

## Antonio Verrio (c1636-1707) His career and surviving work

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Hampton Court Palace contains Antonio Verrio's five last frescoes. The celebration there of the 300th anniversary of his death in 2007 provided an opportunity to re-evaluate his work and investigate the details of his career. A good deal of new information about the artist has come to light in the years since Croft-Murray's seminal *Decorative Painting in England* of 1962,<sup>1</sup> and this material is incorporated here. The article focuses primarily on Verrio's surviving work,<sup>2</sup> and particular emphasis is given to that at Hampton Court – dealt with only briefly in Croft-Murray's chapter on the artist – so that a comprehensive picture of his career may emerge.

Antonio Verrio was born c1636 either in the Apulian city of Lecce or Naples, it is not clear which.<sup>3</sup> Several works which can be confidently attributed to him exist in Lecce, including a pair depicting events in the story of Joseph in the Jesuit church of the Buon Consiglio.<sup>4</sup> In the Chiesa Sant'Irene is a *Lapidazione di Santo Stefano*,<sup>5</sup> and in the Duomo *San Giusto convertit Sant'Oronzo*,<sup>6</sup> probably a collaboration between the elderly master Coppola<sup>7</sup> and the youthful Verrio. His first known signed painting, *S. Francesco Saverio appare al Beato Marcello Mastrilli*,<sup>8</sup> survives there in the Convitto Nazionale. Raffaele De Giorgi suggests that these early works show the influence of artists active in Tuscany in the first decades of the 17th century, which may indicate that Verrio had spent time studying there.<sup>9</sup> He married a Lecce girl, Massenzia Tornese, with whom he had two sons: Cristoforo Gaetano was born in January 1656 and Oronzio Cristoforo in March 1659. In 1661 Verrio moved with his family to Naples, where he had received further commissions from the Jesuits, including a fresco depicting *Christ healing the sick* for the ceiling of the Pharmacy of the Gesù Vecchio.<sup>10</sup> It is possible that he also worked in Florence, Rome and Genoa.

In the mid 1660s, Verrio moved to the region of Toulouse in France, where Pierre-Paul Riquet, the engineer responsible for the Canal du Midi, lived.<sup>11</sup> Riquet had acquired the Seigneurie de Bonrepos, which he rebuilt between 1654 and 1666, and commissioned the young artist to decorate two saloons in the château. According to the dramatist Jean Palaprat,<sup>12</sup> Verrio was brought to France by Riquet.<sup>13</sup> Recent research seems to show that Verrio's work may have survived underneath later wallpaper.<sup>14</sup> Verrio then went to Toulouse itself, where he painted religious subjects for various patrons, including *Saint Félix de Cantalice* for the Capucins,<sup>15</sup> and *Le Mariage de la Vierge* (Pl 1)<sup>16</sup> for the Carmes Déchaussées. Both are equally fine and inspiring, and are now in the Musée des Augustins in Toulouse.<sup>17</sup> He also painted *La Transverbération* for the church of Saint-Exupère,<sup>18</sup> chapel of the Carmes Déchaussées, and an easel canvas, *Orphée lapidé par les Ménades*,<sup>19</sup> is now attributed to him. These works form a valuable record of the artist's activity in the region of Toulouse.

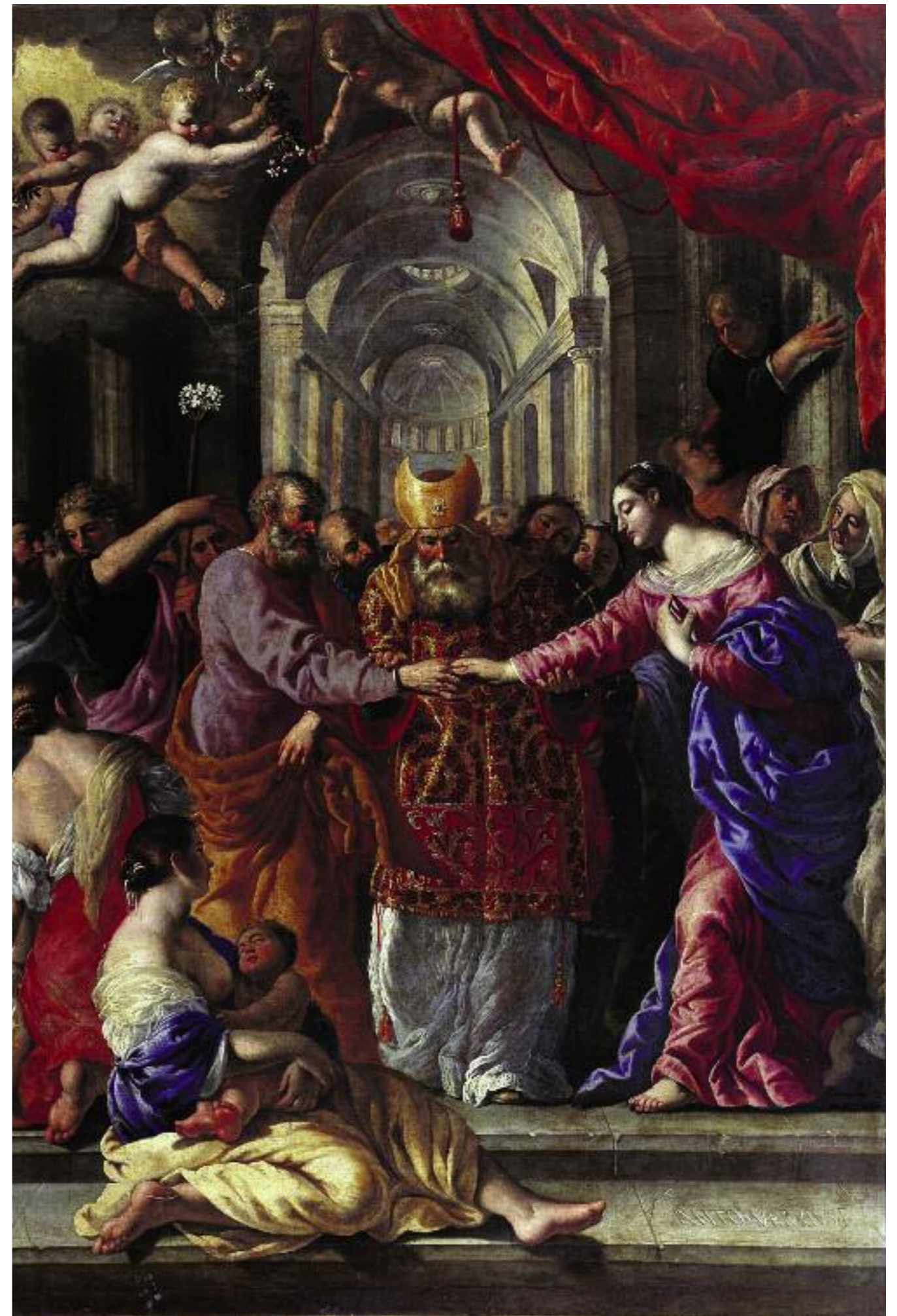
Verrio seems to have abandoned his Italian family when he moved to France, living as a libertine, and rapidly acquiring a reputation as a womaniser, which inspired Palaprat's epigram:

M. Vario, que voilà,  
A peint des raisins et des belles;  
Quel diable de peintre est-ce là,  
Qui mange et qui fout ses modèles!<sup>20</sup>

He eventually settled down with Françoise Dangely, an artist, with whom he had a son, Jean-Baptiste, born on 3 July 1668 and baptised five days later in the Cathédrale de Saint-Etienne.

Around 1670 Verrio moved to Paris where he would have more opportunities to develop his career. It is possible that Verrio and Palaprat travelled together, as they were young, full of ambition and very good friends.<sup>21</sup> In Paris, Verrio soon received an important commission.<sup>22</sup> Catherine Bauyn acquired, in April 1668, a large house in the rue du Perche. In January 1670, she commissioned Libéral Bruand to remodel it.<sup>23</sup> A few months later, she bought the adjacent property and decided to amalgamate the two houses. In November that year, Catherine married Pierre Brûlart, Seigneur du Broussin. Brûlart had a reputation of 'fameux débauché, homme d'esprit et de bonne chère' and moved in bohemian circles.<sup>24</sup> There he must have encountered Verrio, who was also known as a bon viveur. The Brûlarts commissioned Verrio to decorate their house as a celebration of their recent marriage. He painted four ceilings, which include superb allegories of *Bacchus et Ariane*, *Morphee et Endymion* (Pl 2), and *Minerve et les Arts* (Pl 3). Through Bruand, Verrio received a second commission, from Jean Leclerc de Grandmaison, *écuyer, trésorier de l'extraordinaire des guerres*, for his hotel in the rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs. On 21 April 1671, Verrio agreed to 'faire et parfaire les ouvrages moyennant la somme de quatre mil livres'.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately the hotel was destroyed and no detail of his work survives. In May that year he petitioned the Académie royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, of which Charles Le Brun was director, to become a member, as a way of furthering his ambitions. But it was difficult for a foreigner to break into the closed circle of French artists who had access to royal patronage, and it seems Verrio was frustrated in his attempt. In the summer he received a further commission from Georges Pellissari, *Trésorier Général de la Marine et des Galères*. This involved making 'des ouvrages de peintures... (au) cabinet de Madame' located in the rue de Cléry.<sup>26</sup> Again this work is lost, so we know nothing of its extent or character. By the winter, Verrio was living in the rue du Hazard, where he entertained friends including Molière and Palaprat.<sup>27</sup>

Ralph Montagu, later 1st Duke of Montagu, had been appointed Ambassador Extraordinary to the French Court by Charles II in 1669. While in Paris, Montagu met Verrio, doubtless in the artistic circles which both frequented. Montagu must have seen the work Verrio had done in the city and realized that he could have a good future in England, where the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 provided opportunities for a young artist. Montagu, who had wide contacts in the



opposite  
1 *Le Mariage de la Vierge*, c1666-70. Oil on canvas, 351 x 237 cm.  
Musée des Augustins, Toulouse.  
© Toulouse, Musée des Augustins; photographer, Daniel Martin





2 *Morphee et Endymion* (detail), c1670. Ceiling of the alcove on the first floor, Hôtel Brûlart, Paris. © Joëlle Barreau, with her kind permission

3 *Minerve et les Arts*, c1670. Ceiling of the bedroom on the ground floor, Hôtel Brûlart, Paris. © Joëlle Barreau, with her kind permission

4 *The penitent Magdalen surrounded by putti holding emblems of Time, Death and Eternity*, c1673-74. Ceiling of the Duchess' Private Closet, Ham House, Surrey. © The National Trust; courtesy of Ham House

opposite

5 *The Sea Triumph of Charles II*, c1674. Oil on canvas, 225 x 231 cm. The Royal Collection, London. The Royal Collection © 2009, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

English aristocracy, encouraged Verrio to cross the Channel, which he probably did in March 1672 when Montagu's duties as English Ambassador ended.

Montagu introduced his new protégé to Henry Bennet, 1st Earl of Arlington, who became Verrio's first English patron. John Evelyn visited Arlington at Euston Hall in Suffolk, and wrote in his diary: 'In my Lord's home... are paintings in fresco by Signor Verrio, being the first worke he did in England.'<sup>28</sup> Arlington was created an Earl in 1672 and could have commissioned Verrio to decorate his house in celebration of his earldom. Arlington was one of the five ministers of the 'Cabal' under Charles II, the four others being Sir Thomas Clifford, Duke of Buckingham, Lord Ashley and Lord Lauderdale. Lauderdale had a particularly successful and happy year in 1672, as he was created a Duke, married the Countess of Dysart, who had been widowed three years earlier, and moved into his new bride's house at Ham in Surrey. Not surprisingly, Lauderdale wanted to embellish his new home and engaged Verrio to work there, presumably on the recommendation of Arlington. The work at Ham House, mainly in the Duchess' apartments, consists of three ceilings which can probably be dated to c1673-4.<sup>29</sup> On the coved ceiling of the White Closet, Verrio painted *Divine Wisdom presiding over the Liberal Arts*, a theme he had already interpreted at the Hôtel Brûlart. In the adjacent Duchess' Private Closet, he depicted *The penitent Magdalen surrounded by putti holding emblems of Time, Death and Eternity* (Pl 4), and in the Queen's Closet, *Ganymede and the Eagle*. These delightful frescoes bring a breath of Italy to the decoration of this 17th-century gem beside the Thames, and are Verrio's earliest surviving work in England.

Verrio worked again for Arlington on his new house in St James's Park. This replaced Goring House, which had burned down in 1674. By October the following year, the new building had been completed and named Arlington House. Its site is today occupied by Buckingham Palace. From 1674 to 1676, Verrio lived very close to Arlington House, occupying one of the wings of Sir Thomas Clarges' house in Piccadilly – on the site of the present Albany.<sup>30</sup> Verrio's successful début in London led to another commission, this time from William Herbert, 1st Earl of Powis, who had been granted his earldom in April 1674 and celebrated this elevation by decorating the Grand Staircase of his Welsh castle. The painting – unusually in oil on canvas – may represent the coronation of Charles II's queen, Catherine of Braganza,<sup>31</sup> and is adapted from Veronese's *Apotheosis of Venice*,<sup>32</sup> to which Verrio added a sky, typically containing an Olympian scene. It is possible that he never visited Powis Castle – remote from the capital – but did the painting while he was in London, as the canvas could have been easily rolled up and transported to Powis. Verrio's work for this aristocratic clientele quickly established him as the artist in fashion. According to Vertue, it was at Arlington House that the King met the artist, as he 'came in his walks round the Park to see the Workes Verrio was doing there'.<sup>33</sup> Verrio subsequently received his first royal commission.

Charles II originally planned to employ him as a designer for the Mortlake tapestry works, of which Verrio's friend Montagu had been in charge since 1674.<sup>34</sup> But, in the event, Verrio's first official royal commission was *The Sea Triumph of Charles II* (Pl 5),<sup>35</sup> an easel painting in which his portrayal of the King seems to have been based on a miniature by Samuel Cooper.<sup>36</sup> Verrio's exquisite painting clearly impressed the King, although he was not paid immediately for it, and had to wait until 24 January 1688 to receive his fee of £70 from James II.<sup>37</sup> Verrio was 'denized' on 5 May 1675, which confirmed Charles II's intention of employing him,<sup>38</sup> and the King soon



commissioned Verrio to decorate the North Range of Windsor Castle, which was in the process of reconstruction by the architect Hugh May. Verrio was now under royal patronage, and his career as a decorative painter in England established and secured. Windsor occupied Verrio for about ten years. It was a massive project for which he had to employ several assistants, including an apprentice and a grinder of colours. Among them were Gerard Lanscroun, later a significant artist in his own right, and the flower-painter Antonio Montingo, a regular colleague. Other craftsmen also involved in the project were the gilder René Cousin and the carver Grinling Gibbons, who collaborated frequently with Verrio.<sup>39</sup> The Test Act of 1673 forbade the employment of Roman Catholics, and so special warrants had to be issued in order to permit the artists to work. The first of these, dated 16 Nov 1678, forbids officers or ministers 'to give or allow any molestation or trouble to several foreigners, being painters and other artists employed in painting and adorning Windsor Castle'.<sup>40</sup> The persons listed include 'Anthony Verrio and Frances d'Angely, his wife, and Jean-Baptiste and Francis their sons... Verrio's housekeeper and three women servants'.<sup>41</sup> Other warrants were issued later to update the list of persons concerned.

In 1684 the Windsor Castle project was finally completed. In all, Verrio had painted twenty ceilings and three staircases, the King's Chapel, and St George's Hall, for which he was paid a grand total of £7945 8s 4d.<sup>42</sup> On 30 June of the same year, he was appointed 'Chief and first painter' in succession to Sir Peter Lely, who had died in 1680.<sup>43</sup> He could now 'enjoy and hold the said place with a salary of 200L per an'.<sup>44</sup> The satisfaction of Charles II with Verrio's achievement at Windsor was unquestionable, as the Royal Letters patent mention 'the King has for some time past employed the said Senor Antonio Verrio as our Painter in painting and adorning the chapel, hall, and rooms in our Castle of Windsor, and being well satisfied with his art and industry in the performances thereof, we have thought fit as a mark of our favour and esteem we have of his skill to appoint him ut supra'.<sup>45</sup> A portrait by Verrio of Charles II in armour, which may also date from 1684, shows the King in a conventional pose, with a solemn expression on his face.<sup>46</sup>

Of his work at Windsor, only three ceilings remain today, as all the rest was swept away by George IV during the reconstruction of the castle in the 1820s. In the King's Dining Room is represented a banquet of gods where Jupiter,





6 *Christ healing the sick*, c1679-80. Oil on canvas, 104 x 205 cm. The Royal Collection, London. The Royal Collection. © 2009, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

7 *An assembly of the gods*, c1680. Oil on canvas, 169 x 83 cm. Design for the ceiling of the Saloon, Moor Park, Hertfordshire. Tate Collection, London. © Tate, London 2009

Neptune, Pluto and their consorts feast. The cove is richly decorated with fish and fowl, appropriate to the setting. The two other ceilings both contain balustraded coves and are open to a sky in which Catherine of Braganza is the central figure. In the Queen's Audience Chamber she is drawn in a chariot towards a temple of Virtues, while in the Presence Chamber she is seated with the four Cardinal Virtues under a canopy, as Justice drives out the forces of Evil. From the work that was destroyed only a few fragments survive, but these are of particular interest, as three of the four are portraits of Charles II.<sup>47</sup> One of these was rediscovered only in the 1990s and has now returned to the Royal Collection.<sup>48</sup> There is also a modello of *Christ healing the sick* for the King's Chapel (Pl 6), a valuable record of the work Verrio did there, and an illustration of his originality in the inclusion of living characters in his work – in this case, Hugh May and himself.<sup>49</sup>

Verrio's painting at Windsor was particularly admired by Evelyn, who regularly visited the Castle, recording the progress of the work and noting his impressions. On 23 July 1679, he wrote: 'I visited that excellent painter Verrio, whose works in fresca in the King's palace at Windsor will celebrate his name as long as those walls last.'<sup>50</sup> The impact made by the new work at Windsor encouraged the engraver Pierre Vandrebanc to produce plates of three of the ceilings – the King's Closet, King's Presence Chamber and Withdrawing Room.<sup>51</sup> The last two form the basis for the decoration of the King's Room at Hoe Bridge Place, Surrey. This room and the staircase of the house were attributed to Verrio, but they were clearly done later, probably c1720.<sup>52</sup> Vandrebanc's engravings and the illustrations in Pyne's Royal Residences are particularly valuable as records of Verrio's work at Windsor which no longer exists.<sup>53</sup>

Although he was primarily occupied at Windsor during this period, Verrio was permitted to work elsewhere. He decorated the Saloon at Moor Park in Hertfordshire, the property of James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, the King's favourite natural son. Monmouth acquired the estate in 1670 and commissioned May to design the house in 1678. Verrio's ceiling can therefore be dated to the early 1680s. The main scheme depicts Apollo on his chariot surrounded by classical gods and goddesses.<sup>54</sup> The sketch for it (Pl 7), now in the Tate Collection, is interesting as it shows that the original design was re-orientated by 90 degrees when adapted to the room.<sup>55</sup>

An easel painting likely to date from the same period is the attractive portrait of the army officer the Hon Sackville Tufton, who served under Monmouth at Ostend in 1677-8. This work came down in the Tufton family, and is now in the Abbot Hall Gallery, Kendal.<sup>56</sup>

Verrio finally worked for his friend Montagu at his London house. There he painted the staircase and the 'great room'. These were completed by the end of 1682 and impressed Montagu's cousin, William. His diary entry records that the 'great room is now finished... and I believe there is not another room like it in England'.<sup>57</sup> The house unfortunately burnt down only a few years later. Evelyn expressed his sorrow in his diary on 19 January 1686: 'This night was burnt to the ground my Lord Montague's palace in Bloomsbury, than which for painting and furniture there was nothing more glorious in England.'<sup>58</sup>

In the 1680s, Verrio, with the assistance of the young Louis Laguerre, undertook the largest easel painting he ever made. The work was originally intended to commemorate the King's patronage of the Royal Mathematical School at Christ's Hospital. This gigantic painting, made in three parts, and designed to be hung in the Great Hall, was unfinished when the King died in February 1685. James II allowed Verrio to continue the work, which was modified to include James' portrait in place of his brother. The final version shows James sitting on the throne, giving audience to the Governors, masters, boys and girls, with at his feet, amusingly, King Charles' favourite spaniel. Charles' portrait is represented in a medallion on the right hand side of the King, while Edward VI – regarded as a major intellectual influence – is on his other side. Samuel Pepys, who was the initiator of this work, is also represented.<sup>59</sup> When Christ's Hospital moved to Horsham in 1902, the painting was re-hung in the Dining-Hall there. The modello for it is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum.<sup>60</sup>

On James II's accession, Verrio's appointment as 'Chief and first painter to the King at a salary of 200L per annum' was renewed.<sup>61</sup> The new King commissioned two portraits of himself from Verrio for which the artist was paid £100 in March 1686. These portraits were given to the Marquis d'Albyville, Ambassador in Brussels and then in Madrid, and Sir William Trumball, Ambassador in Paris, presumably to be hung in their respective embassies.<sup>62</sup> James also commissioned decorative work from Verrio for Whitehall Palace, which he intended to keep as the seat of government. There he painted James' Roman Catholic Chapel, the Queen's Bedchamber, Closet and 'Little Chapell' and other work in the Queen's Apartments.<sup>63</sup> This occupied Verrio during the years 1686-7 and he was paid £2050 altogether in addition to his salary.<sup>64</sup> During the same period, he undertook further work for the King at Windsor, where he painted the ceiling of Henry VIII's Chapel, showing James II enthroned among allegorical figures, for which he received £300.<sup>65</sup>

In March 1685, Verrio showed his versatility by being appointed 'Keeper of the Great Garden in St James's Park' in succession to Leonard Gurle, at the large salary of £400 a year.<sup>66</sup> Verrio's love and talent for gardening had been noticed six years earlier at Windsor by Evelyn, who wrote 'that excellent painter Verrio... shew'd us his pretty garden, choices of flowers, and curiosities, he himselfe being a skilfull gardener'.<sup>67</sup> Early in 1686, Verrio moved into 'the house in Spring Garden which was Prince Rupert's', let to him by the Duchess of Cleveland.<sup>68</sup> He rapidly transformed the garden in St James' Park into 'a very delicious paradise'.<sup>69</sup> At this period, Verrio was active in London artistic circles, including the Society of the Virtuosi of St Luke – a London club for artists and gentlemen to which Kneller, Wren and Gibbons belonged – and the Society of Painters, for whose annual meeting in 1687 he designed the invitation card.<sup>70</sup>

Verrio's last work in honour of Charles II is in the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. This institution, founded by the King on the model of Les Invalides in Paris, was begun to designs by Sir Christopher Wren in 1682 and largely finished by the time of the King's death. The interior decoration continued under James II.







8 *The Triumph of William III*, c.1699. Oil on canvas, 63 x 90 cm. Design for St George's Hall, Windsor Castle. Private Collection. © Christie's Images Limited 2009

9 *Minerva surrounded by the Arts and Sciences*, 1701. Ceiling of the Banqueting House, Hampton Court Palace. © Historic Royal Palaces

10 *Verrio as a satyr*, 1701. Detail from the north wall of the Banqueting House, Hampton Court Palace. © Historic Royal Palaces

This included the large mural painting in the Great Hall containing the equestrian portrait of Charles II, which was paid for by Richard Jones, 1st Earl of Ranelagh. Verrio began this in 1687 but had not finished before the Glorious Revolution of the following year. The strict re-imposition of the Test Act under William III made it impossible for him to continue this work, which was subsequently completed by Henry Cook.<sup>71</sup> Verrio was paid £210.15s for what he had done.<sup>72</sup> He also lost his post as Chief Painter at the end of 1688, John Riley and Godfrey Kneller being jointly appointed in his place.<sup>73</sup> By February 1689 he had been obliged to leave the house he occupied at St James' as Gardener. He was reimbursed '531L 3s 6d for trees, roots, plants, flowers, etc' he had bought for the gardens and paid '235L... for the value and in full satisfaction of the pictures and paintings that are fixed and left by said Verrio in the house belonging to the gardener there'.<sup>74</sup> It seems that his wife then returned to France, as a pass was issued to 'Mrs Frances Verris and her servants Mary Dollard and John Baptist', and nothing more is heard of her.<sup>75</sup>

Verrio now returned to his aristocratic patrons. He was by then in his fifties and had reached the apogee of his talent. John Cecil, 5th Earl of Exeter, and his wife Anne, both great collectors and patrons of the arts, were in the process of remodelling the interior of their 16th century house, Burghley in Lincolnshire, and commissioned the best craftsmen and artists, including Grinling Gibbons, Jean Tijou, Louis Laguerre and Verrio for this work. Lord Exeter engaged Verrio to complete the decoration of the suite of State Rooms, later known as the 'George' Rooms. Verrio had already painted two rooms at Burghley – the State Dressing Room and its Jewel Closet – in 1686. In September 1690 he started the second half of the project – the Drawing Room, Great Drawing Room, State Dining Room and Saloon. This important commission occupied Verrio for several years and involved a team of assistants – all new except René Cousin. By November 1694, the 'George' Rooms were all finished in Verrio's finest manner. In the Saloon, known as the 'Heaven Room', he achieved his masterpiece.<sup>76</sup> The walls illustrate the story of Venus and her lover Mars caught by Vulcan's net, witnessed by an impressive number of gods and goddesses on the ceiling. Verrio himself appears as Dante in the Cyclops' forge. His final work for Lord Exeter at Burghley was the Hell

Room ceiling, a remarkable composition in which the torments of a mythological Hell are dramatically depicted. Verrio worked without assistance on this ceiling from October 1696 to the following September, and was paid £220 for his efforts. This room was subsequently transformed into a staircase, and the walls were painted by Thomas Stothard in the early 19th century.

Verrio's fees at Burghley seem very modest by comparison with those he had received from his royal patrons. But Lord Exeter looked after him and his sons well, accommodating them as part of his household.<sup>77</sup> Verrio belonged to the 'Honourable Order of Little Bedlam', Lord Exeter's drinking club, and had his portrait painted by Kneller, a fellow-member.<sup>78</sup> Verrio's extravagant tastes were indulged by his patron, who gave him 'a coach and horses, and equipage, a table, and servants and a very considerable pension'.<sup>79</sup> He was also a regular client at *The George* in Stamford, where he kept an open table, consuming delicacies and choice wines with friends. He became increasingly arrogant and this caused difficulties with the staff at Burghley. He quarrelled with Lord Exeter's cook, and painted her in the fourth George Room as Plenty, giving her four extra breasts. Lord Exeter found him more and more tiresome, and losing his patience with the artist, called him an 'impudent dogg'.<sup>80</sup> On his departure from Burghley in September 1697, Verrio left behind magnificent frescoes but an unflattering reputation. Defoe described this well: 'The character of this gentleman left behind him at this town is, that he deserved it all for his paintings, but nothing else, his scandalous life and his unpaid debts, it seems, causing him to be but very meanly spoken of in the town of Stamford'.<sup>81</sup> Burghley is regarded today as one of the best examples of English Baroque interior decoration, and Verrio's contribution constitutes his finest surviving work.

While at Burghley, Verrio also worked at another Exeter property, Snape Castle, in Yorkshire, where he decorated the Chapel with an allegory illustrating 'Wonder and War in Heaven'. This quickly suffered from damp, and by 1725 was in very poor condition. Today the work has almost entirely disappeared. During the same period, Verrio undertook another major commission from Lord Exeter's brother-in-law, William Cavendish, 4th Earl of Devonshire, for his great house, Chatsworth. Devonshire was a key figure in the accession of William III, for which he was granted a dukedom in 1694, and he was also an important patron of the arts. In the late 1680s, Devonshire commissioned William Talman to make major alterations to Chatsworth, and employed fashionable artists and craftsmen, among them Laguerre and Tijou, to transform it into a magnificent baroque palace. Verrio's part in the scheme involved the decoration of the Great Stairs, Great Chamber, a series of medallions in the Gallery, and the Chapel altarpiece, and he spent a year there from autumn 1691. His principal ceiling is in the Great Chamber – later known as the State Dining Room – where *The return of the Golden Age*, with vices defeated by virtues, is depicted in honour of William and Mary.<sup>82</sup> His subject in the Chapel altarpiece is *The Incredulity of St Thomas*.<sup>83</sup>

On the completion of Burghley, it is possible that Lord Exeter encouraged Verrio to return to royal service; but it is more likely that the need for restoration of some of his earlier work at Windsor Castle persuaded King William to override the objections posed by the Test Act and re-employ the artist. We can suppose the brilliant success of his decorations at Burghley influenced the King's decision. He was also anxious, at long last, to complete his State Apartments at Hampton Court, which had been left unfinished after the death of



Queen Mary in 1694. The unexpected loss of Whitehall Palace by fire in 1698 provided an additional stimulus. The damage to Verrio's work at Windsor must have been caused by the dampness of the English climate, as Evelyn had already written in his diary in 1683 'if the walls hold (which is the only doubt by reason of the salts which in time and in this moist climate prejudice) the work will preserve his name to ages'.<sup>84</sup> Verrio resumed his royal duties and by June 1699 had received his first payment for the restoration work.<sup>85</sup> He and his family had been established in new accommodation in the house of William Isaack from 13 May 1699.<sup>86</sup> The work at Windsor mainly concerned St George's Hall and the Chapel, for which Verrio created new designs to incorporate the image of King William. The sketch known as *The Triumph of William III* (Pl 8),<sup>87</sup> which contains a flag bearing the cross of St George, was clearly intended to replace *The Triumph of the Black Prince* on the north wall of St George's Hall. The central part of a drawing by John Francis Rigaud, which records portions of the decoration of the hall before George IV's alterations, closely resembles this sketch.<sup>88</sup>

Meanwhile, plans for Hampton Court Palace were taking shape in May 1700, by which time the King was in residence there. It was decided to create a new waterside banqueting house out of a Tudor garden-tower in the Glass Case Garden. The existing Water Gallery was demolished, and material reused for the new building. By September, the foundations were laid, and by December the interior was ready for the painters to begin their work. Verrio moved to lodgings in the Palace and was at work in the 'new building in the Glass Case Garden', as it was known, during the early months of 1701.<sup>89</sup> William Webb was paid 'for carrying him to and from his worke'.<sup>90</sup> The accounts from March 1701 onwards show constant works and repairs to his lodgings. These, consisting of three rooms and a kitchen, were located at 'Pheasant Court'.<sup>91</sup>



Verrio adorned the ceiling of the Banqueting House – as the Glass Case building is now known – with *Minerva surrounded by the Arts and Sciences* (Pl 9). The sketch for it has survived and is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum.<sup>92</sup> It was one of Verrio's favourite designs, as similar earlier versions exist at Hôtel Brûlart, Ham House and Chatsworth.<sup>93</sup> Verrio also introduced a new trompe l'oeil style by painting framed pictures on the wall, portraying the myth of *Alpheus & Arethusa* and *The Marriage of Bacchus & Ariadne*.<sup>94</sup> The latter includes a satyr who looks very much like Verrio himself (Pl 10). The 'painted room' of the Banqueting House was completed by June 1701, when the painters' scaffold was





taken down.<sup>95</sup> Verrio received £500 for this work. Other craftsmen were involved there, including Peter Cousin,<sup>96</sup> Gibbons, who carved the window and door mouldings, and, probably, Montingo.

The next phase of the works now began in the palace itself. Carpenters were employed in 'making of a ladder with a rail of each side and making 2 runing scaffolds on wheels' for the King's Staircase, and others in the Great and Little Bedchambers of the King's State Apartments.<sup>97</sup> For these two rooms, in which he created intimate designs appropriate to the setting, it was agreed that Verrio should receive £400 and £200 respectively.<sup>98</sup> In the Great Bedchamber, the myth of *Selene and her beloved Endymion* (Pl 11) is represented in a fine nocturnal scene. Endymion sleeps in the arms of Morpheus, and it is interesting to compare Verrio's treatment of them here with his earlier depiction of the same characters at the Hôtel Brûlart.<sup>99</sup> In the Little Bedchamber, the peaceful repose of *Mars in the lap of Venus* (Pl 12) alludes both to marital bliss and the conquest of war by love.

By February 1702 Verrio had moved on to the Great Staircase,<sup>100</sup> where he painted the most elaborate example of his work at Hampton Court – a complex allegory showing the triumph of William III over his catholic enemies, while the banquet of the gods denotes the peace and prosperity brought by his reign. Verrio's design for the banquet is closely related to that in the King's Eating Room at Windsor Castle. Here Verrio created a scene of grandeur which forms an appropriate prelude to the King's State Apartments. A modello exists which was presumably approved by William,<sup>101</sup> but, sadly, he was unable to see the completed work and enjoy the effect, as he died in March 1702 after a fall from his horse. The impression made on Celia Fiennes during her visit a few years later was of a staircase 'very lofty and spacious, with arches for seats, the steps, iron railles carv'd and gilt, the wall black and gold painted with armory like a wanscoat, over that is curi-

ous paintings the twelve Caesars, over that the banquet of the Gods all at length, with Ceres over the side board with plenty; the roof is angells and cherubins, the front on the halfe pace is Julian and the spectre that appear'd to him, in a tent of green, the curtain drawn soe bold as if real with gold fringe'.<sup>102</sup> William's successor Queen Anne authorized the artist to finish the decoration of the staircase as planned, and he worked there with his associates during the summer of 1702. Cousin made the gilding of 'severall moldings of the pannells'.<sup>103</sup> By September the Great Staircase was completed, and labourers were employed 'to move the Scaffold in the King's great stair case, in taking it down and carrying the Boards and poles to the Store Yard'.<sup>104</sup> For this major work, which he signed on the south wall – '*ANT. VERRIO: F*' – Verrio was paid the generous sum of £1600. Here the King's original scheme ended, and although the remaining State Apartments were designed with coved ceilings to accommodate further frescoes, this work was never carried out.

There is a drawing in the British Museum of a king bearing an olive branch, attended by Justice, Royal Power and Humility, being offered a crown by three female figures (Pl 13). It is squared for transfer but not related to any known work.<sup>105</sup> The king represented looks like William III, and this drawing could well be a design for one of the King's State Apartments – possibly the King's Privy Chamber. This seems quite likely, as William III is not represented elsewhere as King of England in any of Verrio's frescoes at Hampton Court.

William had been particularly interested in the Raphael Cartoons, which had been acquired by Charles I, and wished to display them in the King's Gallery at Hampton Court – today known as the Cartoon Gallery. He commissioned three sets of copies, by Cook, Laguerre and Verrio, possibly to be used for new tapestries. In the 19th century, Verrio's copies were in the possession of Archdeacon Thorp of Durham, a connoisseur and bibliophile. After his death in 1862, they



were consigned to Christie's, described as 'The Cartoons of Raffaele a series of seven admirable copies in oils, the size of the originals, executed by Verrio at the command of King William III. They are most faithful transcripts of the celebrated works of Raffaele, and in perfect preservation'.<sup>106</sup>

Verrio then continued his royal service at Windsor for Queen Anne, working on the Private Oratory and the Great Staircase in the autumn of 1702.<sup>107</sup> He was occupied there until the following spring, and by May he had received a commission from the Queen to paint the 'Great Room' – the Queen's Drawing Room at Hampton Court.<sup>108</sup> On 10 May 1703, he wrote to William Lowndes, Secretary to the Queen in the Treasury:

Monsieur

Ayant fini l'escalier de la Reyne a Windsor avec satisfaction de sa Maieste laquele ma comandé un grand ouvrage a Hampton Court ie ne puis rien executer faute d'argent et come vous estes mon unique Patron je vous suplie de vous employer pour moy en vers my Lord Tresorier pour me faire payer le dit escalier suivant le raport qu'en sera fait par Sr Christopher Wren iepere que vous me feres cette grace come les autres puisque suis avec tout le respect imaginable

Monsieur

Votre tres humble e tres oblige serviteur Antonio Verrio<sup>109</sup>

The next day he received £300, part of the money due to him for work on the Great Staircase at Hampton Court.<sup>110</sup> By December he was at work in 'her Majesty's withdrawing room', as he received a payment of £200 for it.<sup>111</sup> Two months



11 *Selene and Endymion*, 1701. Ceiling of the King's Great Bedchamber, Hampton Court Palace. © Historic Royal Palaces

12 *Mars and Venus*, 1701. Ceiling of King's Little Bedchamber, Hampton Court Palace. © Historic Royal Palaces

13 *King bearing an olive branch, attended by Royal Power, Justice and Humility*, c.1702. Pen and brown ink wash over red and black chalk, 28.3 x 42.8 cm. British Museum, London. © Trustees of the British Museum





had explored this branch of art at intervals throughout his career, and his skill as a portraitist, which is insufficiently recognized, is amply demonstrated by the fine double-portrait of himself and General Killigrew (Pl 14), which must date from c1705-6.<sup>119</sup> The self-portrait (Pl 15), now in the National Portrait Gallery collection, this time showing the artist without his wig, surely dates from the same period. Although this work provides little evidence of a decline in his powers, he added the self-pitying inscription 'Ecco Antonio, O' il povero Verrio' – a lament for the end of his career as a court painter.<sup>120</sup> Shortly before his death, he began a portrait of Sir Christopher Wren.<sup>121</sup> This was subsequently completed by Kneller and Thornhill and is now in the Sheldonian Theatre,

later, Verrio petitioned for more money to cover 'the great expense he is at in colours and other necessary assistance in order to finish the Great Room'.<sup>112</sup> He received a further payment of £300 in February 1704, and others in May and July for the same amount. The room was finished at the beginning of 1705 and the last payment of £300 was directed on Feb 2 1705, making a total of £1400 for the whole work.<sup>113</sup> Verrio experimented with a new style in this room by using the whole space to create a marble hall open to the sky, painting on the walls tapestries in trompe l'oeil. Celia Fiennes recorded of this innovation: 'The sides of the walls are painted just like pieces of tapestry; here is Prince Georges picture at length, with his dukall coronet and an anchor, as High Admirall'.<sup>114</sup> The ceiling, perhaps the most attractive part of the entire work, contains an Olympian allegory in honour of Queen Anne – Verrio included a particularly fine portrait of her as *Justice attended by the three other Cardinal Virtues*. The scene is comparable with the central part of the Queen's Presence Chamber at Windsor Castle.

In June 1705, Verrio was still hoping for further employment, and petitioned the Queen: 'Seignor Verrio sets forth that it is near four months since he finished the Great Drawing Room at Hampton Court, that having applied to Her Majesty to begin to paint some other room, her Majesty was pleased to say though there was not haste of any more painting, yet her Majesty would take care of him: that this being the most seasonable time for painting and the petitioner wanting wherewithal to support himself he prays leave to put her Majesty in mind of her gracious promise'.<sup>115</sup> The Queen's reply was concise: 'Give him a pension but no more charge for painting: 200L a year'.<sup>116</sup> It has been suggested that her decision was prompted by the decline of Verrio's eyesight, as he is known to have suffered from cataract. But a more likely explanation is that the Queen felt the need to make economies at Hampton Court, especially in view of the continuing expenditure on restoration at Windsor.<sup>117</sup> It is certainly true that the next decorative work she commissioned for Hampton Court was carried out in the Chapel Royal by Thornhill, and this did not begin before 1710.

Although he had no further opportunity for mural painting,<sup>118</sup> Verrio now embarked on a number of portraits. He

Oxford. It happily commemorates the four giants of the baroque who had worked together at Hampton Court.

No later than a month after Verrio's retirement, Queen Anne gave an additional favour to the elderly artist, paying him £100 'as bounty over and above his 200L per an',<sup>122</sup> and in November, in a pleasant gesture, she directed that he should be sent 'one fat doe of this season' from the royal forest at Epping for his table.<sup>123</sup> Verrio also received a further privilege according to Thornhill's letter of 24 August 1717 to the Commissioners for building the Royal Hospital at Greenwich:

Signor Vario was paid for the whole Palaces of Windsor and Hampton Court, ceilings, sides, stairs, and back stairs, 8s per foot, which is £3-12-0 per yard, exclusive of gilding, had wine daily allowed him, lodgings in the Palaces, and, when his eyesight failed him, a pension of £200 per annum, and allowance of wine for his life.<sup>124</sup>

Verrio did not enjoy a long retirement, as he died in his lodgings in the palace on 15 June 1707. He must have known his time was coming, as he made his will two days before his death in favour of his sons Jean Baptiste and Francis, and his grandchildren John Baptist and Mary. A payment of £50 as royal bounty was made 'to defray the funeral expenses of the said Verrio, if any due, and to satisfy several small debts which at his death were owing to his servants and others at Hampton Court'.<sup>125</sup> According to Vertue, writing on the authority of a Mr Hargrave, he was 'buried at Hamtonn'.<sup>126</sup>

Although only about a third of Verrio's output has survived, it is still representative of his entire career, and shows his development as an artist. It also illustrates the originality and theatrical character of his style. As the artist who first introduced baroque mural painting into England, he exerted a strong influence on younger men such as Lanscroun, Laguerre and Thornhill. As for his own achievement in this field, Verrio seems thoroughly to deserve the tribute paid to him by Celia Fiennes: 'The best hand in England'.<sup>127</sup>

**14** *Double-portrait of Antonio Verrio and General Killigrew*, c1705-06. Oil on canvas, 76 x 103 cm. Sold from the collection of the late Edward Croft-Murray in 2009. © Christie's Images Limited 2009

**15** *Self-portrait*, c1705-06. Oil on canvas, 76 x 64 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London. © National Portrait Gallery, London



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1 E Croft-Murray, *Decorative Painting in England 1537-1837*, 2 vols, London, 1962, I, pp50-60.

2 Verrio's surviving work in Italy and France is treated in the article. In England his work can be seen at Burghley House, Chatsworth, Chelsea Hospital, Christ's Hospital, Ham House, Hampton Court Palace, Moor Park, Powis Castle, Snape Castle and Windsor Castle. All the paintings are oil on plaster

unless otherwise specified. Hoe Place, Huntercombe Manor and Reigate Priory, attributed by Croft-Murray (op cit, I, pp236-42) to Verrio are actually not by him. Hoe Place is treated in the text. I was not permitted to visit Huntercombe Manor as it is now a hospital, but I was informed by Lisa Andrew, Hospital Manager, Huntercombe Group, that the work is attributed to school of Verrio (Letter of 12 June 2007). The work at Reigate Priory was recently cleaned and shows the Coat of Arms of the Parsons family. It was commissioned to celebrate the marriage of Humfrey Parsons and his wife Sarah Crowley and can therefore be dated to 1719, after Verrio's death. The artist is unknown. Verrio's paintings, fragments, sketches and drawings are in collections as stated in this article. A few additional designs and sketches have appeared in sales at various auction houses, but the present whereabouts of these works is unknown.

3 There is no documentary evidence to support the commonly

accepted birth date c1639, and recent research suggests the earlier date is more likely. See Raffaele De Giorgi, 'Couleur, couleur!' *Antonio Verrio: un pittore in Europa tra Seicento e Settecento*. Firenze, 2009. New evidence also suggests that his birthplace was Naples (Archives Départementales de Haute-Garonne 3 E 467 Registre 1 fol 34) for which the information was supplied by Jérôme Zanusso. Verrio clearly considered himself a Neapolitan, since he signed some of his work Neapolitanus (see n11, n35)

4 *Benjamin accused of the theft of the silver goblet and Joseph lets his brothers recognise him*, c1655-56. Oil on canvas, 270 x 250 cm.

5 Of c1656-58. Oil on canvas, 248 x 163 cm.

6 Of c1658-60. Oil on canvas, 230 x 160 cm.

7 Giovanni Andrea Coppola (1597-1659).

8 Signed 'Antonius Verrius facieb', c1659-61. Oil on canvas, 298 x 194 cm.

9 De Giorgi, op cit, n3.

10 This work has not survived.

11 Pierre-Paul Riquet (1604-80), created Baron de Bonrepos in 1674. He came from a Florentine family of the name of Arighetti. An engineer and canal builder, his main work is the Canal du Midi (1665-81). A map, inscribed 'CARTE DU CANAL ROYAL DE COMMUNICATION DES MERS EN LANGUEDOC', was made by the engineer and cartographer François Andréossy (1633-88) to present to Louis XIV This includes decorative figures by Verrio who signed the work 'Ant. Verrius Neapo. pinx', 1669. 91.5 x 155 cm. Musée de la Marine à Vincennes (information supplied by Jérôme Zanusso).

12 Jean Palaprat (1650-1721), Seigneur de Bigot, French dramatist.

13 Palaprat's diary mentions 'l'illustre M. Riquet, plus immortel encore pour le mérite des personnes qui composent la famille qu'il a laissée, que pour le glorieux ouvrage de la jonction des mers, avoit fait venir Vario de Florence pour orner de plusieurs belles peintures sa

- maison charmante de Bonrepos'. Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p52.
- 14 Part of a painting of the Virtues was discovered in a cupboard on the first floor. This was originally the decoration above the fireplace of the room known as 'Chambre des Vertues' (information supplied by Jérôme Zanusso).
- 15 Signed 'Anto... Verrius f', c1666-68. Oil on canvas, 214 x 173 cm, inv no. 2004 1 340. It is currently under restoration following water damage and the work should be completed by the end of this year.
- 16 Signed 'ANTOS.VERRIUS.F.', c1666-70. Oil on canvas, 351 x 237 cm, inv no. 2004 1 339. There is also a sketch for this work in a private collection (information supplied by Axel Hémary).
- 17 An exhibition devoted to Verrio is being organised at Toulouse, Musée des Augustins, by Axel Hémary (Director) in collaboration with Raffaele De Giorgi and the present writer, and will take place 27 March-27 June 2010.
- 18 Of c1666-70. Oil on canvas, approximately 360 x 250 cm (information supplied by Axel Hémary).
- 19 Oil on canvas. Private Collection. Attribution by Raffaele De Giorgi.
- 20 Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p53.
- 21 Palaprat wrote in his diary, 'C'est là [Château de Bonrepos] où j'avois une grande amitié avec Vario, pendant les deux ou trois années qu'il y avoit travaillé.' Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p52.
- 22 Joëlle Barreau in her article, 'Antonio Verrio à l'Hôtel Brûlart', *Revue de l'Art*, no. 122/1998-4, pp64-71, made a very strong case for the attribution of this work to Verrio. This she has subsequently confirmed after further research. Joëlle Barreau, 'Etre architecte au XVIIIe siècle: Libéral Bruand, architecte et ingénieur du roi', *Thèse d'Histoire de l'Art dirigée par M. Claude Mignot*, 4 vols, 2004, no. 7 Hôtel Brûlart, pp3-4. I owe her a special debt of gratitude for generously putting her research at my disposal.
- 23 Libéral Bruand (1636-97), French architect and engineer. He was appointed 'Architecte du Roi' in 1663 and became member of the 'Académie Royale d'Architecture' in 1671. His main work is the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris (1671-6). He was the architect of a country house at Richmond, Yorkshire, for the Duke of York, later James II.
- 24 Barreau, *Revue de l'Art*, op cit n22, p65.
- 25 In the event, he was paid 7308 livres. The last instalment was collected by his wife Françoise Dangelin on his behalf on 25 September 1672. Barreau, *Thèse*, op cit, n21, no. 10 Hôtel Leclerc de Grandmaison, pp5-6. This seems to confirm that by then he was already in England.
- 26 Barreau, *Revue de l'Art*, op cit, n22, p65.
- 27 Palaprat mentioned in his diary, 'Je soupai tous les samedis en très-bonne compagnie chez un Peintre Italien nommé Vario... Mon Florentin... devenu grand ami, cousin, camarade & compère de tous les excellents acteurs de ce temps-là'. Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p53.
- 28 William Bray, ed, *The Diary of John Evelyn, Esq., F.R.S., from 1641 to 1705-6 with Memoir*, nd, p359. Although Evelyn's facts were probably accurate, he must have been confused about the date, since he re-wrote this entry for 16 October 1671 some years later. Verrio's first work in England could not have begun before the summer of 1672 at the earliest. Euston Hall was destroyed by fire in 1902.
- 29 The ceilings of the Duchess' bedroom and its connected cabinet, which also appear in Croft-Murray's catalogue, are now regarded as 'style of Verrio'. *Guidebook of Ham House*, 2007, pp34, 35, 38, 45, 46.
- 30 *Survey of London*, 1963, vol 32, p367.
- 31 Of c1674. Oil on canvas, between 917 and 930 x 444 and 464 cm: the painting has been cut down at some point and it is not rectangular. In Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p239, it is erroneously stated that the work is oil on plaster.
- 32 Work in the Doge's Palace, Venice. *Guidebook of Powis Castle*, 2006, p26.
- 33 Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p238.
- 34 Ibid, p53.
- 35 Signed 'Antonius Verrio / Neapolitanus f.', c1674. Oil on canvas, 224.5 x 231 cm. Royal Collection inv no. 406173. There is a later addition at the top and the original canvas appears to have been cut at both sides.
- 36 Oliver Millar, *The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, London, 1963, p133.
- 37 EK Timings, ed, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, James II, Vol III, Jun 1687-Feb 1689*, 1972, p1724.
- 38 FH Blackburne Daniell, ed, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Charles II, Mar 1675-Feb 1676*, 1907, p584.
- 39 Idem, *CSP Dom, Charles II, Mar-Dec 1678*, 1913, pp525-26, 549.
- 40 Ibid, p525.
- 41 Ibid, p526. This is the first reference to Verrio's second son Francis, the date of whose birth is unknown. He could not have been more than nine years old in 1678.
- 42 William Henry Pyne, *Royal Residences*, 3 vols, 1819, I, p171. This figure includes his annual salary, subsistence and money for his materials, together with payments to his assistants, apart from René Cousin, who submitted his own invoices. According to Pyne, this figure does not include a payment for the decoration of St George's Hall, for which he received an additional £2250. HM Colvin, *The History of the King's Works 1660-1782*, 1976, V, p327.
- 43 WA Shaw, ed, *Calendar of Treasury Books, vol 7*, 1916, part 2, p1188.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Half-length portrait wearing armour with a lace cravat and the ribbon of the Garter, Signed 'Ant<sup>o</sup> Vario f', c1684. Oil on canvas, 74.5 x 62 cm. Sotheby's London, 2 March 1983 (lot 31), now unlocated. There is a similar *Portrait of King Charles II* by John Riley, of approximately the same date, in the Ashmolean Museum.
- 47 The three portraits of Charles II are oil on plaster and framed: (1) *Charles II*, bust length within an oval formed by two palm branches, c1677, 91.4 x 68.6 cm. Fragment from the King's Presence Chamber, Windsor Castle. Royal Collection inv no. 404200. (2) *Charles II*, half-length, in robe with a laurel crown, 1682-84, 82.1 x 68.2 cm. Fragment from St George's Hall, Windsor Castle. Royal Collection inv no. 407412. (3) *King Charles II*, half-length, in robe and crown, c1677, 81.9 x 62.2 cm. Inscribed on the back 'From the King's State Drawing Room Ceiling [Windsor Castle]'. Packwood House. Portraits (1) and (3) appear in Vandrebanc's engravings of their respective rooms. See n51, (2) and (3), (4). The *Fragment of a warrior's head*, 1682-84, is oil on plaster, 30 x 20 cm. From St George's Hall, Windsor Castle. Royal Collection inv no. 407553.
- 48 Dalya Alberge, 'Charles II portrait comes home from Vienna exile', *The Times*, 28 June 1996. This portrait, op cit, n46 (2) was discovered and bought by Philip Mould Ltd, at the Dorotheum auction house in Vienna.
- 49 Framed with the inscription 'Christ in the Temple', Signed 'Ant Verrio f.', c1679-80. Oil on canvas, 103.5 x 205.1 cm. Royal Collection inv no. 404052. Verrio and May are in the opening on the right hand side of the painting. There is a copy of this modello by an unknown hand, c1720, oil on canvas, 105.4 x 210.8 cm, Royal Collection inv no. 402671. There is also a copy of the central section of the work, attributed to Verrio, oil on canvas, 102 x 126 cm, Sotheby's, 29 November 1978 (lot 4), now unlocated.
- 50 Bray, op cit, n28, 23 July 1679, p410. Four years later, Evelyn wrote, 'That which was new at Windsor since I was last there, and was surprising to me, was that incomparable fresca [sic] painting in St. George's Hall, representing the legend of St. George... Verrio's invention is admirable, his ord'nance full and flowing, antiq and heroical; his figures move'. Ibid, 16 June 1683, p442.
- 51 Copies exist at the British Museum: (1) King's Closet: *Jupiter and Leda*, 36.9 x 40.8 cm, inv no. P2-1874,0808.1947. (2) King's Presence Chamber: *Camera Praesentiae Regij Palatii Vindsorensis*, 51.4 x 50.5 cm, inv no. 1868,0612.1442. (3) King's Withdrawing Room: *Lacunar Procaetonis Cubili Regis*, 67.3 x 95.5 cm, inv no. 1874,0808.1948. (4) King's Withdrawing Room: *Lacunar Procaetonis Cubili Regis*, 60.8 x 93.3 cm, inv no. 1865,0610.1266.
- 52 Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p238. He probably did not see the work, as the information was provided to him by Mrs M Sinker. Following my visit there on 18 July 2007, it is clear to me it is not by Verrio. The artist is unknown.
- 53 Several aquatints by Charles Wild (1781-1835) and James Stephanoff (c1786-1874) of Windsor Castle. Pyne, op cit, n41, facing pp88, 90, 93, 99, 106, 116, 147, 152, 155, 161, 166, 170, 172, 176, 178. Some of the originals are in the Royal Library. Wild: inv nos. 22099, 22100, 22102, 22105, 22109, 22112; Stephanoff: inv no. 22103.
- 54 The house was remodelled by James Thornhill in 1721 for Benjamin Styles, but Verrio's work was preserved and can still be seen.
- 55 *An assembly of the gods*. Oil on canvas, 169.2 x 82.9 cm, inv no. T00916.
- 56 Of c1685-87. Oil on canvas, 86.6 x 73.5 cm, inv no. AH2283/81. 'The sitter, in half-length, wears a breastplate, red cloak and a cravat and his natural hair. The portrait bears the later inscription 'COL THE HONBLE SACKVILLE TUFTON. BORN JUNE 11TH 1646 OBT MARCH 13TH 1721. AETAT 75. VERIO PINXT.''
- 57 Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p239. A year later, Evelyn was equally complimentary, writing in a detailed description of the work that 'Signor Verrio's fresca paintings... [were] comparable to the greatest of the old masters, or what they so celebrate at Rome'. Bray, op cit, n28, 10 October 1683, p451.
- 58 Ibid, 19 January 1686, p496.
- 59 *James II giving audience to the Governors, masters, boys and girls of Christ's Hospital*, c1684-88. Oil on canvas, approximately 457 x 2621 cm. It bears the inscription in a cartouche 'This monumental picture of the work of Antonio Verrio was designed and painted in 1684-90 to commemorate the Foundation and Endowment within this Hospital of the Royal Mathematical School by his Majesty King Charles the Second by letters patent in 1673-75'. This painting contains numerous likenesses of important figures, which were probably done from life, and illustrates his skill as a portraitist. There is a reduced scale replica in gouache on paper, 44.5 x 238.5 cm, which belonged to Samuel Pepys. Sotheby's London, *Important 18th/19th Century English Drawings & Watercolours*, 28 November 1974 (lot 49), now in the Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, USA. It lacks the spaniel.
- 60 *Charles II giving audience at Christ's Hospital*, c1682. Oil on canvas, 93.5 x 125.6 cm, inv no. P2-1956.
- 61 EK Timings, ed, *CSP Dom, James II, Vol I, Feb-Dec 1685*, 1960, p103.
- 62 Henry Guy, 'Moneys received and paid for Secret Services of Charles II and James II from 30 Mar 1679 - 25 Dec 1688', *Camden Society*, 1851, p153.
- 63 *Wren Society*, Oxford, 1941, vol 18, pp63-64.
- 64 Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p239.
- 65 Colvin, op cit, n42, p330.
- 66 Guy, op cit, n62, p121. Timings, op cit n61, p349.
- 67 Bray, op cit, n28, 23 July 1679, p410.
- 68 WA Shaw, ed, *CTB, vol 8*, 1923, part 2, 10 February 1686, pp584-85.
- 69 Bray, op cit, n28, 4 August 1686, p502. Although evidently successful in his work at St James', Verrio encountered some difficulties of a personal nature. A feud developed with a Lady Williams, who complained that Verrio's planned alterations to the greenhouse adjacent to her garden wall would 'prejudice [her] house and garden', and 'therefore prays a stop to said Verrio's building'. EK Timings, ed, *CSP Dom, James II, Vol II, Jan 1686-May 1687*, 1964, p589. Verrio was clearly not the most diplomatic of men.
- 70 Vertue is the authority for Verrio's membership of the Society of the Virtuosi of St Luke: *Walpole Society*, XXII (1933-4), 'Vertue III', p120. The Society of Painters held its meeting on 24 November 1687. Verrio was one of the stewards, the others being Godfrey Kneller, Nicholas Sheppard and Edward Polehampton. One print of the invitation card is at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, inv no. E667-1921; another at the British Museum, London, inv no. 1977,U.1223.
- 71 Signed 'H. Cooke Pinxit'. It bears the inscription in a cartouche 'CAROLO SECUNDO REGI OPTIMO HUIUS HOSPITII FUNDATORI DOMINOQUE SUO CLEMENTISSIMO RICARDUS JONES COMES DE RANELAGH HANC TABULAM POSUIT'. Although Cook claimed the work, recent restoration has shown that the major part was painted by Verrio.
- 72 Kathryn Barron, 'Henry Cook', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004-07.
- 73 Joseph Redington, ed, *Calendar of Treasury Papers, 1702-7*, 1874, p93.
- 74 Shaw, op cit, n68, part 4, p2163. This warrant contains a detailed inventory of the pictures in each room. In the withdrawing room, there were 'eight pieces' which suggests that Verrio may have painted some small murals in this room.
- 75 WJ Hardy, ed, *CSP Dom, William and Mary, Feb 1689-Apr 1690*, 1895, p29.
- 76 He spent a year and a half in decorating this room and was paid £500. Two sketches for it survive: (1) *The Cyclops at work at Vulcan's forge*, sketch for the east wall of the Heaven Room, c1693. Oil on canvas, 72.4 x 57 cm, Burghley House. (2) *Gods on Mount Olympus*, sketch for the ceiling of the Heaven Room, c1693. Oil on canvas, 90.2 x 118.1 cm, Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, inv no. 1958-9.18.
- 77 The elder son John-Baptist fought with the Jacobite Army in Ireland and was taken prisoner at Drogheda in 1690. He was released by the special intervention of William III. WJ Hardy, ed, *CSP Dom, William & Mary, May 1690-Oct 1691*, 1898, p155. He joined his father at Burghley. The younger son Francis received his education there. Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p58.
- 78 Half-length portrait wearing a long wig. c1690. Oil on canvas, 76.2 x 63.5 cm, Burghley House. Each member of Exeter's club received the nickname of an animal – in Verrio's case, a porcupine. This can be seen at the foot of his portrait.
- 79 Daniel Defoe, *A tour through the whole Island of Great Britain*, 1986, p422.
- 80 From a scribbled sheet of notes by the Earl's steward Culpepper Tanner, Ex MSS 66/1-28, 'Accts of John Cecil, 5th Earl'. Eric Till, 'Verrio's Decade at Burghley, 1686-1697', unpublished.
- 81 Defoe, op cit, n79, p422.
- 82 In this complex Olympian allegory Verrio included the portrait of Mrs Hackett, the housekeeper, whom he disliked, as an old hag.
- 83 Of c1692-3. Oil on canvas. 203.2 x 162.6 cm. Attached to a wooden board cut to fit the octagonal aperture in the altar itself. In 1950, the panel was found to have a free sketch of the subject in white chalk on its surface. Information from Charles Noble and Till, op cit n80.
- 84 Bray, op cit, n28, 16 June 1683, p442.
- 85 WA Shaw, ed, *CTB, vol 14*, 1934, 12 June 1699, p95.
- 86 The National Archives, MS T 38/737, p4, 5 July 1701. WA Shaw, ed, *CTB, vol 17*, 1939, part 2, p918.
- 87 Of c1699. Oil on canvas, 62.8 x 90.2 cm. Formerly in the Croft-Murray collection; appeared at Christie's South Kensington, Old Master Pictures, 23 April 2009 (lot 184), bought in.
- 88 Of c1805. Pencil on Whatman paper, 44 x 60.3 cm. Royal Collection inv no. RL29202.
- 89 Colvin, op cit, n42, p35.
- 90 The National Archives, MS Work 5/51, May 1701.
- 91 Ibid, October 1701. Today they are occupied by the Embroiderers' Guild, located on the ground floor between the 'Porter's Lodge' at West Gate and the 'Pheasant Court' – now known as Master Carpenter's Court. Based on 'A Survey of the rooms in Her Majesty's palace of Hampton Court... as they were disposed of at the death of his late Majesty King William, taken the 1st day of May 1702 and reviewed this 28th of June 1710', The National Archives MS LC 5/202.
- 92 *Minerva surrounded by the Arts and Sciences*, sketch for the ceiling, c1700. Oil on paper mounted on panel, 34.3 x 49.8 cm, inv no. E.1085-1916. There is also a drawing in the Fitzwilliam Museum which appears to represent a monarch crowned by Minerva or Britannia and surrounded by the four Cardinal Virtues. This may be another preliminary study for the ceiling, c1700. Black chalk, heightened with white on brown paper, 20.7 x 29.1 cm, irregular, inv no. 2863r. On the reverse of this drawing is a detailed study of a head of a woman, with a diadem and head scarf, which may relate to the monochrome female supporter above the fireplace. These drawings were previously attributed to Antonio Balestra (1666-1740).
- 93 At Chatsworth, it appears in one of the medallions in the Gallery.
- 94 Another instance of Verrio's re-use of a theme he had employed earlier in his career, in this case *Bacchus and Ariadne*, at the Hôtel Brûlart and Euston Hall.
- 95 The National Archives, MS Work 5/51, May and June 1701.
- 96 Son of René Cousin. Daniell, op cit, n39, p79.
- 97 The National Archives, MS Work 5/51, July 1701.
- 98 Redington, op cit, n73, p51.
- 99 This scheme was also used in the Queen's Bedroom at Windsor Castle.
- 100 Colvin, op cit, n42, p169.
- 101 *The Banquet of the Gods*, modello for the ceiling, c1701. Oil on canvas, 82.6 x 102.5 cm. Formerly in the collection of the late Sir Oliver Millar, now unlocated.
- 102 Christopher Morris, ed, *The Journeys of Celia Fiemmes*, 1947, p354. Croft-Murray did not share Miss Fiemmes' enthusiasm for the King's Staircase, complaining about the garishness of the colours. The staircase has been considerably restored, and Verrio's original colouring may have been lost.
- 103 The National Archives, MS Work 5/51, July 1702.
- 104 Ibid, September 1702.
- 105 Of c1702. Pen and brown ink wash over red and black chalk, 28.3 x 42.8 cm, inv no. SL5214.249. There is also a pen, brown ink and grey wash drawing of an allegory of *The Triumph of William III*, c1702, 20.8 x 16.1 cm, Sotheby's, 2 October 1975 (lot 124), now unlocated.
- 106 Christie's, 6 May 1863 (lot 95). The present location of these copies is unknown. They were exhibited before the sale and an illustrated catalogue produced. There is a copy in the National Art Library, Victoria & Albert Museum (107.F Box IV).
- 107 He was paid £100 for the Private Oratory. Shaw, op cit, n85, part 1, 4 Nov 1702. And £1300 for the Great Staircase. Idem, *CTB, vol 18*, 1936, pp110, 206, 268, 375, 438.
- 108 Idem, *CTB*, vol 19 (1938), p123.
- 109 The National Archives, MS SP 34/2/94.
- 110 Shaw, op cit, n107, p267.
- 111 Ibid, p491.
- 112 Op cit, n108.
- 113 Shaw, op cit, n107, p495. Croft-Murray lists Verrio's assistants – according to Vertue – as Gerard Lancroon, Nicholas Scheffers of Utrecht and 'Catinat' – probably Giovanni Battista Catenaro – and suggests the participation of the young James Thornhill. Croft-Murray, op cit n1, p60. Thornhill seems to have been one of Verrio's assistants as 'A large sketch of *Apollo and Marsyas*' and '*The Judgement of Midas*' appeared in the sale of his collection. Both are the monochrome mythological designs painted over the doorways of the Queen's Drawing Room (Sir James Thornhill Collection, Cock, Covent Garden, 24 February 1734-5, lots 11 and 12, National Art Library, Victoria & Albert Museum, 23.Q).
- 114 Morris, op cit, n102, p356.
- 115 WA Shaw, ed, *CTB, vol 20*, 1952, part 2, p18.
- 116 The National Archives, MS T 4/16, p329.
- 117 Already on 28 April 1703 the Officers of the Works had been directed by the Lord Treasurer to delay any repairs or new work until the Queen's permission had been obtained. The National Archives, MS T 29/14.
- 118 Had he lived, it seems likely that he would have been involved in the decoration of Blenheim Palace. An anonymous poem of 1704 addressed to the artist, included in the sixth volume of Dryden's *Miscellanies*, prophesies, 'Here we shall see by Verrio's pencil wrought, the numerous spoils from Swabian conquests brought.' Walpole, op cit, n74, p308. In the event the decorative painting there was carried out by Laguerre and Thornhill. The painting known as *The Apotheosis of the Duke of Marlborough* (Höchstadt Palace, Bavaria) has been attributed to Verrio. But since it contains a representation of Blenheim Palace in the background derived from an engraving in Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus*, 1715, it cannot be by Verrio.
- 119 Signed 'Ant. Vario.', c1705-06. Oil on canvas, 76.2 x 102.7 cm, from the Henniker collection, later belonging to Croft-Murray, Christie's London, Old Master Pictures, 24 April 2009 (lot 31). A Verrio half-length portrait of a General in armour, oil on canvas, 76.2 x 88.9 cm, also appeared in the Henniker sale by John D Wood & Co, 24 May 1937 (lot 1078), now unlocated. Another half-length portrait, *Sarab Centlivres, age 13, in white shirt, holding a group of flowers*, signed, inscribed and dated 1700 on the reverse, oil on canvas, 77.5 x 60.3 cm, appeared at Christie's, 30 July 1982 (lot 23), now unlocated. A 'Mr laquerres picture done by him' was among the items in 'An Inventory of Several things Left at Burghley by Sigr Verrio on November 1st, 1694' (Croft-Murray, op cit, n1, p58).
- 120 Of c1705-06. Oil on canvas, feigned oval, 76.2 x 63.5 cm, NPG inv no. 2890.
- 121 *Sir Christopher Wren*, inscribed 'Hanc Tabulam invenit & incepit Anton. Verrio. Perfecerunt Golhofredus Kneller & Jac. Thornhill Equites', c1706-1724. Oil on canvas, 233.7 x 177.8 cm.
- 122 Shaw, op cit, n115, p332.
- 123 The National Archives, MS SP 34/7 no. 4. CS Knighton, ed, *CSP Dom, Anne, Vol 4, Oct 1705-Dec 1706*, 2006, p9.
- 124 24 August 1717, *Wren Society*, VI (1929), vol 6, p78.
- 125 WA Shaw (ed), *CTB, vol 21*, 1952, part 2, 30 July 1707, p374.
- 126 *Walpole Society*, XVIII (1929-30) 'Vertue I', p61. His grave is likely to have been in St Mary's churchyard, but this cannot be proved, as the burial records between 1677 and 1720 are missing. London Metropolitan Archives, MS X099/200.
- 127 Morris, op cit, n102, p200.