



**PIETRO TESTA**

(Lucca, 1612 - Rome, 1650)

*Echo & Narcissus*

pen and light and dark brown ink with wash

271 x 211 mm

**Provenance:**

William Russell, London (1800-1884) [L.2648]

Charles Fairfax Murray, London (1849-1919)

Kenneth Clark, Lord Clark of Saltwood, London (1903-1983)

"Paintings and Works of Art of the Collections of the Late Lord Clark of Saltwood, O. O., C. H., K.C.B.",  
pt. 1, Sotheby's, London: 27 June 1984 [Lot 163]

with Baskett and Day Ltd, London

acquired from the above by the present owner, July 1984

**Literature:**

A. G. B. Russell, "Paolo Veronese (1528-1588)." in *Old Master Drawings*, vol. 3, no. 12 (March 1929).  
pp. 61-62, pl. 52 (as Paolo Veronese).

M. Dobroklonsky, "Pietro Testa (1617-1650)." in *Old Master Drawings*, vol. 5. no. 19 (December 1930),  
pp. 51-52.

K. Hartmann, *Pietro Testa: The Chronology of His Work and Evolution of His Style*, P.h.D. dissertation,

London University, 1970, p. 176.

E. Cropper, *Pietro Testa (1612–1650): Prints and drawings*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, 1988, pp. ii, 36-39, no. 19.

**Exhibited:**

Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, *Pietro Testa (1612–1650): Prints and drawings*. 5 November 1988 – 31 December 1988, no. 19.

Cambridge, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, *Pietro Testa (1612–1650): Prints and drawings*, 21 January 1989 – 19 March 1989, no. 19.

Drawn in a combination of contrasting shades of light and dark brown ink, this drawing depicts the story of Echo and Narcissus, as recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* III:339-510. The drawing is one of three drawings by Testa illustrating episodes from the myth of Narcissus, all of which are dated by Elisabeth Cropper to the early-to-mid 1630s. The other two drawings - one in the Musée du Louvre, Paris [Fig. 1], and the other in the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh – relate to a painting of the same subject, dated to 1636, in an Italian private collection. The present composition does not relate to any known painting but, as Cropper has suggested, it is broadly inspired by Nicolas Poussin's *Echo and Narcissus* of 1630-31, now in the Musée du Louvre.

Here, the schematically drawn, craggy mountains in the distance and the prominent, broadly hatched trees in the foreground are closely related to similar features in a drawing of the garden of Charity in the Morgan Library, New York. Using a reed pen with darker ink for the foreground and a finer nibbed pen with lighter brown ink for the background, Testa successfully effects a strong contrast between the dense-leafy shade and the brilliant sunlit hillsides.

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