

Lawrence W. Nichols



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Catalogue edited by:  
Ferdinando Corberi

**Trinity Fine Art**  
*Old Master Paintings and Sculpture*







**Hendrick Goltzius**

(Dutch, 1558 – 1617)

*Jupiter and Juno*

Oil on canvas, 99.5 x 80 cm (39<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 31<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in)  
Signed with monogram and dated HG/1616.  
(upper right corner, right of Juno's hair ornamentation)

**Provenance:**

Probably collection Gijsbertus van Diemen, lawyer and merchant of Amsterdam (ca. 1610-1686);

Probably collection of Anna Maria van Diemen, daughter of above, either inherited at her father's death, or received as dowry at her marriage in 1675 to Girolamo Parensi (1644-1713), merchant of Lucca, who, after living in Amsterdam, returned with his Dutch wife to Lucca in 1690;

Probably descent within Parensi family, Lucca;

Mansi Collection, Lucca, since 1824, in which year Camilla Parensi (1768-1836), who had married Raffaele Mansi in 1792, inherited the estate of her mother, the granddaughter of Girolamo Parensi;

Purchased (as Jordaens) from the Mansi family in 1962 by a private collection;  
By descent within family of above.

**Literature:**

Charlotte Christensen and Lawrence W. Nichols, "Cadmus, His Companions, and the Dragon: a Newly-discovered Painting by Hendrick Goltzius," *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury* 3 (1986), pp. 15 n. 1, 16 n. 5;

Glauco Borella, Patrizia Giusti Maccari, *Il palazzo Mansi di Lucca* (Lucca 1993), ill. p. 192 (as attributed to Jacob Jordaens);

Lawrence W. Nichols, *The Paintings of Hendrick Goltzius, 1558-1617, A Monograph and Catalogue Raisonné* (Doornspijk, 2013), A-38, pp. 147-49.





Homer's *Iliad* provides the thematic underpinning for Hendrick Goltzius's impressive painting, *Jupiter and Juno*. Hera [Juno], scheming to influence the outcome of the Trojan War through the seduction of her husband Zeus [Jupiter], obtains the loan from Aphrodite [Venus] of her magic girdle, which endowed its wearer with sexual attraction. *Zeus who gathers the clouds saw her, and when he saw her[,] desire was a mist about his close heart as much as on that time they first went to be together and lay in love.* Jupiter then coaxes Juno, 'let us go to bed and turn to lovemaking. For never before has love for any goddess or woman so melted about the heart inside me, broken it to submission, as now.' To Juno's feigned protesting that all the gods would witness their cavorting, Jupiter retorts, 'do not fear that any mortal or any god will see, so close shall be the golden cloud that I gather about us.'<sup>1</sup>

Known to the present author from firsthand inspection in 2012 when the picture was previously in a private collection, the paint surface at the time was substantially obscured and dulled by a severely darkened varnish layer. This visual hindrance notwithstanding, it was plainly evident that the painting was unequivocally from the hand of Goltzius, and on stylistic grounds it was included as a work from ca. 1614 in my catalogue raisonné published the following year (see: Literature).

Recent examination undertaken of Goltzius's *Jupiter and Juno* using infra-red reflectography and X-radiographs (Fig. 1, 2) reveals that with the exception of the positioning of Jupiter's head, essentially no significant alterations

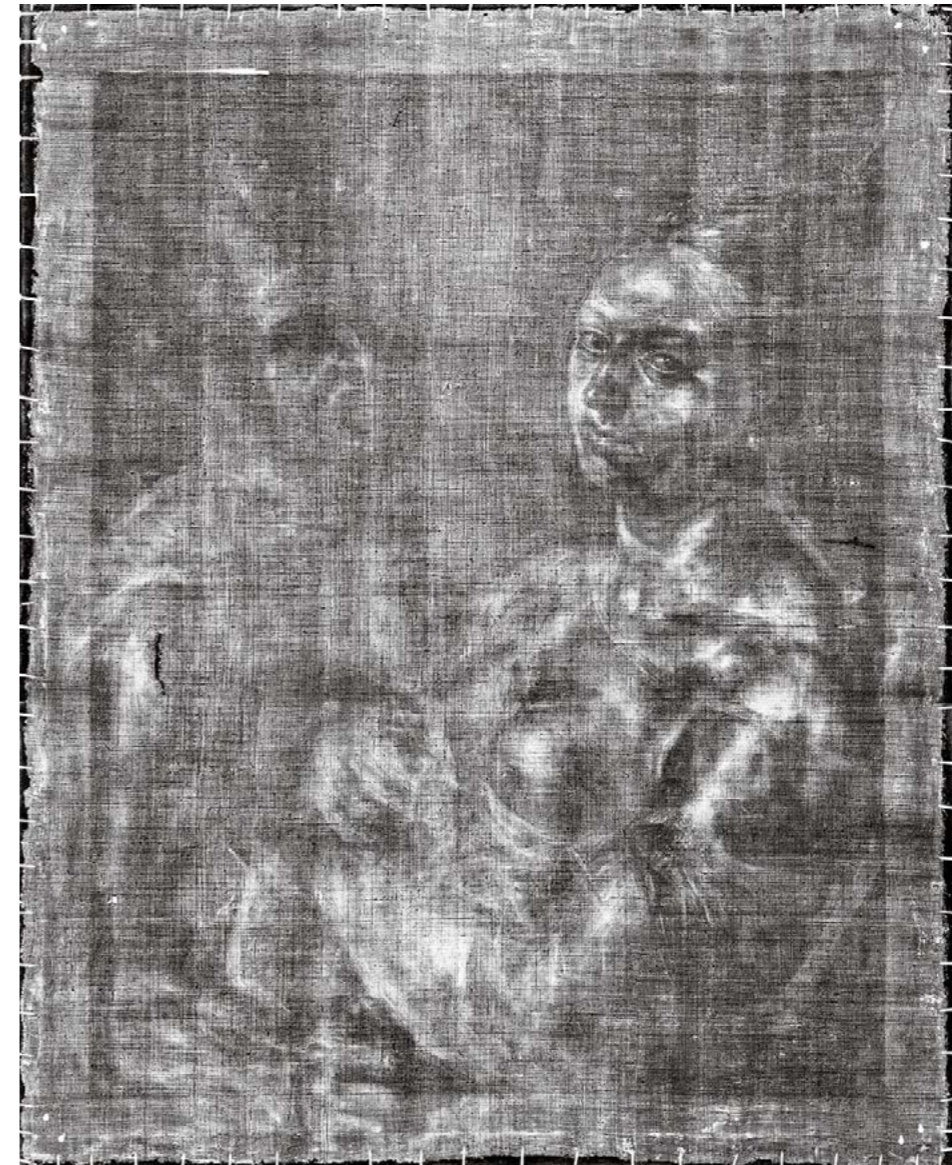






**Fig. 1:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Jupiter and Juno*, infra-red reflectography

were made to the composition, indicating that it was well determined in advance, though no preparatory drawings are known.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the images demonstrate the fine state of preservation of the canvas, the small vertical tear seen in Jupiter's upper right arm and the surface scratch in the background above his left hand on Juno's shoulder being slight matters. As a result of careful cleaning and minor restoration of the canvas carried out in 2023, Goltzius's monogram and the date, 1616, have reappeared in the upper right corner, slightly to the right of Juno's hair ornamentation (**Fig. 3**). The removal of the dirty varnish has had the anticipated and gratifying consequence that the brilliance of Goltzius's colors, as well as his delicate highlight strokes, are now unmistakable (**Fig. p. 9**).



**Fig. 2:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Jupiter and Juno*, X-Radiography

Jupiter and Juno, the supreme ruler of the gods and his consort (and sister), are depicted half-length, with billowing clouds visible behind them. He ogles his divine wife (**Fig. p. 14**) and embraces her, his left hand resting on her left shoulder. With his other hand he clutches his red-hot, three-pronged, barbed thunderbolt, one of his attributes signifying his authority over the universe. Strong light from the left illuminates Jupiter's bare, front shoulder and falls squarely on Juno, who directs her attention outward. She clasps a mirror encircled with feathers from a peacock, one of her attributes (**Fig. p. 17**). Jupiter has a blue toga draped over his left shoulder, also seen at his mid-section, while Juno wears a bejeweled, multi-colored costume cut to expose her breasts. Crossing diagonally below her neck



from one shoulder to the other is a garment strap. A pearl earring dangles from her ear, and her hair is pulled back at the center with a jewel-encrusted ornament.<sup>3</sup>

Goltzius, whose magnificent, bust-length *Self-Portrait* of ca. 1593-95 (**Fig. 4**) exudes both self-confidence and panache<sup>4</sup>, was born in 1558 in Mühlbracht, present-day Bracht-am-Niederrhein. Called “a fat, wild, and lively child” by Karel van Mander, Goltzius fell into a fire when he was about a year old, after which he was never able to fully open his right hand, the one he would nonetheless



**Fig. 3:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Jupiter and Juno*, detail of monogram and date

use to draw, engrave, and paint.<sup>5</sup> Recognizing Hendrick’s artistic interest and ability, his father allowed him to study drawing and glass painting. About 1575 Goltzius was apprenticed to learn the art of engraving, and having settled in Haarlem, in 1582 he began to publish his own prints. By 1585 he was working in the international style now known as Mannerism characterized by its calculated extremes of anatomical excess and distortion, intentionally ambiguous definition of space, and an all-encompassing devotion to surface ornamentation. This anti-classical mode of representation

is well illustrated by his drawing *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* (**Fig. 5**), a preparatory endeavor for his engraving of 1585.<sup>6</sup> Significantly for present purposes, Jupiter with his thunderbolt, as well as his eagle, is to be seen at the forefront of the onlooking ensemble of gods witnessing the ensnared lovers below. By decade’s end a lessening of this flamboyant manner is evident in Goltzius’s engravings and drawings, a tendency that was reinforced by his journey to Italy in the year 1591. By 1600 he enjoyed



**Fig. 4:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1593-95, drawing, Vienna, Albertina

a far-reaching reputation as Europe’s preeminent graphic artist. In or around 1600 the artist exchanged burin for brush and became a painter, a pursuit he followed until his death on New Year’s Day 1617. While vestiges of Goltzius’s Mannerist past are to be seen in some of his paintings, in particular certain of his early efforts in this domain, such as his *Danaë* of 1603 (**Fig. 6**)<sup>7</sup>, the influences of his Italian sojourn, his on-going activity with drawing from the live model, as well as the critical impetus obtained



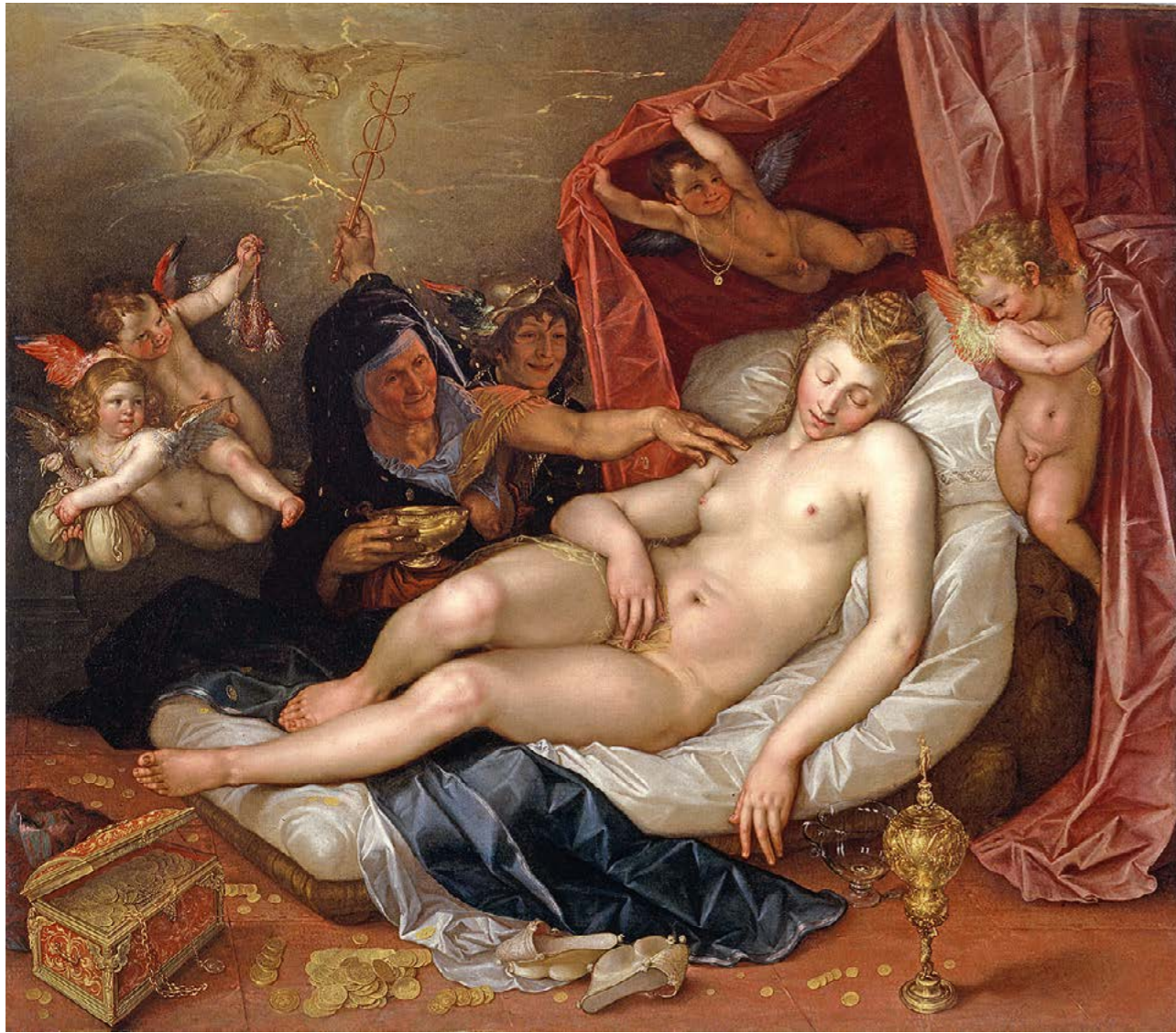


in 1612 from contact with Pieter Paul Rubens during the Flemish master's visit to Haarlem, resulted in his painted coppers, panels, and canvases assuming a more classicizing idiom.

**Fig. 5:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan*, ca. 1585, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum

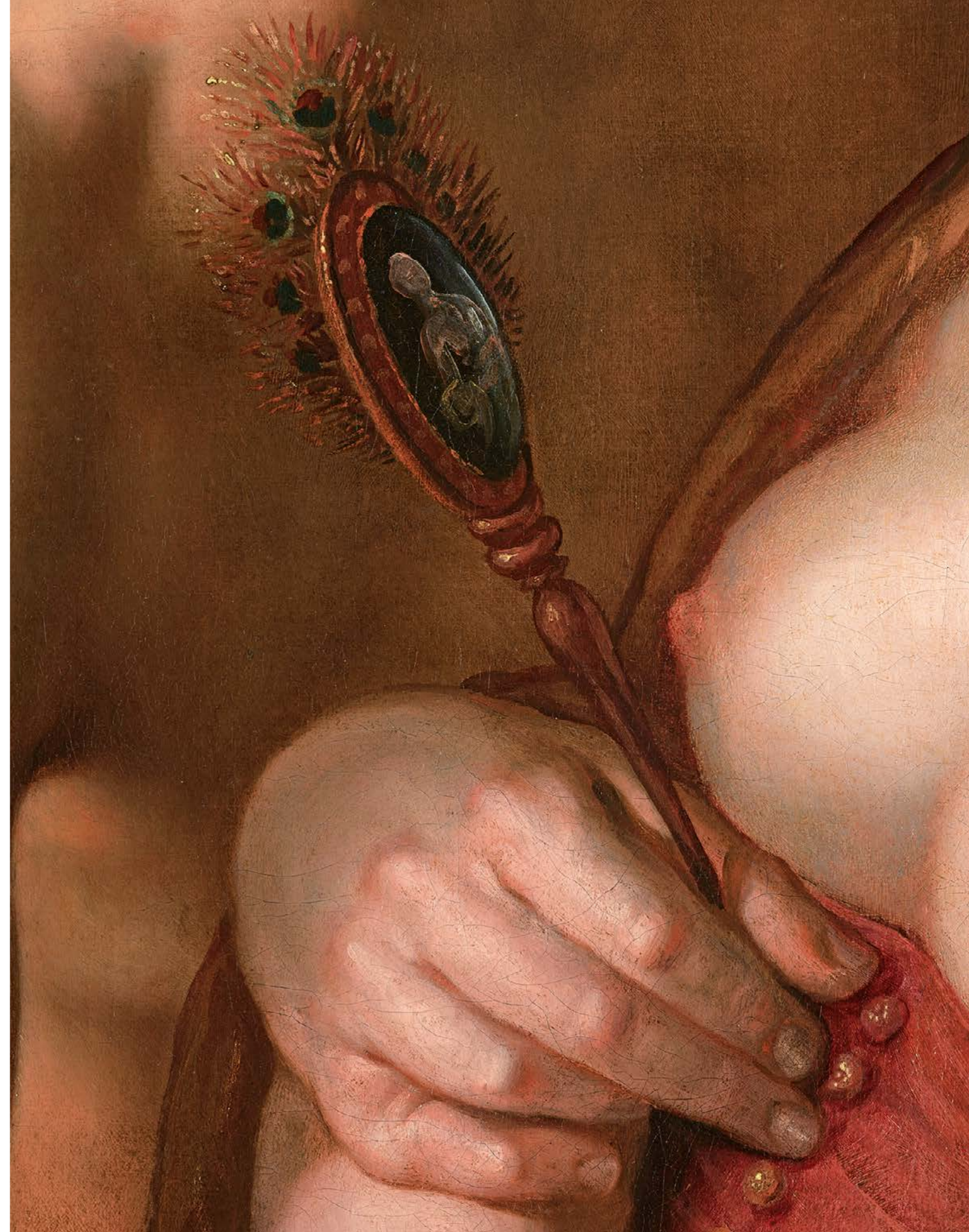
The subject matter of Goltzius's painted oeuvre, numbering approximately fifty-five extant works, is largely comprised of history painting—biblical imagery derived from both the Old and New Testaments, Christian saints, as well as mythological representations, the latter accounting for slightly over one-third of his total production. On four occasions Goltzius the painter took up subjects that involved Jupiter, or Juno, or as in the present example, the two gods together.<sup>8</sup> In the first such instance, his aforementioned *Danaë* of 1603, Jupiter symbolically appears in the guise of his eagle gripping his





**Fig. 6:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Danaë*, 1603, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of the Ahmanson Foundation

thunderbolt as he ‘visits’ the daughter of the king of Argos in the form of a shower of golden rain. In what is perhaps Goltzius’s most overtly lascivious painting, his *Jupiter and Antiope* of 1612 (**Fig. 7**)<sup>9</sup>, the chief of the Olympians assumes the appearance of a hoofed, horned, and pointy-eared satyr in his seduction of the nymph (according to Homer, a mortal according to other sources), Antiope. The urgency and focus of his lecherous leer leaves little to the imagination, emphasized even so by the not incidentally included thunderbolt in the composition’s lower right corner. The following year it was Juno who captured the attention of our artist. Goltzius’s *Juno Receiving the Eyes of Argus from Mercury* of 1615 (**Fig. 8**)<sup>10</sup> involves the story told by the Roman poet Ovid in his *Metamorphosis* of divine infidelity, jealousy, and revenge. Juno, detecting the absence of the ever-philandering Jupiter—he







**Fig. 7:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Jupiter and Antiope*, 1612, Private Collection

having descended to earth to ravish the water nymph Io—likewise makes her way earthbound in her peacock-drawn chariot only to find Io having been changed by her unfaithful husband into a white heifer. Juno insists on having the cow as a gift and has it guarded by the hundred-eyed Argus, whereupon Jupiter sends Mercury to slay the watchman. Ovid's text relates that Juno *took* [Argus's] eyes and set them on the feathers of her bird, filling his tail with star-like jewels.<sup>11</sup>

Goltzius's *Danaë*, *Jupiter and Antiope*, and *Juno Receiving the Eyes of Argus from Mercury* all are narratives that closely follow specific literary sources. In like manner, in a series of designs executed before and after his trip to Italy for prints illustrating much of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, he devoted three compositions to the debate between Jupiter and Juno as to which partner enjoyed greater pleasure in love, the man or the woman.<sup>12</sup> *Jove* (as the story goes), while warmed with wine, put care aside and bandied good-humoured jests with Juno in an idle hour. 'I maintain,' said he, 'that your pleasure in love is greater than that





**Fig. 8:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Juno Receiving the Eyes of Argus from Mercury*, 1615, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

which we enjoy.’ She held the opposite view.<sup>13</sup> *The dispute Between Jupiter and Juno* (**Fig. 9**) in which hand gestures distinctly capture the differing opinions on the matter, depicts the couple wrangling the issue. (The ensuing scene shows Jupiter and Juno consulting Tiresias, who had personal experience of both sides of the question, his pronouncement being in favor of Jove’s claim.)

In contradistinction to the print design just considered, as well as the three paintings illustrating conquests of Jupiter (**Figs. 6,7, and 8**), *Jupiter and Juno* is better understood as a non-narrative representation. Conceptually alluding to all that Homer has described, it nonetheless does not function intrinsically as a story-telling image. Rather, Goltzius’s composition is best described as an allegory of the power of love. An engraving made by Goltzius in ca. 1594, offers a close iconographic parallel. His *Jupiter and Juno* (**Fig. 10**) forms part of a series of three prints known as “The



**Fig. 9:** Attributed to Robert de Baudous after Hendrick Goltzius, *The Dispute between Jupiter and Juno*, ca. 1590, published in 1615, engraving

Loves of the Gods” (the others being *Neptune and Amphitrite* and *Pluto and Proserpina*).<sup>14</sup> The two arch-gods, rendered as full-lengths, recline together on an engulfing cloud, suggestive of the Homeric passage in which Jupiter tells his wife that their impending lovemaking will go undetected. The romantic pair join hands and gaze at one another, the eagle of Jupiter holding his thunderbolt visible at right. Not dissimilar in kind from Goltzius’s painting and engraving is a drawing by an artist who greatly influenced Goltzius in his early years, Bartholomeus Spranger (1546-1611). The Flemish artist’s *Jupiter and Juno* (**Fig. 11**), datable to the late 1580s, likewise depicts the levitating, titillating couple in a swirl of clouds. The erotic nature of the sheet is one of intense charge.<sup>15</sup>

If our two protagonists lock eyes and hands in Goltzius’s print of ca. 1594, making the depiction a self-contained one, as it were, in his painting of 1616 the god gawks longingly at the goddess while embracing her, and the goddess, her hands kept to herself, rather unemotionally peers at the



viewer.<sup>16</sup> The beholder is seemingly thereby compelled to engage in, not merely observe, the portrayed dialogue. Might it be that the artist is coyly conveying the goddess's manipulative conniving? To be sure, Goltzius has included the subject's requisite cloud cover, and Jupiter's thunderbolt blatantly indicates his preparedness and intention for 'action'. But Juno's peacock-feathered mirror (**Fig. p. 17**), its reflection only vaguely hinting



**Fig. 10:** Hendrick Goltzius, *Jupiter and Juno*, ca. 1594, engraving

at the true appearance of the goddess, in conjunction with the engrossing demeanor of her countenance, may well be Goltzius's way of letting us in on her playful deceit. All is not necessarily what it appears to be.

In 2017 a previously unknown painting by Goltzius appeared at auction in London, *Mars and Venus* (**Fig. 12**).<sup>17</sup> Monogrammed and dated 1616, the

canvas measures 93.9 x 76.2 cm. Rather than the entrapment of their love-making by the cuckolded Vulcan, as addressed by Goltzius in his earlier *Venus and Mars Surprised by Vulcan* (**Fig. 5**), the goddess of love and the god of war are depicted half-length and garbed, albeit only partially. Mars, a plumed helmet upon his head, is rendered wearing a breastplate over his mid-section and a crimson cape held over one shoulder by a pink strap.



**Fig. 11:** Bartholomeus Spranger, *Jupiter and Juno*, late 1580s, drawing, Block Museum, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

Simultaneously embracing and grabbing Venus, his commanding stare in her direction makes plain his goal. In contrast, rose-wreathed, arm akimbo Venus appears to fend off his advances, and with her determined glare she demands our attention analogous to Juno's doing so. On no less than five occasions, and possibly as many as eight, Goltzius painted pendants, that is, works that are paired thematically and compositionally.<sup>18</sup> *Mars and*





*Venus* and *Jupiter and Juno* may now be added to these pairings. Dating, dimensions, balanced compositional arrangements, style, and modality all bear witness to these canvases being conceived as an ensemble. So too, the iconography of the two paintings confirms their planned union. *Mars and Venus* as an allegory of love conquering strife—note that Mars has not yet been fully disarmed—is matched with *Jupiter and Juno* as an allegory of love.

When the two paintings went their separate ways is not known. Nothing whatsoever has come to light regarding the whereabouts of *Mars and Venus* prior to its recent emergence from a Scottish collection and subsequent auction sale offering. As for Goltzius's *Jupiter and Juno*, it likely was in the collection of Gijsbertus van Diemen, lawyer and merchant of Amsterdam (ca. 1610-1686).<sup>19</sup> Thereafter it probably was the possession of Anna Maria van Diemen, daughter of Gijsbertus van Diemen, either inherited by her at her father's death, or received previously as dowry at her marriage in 1675 to Girolamo Parenisi (1644-1713), a merchant from Lucca, who, after living in Amsterdam, returned with his Dutch wife to Lucca in 1690. The picture would then have descended within the Parenisi family. At this juncture plausible speculation becomes certain fact, for in 1824 it is known that the painting entered the Mansi Collection in Lucca, in which year Camilla Parenisi (1768-1836), who had married Raffaele Mansi in 1792, inherited the estate of her mother, the granddaughter of Girolamo Parenisi.<sup>20</sup> In 1962 it was purchased from the Mansi family, again as Jordaens, by the grandfather of the previous private collector.

Goltzius's *Jupiter and Juno*, from the last year of the artist's life, the most productive one of his career as a painter, is engaging, well painted, and finely preserved. It admirably exemplifies his late manner, so utterly antithetical to his Mannerist early years as a printmaker.

**Fig. 12** (opposite): Hendrick Goltzius, *Mars and Venus*, 1616, present whereabouts unknown



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Homer, *Iliad*, (Richmond Lattimore, trans., Chicago & London, 1973), XIV:214-19; 293-96; 314-17; and 341-45.

<sup>2</sup> It may also be the case that Goltzius initially had planned to have a crown atop Jupiter's head, as one encounters in his earlier engraving of the subject; see Fig. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Goltzius's *Helen of Troy*, 1615, displays a comparable hair arrangement, as does the figure of the muse Euterpe, seen second from left in Goltzius's drawing of 1590, *The Judgment of Midas*; see respectively, Nichols 2013, A-34; and E.K.J. Reznicek, *Die Zeichnungen von Hendrick Goltzius*, 2 vols. (Utrecht, 1961), K107

<sup>4</sup> Reznicek 1961, K256.

<sup>5</sup> The primary source material for biographical information on Goltzius is "Tleven van Henricus Goltzius" in Karel van Mander's *Het Schilder-Boeck* (Haarlem, 1604), fol. 281v-287r. See also: H. Miedema, ed., *KAREL VAN MANDER, The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters* (Doornspijk, 1998), vol. 5, pp. 174-225; and Nichols, 2013, Appendix I – Documents and Publications, pp. 261-368.

<sup>6</sup> Reznicek 1961, K105; and *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450-1700, Hendrick Goltzius*, compiled by Marjolein Leesberg, edited by Huigen Leeftang (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel, 2012), nr. 150, respectively.

<sup>7</sup> Nichols 2013, A-33.

<sup>8</sup> For two paintings purported to be by Goltzius, a "Juno" and a "Jupiter and Juno", known from 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century sale records, see Nichols 2013, B-50 and B-51.

<sup>9</sup> Nichols 2013, A-37.

<sup>10</sup> Nichols 2013, A-36.

<sup>11</sup> The Loeb Classical Library, *Ovid III, Metamorphoses, I* (1984), l:722-23.

<sup>12</sup> *The New Hollstein* (Goltzius), nrs. 577-79.

<sup>13</sup> *Met.*, III:316-38.

<sup>14</sup> *The New Hollstein* (Goltzius), nrs. 138-40.

<sup>15</sup> Sally Metzler, *Bartholomeus Spranger, Splendor and Eroticism in Imperial Prague, The Complete Works*, exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2014, nr. 122. Spranger made at least one other drawing having this subject in the late 1590s, which was then engraved by Joannes Bara in 1599; see nrs. 134 and 211.

<sup>16</sup> Jupiter's expression (p. 14) reminds one of the inebriated state of the besotted Lot in Goltzius's painting of the same year, *Lot and His Daughters*; see Nichols 2013, A-6. Goltzius may have drawn on Ovid's remark noted above, *Jove (as the story goes), while warmed with wine...*; see note 13.

<sup>17</sup> Christie's, London, 7 December 2017, lot 24. A painting listed in the Amsterdam inventory of Herman Becker in 1678 conceivably records this newly discovered canvas; see Nichols 2013, B-52.

<sup>18</sup> See Nichols 2013, A-22 and A-23; A-1 and A-13; A-39 and A-40; A-3 and A-4; and A-7 and A-15. The possible pendants of which only one component is known are A-29; A-48, and A-57.

<sup>19</sup> Gijsbertus van Diemen's betrothal at age 36 to Maria Backers took place on 4 May 1646; Gemeente Amsterdam Staatsarchief, Ondertrouwregister, archiefnummer 5001, inventarisnummer 678, blad p. 198. I am grateful to Marten Jan Bok for sharing this information.

<sup>20</sup> The painting is listed in the Mansi archive (now in Archivio di Stato di

Lucca) ASL, Mansi, 317, XI, no. 52, as "Giove e Giunone quadro in tela di Jordaens"; and 462, VIII, no. 28 (same). In addition, on a photograph dated 6 June 1958 in the Gabinetto Fotografico, Soprintendenza Monumenti, Pisa, neg. no. 2966, it is noted as "Scuola di Rubens, Uomo e donna".



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