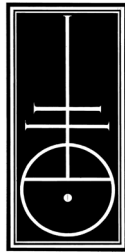


VISIBLE SPIRIT  
THE ART OF  
GIANLORENZO BERNINI

VOL. I

IRVING LAVIN



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## I

**Review of Rudolf Wittkower, *Gian Lorenzo Bernini, The Sculptor of the Roman Baroque*\***

THE modern Bernini revival may be said to date from a great exhibition of his work held in Rome at the turn of the present century. On that occasion Stanislau Frascetti, a Venturi disciple, produced the weighty volume which has remained fundamental to Bernini research ever since. The quantities of documentary and broadly historical data the work contains, however, do not disguise a pervasive flaw; Frascetti rather disapproved of Bernini's art, or at least his perception of it was obscured by the lingering theoretical prejudices of an earlier age. This was the objection raised, and probably somewhat overstated, by the great Riegl, whose lectures on Baldinucci's *Vita*, published posthumously, reflect a much deeper and more sympathetic insight.

In the rich bibliography on Bernini which has accumulated since that time, two contributions are outstanding. Years of meticulous labour in the labyrinthine archives of Rome, actually only begun and never wholly published, resulted ultimately (1927, 1931) in the *Kunsttätigkeit unter Urban VIII* of Oskar Pollak. Devoted entirely to the documents of artistic production in Rome under Urban VIII, these two volumes provided the historian of Roman Baroque art, and of Bernini in particular, with a foundation in fact of paradigmatic breadth and reliability. The second major event was the joint publication in 1931 by Professor Wittkower, who had participated in the edition of Pollak's material, and Heinrich Brauer, of Bernini's sizeable

\* Review of Rudolf Wittkower, *Gian Lorenzo Bernini: The Sculptor of the Roman Baroque*, New York, Phaidon, 1955, pp. 255, 107, Figs., 122 Pls.

legacy of drawings. In addition to presenting much new material, both visual and documentary, this was the first really comprehensive attempt to understand Bernini's art through the medium of his preparatory studies.

Professor Wittkower's new monograph on Bernini's sculpture thus appears against a somewhat lopsided historiographical setting. For while considerable development was taking place on the Continent, Bernini had hardly been introduced to the English-speaking public, scholarly or otherwise. One cause of this situation, and a formidable obstacle in the way of its correction, was the traditional Anglo-Saxon penchant for reticence and understatement in aesthetic matters; a laudable sentiment in some respects perhaps, but profoundly unberninesque. To meet the challenge, a neat summary and sound exposition, in English, was very much in order. It required — however, an author possessing at least one very special characteristic — absolute mastery of the truly formidable body of available information. Needless to say, such individuals are exceedingly rare; indeed, Wittkower may well be the only living example. Publication of any work by Wittkower has come to be recognized as an important event in the realm of art history. All factors have combined to make this especially true on the present occasion.

The book's arrangement follows a pattern by now well-established in the Phaidon monographs. There is a brief text, a more elaborate *catalogue raisonné*, and a copious body of illustrations which includes large plates as well as smaller supplementary figures.

The text is barely forty-three pages long; when we consider that it has to interpret the sculptural production of an artist whose career covered two generations, the extraordinary difficulties of the undertaking become apparent. The author has chosen to divide the material into typological groups, such as religious imagery; tombs and chapels, etc., which are discussed in a total of seven chapters. The reader is thereby spared the flood of monuments with which he would be faced in a purely chronological treatment; such a treatment would only mislead him in any case, since simultaneous undertakings, often widely divergent in character, were the rule rather than the exception in Bernini's studio. But most important, the typological plan illustrates the constancy of certain kinds of problems throughout Bernini's development. And since Wittkower conceives of Bernini as the great revolutionary, the destroyer of barriers *par excellence*, he can the more readily describe which barriers were destroyed in each category, and by what means. His formal analyses are confined mainly to the 'first'

level of visual experience, dipping only when necessary into the infinite subtleties that lie beneath. He is thus ever-cognizant of the uninitiated, for whom he also defines with refreshing lucidity the peculiar visual and ideological terms in which Bernini's art must be understood.

The first chapter concerns Bernini's *juvenilia*. Discussion of these works is always crucial, since in them Bernini perpetrated his very first revolution; namely, that of resurrecting, before he was twenty-five, the entire moribund tradition of Roman sculpture. The need for a new general account of Bernini's youthful development has been rendered urgent in recent years by the researches of Italo Faldi, in the Borghese collection of the Vatican's Archivio Segreto; these findings have necessitated several conspicuous modifications in the canonical chronology of the Borghese figures. The most notable change involves the *David*; instead of 1619, as had been thought since Venturi's day, it must actually have been made *ca.* 1623, and thus comes after rather than before the *Rape of Proserpine*. The *Apollo and Daphne*, moreover, is not several years after the *David*, but contemporary with it, begun before and finished afterward. Once the point has been made, it becomes difficult to see how the *Pluto and Proserpine* could ever have been considered later than the *David*, so natural is the development in the opposite direction. Indeed, the entire evolution represented by the Borghese sculptures becomes much more meaningful, a fact which emerges clearly from Professor Wittkower's account.

Bernini advanced during this period with prodigious rapidity. In the few years that separate the *Aeneas and Anchises* from the *Rape of Proserpine*, he had already fought and won a major engagement. 'Accurate realistic observation and genuine classical influence subordinated to Annibale's disciplined interpretation of the antique — that was the formula by which Bernini rid his style of the last vestiges of Mannerism'. A certain optimum is reached almost immediately thereafter in the *David*, where the thin but impenetrable veil of consciousness that had separated representation from reality falls, and the two worlds freely intermingle. This quality is less pronounced in the *Apollo and Daphne*, (initiated, be it remembered, before the *David*), but is replaced by a keener penetration of 'psychophysical' dynamics which contrasts with the classicizing abstraction of the whole, and points unmistakably into the future. Wittkower summarizes Bernini's achievements in these early works in one splendid sentence which bespeaks the essence of his own contributions during a lifetime of thought, as well as the insights gained by a major segment of art-historical endeavour during the past fifty years (p. 8).

Bernini's figures of religious subjects are considered in the following chapter. His effort in this area involved primarily an adaptation of the dynamic energy and external focus attained earlier to the problems of spiritual expressiveness. At first individually, as in the *St. Bibiana* and *St. Longinus*, and then in complementary pairs, like *Daniel* and *Habakkuk*, *Mary Magdalene* and *St. Jerome*, Bernini contrasts the varieties of religious experience that were as categories inherent in the Baroque mentality. 'Herein seems to lie the secret of Bernini's spectacular success: it is through emotional identification with the mood symbolized in a figure that the faithful are led to submit to the ethos of the triumphant Counter-Reformation'. In every case Wittkower explores the means whereby this effect of empathetical association is produced. He also demonstrates, in discussing the *Beata Lodovica Albertoni*, the changes that took place with Bernini's late development. Whereas the mature works are constructed primarily with diagonals, the dominating system here is one of verticals and horizontals. This principle Wittkower considers to be essentially classical, and he connects it with a general turn toward the austere and classical in several of the major Baroque artists around 1660.

The chapter on Bernini's portraits, together with the related entries in the catalogue, may easily constitute the most enduring scholarly contribution in the book. Nowhere better than in his portraits did Bernini reveal himself the archenemy of tradition's 'injunctions'. Yet, the subject has long cried for adequate treatment. Wittkower discusses incisively the critical development that occurs at the period of the *Longinus*, in the portraits of Scipione Borghese and Costanze Bonarelli. Here Bernini formulates that expansive, extroverted type which astounds by the immediacy of its contact, and catches the entire age in a moment unawares. Once achieved, this uncanny spontaneity was never lost, animating the Baker and Orsini busts in the teeth of studio assistance and a certain tendency to abstraction and planar simplification. Even these were but an overture to the *concerti grossi* Bernini fashioned in the portraits of Francesco I d'Este and Louis XIV. Less momentary perhaps, but more monumental and grandiose, they fully realize Bernini's unique conception of the 'general cause vested in a great and powerful personality'.

The basic problem arising in connection with Bernini's work for St. Peter's, discussed in the next chapter, is the extent to which the ultimate results were the product of a unified preconceived plan. Probably there will never be a precise answer to this question, since available evidence is con-



flicting. Two things are certain, however: that a complete transformation of the whole complex was envisaged from the outset, and that Bernini succeeded in harmonizing the disparate contributions of a host of enterprises which date back as far as the fifteenth century. To convey a sense of this unity, Wittkower turns *cicerone* and takes the reader on a tour that begins at the east side of the Tiber and ends before the vast, culminating spectacle of the *Cattedra Petri*. He creates a series of images filled with nostalgia for those who have been there, and envy for those who may have tried to verbalize their impressions in a few short sentences. The *Cattedra Petri* climaxes the whole, he emphasizes, through a complete fusion of colours, materials, and levels of relief; this fusion serves one overwhelming purpose, that of drawing the observer inexorably into a 'world which he shares with saints and angels'.

In his chapels, which are treated in the fifth chapter, Bernini's primary effort again was to eliminate arbitrary visual and spiritual impediments that hinder the spectator's participation in the event portrayed. In the Cornaro chapel, for example, he establishes at least three realms of existence: members of the Cornaro family who appear in loges at the chapel's sides, a very literal depiction of St. Theresa's vision as she herself described it, and the glory of angels above. Bernini then proceeds by every possible means, including a concealed source of light, to interrelate these three realities so that the worshiper can communicate directly with personages whose orders of being are higher than his own. Naturally, the experience would be most effective when all the attendant circumstances could be controlled. And Wittkower points out that in each of the three churches which Bernini designed in their entirety (S. Tommaso at Castelgandolfo, the Assumption at Ariccia, and S. Andrea al Quirinale), the entire structure, including its decoration, is subordinated to a single religio-dramatic event.

In another remarkable paragraph Wittkower definitively annihilates the banal connotation of 'theatricalism' which often accompanies the traditional association of Bernini's style with the Baroque stage. He explains the community of means, the community of effects and above all, the community of purpose that properly define a relationship to the theatre (in which field Bernini was no less astonishing a creator than in sculpture).

With certain exceptions, the contributions of Mannerist principles are most strongly felt in the fountains and monuments, which are the subject of the following chapter. The naturalistic *bizzarerie* of sixteenth century garden sculpture supplied the essential freedom and even some of the motifs

which Bernini monumentalized and placed on public view in the streets and piazzas of Rome. The real achievement, however, Wittkower once more finds in the reconciliation of elements normally incompatible. He shows how the movement, even the sound, of water unites in an integral whole with solid travertine and marble; and how, in the Four Rivers fountain, extremely naturalistic forms are used to represent a seemingly impossible static situation, creating thereby an impression which has at once the reality and unreality of a dream.

The last chapter deals with three of the broader problems that help to complete the outline of Bernini's development. The story of Bernini and his period is ultimately a simple one — by and large he created the period in his own image. Throughout his life, outside influences were more a matter of convenience than of necessity. Even the brief fall from favour during the early years of Innocent X's reign brought, as Wittkower observes, many of the purest expressions of Bernini's personal artistic manifesto. Analysis of the functional composition of Bernini's studio reveals his administrative genius and the extent of advanced preparation which he lavished on those commissions that called for it. Nearly every member of the shop lent a hand in the tomb of Alexander VII, for instance; yet it has all the cohesion of a personally executed work. And unless he chose to relax his grip, Bernini was able to maintain this homogeneity despite the diversity of talent he employed. A separate study would be very useful here: as an aid in distinguishing the work of Bernini's own hand from that of his assistants, as a clarification of the channels through which Bernini's style was transmitted throughout Europe, and for an understanding of the progressive dissolution of the unity which Bernini created into the basic tendencies that evolved in the eighteenth century. Bernini's theory, such as it is, generally shows him steeped in the traditions of the Renaissance; yet elements of a more personal view also appear here and there in the sources. Wittkower rightly stresses that it is an error to consider the two attitudes incompatible. On the contrary, they complement one another, and both are indispensable in the procedure that underlay the final product.

The *catalogue raisonné*, finally, gives a complete picture of Bernini's work in sculpture. Considering the wealth of material at hand, it is a model of abridgement and clarity, and will provide an ideal point of reference for those who wish to delve further into Bernini's art. A great deal of new information is included, as are several new monuments, while a number of works receive more accurate dates than heretofore. The whole is supple-

mented by a chronological chart, which allows a most welcome bird's-eye view of the full range of Bernini's production.

A publication of this sort must discharge two obligations before all others. The brief text should be palatable to a very wide audience, while the catalogue, although longer, must deal with the minutiae of the subject. The region that lies between, which is the natural purview of interpretive art history, suffers perforce from neglect. Certainly no space can be given over to controversy or conjecture, which to many will seem little enough cause for regret. Besides, the work already wears two hats; a third would hardly be appropriate.

The condition is aggravated, however, by the very organization of the text. The typological plan, although it has the important advantages we noted above, inevitably sacrifices a sense of over-all developmental continuity. The reader must build a synthesis from isolated remarks dispersed here and there in the text. A summary does run through pp. 37–39; but as it is very brief, the author regrettably was forced to stint on several problems and to omit others altogether. Accordingly, the remarks which follow are offered to orient those who are not fully acquainted with the implications of some of Wittkower's views, and to recommend caution at certain points where the line between simplification and oversimplification may seem perilously tenuous.

We suspect, for example, that Bernini's art did not develop in quite so complete a vacuum with respect to his contemporaries and immediate predecessors as Wittkower's account might suggest. It is true that Mariani, Maderna, even Mochi, and others, are of interest now only to specialists in the field of Baroque sculpture; yet Bernini was certainly a specialist in the field, if nothing else. We mention only artists who were active at one time or another in Rome; those working in other centres may also have been significant, as Longhi suggested long ago. In the past, Wittkower himself has contributed much to our knowledge of these individuals, and he does make generic references to Giovanni Bologna and Mannerism here; but the maze of sixteenth and early seventeenth century traditions, in and out of Rome, is still far from sufficiently explored to permit final conclusions. The same is largely true of painting. Wittkower recognizes, along with antiquity, the importance of Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni and Caravaggio for the early work; on the other hand, Bernini's continuing relationship to the painting of his own and previous generations receives little or no consideration. Such a relationship must have existed, although

here again it might be premature to attempt a conclusive definition. Great things were going on in this sphere throughout Bernini's lifetime. It would be misleading to imply that he was unaware of them as regards his technique, his decorative schemes, and even certain of his individual figures. Caravaggio poses a further problem. His influence evidently goes much beyond the early physiognomical studies. While the two artists of course achieve very different results, the intense 'realism' directed toward inducing an immediate emotional rapport between the spectator and the subject represented is common to them both. Moreover, the extremely suggestive religious associations which Walter Friedlaender has recently found in Caravaggio's art may indicate that considerable refinement is possible in our understanding of Bernini's response to the 'fervent mysticism' of Loyola and the Jesuits.

In any case it is certain that Bernini's development was exceedingly complex. And the addition to his earliest oeuvre of the *St. Sebastian* in Lugano and the *St. Lawrence* in Florence occasions a curious situation which Wittkower does not discuss. In certain important respects these works contain fewer Mannerist or 'Maniera' features than do the *Aeneas and Anchises* or even the *Pluto and Proserpine* which come later in Wittkower's chronology. The question has at least enough substance for one recent critic to postulate, indeed, that Bernini fell under his father's influence in the *Aeneas and Anchises*, after he had already broken away from it in the *St. Sebastian* and *St. Lawrence*;<sup>1</sup> not an impossible arrangement, but rather uncomfortable and in need of elucidation. Although elimination or even redating of the works may not be justified, we should wish to have Wittkower's views on the topic.

A kindred difficulty occurs with the decidedly 'classical' trend in Bernini's development during the 1630s, witnessed by such monuments as that of Countess Matilda and the early stage of the *Pasce Oves Meas*. Bernini may indeed have been making certain 'concessions to a prevailing taste for classicism' (p. 37), but whether this alone suffices as an explanation of the phenomenon appears open to debate. In the first place there is the indubitable fact that classical (antique) art never ceased to be an inspiration. Moreover, it will be recalled that a work of such another stamp as the Bonarelli bust was executed during precisely the same period. Evidently, the

<sup>1</sup> Faldi, *Galleria Borghese, Le sculture dal secolo XVI al XIX*, Rome, 1954, p. 28.

interpretation of Bernini's entire development is involved, rather than merely a single phase having political implications. Perhaps it is only a matter of degree; in which case, however, it would seem all the more important to evaluate other hypotheses, such as those suggested by Bernini's conception of the appropriateness of form to content (to which the sources testify and Wittkower himself alludes when analysing the *St. Bibiana*, p. 9). Arguments could be found, for example, for an alternative of styles, or even a kind of stylistic continuum different aspects of which could be emphasized for different purposes. Probably the subject cannot be resolved apart from a consideration of Bernini's architecture, in itself and as it relates to his sculpture; but here we begin to detect a vicious circle.

Discussion seems warranted by Wittkower's designation of Bernini's late style, i.e. after 1660, as 'classical' and related to a similar development in the production of other artists of the period. To begin with, we fear that some confusion may arise from using the same word to describe a work like the *Beata Lodovica Albertoni*, as the Countess Matilda monument, for example. Superficially at least, quite dissimilar styles are represented. There is of course a common ground; and it is sufficiently evident to reveal Wittkower's meaning to a trained art historian, whether or not he agrees that one name is applicable in both contexts. But we must sympathize with the consternation of the 'general reader', who may not share with us the benefits of an imprecise vocabulary.

Vocabulary aside, however, the author aptly stresses the basic differences between mature works and late works such as the busts of Francesco I and Louis XIV, the *St. Theresa* and the *Beata Lodovica*; he has utterly absolved them from the taint of repetitiousness with which they have too often been slandered. And doubtless a tendency toward horizontals and verticals is among the more important distinctions. Yet it seems intended to provide a stabilizing element beneath other changes in the treatment of form itself which are possibly more important, and surely less susceptible to the term 'classical'. For the increased geometry of the underlying system was the necessary complement in the late style to a more radical dissolution of mass, wherein the marble is valued less for its volume than as the creator of patterns of light and dark. The question becomes one of determining which constituent of the style merits greater emphasis, and the decision we make is of some consequence. Pevsner also has found a marked turn around the same period in Italian painting, akin to this dissolution of form, however,

rather than Wittkower's change in structure, and moving in a very different direction from that of classicism'.<sup>2</sup>

In the catalogue, as we have noted, the detailed entries on portraits are particularly valuable. The multitude of objects of this type blessed with Bernini's name in museums and collections throughout the world make for a perplexing state of affairs, which Wittkower has done much to clarify. Indeed, a number of recent efforts to connect existing monuments with statements in the sources have yielded gratifying results. We should maintain only a few reservations as to the extent of the master's participation. For example, the animated countenance of the early bust of Urban VIII in the Barberini collection (cat. no. 19, I, Pl. 32) indicates that Bernini was in the vicinity; but the expression itself has a trace of fatuousness, hardly compatible with his later conception of that magnificent Pope. Moreover, the somewhat textureless skin and vapid eyes recall the portrait of Urban without cap in S. Lorenzo in Fonte (cat. no. 19, 1a, Fig. 16), where Wittkower recognizes the hand of Giulio Finelli. The bust of Francesco Barberini now in Washington (cat. no. 24a, Fig. 27), while it has a finely structured head, is uneven technically and somehow lacks the expressive imaginativeness of works entirely by Bernini. The Doria portrait of Innocent X (cat. no., 51, 2, Pl. 79) employs one of Bernini's devices for vitalizing the lower portions of his busts. He may therefore have been responsible for the basic design, and perhaps certain areas of the surface as well. Otherwise, the effect seems too bland, especially for a product of the later 1640s. Works such as these, despite unusual qualities and excellent references, cannot be equated with Bernini's best portrayals. It must be said in general, however, that a liberal policy in this realm is probably much the wisest until more extensive studies have been made of the individual members of Bernini's studio.

A later bust of Urban VIII in the Barberini collection (cat. no. 19, 2a, Pl. 35, Fig. 17), on the other hand, is an extremely moving characterization, though here exception may be taken to Wittkower's suggested dating (about 1630). One of the two related bronze casts (in Camerino) is documented 1643; and since the execution, the mood and age of the sitter are all closely linked to the bust of Urban in Spoleto (1640–1642), there is no

<sup>2</sup> *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, VIII, 1932, pp. 69 ff.

compelling reason to assume that the marble original and the other bronze (Vatican Library) were produced more than a decade before.<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the composition of *Time discovering Truth*, of which only the figure of Truth was executed, it is often overlooked that the two descriptions we have of Bernini's intentions directly contradict each other. The earlier, and evidently the correct version, is contained in a letter of November 30, 1652, from Gemignano Poggi to Francesco I of Modena, where it is reported that Time was to be flying above to unveil Truth, who lay upon a rock (Fraschetti, p. 172). Years later, on the other hand, Bernini himself told Louis XIV that Time was to carry Truth up to the heavens (Chantelou, ed. Lalanne, p. 116). The former situation is found, roughly, in a sketch in Leipzig (Brauer-Wittkower, Pl. 20) and is implied in the work that has come down to us, though that particular drawing may not actually be a study for it. The arrangement Bernini describes, however, reverts essentially to the way in which the subject had been represented by painters in the first half of the century. In this fashion, for example, Domenichino had depicted *Time unveiling Truth* on the Apollo ceiling of the Palazzo Costaguti (ca. 1615, cf. L. Serra, *Domenichino*, Fig. 43). Also interesting is the canvas for a ceiling in Richelieu's palace executed by Poussin shortly before he left Paris in 1642 (cf. Grautoff, *Poussin*, II, Pl. 106). Presumably Bernini knew of the composition, and it may well have influenced the false and rather fantastic account of his own work that he gave to the French king.

Wittkower's interpretation of the documents pertaining to the Ponte Sant'Angelo is ingenious. The problem centres upon four statues, two now in S. Andrea delle Fratte by Bernini himself, and two 'copies' which stand on the bridge. Wittkower makes a virtue of necessity in reconciling the usually reliable sources (Baldinucci and Domenico Bernini) which report that Bernini was surreptitiously responsible for a second version of the *Angel with the Inscription*, with the preserved payment to Giulio Cartari for that figure. We must assume that on two occasions artists were paid the full complement of 700 scudi (which the other sculptors received for their figures entire) for merely preparing the marble, which Bernini then finished. Yet this hypothesis does less violence than most to a perverse group of facts for which no consistent theory seems able to give a fully satisfying

<sup>3</sup> Cf. V. Martintelli, *Studi romani*, III, I, 1955, p. 46; further to Bernini portraiture, *idem*, 'I busti berniniani di Paolo V, Gregorio XV e Clemente X', III, 6, 1955, pp. 647-666.



explanation. Moreover, the main conclusion of Wittkower's argument, that the *Angel with the Inscription* now on the bridge is ultimately a separate creation of Bernini himself, is undoubtedly true. However, the basic chronology presents a problem which should be considered.

I would find it hard to believe that the *Angel with the Inscription* on the bridge is actually a later conception than the one in S. Andrea. The similarity to its partner in disposition of both drapery and legs is inimical to the fundamental principles of differentiation that Bernini arrived at in the S. Andrea figures only after much experimentation. The design seems rather to be an offshoot from an earlier stage in the development, analogous to the composition which Bernini had provided for Lazzaro Morelli's *Angel with the Scourge*. It may be questioned whether any light can be shed on this paradoxical relation between 'first' and 'second' versions. The essential data are as follows:

1. November 11, 1667. Funds are set aside for redecoration of the bridge.
2. July, 28, 1668. The Pope inspects the angels in Bernini's studio.
3. July 12, 1669. Paolo Naldini is paid for his copy of the *Angel with the Crown*.
4. September 11, 1669. Bernini is paid for one of his angels (Fraschetti, p. 370, no. 11, a document not mentioned by Wittkower).
5. November 13, 1669. Giulio Cartari is paid for his 'copy' of the *Angel with the Inscription* (Wittkower considers that he only prepared the marble).
6. December 1, 1669. Paolo Bernini is referred to as having executed one of the original angels now in S. Andrea.
7. September 11, 1670, Paolo Bernini is paid, presumably for the same angel as in no. 6 (also preparation of the marble in Wittkower's view).
8. October 28, 1671. Bernini is reported as having 'finally resolved to finish his angel'.

Perhaps the most puzzling document is no. 7, which, granting Wittkower's assumptions, would suggest that Paolo Bernini prepared the marble for an original angel as one of the latest steps in the operations. If, as seems most likely for a number of reasons, this payment refers to the original *Angel with the Inscription*, it would follow that the preparation of



that figure was completed only *after* both the copy (doc. no. 3) and the original (doc. no. 4) of the *Angel with the Crown* had been finished, and even after Cartari had prepared the second version of *Angel with the Inscription* (doc. no. 5). This would make it entirely understandable, chronologically speaking, that the Cartari-Bernini substitute should include features which are antecedent to Bernini's final solution for the pair. In any case, it appears that both substitutes were begun before their respective originals were finished. Indeed one begins to wonder how seriously it was ever intended to mount Bernini's angels on the bridge, at least in their present form. They are so highly finished, much more so than the other figures on the bridge, as to raise *a priori* the doubt that Bernini would have gone so far at a time when he was still expecting them to be placed in the open.

The book is practically free of minor errors or omissions, as far as this reviewer can judge. Worth mentioning perhaps are only the fact that the fragmentary terracotta head in a Roman private collection (cat. no. 18, p. 184), originally published as being for the *Daphne* (Colasanti, *Bollettino d'arte*, III, 1923/4, pp. 416 ff.), is actually related to the head of *Proserpine* (indicated by the tears, *ibid.*, Fig. p. 418, printed in reverse; E. Zocca, *Arti figurative*, 1, 1945, p. 158); and that Bernini's designs for the fountains at Sassuolo, carried out by Raggi in part, are rather precisely datable, August 1652 (cat. no. 80, 6, p. 243; *cf.* Fraschetti, p. 229, n. 2 and 3).

A word must be said concerning the illustrations. With 122 full-size plates and 98 supporting illustrations inserted into the catalogue, the work gives one of the richest visual documentations of Bernini's sculpture presently available. The publishers rendered noble service by having made a goodly number of new photographs; these on the whole are excellent, and contribute substantially to an illustrational problem which, as everybody recognizes, only a corpus of several volumes could adequately solve. The details especially are striking (e.g. Pls. 6, 39, 53, 88, 114), and exploit with real sensitivity Bernini's textural and chiaroscuro nuances. Unfortunately, however, the whole series appears to have been subjected to a process of reproduction which fairly pulverizes the surfaces and eliminates plastic modulations. The effects in many cases are hardly noticeable, but in others they are very damaging indeed (e.g. Pls. 3, 9, 35, 61). Reproductions are never perfect, and a certain amount of touching-up was unavoidable, even excusable; except in one instance where, surely through an oversight, the 'restorer's' pencil marks were left blatantly in evidence (Pl. 8, around the eyes). The publishers might have taken greater care to maintain their own

high standards and do justice to the photographs themselves, as well as to the text.

These blemishes are all but overshadowed, however, by the author's choice of plates for juxtaposition and comparison. Words being extremely precious, it is not surprising to find photographic comparisons used to supplement the text, to suggest to the reader special points for meditation, and to serve as silent witnesses to the author's arguments. Wittkower's selections are often particularly evocative; if nothing of Bernini's whole oeuvre were preserved except the two photographs of the head of Constantine's horse and that of Gabriele Fonseca (Pls. 111 and 112), proof would yet be ample that here was 'one of the greatest artists of all Christendom'.

In the last analysis, some of our considerations, although pertinent to Wittkower's subject, may reach beyond its scope. Even so, perhaps they will suggest the magnitude of our loss in the author's decision to abandon his plan for a definitive treatment of Bernini's art. But also, they should indicate the complexity of the problems with which he has dealt in so concise and orderly a fashion. Fortunate indeed are those who see Bernini's sculpture for the first time through Wittkower's eyes.