, to response to the demand for Artemisia's paintings.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the lives and artworks of Diana di Rosa and Artemisia Gentileschi in Naples, using alternative methodologies and perspectives which do not seek to reach definitive answers but rather to change our perspectives on female artistic production in Naples, and in doing so, to challenge the broader monographic focus of art history in relation to art production in Naples and beyond. As such, there are several major alternative routes through which to develop further the ideas presented here, which may serve to offer similar or differing perspectives, but would nevertheless yield more information.

The first would be an increase in technical studies on the works attributed to Artemisia Gentileschi and the potential for similar work to be undertaken for paintings attributed to Diana di Rosa, and more generally, for the many Neapolitan painters alluded to here.¹⁸⁹ While the data collected would not offer definitive proof of authorship, or even of the number of artists, insights such as preparatory sketches, or underdrawings, may allow for several re-interpretations which could further illuminate instances of Neapolitan collaboration.

The second is a further search for existing Neapolitan archival sources for the people examined here: further documents referring to the identity of Antonio de Napoli, for example,

¹⁸⁹ Recent examples from her time in Naples include a study of her Pozzuoli *Adoration of the Magi*, and her *David with the Head of Goliath*. E. Scialla, J. Brocchieri, M. Merolle, et. al, "The *Adoration of the Magi* by Artemisia Gentileschi analyzed with multispectral imaging and XRF technique," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 57 (Sept. 2024); Gianni Papi, Tracey D. Chaplin, Simo Gillespie, "A 'David and Goliath' by Artemisia Gentileschi rediscovered," *The Burlington Magazine* 162 (March 2020): 188-195.

but also the serious study of Neapolitan women artists throughout the whole of the seventeenth century whose names we know but remain understudied: Prudenzia Stiattești, Cristina Beltrano, Luisa Capamozza, Mariangela Criscuolo, Elena Recco, Mariangela de Matteis, and many more. Beyond looking for women who we know of as artists, this thesis and further research may shed light on the artistic production of the women who were deeply interconnected within these families of artists: Caterina de Mauro, Maria Grazia and Lucrezia di Rosa, and many others.

Both these opportunities for further research, however, are likely to have only limited impact. This thesis aims to offer alternative art historical insights, which in many cases, necessitate new methodologies and ways of thinking. These may belong, as we have seen, to feminist scholars even beyond art history and history, whose methodologies stretch well beyond those seen in feminist art history, or other disciplines from whom we can borrow. This thesis aims to ask how we view “objectivity” in history, and how the insistent and traditional methodologies of art history, which prize the individual male artist (and in recent years, the female artist), create barriers that cannot be overcome. While Artemisia Gentileschi is an artist for whom a steady flow of new documentation has been published, there are nevertheless questions that have plagued her scholarship since its inception and have yet to be answered, and these answers may not exist in the archive. By examining alternative methodologies and ways of thinking about Artemisia Gentileschi and women’s artistic production, we may not only serve to advance our understanding of the artist, but find the gateway to the lives of numerous other women artists whose names we may never find—at once understanding that the lack of women

artists in the archive has little to do with exceptionality and much more to do with the systemic omissions. A lack of women on paper does not mean a lack of women on canvas.¹⁹⁰

In Lopresti's book, Diana di Rosa refers to Artemisia Gentileschi as her *Maestra*: an act of respect, but also an act of rebellion. Just before that, however, Diana stood in the workshop of Massimo Stanzione as Artemisia entered:

'Hello Anna!' Artemisia used to say...going over to the shabbily dressed young woman whose clothes were neglected in her fervor of painting. Massimo Stanzione would come running over from the other end of the studio, anxious and vigilant, with raised arms, beseeching eyes: do not disturb the miraculous pupil, the beloved prodigy. Having pushed the visitor into a corner, the maestro would explain in a low voice: 'She's so sensitive and odd, we must treat her with great care. An amazing talent.'¹⁹¹

Stanzione, referred to as the maestro (lowercase m) begs Artemisia not to interfere with the genius of his prodigy. Yet both women choose to ignore him, with Diana's first words of the book claiming Artemisia as her *Maestra*. In this scene, Lopresti's character of Stanzione physically performs the role of a barrier to Diana di Rosa's recognition by Artemisia, and in a smaller, yet still significant way, to Artemisia's recognition by Diana. This echoes the ensuing historiography to which these women have been subjected, as Stanzione and the other men within their lives separate them from each other and from recognition for their work. This is not only a barrier for Artemisia Gentileschi and Diana di Rosa, but for many known women artists, and women such as Maria Grazia and Lucrezia di Rosa: all Neapolitan women artists whose likely work remains buried underneath that of a father, brother, husband, or uncle. This thesis

¹⁹⁰ Line graciously gifted to me by my colleague, Nic Staley.

¹⁹¹ "'Buon giorno Anna!' diceva Artemisia, entrata come a caso...e avanzando verso la giovane trasandata, quasi discinta foga del dipingere. Trepido e vigilante accorreva dal fondo della bottega Massimo Stanzione, le braccia levate, gli occhi supplici: non si disturbi l'allieva miracolosa, il prodigo carissimo...il maestro spiegava a bassa voce: "Cosi sensitiva e bizzarra bisogna averle riguardo. Un talent da sbalordire." Translation by Shirley D'Ardia Caracciolo. Caracciolo, trans. *Artemisia*, 196; Banti, *Artemisia*, 179.

offers a way to re-examine not only the Neapolitan woman artist, but woman artists in the historic period of early modern Italy: moving beyond or through the archives with deference to their stories and honoring their views. And through an increasingly collaborative perspective on the execution of paintings, we can learn to see beyond the monographic mindset of art history, which can only bring us so far in uncovering women whose voices were deliberately silenced.

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Figure List

Given the nature of this thesis, the artists indicated in the captions are meant to reflect as many of the potential contributors as possible; the term “workshop” does not necessarily designate subordinate artists within the same space, nor are the names given intended to exclude additional possible contributors.

Figure 1

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Allegory of Painting*, 98.6 x 75.2 cm, c. 1638-1639, Hampton Court Palace, London



Figure 2

Diana di Rosa, *Saint Cecilia with an Angel*, 97.5 x 76.5 cm, unknown date, (est. 1630s) Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

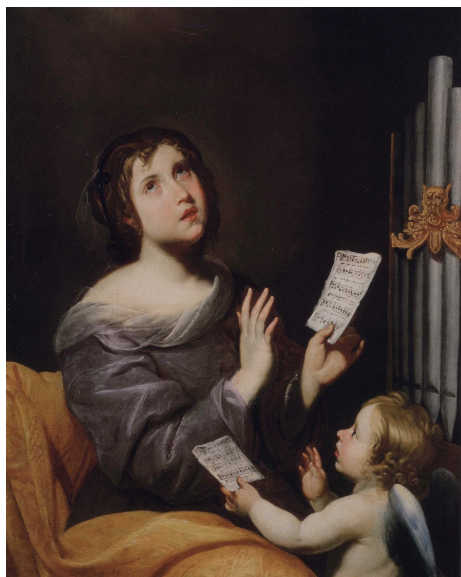


Figure 3

Detail of Fig. 2



Figure 4

Cristina Beltrano, *Praying Madonna*, unknown date, unknown location.

Figure 5

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Annunciation*, c. 1630, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte, Naples



Figure 6

Traditionally given to Diana di Rosa, Workshop of Diana di Rosa, Agostino Beltrano, Filippo Vitale, other Neapolitan artists, *Birth of the Virgin*, unknown date (est. c. 1630-1643) Church of the Pieta dei Turchini, Naples.



Figure 7

Traditionally given to Diana di Rosa, Workshop of Diana di Rosa, Agostino Beltrano, Filippo Vitale, other Neapolitan artists, *Death of the Virgin*, unknown date (est. c. 1630-1643), Church of the Pieta dei Turchini, Naples.



Figure 8

Traditionally given to Andrea Vaccaro, Workshop of Andrea Vaccaro, Neapolitan artists, *Christ in Front of Pilate*, unknown date (est. 1640-1650), Church of the Pieta dei Turchini, Naples.
Photo by author.



Figure 9

Traditionally given to Andrea Vaccaro, Workshop of Andrea Vaccaro, Neapolitan artists, *Flagellation*, unknown date (est. 1640-1650), Church of the Pieta dei Turchini, Naples. Photo by author.



Figure 10

Traditionally given to Andrea Vaccaro, Workshop of Andrea Vaccaro, Neapolitan artists, *The Road to Calvary*, unknown date (est. 1640-1650), Church of the Pieta dei Turchini, Naples. Photo by author.



Figure 11

Traditionally given to Filippo Vitale, Workshop of Filippo Vitale, Agostino Beltrano, Diana di Rosa, Pacecco de Rosa, Neapolitan artists, *Guardian Angel*, unknown date (est. 1630s, donated 1641), Church of the Pietà dei Turchini, Naples



Figure 12

Traditionally given to Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshop of Artemisia Gentileschi, Viviano Codazzi, and Domenico Gargiulio, *Bathsheba*, c. 1636-37, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus



Figure 13

Traditionally given to Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshop of Artemisia Gentileschi, Neapolitan artists, *Lot and His Daughters*, c.1636-1637, Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo



Figure 14

Traditionally given to Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshop of Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshops of Massimo Stanzione, Paolo Finoglio, Agostino Beltrano, and all artists of the Pozzuoli canvases, *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1636-37, Cathedral di Pozzuoli, Pozzuoli.



Figure 15

Traditionally given to Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshop of Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshops of Massimo Stanzione, Paolo Finoglio, Agostino Beltrano, and all artists of the Pozzuoli canvases, *Saint Janarius in the Ampitheatre*, c. 1636-37, Cathedral di Pozzuoli, Pozzuoli.



Figure 16

Traditionally given to Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshop of Artemisia Gentileschi, Workshops of Massimo Stanzione, Paolo Finoglio, Agostino Beltrano, and all artists of the Pozzuoli canvases, *Saints Proculus and Nicea*, c. 1636-37, Cathedral di Pozzuoli, Pozzuoli.



Figure 17

Traditionally given to Massimo Stanzione, the Workshop of Massimo Stanzione, with assistance from the Workshops of Artemisia Gentileschi and Paolo Finoglio, *The Birth of Saint John the Baptist Announced to Zacharias*, c. 1635, Museo del Prado, Madrid



Figure 18

Traditionally given to Artemisia Gentileschi, the Workshop of Artemisia Gentileschi, with assistance from the Workshops of Massimo Stanzione and Paolo Finoglio, *The Birth of Saint John the Baptist*, c. 1635, Museo del Prado, Madrid



Figure 19

Traditionally given to Massimo Stanzione, the Workshop of Massimo Stanzione, with assistance from the Workshops of Artemisia Gentileschi and Paolo Finoglio, *Saint John the Baptist Bids Farewell to his Parents*, c. 1635, Museo del Prado, Madrid



Figure 20

Traditionally given to Massimo Stanzione, the Workshop of Massimo Stanzione, with assistance from the Workshops of Artemisia Gentileschi and Paolo Finoglio, *The Preaching of Saint John the Baptist*, c. 1635, Museo del Prado, Madrid



Figure 21

Traditionally given to Massimo Stanzione, the Workshop of Massimo Stanzione, with assistance from the Workshops of Artemisia Gentileschi and Paolo Finoglio, *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, c. 1635, Museo del Prado, Madrid



Figure 22

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Mary Magdalene*, c. 1616-1618, Uffizi Gallery, Florence



Figure 23

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, c. 1612, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte, Naples



Figure 24

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith and Her Maidservant*, c. 1623, Detroit Institute of the Arts, Detroit

