



FLORENTINE SCHOOL, C. 1620-30

Two scenes of public games in the Via Tornabuoni, Florence: Il Gioco dell'Anello and il Gioco del Pallone
oil on paper laid down on canvas

both 510 x 410 mm

Provenance:

Private collection, UK

Drawn in the second quarter of the 17th century, these two pendants depict two of the popular public games which animated the streets and squares of Florence from the Medieval period onward: the Gioco dell'Anello, and the Gioco del Pallone. Although the identity of the artist remains uncertain, a group of six other works by the same hand are known: four lunettes depicting public processions in Florence - three of which are in the Museo di "Firenze com'era" and one in the Museo degli Argenti - and two larger versions of the scenes depicted here. These two larger scale canvases are painted in tempera, as opposed to oil, and are in the collection of Francesco Giuntini

In the 17th century both the Gioco dell'Anello and the Gioco del Pallone were staged in the via Tornabuoni, between Palazzo Strozzi and Basilica di Santa Trinita, forming part of the fabric of Florentine urban and ceremonial culture.

The Gioco del Pallone, often referred to as the 'gioco del bracciale' (the bracelet game), named after the armguards made of leather and wood, with which the players hit the ball. Like modern-day tennis, it was a summer game which consisted of hitting a leather ball on the full, or after a single bounce, between two opposing teams who stand on opposite sides of a court, or street. Despite the game's danger, it was much loved by the Florentines and the Grand Duke was often in attendance. Here, he is shown in the foreground in the horse-drawn carriage, accompanied by his retinue and escorted by the

landsknechts in their striped regalia.

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