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THE ELOQUENT CHILD IN RAPHAEL'S DRAWINGS

The concept of eloquence in visual and material terms was a guiding tool in the presentation of drawings by Raphael in the 2017 exhibition in Oxford, which posed the question of how the artist developed in and through drawing the rhetorical sophistication so evident in his paintings and tapestry designs[1]. His treatment of the motif of the child, sacred or secular, is a strand of his practice that merits further investigation in relation to *fantasia* and the anxieties of composition, as well as in rhetorical terms. Raphael's extraordinary artistic and social trajectory speaks not only of his exceptional talent but also of his acute understanding of the intellectual frameworks of the educated elite and his ability to fashion himself within this culture, in which cognizance of rhetoric was central[2]. His cultural sophistication and experimental or reflective practices in *disegno* are particularly evident in his approach to the motif of the child in drawing as distinct from the final painting[3]. This essay will explore certain kinds of attention that Raphael paid to the figure of the male child, who can function as a persuasive rhetorical device - a protagonist imbued with character and emotion - in relation to secular and religious themes. Further, the child or *putto* appears as an animated or impertinent motif juxtaposed with serious reflections, embodying the tussling with ideas and the critical self-awareness that is part of the process of composition. Finally, Raphael's exploration and consequent understanding of the significance of the exuberant *all'antica* child gave new licence to his spirit of inventiveness.

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[1] *Raphael: The Drawings*, exhibition catalogue by B. THOMAS and C. WHISTLER, with contributions by A. GNANN and A. ACETO, (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 1 June – 3 September 2017), Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 2017. On the rhetorical nature of Raphael's paintings and tapestries see P. RUBIN, *Raphael and the rhetoric of art*, in *Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. P. MACK, Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, 1994, pp. 165-182; K. BUTLER, *"Reddita lux est": Raphael and the Pursuit of Sacred Eloquence in Leonine Rome*, in *Artists at Court, Image-Making and Identity 1300-1550*, edited by S.J. CAMPBELL, Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2004, pp. 15-39; C. KLEINBUB, *Vision and the Visionary in Raphael,* University Park, Pennsylvania, 2011.

[2] C. WHISTLER, *Raphael, oratory and the art of drawing*, in *Raffael als Zeichner/ Raffaello disegnatore*, "Atti del Colloquio internazionale, Albertina, Vienna, in collaborazione con le Gallerie degli Uffizi, Firenze, Albertina, Vienna, 21-22 Novembre 2017", edited by M. FAIETTI and A. GNANN, Florence, Giunti, 2019, pp. 319-343.

[3] A. NESSELRATH, *Raffaels Kinder* in *Die Sixtinische Madonna. Raffaels Kultbild wird 500,* exhibition catalogue edited by A. HENNING (Dresden, Gemäldegalerie, 26 May – 26 August 2012), Munich, Prestel, 2012, pp. 58-67, explored the figure of the child notably in the Vatican *Stanze*, the *Sistine Madonna* (Dresden) and the *Madonna of Foligno* (Vatican, Pinacoteca).

In a substantial drawing in Haarlem, Raphael reprised a figural invention made for his fresco of the prophet Isaiah in Sant'Agostino in Rome in 1512 (fig. 1). He had in mind a minor decorative element, a fictive sculpture for the north wall of the Stanza di Eliodoro, yet he gave this element extraordinary consideration[4]. That this drawing was newly executed with the Stanza decoration in view is evident from indications of the shape of the fresco field, and from the vigorous initial strokes that explore the pose of the child and the position of the Medici emblems. The varied use of black chalk is striking, from the gestural freedom in placing the motif to the subtle blending of the black and white chalks to achieve luminosity and softness of texture. The rhetorical potential of the material in creating sensuous effects was exploited as Raphael brought out the character of this tender infant, who anxiously bears the heavy Medici ring and feathers. The excess of attention in terms of the preparatory function is remarkable (in fact, other *putti* in the Stanza's decoration were painted freehand over guiding incisions in the plaster). The drawing itself becomes an eloquent artefact, its accomplishment and compressed vitality testifying to Raphael's virtuosity in *disegno*. Perhaps it was intended to be viewed by friends at the papal court; the child with the Medici emblems resonates with contemporary rhetoric on the papacy of Leo X as heralding a golden age. Indeed, *putti* and *erotes* in antics deriving from the *Eikones* (*Imagines*) of Philostratus would feature prominently in Raphael-inspired designs for Leonine tapestry and other decorations, such as at the Villa Madama, with the *Giochi di putti* subjects having a particular impact in print culture[5].

In other types of studies, the child becomes an animated motif that, in a rhetorical mode of antithesis, contrasts with the principal action. In a drawing of c.1507 in Windsor, Raphael interpreted Leonardo's design of *Leda and the Swan*: the lost painting, known through copies,

[4] P. JOANNIDES, *The Drawings of Raphael with a Complete Catalogue*, Oxford, Phaidon, 1983, cat. 345; E. KNAB, E. MITSCH, K. OBERHUBER, and S. FERINO PAGDEN, *Raphael, Die Zeichnungen*, Stuttgart, Urachhaus, 1983, cat.489; WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 99. No traces of pouncing or transfer techniques are visible on this sheet.

[5] See further L. KARAFEL, *Raphael's Tapestries. The grotesques of Leo X*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2016, on Leonine imagery; T. CAMPBELL, in *Tapestry in the Renaissance. Art and Magnificence*, exhibition catalogue by T. CAMPBELL with contributions by M.W. AINSWORTH *et alii*, (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 12 March – 19 June 2002), New York, The Metropolitan Museum and New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 229-233; R. QUEDNAU, in *Raffaello in Vaticano*, exhibition catalogue edited by F. MANCINELLI (Città del Vaticano, Musei Vaticani, 16 ottobre 1984 – 16 gennaio 1985), Milan, Skira, 1984, pp. 357-363 in particular on Raphael's use of specific descriptions in Philostratus.

included Leda's twin children [6]. Having studied the main group in ink over black chalk, Raphael added a single grinning baby, improvised in ink at lower left, who seems to offer an irreverent note. In a more complex sheet in Oxford relating to the *Disputa* of c.1508-10, Raphael's principal concern was with conveying the authority and wisdom of St Paul through the powerful character of his head and the majestic, voluminous drapery[7]. In shaping the saint's form with different pressures on the charcoal, blending it with white chalk to achieve stronger expressive effects, Raphael was thinking gesturally on the dignity and theological importance of this figure – then, in a moment of exuberance, he conjured up an impudent cherub in a welter of sketchy strokes at the right. This kind of contrast of register, which aids composition and invention, is a characteristic of Raphael's drawings, as in the *Leda* study. Here it may also evoke his thinking on the character of St Paul: we know from drafts of sonnets at this time that Raphael had some knowledge of Pauline theology[8]. St Paul's insistence that divine wisdom is beyond human comprehension so that, paradoxically, one needs to be foolish in order to embrace the divine, is a salient aspect that may have sparked Raphael's juxtaposition of childish frivolity or ignorance, and saintly meditation[9].

Raphael's use of the animated child as an aid to invention and composition is evident in drawings of around 1507-8. A visually arresting sheet of studies (fig. 2) relates to his thinking on the painting of *St Catherine*, now in the National Gallery, London. The brilliance and economy of the upturned female head, drawn in a controlled, linear manner to evoke a sense of purity, contrasts with the mobile children who seem to move and turn across the sheet, like rotating sculptural models[10]. A graphic mode of intensive, untidy sketching – the Leonardesque *componimento inculto* - contrasts with the grace and *sprezzatura* of the enraptured head, which is framed by two *putti*. Raphael first loosened his hand and thoughts with stylus sketching, especially beneath the inventive studies of winged *amorini* at the right, before improvising further with the pen: the sense of *brio* that the sheet conveys is based on

[6] Windsor, Royal Collection, inv. RL12759, see THOMAS, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 25; for the relationship with Leonardo's lost painting, *Raphael and his circle*: *drawings from Windsor Castle*, exhibition catalogue by M. CLAYTON, (London, Queen's Gallery, 21 May – 10 October 1999), London, Merrill Holberton, 1999, under cat. 12.
[7] Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. WA1846.189, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 52.
[8] See B. THOMAS and C. WHISTLER, *Eloquence in Raphael Drawings*, in "Artibus et Historiae", 74, 2016, p. 25.
[9] T. MORGAN, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 2015, pp. 248, 249. The wisdom of the fool, partly deriving from interpretations of the adages of Socrates, was part of Renaissance humanist thinking.
[10] Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. WA1846.177, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 39.

an intensity of invisible sketching. The motif of the cherub who takes up almost casually the spiralling pose that Raphael had struggled to find for St Catherine seems to be a wry comment on the difficulties of invention[11]. Indeed, the other side of this sheet shows his intensive search for a solution to the challenge of representing St Catherine as an expressive, rhythmic figure.

Similarly, Raphael used the figure of the child to enact adult concerns in a composition in Christ Church where a boy in the role of a judge flanked by guards leans towards a group carrying the flailing form of another child[12]. Stylistically this comes at the time he was embroiled in the complex design process of the Baglioni altarpiece, his innovative solution stimulated by a classical relief of the *Death of Meleager*. The frieze-like design of the Christ Church drawing recalls relief sculpture. Perhaps significantly, a variation on the Meleager type in Roman sarcophagi can involve imagery where children take on the adult roles[13]. More specifically, the efforts of the boys in heaving their companion echo, with rotations and reversals, those of the adult bearers of the dead weight of Christ's body in a study for the Baglioni *Entombment* in Oxford[14]. Thus, Raphael could playfully consider his own difficulties in composition, as the children enact the struggle to carry the weight of a companion before the gazes of others.

Lively male children appear in other sheets connected with the Baglioni *Entombment*, notably on the verso of a compositional study in the British Museum (fig. 3), where Raphael was observing the form and character of shrouded dead bodies, perhaps in a mortuary, and considering the effort involved in lifting or moving a stiff corpse [15]. He added at the top a group of three *putti*, carefully arranging them to avoid the lines of the existing drawing, although one child's toes rest on a dead body. The boys' physical touching and crowding,

[11] As Carol Plazzotta suggested in *Raphael. From Urbino to Rome*, exhibition catalogue edited by H. CHAPMAN, T. HENRY and C. PLAZZOTTA (London, National Gallery, 20 October 2004 -16 January 2005), London, National Gallery, 2004, under cat. 76, with a full discussion of the verso.
[12] Oxford, Christ Church, inv. JBS 362, WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 36.
[13] See J. HUSKINSON, *Roman Children's Sarcophagi. Their Decoration and Social Significance*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, cat. 2.15 -2.18 for Roman examples of the Meleager type.
[14] Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. WA1846.173, THOMAS, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 31.
[15] London, British Museum inv. 1963,1216.1, the verso of a study in pen and ink for the *Entombment*, see JOANNIDES, *The Drawings of Raphael*, cit,.cat. 130 and OBERHUBER, *Raphael Die Zeichnungen*, cit., cat. 197.

their plump nakedness, nonchalant gazes and mischievous gestures (the ritual 'toccare le palle' to ward off evil seems to be involved) contrast with the rigidity of the shrouded adults. Their babyish vitality is the antithesis of death, again recalling how the motif of merry-making children is common in Roman sarcophagi. Raphael may have intended to take forward this new figural group elsewhere. Yet on each side of this sheet, his thoughts were on death, notably on the entombment of Christ, hence on his human and divine nature. The small child also evokes Christ's Incarnation and the mystery of Salvation. The theology of the Incarnation was of fundamental importance to Renaissance thinking, intimately related to the application of humanist studies to Christianity[16]. Raphael's reflections in drawing on the Christ Child's dual human and divine nature were fired both by contemporary devotional practices and by his sophisticated theological understanding.

As recent studies have emphasised, the Christ Child and the young St John the Baptist took on a special character in Renaissance art in terms of devotional activities[17]. Moreover, the healthy boy – the *putto felix* – had long been an integral part of domestic imagery associated with marriage and the family. At a time of high infant mortality the figure of the robust male child, armed with talismans against evil, was ubiquitous in Quattrocento imagery, such as the plump child playing games or making music in the *desco da parto*, or in other ceramic or sculptural imagery alluding to health and early education[18]. The borderline between play and devotion is a narrow one, as Christine Klapisch Zuber noted, since male dolls made as gifts to young brides for dressing and tending are sometimes identified in inventories as the Christ Child, while such *bambini* or 'holy dolls' were also owned by nuns, monks or

[16] J. O'MALLEY, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1979, pp. 137-151.
[17] See *Madonnas and Miracles. The Holy Home in Renaissance Italy*, exhibition catalogue edited by M. CORRY, D. HOWARD and M. LAVEN (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, 7 March – 4 June 2017), London, Philip Wilson, 2017, and C. KLAPISCH ZUBER, *Réalités et representation de l'enfance au Quattrocento*, in *Desiderio da Settignano*, edited by J. CONNORS, A. NOVA, B. PAOLOZZI STROZZI and G. WOLF, Venice, Marsilio, 2011, pp. 79-88.
[18] See J. MUSACCHIO, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999; C. KLAPISCH ZUBER, *Holy Dolls: Play and Piety in Florence in the Quattrocento*, in *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, edited by S. BLAKE MCHAM, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 111-112; E. MARCHETTI, *Il putto felix. Osservazioni sul tema del putto nel disegno fiorentino tra Quattro e Cinquecento*, in "Polittico", 1, 2000, pp. 39-63. On concerns for the child's health and formation, see C. GIORGETTI, *Le vesti dell'infanzia, il tempo dimenticato*, in *Doni d'amore. Donne e rituali nel Rinascimento*, exhibition catalogue edited by P. LURATI (Rancate, Pinacoteca cantonale Giovanni Züst, 12 October 2014 – 15 January 2015), Cinisello Balsamo, Silvana Editoriale, 2014, pp. 160-170; and J. KOHL, *Morals, Males and Mirrors. Some Thoughts on Busts of Boys in the Renaissance* in *Desiderio,* cit. p. 91; L. SYSON and D. THORNTON, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy,* London, British Museum Publications, 2001, pp. 61-63.

priests[19]. They would act as a focus for devotion in the home or convent where touching the *bambino* could open up thoughts and emotions while meditating on the childhood of Christ. The blessings of the Incarnation and the revelation of God as fully human were the topics of sermons and spiritual guides, with a loving empathy encouraged in devotional practices, including visualizations of affectionate intimacy between the Madonna, the *bambino* and the devotee. The *Vita Spirituale* (1491) of Suor Camilla Battista da Varano (who entered the Franciscan *clarisse* order in Urbino in 1481, moving to Santa Chiara, Camerino in 1484) attests to these practices; and a polychrome *bambinello* at Santa Chiara, attributed to Domenico Individini (c.1445-1502), is traditionally associated with her[20].

The familiar theme of the Christ Child was one that Raphael regularly confronted, exploring in drawings its human and theological significance, while considering ways of emulating and superseding the achievements of admired masters. From his early career, when he began with Umbrian formulations of a type seen in a sheet from the circle of Perugino with a repertoire of usable figures, Raphael's concern was to infuse given conventions for the Child and St John with a greater expressiveness [21]. The real-life observation and new naturalism seen in Leonardo's free sketches of squirming babies proved stimulating[22]. This mode of

[19] KLAPISCH ZUBER, *Holy Dolls*, cit., p. 111; see also Z. SARNECKA in *Madonnas and Miracles*, cit., pp. 80-81, and p. 92.

[20] KLAPISCH ZUBER, *Holy Dolls*, cit., p. 119, and LURATI in *Doni d'amore*, cit., under cat. 68, p. 204. On Suor Camilla Battista and the influence of Franciscan preaching, see G.CAPRIOTTI, in *Crivelli, Lotto, Guercino. Immagini della predicazione tra Quattrocento e Settecento*, exhibition catalogue edited by G.CAPRIOTTI and F.COLTRINARI (Loreto, Museo-Antico Tesoro della Santa Casa, 7 October 2017 – 8 April 2018), Cinsello Balsamo, Silvana Editoriale, 2017, pp. 40-41 and under cat. 16, pp. 156-158. On preaching and encouraging visualization of the life of the Holy Family, L. BOLZONI, *The Web of Images. Vernacular Preaching from its Origins to St Bernardino da Siena*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2004, pp. 156-158. See also K. A. RIVERS, *Preaching the memory of virtue and vice: memory, images and preaching in the late Middle Ages*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2010.

[21] The figure types in this sheet of c.1500 (New York, The Metropolitan Museum, Robert Lehman Collection inv. 1975.1.395, circle of Perugino and Raphael) recur in a repertoire sheet in Florence, see *Disegni umbri del Rinascimento da Perugino a Raffaello*, exhibition catalogue by S. FERINO PAGDEN (Florence, Uffizi, 16 October 1982 – 30 January 1983), Florence, Olschki 1982, cat. 32 verso (inv. 408E), tentatively attributed to Berto di Giovanni. See ACETO in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cats. 10 -12 for a discussion of Raphael's inventive development of Peruginesque models.

[22] On Leonardo's untidy sketching, see L. SYSON in *Leonardo da Vinci, painter at the court of Milan*, exhibition catalogue edited by L. SYSON, (London, National Gallery, 9 November 2011 – 5 February 2012) London, National Gallery, 2011, p. 285, under cat. 85, and C. BAMBACH, *"porre le figure disgrossatamente". The Sketches of Leonardo and the Creative Imagination*, in *Leonardo da Vinci 1452-1519. The Design of the World*, exhibition catalogue edited by P. C. MARANI and M. T. FIORIO (Milan, Palazzo Reale, 16 April – 19 July, 2015), Milan, Skira, 2015, pp. 55-61; also C. BAMBACH, *Leonardo da Vinci Rediscovered*, 4 vols, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2019, especially the discussions and related notes in Vol. I, pp. 215-222 and 429-432, and Vol. II, pp. 385-394.

rough sketching, hand and mind in tune, allowed Raphael to explore in a series of drawings the bodily connections and physical intimacies of mother and child. In a sheet in Christ Church, the feeding baby seems embedded in the Madonna's body, while in a scribbled sketch below, her protective arm moves to enclose and embrace the Child[23]. Contemplating the Incarnation involved the comprehension that God took on human nature in its many weaknesses, including the vulnerability of babyhood and its need for sustenance – hence the feeding Child or the Virgin catch the viewer's gaze to ensure this understanding[24]. On a large sheet of inventive studies in the Albertina, Raphael began with red chalk studies of tender affection, before working with the pen in a series of adaptations and rotations where the Child seems gradually to detach himself physically from his mother, learning to explore the external world[25]. Thoughts on the nature of the bond between mother and child intermingle with an awareness of the theological underpinning of this human yet sacred theme.

While his concerns were primarily with the challenges of design and composition, Raphael also used drawing as a mode of reflection that enabled him to develop the empathetic visualization that gives eloquence to his subjects. The pace of his drawing, with considered revisions to forms, accentuations of line or lightness of touch, is an index of thoughtfulness: the artist's reflections were keenly focussed on the distinct moment of the narrative and the appropriate mental states of the protagonists. Thus, in a sheet with metalpoint studies in the Louvre relating to the *Holy Family with the Palm Tree* of c.1506-7, Raphael amplified the Madonna's femininity through the reiterated curves of the forms and the drapery, asserting her nature as the mother of God[26]. The delicate modelling of the features evokes her poignant realization of the suffering that her eager son, impatient to confront the world despite her restraining hand, will necessarily undergo. In a separate male head study, a sense

[23] Christ Church, Oxford, inv. JBS 363, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat.18; see also JOANNIDES, *The Drawings of Raphael*, cit., for drawings with the Madonna feeding the Child in Bayonne (cat. 165r) and Stockholm (cat.172).

[24] On this point, see L. STEINBERG, *The Sexuality of Christ*, 2nd revised edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996, p. 47 and pp. 131-133.

[25] Vienna, Albertina, inv. 209, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 38. This sheet provided ideas for a series of Madonna and Child paintings of c.1507-1508, see A. GNANN in *Raphael*, exhibition catalogue edited by A. GNANN (Vienna, Albertina, 29 September 2017 – 7 January 2018), Munich, Hirmer, 2017, cat. 20 verso.

[26] Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. 3861, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 27.

of protective affection is conveyed through assiduous, nuanced modelling, suggesting how St Joseph too is haunted by this painful foreshadowing[27].

Portents of the future suffering of Christ can be filtered through concepts of strength, seen in domestic and public sculptures by artists such as Desiderio da Settignano or Michelangelo: Raphael similarly imagined the Child as stalwart and robust, indeed of heroic proportions, in a study in Oxford for *La Belle Jardinière*, stimulated by Michelangelo's *Bruges Madonna*[28]. The growing Child is imbued with dynamic energy in later iterations. He is drawn in athletic, turning poses, or in one striking instance, leaping joyfully towards his mother in a study for the Madonna of François I in the Uffizi (fig. 4)[29]. Although in that sheet the Child's twisting, balletic pose seems potentially problematic, even indecorous for a devotional painting, the nature of Christ as the loving bridegroom of the *Song of Songs* is in fact evoked. This reflects current theological understanding of the Child as the Infant Spouse, who, like the pagan Cupid, can pierce the heart of the devotee with sacred love or *caritas*[30].

Raphael also studied the Child and St John the Baptist as growing boys in mutual friendship, recalling domestic devotional practices. Portrait busts of little boys had become fashionable, celebrating their health, growth and the consequent confidence in family's future. The 'speaking' likeness, seen in examples such as Desiderio da Settignano's *Laughing Boy* of c.1460-64 (Vienna, Kunsthistoriches Museum) or the *Portrait of a Boy* by Guido Mazzoni of c.1498 (Windsor, Royal Collection) also testifies to the boy's ability to communicate and to reason, hence to his intellectual and spiritual formation[31]. Theories of education developed by influential humanists, with an emphasis on the health of mind and body, had been taken up

[27] See further A. ACRES, *Renaissance Invention and the Haunted Infancy*, London, Harvey Miller, 2013.
[28] Ashmolean Museum, inv. WA1855.91, THOMAS, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 37.
[29] For instance, the energetic turning Child in *Studies for the Madonna dell'Impannata*, c.1512, Berlin, inv. KdZ 2231, see GNANN, entry in *Raphael*, cit., cat. 72; for the Uffizi sheet inv. 534E, see THOMAS, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 112.
[30] See B. NEWMAN, *Love's arrows: Christ as Cupid in Late Medieval Art and Devotion*, in *The Mind's Eye. Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, edited by J.F. HAMBURGER and A-M. BOUCHÉ, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2006, pp. 263-286, on this formulation deriving from St Augustine.
[31] See J.W. CYRIL, *Dynastic Identity in Renaissance Court Life: Dynastic Privilege in Portraits of Children*, in *The Early Modern Child in Art and History*, edited by M. KNOX AVERETT, London, Pickering & Chatto, 2015, pp. 83-98. On the context of boys' education in relation to Desiderio's marble tondo of the smiling St John the Baptist and the Infant Christ, see A. LUCHS, *"Così si specchi": Speculations on Medici Patronage and Purposes for Desiderio's Louvre Tondo*, in *Desiderio*, cit., pp. 1-16.

by Leon Battista Alberti in relation to the family and its social interactions in civic culture; the boy's natural inclinations were to be encouraged by the benevolent tutor or parent[32]. The classical ideal of the *puer senex*, the well-balanced, responsible boy, provided a model for proper behaviour as a brother, son and citizen, but this was actively aided by images in the home of the Christ Child and St John. Little boys were encouraged to take the Baptist as a mirror for their own behaviour, and to appropriate the virtues seen in devotional images[33]. Raphael examined exemplary relationships of affection and education in preparatory drawings where the Child, in the company of St John, learns to walk, to read and in turn to lead: their informal interactions are often touching and charming. Such relationships recall how, in the formation of male character, laughter and play were given important roles, necessarily underlined by mutual respect and trust[34].

Thinking and reflecting in drawing affords more adventurous or experimental approaches than in painting where decorum is paramount. Raphael could consider other aspects of motherhood and childhood, such as the demanding child, as in a breezily Leonardesque study in Vienna, full of twisting energy in the forms and penwork, where he envisaged the Madonna intent on reading, her animated hand seeking to restrain her son's jumpy impatience[35]. His searching thoughts on motherhood are earlier evident in the study of *Charity* (fig. 5) as a figure besieged by exigent children - one is feeding and three others clamber over her body[36]. The assertive, sharp hatching and outlining with the pen creates harsh visual effects, accentuated by the remote, austere expression of the mother. Interestingly the drawing is far larger than the related painting in the predella of the Baglioni *Entombment*, where Raphael's striking concept was considerably modified, appearing as a

[32] For many references, see J. VITULLO, *Fashioning Fatherhood: Leon Battista Alberti's Art of Parenting*, in *Childhood in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The Results of a Paradigm Shift in the History of Mentality*, edited by A. CLASSEN, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2005, pp. 341-353; A. TÖNNESMANN, *Schüler und Schule in der Kunst der Renaissance*, in *Das Kind in der Renaissance*, edited by K. BERGDOLT, B. HAMM, and A. TÖNNESMANN, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz in Kommission, 2008, pp. 269-298 and F. LACOUTURE, *"You Will be a Man, My Son": Signs of Masculinity and Virility in Renaissance Paintings of Boys*, in *Early Modern Child*, cit., pp. 99-116.
[33] See KOHL, *Morals*, cit., on the *puer senex* and images of the Christ Child and St John the Baptist, and N.B-A DEBBY, *Predicatori, artisti e santi nella Toscana del Rinascimento*, Florence, Edifir Edizioni, 2015, pp. 57-58.
[34] Amongst many preparatory drawings, see that with the laughing St John in the Albertina, Vienna, inv. 206, WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 17; also Albertina, Vienna, inv. 207 with studies for the *Madonna of the Meadow* with the Child learning to walk encouraged by St John, THOMAS, ibid,. cat. 19; for further examples, L. MELLI, *La carezza di Giovannino: un nuovo disegno di Raffaello al Louvre*, in "Prospettiva", 130/131, 2008, pp. 183-188.
[35] Vienna, Albertina inv. 205, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 138.
[36] Vienna, Albertina inv. IV, 245, see ACETO, *Ivi*., cat. 33.

graceful, muted representation. He could pursue a different train of thought on this large sheet of paper, recalling notably Michelangelo's *Pitti Tondo*, but deploying the strident graphic mode he had employed in antique themes of battle or heroism, for example in drawings in the Ashmolean, the British Museum and Windsor[37].

It is partly because of Raphael's intense interest in classical culture - which deepened with the friendships and networks he forged in Florentine circles - that the figure of the *all'antica* child takes on new resonance in his drawings at this time. In Urbino he could appreciate the decorative qualities and impish nature of the *putto*, especially as treated in exuberant sculptural decoration throughout the Palazzo Ducale, and an early sheet includes jottings of similar animated *putti*, seated on a doorway or bearing a tondo[38]. Two highly-worked cartoon fragments in Chantilly, made c.1502-1503, of jousting children mounted on boars demonstrate Raphael's early command of a visual language of playful or boisterous themes, with courtly appeal both through potential classical references and allusions to the art of Albrecht Dürer[39]. Admiration for Mantegna, so powerfully expressed by Giovanni Santi, was pervasive and probably ensured Raphael's exposure to prints and other models that opened up new approaches to the antique for the young artist. The *Libretto Veneziano*, a compilation of dull but faithful copies after inventive and observational sheets by Raphael and others from the years around 1500, includes three studies from different angles of a Quattrocento sculptural model known as the 'Uomo della paura', deriving from an antique Marsyas prototype[40]. One of them features a contrasting element of a child in a *girello* or walking frame, inserted around the main study without interfering with it (fig. 6). This was a familiar theme in representations of the Ages of Man, since the child's first steps will ultimately lead to death, while the walking frame is also required in the last stage of helpless old age.

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[37] See JOANNIDES, *The Drawings of Raphael*, cit., respectively cat. 185, 186, 187, 188 and 189.
[38] Oxford, Ashmolean Museum inv. WA1846.147, WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 3.
[39] *Dessins italiens du musée Condé à Chantilly. II. Raphaël et son cercle*, exhibition catalogue by B. PERRONET, (Chantilly, Musée Condé, 28 February – 29 May 1997), Paris, Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1997, cat. 1, pp. 34-36. See P. BAROLSKY, *Infinite Jest. Wit and humor in Italian Renaissance art*, Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 1978, p. 6 on Quintilian's categorizations of humour, and pp. 77-98 on Raphael.
[40] P.P. BOBER and R. RUBINSTEIN, *Renaissance artists and antique sculpture*, London, Harvey Miller, 2010, cat. 30, pp. 73-74 for the antique-type model; see FERINO PAGDEN, entries in *Disegni umbri*, cit., cat.83.9 recto, 83.14 recto and 83.16 recto for studies after this model in the *Libretto*, tentatively attributed to Domenico Alfani; for further thoughts, S. FERINO PAGDEN, *Gli inizi di Raffaello disegnatore*, in *Raffaello e Urbino. La formazione giovanile e i rapporti con la città natale*, exhibition catalogue edited by L. MOCHI ONORI (Urbino, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, 4 April – 12 July 2009), Milan, Electa, 2009, pp. 93-99.

Indeed, popular devotional literature included contemplation on the first steps of Jesus[41]. The walking frame recurs in a later Raphael invention seen in drawing in Chatsworth generally attributed to Giulio Romano, where the older St Joseph leans for support on the *girello* that he has made for the Christ Child[42]. In the prototype for the *Libretto* sheet, the context is that of the antique sculpture: seemingly, Raphael used the figure of the toddler to make a playful comment on artistic education through emulation, since the child can stand for the natural and unformed as opposed to the exemplary work of art.

In Florentine circles, Raphael became friends with artists and architects such as Baccio d'Agnolo, Andrea Sansovino, his pupil Jacopo Sansovino and Giuliano da Sangallo, while Cesarino Roscetto, the Perugian goldsmith, designer and sculptor was a long-standing friend[43]. All were known for their interests in the antique, with Giuliano da Sangallo as a model to be emulated. Drawing after the antique - particularly the richness of architectural ornament, sculptural reliefs and painted *grotteschi* - and the study of the forms and vestiges of classical architecture was intensively practised. Books of drawings by artists such as Filippino Lippi, Pintoricchio or Domenico Ghirlandaio were studied and admired: for instance, Raphael copied before 1508 some of the prototypes of *all'antica* and landscape motifs found in the *Codex Escurialensis*, a compilation of drawings after the antique[44]. Doubtless his growing interest in the antique *putto* was sparked by a variety of representations viewed in drawings after sculpture or *grotteschi*, as well as by classical sculpture seen Florentine private and public collections[45]. Moreover, Raphael's active memorization of a variety of sculptural sources and his visual responsiveness to fresh stimuli

[41] See LURATI in *Doni d'amore*, cit., under cat. 77 (Polidoro da Lanciano, Vicenza Museo Civico, based on the Raphael invention) pointing to the medieval source of the *Vita Beatae Virginis Mariae et Salvatoris rhythmica*, translated into vernacular prose versions, which included descriptions of Christ learning to walk.
[42] GNANN, entry in *Raphael*, cit., cat. 130 (as Raphael) discussed the dissemination of the invention in Venetian paintings.
[43] See A. MEZZANOTTE, *Della vita e delle opere di Pietro Vanucci da Castello della Pieve, cognominato Il Perugino commentario istorico*, Perugia, Tipografia Baduel presso Vincenzio Bartelli, 1836, pp. 265-266 on Raphael's friendship with Roscetto.
[44] A. NESSELRATH, *I Libri di disegni di antichità. Tentativo di una tipologia*, in *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana*. III. *Dalla tradizione all'archeologia*, edited by S. SETTIS, Turin, Einaudi, 1986, pp. 89-147. See J. SHEARMAN, *Raphael, Rome and the Codex Escurialensis*, "Master Drawings" 15, 1977, pp. 107-146; F. MARÍAS, *El Codex Escurialensis: Problemas e incertidumbres de un libro de dibujos de antigüedades del último quattrocento*, "Reales Sitios", 163, 2005, pp. 14-35.
[45] See *Il Giardino di San Marco. Maestri e compagni del giovane Michelangelo*, exhibition catalogue by P. BAROCCHI (Florence, Casa Buonarroti, 30 June – 19 October 1992) Florence, Silvana Editoriale, 1992, for the collecting of antiquities in late Quattrocento Florence.

in Florence led to a renewed understanding of the character and significance of the antique-style child.

Based on classical sources, literary as well as visual, the antique *putto* or *amorino* was a recurring element in painting, graphic art, manuscript painting and sculpture. The connotations of the *putto* or *spiritello* in Renaissance Florence - where ideas deriving from ancient philosophical and medical theories intertwined with the conventions of courtly love - have been examined by Charles Dempsey and others[46]. No doubt Raphael was keenly aware of the meanings that had accrued around this ebullient figure, which could be seen in many guises, from highly characterised bronze figures such as Donatello's *Attis-Amor* of c.1440-43 (Florence, Bargello) or Andrea del Verocchio's *Boy with a Dolphin* of c.1465-75 (Florence, Palazzo Vecchio) to groups in relief sculpture such as the zestful dancing children in the *Cantorie* of the early 1430s by Luca della Robbia and by Donatello (Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo), or the bacchic children on the base of Donatello's *Judith* of c.1465 (Florence, Piazza della Signoria)[47]. In associating the effervescent *putto* with Aristotelian and Galenic thinking on the *pneuma* that nourish the body and generate involuntary reactions, Dempsey neatly described these Renaissance *spiritelli* as the 'essences of irresistible sensations that make the pulse beat faster'[48].

In the intensely concentrated work of searching for new inventions and then shaping them into a compelling and attractive composition, the artist like the writer works in a deeply reflective mode. Yet the artist's *fantasia* can move in unpredictable ways, and the idea of the uninhibited child - playing, tussling or wrestling - can represent the compositional struggle, or the unbidden ideas that invade the writer's thoughts. Such imagery was influenced as much by ideas associated with the Florentine *spiritello* as by the Northern Italian *all'antica*

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[46] Particularly R. KLEIN, *Spirito Peregrino*, in R. KLEIN, *Form and Meaning. Essays in Renaissance and Modern Art,* New York, Viking Press, 1979, pp. 62-85; C. DEMPSEY, *Donatello's Spiritelli*, in *Ars naturam adjuvans. Festschrift für Matthias Winner* edited by V. VON FLEMMING, Mainz, von Zabern, 1996, pp. 50-61; and C. DEMPSEY, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
[47] F. CAGLIOTI, *L'Amore-Attis di Donatello, caso esemplare d'un iconografia "d'autore"*, in *Il ritorno d'amore. L'Attis di Donatello restaurato*, exhibition catalogue edited by B. PAOLOZZI STROZZI (Florence, Bargello, 1 October 2005 – 8 January 2006), Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, 2005, pp. 31-74.
[48] DEMPSEY, *Donatello's Spiritelli*, cit., p. 60.

child, notably seen in the inventions of Mantegna, Marco Zoppo and miniature painters[49]. The '*battaglia dei pensieri*' was evoked by Dante, and images of wrestling are associated with invention and composition in classical, medieval and Renaissance thought[50]. Hence, the subversive, playful or tussling child is a constant presence in late Quattrocento manuscript decoration, epitomising humanist ideas on the waywardness of fantasy and caprice, and embodying the intrusiveness of new, spontaneous ideas. In miniature painting, the *all'antica* child enacts adult themes including fighting, while irreverent *putti*, *erotes* and satyrs clamber around antique-style structures and try to distract the scholar[51]. As recent scholarship has emphasised, the painted frontispiece was a theatre for artistic innovation, with the ubiquitous motif of the mischievous *putto* also signalling creative self-awareness. These sophisticated illustrations were viewed and admired in the *studioli* and libraries of humanists, patricians and rulers, with Padua and Venice as particularly important sites of production, although manuscripts and printed books with hand-painted illustrations circulated widely and miniaturists moved easily between Venice, Florence and Rome. The same *studioli* would also hold ancient and modern coins and medals, small antiquities and sculptures, and prints and drawings. While the irreverent images of *putti* and *erotes* partly derive from the medieval tradition of marginal *drôleries* (also intended for an elite audience), their primary

[49] See the observations of D. ERBEN, *Kinder und Putten. Zur Darstellung der "infantia" in der Frührenaissance*, in *Das Kind in der Renaissance*, cit., pp. 299-324; on the identification of child and idea, see M. RUVOLDT, *Italian Renaissance Imagery of Inspiration: Metaphors of Sex, Sleep and Dreams*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 73.

[50] See M. CARRUTHERS, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1990, pp. 194-202 on composition and tussling in classical and medieval sources; on invention and wrestling see P. BINSKI, *Villard de Honnecourt and Invention* in *Inventing a Path: Studies in Medieval Rhetoric in Honour of Mary Carruthers* (*Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 56), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012, pp. 63-79; see also DEMPSEY, *Renaissance putto*, cit., pp. 89-92. M. KEMP, *In the light of Dante. Meditations on natural and divine light in Piero della Francesca, Raphael and Michelangelo*, in *Ars naturam adjuvans* cit., pp. 160-177, explored Raphael's knowledge of Dante. See the pen study of two boys wrestling by Marcantonio Raimondi, an early work from Bologna when he worked closely with humanist patrons, Pierpont Morgan Library inv. IV 55, in *Bologna e l'umanesimo 1490-1510*, exhibition catalogue by M. FAIETTI and K. OBERHUBER (Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale, 6 March - 24 April 1988), Bologna, Nuova Alfa, 1988, pp. 63-64 and fig. 8. Raphael's studies of a sculptural group of two *putti* wrestling are reflected in copies, A. NESSELRATH, *Der Fossombroner Skizzenbuch*, London, Warburg Institute, 1993, fol. 78v.

[51] For examples of scholarly distraction by *putti* see the Venetian manuscript of the *Letters of St Jerome* c.1478-80, with illustrations attributed to the Master of the London Pliny, in *The Painted Page. Italian Renaissance Book Illustration* exhibition catalogue by J.J.G. ALEXANDER (London, Royal Academy, 27 October 1994 – 22 January 1995, and New York, The Morgan Library, 15 February – 7 May 1995), Munich, Prestel, 1994, cat. 28, and the painted illustrations of c.1484 by the Master of the Seven Virtues to Petrus de Abano, *Conciliator differentiarum philosophorum et medicorum*, Venice, 1483, *Ivi*, cat. 100. See further L. ARMSTRONG, "The Pico Master: A Venetian Miniaturist of the late Quattrocento", in *idem*, *Studies of Renaissance Miniaturists in Venice*, London, Pindar Press, 2003, II, pp. 233-338, and for illuminating perspectives, N. HERMAN, *Excavating the page: virtuosity and illusionism in Italian book illumination, 1460-1520*, in "Word and Image", 27, 2, 2011, pp. 190-211, with many references.

impetus in Raphael's time came from the antique, not least from the child sarcophagus with Dionysiac themes of playing, fighting and drunken merry-making[52].

Given that the figure of the lively child as embodying capricious or distracting thoughts - effectively configuring the materialization of ideas - was a familiar *topos* in elite circles, Raphael's drawings of children take on a new interest. Elite concerns and conversations were also his *milieu*: the artist's ambition and thirst for knowledge led him to attain considerable standing, whether in the circle of Taddeo Taddei in Florence or that of Baldassarre Castiglione in Rome. In considering drawings featuring children that stylistically belong to the time of the Baglioni *Entombment*, I would argue that, rather than connect them with a putative decorative commission, we should view them in terms of experimentation and imaginative responses to the antique. Raphael's brash, uninhibited *putti* are protagonists who enact light-hearted dramas, mirroring the emotions or the anxieties of the artist who is himself grappling with serious subjects (see fig. 3). In a sheet in Oxford, Raphael employed the same mode of open hatching as in preparatory studies for the *Entombment*, juxtaposing children's games with thoughts on mortality[53]. He composed in an additive manner, beginning with a central group of pushing and pulling children, who play with a small animal. He then framed this group with contrasting figures of boys with baskets; he added variety with further child protagonists, then inserted an observer at the right, a girl holding a child. Raphael's thoughts in drawing the girl and, finally, the motifs of acanthus leaves above, may have gone to the well-known story from Vitruvius on the origins of the Corinthian order[54]. This order imitates the slender form of a young maiden, but the capital was invented when the sculptor Callimachus saw on the funeral monument of a recently married girl, a votive basket where acanthus leaves had grown through the woven sides. In a drawing of the same period in Vienna (fig. 7), Raphael sketched lightly in black chalk,

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[52] See M. CAMILLE, *Image on the Edge. The Margins of Medieval Art*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. 11-55; for historiographical approaches and a reading in rhetorical terms, J. WIRTH, *Les marges à drolleries des manuscrits gothiques*, Geneva, Droz, 2008. A fundamental study is L. ARMSTRONG, *Renaissance Miniature Painters & Classical Imagery*, London, Harvey Miller, 1981. On the variety of Dionysiac themes in the child sarcophagus, HUSKINSON, *Roman Children's Sarcophagi*, cit., especially pp. 86-109, and P. KRANZ, *Die stadtrömischen Eroten-Sarkophage*, I, *Dionysische Themen*, Berlin, Gebr. Mann, 1995, cat. 32, 46, 82, 121 and 125.

[53] Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. WA1846.169, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 35.

[54] J. ONIANS, *Bearers of Meaning.The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988 p. 19.

creating separate groups that probably derive from motifs in Roman child sarcophagi[55]. An inventive sheet, this reveals explorations of contrasting motifs as boys embrace, grapple, twist, sleep, or play in a relaxed mode (with moments of impatience as Raphael cancelled out part of the grappling group at the right). Recollections of other inventions recur, such as a whirling boy in the centre who previously appeared on a sheet with studies of the Virgin and Child in Vienna, or a chubby-faced baby at upper right, a reprise of the impudent baby in the Windsor study of *Leda*[56]. Again, Raphael was exploiting the licence endowed by antique art as a way of releasing new ideas; in sarcophagi with children's games and bacchic celebrations, the child is associated with Dionysus, who had been killed and was reborn. Later, in a similar spirit, Michelangelo would incorporate in his *Bacchanal of Children* at Windsor allusions to Raphael's Baglioni *Entombment*, while a sheet in Bayonne with the older artist's thinking on childish bacchic revelry includes on the verso ideas for a *Lamentation*[57]. The association of inventiveness with antique art and with the male child is fully represented in a drawing of c. 1512-17 by the Master of the Oxford Album, where a group of *putti* is placed in the Mausoleum of Sta Costanza[58]. Here, in imagery taken from sarcophagi (including the same motif of embracing boys that Raphael used in the Albertina sheet, fig. 7) the children dramatize the nature of *fantasia* through wrestling, embracing and playing with little *girandole* or windmills, which can signify folly and frivolity[59].

In Rome, as Raphael deepened his understanding and knowledge of the antique, his absorption of the dynamic energy inherent in classical art and literature emerges in brainstorming drawings of *putti* such as a double-sided sheet in the Uffizi with architectural

[55] Vienna, Albertina inv. 246, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 34.
[56] The whirling boy appears in Vienna, Albertina, inv. 206, see WHISTLER, *Ivi*, cat. 17; for the Leda sheet, see note 6 above.
[57] See A. NAGEL, *Michelangelo and the Reform of Art*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p.161, and M. CLAYTON in *The Art of Italy in the Royal Collection: Renaissance and Baroque*, exhibition catalogue by M. CLAYTON and L. WHITAKER (London, Queen's Gallery, 30 March 2007 – 20 January 2008), London, Royal Collection Publications, 2007, under cat. 20.
[58] Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, inv. WA1935.69.16, fol. 15 verso, see V. CAFÀ, *I disegni di architettura del taccuino KP668 dell'Ashmolean Museum di Oxford*, in "Annali di Architettura", 14, 2002, cat. 31, pp. 149-150 and pl. XIX, p. 147.
[59] E. LANGMUIR, *Imagining Childhood*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2006, especially pp.138-142. For insights into Dürer's concerns about invention and unbridled *fantasia*, see P. PARSHALL, *Graphic Knowledge: Albrecht Dürer and the Imagination*, in "Art Bulletin", 95, 2013, pp. 292-410.

studies relating to his work for Agostino Chigi (fig. 8)[60]. In sketching with sharpened black chalk, Raphael searched three times over for the motif of a boy, crouching or standing legs apart, who struggles with a large bird: these free-wheeling thoughts have an air of excitement. In a change of technique, he took up the pen laden with ink to pursue a different motif of a laughing, kicking child riding a sea-monster with a thick tail and open mouth. On the verso, this Leonardesque brainstorming continued, overlapping existing architectural designs in red chalk, as Raphael fired off ideas for children riding on an urn, delving into his memory for recollections of earlier inventions (such as the motif seen on fig. 2). His idea on the recto of the boy with the bird took further shape in a red chalk sketch in the British Museum, as he brilliantly responded to an antique sculptural prototype with looping gestures and instantaneous revisions in the drawing[61].

The sense of almost primal energy that is conveyed by the vitality of Raphael's inventive sketches in his career in Rome recalls the association of the disruptive child with *fantasia* and the materialization of the idea. These concepts derive from classical sources, and Raphael's profound engagement with the antique had a transformative effect in his Roman years. Significantly, this engagement generated new thoughts on the nature of *disegno* in its power to resurrect the past, as articulated in the *Letter to Leo X*, which he composed with Baldessarre Castiglione[62]. This chimes with the language of rebirth and revivification that characterised Leonine Rome, which was interwoven with a sophisticated culture of performance[63]. From the dynamics of Raphael's collaborative understanding of the antique came new types of artistic production, whether the ambitious Villa Madama project or the *all'antica* decoration in fresco and stucco of the Vatican Logge[64]. The figure of the male child, *amorino* or *putto* takes on a particular rhetorical charge in Raphael's drawings, whether in elaborate figurations such as the tender child with the Medici emblems, adventurous

[60] Florence, Gallerie degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe, inv. 1474E, see S. FERINO PAGDEN, *I disegni*, in *Raffaello a Firenze. Dipinti e disegni delle collezioni fiorentine*, exhibition catalogue edited by C. MARMUGI (Florence, Palazzo Pitti, 11 January – 29 April 1984), Florence, Electa, 1984, cat. 19, pp. 314-316.
[61] London, British Museum inv. 1868,0808.3180, see WHISTLER, entry in *Raphael: The Drawings*, cit., cat. 91.
[62] See now F.P. DI TEODORO, *"Lettera a Leone X" di Raffaello e Baldassare Castiglione*, Florence, Leo S. Olschki, 2020.
[63] Y. ELET, *Architectural Invention in Renaissance Rome: artists, humanists and the planning of Raphael's Villa Madama*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017.
[64] Antique sarcophagi with children were also found in the territory around the Villa Madama, see R. LEFEVRE, *Villa Madama*, Rome, Editalia, 1973, p. 266; BOBER and RUBENSTEIN, *Renaissance artists*, cit., cat. 53, pp. 100-101, and fig. 53b.

concepts such as the leaping Christ Child in the Uffizi sheet, or the fizzing inventiveness of the boys with birds and sea-creatures discussed above. The artist's creative struggles and compositional anxieties could be defused by deploying the irreverent *putto* in sketches that might unlock fresh ideas. Owing to the nature of drawing as a mode of thinking and discovering through a gestural process, Raphael was able to explore the human character and metaphorical or theological significance of the sacred or secular child in ways that move well beyond what painting can afford. Above all, the inventive licence and dynamism epitomised by the male child that Raphael distilled from classical visual sources provided him with a kind of creative adrenalin that infuses his drawings with verve and eloquence.