



# Accommodating the ‘graces of sculpture’: drawings by Giovanni Battista Cipriani for the attic statuary of the Casino at Marino

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FEW BUILDINGS SO SUCCESSFULLY EMBODY THE IDEA OF ARCHITECTURAL PERFECTION AS the Casino at Marino. Designed by the Swedish-born architect Sir William Chambers (1723-1796) and dated to the period 1757-71, it is considered the acme of neoclassical taste, achieving a degree of architectural refinement entirely novel at this date not just in Ireland, but even along the Paris-Rome axis which provided the well-spring of European neoclassicism.<sup>1</sup> The building’s design marries the idea of a peripteral temple with a centralised plan – a Greek cross as its point of embarkation – while externally it draws in something of the imagery of Palladio’s Villa Rotonda with its opposing porticoed façades expressed with a Roman Doric order, its columns of an enriched Tuscan variety.<sup>2</sup> Much of the thrill of the building comes with the revelation that despite the evidence of the exterior, it was planned over three levels to contain some sixteen rooms – essentially a temple to the arts in which its patron could also reside. The Casino is as much a celebration of the art of sculpture as it is of architecture, and statuary has a key part to play in this visual paradox. The blind attic storey presented on the north and south sides, which is integrated as a vital aesthetic component of the building’s classical vocabulary (attractively alternating and contrasting with pediments on the intervening façades), is integral to the conceit, accommodating, as it does, the rooms of the upper floor. This fact is largely concealed by its sculptural treatment: the attic is decorated with swagged decorative panels framed on each side by two life-size classical statues and topped by an urn. The importance of these attic statues of classical deities to the building’s success is neatly illustrated by a comparison between James Malton’s view dating from shortly after

1 – Giovanni Battista Cipriani (1727-85), *VENUS*

1767, pencil, pen and black ink and brown wash on paper, 25 x 14 cm (private collection)



its completion (Plate 4) and a mid-twentieth-century photograph (Plate 3) showing the north façade after the statues had been removed, seemingly on grounds of decency and ironically, decorum.<sup>3</sup>

The building's apparent ideality underlines a further paradox: instead of emerging from the architect's mind as a fully formed Platonic idea of architectural perfection, it was the product of many hands, of compromise and delay, and, famously, its site was never visited by its architect. The Casino was commissioned by James Caulfeild, 4th Viscount (later 1st Earl of) Charlemont (Plate 2), and largely inspired by the experience of his extended Grand Tour.<sup>4</sup> The young peer's time in Rome had closely coincided with Chambers' sojourn in the Eternal City, commencing in 1750. Having made each other's acquaintance, peer and architect forged lasting friendships with the Italian-born artist Giovanni Battista Cipriani (1727-1785), and the English sculptors Simon Vierpyl (c.1725-1810) and Joseph Wilton (1722-1803), all of whom were later to work on the Casino.<sup>5</sup>

The design for the Casino evolved from a rejected proposal for pavilions for Harewood in Yorkshire, and its form can also be detected in proposals for a temple to the arts dating from the same period.<sup>6</sup> The final design appears to have been approved by 1758, and a year later Chambers gave it prominence in his *Treatise on Civil Architecture*, acknowledging, in a later edition of this text, the role of Simon Vierpyl in undertaking the work 'with great neatness and taste, after models made here and instructions sent from hence'.<sup>7</sup> Vierpyl, whose work carving statuary for British and Irish patrons while in Rome had been 'extremely admired and prais'd by Gentlemen & Connoisseurs', was the central figure in Charlemont's building activities, which, from 1763, included his town house on Rutland (now Parnell) Square, also built to a design by Chambers.<sup>8</sup> Vierpyl's role at



2 – Pompeo Batoni (1708-1787),  
*Portrait of James Caulfeild,  
4th Viscount Charlemont and  
later 1st Earl of Charlemont*  
(Yale Center for British Art:  
Paul Mellon Collection)

3 – *The Casino at Marino,  
(north façade) shown in the  
mid-twentieth century with the  
statues having been removed*  
(courtesy Photographic Unit,  
National Monuments Service)



4 – James Malton (c.1760-1803), *LORD CHARLEMONT'S CASINO AT MARINO, 1795*  
(National Gallery of Ireland)

the Casino was essentially that of executant architect and master mason.<sup>9</sup> Recently identified building accounts show that he was paid £4,000, exclusive of materials, between 1763 and the beginning of 1769, and thereafter, as the pace of work accelerated towards completion, he was in receipt of £20 a week up to the end of 1771.<sup>10</sup> Although the complex process involved in designing such an exquisitely detailed building must have resulted in a huge number of working drawings for his client and workmen, especially Vierpyl, virtually none has survived beyond those used to produce the engravings in Chambers' treatise.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to his close working relationship with Vierpyl at Marino and Charlemont House, Chambers had collaborated with Wilton and Cipriani from the very outset of his London career, most notably on the Duke of Richmond's Gallery in Whitehall. It is unsurprising then that as work progressed on the Casino through the 1760s, contributions were made by Wilton who was responsible for the four Egyptian lions at the corners of the building (he also supplied two tables), while Cipriani (who was commissioned by Charlemont principally to supply several grisaille paintings, one of these for the Casino)<sup>12</sup> is usually associated with the designs for the relief panels on the diagonal pedestals which carry Wilton's lions.<sup>13</sup> Five newly identified drawings (Plates 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12) show that Cipriani's contribution to the building extended further than



5, 6 – Giovanni Battista Cipriani (1727-85), CERES and BACCHUS

1767, pencil, pen and black ink and brown wash on paper, 25 x 14 cm (private collection)

opposite 7, 8 – Attributed to Simon Vierpyl (c.1725-1810) after a design by Giovanni Battista Cipriani

CERES and BACCHUS, c.1768-70, Casino at Marino

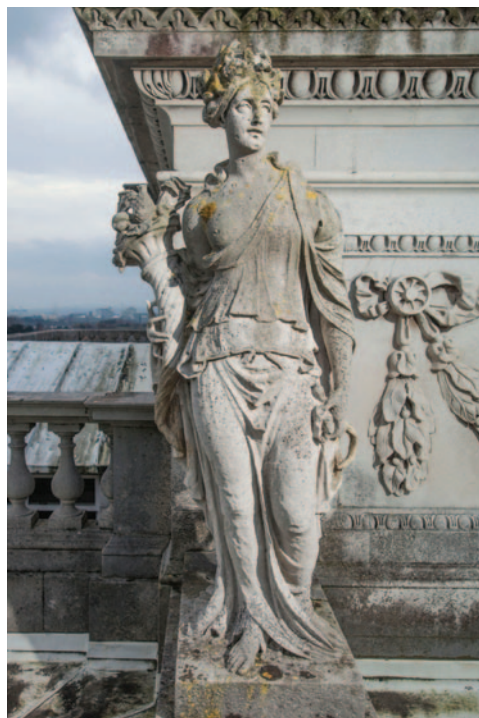
(all photographs of statuary courtesy Photographic Unit, National Monuments Service)

has been appreciated hitherto.<sup>14</sup> The designs – particularly valuable given the almost complete absence of other working drawings for the Casino – are discussed here alongside an unpublished letter from Cipriani to Charlemont to illustrate how the long-distance and distinctively collaborative design process between client, architect, artist and sculptor worked to create a building of exceptional unity and refinement.

Cipriani's five drawings are for the four attic statues of the Casino and depict the gods Ceres, Bacchus, Venus and Apollo. They are of particular value given the rather sorry state of the statues themselves (Plates 7, 8, 11, 13), which have suffered both from prolonged exposure to the elements and from clumsy repair. Cipriani's four main drawings (Plates 5, 6, 9, 12) are nicely realised with an effectively sculptural use of wash to impart a strong sense of three-dimensionality, allowing the compositions to be judged, at

least partly, in the round. However, a fifth drawing, showing an alternative pose for the Venus (Plate 10), dispenses with wash to present an outline only. The differences between the two drawings of Venus are revealing as, contrary to what one would normally expect, the least finished of the two drawings is the one closest to the statue as executed (Plate 11), and so would seem to post-date the related, more highly finished design. In the wash drawing (Plate 9), Venus holds the apple awarded her by Paris between her breasts in a pose which was perhaps judged likely to be difficult to read when executed in stone and seen from the ground. In the outline drawing, by contrast, the position of the arm has been changed so that the apple is proffered in Venus's extended left hand. While this pose achieves a better balance with the corresponding figure of Apollo (Plate 13) (Bacchus and Ceres similarly respond to one another on the opposite side), it is also possible that the earlier pose was seen as overly suggestive in the context of Chambers' chaste classicism. Supporting this proposition is the other compositional change: in the later (outline) drawing, Venus bunches what had been rather suggestively slipping drapery more firmly around her body, rather in the manner of the Venus Felix in the Vatican Museum. The changes clearly satisfied Charlemont as the outline drawing of Venus comes very close to the statue as executed.

The four wash drawings are rendered in Cipriani's fluid, even facile, hand, and the attribution to the Italian can be confirmed by a comparison with other works in his extensive graphic oeuvre. A similarly emblematic drawing (Plate 14), in this instance showing





personifications of Architecture and Painting (engraved by Conrad Metz for his *Imitations of Ancient and Modern Drawings*, published in 1789), shares many stylistic traits with the Casino drawings, such as the way that Architecture and Venus's draperies seem at one, and at the same time seem to be made of fabric and marble, and the illusionistic areas of shadow where feet rest on pedestals. More generally, both the sheet engraved by Metz and the Casino drawings draw inspiration from Michelangelo – Cipriani's great Florentine forebear. The figure of Painting derives from the statues of Night and Day in the tomb of Giuliano de' Medici in San Lorenzo, while the Casino Bacchus is closely related to Michelangelo's marble figure of the same god (Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence).<sup>15</sup>

Sometime after Cipriani's drawings were approved, with the one amendment we have noted, the statues were carved, most likely on the spot in Dublin by Vierpyl, though there is no documentation to confirm this, and the possibility of Wilton's involvement cannot completely be excluded. While, sculpture had adorned Irish domestic architecture from earlier in the century, used, for example, in an integral way by Edward Lovett Pearce (d.1733) in the entrance hall at Bellamont Forest, county Cavan, and similarly by Richard Castle (d.1751) on the façades of Russborough and Powerscourt, county Wicklow,

instances of figural attic sculpture are difficult to trace in Ireland before the building of the Casino, and thereafter can be found principally on public buildings. However, given that attic sculpture was common on classical buildings from antiquity to the Renaissance, it was understandable that Chambers should have considered statuary for the embellishment of the Casino; indeed, he acknowledged in his *Treatise* that architecture ‘is indebted to sculpture for a great part of its magnificence’.<sup>16</sup> Well conceived combinations of the sculptural and architectonic can be found on contemporary buildings by Chambers’ chief rival Robert Adam (1728-1792), who used attic figures with greater prominence on the south front of Kedleston, Derbyshire, and even introduced them internally in full gilded glory to the ante room at Syon, Middlesex.<sup>17</sup> However, although Chambers had worked closely to integrate architecture and sculpture successfully in an important early commission at Kew, he would only ever match this aspect of his design for the Casino in his later work at Somerset House, in which, tellingly perhaps, Cipriani was again involved.<sup>18</sup> In the *Treatise*, Chambers was decidedly prescriptive as to which deities were best suited to each of the architectural orders, recommending, for example, that ‘male statues representing beings of a robust and grave nature’ should be preferred for Doric buildings.<sup>19</sup> He further advised that Apollo, Bacchus and Ceres were suitable for Ionic structures, leaving others ‘of a delicate kind and slender make’, including Venus, as most appropriate for Corinthian buildings.<sup>20</sup> Given that these strictures about the appropriateness of individual divinities to the architectural orders were ignored in how this crucial relationship was

11 – Attributed to Simon Vierpyl (c.1725-1810)  
to a design by Giovanni Battista Cipriani, VENUS  
c.1768-70, Casino at Marino

opposite

9 – Giovanni Battista Cipriani, VENUS  
1767, pencil, pen and black ink and brown wash on paper,  
25 x 14 cm (private collection)

10 – Giovanni Battista Cipriani, VENUS  
1767, pencil, pen and black ink, 25 x 14 cm (private coll.)







configured at the Casino, it is likely that the choice of deities was made by the patron, and what was likely to have been of greater concern for the architect was the expression of the pose, which clearly had to accord with his acute sense of neoclassical propriety. Attention has been drawn to Chambers' advocacy of 'upright figures' for architectural sculpture instead of 'whimsically contorted' ones – that is, figures in an exaggerated baroque style.<sup>21</sup> If Charlemont chose which classical divinities were to adorn his Casino, Chambers saw it as the architect's role to guide 'the artist or artificer, by advice and precise directions'. This he deemed essential to produce a 'general uniformly supported whole', which, he argues, 'never can be the case where artists and artificers are left to themselves' and when there was a danger of the 'sacrificing of architecture to the graces of sculpture'.<sup>22</sup> A distinct hierarchy, or chain of command, can be glimpsed at work here: Charlemont determining the iconography, Chambers giving advice on the overall design and the relation of the sculpture to the building, Cipriani providing the designs, and Vierpyl (as seems very likely) carving the statues.

Although Chambers was, himself, accomplished at figure drawing and was familiar with the full range of models from the antique, his support of Cipriani and Wilton (who was reserved for the architect's most prestigious commissions) for sculptural design and execution was not just an explicit endorsement of their considerable skills in drawing and sculpture respectively, but an acknowledgement of their shared understanding of neoclassical ideals. The collaborative approach that

14 – Giovanni Battista  
Cipriani (1727-1785),  
*PERSONIFICATIONS OF  
ARCHITECTURE AND PAINTING*  
c.1789, 28.5 x 27 cm, pencil,  
ink and grey and ochre wash on  
paper (private collection)

opposite

12 – Giovanni Battista  
Cipriani, *APOLLO*  
1767, pencil, pen and black ink  
and brown wash on paper,  
25 x 14 cm (private collection)

13 – Attributed to Simon  
Vierpyl (c.1725-1810) after a  
design by Giovanni Battista  
Cipriani, *APOLLO*  
c.1768-70, Casino at Marino



Chambers was to adopt with these artists was demonstrated on one of the architect's earliest commissions – the Gallery of Antiques at Kew, built for the Dowager Princess Augusta of Wales in 1757.<sup>23</sup> The building, now long destroyed, was significant in that the statuary that it contained were posed according to original ideas of posture rather than simply undertaken as direct copies from the antique.<sup>24</sup> In a later edition of Chambers' *Treatise* (1825), it was stated that the engravings for a volume on Kew he produced in 1763 (*Plans, Elevations and Perspective Views of the Gardens and Buildings at Kew in Surrey, the seat of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales*) were made 'from drawings by Chambers himself, Cipriani inserting the figures', suggesting that the Italian also had a role in the design of the sculptures.<sup>25</sup> Such an attribution is reinforced by the similarities between the figure of Ceres at Kew, as represented in the engraved view published in 1763 (Plate 15), and the statue of the same goddess at the Casino (Plate 5). Similarly, the figure of Prosperine at Kew invites comparison with Cipriani's designs for the Casino Venus (Plate 1).

Further evidence for Cipriani's key responsibility for providing sculptural designs for Chambers comes from the artist and engraver John Smith, who knew Cipriani and whose father Nathaniel had worked as a sculptor for Joseph Wilton at Somerset House.<sup>26</sup> Writing in 1829, Smith asserted that 'it is well known that the whole of the carvings on the various fronts [of Somerset House] were carved from finished drawings made by Cipriani', presumably exactly of the sort published here. Among these are the four con-



15 – Edward Rooker after William Chambers, SECTION OF THE GALLERY OF ANTIQUES AT KEW from William Chambers, *PLANS, ELEVATIONS, SECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVE VIEWS OF THE GARDENS AND BUILDINGS AT KEW...*, 1763 (Victoria & Albert Museum, London – National Art Library)

tinents on the south, courtyard façade of the Strand building.<sup>27</sup> Here, the figure of Asia, in particular, is worth noting for its similarities to the Casino figure of Ceres. Cipriani clearly made something of a speciality of providing designs for sculpture, also supplying drawings for ‘five masks upon keystones’, again for Somerset House, which were executed by Joseph Nollekens (1737-1823).<sup>28</sup> Smith goes on to offer a very simple reason for the involvement of artists like Cipriani in designing statuary for Chambers and others: ‘painters, and indeed engravers, at this time were much better draughtsmen than the sculptors’, and here Smith includes Cipriani amongst those ‘who drew the figure well’.<sup>29</sup>

Statues had been envisaged for the Casino’s attic from the beginning. In the engraving in the 1759 *Treatise*, and in a drawing preparatory to it, statues are shown in their final position, but compared to the figures as executed they appear as lifeless and rather generic maquettes (Plate 16). It is almost as if Chambers did not feel the need to expend creative effort on these figure, knowing full well that he had Cipriani (famed for the ‘fertility of his invention, the graces of his composition, and the seductive elegance of his forms’) on hand to supply appropriately elegant designs.<sup>30</sup> But when was this? The five Cipriani drawings are inscribed, though possibly in a later hand, ‘By Sir William Chambers for the Earl of Charlemont 1760’. This suggests that the drawings were executed almost immediately after the sheet in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the publication of the *Treatise*. However, the dating on the drawings is inaccurate; this is too early in the design process by several years, and in fact it was only towards the end of the decade that Cipriani was brought on board to bring life to the unarticulated automatons which stand on the Casino’s attic in the *Treatise* and the V&A drawing (Plate 16). Cipriani’s involvement at the Casino, and the specific circumstances of the newly identified drawings, can be tracked in Charlemont’s correspondence, which allows for docu-

mentary confirmation of the stylistic attribution of the drawings, and hence the designs for the statues, to Cipriani. In July 1767, Cipriani wrote a brief note to Charlemont, evidently after he had produced designs for at least three of the four statues (see Appendix).<sup>31</sup> While the figures of Ceres and Apollo are also mentioned, the letter is principally concerned with the artist's revision to the Venus. While retaining the overall posture, Venus was altered with respect to the position of the left arm: 'solamente un poco nel braccio sinistro che e piú basso, e disteso' – that is, the arm was revised to a more outstretched position. The letter confirms what the visual evidence of the drawings has already shown – and this alteration corresponds exactly with that shown in the revised, outline sketch (Plate 10) – but it clearly demonstrates that the date inscribed on the newly discovered drawings is inaccurate by seven years. The letter implies that the designs had first been shown personally by Cipriani to Charlemont, probably in London, and that alterations to the Venus were afterwards proposed. Cipriani notes that 'in the event that your excellency does not approve this design, the sculptor can easily amend', which clearly suggests that the statues were being carved in Dublin, not London, and reinforces the case for Vierpyl's authorship.

By February the following year, Chambers reported to Charlemont that 'Cipriani and Wilton are both hard at it for your lordship', enclosing with his letter 'Cipriani's drawing for the dragons of the gate at Marino', presumably forwarded only after he had himself approved the design.<sup>32</sup> Wilton was then working on one of two tables for Charlemont, while a series of chiaroscuro – or grisaille – medallions intended for Charlemont House were expected from Cipriani. A month later, Chambers advised an evidently impatient Charlemont that the two artists needed a nudge, suggesting that only 'a letter from your lordship' could 'induce them to be expeditious'.<sup>33</sup> A mutual friend, Joseph Baretta, secretary to the Royal Academy, appears to have been asked to intervene, and Charlemont received a reply in April with the explanation that 'Cipriani ... is made almost desperate with too much business'. However, Baretta could report that four of the five pictures were almost finished, with promises that he would make 'an end of them all with all possible haste'.<sup>34</sup>

In the meantime, however, Chambers had also made Charlemont's complaint known to Cipriani, and the artist in his defence explained that part of his difficulty was that he was overrun with commissions, 'every one wishing to be served first'. He protested that, unlike Wilton, he lacked both the assistance and health 'to satisfy all my engagements except a decent time is allowed to me'. Moreover, as a response to Charlemont's charge that Cipriani was tardily behind schedule, he replied, through Chambers, 'you may assure him that the paintings in chiaro'scuro which I have allready forwarded for him, are extremely more tedious than his lordship can imagine', and outlined the laborious processes required to 'bring them to one even colour'.<sup>35</sup>

Also in April, work on the Casino had advanced to the extent of finishing the roof, with Chambers explaining that the attic should be made flat (covered in lead as copper would prove too expensive, and was both complicated to seal and poisonous to the rain-



16 – *Office of William Chambers, ELEVATION OF THE ENTRANCE FRONT OF THE CASINO AT MARINO*

*c.1758-59, 33 x 43 cm, pen and ink, pencil and grey washes on paper*

*(courtesy Victoria & Albert Museum, London (3861.20))*

water), thereby making for ‘a pleasant gazebo’.<sup>36</sup> On 10th December 1768, Cipriani wrote to Charlemont, in Italian, and thanked him for his ‘kindly forbearance’ towards the artist’s ‘poor labours’.<sup>37</sup> Enclosing his bill, Cipriani sought a total of £80 80s; grisailles (the Charlemont House medallions representing Natural and Moral Philosophies, History, and Poetry and a large ‘bas-relief’ depicting Minerva on Parnassus) accounted for the bulk of this figure, with the remainder (with other expenses) charged for various designs, including £5 5s for ‘4 disegni di statue’ (the drawings published here) and a design for a dragon intended to adorn the gate piers at Marino (where the executed work may still be seen).<sup>38</sup>

As work drew to a close on the Casino’s exterior at the beginning of 1771, Chambers wrote to Charlemont, sending designs for the ‘chimney vases’ which were to stand above the attics.<sup>39</sup> Although he recommended that they be made of lead ‘or some sort of metal and sanded to look like stone’, they were ultimately carved by Vierpyl in Portland stone. Without knowledge of the site, and at a loss to find ‘any figured copies of the Casino’, Chambers suggested the design for the vases be ‘drawn correctly in board to the full size, then cut out, and put in the place’ in order to ascertain the appropriateness of the scale intended, ‘by which means you will be able to judge of the proportion’. Here we get the clearest articulation of Chambers’ own views on the crucial relationship

between architecture and sculpture at the Casino, and it is very much that of a practical architect. He was particularly concerned about the statuary, presumably then being carved, addressing the importance of scale:

With regard to the statues, they are proportioned to the columns, and cannot be made less; their heads now reach to the underside of the attic cornice and they will when seen from below, particularly if the spectator be near, appear higher than the attic, but that will have no bad effect. However the plinth on which they stand may be made a little lower, making its top to the level with the plain part of the cove of the attic instead of levelling with the top of its mouldings as it doth in the design.<sup>40</sup>

In this, Chambers was echoing the advice of an earlier architectural writer Sebastian Le Clerc (to whom Chambers refers in his treatise), who recommended that the architect ‘must always proportion his figures to the orders, and the stories where they are to be placed’, recommending for statues ‘rais’d over an order or building’ a height equal to one third that of the column, otherwise ‘if it be bigger, it will make the building appear little, and if it be less ... the building will appear ... much the larger’.<sup>41</sup> Control of relative scale and proportion was crucial in the architectural pursuit of neoclassical perfection, and here at the Casino, Chambers’ great success – though he would never stand before the building to see it – was to assemble in its design components which, together, would offer a perfect impression of coherence and achieve the visual effect of an exquisite building that appears ‘miniature in spite of the facts’.<sup>42</sup> The credit for this, of course, must be shared. Charlemont, Chambers, Cipriani and Vierpyl, who cumulatively were responsible for the statues on the Casino’s attic – and Wilton, too, who may have had a hand – were all born within six years of each other and had known each other since their days in Rome. No doubt this fostered a camaraderie based on similarity of outlook and mutual understanding which transcended differences of birth and nationality between the Irish peer, the Swedish architect, the Italian draughtsman and the English sculptors (one of Dutch origin). But it was a shared commitment to the classical ideal that allowed this disparate group to combine so seamlessly in the creation of a ‘general uniformly supported whole’ in this most perfect of buildings in which architecture is welded very firmly to the ‘graces of sculpture’.

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## APPENDIX

LETTER FROM G.B. CIPRIANI TO LORD CHARLEMONT, 17th July 1767  
(RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 12 60a)

*My Lord, Non ho toccata alla penna l’altera figura della venere Venus, che ebsi l’onore di mostrarle lo shizzo [schizzo] non essendo diferente nella positura al contorno che gia le diedi assieme con la cerere [Ceres], e l’apollo che solamente un poco nel braccio sinistro che e piu basso, e disteso la qual cosa in caso che vr. eccelz. non approvi il presente disegno, lo statuario potrà facilmente emendare. In tanto*

*ardisco auguriarvi a vr ecclz un felicissimo viaggio e offerirle la mia umilissima servitù e con ossequio profondo mi do l'onore di protistarmi... GB Cipriani*

My Lord, I didn't touch with the pen [i.e. alter] the other figure of Venus, whose sketch I had the honor to show you, it not being different in the edge outline to that I formerly gave her along with the Ceres, and the Apollo, except a little in the left arm is lower and outstretched, therefore in the event that your excellency does not approve this design, the sculptor can easily amend [it]. In the meantime I presume to wish your Excellency a very happy journey and offer my very humble services and with profound respect give myself the honor of bowing...

Your humble devoted servant, GB Cipriani

Friday 17th July 1767

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#### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> John Harris, 'A Franco-Roman Triumph: The Casino at Marino', in John Harris and Michael Snodin (eds), *Sir William Chambers, Architect to George III* (New Haven and London, 1996) 39. See also Maurice Craig, *The Volunteer Earl* (London, 1948) esp. 135-42; David Newman Johnson, 'The Casino at Marino', *Irish Arts Review*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1984, 18-23. Seán O'Reilly, *The Casino at Marino* (Dublin, 1991); John Cornforth, 'The Casino at Marino', *Country Life*, vol. 182, nos 5 & 6, 4th February 1988, 70-73; 11 February 1988, 94-97; John R. Redmill and Ian C. Bristow, 'The Casino at Marino, Dublin', *Association for Studies in the Conservation of Historic Buildings Transactions*, vol. 9, 1985, 29-44.
- <sup>2</sup> The choice of classical order for the Casino and the relationship of solid to void also share a certain consonance with Palladio's Palazzo Chiericati, Vicenza.
- <sup>3</sup> The statuary was also omitted from a detailed survey of the building by Alfred E. Jones, 1917-18, O'Reilly, *The Casino*, 21.
- <sup>4</sup> See Cynthia O'Connor, *The Pleasing Hours: the Grand Tour of James Caulfeild, First Earl of Charlemont (1728-1799), traveller, connoisseur and patron of the arts* (Cork, 1999).
- <sup>5</sup> John Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701-1800* (London, 1997), 967-68; Helen Byrne, 'Simon Vierpyl (c.1725-1810) sculptor and stonemason', in Michael McCarthy (ed.), *Lord Charlemont and his Circle* (Dublin, 2001), 177-80; Helen Byrne, 'Simon Vierpyl: Busts, c.1751-55', in Siobhán O'Rafferty and Bernadette Cunningham, *Charlemont 1728-1799*, RIA exhibition catalogue (Dublin, 1999), 19-22. In Rome, Vierpyl lived in the Palazzo Zuccari, an address which he shared with Wilton and Francis Harwood, the English sculptor who carved the (now lost) Saloon chimney piece of the Casino, and who, in 1753, was in Florence working with Joseph Wilton. Ingamells, *Dictionary*, 472-73.
- <sup>6</sup> Sir William Chambers, *A Treatise on the Decorative Part of Civil Architecture with Illustration*,

*Notes, and An Examination of Grecian Architecture by Joseph Gwilt*, 2 vols (London, 1825) II, 400; Harris, 'A Franco-Roman Triumph', fig. 55.

- <sup>7</sup> A model of the building was apparently in existence by 1758. Christine Casey, 'Newly discovered building accounts for Charlemont House and the Casino at Marino', *Apollo*, vol. cxl, no. 448, 1999, 45, citing the *Irish Times*, 16 September 1886; Chambers, *A Treatise*, II, 400.
- <sup>8</sup> Ingamells, *Dictionary*, 967-78. See also Byrne, 'Simon Vierpyl', 193. Amongst Vierpyl's earliest commissions were two sets of marble copies of Apollo and the Dancing Faun from the Uffizi, one commissioned by Lord Malton in 1749 for Wentworth Woodhouse, the other in 1751 for Ralph Howard of Shelton, Co. Wicklow. The largest single commission was for a hundred terracotta copies of statues and busts, begun in 1751 for Edward Murphy, Lord Charlemont's tutor. For Charlemont, a marble copy of the Borghese Gladiator in 1753 was the first of several sculptural commissions in Rome, which Vierpyl evidently carried with him to Ireland having sent twelve blocks of Carrara marble to Dublin ahead of his arrival there in 1756. John T. Gilbert (ed.), 'The manuscripts and correspondence of James, first earl of Charlemont, vol. i, 1745-1783', *Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC)*, 12th Report, Appendix Part X (London, 1891), 227.
- <sup>9</sup> Anticipating Vierpyl's eventual role in building the Casino, Lord Charlemont's agent in Rome, John Parker, wrote in February 1756, sending designs for gates with the advice that 'Vierpyl will be able to assist your builders as to the execution without other models in wood'. *HMC*, 226.
- <sup>10</sup> Casey, 'Newly discovered building accounts for Charlemont House', 42-50.
- <sup>11</sup> Michael Snodin (ed.), *Sir William Chambers, Catalogue of Architectural Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1996) 130. V&A nos 3342, 3343, 3344, 3346. Chambers' design for two chimney pieces for the Casino, as engraved in the *Treatise*, is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Acc. no. 53.521.8. A further plan and elevation, usually attributed to Chambers' office and formerly in collection of Sir Albert Richardson, was acquired by the Office of Public Works in 1983 (Christie's, 30th November 1983, lot 14). See O'Reilly, *The Casino*, where the elevation is illustrated on the title page.
- <sup>12</sup> Craig, *The Volunteer Earl*, 136; Seán O'Reilly, 'Charlemont House – A Critical History' in E. Mayes and P. Murphy (eds), *Images & Insights* (Dublin, 1993) 48-49; Jane Meredith, 'Letters between friends: Lord Charlemont's library and other matters', *Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies*, IV, 2001, 52-77. Old photographs of the main library of Charlemont House indicate that six grisaille panels were displayed here – four ovals and two rectangular panels.
- <sup>13</sup> The attribution to Cipriani of the relief panels which depict Herculanean tripods, and which replaced Chambers' original idea for fountains, appears to have been made entirely on stylistic grounds, but there seems no reason to doubt it. Michael McCarthy, 'Jean-Laurent Le Geay and his View of the Casino at Marino of 1768' in McCarthy, *Lord Charlemont and his Circle*, 150-51.
- <sup>14</sup> The drawings emerged at Christie's, 3rd July 2012, lot 113, where they were acquired for an Irish private collection. We are grateful for permission to publish them here.
- <sup>15</sup> Christie's, *The Collection of Professor Sir Albert Richardson, P.R.A.*, 18-19 September 2013, 135.
- <sup>16</sup> Chambers, *A Treatise*, II, 370-76.
- <sup>17</sup> It was also adopted by Sir John Soane both at Lincoln's Inn Fields and Pitzhanger, and later again by C.R. Cockerell for the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. The motif derived, ultimately, from Rome and the heroic architecture of the triumphal arch and, in particular, the Arch of Constantine.
- <sup>18</sup> Joan Coutou, 'William Chambers and Joseph Wilton' in Harris and Snodin, *Sir William Chambers*, 183, 184: fig. 271.
- <sup>19</sup> Chambers, *A Treatise*, II, 375.
- <sup>20</sup> *ibid.*



- <sup>21</sup> Coutou, 'William Chambers and Joseph Wilton', 185; Chambers, *A Treatise*, I, 95.
- <sup>22</sup> Chambers, *ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup> Coutou, 'William Chambers and Joseph Wilton', 177, figs 262, 263.
- <sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, 176.
- <sup>25</sup> Chambers, *A Treatise*, I, xv.
- <sup>26</sup> John Thomas Smith, *Nollekens and His Times, comprehending a life of that celebrated sculptor, and memoirs of several contemporary artists*, 2 vols (2nd ed., London, 1829), II, 176-77.
- <sup>27</sup> Although the attic statuary is usually considered to have been carved by Joseph Wilton in 1778 as part of his last collaboration with Chambers, Smith was keen to correct the attribution as given by Joseph Baretti in his 1780 *Guide to the Royal Academy*. In doing so, he asserted that for almost all the sculpture on the building, but specifically the statuary, 'John Atkins ... and Nathaniel Smith, my father, modelled and carved the whole of them for Wilton, immediately from the drawings, he never having put a tool to them', while adding, with a certain honesty, 'not that they are perhaps the better for this circumstance; but such is the fact'. Smith, *Nollekens and His Times*, II, 176-77. Coutou, 'William Chambers and Joseph Wilton', 183-84.
- <sup>28</sup> Smith, *Nollekens and His Times*, 74.
- <sup>29</sup> *ibid.* Smith also refers to the close relationship between the sculptor Agostino Carlini and Cipriani, to whom 'it has been said he was often indebted for his designs', *ibid.*, 200. It is worth noting that the attic sculpture depicting Neptune and Mercury, which originally stood on the South Portico of James Gandon's Custom House, were sculpted by Carlini. Edward McParland, *James Gandon: Vitruvius Hibernicus* (London, 1985), 68.
- <sup>30</sup> Matthew Pilkington, *A Dictionary of Painters from the Revival of the Art to the Present Period* (London, 1810) 117.
- <sup>31</sup> Royal Irish Academy (RIA), Charlemont MSS, 12 R 12/ 60a.
- <sup>32</sup> RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 12/52; *HMC*, 284. Previously, late in August 1767, Chambers had enclosed to Charlemont 'a design for the iron gates of the entrance to Marino, done in the manner your lordship desires'. RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 10/16; *HMC*, 283.
- <sup>33</sup> RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 12/53; *HMC*, 285.
- <sup>34</sup> RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 10/18; *HMC*, 285.
- <sup>35</sup> RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 12/54; *HMC*, 285.
- <sup>36</sup> RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 12/55; *HMC*, 286.
- <sup>37</sup> RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 10/25; *HMC*, 290-91. Cipriani noted how he was honoured to have received from Charlemont a letter written in his native tongue: 'per parlare il linguaggio del più gentil dei poeti, cio é Messer Francesco Petrarca'.
- <sup>38</sup> 'Per 4 pitture in chiaro scuro, di medaglie rappresentanti la Filosofia morale e natural, l'Listoria, e la Poesia £40 40s. per un bassorilievo grande rappresentante Minerva in Parnaso, £35 35s'.
- <sup>39</sup> RIA, Charlemont MSS, 12 R 12/55; *HMC*, 304-05
- <sup>40</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup> Sebastien Le Clerc, *A Treatise of Architecture* (London, 1732) 119-21. Le Clerc was more concerned by the inevitable distortion of scale given to most viewpoints within close proximity to a building, and expressed a preference against the placing of statues 'to finish the uppermost stories' (with the exception of 'Tutelary Angels appointed for the Guard and Protection of the Building') recommending instead the use of 'vases, torches, pots of incense, trophies, and the like ornament'.
- <sup>42</sup> Craig, *The Volunteer Earl*, 135.