SOFONISBA ANGUISSOLA AND HER EARLY TEACHERS

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SOFONISBA ANGUISSOLA AND HER EARLY TEACHERS

by

Lily Chin

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Art History, Hunter College
The City University of New York

2017

Thesis Sponsor:

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INTRODUCTION

Sofonisba Anguissola has long been known as the first notable woman artist of the Renaissance.¹ Anguissola not only had the good fortune to be born into a noble family, but she also benefited from contact with and training from several artists during her career, chief among them were her earliest instructors. Were it not for the guidance and education Anguissola received from her first two teachers, Bernardino Campi (c. 1522-1591) and Bernardino Gatti (c. 1495-1576) (often referred to “Il Soiaro” or “Il Sojaro”), it is questionable whether the artist might have enjoyed as much renown and success as she had.² Although she initially gained recognition through her genre painting depicting her family members, her status as the premier woman artist of the Renaissance was solidified on the strength of her portraits. Campi and Gatti were both renowned master painters working in the city of Cremona in the Lombardy region at the time of Anguissola’s apprenticeships. Gatti’s output was mainly grounded in altarpieces and other religious works, while Campi’s commissions were more varied, and included some portraits and religious scenes. Although his student Anguissola painted a great number of self-portraits, the only extant portrait of Campi himself is Anguissola’s double portrait *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* from the late 1550s (Figure 1), currently at the Pinacoteca

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¹ Variations of her name include Sophonisba Angosciosa, Sofonisba Anguisciuola, Sofanisba Anguisciola, Sophonisba Angussola, Sophonisba Anguissola, Sophanisba Anguissola, Sophonisba Anguisciola, and Sofonisba Lomelina.

² The common reference for Gatti as “Il Soiaro” (sometimes spelled “Il Sojaro” or less frequently, “Il Sogliaro”) derives from his father’s profession as a producer of tubs to hold wine, according to Franco Voltini in the exhibition catalog, *I Campi e la cultura artistica Cremonese del cinquecento* (Milan, Italy: Electa, 1985), 145, and Ilya Sandra Perlingieri. *Sofonisba Anguissola: The First Great Woman Artist of the Renaissance* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 52. For present purposes, I will refer to the artist as Bernardino Gatti, rather than “Il Soiaro.”
Nazionale in Siena. Taking what she learned from her instructors, Anguissola found her calling and strength in painting people and portraits. Her earlier experiences shaped her later career and her career not only brought her widespread admiration and fame, but positively impacted later women artists in the decades and years afterward.

Although elements of her teachers’ influences exist in her work, ultimately her style is not theirs. Anguissola’s place in history is due to a combination of chance and opportunity, unusual circumstances, and being in the right place at the right time. Her unconventional background (being both a woman and from a noble class and not being the daughter of an artist) coupled with taking bits and pieces from her teachers and other mentoring artists along the way and adding her own touches, aided her into becoming an original artist who experimented and innovated the Lombard style. She synthesized what she learned and added her own inventiveness to explore new territory in sixteenth-century portraiture by incorporating expressiveness and emotion in her works when they would not be expected and by introducing bold compositions. Anguissola, in a sense, also exerted some amount of influence on her teachers, as her later career helped write the story of how history remembers Campi and Gatti.

Today, Anguissola is known for her extensive number of self-portraits. More than a few art historians have noted that Anguissola’s series of self-portraits is outpaced only by Rembrandt van Rijn and Albrecht Dürer. Her earliest extant painted self-portrait (Figure 2), now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, was produced in 1554 following her two apprenticeships with Campi and Gatti. While the exact dates of her apprenticeships are not certain, Anguissola

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3 Perlingieri, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 49.

4 Several scholars have noted this fact, including Anne Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, *Women Artists, 1550-1950* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1976), 107, and Perlingieri, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 77-78.

5 The dating is based on a now-faded inscription according to Mary D. Garrard, “Here’s Looking at Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (Autumn, 1994), 558.
studied under Campi from around 1546 to 1549 or 1550 and then under Gatti from around 1550 to 1552 or 1553.

Sofonisba Anguissola was born around 1532 to Amilcare Anguissola (1494-1573) and his second wife, Bianca Ponzone in Cremona, Italy. With a lineage that can be traced back to the tenth century, the Anguissola clan was minor nobility for generations before Sofonisba and her six younger siblings were born. After the birth of Sofonisba, Amilcare and Bianca had six more children: five girls, Elena (c. 1535-after 1584), Lucia (c. 1536/38-1565), Minerva (c. 1539/41-c. 1564), Europa (c. 1542/44-?1578), Anna Maria (c. 1545/46-?), and a boy, Asdrubale (1551-1623). Following the Cremonese tradition of multiple artists emerging from one family (or several generations of one family), all six Anguissola daughters studied art or attempted to become artists. As a young girl, Minerva likely initially trained as an artist but later decided to pursue a different path as a writer and Latin scholar. Asdrubale, their only son, was not an artist.

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6 The majority of sources I consulted place Sofonisba Anguissola’s year of birth as “circa 1532” but her birth year varies from the late 1520s to 1540. Jonathan Brown records the year she was born as 1540 in his *Painting in Spain: 1500-1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 50. Maria Kusche also speculates that Anguissola’s birth year likely veers later, to about 1535 or after, on the basis of what her age might have been at the beginning of her Campi apprenticeship and also due to her marriage contract mentioning the possibility of having children. Therefore the assumption is that the artist must have been of childbearing age (Maria Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola: Her Life and Work,” in *Sofonisba Anguissola: A Renaissance Woman* by Sylvia Ferino-Pagden and Maria Kusche (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1995), 26, 103n2). More recent scholarship, such as Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012), 78, also tends to favor the 1535 or later timeframe. Bianca’s surname is also sometimes spelled Ponzoni or Punzona. Her birth and death dates are not known, although Maria Kusche reports that Bianca is still living in Cremona in 1578 in her essay, “Sofonisba Anguissola,” 81.

7 Mina Gregori notes in her essay, “Caravaggio and Lombardy: A Critical Account of the Artist’s Formation” in *Painters of Reality: The Legacy of Leonardo and Caravaggio in Lombardy*, ed. Andrea Bayer (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), 36, that another example of multiple artists from a Cremonese family is Galeazzo Campi and his three sons, Giulio, Antonio, and Vincenzo. Anguissola’s teacher, Bernardino Campi, is not directly related to this Campi dynasty, although Bernardino did apprentice under with Giulio. Some sources differ on whether all of the sisters studied painting or which of the sisters were artists. On page 390 of Catherine King, “Looking a Sight: Sixteenth-Century Portraits of Woman Artists,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 58. Bd., H. 3 (1995), only three sisters (Sofonisba, Lucia, and Minerva) are cited as painters. In Garrard, “Here’s Looking at Me,” 582, only Lucia, Europa, and Anna Maria are listed as her artist siblings. Based on my research, it is safe to conclude all five sisters studied art.

8 Ilya Sandra Perlingieri does not mention Minerva being an artist but instead states that she was a Latin scholar and a writer in *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 95, 175. Yet it is probable that Minerva was an artist in her youth because Giorgio
but he does feature prominently in one of Anguissola’s best-known drawings, *Asdrubale Bitten by a Crayfish* (Figure 3), which she made to fulfill a request from Michelangelo for a challenging subject: to draw a crying boy.\(^9\) Sofonisba later depicts Asdrubale in several more portraits at different ages, as well as in the group family portrait, *Portrait of Amilcare, Minerva, and Asdrubale Anguissola*, of around 1557-1558 (Figure 4).

Being of noble status, Amilcare and Bianca set out to give Sofonisba and her siblings a privileged education.\(^10\) In the same vein that Ercole I d’Este, the duke of Ferrara (1431-1505), arranged for his daughters Isabella (1474-1539) and Beatrice (1475-1497) to be given a proper classical education.\(^11\) Like other examples of privileged girls who received a classical education in the sixteenth century, including Vittoria Colonna (1490-1547) and Sir Thomas More’s daughter, Margaret (1504-1544), Amilcare also made sure the six Anguissola sisters received a humanist education normally reserved for boys.\(^12\) Educating the young daughters of the elite class, therefore, was not a novel concept when Amilcare decided on this path for his own children. Paul F. Grendler notes that, “the majority of female students came from the upper or

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\(^9\) Charles de Tolnay, “Sofonisba Anguissola and Her Relations with Michelangelo,” *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 4 (1941): 117. De Tolnay quotes from a letter by Michelangelo’s friend, Tommaso Cavalieri, that “Michelangelo having seen a a drawing done by her hand of a smiling girl, he said that he would have liked to see a weeping boy, as a subject more difficult to draw.”


middle classes” and that “a significant minority of girls studied the Latin humanities, usually with male household tutors.”

Maria Kusche postulates that one of the reasons Amilcare thought to educate his six daughters was to lighten the eventual burden of paying six dowries. While there is no evidence, this is a persuasive thesis for a family with six daughters. In addition to a classical education in the humanities, Anguissola and her sisters also studied music. Among her many self-portraits, she painted at least two depicting herself playing an instrument (showcasing another aspect of her privileged education), including *Self-Portrait at Spinet* of around 1555-1556 (Figure 5) and *Self-Portrait* (Figure 6) of 1561. The latter work is one of the few paintings produced during her time at the Spanish court that can be securely attributed to Anguissola.

Anguissola was not the only woman artist of this era to have been educated in the arts. Jacopo Robusti’s (called Tintoretto) daughter, Marietta Robusti (c. 1554-1590), also studied the arts (music and painting) as a child. Marietta had Giulio Zacchino as her music teacher for singing and for the harpsichord. Tintoretto himself taught her to draw and paint. Because of her experience and education, Carlo Ridolfi suggests that young women would benefit from the kind of upbringing and instruction in the arts that Robusti had. He states that, “This excellent lady [Robusti] will serve in the future as a model of womanly virtue.” Albeit, Marietta Robusti was born about twenty years after Anguissola, so her arts education might indicate a new

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13 Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 93.


15 Maria Kusche notes that Anguissola did not sign her work during her years at the Spanish court (from the late 1550s to 1570s) in her essay, “Sofonisba Anguissola,” 60.

16 Variations of Marietta Robusti’s name include Marietta Tintoretto.


18 Ibid., 99.
progression or perhaps Anguissola’s own success might have helped to spark or facilitate this societal shift.

Despite the advantage of her early education, Robusti still faced challenges from both within and outside of her family. Having trained as an artist in Tintoretto’s workshop, her work was so impressive that she received invitations from two European monarchs, Emperor Maximillan II of Austria and Philip II in Spain, to become a court painter. Unfortunately her father did not allow her to go to either royal court. Moreover, Robusti ends up dying in her thirties, her potential never fully realized.¹⁹

**Literature review:**

An increasing amount of scholarship has been produced on Sofonisba Anguissola over the last four decades. As some art historians have observed, despite being widely praised and securing a reputation as the preeminent female portrait painter during her lifetime, she was largely overlooked by the discipline over the next several hundred years.²⁰ Owing much to the impetus of Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin’s unprecedented 1976 exhibition, *Women Artists 1550-1950*, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Anguissola’s oeuvre has again come to the attention of scholars and to the public over the last forty years.²¹

Perhaps inspired by the LACMA exhibition, Germaine Greer’s 1979 monograph, *The Obstacle Race*, provides a few pages of overview of Sofonisba Anguissola and her sisters.


²⁰ Some of these scholars include Sylvia Ferino-Pagden, Ilya Sandra Perlingieri and Mina Gregori. Being neglected by art historians for several centuries is not a phenomenon that occurred only with women artists. In some ways, Anguissola’s fall into obscurity and subsequent resurgence calls to mind the case of Piero della Francesca, who scholars also largely disregarded for many years until he was rediscovered in the late nineteenth century.

²¹ In addition to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art exhibition, which opened in December 1976, the show also traveled to the University Art Museum at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas, the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the Brooklyn Museum in New York the following year.
Greer’s study is valuable as it takes a look at numerous lesser-known female artists who were the daughters of painters—such as Antonia Uccello, daughter of Paolo Uccello (1456-1491) and Isabel Sánchez Coello (1564-1612), daughter of Alonso Sánchez-Coello. Although Anguissola herself does not fall under the category of being a woman artist who had an artist father, the majority of female artists in the sixteenth and seventeenth century do. While Greer provides a possible historical context for Anguissola, she also demonstrates her singularity.

The first monograph on Anguissola, Flavio Caroli’s *Sofonisba Anguissola e le sue sorelle*, published in Italian, came out in 1987. Since that time, at least five other Italian-language monographs about the artist have been written. In addition to Caroli’s study, there are two monographs written in English about Anguissola. Although published more than twenty years ago, Ilya Sandra Perlingieri’s monograph, *Sofonisba Anguissola: The First Great Woman Artist of the Renaissance*, remains the primary and most comprehensive study written about the artist in English. Structured chronologically, Perlingieri’s monograph takes the reader through Anguissola’s life and works. The Perlingieri text is neither an exhibition catalog nor a catalogue raisonné but rather an extensive biography and a general overview of her attributed works. Although there are a few inaccuracies, such as stating that Anguissola’s *Self-Portrait* of about 1556 at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (Figure 7) was damaged in the 1980s, this monograph gives the English-language reader a thorough overview on the artist. Perlingieri also introduces

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24 When I viewed the Museum of Fine Arts Boston’s object file for this work in September 2014, I saw documentation and communication between the conservator and others at the MFA about the crystal glass covering being damaged but not the actual painting underneath, as Perlingieri mistakenly notes in Perlingieri, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 61, 63. According to the MFA’s file, the glass covering was replaced in the early 1990s, so perhaps it occurred after or around the same time as the publication of Perlingieri’s monograph. I also viewed the miniature myself in September 2014 and did not see any damage to the artist’s left hand in the painting, as Perlingieri claims.
a number of paintings, which she newly attributes to Anguissola, including the *Portrait of the Infantas Isabella Clara Eugenia and Catalina Micaela*, which scholars previously thought to be by the workshop of the Spanish painter Alonso Sánchez Coello.

A second English-language monograph on the artist is Sylvia Ferino-Pagden and Maria Kusche’s *Sofonisba Anguissola: A Renaissance Woman*, which was produced in conjunction with the 1995 exhibition on Anguissola that took place at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC.\(^{25}\) This was the first North American solo exhibition devoted to the artist.\(^{26}\) The exhibition also traveled to Santa Maria della Pietà in Cremona, Italy (1994) and the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (1995). The exhibition catalog features two essays by Ferino-Pagden and Kusche, in addition to catalog entries for most of the works featured in the exhibition.\(^ {27}\)

Similar to Perlingieri’s monograph published several years earlier, Kusche’s essay, “Sofonisba Anguissola: Her Life and Work,” gives the reader a chronological account of Anguissola’s life and career highlights.\(^ {28}\) There are some important differences between the two texts. Most notably, Kusche does not mention the young Anguissola’s time spent learning from

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\(^{27}\) The exhibition catalog is not an exhaustive list of the works featured in the exhibition. I viewed the exhibition’s archival material at the National Museum of Women in the Arts’ Library and Research Center in September 2014 and saw documentation and museum labels for paintings in the show that are not included in this catalog, such as *Double Portrait of a Lady and Her Daughter*, which is in NMWA’s own collection but the attribution to Anguissola is not secure.

Michelangelo in Rome in the 1550s.\textsuperscript{29} Perlingieri speculates that Anguissola traveled to Rome in the mid to late 1550s and spent a year or two learning from Michelangelo. It was not the kind of official apprenticeship that she had with Campi or Gatti, but rather consisted of informal assignments such as copying drawings, with the master offering critiques and suggestions.

Another significant distinction between Kusche and Perlingieri’s accounts is the authors’ differing view on whether Sofonisba’s younger sister, Elena Anguissola, also apprenticed with Bernardino Gatti before entering the Convent of the Holy Virgins at San Vincenzo in Mantua; Perlingieri believes that Elena did not, whereas Kusche reports that she did.\textsuperscript{30}

Giulio Bora’s essay, “Sofonisba Anguissola e la sua formazione cremonese: Il ruolo del disegno,” in the 1994 Italian-language exhibition catalog, \textit{Sofonisba Anguissola e le sue sorelle}, briefly discusses Anguissola’s time with both teachers but focuses almost entirely on the role of drawing, essentially excluding other elements of her training.\textsuperscript{31} Bora also briefly remarks on characteristics of \textit{disegno} in other Lombard artists, including influences from Leonardo da Vinci’s time in Milan and does not go into extensive detail on Anguissola’s time under Campi; however, Bora does suggest Anguissola’s drawings may have inspired some of the figures in one of Gatti’s better-known works, the fresco, \textit{Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes}, located in the refectory at San Pietro al Po in Cremona.

Although there was an increase in scholarship on Anguissola in the 1990s, in the last 15 years or so, literature on Anguissola has more often come in the form of dissertations and theses, rather than monographic studies. One master’s thesis, Meghan Jane Kalasky Musolff’s

\textsuperscript{29} Perlingieri writes about this period of her life in Chapter Four of Perlingieri, \textit{Sofonisba Anguissola}, 57-75.


“Sofonisba Anguissola’s Double Portrait” from 2003, touches on the relationship between Campi and Anguissola but in the context of her double portrait, *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* from the late 1550s (Figure 1).32 This one work is the primary focus of the thesis and Musolff frames the double portrait in relation to the tradition of Saint Luke painting the Virgin Mary as depicted by other artists. Musolff devotes only a few pages to discussing Anguissola’s apprenticeship and relationship with Campi. The thesis also looks at the painting partly from a feminist viewpoint, and Musolff also notes that one popular reading of the work is that Anguissola can be said to be taking revenge on Campi in the double portrait. I do not agree with the theory that Anguissola painted this work as a means of revenge. Rather, I believe that student and pupil had a positive relationship, even years after the apprenticeship ended. With this double portrait, I am inclined to think that perhaps Anguissola took lessons learned from her teacher and invoked her own *invenzione*. Hence she attempted to innovate the double portrait format and experiment with the composition of the painting (for example, placing herself or her image to be seen at a higher level than the top of Campi’s head). I will discuss this work in more detail in Chapter Two.

Ironically, both the feminist approach and the monographic tradition seek to rehabilitate Anguissola within the canon in one way or another. As a result, in most of the studies on Anguissola thus far, Campi and Gatti have usually been relegated to cursory mentions as her two early teachers. None of these books have taken an extensive look at the pivotal years of Anguissola’s apprenticeships and the resulting effects. Over the next four chapters, this current thesis will explore Anguissola’s apprenticeships under Campi and Gatti and her development as an artist as a result of these early experiences. This thesis will also provide some history on the

three artists and their respective influences. Chapter One looks at Anguissola’s early training and presents some background on the sixteenth-century Lombard School, to which the three artists belong. That these three artists emerged from this region plays a large part in how their artistic styles developed. Chapter Two provides some background on Campi and examines the important connections between Campi and Anguissola. Chapter Three looks at Gatti and his role in Anguissola’s development. Chapter Four provides a closer look at how Anguissola forged her own path after her training. The Conclusion explores Anguissola’s legacy and her impact on artists (especially women artists) who came after her.
Chapter One: Beginnings

Anguissola’s story as an artist begins with her father, Amilcare Anguissola, who played an important role in the development of her art career. Although not an artist himself, Amilcare had ambitious dreams for his oldest child, Sofonisba. She was fortunate that her father wanted her to succeed in the arts although in actuality, Amilcare needed Sofonisba to succeed because, although the Anguissolas were minor nobility, they could not subsist on the earnings from Amilcare’s various business dealings alone. Moreover, they had a large family (seven children) and Amilcare needed to pay dowries for six daughters. Thus, Amilcare and his wife, Bianca, made the decision around 1546 to seek out a local painter, Bernardino Campi, to teach art to their two oldest daughters, Sofonisba and Elena.

In this regard, Anguissola shares an interesting parallel with Michelangelo, as the artist was also born into a privileged household, where a chosen career as an artist would seem unusual. Rab Hatfield brings up the fact that Michelangelo’s father, Lodovico sent his son to apprentice with the Ghirlandaio brothers, at age 13. Hatfield speculates that Lodovico “sent Michelangelo into an artist’s career—possibly because he needed the money.” While there is no concrete evidence, one might speculate that this shared trajectory was one of the reasons that Michelangelo took a liking to Anguissola when she visited Rome. This is similar to why Amilcare may have wanted Sofonisba and Elena to study art with Campi.

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For the Anguissola sisters, their first apprenticeship, where the girls learned about drawing and copied sketches during their lessons, took place inside the Campi residence, as opposed to a traditional workshop that would have included male students, although it is unclear whether Campi actually had any male students at the same time (Greer suggests he did not).\(^{35}\) Given the culture of their time, and seeing as Sofonisba and Elena were members of the nobility, it would have been inappropriate for young aristocratic women to study alongside boys in a traditional workshop environment. Some later women artists such as Marietta Robusti (c. 1554-1590) did learn to paint alongside male apprentices, but this was in the workshop of her father Tintoretto (1519-1594) and the Robusti were not of highborn blood.\(^{36}\) About sixty years after Anguissola’s apprenticeship, Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1654) also mastered her craft in her father Orazio Gentileschi’s (1563-1639) workshop, alongside three of her brothers.\(^{37}\) This was not the case for the Anguissola sisters.

Sofonisba and Elena’s studies lasted about three years until 1549, when Campi received some new commissions and moved to Milan.\(^{38}\) It had been an atypical apprenticeship as the sisters were separated from other students and were essentially guests in the Campi household during this period. Anguissola began her apprenticeship when she, at age fourteen (if we assume her birth year to be as 1532) and her sister, Elena, at eleven years old, started working with Campi. On the one hand, this might seem relatively young, but male artists such as Andrea del

\(^{35}\) Germaine Greer, *The Obstacle Race: The Fortunes of Women Painters and Their Work*. (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1979), 182. Although Campi does not appear to have had any male students in Cremona during his time with the Anguissola sisters, he did teach other apprentices later in his career, which I discuss in Chapter Two.

\(^{36}\) The key difference for some of these women artists and Anguissola is that most of them had fathers who themselves were artists, so they could learn their craft from a parent, rather than an outside instructor.


\(^{38}\) Garrard, “Here’s Looking at Me,” 565.
Sarto could begin as early as age 7. This was the case even into the seventeenth century. For instance, though Guido Reni’s father wanted his son to pursue music, Guido also began to study art under Denys Calvaert’s guidance at age 9, after the child caught the attention of Calvaert. On the other hand, there are some male artists who, similar to Anguissola, also got a “late” start in their formal art education, such as Leonardo da Vinci at age fourteen. Even if we assume Sofonisba’s birth year was 1535, as several more recent scholars believe, she would still have been eleven years old when she began her first apprenticeship.

Recognizing Sofonisba’s artistic potential early on, Amilcare often championed her talents and steered her career. He communicated with powerful and influential people, including Annibale Caro, Pope Julius II, as well as the formidable d’Este and Gonzaga families. It has even been suggested that she spent time in Rome learning from Michelangelo in the mid- to late 1550s. Prior to her Roman visit, Amilcare corresponded with the great master asking for any advice he could give Sofonisba and asked for drawings of his that she could copy. Even before that time, Amilcare sought the assistance of local artists in shaping his daughter’s career.

Sylvia Ferino-Pagden postulates that it is probable that Campi decided early on that the sisters should study how to draw nature scenes and portraits. Genre scenes that included people and objects from nature were a natural progression as the young girls had easy access to their

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41 Larry J. Feinberg, *The Young Leonardo: Art and Life in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 26: “When, perhaps in 1465 or 1466, he entered Verrocchio’s large bottega or shop, which produced marble and bronze sculptures as well as paintings and frames.”


43 While it is not entirely certain if this instruction from Michelangelo in Rome actually took place, Ilya Sandra Perlingieri devotes a chapter to this period in her monograph, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 57-75. Perlingieri also cites the scholars E. H. Ramsden and J. A. Symonds referencing Anguissola’s time with Michelangelo in their writings in Perlingieri, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 67.
family members. Ferino-Pagden believes that Campi decided this because he himself was not highly skilled at “dramatic designs and complex compositions” and therefore would have encountered problems teaching these concepts to Sofonisba and Elena.\textsuperscript{44}

Following Campi’s move to Milan in 1549, Amilcare arranged for another local master, Bernardino Gatti, to continue Sofonisba’s training. Campi was born in Cremona and after some time studying with Ippolito Costa in Mantua, he returned to Cremona around 1541.\textsuperscript{45} However, it is uncertain where Gatti was born, but most art historians believe his birthplace was either Pavia or perhaps Cremona.\textsuperscript{46} Some scholars believe Gatti apprenticed under Correggio and that he later came back to Cremona in 1548.\textsuperscript{47} Gatti then worked with Sofonisba for another two or three years until around 1552 or 1553.\textsuperscript{48} Most sources recount that Elena did not apprentice with Gatti, yet, given that she waited until 1551 before joining the convent, it is possible that she joined Sofonisba in her lessons with Gatti.\textsuperscript{49}


\textsuperscript{45} Perlingieri, \textit{Sofonisba Anguissola}, 36.


\textsuperscript{48} These dates are approximate as some scholars cite an even shorter time frame such as Whitney Chadwick stating that Anguissola had a total of only three years of private instruction with both Campi and Gatti in Chadwick, \textit{Women, Art, and Society}, (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012), 77.

\textsuperscript{49} It is unclear whether Elena also studied under Gatti, although both Giulio Bora and Maria Kusche suggest that she did for a brief time before entering the Convent of the Holy Virgins at San Vincenzo in Mantua around 1551. Bora, “Sofonisba Anguissola e la sua formazione cremonese, 83; Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola: Her Life and Work,” in \textit{Sofonisba Anguissola: A Renaissance Woman} by Sylvia Ferino-Pagden and Maria Kusche (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1995), 35; Perlingieri, \textit{Sofonisba Anguissola}, 60.
As part of their initial training under Campi, Sofonisba and Elena would have also been introduced to many drawings by a Lombard artist who was one generation ahead, Camillo Boccaccino (1504-1546). Boccaccino was a popular local artist. He not only served as an inspiration to both Campi and Gatti, but to an entire generation of Lombard artists.\(^5^0\)

Boccaccino’s drawings were known throughout the region and Campi purchased some for his own collection and also for the two Anguissola sisters to copy from, using the opportunity to teach them drawing and to improve their techniques. Like several other notable Lombard painters, Boccaccino also came from an artistic family, as his father, Boccaccio Boccaccino (before 1466-1525) was a painter. Boccaccio Boccaccino was born in Ferrara sometime around 1465 and he lived and worked in Cremona, Ferrara, and Venice during his career.\(^5^1\)

Boccaccio’s father (and Camillo’s grandfather), Antonio Boccaccino, worked as an embroiderer.\(^5^2\) Boccaccio produced many frescoes and altarpieces.

Camillo’s artistic style is often characterized by strong lines, deep colors, and elongated limbs. Interestingly, one feature that seems to reoccur in Boccaccino’s work are figures who are often looking downward, as in *The Prophet David* (Figure 8) and *Madonna and Child with Saint Michael and the Blessed Ambrogio Sansedoni* (Figure 9). This downward gaze is in contrast to Gatti’s style, where he often includes at least one figure looking out toward the viewer (such as in *The Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes* (Figure 10) and the *Adoration of the Shepherds* (Figure 11)). Similar to Boccaccino, Campi also favored elongated figures in some of his paintings, such as the *Pietà* (Figure 12), which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Two.

\(^5^0\) Bora, “Sofonisba Anguissola e la sua formazione cremonese,” 79: “L’arte estrosa, colta e raffinata del Boccaccio si era imposta in quegli anni a Cremona, influenzando gli artisti dell’ultima generazione.”

\(^5^1\) Boccaccio Boccaccino was born sometime before August 22, 1466 according to Mina Gregori, *I Campi e la cultura artistica Cremonese del cinquecento* (Milan, Italy: Electa, 1985), 51.

The Lombard School of painting included many artists over many years. Artists active in the region included the Campi dynasty (Galeazzo and his sons Giulio, Antonio, and Vincenzo) and the aforementioned Camillo Boccaccino (although Camillo’s career reached its apex a generation earlier than Anguissola’s time). Although a few scholars state that Bernardino Campi was directly or even distantly related to the Campi painting dynasty of Galeazzo Campi and his three sons, possibly by marriage, the consensus seems to be that Bernardino was not directly related to them.\(^5^3\) Coincidentally, Germaine Greer notes that Sofonisba’s younger sister, Europa, worked with Antonio Campi, and that Europa received commissions for the church of Santa Elena, located in Cremona.\(^5^4\) Thus, even if a direct familial or professional relation cannot always be traced, it is clear that these artists moved in similar circles.

The Lombard School also comprised artists working in Cremona’s neighboring cities (in other areas of Lombardy), including artists as far away as Bergamo such as Giovanni Battista Moroni (1520/24-1578) and Brescia such as Vincenzo Foppa (1427/1430-1515/1516). During the fifteenth century, Foppa was one of the more prominent artists working in and around Lombardy, and Moroni, in his day, was a highly regarded and sought-after portraitist.\(^5^5\) Moroni’s own style and Anguissola’s were sometimes so similar that a number of their paintings have been misattributed to the other over the years. For instance, Anguissola’s *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* (Figure 13) from 1557 (now at the Walters Art Museum in

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\(^{5^3}\) Bram De Klerck writes, “In 1932, Aurelia Perotti devoted a monograph to the brothers Giulio, Antonio and Vincenzo Campi, their father Galeazzo and Bernardino Campi, a Cremonese painter who, despite his surname, was actually unrelated to the rest” in his monograph, *The Brothers Campi - Images and Devotion: Religious Painting in Sixteenth-Century Lombardy*, trans. Andrew McCormick. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999), 8.

\(^{5^4}\) Greer, *Obstacle Race*, 182.

\(^{5^5}\) Federico Zeri says that Foppa was “one of the major figures of the Italian fifteenth century” in Federico Zeri, *Italian Paintings in the Walters Art Gallery* (Baltimore, Maryland: Walters Art Gallery, 1976), 288.
Baltimore), was initially purchased by Henry Walters in 1927 as a Moroni painting. This portrait was likely one of her first official commissions and may have been arranged by Campi.\footnote{Eric Zafran, \textit{Fifty Old Master Paintings from the Walters Art Gallery} (Baltimore, Maryland: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery), 1988, 14.}

Not only were Moroni and Anguissola both known for their talents in depicting their sitters in a true to life manner, they both had a penchant for full-length portraits. In some works, the composition is very similar (for example, the sitter standing in a three-quarter profile, set against a wall). Kusche also remarks about a northern Italian “interest in the depiction of the full-length figure,” which may explain why both artists favored the format.\footnote{Morten Steen Hansen and Joaneath A. Spicer, \textit{Masterpieces of Italian Painting: The Walters Art Museum} (Baltimore, Maryland: Walters Art Museum) 2005, 102.}

In the sixteenth century, many of the artists working in the Lombardy region shared similar characteristics in their artistic output. A recurring theme evident in the work of many artists in the Lombard School is naturalism. This theme likely informed the way Sofonisba and Elena Anguissola learned to depict and paint early on in their art education and thus, in part, explains Sofonisba’s realistic style for much of the artistic output in her career. She had the ability to make her sitters look true to life and also a skill to convey emotion in children, such as in \textit{Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa} (Figure 13) and her sister Europa in \textit{The Chess Game} (Figure 14). Giorgio Vasari makes particular note of Anguissola’s ability to infuse her subjects with a great likeness and who “appear to be breathing and absolutely alive.”\footnote{Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola,” 102.} In Massimiliano Stampa’s case, Anguissola skillfully gives him a sense of both sadness and strength, as his father has recently died yet the boy is being elevated to the position of Marquess. Massimiliano’s eyes are especially expressive in Anguissola’s depiction of him. In \textit{The Chess Game}.
Game, Sofonisba’s little sister, Europa, appears in the center. Her smile and laughter not only bring the whole scene alive, it also brings the viewer into the scene because the genuineness of the situation makes the scene feel very present. One can almost hear Europa giggling. The composition of this work feels natural, almost like a snapshot of their life, in contrast to a typical posed portrait of a monarch during the Renaissance.

We might also compare Anguissola’s *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* (Figure 6) with two of Moroni portraits, *Gian Lodovico Madruzzo* (Figure 15) from 1551/1552 at The Art Institute of Chicago, and *Gian Federico Madruzzo* (Figure 16) from circa 1550 at The National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. All three works are staged against interior architectural elements; they take on somewhat exaggerated and prominent hand gestures, often with an object in the sitter’s hand such as gloves for *Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* and *Gian Lodovico Madruzzo*, and a handkerchief in *Gian Federico Madruzzo*’s case. Finally, they are accompanied frequently by a faithful dog. In Moroni’s rendering of *Gian Lodovico Madruzzo*, the details of the dog’s fur and Madruzzo’s knuckles and protruding veins on his right hand are especially lifelike. The color palette of both artists also seem to favor greens and browns. In the case of Moroni’s *Gian Federico Madruzzo*, we see the olive green tiles of the floor and the brown of his garments; in *Gian Lodovico Madruzzo* (Figure 15), we have green walls, brown gloves, and olive green and brown tiles on the floor. In *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* (Figure 13), we again have a green wall. The floor and marble pattern of the column are different shades of brown. Anguissola’s *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two, but here it is sufficient to note the similarity of her chromatic scheme with that of Moroni.
Northern Italian artists are associated with naturalism from the start; one might consider the figures seen in Vincenzo Foppa’s *Saint Agnes and Catherine of Alexandria* (Figure 17) from circa 1460 and currently at the Walters Art Museum. Although, the figures overall appear flatter and more two-dimensional than those found in sixteenth-century Lombard paintings, there is still a naturalistic quality to both Agnes’ and Catherine’s faces and even their hands. Likewise, although the gold leaf seen on the crowns of Saint Agnes and Saint Catherine and at the top of Catherine’s robe are visually striking and protrude out of the canvas, the overall color scheme of the golden arches, the golden parts of their clothing, and their golden halos contribute to the “flatness” of the overall image.

Comparing Foppa’s *Saint Agnes and Catherine of Alexandria* to the two Moroni portraits of *Gian Lodovico Madruzzo* (Figure 15) and *Gian Federico Madruzzo* (Figure 16), the tiled floor pattern is somewhat similar to what we would see later in Moroni’s and Anguissola’s work. The tiles in Foppa’s painting appear to recede into space while the female figures stand prominently in the foreground. There are three columns that surround the two female saints, Agnes on the right and Catherine on the left with her attribute (a wheel) seen on the left of the painting, by the side of her feet. The three columns are covered in gold on each end (which again, may contribute to the monochromic aspect and flatness of the overall painting). The ground strangely recedes into the background but the columns do not follow the same pattern. In some ways, this work acts as precursor for the interior architectural elements seen in Moroni’s and Anguissola’s later works, demonstrating how both artists drew from local visual traditions.

Another hallmark of the Lombard School that we find reflected in Anguissola’s work is the depiction of everyday genre scenes. Vincenzo Campi, Anguissola’s near contemporary, would become a specialist of genre scenes and especially of market scenes, as seen in *Fruit*
Vendor (Fruiterer) (Figure 18) from the 1580s. Vincenzo was of the Campi dynasty, although not a direct descendant of Bernardino Campi, and while he became one of the great genre painters of his time, it should be noted that one of Anguissola’s most famous works, The Chess Game (Figure 14) of 1555, served as a forerunner to this kind of image. Given that both Vincenzo and Anguissola lived and studied art in Lombardy, it was a natural extension for them to excel at painting genre scenes. However, unlike her male counterparts, Anguissola’s frequent contact with family members also made it easier for her to closely study and portray scenes from daily life. In this regard, being a woman painter had its unexpectedly advantages too. During her early career, Anguissola’s family members served as her most frequent models and were sometimes depicted in everyday activities such as her sisters playing a game of chess. There are only two extant Anguissola paintings that scholars have identified as Bianca Ponzone but the attribution is not certain for either work. The Portrait of a Young Woman (Figure 19) in Berlin’s Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz is generally accepted by most scholars to be Ponzone. Ilya Sandra Perlingieri also attributed the identity of the woman in Portrait of a Lady (Figure 20) at Cremona’s Museo Civico Ala Ponzone to Ponzone. In my opinion, these two portraits are not of the same woman because there is not a strong resemblance between the two. The facial features are too dissimilar (for instance, a higher forehead, a wider face, and a broader nose in the woman from the painting in Berlin in Figure 19). Yet regardless of whether Anguissola did or did not portray her mother, other family members were known to be frequent sitters. Sofonisba took advantage of the fact that she was around her family members and actually broadened the concept of the genre scene by adding unexpected elements of emotion in her works.

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60 Perlingieri. Sofonisba Anguissola, 79-80.
CHAPTER TWO: THE BIRTH OF AN ARTIST AND FOUNDATIONAL WORK

Like the Anguissola siblings, Bernardino Campi had also been born in Cremona. And although he is more commonly known in present day art historical scholarship as Sofonisba Anguissola’s first instructor, during his lifetime, he was also a highly regarded painter in his own right. When he is discussed, Campi is often associated in art historical texts with the Campi dynasty of the Lombard School (father Galeazzo (1475-1536) and his sons, Giulio (1502-1572), Antonio (1522-1587), and Vincenzo (1536-1591)).\(^61\) Despite their common surname, Bernardino was not a blood relative to Galeazzo and his sons, although it seems that Bernardino did study briefly with Giulio and, therefore, had some association to the Campi workshop.\(^62\)

Bernardino was born in 1522 to Pietro Campi, a goldsmith, and his wife Barbara Vaghi.\(^63\) As the son of an artisan, Bernardino’s own training as an artist began early. He was drawing from a young age.\(^64\) His first apprenticeship took place in his father’s workshop.\(^65\) Campi’s art education continued with time spent with other several artists, including Giulio Campi in Cremona (for a short period) and later, for a few years in Mantua studying with Ippolito Costa (1506-1561).\(^66\) During Bernardino’s time in Mantua, he used works by Giulio Romano as study aids and also did some work on the Ducal Palace as part of his apprenticeship, including

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\(^{61}\) The Campi dynasty is often referred to as “I Campi” in Italian-language scholarship.


\(^{65}\) Miller, “Bernardino Campi,” 154.

\(^{66}\) Ricci, *North Italian Painting of the Cinquecento*, 69.
assisting with the decoration of the Sala di Troia.67 He returned to Cremona around 1541, where he received his first official commission from Renato Trivulzio to paint a series of frescoes for his house in Formigara.68 According to Aurelia Perotti, the subjects of these frescoes included a battle at sea, an assault on a fortress, and stories relating to the goddess Minerva.69 Campi’s first signed and dated work is the Assumption from 1542, which is still in situ at the Church of Sant’Agata in Cremona.70 During the intervening years, he worked on more commissions and was married to Anna Ungaroni by 1545.71

Sofonisba and Elena Anguissola began their apprenticeships under Bernardino Campi around 1546, when Campi was an established, mature artist and continued to study under him for about three years until around 1549.72 Their apprenticeships were conducted while staying at the residence of Campi and his wife, Anna. Thus the Anguissola sisters learned in a very different setting than a traditional male apprentice would have during the Renaissance.73 The girls did not experience some of the hardships that an aspiring male artist might have endured, such as leaving their hometown to work for and study with an older artist. Some artists, such as young Taddeo Zuccaro, arrived in a new city (in his case, Rome) without already being assigned to a specific


70 Miller, “Bernardino Campi,” 154.

71 Ibid. The surname of Campi’s wife, Anna, is spelled “Longoroni” in Perotti, I pittori Campi, 106.

72 Anne Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, Women Artists, 1550-1950 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1976), 106.

In such cases, a young artist would have to try to find a master to teach him, or work per diem at different workshops performing tasks such as grinding pigments. Or once he found a new master and began an apprenticeship in a workshop, he might have also needed to perform household chores (for example, sweeping the house, gathering wood, or helping with laundry) in addition to art-related tasks such as cleaning paint brushes and grinding pigments.

While the Anguissola sisters lived and learned in the Campi household, they also continued to take lessons in other subjects (such as music and literature) with a tutor who came to the Campi residence. Maria Kusche notes that it is likely Amilcare chose Campi to be their teacher because the two men were already acquainted. She writes, “One reason for the affiliation with Bernardino was probably Amilcare’s supervision of the construction and interior decoration of San Sigismondo. Campi was an important contributor to that project.”

During the Renaissance, copying the drawings of a more accomplished artist, particularly by one of the Masters, was a basic element of teaching art to aspiring artists. This method of learning through imitation was common practice whether the student was taking private lessons or serving as an apprentice in a workshop. One of earliest exercises Campi gave the Anguissola sisters was to copy drawings by an earlier Lombard artist, Camillo Boccaccino. Campi

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76 Perlingieri, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 42.


78 Carl Goldstein, *Teaching Art: Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 115: “No practice was more central to the Renaissance tradition than that of copying works of art.”

purchased multiple Boccaccino sketches and drawings not only for his own collection, but also to use as a teaching tool for the young Sofonisba and Elena. Campi shared the common Renaissance belief that any student who wanted to excel in art must first learn how to copy all types of drawings and that having a high quality drawing to copy from would be most ideal.\textsuperscript{80} One of Boccaccino’s drawings that Sofonisba copied included \textit{The Holy Family}.\textsuperscript{81} While Boccaccino and Anguissola were both from the Lombard School, her eventual style is not very similar to his. Boccaccino served as an inspiration and was held in high esteem by Campi, and therefore the former likely became an obvious choice when latter was looking for materials with which to teach. In contrast to Anguissola, Campi’s own style displays elements that are more similar to Boccaccino’s style, such as the use of elongated limbs. Kusche compliments Bernardino’s own skills when she says that Sofonisba “takes advantage of Campi’s thorough knowledge of drawing.”\textsuperscript{82} In Anguissola’s own works later in her career, we see evidence of this training not only through her realistic depictions of sitters but also her strong lines in her paintings, such as in the \textit{Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa} (Figure 13). Marianne Haraszti-Takács also notes that the young girls also copied works by Campi and another Lombard School artist, Giulio Campi, during their training.\textsuperscript{83}

From the development of basic drawing skills, Campi then started off Sofonisba and Elena’s art education by incorporating lessons on portraits and nature scenes. Sylvia Ferino-

\textsuperscript{80} Bora, “Sofonisba Anguissola e la sua formazione cremonese,” 79. Campi says “Secondo il mio parere, a qualunque elevato ingegno vuole imparare a contraffare ogni sorta di designi, facendo però sempre scelta de i più eccellenti, e più buoni.”

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{82} Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola,” 102.

Pagden believes that Campi likely decided this because he himself was not highly skilled at “dramatic designs and complex compositions” and therefore would have problems teaching these concepts to Sofonisba and Elena. He also painted a number of religious-themed works over the course of his career but he became known as a portraitist, which is a strength that he passed on to his pupil, Sofonisba, who eventually surpassed him at portraiture. For his portraiture work, Campi often employed a simple monochromatic background, such as can be seen in his Portrait of Pietro Bonomi (Figure 21) and his Portrait of Catellano Cotta (Figure 22). The depictions of these sitters include very realistic elements (for instance, the detailed hands of Pietro Bonomi and the wrinkles that are visible in both men’s faces). These are not elaborate compositions. The folds in the clothing of Catellano Cotta (in particular the red fabric of his left elbow area and the drapery in the brown leather near his thigh area) are quite well done and look quite natural. Campi also painted religious works too, including his Saint Cecilia and Saint Catherine of around 1562-1566 (Figure 23). This too has a subdued and dark background but both saints wear bright garments.

Although Campi was part of the Lombard School, whose artists were known for their naturalistic style, there are also certain Mannerist tendencies that appear in his style. For example, this can be seen in his Pietà (see Figure 12), dated 1574 and now in the collection of the Pinacoteca di Brera, especially in the elongated and curved body of Christ, and the long, sinewy fingers of Christ and the Virgin Mary. The multitude of colors (particularly in the drapery), as well as the sky that is in the background reflects Campi’s Mannerism. The highlighting and different shades of color in the garments of the Virgin Mary and Saint Catherine (the other female figure on the far left of the painting) indicate Campi’s abilities with color and

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shadow. Most notable here is Bernardino’s skill in rendering the contrasts between lighter and darker shades of blue and shadows in Mary’s mantle.

For many years, a smaller copy (44 x 27 cm) of this Pietà was attributed to Sofonisba Anguissola. Like the larger painting by Campi (160 x 235 cm), this smaller work is now in the collection of the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan. Anguissola’s version is not only smaller in size, it looks somewhat incomplete. Campi’s larger version of the Pietà is much more detailed, with four additional figures in the painting, as well as the inclusion of a landscape with hills, trees and a sky, whereas the background of Anguissola’s replica is much darker, giving emphasis to the two central figures. Anguissola’s painting shows the outline of trees and hills but is lacking realistic colors and depictions, aside from a colorful sky in the background. Even the chiaroscuro of the Virgin Mary’s blue mantle is not as skillfully rendered in Anguissola’s copy. Another important element of the painting is the different types of drapery on the figures’ clothing; for instance, the shorter folds in Saint Catherine’s pink garment and the deeper folds in the drapery in Mary’s mantle.

While the Pinacoteca di Brera dates Anguissola’s Pietà (Figure 24) to sometime between 1574 and 1585, a more convincing argument would be that this work was done much earlier, perhaps toward the end of her apprenticeship under Campi around 1549 or 1550. It is unclear why the museum has dated the somewhat simplistic and derivative work to such a late date. By 1574, Anguissola was already an accomplished artist who had served the Spanish court for about fifteen years and who for years had already been painting more elaborate and more fully realized

85 While one might assume that the other female figure in a depiction of the Pietà would be Mary Magdalene, Robert Miller identifies her as Saint Catherine in his Pietà catalog entry, in I Campi e la cultura artistica Cremonese del cinquecento, ed. Mina Gregori (Milan, Italy: Electa, 1985), 167.

paintings than this Pietà, instead of works with dark, unfinished backgrounds. A more plausible conclusion, therefore, would be that this smaller Pietà was in fact a teaching exercise that Campi gave to Sofonisba in her early career. As with the study of drawings, the imitation of paintings was an important step in the artist’s development. With its dark background and absence of the secondary figures (who are seen in the larger work), this smaller painting is more indicative of an artist who is still learning the mechanics of painting and composition. One reason that the museum may have dated it to 1574 is because the altarpiece after which it was made “was not completed until 1574.” Nevertheless, both Wolfgang Prohaska and Ilya Sandra Perlingieri support an earlier date from about 1550 and the 1550s. Prohaska explained:

This painting has belonged to the Brera in Milan since 1909, and was attributed until 1932 to Bernardino Campi. It has since been assigned to his student Sofonisba, an attribution that research has continued to accept until quite recently. It has been dated about 1550, which is not easily proven. The small painting seems to be based on the central group in Bernardino Campi’s large Pietà from Santa Caterina in Crema, today also at the Brera. Since their altarpiece was not completed until 1574, Sofonisba, if she were the artist, would have to have made her small copy after an earlier version (so far unknown) of Campi’s Pietà in Spain. Otherwise, the painting must have been done following her return from Spain, after 1573, in Genoa, Cremona or Sicily. The possibility cannot be ruled out, however, that this is a small-size copy by Campi himself.

We are faced, therefore, with two possibilities: either Anguissola did not make the painting and this is a “small-size copy” that Campi executed himself; or Anguissola is the author of the painting and the dates are incorrect and should be reattributed, following Prohaska and Perlingieri, to the early 1550s. I am inclined to accept the latter since as a copy it would be

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88 Prohaska, Pietà, 93.
notably incomplete, but as a learning exercise it demonstrates Anguissola’s attempt to mastering
the basic parts of the painting: foreground, middle-ground, and background.

While it is not known whether Campi was also running a workshop with male students
during the time that Sofonisba and Elena were taking lessons in his household, he did teach other
students at other times during his career.\textsuperscript{89} It is recorded, for example, that when he moved to
Milan in 1550, Raffaele Crespi served as his apprentice and was paid five scudi per month.\textsuperscript{90} In
addition to teaching the Anguissola sisters and Crespi, Campi also taught Giovanni Battista
Trotti (called “Il Malosso”) (1556-1619), whom Robert Miller considers to have been
Bernardino’s “most important pupil.”\textsuperscript{91} It is interesting that Miller considers Trotti to be more
significant than Sofonisba Anguissola, with whom Campi is most often associated in present
day. Perhaps this is because Trotti later marries Campi’s niece and becomes part of the family,
whereas Anguissola quickly moves on and establishes herself as an independent painter.\textsuperscript{92} Miller
also suggests that the artist Giulio Calvi (called “Il Cornaro”) (c. 1565-1596) may have been
Campi’s student: “a small number of his surviving works demonstrate that he may have been
trained by Bernardino Campi.”\textsuperscript{93} Although, again, if indeed Calvi served as Campi’s apprentice
in his workshop, it was not at the same time that Sofonisba and Elena were studying at the

\textsuperscript{89} I have not come across any source during my research that mentions Campi teaching other students (male or
female) during the time he was teaching the Anguissolas.

Crespi had a son, Giovanni Battista Crespi (called Il Cerano), who was also an artist, as noted by Miller,
“Bernardino Campi,” 154.

\textsuperscript{91} Miller, “Bernardino Campi,” 158n2.

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 156.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 158n2.
Campi household. Calvi would have apprenticed about twenty years after the sisters as he was born around 1565, about fifteen years after Sofonisba’s apprenticeship ended.

In 1565, Anguissola was already an established portraitist in her own right living and working at the Spanish Court. Similarly with Trotti, who was born in 1556, which is approximately seven years after Sofonisba and Elena stopped studying with Campi. Consequently, Trotti could not have been Campi’s apprentice during the time he taught the Anguissolas (around 1546 to 1549) because he was not even born yet.

Despite being most often associated with Anguissola in our present art historical dialogue, it is apparent that Campi also played an integral role in the education and careers of many other artists of his time. Campi was only about ten years older than Anguissola and therefore, taught her and Elena soon after he became an established painter. The girls were likely two of his earliest pupils. Although their lessons were tailored to suit their gender and class, the experience of teaching the girls may have helped him in the role of teacher to his later students. One could argue that teaching the sisters and then seeing Sofonisba achieve such great success elevated his reputation and helped him to garner not only more commissions but also more apprentices. In this regard, both master and pupil benefitted from the exchange, and this relationship is perhaps nowhere more evident than in Anguissola’s double portrait with her master.

*Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* (Figure 1) depicts Campi looking out towards the viewer while he paints a portrait of his student Sofonisba Anguissola. Her image appears in the center of the painting. She is the focal point, and the richness of the red and the brightness of the white of her dress call the viewer’s attention to her. Her image on the canvas appears larger than Campi who is dressed in black, which makes him not as immediately
noticeable as Anguissola. Digital reproductions of this image sometimes show a pentimento where her left arm is angled upwards, as if touching the mahlstick, so that the reproduction mistakenly makes it seem as if she has painted herself with two left arms. In the final painting though, she only has one left arm; her elbow sits on the armrest of her chair. Her hand appears at an awkward position (with bent pinky and ring fingers) holding a glove. In addition, her own facial features are not rendered as realistically as some of her works from the mid 1550s, such as *The Chess Game* (which Vasari cited as figures that have a great likeness and who “appear to be breathing and absolutely alive”). Interestingly enough, there is no known painting (or double portrait) of Anguissola and her second teacher, Gatti. Another possibility that Ilya Sandra Perlingieri and Maria H. Loh put forth is that Anguissola’s representation of herself in this painting corresponds to how Campi would have painted her if he had really been holding the brush. This could also explain why Campi looks more realistic than she does. He looks more three-dimensional and is not idealized. This is in part because he is shown in a more complex, active pose, while she is intended to be read as a portrait on his easel.

This painting is often included in art history courses or textbooks about women artists. Some viewers may interpret this painting from a feminist angle because the top of Anguissola’s head appears at a higher level than her teacher, perhaps suggesting that she is superior or better

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94 Maria H. Loh, *Still Lives: Death, Desire, and the Portrait of the Old Master* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 67: “Up close before the canvas, one can make out a set of pentimenti indicating that her hand was moved from its initial position (just underneath the very spot where Campi rests his hand).”

95 Based on my research, I have not come across any evidence or mention of any painting or double portrait of Gatti and Anguissola.

96 Perlingieri, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 49: “This is the only known portrait of Campi and is far more sensitively done—in her own style—than Anguissola’s portrayal of herself, which appears as much flatter, as if she were painting herself as Campi would have—trying to imitate his style;” and Loh, *Still Lives*, 69.
than he is. Indeed, Meghan Jane Kalasky Musolff indicates that “the most common interpretation of [this painting is] a revenge tactic against Campi.”

Although “revenge” is one possible reading of this work, there are several factors that suggest a more positive and well-intentioned interpretation. Anguissola paints a portrait of a painter (Campi) painting her, so her act almost completely reverses what is stated and portrayed, and she conflates the line between subject and object. Anguissola is at the same time the subject of the work and the object of the work. In a similar vein, Campi’s role is unclear—he is the one taking action in this work (the actor) by painting by the object (Anguissola) so he can also be interpreted as the subject.

Although men would have held a superior role over women during this time, in this instance, a woman may be interpreted as a having a “higher” (or superior) position than the male; at the same time, in this instance, that male happens to have been the artist’s former teacher. Anguissola appears in the center of the painting and with a more commanding gaze and looks more directly at the viewer than does Campi, who looks out with a three-quarter profile view. Campi seems to be both a subject of the painting and perhaps somewhat of a “handmaiden” as he is shown to be building up his own subject (Anguissola) stroke by stroke. With this portrayal of Campi, perhaps Anguissola was trying to express her debt to her teacher’s efforts in shaping her into an artist. The fact that she is seemingly portrayed in a more superior position may be her way of saying that he transformed her into a great and exceptional artist. Maria Kusche notes that “Campi’s hand on her heart demonstrates his profound affection.”

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and another way that this affection is demonstrated is that the position of Campi’s right hand is positioned where Anguissola’s heart would be, meaning “he is dear to her heart.”

Anguissola’s choice to include Campi in this double portrait actually makes Campi more prominent than he likely would have been to contemporary art historians. In a way, one can say that Anguissola has influenced or impacted how the world or art historical community views her teacher. If Campi had not served as Anguissola’s first instructor, he likely would have still been misgrouped with other members of the Campi workshop (Galeazzo, Antonio, Giulio, and Vincenzo), but Anguissola’s decision to include him as one of the subjects in her double portrait preserved his reputation and standing in the broader art historical dialogue. One often talks about how an instructor will influence a student; in the case of the painting, *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola*, the student, Anguissola, casts more influence than her teacher because his inclusion in her double portrait casts him in a wider art historical dialogue, including studies on feminist art.

This is in line with Michael Baxandall’s notion that artistic “influence” does not flow one way as most would think (for instance, from Person X to Person Y or from teacher to student) but rather, it is a more compelling argument to say that Person Y takes action or “react[s] to” Person X.99 In addition, much like how Baxandall likens artists like X and Y to billiard balls whose position changes every time Y interacts or “reacts” to something involving X, this analogy can also be likened to a situation like Anguissola and Campi. So in this case, Campi (Person X) gains a more prominent place in art history based on what Anguissola (Person Y) does as a result or in reaction to his time as her teacher.

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99 Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 58-62. “What happens in the field, each time Y refers to X, is a rearrangement. X has moved purposefully, impelled by the cue of intention, and X has been repositioned too: each ends up in a new relation to the arrange of all the other balls.”
Anguissola does not “take revenge,” but pays due respect to her master. After all, Campi does play a pivotal role in launching her career. He likely facilitated her first official commission, the Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa (Figure 13). Campi was already acquainted with the Stampa family because he had worked on a commission for Massimiliano’s father, Ermes Stampa. Several scholars, including Rossana Sacchi and Alexander Weid, have suggested that Campi introduced the young artist to the Stampi family. As Weid explains, “The Stampa were a powerful aristocratic family in 16th-century Lombardy. Ermes Stampa had commissioned Bernardino Campi . . . to paint altarpieces for his family estate, Soncino, which accounts for the connection with Sofonisba.”

Originally purchased as a work attributed to Giovanni Battista Moroni in 1927 by Henry Walters, the attribution of the Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa was later corrected to Anguissola by Bernard Berenson in 1933. Over the years different scholars have posited that other possible identities for the boy could be a member of the House of Medici (specifically a son of Cosimo I, Grand Duke of Tuscany), a member of the Este family, Victor Amadeus of Savoy, or even Sofonisba’s younger brother, Asdrubale. This portrait was also previously titled Portrait of a Young Medici Prince but the identity was revised to Massimiliano Stampa in 1986 when an inscription (reading “MAX.STA.MAR.SON.III-AET.AN.VIII-1557”), stating that

102 Flavio Caroli, Sofonisba Anguissola e le sue sorelle (Milan, Italy: A. Mondadori, 1987), 126 and Weid, “Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa,” 36. Prior to Henry Walters purchasing the painting, it was in the Chantel of Lyon Collection and James Stillman Collection, and also displayed at the Metropolitan Museum (New York) between 1921 to 1926 according to Sacchi, “Sofonisba Anguissola, Ritratto di Massimiliano Stampa,” 206.
the boy was nine-year-old Massimiliano, was discovered by conservators during the re-lining of
the canvas. This portrait was painted shortly after his father, Ermete Stampa (the second
marquess of Soncino), died in 1557 and Massimiliano became the third marquess of Soncino.

In addition to the Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa that is currently at the
Walters Museum in Baltimore, there are at least two other copies of this work, including one in a
private collection (Figure 25) and one at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Reims, France (Figure
26). The version at the Walters Museum (where the inscription denoting Massimiliano Stampa
was discovered) is considered by most scholars to be the original and definitive version.

In the Walters Art Museum painting, Massimiliano’s left hand bears Anguissola’s trademark
“square-U” shape, while the hands in the two copies (the private collection and the Musée des
Beaux-Arts in Reims) do not clearly show the square-U shape. Although the square-U shape of
the hands is not a consistent feature in all of Anguissola’s works, it does appear in many of her
portraits, including her Self-Portrait at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (Figure 7), where her
left hand looks strikingly similar to Massimiliano’s hand in the Walters Art Museum painting
(Figure 13). Massimiliano’s square-U shape in his left hand is more obvious to the eye when
viewing this painting in person, rather than in digital reproductions. The boy’s right hand and
fingers are also almost in a square-U shape as they bend holding his gloves.

104 “Sophonisba Anguissola: Portrait of a Young Medici Prince,” The Art News 38, no. 2 (October 14, 1939): 6.;
Weid, “Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa,” 36. For more information on the interpretation of the
inscription, see the Robert Simon essay.

105 Simon, “The Identity of Sofonisba Anguissola’s Young Man”: 120. “The first marquess of Soncino was
Ermete’s brother, who was also named Massimiliano (1494-1552).

106 Some of the scholars who note that the version in Baltimore is the original include Rossana Saachi who writes,
“L’originale è certamente da riconoscersi in questo Ritratto della Walters Art Gallery di Baltimora,” in Sacchi,
“Sofonisba Anguissola, Ritratto di Massimiliano Stampa,” 206. For further reading on the copies, see Flavio Caroli,
Sofonisba Anguissola e le sue sorelle, 128-129 and Sacchi, “Ritratto di Massimiliano Stampa,” 208-211.
In the *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* from the Walters Museum, Massimiliano Stampa appears in the center and is flanked by a sleeping dog and interior architectural elements (a column and base with two diamond shaped marble panels). The light source emanates from the right side and therefore casting slight shadows onto the left side of the canvas, onto the base of the column. Anguissola clearly draws Massimiliano with a strong line; he does not blend into the background of the green wall. Anguissola uses the vertical lines of the column and the base to draw the viewer’s eyes toward the boy. In addition, the boy’s black outfit set against the white column creates contrast, and Anguissola’s placement of Massimiliano’s sword by his side also directs the viewer’s attention to him.

The earthy tones (green wall, burnt orange color of the marble diamond-shaped panels of the column, and the brown and white fur of the sleeping dog) attempt to create a warm and welcoming effect. Unfortunately, the weakest part of the composition may be the brownish orange marble of the base of the column, as the swirls and pattern of the brown and orange marble panels just do not look realistic (when viewed in person). It looks as if Anguissola swirled her brush a few times to create this pattern, but as this is her first official commission, painted during her first years as an practicing artist, one might excuse the detail.

While Anguissola rendered the marble print pattern of the column in schematic terms, she shows much finesse with other textures. In particular, she demonstrates her skill for detail in the rendering of Massimiliano’s clothing, including the white ruffles at his neckline as well as those peeking out from under his sleeves. The slits and rough edges in Massimiliano’s leather shoes are very tactile, as are the dog’s fleshy pink nose and soft white and brown fur, the delicately rendered strands of which are visible against the green backdrop. Although the boy’s white gloves do look like they are made of leather, they are depicted with a looser brushstroke, the
surface is somewhat hazy and not very clear. This, however, serves to redirect the spectator’s gaze to the body of the sitter. Perhaps the most striking element of the work are Massimiliano’s expressive eyes, which simultaneously convey sadness, maturity, and authority.

One can also draw some parallels and comparisons between Anguissola’s *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* of 1557 (Figure 13) and Campi’s *Portrait of a Lady* of the late 1560s (Figure 27), currently in the Metropolitan Museum’s collection. At first glance, one can see that both paintings showcase a sitter from the upper class set against a green background. A faithful dog accompanies each sitter—a young boy in the case of Anguissola’s work and an adult woman in Campi’s portrait. Although there is an age gap, both figures are dressed and staged to suggest they are members of privileged society.

Unlike Anguissola’s full-length *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa*, Campi’s *Portrait of a Woman* is depicted in three-quarter length. She stares out toward the viewer in a three-quarter profile, with her left hand gently resting on her dog’s back, which also has brown and white fur (similar to Massimiliano’s sleeping dog). Unlike the young boy’s dog, the woman’s dog is wide awake and much smaller. She wears an elegant green and white dress, with a floral pattern in a “T” shape over her chest and running down both arms. The green quilted fabric runs down her shoulder down past her rib cage. Her golden belt, necklace, and earrings reinforce the notion that she is wealthy. She also holds an elaborate fan made from feathers on a golden chain.

The canvas is damaged, which may account for why the woman’s dog appears less sharp than the woman’s bodice—the floral leaf design of her dress looks more realistic and has a
sharper focus than the dog here. While the style and pattern of her dress is beautiful and elegant, the damage due to the abrasion and flattening cause light to reflect somewhat unnaturally off the woman, particularly in the lower half of her dress. In addition, the surface area’s damage makes the dog look slightly disfigured as the dog’s fur is not depicted with the same sense of tactility as in Anguissola’s earlier portrait.

The light source originates from the left side of the canvas. Campi has skillfully created shadows that fall onto her bodice with her right arm casting shadows onto her right side and her left upper arm partially covered in shadow. Unlike the solid light green backdrop of Anguissola’s *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa*, Campi employs a green background with somewhat of a gradient effect, with lighter shades of green changing into deeper and darker shades of green. The lighter part of the green background is around the woman’s face, in effect, highlighting her face and calling the viewer’s attention to her face. The green wall ends about three-quarters across. The left side of the painting shows a dark section running down the length of the wall; this may indicate a corner of the wall.

Campi does a good job rendering texture in this work. The most elaborate element or part of this work is her bodice and dress—the folds and drapery of her skirt and the lower section of her dress, golden belt, and the leaf design of the bodice. The dog’s hair is not rendered as realistically as the fan in her hand. While her necklace (a golden chain with six or seven charms

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107 The museum’s website says “This picture has been flattened by lining. The surface, with the exception of the embroidered areas and the scarf, is also disfigured by abrasion; this is particularly noticeable in the light areas, the flesh, and the bodice.” [http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/435835](http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/435835) Accessed August 25, 2017. I visited museum to view this painting in person on March 30, 2017.
hanging down) is not a clearly painted as her golden belt hanging in a “V” shaped down her waist, this may be due to the flattening of the canvas or the damage from the abrasion.\(^{108}\)

Perhaps the flattening of the painting’s surface has led this work to look less realistic than it once did. For instance, the burgundy table covering (that rests under the pillow that the dog sits on) does not look three-dimensional nor convey enough depth. In addition, the object in the background (with a burgundy cloth atop it) is supposed to be a table; it is intended to recede into the background, but because of flattening, it now looks as if the woman’s left arm is resting atop the table. In terms of volume, the viewer experiences a sense of three-dimensionality and depth with the placement of the woman and the dog with her hand covering his back but the tablecloth does not look three-dimensional and it does not recede properly into space. It looks shallow but the viewer is invited into space through the woman’s gaze. Perhaps, too, Campi was simply unable later in life to catch up with the skills that his best pupil had acquired while in his care.

Despite the fame that Campi achieved during his career, his student surpassed him in terms of fame and recognition. He was very well respected in Lombardy while Anguissola became known in other European countries and even received an invitation from the Spanish court. While Giorgio Vasari chose to include Anguissola in his Lives of the Painters Sculptors, and Architects, Campi is noticeable absent from Vasari’s books.\(^{109}\) Although he worked in different genres of painting including portraiture and religious works (especially earlier in his career), Campi’s commissions and income were largely based on his portraiture work.\(^{110}\)

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\(^{108}\) Wall label for “Portrait of a Lady” by Bernardino Campi.  
http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/435835

\(^{109}\) The omission of Campi from Vasari’s texts is noted by Perotti, I pittori Campi, 69 and Miller, “Bernardino Campi,” 154.

\(^{110}\) Bora, “Sofonisba Anguissola e la sua formazione cremonese,” 79: “Dovettero essere le qualità rittrattistiche del Campi … e che fecero presto la fortuna di Bernardino, tanto da venir accolto con favor presso la nobiltà milanese nel 1550.”
1550 Campi had received word of new commissions via a letter from Bernardo Spina, who said that the Princess of Molfetta, the wife of Governor Ferrante Gonzaga, had requested that Campi come to Milan. Spina gave Campi the choice to stay in the Gonzaga household or the artist, Francesco Melzi (c. 1491-c. 1570), upon his arrival in Milan.\textsuperscript{111} His strength in portraiture work, as noted by Giulio Bora, ultimately led him to move to Milan, forcing an end to Sofonisba and Elena’s apprenticeships.

Even more than a decade after their teaching relationship ended, Campi and Anguissola continued to stay in touch. In 1561, Anguissola wrote in a letter to Campi that the Queen [Isabel of Valois] is taking up too much of her time.\textsuperscript{112} Campi had also requested that she send him a portrait of the King [Philip II] but she replied that she was too busy to paint one for him as she is currently working on a portrait of the King’s sister [Infanta Juana].\textsuperscript{113} The fact that Campi and Anguissola were still in touch seems to suggest that she held positive feelings for her former teacher, and did not paint her double portrait as a “revenge” tactic. Campi not only played an important role in Anguissola’s education by giving her the basic tools to begin her career, her reputation also played an important role in elevating his status as an artist and teacher. In this sense, following Baxandall’s thesis, influence did not only flow one way and their relationship ultimately transformed both of their lives.

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 83. The letter from Bernardo Spina is dated May 2, 1550.

\textsuperscript{112} Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola,” 60.

\textsuperscript{113} Mary D. Garrard, “Here’s Looking at Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist,” \textit{Renaissance Quarterly} 47, no. 3 (Autumn, 1994), 617.
CHAPTER THREE: THE EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION OF AN ARTIST

The period between 1549 and 1550 saw great change for Anguissola. Sofonisba and Elena’s apprenticeships under Campi came to an end when he received an offer from the Princess of Molfetta (the wife of Governor Ferrante Gonzaga) for a commission in Milan. Following Campi’s departure from Cremona, Amilcare Anguissola arranged to have Bernardino Gatti continue Sofonisba’s art studies on her own.\(^{114}\) Around this time, her sister, Elena, entered a convent.\(^{115}\) One reason Amilcare may have chosen Gatti was that the men were already acquainted. Amilcare had served on a committee for the Church of San Sigismondo from 1545 until 1546 that, according to a document dated October 21, 1546, hired Gatti to “paint the arch [vault] of the first chapel near the main door of the Church of San Sigismondo.”\(^{116}\)

Sofonisba apprenticed under Gatti from around 1550 to 1552 or 1553. As there are no surviving records, it is not certain whether Elena also studied art with Gatti prior to entering the Convent of the Holy Virgins at San Vincenzo in Mantua.\(^{117}\) While the sisters eventually parted ways in terms of their professional routes, one of Sofonisba’s earliest portraits from this period is of Elena dressed as a nun, in the 1551 work, *Portrait of a Nun* (Portrait of Elena Anguissola) (Figure 28). Thus, from the visual evidence we might conclude that it is more likely that Elena did not work with Gatti because in the *Portrait of a Nun*, Sofonisba already paints Elena in the

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garb of a nun. This work is the earliest extant independent painting known by Sofonisba (I will return to this portrait below). Additionally, it is not clear whether Sofonisba lived in the Gatti household, as the sisters had resided in the Campi household during their apprenticeships. If Sofonisba did not have a similar arrangement with Gatti, then it is likely that she moved back to stay with her parents.

Gatti was born around 1495 in Pavia. By the time Gatti inherited the mantle of teacher to young Sofonisba around 1550, he was already a prominent painter who had been living and working in Cremona for about two years. He specialized in religious works, such as the Crucifixion (Figure 29) at the Palazzo Comunale in Parma and Adoration of the Shepherds (Figure 11). Unlike Campi, who came from an artistic family, Gatti’s father, Orlando Gatti, was not involved with the arts; instead, he produced tubs to hold wine. Perlingieri notes that the reason why Gatti was often called “Il Sojaro” was because it was “a Lombardian term for a type of large, wooden barrel.” Not much is known about his early career, but some scholars believe he apprenticed under Correggio (Antonio Allegri, c. 1489-1534), due to similar stylistic characteristics seen in the color scheme, drawing style, and soft lines in some of their works. Indeed, sometimes their styles were so similar that Aaron Scharf writes that two drawings attributed to Correggio should actually be attributed to Gatti as they seem to be preparatory

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118 Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola,” 35. The majority of the sources I consulted do not state that Elena also studied with Gatti, but Maria Kusche is one scholar who believes that Elena was also Gatti’s pupil.

119 Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 54. None of the sources I consulted mentioned Anguissola residing in the Gatti household during her apprenticeship.

120 Although some scholars are not certain where Gatti’s birthplace was, most of the sources I consulted including Corrado Ricci, North Italian Painting of the Cinquecento: Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, Emilia (New York: Hacker, 1976), 35, place his birthplace in Pavia.


122 Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 53.
drawings for Gatti’s *Ascension* in Cremona and the *Madonna Adored by S. Catherine of Alexandria* in the collection of the Earl of Yarborough.\(^\text{123}\) In the same article, Scharf refers to Gatti as Correggio’s pupil, which makes for an interesting new presence in Anguissola’s formation.\(^\text{124}\)

Although it is not confirmed whether Gatti studied under Correggio, Diane De Grazia notes that, “Throughout his career Gatti paid homage to Correggio in such a fashion as to suggest that he may have worked with or known Correggio in the 1520s” and that Gatti was even referred to as “‘la scimmia di Correggio,’ or the ‘ape’ of Correggio.”\(^\text{125}\) However De Grazia also notes an important difference between the two artists. Gatti often used ink over his contours, whereas Correggio did not. She states that Correggio and Giorgio Gandini (an artist whose drawings have been at times misattributed to Gatti and vice versa) “continually searched for their forms using *pentimenti*, whereas Gatti’s contours were found quickly without *pentimenti*, after which he went over them with ink.”\(^\text{126}\) One trait that Anguissola did not inherit from Gatti was the absence of *pentimenti* in his compositions. As Maria H. Loh noted, Anguissola reworked her own left arm from an upward angle to one that sits on an arm rest in *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola*; this *pentimento* can sometimes be seen in some reproductions of the work.\(^\text{127}\)


\(^{124}\) Ibid.


\(^{126}\) Ibid., 272.

The three cities that Gatti is most often associated with are Pavia, Cremona, and Parma, where he is known to have completed commissions, many of them in churches and of religious subject matter. He became associated with the Lombard school because of his frequent work (and long stay) in Cremona, which also served as the location for his first commission. Gatti stayed in Cremona with his family for long periods when he had projects but he never established a fixed residence there and was also known to have stayed in the vicinity of such regions as San Faustino, Sant’Elena, Sant’Erasmo, San Vito, and Sant’Antonino, for short periods. When he was commissioned by the Church of San Sigismondo in October of 1546 to paint the arch of the first chapel, he is documented to have been living in Piacenza at the time.

He also served at the Milanese court, just as his future pupil Anguissola would later find work (albeit of a different nature as she served as a lady in waiting and teacher to Queen Isabel) at the Spanish court. The fact that Gatti had worked for the Milanese court may have influenced Anguissola’s decision to accept the invitation from the Spanish court. One important difference is that Gatti was paid for his work at the Milanese court while Anguissola did not accept monetary payment for her work; instead, she was paid with jewels, fabrics, and textiles. In addition, her compensation also included her living expenses. Although Gatti did not have a

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128 Franco Voltini, “Bernardino Gatti,” in I Campi e la cultura artistica Cremonese del cinquecento, ed. Mina Gregori (Milan, Italy: Electa, 1985), 145: “Numerosi atti notarili riguardanti il pittore attestano che a Cremona egli abitò con la famiglia, sia pure per lunghi periodi, solo in ragione dei lavori più impegnativi che gli furono commissionati in città, e comunque senza stabilirvi mai una residenza fissa; così i documenti lo dicono di volta in volta dimorante nelle vicinie di San Faustino, di Sant’Elena, di Sant’Erasmo, di San Pantaleone, di San Vito, di Sant’Antonino, di Santa Maria in Betlem.”


130 Bora, “Sofonisba Anguissola e la sua formazione cremonese, 83: “Lo stesso Sojaro in precedenza aveva lavorato per la corte milanese (due suoi dipinti per il Duomo di Vigevano erano stati ordinati da Francesco II Sforza nel 1534-1535).” For further reading on Anguissola’s time at the Spanish Court, see Pamela Holmes Baldwin, “Sofonisba Anguissola in Spain: Portraiture as Art and Social Practice at a Renaissance Court” (PhD diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1995).

131 Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 113, 138.
permanent residence, he completed many commissions in Cremona between 1548 to 1559, when he left the city to work on commissions in other cities.\textsuperscript{132} He eventually returned to Cremona around 1573 to work on \textit{The Assumption}, but he died in 1575 before the work was completed.\textsuperscript{133}

Gatti’s first known signed and dated commission is the fresco of \textit{The Resurrection} (Figure 30), located in Cathedral of Cremona.\textsuperscript{134} The contract for \textit{The Resurrection} between Gatti and the Massari is dated August 22, 1529.\textsuperscript{135} \textit{The Resurrection} was the last fresco in a series of frescoes depicting the “Stories of Christ,” for which other artists such as Girolamo Romanino (1484-c. 1560) and Pordenone (Giovanni Antonio de’Sacchis, c. 1483-c. 1539) also produced frescoes. Being chosen to produce a fresco at this site was an indication of how Gatti was already highly regarded early in his career because he was in such prestigious company.\textsuperscript{136} Gatti and Pordenone would work together again about fourteen years later when they both contributed works for the decoration of Santa Maria di Campagna at Piacenza. Pordenone worked on the cupola and Gatti produced eight frescoes on the drum underneath the cupola that depict key moments occurring in the Life of the Virgin, including the Annunciation.\textsuperscript{137} These commissions were typical for Gatti, as many of his paintings revolved around religious themes and imagery.

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 53.


\textsuperscript{134} De Grazia, \textit{Correggio and His Legacy}, 271, and Voltini, “Bernardino Gatti,” 145.

\textsuperscript{135} Voltini, “Bernardino Gatti,” 145. In his chapter on Italian merchants, Lewis Einstein explains “their consuls and Massari were the responsible officers of each community, through whom official communication with their respective republics could be maintained” in Einstein, \textit{The Italian Renaissance in England} (New York: Burt Franklin, 1962), 255.

\textsuperscript{136} Voltini, “Bernardino Gatti,” 145-146.

While Anguissola learned valuable techniques with Campi such as drawing and mixing paints, Gatti taught Anguissola about perspective and light and shadow, and helped her to develop a deeper understanding of color. Gatti’s own work is at times marked by vibrant colors, including the garments seen in his painting of the Crucifixion (Figure 29), yet Anguissola’s color palette (especially before she left for the Spanish Court) remained more muted in comparison to Gatti. Anguissola in her early career seemed to favor greens, olives, and browns—essentially more neutral colors. Her early paintings exhibit earthly tones, a chromatic scheme interestingly enough, that would be re-adopted subsequently by the naturalism of the Carracci. Once she was at the Spanish Court, her color palette did brighten up and diversify after about 1559, in part due to the colorful costumes worn by members of the royal family and the nobility in the portraits that Anguissola painted, such as the portrait she painted of Alessandro Farnese (Figure 31). Her interaction with other artists serving the Spanish Court, such as Alonso Sánchez Coello, also contributed to a change in palette. One could say that Anguissola had a more muted palette earlier in her career, when she was still learning about coloring, but that subsequently, her shift in palette was determined by a naturalism that corresponds to a change of environment, a change in her subjects, a change in her sitters’ costumes and a change in the other artists surrounding her at the Spanish court.

We can examine her early and later styles through the following comparison. In her earliest independent portrait from 1551, Portrait of a Nun (Portrait of Elena Anguissola) (Figure 28). Sofonisba presents her younger sister in a simple, yet elegant manner. Naturally, Elena wears a white frock, typical of a nun, but Anguissola sets her against a dark green background, which has darkened over time, (and now appears almost black). Nevertheless, Anguissola’s light touch can be seen in other aspects of the painting. While Gatti often employed drapery in his

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own works, Anguissola chooses to only include a few folds of the fabric here—not as many as Gatti might have included in one of his compositions. Carl Goldstein notes that in typical Renaissance workshops, one exercise for more advanced students included copying figures that “were usually clothed, of drapery.” Elena comes across as humble, and the most elaborate aspect of this portrait is the book with the raised design on the back cover, which alludes to her learned past and humanist education. Elena has clearly defined knuckles on her right hand. In her left hand, one can see the beginnings of the “square-U” shaped position of the fingers that Sofonisba would later use extensively in her other portraits.

In Gatti’s late career, he is known to have worked in Parma (moving there in 1560), where he collaborated with another Northern Italian artist Lattanzio Gambara (1530-1574) of Brescia, on the Ascension (Figure 32), a fresco located on the interior entrance wall inside the Cathedral of Parma. The fresco was completed between 1571 and 1573, a few years before Gatti’s death in 1575. Coincidentally, Gambara’s own teacher had been Giulio Campi, another artist from the Lombard school. Similarly to Bernardino Campi, Gatti also took on other apprentices aside from Anguissola, albeit at a different time period than when he taught Anguissola. Bert W. Meijer notes that it is while working in Parma in Spring of 1566 that Gatti took on the Flemish artist Bartholomeus Spranger (1546-1611), but it proved to be an ill-fated three-month apprenticeship that ended after a bad argument. Meijer observes that many

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139 Carl Goldstein, Teaching Art: Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 12.


141 Ibid., 73.

northern artists such as Spranger would have apprenticed in Italy under Italian Master painters to learn the proper techniques to produce frescoes.\textsuperscript{143} Artists were easily inspired by each other for they often moved in the same circles; in this regard, Spranger was also acquainted with the miniaturist Don Giulio Clovio (1498-1578), who sat for a portrait by Anguissola (Figure 33). Clovio introduced Spranger to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who offered Spranger work, but Spranger was already committed to a different project. Anguissola paints Clovio’s portrait during the 1570s, in the last decade of his life.

Anguissola’s \textit{Portrait of Giulio Clovio} (Figure 33) is at first glance a portrait of the miniaturist but when one looks more carefully, it is actually a double portrait as Clovio holds in left hand a small locket with a portrait of his former student, the female miniaturist, Levina Teerlinc, who studied with him in the 1540s.\textsuperscript{144} This double portrait recalls \textit{Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola}, which was discussed in Chapter Two. Similarly, the Clovio painting also features a male teacher and his female student. Again, we see the male teacher posed with a painted image of his female student. Similar to Anguissola’s invitation to go to the Spanish court, Teerlinc also served the court of Henry VIII as a court painter.\textsuperscript{145} In some ways, this may be Anguissola making another statement about the enduring friendships and relationships between artists and between teacher and student. Instead of just depicting two artists face to face in the same painting, she chooses to render the student as a painting within a painting. Anguissola’s \textit{invenzione} in the composition of both paintings results in an intriguing way to consider and honor friendships.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., 44.
\textsuperscript{145} Perlingieri, \textit{Sofonisba Anguissola}, 40.
Vasari mentions Anguissola even if he does not write an independent biography for Anguissola in his *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (perhaps because she was still alive and relatively young when the second edition came out in 1568); however, Vasari does discuss Gatti in several parts. Gatti is first mentioned in the section on artists in Parma because of his projects in city, including his completion of Michelangelo Anselmi’s *Adoration of the Magi* following Anselmi’s death around 1554. Vasari also mentions Gatti’s *Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes* (Figure 34), a fresco located in the refectory of San Pietro al Po. It is Gatti’s most well-known work and recounts the biblical story of how Jesus fed several thousand men, women, and children with just two fishes and five loaves of bread. In Gatti’s work, Jesus is seen attending to the masses, some of whom are eating. A few of the figures stare outward at the viewer. Two angels hover above the crowds. This work is also notable for its diverse array of figures and different facial expressions. Gatti’s compositions are often marked by colorful imagery (although at times, muted colors), keen attention to hands, especially slender fingers, and someone in the painting staring out towards the viewer. As we can see in this detail of the left side of Gatti’s *Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes* from 1552 (Figure 10), there is a typical Mannerist color palette (especially in the soft rosy red garments worn by the figure in the foreground with his back to the viewer). Christ’s fingers look especially slender and delicate. Most of the hands and fingers of the other gesturing men are similarly rendered in an idealized fashion. One exception is the figure with his back to the viewer, wearing the white headscarf and rosy red garments in the foreground. His fingers are chunkier and seem more realistic for a man of his standing. A young boy who is handing Christ a piece of bread and the second figure from the left in the background (the man wearing a white hood) both stare out at the viewer.

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Gatti was very skilled at depicting hands. He often depicted different types of hands (for instance, delicate, rough, plump, thin). Gatti’s talent at rendering a diverse portfolio of hands in his own work is perhaps taken up in different ways by his student even if Anguissola’s work later becomes recognizable to art historians because of her trademark of depicting fingers in a U-shaped gesture, which often have the hand holding a letter, brush, gloves, or some other prop. Perhaps Gatti’s emphasis on hands in his own oeuvre prompted Anguissola to think about hands and to come up with her trademark square-U.

Anguissola’s style and technique were thus refined under Gatti’s guidance. In her Self-Portrait of 1552 (Figure 35), now at the Uffizi, and likely executed during her apprenticeship under Gatti because of the dating, one can see the development of Anguissola’s work as a portraitist. Anguissola portrays herself wearing a simple black garment over a white shirt, with ruffles peeking out at the neckline and sleeves. In her right hand, she holds a curled up piece of parchment or paper. In her left hand, she is holding two thin paintbrushes next to a rectangular wooden paint palette. Anguissola at this point is still fleshing out her technique. Her features in the painting are not as sharp or clearly defined as her later work and one does not really get a sense of the “breathing quality” that Vasari heralded. While Anguissola’s facial features are not as sharply defined either, especially her nose, which seems larger than in her later self-portraits, there is nevertheless a certain gracefulness to her hands (especially in the depiction of her long fingers) even if they seem somewhat plump.

The influence of her teacher Gatti’s mastery of hands is not immediately evident in this Self-Portrait. While there is a delicate quality to the fingers on her right hand, her left hand looks somewhat awkward and not natural. Curiously, Anguissola depicts herself as left-handed here, but is seen painting with her right hand in other self-portraits, unless the paint brushes in her left

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hand is actually a *mahlstick*. During her early paintings that she completed while under Gatti’s tutelage, the features are a bit softer, and not as precise as works from her later career. The softer features are especially evident in the nose of Elena and Sofonisba (Figure 28 and Figure 35).

Perhaps Gatti instilled in Anguissola a sense of how to render details and especially how to render hands, which may have been one of the few parts of the body along with the faces and heads that Anguissola could focus on given that as a female artist she was therefore barred from studying male nudes. If Gatti’s impact is not immediately noticeable, it is significant that just a few years later, she would be executing groundbreaking paintings such as *The Chess Game* and *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* and the drawing *Asdrubale Bitten by a Crayfish*, which will be discussed in Chapter Four and the Conclusion.

Although the time Anguissola spent apprenticing under Gatti was a shorter time period than the time she and Elena spent studying with Campi, one could say that what she learned from Gatti had a stronger impact on her long-term career, as it allowed her to expand her color palette and, more importantly, her understanding of expressive composition. This led Anguissola to produce genre paintings featuring her family members in the decade after her time with Gatti ends. Campi had been her first teacher and was present at the most pivotal time of her career (at the start of art education when she was most impressionable) yet what she picked up from her second teacher could ultimately have been more important for her long-term career as a portraitist.
Sometime around 1552 or 1553, Anguissola’s apprenticeship under Gatti drew to an end. It is unclear why the apprenticeship concluded, but Anguissola took the lessons she learned from Gatti and Campi and set off on a path to becoming her own artist. Along the way, she would gain much admiration and renown, and she would ultimately surpass both of her early teachers in terms of fame and recognition. The 1550s proved to be a prolific period for Anguissola as she developed her own distinctive style and focused on genre scenes featuring her family members, and, above all, on portraiture. She also painted multiple self-portraits of which some have already been noted in the previous chapters, and was now living at home full time after her second apprenticeship ended. Taking all the knowledge and skills that she absorbed from her teachers, Anguissola herself became a teacher of art to her younger sisters, Lucia (c. 1536/38-1565), Minerva (c. 1539/41-c. 1564), Europa (c. 1542/44-? 1578), and Anna Maria (c. 1545/46-?), following Elena’s move to a convent in Mantua. Her sisters also served as subjects for her own artistic development.

Anguissola’s sitters do many interesting things with their hands but one of the most distinguishable stylistic elements is what Perlingieri referred to as the “square-U” shape that is frequently seen in the hands of her figures. It appears throughout her career in many works, including her sister Minerva’s left hand in Portrait of Amilcare, Minerva, and Asdrubale Anguissola of c. 1557-1558 (Figure 4), and Sofonisba’s own right hand in Self-Portrait with

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148 It is possible that Anguissola was living at the Anguissola household during her apprenticeship under Gatti, as I have not come across any documentation that she had a similar living arrangement with Gatti as she had when she lived and studied in the Campi household.

Spinet of c. 1555-1556 (Figure 5) and Self-Portrait of 1561 (Figure 6). In addition, in The Chess Game (Figure 14), on the far left, we see Lucia’s left hand and in the middle, young Europa’s left hand in the square-U shape. Thinking about this characteristic of Anguissola’s style may bring to mind her teacher Bernardino Gatti’s own strength and talent in depicting different types of hands in his own compositions. Perhaps Gatti’s emphasis on hands in his own works influences Anguissola to think about hands and to come up with her trademark hand gesture.

The square-U shape has aided scholars to provide more visual confirmation that certain works can be attributed to Anguissola. Sofonisba’s sister, Lucia (the third daughter born to Amilcare and Bianca Anguissola), who was also an artist and who was taught by Sofonisba, also attempted to incorporate her own square-U shape in the hands in one of her own paintings. Yet Perlingieri points out that’s Lucia’s fingers are depicted more “pudgy” and “less angular” than Sofonisba’s hands and fingers, as seen in Lucia’s Self-Portrait of c. 1557 (Figure 36). While the hands depicted in Sofonisba’s paintings were often delicate and beautiful, they lack the diversity and dynamism of Gatti’s hands. This may have to do with the requirements of portraiture where wild gestures are often inappropriate. The hands in Anguissola’s paintings are expressive, however, in a different way. Seeing Lucia’s plump fingers in her Self-Portrait (Figure 36) may make one think of Sofonisba’s early Self-Portrait of 1552 (Figure 35) that is now at the Uffizi. The painting was completed during her apprenticeship under Gatti (discussed in the previous chapter) and the fingers look as if they are in an uncomfortable pose, causing them to appear somewhat unnatural. Both Sofonisba’s Self-Portrait of 1552 and Lucia’s Self-Portrait of c. 1557 were executed early in their respective careers, so their styles had not yet

\[150\text{ Unfortunately, very few of Lucia’s works are extant and securely attributed to her. Perlingieri does point out that Lucia signed two of her paintings but that her other sisters Anna Maria and Europa (also artists) did not usually sign their works in Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 95.}\]
been refined. Sadly, Lucia’s career as an artist is tragically cut short in her late twenties when she dies in 1565.151

Following the end of both apprenticeships and without a teacher to steer her career and education, Sofonisba’s father, Amilcare, contacted and communicated with people of power and influence to publicize his daughter’s talents. Some of the people he corresponded with included the formidable d’Este and Gonzaga families as well as Annibale Caro, Pope Julius II and other people in Rome.152 Michelangelo was also among this group. Perlingieri details two letters from 1557 and 1558 from Amilcare to Michelangelo (that still exist in the artist’s archives today), for any advice he could give Sofonisba and asked for drawings of his that she could copy or color in.153

Beginning around 1554, the young artist spent several years traveling to different regions in Italy. Perlingieri also suggests that Sofonisba spent some time (about a year or two) learning from Michelangelo when she went to Rome, but most scholars do not agree that she studied directly with the master.154 Perhaps Anguissola did encounter Michelangelo while she was in the city during the 1550s, but if there were meetings and instruction, it likely would have been very informal and not on the scale of her private lessons with Campi and Gatti. In Amilcare’s letter to Michelangelo of 1557, he mentioned that the master had given her advice in the past (perhaps this was in reference to informal study when Sofonisba was in Rome):


154 Scholars disagree on whether Anguissola actually spent time in Rome studying with Michelangelo. Most research suggests that she did not study with him in person but Perlingieri suggests that she did and writes about this period in Chapter Four of Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 57-75.
I beg of you that since . . . you deigned by your advice in the past to introduce her (to art), that you will condescend sometime in the future to guide her again. . . that you will. . . send her one of your drawings that she may color it in oil, with the obligation to return it to you faithfully finished by her own hand.¹⁵⁵

Whether she received instruction from the master in person or not, Amilcare did correspond by mail with Michelangelo and Sofonisba made the drawing, Asdrubale Bitten by a Crayfish (Figure 3), because of his desire to see a drawing of hers depicting a crying child. In this work, we see a young boy (usually identified as Sofonisba’s brother) in tears after a crayfish has bitten his hand; standing next to him a girl is comforting him (possibly Minerva or Europa). Done in black chalk, Sofonisba made good use of shadows and expertly conveyed the emotion of her young brother’s pain with his partially closed eyes and slightly agape mouth. The young boy is probably about four years old here and his tiny fingers cringe, like his facial expression, in response to the pain. His sister looks at the boy and attempts to comfort him by putting her right arm on his right shoulder. The folds and creases of Asdrubale’s shirt and his sister’s dress (and details of their sleeves and of her shoulder) are visible in the drawing. Sofonisba’s attempts at conveying the naturalism that artists from the Lombard School are known for are evident in this drawing, but she takes it further than a concern with verisimilitude of surfaces and textures. It is in the naturalism of expression and response that Anguissola finds her originality.

This work, now at the Museo e Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte in Naples, was once in Cosimo de’ Medici’s possession. In 1562, Michelangelo’s friend Tomasso Cavalieri, sent Anguissola’s drawing along with a drawing of Cleopatra by Michelangelo as a gift to Cosimo. In a letter that accompanied the paired drawings, Cavalieri writes that “Michelangelo having seen a drawing done by her hand of a smiling girl, he said that he would have liked to see a weeping

¹⁵⁵ Amilcare Anguissola quoted in de Tolnay, “Sofonisba Anguissola and Her Relations with Michelangelo,” 117.
boy, as a subject more difficult to draw.” In this regard, Anguissola advanced quickly in a short period of time from being associated with artists such as Campi and Gatti to Michelangelo himself.

By 1559, following her trip to Rome, Anguissola’s fame had grown and although it was difficult to leave her family behind, she accepted an invitation from King Philip II (1527-1598) to come to Spain to serve as a lady-in-waiting and to teach art to his third wife, Isabel of Valois (1545-1568). During this time in Spain, she also had duties of a court painter, executing portraits of various members of the royal family. Anguissola’s teaching continued on and off throughout her career, and she is said to have taught the artist Francesco Piola (1565-1600) for a brief period while living in Genoa later in her career.

Being part of the tradition of the Lombard School instilled a deep sense of naturalism in her painting. Anguissola depicted her subjects as true to life as possible rather than using a loose brushstroke. This came from living and learning art in Cremona. Her realistic depiction of her subjects reached new heights when she was living at the Spanish court and absorbed some of the stylistic tendencies (for example, more emphasis on line) from two male artists at the Spanish court, Alonso Sánchez-Coello (c. 1531/1532-1588), and Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (1549/53-

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156 de Tolnay, “Sofonisba Anguissola and Her Relations with Michelangelo,” 117.

157 Variations of Queen Isabel’s name include Isabella of Valois, Elizabeth of Valois, and Elizabeth of France.

158 There is some inconsistency among sources as to whether Anguissola was appointed as court painter or a lady-in-waiting. Some sources I consulted state that she was both a court painter and lady-in-waiting yet other sources do not say court painter.

159 Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 185.
The three artists interacted and sometimes painted copies of each other’s work, especially when the work was a portrait of a member of the royal family.

A good example of Anguissola’s “Spanish style” can be seen in her a three-quarter-length portrait of Alessandro Farnese (1545-1592), Duke of Parma, who was the son of Margaret of Austria, an illegitimate child of Charles V (Philip II’s father) (Figure 31). Alessandro is shown here in three-quarter profile wearing a sumptuous gold and silver coat. Set against a dark backdrop, he confidently stares out at the viewer. Although he is just a teenager (around sixteen when this portrait was painted), he has a commanding presence, especially for someone his age. His clothing is exquisite and typical of royal subjects (the use of such beautiful fabrics recall the rich costumes worn by Isabel of Valois in other Anguissola portraits). Alessandro’s coat is lined with what appears to be lynx fur (white fur mottled with black dots). His high collared vest is the same color as his coat, while his gold and silver shirt and pants are rounded off at his thighs, which in turn are covered with white tights. This gold is a different shade than his coat. He wears a diamond studded black hat adorned with white feathers. He carries a sword under his jacket, perhaps referencing his future career as a soldier and lieutenant. This portrait is typical of Anguissola’s portraiture of a younger male in the court, especially in terms of costume.

In an era when the notion of a professional woman artist had not yet been fully established, Anguissola did not create works for money or as paid commissions. For one, it would have been unacceptable to receive payment given that she was a female member of the nobility. Instead, she, or rather Amilcare, gifted her paintings to influential people, and she and

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162 Early in her career, she receives a number of commissions for church and clergy members, according to Perlingieri, *Sofonisba Anguissola*, 77.
her family received gifts and favors (such as her royal position in Madrid) in return. While at the Spanish court, she received many pieces of jewelry, in addition to textiles, as gifts from the Queen and as payment.163

As a result of Amilcare’s continual efforts and Sofonisba’s stunning portraits for the European elite, she gained an international reputation as an artist, which earned her a rare spot among a small, select group of women artists in the second edition of Giorgio Vasari’s *The Lives of the Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, published in 1568 during her mid-thirties. In his book, Vasari praised the other Anguissola sisters whom he met firsthand when he visited the Anguissola household in Cremona but he was unable to meet Sofonisba on that occasion, as she was already at the Spanish court. Vasari applauds Anguissola’s talent to make her figures “appear to be breathing and absolutely alive” in reference to her *Portrait of Amilcare, Minerva, and Asdrubale Anguissola* of about 1557-1558 (Figure 4).164

Vasari also mentioned one her most famous works, the 1555 painting, *The Chess Game* (Figure 14), in which he says that her three sisters “all have the appearance of life.”165 Frederika H. Jacobs brings up the possibility that not only was Vasari marveling at what a unique and impressive talent Anguissola had but she proposes that perhaps he was also referring to the fact that Anguissola broke the gender barrier, “[Vasari] also may have been acknowledging

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165 Ibid.
Anguissola’s ability to successfully master the ‘profession di gentiluomo.’” According to Jacobs, Anguissola is alone among women with the ability to make a figure seem alive:

Although more than thirty-five other women have been recorded as artists during the Cinquecento, and while some received copious amounts of praise, none, as will be seen, were credited with the ability to infuse an image with life. . . . portraits by Anguissola’s hand [are] the only works by a sixteenth-century woman privileged by this type of praise.  

Jacobs continues to extrapolate that in general, it was thought that male artists differed from and were perceived as superior to women artists due to “the ability to produce images that ‘appear truly alive.’” The skill to give her figures such a “breathing likeness” may be Anguissola’s most notable and strongest quality as a painter.

*The Chess Game* only reinforced Anguissola’s status as a trailblazer, as this work may have been one of the first paintings during the Renaissance depicting someone with lively emotion (in this case, it is Europa Anguissola laughing) during a period when sitters were usually depicted in a very reserved manner.  

The laughter and emotion conveyed in *The Chess Game* bring to mind the work of another artist, Bartolomeo Passerotti, who was active around Bologna in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. One could say that the type of genre scene depicted in *The Chess Game* anticipates some of the northern Italian genre scenes of the 1580s, which often show people, particularly food merchants such as butchers and fruit sellers, amongst their goods in a casual, quotidian manner. These scenes are akin to snapshots of daily life. Often we see people laughing, such as in Passerotti’s allegorical painting, *Butcher Shop* (Figure 37), which

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167 Ibid., 78.
168 Ibid., 83.
displays two men surrounded by meat smiling out at the viewer. The one contrast between Passerotti’s *Butcher Shop* and Anguissola’s *Chess Game* is that Passerotti’s works often depicted what Sheila McTighe would call “low-born human bodies with foodstuffs” while *The Chess Game* features three aristocratic young girls with their servant.\textsuperscript{170}

One important element missing from Anguissola’s artistic education under Campi and Gatti was the inability to study anatomy from actual models as male artists usually did. This was a common dilemma that affected not only Anguissola, but also other women artists such as Lavinia Fontana, who could not attend the Carracci’s academy because of the school’s “emphasis on drawing from the nude model.”\textsuperscript{171} Despite Anguissola’s lack of professional training, she nevertheless blossomed into a skilled portraitist and was praised for giving her figures a vibrant, organic quality with realistic depictions of her subjects and unexpected injections of emotion, often through their facial expressions and sometimes with their hand gestures. Working within the limits set upon her by society, she focused her talent instead on making the most of her depiction of details rather than attempting to master the whole.

Anguissola is also notable as being the first internationally recognized female artist whose own father was not an artist. She emerges as the singular, notable, female artist from Cremona while the majority of the other women artists of her time (and in the decades following her career) hailed from Bologna, including Lavinia Fontana, Artemisia Gentileschi, and


\textsuperscript{171} Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012), 94. Although Fontana was not allowed into the Carracci’s Accademia degli Incamminati, she was able to attend a different, and reputable, academy, the Roman Accademia di San Luca according to Lisa Kaborycha, *A Short History of Renaissance Italy* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2011), 273. It is uncertain, however, whether she was allowed to participate in life drawing classes.
Elisabetta Sirani.\textsuperscript{172} As fortunate as Anguissola was to be born to two members of the nobility, she may have been at a disadvantage compared to some of the later women painters whose fathers were artists. Some of these women, including Fontana and Sirani, trained in their fathers’ workshops and had more exposure to different aspects and genres of painting—not just portraiture and religious works. This circumstance served Fontana and Sirani well as they were able to get commissions for more elaborate history paintings and mythological themes.

Maria Kusche also speculates that not having the ability to do their apprenticeships alongside male art students forced the two elder Anguissola sisters (Sofonisba and Elena) to concentrate on portraiture and small-scale works, which thus “caused the neglect of invenzione, the ‘creation’ of sacred or profane multi-figured scenes.”\textsuperscript{173} Perhaps “neglect” is too strong a word. Perhaps it is more productive to think about how Anguissola instead transformed the portrait genre given the limitations of her particular circumstance. After all, one can argue that Sofonisba employed a good deal of invenzione when she painted the double portrait, \textit{Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola} (Figure 1), which I discussed in Chapter Two. Some may have viewed Anguissola as an anomaly as she wasn’t the daughter of an artist but rather a member of the nobility who chose painting as a profession. Yet she channeled her uniqueness and innate ability as an artist into exceptional opportunities.

Another Anguissola portrait of note is \textit{Elisabeth of Valois Holding a Portrait of Philip II} (Figure 38). In this full-length portrait, we see the Queen dressed in a sumptuous black dress decorated with a jeweled belt and ornamentation running down the front of her dress. Her sleeves


\textsuperscript{173} Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola, 34-35.
are open and reveal beautiful white and yellow sleeves underneath. Similar to the *Portrait of Giulio Clovio* and *Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola* that were discussed in previous chapters, this painting, too, looks at first glance to be a single portrait. Yet in her Elisabeth’s hand, she holds a bejeweled cameo containing a portrait of her husband, King Philip II, making this a double portrait. The shape of her fingers also hint at a square-U shape. Similar to the Clovio painting, Anguissola uses the cameo as an unconventional device to bring the King and Queen in one painting but not in an obvious way. With the inclusion of the cameo, Anguissola adds another layer to the story.

Not only does this double portrait anticipate her *Portrait of Giulio Clovio* (Figure 33) a decade later, the marbleized patterns of the interior column recalls another Anguissola work, *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa* (Figure 13), which had an orange marbleized pattern on the column. In the *Elisabeth of Valois* painting, Anguissola attempts three marble patterns and they greatly improve upon her early effort on the *Stampa* portrait, as these three patterns are distinct from each other and appear more true-to-life than her earlier efforts at interior architectural elements. In many ways, Anguissola has come full circle from her first official commission with *Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa*.

After more than a decade-long stay in Spain, and following the death of Queen Isabel, Anguissola married for the first time at around age 39 to Don Fabrizio de Moncada as a result of Philip II’s introduction. In a show of gratitude for her years of service, the Spanish king pays for Anguissola’s dowry. The newlywed couple travel throughout Italy and then settle back in Spain again, but Don Fabrizio dies around 1579, most likely from the plague or from a pirate

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attack at sea.\textsuperscript{175} A year or two following Don Fabrizio’s passing, she meets her second husband, Orazio Lomellino, on a ship while returning to Italy. They marry soon afterward and live in Pisa for a year. Following that, they settle in Genoa and Palermo. Her late career work is marked by religious themes and miniatures, which Kusche claims that she produced in both cities once she left the Spanish court.\textsuperscript{176} Anguissola and Lomellino move between the two cities until her death in 1625 in Palermo.\textsuperscript{177}


\textsuperscript{176} Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola, 46. According to Perlingieri, in \textit{Sofonisba Anguissola}, 199, Anguissola only worked extensively in miniature late in her career in Palermo while Kusche believes she worked in this style earlier on in both Genoa and Palermo.

\textsuperscript{177} Kusche, “Sofonisba Anguissola, 72-97.
CONCLUSION: ANGUISSOLA’S LEGACY

Though she lived four hundred years ago, Sofonisba Anguissola has had an enduring legacy. Her training with Bernardino Campi and Bernardino Gatti allowed her to gain the necessary skills as a portraitist and set her on a path to being a trailblazer. Taking what she learned from her teachers, she improved upon and innovated the genre of portraiture and had an impact on later Lombard artists of genre scenes such as Bartolomeo Passerotti and the Carracci. Because of her success, it became more acceptable not only for women to pursue a career as an artist, but also for someone from the noble class to become a professional artist. Sylvia Ferino-Pagden sums up Anguissola’s lasting legacy by saying, “Without a doubt, Sofonisba Anguissola’s greatest achievement was opening up painting to women as a socially acceptable profession.”

Ferino-Pagden also postulates that not only did Anguissola’s success allow future women artists to achieve respectable careers as painters, but Anguissola’s success may have encouraged other members of nobility (both male and female) when she states, “perhaps Sofonisba’s great fame during her lifetime paved the way for future persons of noble rank to be able to devote themselves to the artistic profession.” Moreover, not only was Anguissola significant because she was one of the first aristocratic women artists in history but she was also one who was not trained by a family member as was customary.

As such, Anguissola was an important figure that acted as a bridge for the future success for other women artists of the Renaissance, such as Lavinia Fontana (1552-1614), who was

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179 Ibid.
inspired to paint because of Anguissola’s achievements. Irene di Spilimbergo (1541-1559) offers an even better point of comparison. Similar to the Anguissola clan, di Spilimbergo also came from a noble family. Having seen a self-portrait that Anguissola painted for Philip II and that had been sent to Venice, di Spilimbergo “was deeply impressed” and sought out lessons from Titian. Unfortunately, she died early before the age of twenty, but in that time she became so revered as an artist that a mass of people were reported in attendance at her funeral.

In some ways, it is remarkable that Anguissola actually surpassed Campi and Gatti in terms of fame, prestige and international recognition as an artist. Given her limited training and the fact that being a woman denied her the opportunity to engage in a full experience of an apprenticeship that a male artist would have (for instance, Leonardo da Vinci under Verrocchio or Raphael under Perugino), Anguissola’s later professional success is a testament to the pedagogical talents of Campi and Gatti because they taught her so well despite the social restrictions she and they faced and were able to nurture her talent so that she could forge her own way. Not only did Anguissola benefit from having exceptional teachers at the start of her career, she herself became a teacher later on to four of her younger sisters (Lucia, Minerva, Europa, and Anna Maria), Queen Elisabeth of Valois, and Francesco Piola. Near the end of her career, a young Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641) would come to see her in July of 1624 and she would

180 Frederika H. Jacobs, “Woman’s Capacity to Create: The Unusual Case of Sofonisba Anguissola,” Renaissance Quarterly 47, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 76: “Having been shown a portrait by Sofonisba Anguissola, made by her own hand... and hearing wondrous praise of her in the art of painting, two other Renaissance pittrici, Irene di Spilimbergo and Lavinia Fontana reportedly ‘set [their] heart[s] on learning how to paint.”


183 Greer, Obstacle Race, 182-183.

184 Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 185, and Jacobs, “Woman’s Capacity to Create,” 76.
offer him tips and advice on how to excel at portraiture. This visit to Anguissola is immortalized in van Dyck’s notebook, as he drew a sketch of Anguissola, as well as in the two portraits he made of her, including one of her lying down and resting on a pillow (Figure 39). She could be considered a wise and experienced “master artist” who is now advising an aspiring artist. This meeting with van Dyck recalls or mirrors the start of her career, when Michelangelo gave her advice, demonstrating once more the give and take that could occur between masters and their apprentices.

Van Dyck was not the only male artist she had an effect on. Perlingieri suggests Caravaggio’s Boy Being Bitten by a Lizard of about 1590-1595 (Figure 40) (now at the Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence) was directly influenced by Asdrubale Being Bitten by a Crayfish (Figure 3) from forty years earlier. Although his career is most often associated with Rome, Naples, Malta, and Sicily, Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, 1571-1610) is considered an artist from the Lombard School as he was born in town of Caravaggio in the Bergamo region, yet he is a generation after Anguissola’s time. In fact, Mina Gregori notes that, “In judging the cultural legacy of Lombardy and evaluating its impact, one realizes that the growing recognition of the importance of Caravaggio and of his concept of naturalism... was automatically a reflection of the achievements of that province.” In Boy Being Bitten by a Lizard, an older boy strikes a similar pose as Asdrubale right after he is bitten by a lizard. His fingers and hand gestures are quite exaggerated, and this composition works to convey the

185 Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 204.


187 Perlingieri, Sofonisba Anguissola, 187.

moment and shock of being bitten. Similar to Asdrubale, Caravaggio’s boy also has curly hair, although the boy has more hair than young Asdrubale. The boy stares directly at the viewer, whereas Asdrubale winces indirectly at the viewer. One might say, too, that if Caravaggio was able to address the beholder in this direct way, it was on account of Anguissola’s innovations.

This thesis serves as a beginning of an exploration between the relationships between Sofonisba Anguissola and her two teachers, Bernardino Campi and Bernardino Gatti. The thesis has touched briefly on other artists and has hopefully opened up topics that can be further studied. Further research into the individual careers of Campi and Gatti, as well as other Lombard School artists such the Boccaccino and Campi workshops would undoubtedly enrich the field and more could be explored in relation to Anguissola’s late career in Palermo and Genoa. In the last ten years, two novels have featured Anguissola, including Carmen Boullosa’s 2008 *La virgen y el violín*, which was published in Spanish.¹⁸⁹ In 2010, Lynn Cullen published the novel, *The Creation of Eve*, featuring Anguissola as the protagonist and centering on her time at the Spanish court.¹⁹⁰ In 2016 Annie Kevans produced a portrait painting of Anguissola (Figure 41). Rather than reducing the story of influence to one in which Person X simply influences Person Y, I hope this thesis will help reframe the possibilities of artistic influence from various perspectives. Moreover, I hope it will fill in some of the gaps that exist in the scholarship of Campi, Gatti, and Anguissola and serve as a valuable resource and a starting point for other scholars looking to do further research.


BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Figure 1
Sofonisba Anguissola
*Bernardino Campi Painting Sofonisba Anguissola*
c. late 1550s
Oil on canvas
111 x 109.5 cm
Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena
Figure 2
Sofonisba Anguissola
*Self-Portrait*
1554
Oil on panel
17 x 12 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna
Figure 3
Sofonisba Anguissola
Asdrubale Bitten by a Crayfish
Before 1559
Black chalk on brownish paper
33.3 x 38.5 cm
Museo e Galleria Nazionali di Capodimonte, Naples
Figure 4
Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of Amilcare, Minerva, and Asdrubale Anguissola*
c. 1557-1558
Oil on canvas
157 x 122 cm
Nivaagaards Malerisamling, Niva, Denmark
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Self-Portrait with Spinet*

c. 1555-1556
Oil on canvas
56.5 x 48 cm
Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Self-Portrait*
1561
Oil on canvas
83 x 65 cm
Earl Spencer Collection, Althorp, North Hampton, United Kingdom
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Self-Portrait*
About 1556
8.3 x 6.4 cm
Varnished watercolor on parchment
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Camillo Boccaccino
*The Prophet David*
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Oil on panel
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Camillo Boccaccino
*Madonna and Child with Saint Michael and the Blessed Ambrogio Sansedoni*
1540-1546
Oil on canvas
207 x 141.4 cm
Museo Civico Ala Ponzone, Cremona
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Bernardino Gatti
*Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes (DETAIL)*
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Fresco
Refectory of San Pietro al Po, Cremona
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Bernardino Gatti
*Adoration of the Shepherds*
1555-1557
Oil on canvas
257 x 157 cm
Church of San Pietro al Po, Cremona
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Bernardino Campi
Pietà
1574
Oil on canvas
160 x 235 cm
Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa*
1557
Oil on canvas
136.9 x 71.5 cm
Walters Art Museum, Baltimore
Figure 14
Sofonisba Anguissola
_The Chess Game_
1555
Oil on canvas
72 x 97 cm
Muzeum Naradowe, Poznan, Poland
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Giovanni Battista Moroni
_Gian Lodovico Madruzzo_
1551/1552
Oil on canvas
199.8 x 116 cm
The Art Institute of Chicago
Figure 16
Giovanni Battista Moroni
*Gian Federico Madruzzo*

c. 1550
Oil on canvas
201.9 x 116.8 cm
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
Figure 17
Vincenzo Foppa
*Saint Agnes and Catherine of Alexandria*
C. 1460
Tempera and gold leaf on wood panel
44.3 x 32 cm
Walters Art Museum, Baltimore
Figure 18
Vincenzo Campi
*Fruit Vendor (Fruiterer)*
Second half of 1580s
Oil on canvas
143 x 213 cm
Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of Bianca Ponzoni Anguissola, the Artist’s Mother (Portrait of a Young Woman)*
c. 1557
Oil on panel
98.1 x 75.6 cm
Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
Figure 20
Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of a Lady*

c. 1556
Oil on panel
41 x 33 cm

Museo Civico Ala Ponzone, Cremona
Figure 21
Bernardino Campi
*Portrait of Pietro Bonomi*
1574-1585
Museo Civico Ala Ponzone, Cremona
Figure 22
Bernardino Campi
*Portrait of Catellano Cotta*
Oil on canvas
103 x 82.5 cm
Museo Civico Ala Ponzone, Cremona
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Bernardino Campi
*Saint Cecilia and Saint Catherine*
1562-1566
Oil on canvas
218 x 146 cm
Church of San Sigismondo, Cremona
Figure 24
Sofonisba Anguissola or Bernardino Campi (?)

_Pietà_
1574-1585
Oil on canvas
44 x 27 cm
Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan
Figure 25
Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa*

C. 1557
Oil on canvas
144 x 79 cm
Private collection
Figure 26
Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of Marquess Massimiliano Stampa*

c. 1557
Oil on canvas
136.8 x 73 cm
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Reims, France
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Bernardino Campi
*Portrait of a Woman*
Late 1560s
Oil on canvas
141.3 x 97.2 cm
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of a Nun* (Portrait of Elena Anguissola)
1551
Oil on canvas
169 x 53 cm
City Art Gallery, Southampton, United Kingdom
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Bernardino Gatti

*Crucifixion*

Oil on canvas

580 x 320 cm

Palazzo Comunale, Parma
Figure 30
Bernardino Gatti
*The Resurrection*
1529
Fresco
Cathedral, Cremona
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*Alessandro Farnese (1545-1592), Duke of Parma*
c. 1561
Oil on canvas
107 x 79 cm
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin
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Lattanzio Gambara and Bernardino Gatti

Ascension
1571-1573
Fresco
Cathedral, Parma
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Portrait of Giulio Clovio*

C. 1557
Oil on canvas
100 x 75.5 cm
Fondazione Federico Zeri, Bologna
Figure 34
Bernardino Gatti
*Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes*
1552
Fresco
Refectory of San Pietro al Po, Cremona
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Sofonisba Anguissola
*Self-Portrait*
1552
Oil on canvas
37 7/8 x 27 3/8 cm
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*Self-Portrait*

C. 1557
Oil on canvas
28 x 20 cm
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Bartolomeo Passerotti
*Butcher Shop*
1580s
Oil on canvas
112-152 cm
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*Elisabeth of Valois Holding a Portrait of Philip II*
1561-1565
Oil on canvas
206 x 103 cm
Prado Museum, Madrid
Figure 39
Anthony van Dyck
*Portrait of Sofonisba Anguissola*
1624
Galleria Sabauda, Turin
Figure 40
Caravaggio
*Boy Bitten by a Lizard*

c. 1590-1595
Oil on canvas
65.8 x 50 cm
Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence
Figure 41
Annie Kevans
Sofonisba Anguissola
2016
Oil on paper
40.6 x 30.5 cm