



IL GUERCINO

(Cento, 1591 - Bologna, 1666)

Putto Holding up a Drapery over his Head
executed c. 1620 - 1625

red chalk

170 x 134 mm

Provenance:

Earl Spencer, Althorp [L. 2341A]

acquired from the above by Baskett and Day Ltd, London

acquired from the above by the present owner, May 1983

As pointed out by Nicolas Turner in a letter dated 29.11.1999, the present drawing is connected to a red chalk composition drawing of five putti in the Royal Collection, Windsor (Mahon and Turner 1989, 164) [Fig. 1]. Although omitted from his original entry on the Windsor drawing, Turner suggests that the sheet is related to a painted commission of Venus Attiring from the Bath, or the Toilet of Venus. This painting, dated to c. 1622-3, is now on deposit at Oregon House, California (Turner 2017, 118.ii) [Fig. 2]. The tumbling treatment of the putti in these works and in others from the first half of the 1620s was clearly influenced by Titian's *Worship of Venus* which had passed into the Ludovisi collection by 1621 and would have been known by Guercino. The Windsor drawing was etched in reverse by Francesco Bartolozzi (Boydell, I, 30; Calabi 2151).

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