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The Other Englishman: Bernini's *Bust of Thomas Baker* (1638)

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An abstract of
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
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Abstract

The Other Englishman: *Bernini's Bust of Thomas Baker* (1638)

By Alexandra Zigomalas

During the 1630s, Gian Lorenzo Bernini sculpted the effigies of two Englishmen. The first was of King Charles I who desired a portrait bust from the greatest sculptor in Rome. The second was of Thomas Baker who was an avid art collector from the provincial English town of Fressingfield. In the narrative of Bernini's international patrons, the bust of Thomas Baker often serves as an interesting anecdote to the story of the Charles commission. However, Mr. Baker's bust is the only surviving Bernini portrait of an English patron. In this paper, I argue that the bust of Thomas Baker is critical to understanding this important moment in Bernini's career. Bernini created the portraits of Charles I and of Thomas Baker as a means of demonstrating his talents to an English audience that often sat for painted portraits, but infrequently commissioned portrait busts. By repositioning the Baker bust in the larger context of Bernini's English patrons, I argue not only for the bust's importance in the sculptor's oeuvre, but also for the idea that the bust of Thomas Baker serves as a key to understanding the larger impact of Bernini's sculpture in England.

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Introduction

In 1915, the director of the French Academy in Rome, Albert Besnard, observed Auguste Rodin as he admired Gian Lorenzo Bernini's portrait busts, writing: "He circles round them like a man looking for a secret."[1] Rodin's meditation on Bernini's portraiture is of no surprise to those who admire the seventeenth-century sculptor; Bernini's busts require close looking. Viewers who spend time with the sculptor's portraits are in turn rewarded with small, charming details− a button that is not fully fastened, a fallen lock of hair, a creased mozzetta. These elements are what elevate Bernini's portraiture beyond mere representations in stone; they are what make his busts appear alive.

Bernini felt great pride in his ability to sculpt realistic marble effigies. In his diary of the Cavaliere's visit to France, Paul Fréart de Chantelou describes Bernini's thoughts on sculpting portraits:

> He told me a remarkable thing, which he has since repeated on many occasions− that if a man bleached his hair, his beard, his eyebrows, and, if it were possible, the pupils of his eyes and his lips, and showed himself in this state to those who were accustomed to see him every day, they would have difficulty in recognizing him […] For this reason it is extremely hard to get a likeness in marble that is all of one color.[2]

During the 1630s, Bernini's fame reached new heights when the king of England, Charles I, requested a portrait bust. As part of the commission, the king sent the sculptor a triple portrait of himself by the esteemed Flemish painter Anthony Van Dyck. According to Filippo Baldinucci, the king was so pleased with his portrait bust that he sent a diamond ring worth 6,000 scudi to

[1] As quoted in Andrea Bacchi and Catherine Hess, "Creating a New Likeness: Bernini's Transformation of the Portrait Bust," in *Bernini and the Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum; Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2008), 3.
[2] Paul Fréart De Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*. 1665. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), 16.

"Adorn that hand which made so fine a work."[3] Because of the reception of her husband's portrait, Queen Henrietta Maria sent a letter directly to the Cavaliere requesting her own. However, Bernini never created her majesty's portrait because of the political strife in England, and unfortunately, Charles I's bust was most likely destroyed in an accidental fire at Whitehall Palace in 1698.[4] Bernini's only surviving English commission is, ironically, not royal, nor was it celebrated by the artist's contemporaries. It is the bust of a different Englishman, Thomas Baker (Figure 1).

Thomas Baker was born in the provincial English town of Fressingfield in 1606. A graduate of Wadham College, Oxford, Baker was an ardent traveler before the Grand Tour.[5] Although Thomas Baker was a well-connected and wealthy gentleman, it is unclear how he entered the studio of the pope's favorite sculptor. In 1713, George Vertue suggested that Baker was responsible for the delivery of the Van Dyck triple portrait to Bernini.[6] However, there is no documentary evidence to support the English antiquarian's claim.[7] The bust of Thomas Baker is also an anomaly in the sculptor's oeuvre. The bust portrays Bernini's youngest male sitter.[8] Unlike the sculptor's other patrons, Baker wears continental fashions that were popular in seventeenth-century England: a delicate Venetian lace collar, a silk glove, a traveler's cloak, and

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[3] Filippo Baldinucci, *The Life of Bernini.* 1682. trans. Catherine Enggass (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966), 23.

[4] George Vertue writes about the fire in a diary entry on 10 August 1713: "The Busto of King Charles I made by Cavalier Bernini was consum'd in the fire at Whitehall 1697. This Busto was made from the three faces painted by A. Vandyck is which the King sate for." George Vertue, "The Notebooks of George Vertue Relating to Artists and Collections in England Volume 1" in *The Volume of The Walpole Society* 18 (1929-1930): 27.
Ronald Lightbown provides documentary evidence to support that the fire occurred in 1698: R. W. Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," in *Art, the Ape of Nature: Studies in Honor of H. W. Janson* eds. M. Barasch, L.F. Sandler, and P. Egan (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1981), 439.

[5] Thomas Baker traveled throughout France, Spain, and Italy. For more information on his travels, consult: Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 453-468.

[6] Vertue, "The Notebooks of George Vertue," 27.

[7] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 463-464.

[8] Ann Sutherland Harris, "Bernini and Virginio Cesarini," *Burlington Magazine* 131, no. 1030 (January 1989), 19.

a lovelock that falls onto his left shoulder. Baker's attire separates his effigy from Bernini's other portraits. Despite the richness of Thomas Baker's garments, scholars have dismissed the portrait as a representation of an unimportant, "frivolous" and "foolish" dandy, and some have suggested that Bernini created an unflattering caricature of his sitter.[9] However, the Baker bust is important to our understanding of Bernini's portraiture because it is the only surviving bust of an English sitter. And although Thomas Baker was not a king, he certainly was not an ordinary man, as he was able to convince Bernini to sculpt his bust during a period when the artist made very few portraits.

In this paper, I present three busts: the lost portrait of King Charles I, the surviving portrait of Thomas Baker, and the unrealized portrait of Queen Henrietta Maria. The majority of the scholarship on Thomas Baker treats his portrait briefly, as an anecdote in the narrative of the Charles I commission; however, the Baker bust is critical to understanding this important international moment in Bernini's career. Although Charles I and his circle lauded the sculptor for his bust of the monarch, Bernini believed that the commission was insufficient because he had relied on a painting to capture the king's likeness. Bernini accepted the Thomas Baker commission as an opportunity to show his English patrons how he could sculpt a marble portrait from the life. Moreover, Bernini created these two portraits as a means of demonstrating his talents to an English audience that often sat for painted portraits, but infrequently commissioned portrait busts. By repositioning the Baker bust in the larger context of Bernini's English patrons, I argue not only for the bust's importance in the sculptor's oeuvre, but also for the idea that the bust of Thomas Baker serves as a key to understanding the larger impact of Bernini's sculpture in England.

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[9] Franco Mormando, *Bernini: His Life and His Rome* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 133; Catherine Hess, "Absolute Art for Absolute Powers," in *Bernini and the Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum; Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2008), 241.

Historiography of Bernini's *Bust of Thomas Baker*

The Baker bust first appears in the English sculptor Nicholas Stone's diary on the 22nd of October 1638, where Stone documents his first encounter with the greatest sculptor in Rome. According to this entry, during their conversation Bernini asked Stone if he had seen the marble portrait of Charles I.[10] Stone said he had and went on to describe the bust's positive reception and how it was wrapped in a silk bag to protect it. Bernini expressed concern for the bust's delicate locks of hair and explained to the English sculptor how much time and care he had taken to create the king's effigy. Bernini then revealed that another Englishman wooed him to create a marble portrait and promised a handsome payment in return.[11] Stone writes that Bernini

[10] "hee askt me whether I had seene the head of marble which was sent into England for the King, and to tell him the truth of what was spoken of itt. I told him that whosoeur I had heard admired itt nott only for the exquisitnesse of the worke but the likenesse and nere resemblance itt had to the King's countenance […] I told him that when as I saw itt that all was whole and safe […] I told him that now itt was preserued with a case of silke, he desyred to know in what manner. I told him that itt was made like a bag gathered together on the top of the head and drawne together with a strink under the body with very great care, he answered he was afraid thatt would be the cause to break itt for he says in my time of doing itt I did couer it in the like manner to keepe it from the flyes, but with a great deal of danger, because in taking of the casse if itt hangs att any of the little lockes of hayre or on the worke of the band itt would be presently defaced, for itt greiue him to heare it was broke, being he had taken so great paines and study on itt." Nicholas Stone, Walter Lewis Spiers, ed. "The Note-Book and Account Book of Nicholas Stone." *The Volume of the Walpole Society* 7 (1918): 170.

[11] "After this he began to tell us here was an English gent: who wooed him a long time to make his effigies in marble, and after a greate deale of intreaty and the promise of a large some [sum] of money he did gett a mind to undertake itt because itt should goe into England, that thay might see the difference of doing a picture after the life or a painting; so he began to imbost his physyogynymy, and being finish and ready to begin in marble, itt fell out that his patrone the Pope came to here [hear] of itt who sent Cardinall Barberine to forbid him; the gentleman was to come the next morning to sett, in the meane time he defaced the modell in diuers places, when the gentleman came he began to excuse himself that thaire had binn a mischaunce to the modell and yt he had no mind to goe forward with itt, so I (sayth he) I return'd him his earnest, and desired him to pardon me; then was the gent. uery much moued that he should haue such dealing, being he had come so often and had sett diuers times already; and for my part (sayth the Cauelier) I could not belye itt being commanded to the contrary; for the Pope would haue no picture sent into England from his hand but his Maity; then he askt the young man if he understood Italian well. Then he began to tell yt the Pope sent for him sence the doing of the former head, and would haue him doe another picture in marble after a painting for some other prince." Ibid, 170.

considered sculpting the portrait because it would be displayed in England so "that thay might see the difference of doing a picture after the life or a painting."[12] Stone writes that Bernini never did finish the Englishman's bust because Pope Urban VIII forbade him and that the sculptor went so far as to destroy a model of the sitter. But the bust was finished and clearly survives.

Baker next appears in Paul Fréart de Chantelou's 1665 *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France.*[13] Chantelou claims that an Englishman approached the sculptor after seeing the completed bust of Charles I and describes the young man's persistence: "He wanted one of himself so much that he would not leave him alone until he agreed to do it and had promised any sum provided that no one should hear about it."[14] Similar to Chantelou, both of Bernini's biographers describe the work as an example of the artist's cross-continental fame. In 1682 and later in 1713, Filippo Baldinucci and Domenico Bernini both emphasized the large payment Bernini received for the bust and the patron's satisfaction with the work.[15] All of these seventeenth and early eighteenth-century accounts present the Baker bust as chronologically after the Charles I commission and use the bust to demonstrate the international desire for Bernini's portraits.

By 1680, the Baker bust had made its way to the collection of Restoration England's most famous portraitist, Sir Peter Lely.[16] In Lely's collection inventory, the portrait is described as, "The Head and Busto of Mr. Baker, in White Marble, by *Cavalier Bernini*."[17] It is unclear when the painter acquired the Thomas Baker bust, but it must have been after 1658 when the

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[12] Ibid, 170.
[13] Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*, 259.
[14] Ibid, 259.
[15] Baldinucci, *The Life of Bernini*, 24; Domenico Bernini. *The Life of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, trans. Franco Mormando. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 144.
[16] "Sir Peter Lely's Collection," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 83, no. 485 (1943): 185-91.
[17] Ibid, 188.

sitter passed away.[18] The next account of the portrait appears in the notebooks of the English engraver George Vertue. On the 10th of August 1713, Vertue briefly mentions the Bernini bust of a 'Mr. Baker.' This is the second time the Englishman is directly named. Vertue elaborates on the sitter's connection to the sculptor, claiming that Baker delivered the Van Dyck triple portrait to Bernini. Vertue also makes note of the bust's presence in Sir Peter Lely's collection until Lely's death in 1680.[19] When describing the bust, Vertue echoes Nicholas Stone in stating that Bernini accepted the commission as a means of showing the English how he could sculpt from the life.[20] After Vertue, no artist or scholar wrote about the portrait until Lionel Cust in 1909.[21] However, Cust only briefly mentions Thomas Baker and his presence in the diaries of Nicholas Stone when discussing the larger Charles I commission.

The bust of Thomas Baker began to receive more scholarly attention when the Victoria and Albert Museum purchased it for £1,533 in 1921 from the estate sale of Lord Anglesey.[22] In February of that year, museum director and art historian Eric MacLagan published a brief article on the bust and wrote about how the portrait passed through many well known English collections.[23] After a silence of thirty years, art historians Rudolf Wittkower and John Pope-Hennessy engaged in a debate over the dating and attribution of the Baker bust in the January

[18] Hess, "Absolute Art for Absolute Powers," 241.
[19] Vertue, "The Notebooks of George Vertue," 27.
[20] "Bernini made a Busto in Marble of Mr. Baker. (Bernini made him a present thereof. Baker presented Bernini 100 broad pieces) the Gentleman by whom this picture was sent to Rome (which pictures is not in the possession of the Son at Rome.) designing thereby to shew K. Charles. What he cou'd do from life." Ibid, 27.
[21] Lionel Cust, "Notes on Pictures in the Royal Collections-XIII. The Triple Portrait of Charles I by Van Dyck, and the Bust by Bernini," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 14, no. 72 (March 1909), 339.
[22] Eric MacLagan, "Sculpture by Bernini in England," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 40, no. 227 (February 1922), 62.
[23] Ibid, 62.

1953 and April 1953 editions of the Burlington Magazine.[24] Both Wittkower and Pope-Hennessy used the Charles I commission and the diary of Nicholas Stone to date the Baker bust between 1637-1638.[25] Roughly ten years later in 1965, Howard Hibbard described the portrait in his survey of Bernini's life and works, claiming that Bernini's motivation for completing the bust was twofold: the sculptor wanted to demonstrate his talents to the English and he wanted *scudi.*[26] According to Bernini's biographers, Baker offered to pay Bernini as much as the king had. Hibbard hypothesized that this 6,000 scudi payment was so grand a gesture that Bernini could not decline the commission.

The most important work to date on Thomas Baker is Ronald Lightbown's 1981 article, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons."[27] In his article, Lightbown introduces documentary evidence on Baker's upbringing, travels abroad, and political affiliations during the English Civil War. Lightbown's research is critical to our understanding of Bernini's English patrons because it elevates Thomas Baker from a minor character in the sculptor's life to a man who was part of the larger artistic exchange between England and Rome. In 1997, Charles Avery cited Lightbown's work in his book *Bernini: Genius of the Baroque*, but he ultimately restored Baker to anecdotal status.[28]

Avery's characterization of the bust is repeated in the 2008 catalog *Bernini and The Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture*. Art historian Catherine Hess describes the portrait as "one of the first examples of a bust whose only function is as a work of art rather than as a celebratory or commemorative image of an important, powerful, or lauded figure," and describes the sitter as a

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[24] Rudolf Wittkower "Bernini Studies - II: The 'Bust of Mr. Baker'." *The Burlington Magazine* 95, no. 598 (1953): 18-22.
[25] Ibid, 18-22.
[26] Howard Hibbard, *Bernini* (London: Pelican Books, 1965), 97.
[27] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 453-476.
[28] Charles Avery, "England and France: Bernini, Servant of Kings," in *Bernini: Genius of the Baroque.* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 225-231.

"frivolous dandy."[29] In his biography of the sculptor, *Bernini: His Life and His Rome,* Franco Mormando too echoes Hess's language, labeling Thomas Baker a "foolish dandy."[30] Mormando also returns to Howard Hibbard's comment on Bernini's avarice as a motivation for accepting the commission, adding that Bernini needed lucrative projects to run a successful sculpture studio.[31] Like Hibbard, Avery, and Hess, Mormando does not view the Baker bust as significant beyond the Charles I commission.

In this paper, I build on Ronald Lightbown's work to underscore the importance of the Baker commission and to place the bust in the larger context of Bernini's influence on English sculpture. I begin with the lost portrait of Charles I because the success of this commission is likely to have sparked Thomas Baker's desire for his own effigy.

Charles I: The Lost Portrait

King Charles I enjoyed the fine arts. Throughout his reign, he acquired the works of prominent artists such as Rubens, Tintoretto, and Titian and collected paintings and sculptures of a variety of subjects. Walking through the halls of the monarch's many palaces, the seventeenth-century viewer would have encountered a variety of pictures, among them grand allegorical and mythological scenes, small Renaissance devotional paintings, and portraits from Northern artists such as Hans Holbein the Younger and Albrecht Dürer.[32] The extensive nature of the king's collection suggests that Charles was passionate about acquiring works of art from European masters, and throughout his twenty-four year reign, the king continuously expanded his

[29] Hess, "Absolute Art for Absolute Powers," 241.
[30] Mormando, *Bernini: His Life and His Rome*, 133.
[31] Ibid, 95.
[32] For more on the Charles I collection: Per Rumberg and Desmond Shawe-Taylor, eds. *Charles: King and Collector.* London: The Royal Academy of Arts, 2018.

collection through both the purchasing and commissioning of works of art. While the king's collection was always diverse, he consistently commissioned one particular subject, himself.

Charles I commissioned countless portraits from England's esteemed court painter, Sir Anthony Van Dyck. Born in Flanders, Van Dyck was a follower of Peter Paul Rubens and like the master, he created richly detailed paintings. In April of 1632, Van Dyck arrived in London where he would spend the rest of his unfortunately short life painting portraits of the Stuart monarchs and their aristocratic supporters.[33] Within his first year in London, Van Dyck produced a series of grand portraits of Charles and his wife Henrietta Maria.[34] Now scattered across the royal collections, the National Gallery, and the Louvre, these portraits depict the king on horseback, in the royal hunting fields, and wearing ceremonial garb. These paintings also celebrate the strong bond between Charles and his Catholic bride. In 1632, Van Dyck painted a portrait of the two monarchs in which Henrietta gently places a myrtle wreath in her husband's right palm (Figure 2). In his 1672 biography of Anthony Van Dyck in *Le Vite de Pittori, Scultori, et Architetti Moderni*, Giovanni Pietro Bellori described the couple as holding *un ramo di mirto*, associating the branch with themes of devotion and unwavering love.[35] The couple was married on 25 May 1625 by proxy and did not meet in person until the following month.[36] Henrietta Maria was the daughter of the French monarch Henry IV and Marie de' Medici. The French and English monarchies viewed her marriage to Charles as a symbol of a new political concord between the two nations. However, English Protestants were hesitant to accept their new queen

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[33] Oliver Millar, "Van Dyck in England," in *Van Dyck: A Complete Catalog of the Paintings* ed. Susan Barnes, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 419.
[34] Ibid, 419.
[35] Ibid, 460. Bellori writes: "*Dipinse il Van Dyck li ritratti del Rè medesimo, e della Regina in mezze figure tenendo frà di loro un ramo di mirto, un altro con li figliuoli; & il Rè a cavallo ad imitatione di Carlo Quinto espresso da Titiano, seguitato dietro da uno de' suoi gentilhuomini, che porta l'elmo*." Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Le Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, et Architetti Moderni.* (Roma: Per il success. al Mascardi, 1672), 260.
[36] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 440.

whose marriage contract stipulated that she be allowed to practice her faith openly at the Stuart court.[37] Moreover, the queen's godfather was Pope Urban VIII, and their surviving letters suggest that the Holy Father viewed his goddaughter as a powerful instrument in the desired conversion of the Anglican king to Catholicism.[38] In April 1625, Henrietta Maria wrote to her uncle asking him to bless her marriage to the newly crowned King Charles I and promised that she would only allow Catholics to nurse and educate the children from this union.[39] While the future royals would not be baptized in the Catholic Church, they were to grow up surrounded by and sympathetic to Catholics in England.

The crown commissioned celebratory portraits, poems, and libretti to quell the fears of critics who were wary of Charles and Henrietta's union. British art historian Oliver Millar describes Van Dyck's contribution to these efforts: "Van Dyck created in London a series of royal images in which is displayed, with conviction and this wealth of technical skill, the understated but unquestioned authority of the ruler […] In particular, Van Dyck illustrated with rare perceptiveness the love, 'A love soe famous fruitfull and religiously observed' between the King and his 'most dearest Consort the Queene.'"[40] Like his father James I, Charles valued his art collection and used it to promote his public image. In 1649, Charles I's closest supporters published the monarch's plea for clemency entitled, *Eikon Basilike: The Portraiture of His*

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[37] Ibid, 440.
[38] Erin Griffey, *On Display: Henrietta Maria and the Materials of Magnificence at the Stuart Court,* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2015), 33.
[39] Henrietta Maria wrote a letter to her uncle on 6 April 1625 thanking him for his blessing to marry Charles I. She writes: "I have thought it my duty to render, as I do, very humble thanks to your holiness, that you have pleased on your part to contribute hereto; giving you my faith and word of honour, and in conformity with that which I have given to his majesty, that if it please God to bless this marriage, and if he grant me the favour to give me progeny, I will not choose any but Catholics to nurse or educate the children who shall be born, or do any service for them, and will take care that the officers who choose them be only Catholics, obliging them only to take others of the same religion." Mary Anne Everett Green, *Letters of Queen Henrietta Maria including her Private correspondence with Charles I,* (London: R. Bentley, 1857), 10.
[40] Millar, "Van Dyck in England," 420.

Sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings.[41] The *Eikon Basilike* or Royal Portrait bore a frontispiece of Charles kneeling before a church altar and grasping Christ's crown of thorns (Figure 3). The title and imagery of this publication suggest that the king thought of himself pictorially even in the days before his execution. Portraits and other images of the king served two essential purposes: to reaffirm the king's authority and to decorate the halls of his many palaces.

Despite his marriage to the pope's goddaughter, Charles I did not have direct access to the papal sculptor, Bernini. Because he was not a Catholic, Charles was still considered a rebel in the eyes of the papacy and was not allowed to engage in correspondence with the pope except on the subject of conversion.[42] However, on 13 June 1635, Gregorio Panzani, a priest from the Chiesa Nuova in Henrietta Maria's circle, wrote a letter to Cardinal Francesco Barberini stating that the king was beyond satisfied by the license that the pope had given Bernini to sculpt the king's portrait, as such favors had been denied to other princes.[43] It is unclear how exactly Charles I received the pope's blessing to commission a portrait from Bernini, but it was most likely through the queen. Henrietta Maria was close with her cousin Francesco Barberini who helped her to build an art collection. Although no documentary evidence has surfaced to link Henrietta Maria to her husband's commission, it is plausible that she was the point of communication between the crown and the papacy.

In 1981, Ronald Lightbown published several letters from the Vatican library that establish when the bust of Charles I was created and how it was transported to England. Because Charles could not travel to Rome to sit for his portrait, he sent the sculptor the next best thing: a

[41] Richard Cust, *Charles I* (London: Pearson, 2005), 446.
[42] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 441.
[43] *A questo proposito il Montagú mi disse, che il Rè è restato sopra modo sodisfatto della licenza, che il Papa ha data al Bernino di far la Statua di questo Rè, essendo massime simile gratia stata negate ad altri Principi.* Ibid, 441.

portrait by Anthony Van Dyck (Figure 4).[44] Van Dyck's *Charles I in Three Positions* shows the king from three different angles on one canvas. From left to right, Charles is depicted in three different colored cloaks. In each position, he wears a lace falling band collar that drapes delicately onto his shoulders and a blue ribbon around his neck with a royal medallion. According to Oliver Millar, Van Dyck most likely based this portrait on Lorenzo Lotto's 1530 *Portrait of a Man in Three Positions*, which was in Charles I's collection (Figure 5).[45] Because they are both triple portraits, these two paintings are remarkably similar in composition. Both Van Dyck and Lotto show the sitter from three different views. However, Van Dyck does not depict a true left profile and instead presents Charles in an almost three-quarter view. By adjusting Charles's position, Van Dyck depicted more of the sitter's face to give Bernini a better idea of how the king looked from various angles. The sculptor employed the three-quarter view in many of his informal sketches of Roman sitters. In this portrait sketch of a man from 1625-1630 (Figure 6), Bernini renders the sitter with parted lips as if he is speaking and positions him in a three-quarter view to suggest that he has just turned to acknowledge the viewer.[46] Because Bernini relied on the three-quarter view in his portraiture, it was important that he had access to a painting that depicted Charles in this more active position.

As a sculptor who took great pride in sculpting portraits *ad vivum*, Bernini was challenged with sculpting a realistic portrait without a live sitter. According to his son Domenico, it was Bernini's custom to observe his sitter in action, "since motion consists of all those qualities that are his alone and not of others."[47] Poet and member of the pope's circle Lelio Guidiccioni commented that Bernini was active and quick when sculpting portraits, "marking the

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[44] Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*, 259.
[45] Millar, "Van Dyck in England," 466.
[46] Bacchi and Hess, eds. *Bernini and the Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture*, 163.
[47] Bacchi and Hess, "Creating a New Likeness: Bernini's Transformation of the Portrait Bust," 23.

marble with charcoal in one hundred places, hitting it with the mallet in one hundred others."[48] Bernini did in fact sketch his sitters both on the page and on the block.[49] However, he did not always sculpt directly from a sitter or from a quick sketch. Like other portrait artists, Bernini used clay models.[50] Unlike drawings, models have the three-dimensionality of a sitter. Clay models were also practical because sculpting portrait busts required a lot of time from both the sculptor and the sitter. In 1633, Lelio Guidicconi described Bernini creating a clay model of the head of Scipione Borghese. In his account, the poet wrote that Bernini used his fingers to mold the clay with the expertise and finesse of a harpist.[51] Bernini also may have used a terracotta model in sculpting Thomas Baker's portrait. According to the diaries of Nicholas Stone, Bernini defaced a model of the sitter after the pope discouraged him from executing the commission.[52]

What exactly did it mean to create an image from life in the seventeenth century? Artists employed the terms *ad vivum, naer het leven,* and *al vivo* to describe their works as being the result of direct observation and study.[53] Portraiture complicates the *ad vivum* concept because many portraitists did not solely create from direct observation, but still claimed their works were *ad vivum.* Art historian Robert Felfe writes that the goal of these types of portraits was not only to capture a lifelike representation, but also to capture something personal to the sitter.[54] Around 1640, Van Dyck created his *Iconography*, a series of engraved portraits of noble sitters that were

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[48] Ibid, 23.
[49] Ann Sutherland Harris, "Bernini's Portrait Drawings: Context and Connoisseurship." *The Sculpture Journal* 20, no.2 (2011), 163-178.
[50] C.D. Dickerson III, Anthony Sigel, and Ian Wardropper, eds. *Bernini Sculpting in Clay.* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2012), 13.
[51] Ibid, 50.
[52] Nicholas Stone, "The Note-Book and Account Book of Nicholas Stone," 170.
[53] Claudia Swan, "*Ad vivum, naer het leven,* from the life: defining a mode of representation." *Word and Image* 11, no. 4 (October 1995): 353-372.
[54] Robert Felfe, "*Naer het leven*: between Image-Generating Techniques and Aesthetic Mediation," in *Ad Vivum?: Visual Materials and the Vocabulary of Life-Likeness in Europe before 1800*, eds. Thomas Balfe, Joanna Woodall, and Claus Zittel, (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2019), 54-57.

based on drawings done *ad vivum.* The book opens with the following phrase: "*ab Antonio van Dyck Pictore ad vivum expressae*."[55] Felfe writes that these portraits are not classified as *ad vivum* because of their naturalism, but because each portrait reveals a psychological presence of a sitter− Van Dyck captures a speaking likeness.[56] Early in his career, Bernini became known for his ability to capture a man mid-speech and render his fleeting expressions in marble. In his diary, Nicholas Stone writes that Bernini suggests there is a difference between sculpting from the life and from a painting. While a painting can provide an accurate representation of a person, the only way to achieve a speaking likeness is to observe a sitter from life even if only for a few brief moments. In the Charles I commission, Bernini was compelled to work from Van Dyck's portrait alone, making it more difficult to capture the king's psychological presence.

Nevertheless, Bernini completed the bust of Charles I in the spring of 1637, less than two years after the king's request for the portrait. Before shipping the bust to England, it was displayed in Rome. The Duke of Modena visited Bernini during this time and described the bust as the sculptor's most magnificent work.[57] After a journey across the continent, the long awaited bust arrived in England on 31 July 1637.[58] In a letter to Cardinal Barberini, the Scottish papal agent George Con reported the king's delight upon seeing his effigy, writing that the king brought every important person to see his bust.[59] Charles I was so pleased with his bust that it was the talk of his circle for months, as indicated in the letters of Francesco Barberini, George

[55] Ibid, 54.
[56] Ibid, 56.
[57] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 445.
[58] Ibid, 446.
[59] *La sodisfatt.ne del Re per conto della Testa passa ogni espressione; Non capita in Corte persona di qualità, che egli med.mo non la conduchi a vederla in publico*. Ibid, 446.

Con, and Henrietta Maria.[60] Bernini reportedly received a diamond ring worth 6,000 scudi for his talents− six times what Scipione Borghese had paid him in 1632.[61]

But what did this magnificent bust look like? And how did it compare to Van Dyck's triple portrait of the monarch? Art Historians, beginning with the eighteenth-century English antiquarian George Vertue, have claimed that the bust was destroyed in an accidental fire in Whitehall Palace in 1698, which took place almost fifty years after the beheading of the monarch outside the same palace.[62] However, casts and copies of the bust do survive. In her 1996 article entitled "Plaster Casts of Bernini's busts of Charles I," art historian Gudrun Raatschen noted that plaster casts were made in England and owned by various artists and writers including George Vertue, Jonathan Richardson Sr., sculptor Francois Bird, and jeweler Michael Rose.[63] Anthony Van Dyck also may have owned a plaster cast of the bust; according to the 1641 inventory created upon his death, he owned a plaster portrait of Charles I.[64] While this replica may not be of Bernini's bust, it is plausible that the painter owned a cast of Bernini's work given his position as a court painter.

One cast that currently resides in a private collection is remarkably similar to Van Dyck's triple portrait and may echo Bernini's original (Figure 7). In this cast, Charles softly gazes at a distant viewer with his characteristic hooded eyes, seen in the triple portrait (Figure 4). His waxed and curled facial hair forms the shape of a hammer, a very popular style across England and France in this period. Because this cast and others like it only preserve the king's face, it is

[60] Ibid, 445-450.
[61] Baldinucci, *The Life of Bernini*, 23.
[62] Vertue, "The Notebooks of George Vertue," 27.
[63] Gudrun Raatschen, "Plaster Casts of Bernini's Bust of Charles I," *The Burlington Magazine* 138, no. 1125 (December 1996): 813.
[64] Ibid, 813; Christopher Brown and Nigel Ramsay, "Van Dyck's Collection: Some New Documents," *The Burlington Magazine* 132, no. 1051 (Oct. 1990): 706.

difficult to confirm Bernini's hand. However these small casts, which putatively are made from Bernini's lost portrait, are consistent with the same details in Van Dyck's painting.

The Charles I bust was Bernini's first English commission and his first portrait based solely on a painting. And while the bust was a great success in England and in Rome, Bernini expressed some dissatisfaction with the effigy. When an Englishman by the name of Thomas Baker arrived in Rome eager for a marble bust, the idea of international fame enticed Bernini once more, as this time, he could create a true speaking likeness.

Thomas Baker: The Surviving Portrait

In the mid 1630s, Thomas Baker arrived in Rome hungry for the splendors of the eternal city. In all of Bernini's biographies, the young Englishman is described as an eager patron determined to commission a bust from the greatest sculptor in the city. Chantelou writes that Thomas Baker was so persistent that he would not leave Bernini alone until he agreed to create his portrait.[65] Mr. Baker also appears as a passionate art collector in the biography of another sculptor. In his life of François Duquesnoy, Bellori describes a young man by the name of "Tomasso Bacchera," who was determined to purchase a statue of a cupid shooting his bow. Duquesnoy made the gentleman wait almost a year before agreeing to sell the sculpture. [66]

Although Van Dyck never painted Thomas Baker, the Flemish painter's oeuvre once again serves as an important point of comparison for this Bernini commission. As art historian Emilie Gordenker writes, "Any of Van Dyck's portraits would have triggered the association of high social status, since Van Dyck himself, and certainly his patrons, moved in the most elevated

[65] Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France,* 259.
[66] Bellori, *Le Vite de' Pittori, Scultori, et Architetti Moderni,* 277.

of English circles."[67] Like Van Dyck and his sitters, Thomas Baker was a man of high society who moved within Europe's most exclusive networks. He was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Baker and Constance Kingsmill who both came from noble English families. Upon his father's death in 1622, Thomas inherited a small fortune and three English manors; he was only sixteen years old.[68] Baker's education at Oxford and his inherited wealth placed him in a class of young men who traveled throughout the continent that included diarists John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys. When compared with portraits of the English gentry, Thomas Baker fits right in; his curly coiffure and richly detailed garments are similar to those of Van Dyck's sitters. Because of the Charles I commission, Bernini was familiar with the fashions that this class of cultured Englishmen wore. But how did Bernini translate this man from Van Dyck's world into marble?

Bernini's portrait bust of Thomas Baker depicts a young, fashionable gentleman poised to greet his viewer (Figure 1). He has blank, pupilless eyes with lids that wrinkle at the corners. Strong, textured eyebrows emerge from behind bangs that frames his face. A delicate ribbon falls onto his left shoulder and collar but is only successful at taming a single lock of hair. The bridge of his nose protrudes and the nose itself, when seen in profile, curves to end in a thin, pointed tip. Beneath his nostrils is a prominent mustache that is combed upward and parted off center. Under his lower lip, a small tuft of hair rests above his cleft chin. The sitter's mouth is relaxed and his lips part slightly, suggesting that he could respond to his viewer at any moment. His face is smooth and luminous in contrast to the thick curls, which display the marks of the sculptor's toothed chisel and drill. The sitter's skin ripples over defined cheekbones and settles loosely under his jaw. Baker's collar falls over the folds of his cloak and finely carved circular striations

[67] Emilie Gordenker. *Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641) and The Representation of Dress in Seventeenth-Century Portraiture*. (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2001), 11.
[68] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 455.

give the collar the appearance of lace. A highly polished gloved hand emerges from the thick folds of drapery that conceal the rest of his attire.

In the context of Bernini's portraiture, the bust of Thomas Baker is unusual. The bust's rounded shape evokes a funerary style that recalls the busts of Antonio Coppola and Giovanni Vigevano (Figures 8 and 9). Yet, Baker's turned head and unbuttoned doublet give him a lively, speaking quality that is found in the busts of Scipione Borghese and Costanza Piccolomini (Figures 10 and 11). Bernini translates the continental fashions made popular in Anthony Van Dyck's paintings into a timeless, Roman portrait of Thomas Baker. Bernini's bust of this Englishman differs from his other portraits because the patron was unlike any of the sculptor's other sitters; he was an Anglican traveler who only visited Rome for brief periods of time. In order to understand how and why Bernini agreed to execute this portrait, it is important to consider what Bernini would have seen when he looked at Thomas Baker.

Thomas Baker's long flowing hairstyle with a prominent fringe was popular in England and France from 1628 until 1660 and can be seen in Van Dyck's portrait of Philip Henri II de Lorraine (Figure 12).[69] Baker's luxuriant curls are individually rendered and naturalistic. In a fashion similar to Lorraine, a ribbon ties a slightly longer lock of hair that drapes onto Baker's left shoulder. This is a lovelock, a style that originated in France where it was called a *cadenette.*[70] The lock was to extend over the wearer's left shoulder to cover his heart.[71] Historian Robyn Bryer claims that the lock was similar to a knight's *favour*– typically a glove or a token

[69] C. Willett Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington. *Handbook of English Costume in The Seventeenth-Century*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), 71.
[70] Robin Bryer. *The History of Hair: Fashion and Fantasy Down the Ages (*New York: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2000), 51.
[71] Stephen B. Dobranski, *Milton's Visual Imagination: Imagery in Paradise Lost* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 154.

worn in his helmet− that he would wear to remind him of his beloved.[72] The wearer demonstrates his affection by forgetting to cut a lock of hair.[73] Bryer writes, "It is as if he is so engrossed in his regard for his lady that he has absentmindedly forgotten to have his hair cut evenly, leaving the chair before the barber has completed his ministrations, so impatient is he to be with her."[74] The lovelock became popular in England before the English Civil War and is present in the triple portrait of Charles I (Figure 4). Although Charles does not tie his lock with a bow, his hair is intentionally uneven. A pearl earring dangles from his left ear in place of a ribbon; a single earring was a frequent accompaniment of this hairstyle.[75] Thomas Baker's brother-in-law and cupbearer to King Charles I, Thomas Hanmer, also sported a lovelock in his 1631 portrait by Cornelius Johnson (Figure 13). This was the year he married Baker's sister, Elizabeth, who was a court maiden to Henrietta Maria.[76] Unfortunately, we do not know the identity of Thomas Baker's sweetheart during his travels in Rome; he did not meet his wife Alice until 1645.[77]

Despite the lovelock's popularity, critics of the hairstyle ridiculed it as frivolous. In 1628, puritan polemicist William Prynne wrote a denunciation of the style entitled *The Unlovelinesse of Love-Lockes.*[78] Prynne describes the locks as: "badges of infamie, effeminacy, vanitie, singularitie, pride, lasciviousnesse, and shame, in the eyes of God, and in the judgment of all godly Christians, and Grave or Civill men: yea, they are such unnaturall, sinfull, and unlawfull ornaments, that it is altogether unseemely, and unlawful for any to nourish, use, or weare

[72] Robin Bryer. *The History of Hair: Fashion and Fantasy Down the Ages,* 51.
[73] Ibid, 51
[74] Ibid, 51.
[75] Ibid, 51.
[76] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 456.
[77] Ibid, 456.
[78] Bill Seven. *The Long and Short of It: Five Thousand Years of Fun and Fury over Hair (*New York: David McKay Company Inc., 1971), 40.

them."[79] Despite Prynne's condemnation of the hairstyle, the Puritan dressed fashionably. He wears the same lace collar and a beard similar to that of Thomas Baker in his mid-seventeenth century portrait (Figure 14). Baker's mustache and small tuft of hair under his lower lip were known as the T-shaped or hammer-cut beard.[80] This mustache was often waxed and brushed upwards towards the nose in a similar fashion to what is seen in both Charles I and William Prynne's portraits (Figures 4 and 14). This style of beard also appears in the portrait of Philip Henri de Lorraine (Figure 12). Whether romantic or frivolous, Bernini signals the connection between Thomas Baker and the English king with the inclusion of the lovelock and the waxed mustache.

As noted earlier, Thomas Baker wears the refined attire of wealthy men who traveled the continent. English author and dramatist Robert Greene wrote a treatise in 1591 entitled *Farewell to Folly* that may apply to Thomas Baker and Van Dyck's English sitters. Greene describes the English affinity for frivolous, continental fashions: "I have seen an English gentleman so diffused in his suits, his doublet being for the wear of castile, his hose for Venice, his cloak for Germany, that he seemed no way to be an Englishman but the face."[81] One defining feature of Van Dyck's portraiture was the Venetian lace falling band collar (Figure 15). Although it originated in Venice, the collar was essential to an English man or woman's wardrobe. The falling band was popular in England from 1620 until 1650 and differed from the sixteenth-century ruff collar that was tufted to completely frame a person's face and conceal his or her

[79] William Prynne, *The Unlovelinesse of Love-Lockes (London, 1628)* ed. Walter J. Johnson (Amsterdam/Norwood N.J.: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum LTD., 1976), 3.
[80] Cunnington and Cunnington. *Handbook of English Costume in The Seventeenth-Century*. 71.
[81] Robert Greene, *Farewell to Folly* (London: Printed by Thomas Scarlet for T. Gubbin and T. Newman, 1591), 12; F. W. Fairholt and Harold Arthur Lee-Dillon Dillon. *Costume in England: A History of Dress to the End of the Eighteenth Century.* ed. Hon. H. A. Dillon, vol. I and II. London: George Bell and Sons, York Street Covent Garden, 1885.

neck. [82] The falling band was fastened with linen tassels that could be hidden under a garment to give a seamless appearance. Such a collar is visible in Van Dyck's portrait of Queen Henrietta Maria with her dwarf companion, Sir Jeffrey Hudson (Figure 16). Here, Henrietta wears a hunting outfit; her lace collar and broad-rimmed, feathered hat give her attire a masculine appearance.[83]

Baker's falling band lace collar resembles those that appear in many of Van Dyck's works. The pattern on Baker's collar is most similar to the Flemish painter's portrait of Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery (Figures 17 and 18). Both his and Baker's collars are scalloped along the edges, and each edge ends in a circular pattern surrounded by petals. Two fiddlehead fern-shaped details emerge from this floral design, and in the center is a cruciform pattern that is similar to the cross of the Maltese Knights.[84] Thomas Baker's collar is not as closely related to that of Charles I's, although they both have a scalloped edge and floral pattern (Figure 4). Unlike Van Dyck's triple portrait of Charles I, Bernini leaves the collar's linen ties exposed. This subtle detail combined with the unbuttoned doublet enlivens Baker's garments.

Bernini renders delicate and detailed lace in a hard, stiff medium. It seems clear that in carving Baker's Venetian collar, the Cavaliere may have intended to evoke a *paragone* between himself and Van Dyck. However, some scholars have suggested that Bernini did not carve this part of the bust. In 1953, Rudolf Wittkower argued that Andrea Bolgi could have sculpted the lace.[85] In support of this claim, he cited Chantelou's entry of 22 September 1665 in which Bernini is described working on the lace collar of Louis XIV (Figure 19). Chantelou states that later on that evening, "the Cavaliere said, smiling, that with this Venetian lace he was working at

[82] Cunnington and Cunnington. *Handbook of English Costume in The Seventeenth-Century*, 37.
[83] Millar, "Van Dyck in England," 522.
[84] I thank Dr. Sarah McPhee for this observation.
[85] Wittkower, "Bernini Studies- II: 'The Bust of Mr. Baker'," 21.

something of very little taste which really he would never thought he could do."[86] Chantelou's account alone is not sufficient to disprove Bernini's authorship. The Cavaliere was familiar with Venetian lace because of the Van Dyck triple portrait, and when Bernini looked at Thomas Baker and his collar, he must have seen an Englishman in the guise of Charles I. Although Thomas Baker did not have the status of the king, his garments did. The Thomas Baker commission was important to Bernini because he saw it as a continuation of his dialogue with his English patrons, and it is unlikely that he would have delegated such a significant part of the bust to an assistant. Additionally, Bernini carved the lace by himself to further instruct the English on how to create active marble portraits. The lace collar animates Thomas Baker and connects him to the English crown. Without the collar, the bust is static.

In evoking the wardrobe present in the Van Dyck triple portrait, Bernini also alludes to the medium of paint. Art Historian Heiko Damm writes about the painterly quality of Thomas Baker's lace collar, suggesting that Bernini carved deep undercuts in the marble to create a chiaroscuro effect.[87] Damm is correct in his observation; Bernini did desire to achieve the effect of color in white marble. According to Chantelou, Bernini remarked that in order to create the dark shadows around a person's eyes, a sculptor must hollow out the marble to create a difference in color.[88] For Bernini, sculpture was the more challenging medium because the sculptor had to suggest differences in color without actual pigments. By carving the bust of Thomas Baker, Bernini sent England an example of the preeminence of sculpture in the *paragone* debate.

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[86] Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*, 219.
[87] Heiko Damm, "Agon und Spitzenkragen: Zur Rhetorik des Ornaments in Berninis Büste Ludwigs XIV," in *A Transitory Star: The Late Bernini and his Reception,* eds. Claudia Lehmann and Karen J. Lloyd, (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 57.
[88] Chantelou, *Diary of the Cavaliere Bernini's Visit to France*, 16.

Moving downward from the lace collar, Baker wears the cloak and gloves of a wealthy English traveler. In seventeenth-century England, a cloak was important to a man's outfit, especially when in public. The only occasion in which a man would remove his cloak in the company of others was for dancing.[89] Baker's cloak not only evokes his position as an English traveler in Europe but also serves to wrap his arms in an *imago clipeata* shape. The *imago clipeata* was a type of ancient Roman portraiture that often placed the sitter's effigy in a tondo frame. From the frame, the bust protruded outward; often, the bust was carved separately and attached to the tondo.[90] This style of portrait appeared on sarcophagi and had a commemorative function. However, the *imago clipeata* did not have to be funerary nor involve a tondo and could appear as a feature of a bust as seen in a third-century portrait from the Capitoline Museum (Figure 20). In this bust, a hand emerges from the man's cloak in a similar style to Thomas Baker's. The hand's position derives from the orator's pose and suggests an intellectual quality. Baker was young when he commissioned the sculpture, and this *imago clipeata* would have given him the qualities of Roman intellectuals and orators. However, Wittkower acknowledges that sometimes a patron would commission a funerary bust during his lifetime that was to be used later in his tomb.[91] Whatever the case, by evoking ancient Rome through both style and medium, Thomas Baker's bust attains a timeless, eternal quality.

From the cloak, a gloved hand emerges. Gloves were an important part of a gentleman's wardrobe, especially when traveling outdoors. A gentleman's gloves were made of leather, wool, or silk; some gloves were even perfumed or embroidered and could be worn like a love-lock as a

[89] Cunnington and Cunnington. *Handbook of English Costume in The Seventeenth-Century*, 28.
[90] Cornelius C. Vermeule, "A Greek Theme and Its Survivals: The Ruler's Shield (Tondo Image) in Tomb and Temple." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 109, no. 6 (1965): 361-97.
[91] Wittkower, "Bernini Studies - II: The 'Bust of Mr. Baker'," 21.

favour for a young maiden.[92] Gloved hands are important in Van Dyck's portraiture as seen in his painting of Lord John Stuart and his brother Bernard (Figure 21). Van Dyck often painted gloves as if they were made of shiny, luxurious silk, as seen in his portrait of Bernini's brother-in-law Thomas Hanmer (Figure 22). With Baker's gloved hand, Bernini seeks to rival Van Dyck's luminous silk.

The lovelock, the falling-band collar, the cloak, and the glove together place Baker in the context of fellow Englishmen whom Van Dyck eternalized in portraiture. Art historian Oliver Millar writes that Van Dyck created "a type of costume… 'that blurred the margins of fact and fancy' and in doing so brought about a revolution in the way English men and women chose to be represented for posterity."[93] In his bust of Thomas Baker, Bernini translated Van Dyck's painted costumes from oils to marble, creating a portrait that was simultaneously modern and timeless. With this second commission, Bernini had the benefit of an *ad vivum* encounter and was able to produce an actual speaking likeness.

Henrietta Maria: The Unrealized Portrait

Before Charles I met his bride, he was introduced to her portrait. During their engagement, paintings of the French princess were sent to the monarch so that he could see the beauty of his future queen.[94] After the couple's marriage in 1625, the Stuart court and those closest to Henrietta Maria began commissioning the new queen's portrait. Van Dyck was instrumental in creating a recognizable image of Henrietta Maria that reflected both her powerful political status and pure, graceful demeanor. In 1636, the queen's cousin and papal nephew

[92] F. W. Fairholt and Harold Arthur Lee-Dillon Dillon. *Costume in England: A History of Dress to the End of the Eighteenth Century,* 189.
[93] Millar "Van Dyck in England," 423.
[94] Erin Griffey, *On Display,* 83.

Cardinal Francesco Barberini received word that he would soon be given a Van Dyck portrait of Henrietta as a gesture of gratitude for sending a large group of paintings from Rome to the English monarchs (Figure 23).[95] In this portrait, the queen wears a golden dress with intricate lace on the collar and cuffs. A black ribbon cinches her waist to accent her swollen lower abdomen. Ringlets frame her porcelain skin, which Van Dyck illuminated with his skillful use of oil paint. Henrietta does not speak to her viewer, but instead quietly gazes at him, cradling her pregnant belly. This is not a speaking likeness, but it is a psychologically intimate portrait of the rather remote queen.

Henrietta Maria was able to help facilitate the Bernini portrait of her husband because of her close relationship with Francesco. Shortly after the bust of Charles I arrived in England in 1637, George Con wrote to the cardinal that the queen desired her own bust.[96] However, it was not until 26 June 1639 that the queen formally requested a bust in a letter written directly to the Cavaliere.[97] The letter was written in French and according to Ronald Lightbown, was later pasted to the back of Van Dyck's triple portrait of Charles I.[98] In writing a letter to the sculptor, Henrietta Maria bestowed a great honor on Bernini and his family. Although he never made her portrait, Bernini still earned the queen's recognition.

A second letter from George Con to Francesco Barberini states that the queen agreed to sit for a triple portrait in November of 1637 (Figures 24, 25, 26).[99] Indeed, three fragments of a triple portrait survive, and scholars have argued that they are evidence of the unrealized Bernini

[95] Millar "Van Dyck in England," 526.
[96] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 452.
[97] Baldinucci, *The Life of Bernini*, 23-24.
[98] Lightbown, "Bernini's Busts of English Patrons," 453.
[99] *"al fine s'è lasciata depingere in quelle tre maniere che si desiderano per fare la testa compagna di quella del Re."* Ibid, 472.

commission.[100] The frontal portrait and left profile are currently in the Royal Collections (Figures 25 and 26); the right profile is in the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art in Tennessee (Figure 24). The painting of Henrietta Maria's right profile was most likely part of a triple portrait on one canvas as the faint outline of a frontal portrait can be seen at the right (Figure 24). Technical analysis of this painting confirms that the canvas was cut, and infrared scans reveal that Van Dyck had painted the queen's tight curls, her right eye and brow, and part of her dress in a frontal view.[101] The other two portraits in the royal collections do not show any signs of being cut or reworked.

In both profile paintings, Henrietta wears a dress of white satin and lace with a mantle draped over her shoulders. In the left profile, the mantle is lowered, exposing her satin sleeve. In the frontal portrait, Henrietta wears the pearl necklace and earrings seen in the profile paintings but does not wear a mantle. Instead, she wears a lower cut, white dress. A jeweled cross with pendant pearls is attached to the neckline of her dress, a symbol of her Catholic faith. Despite the rich ornaments of the queen's dress, Olivar Millar describes the attire in this painting as less formal than in the profile views.[102]

These portraits were never sent to Rome, likely because of the growing political unrest in England.[103] And, it is still unclear why Van Dyck painted three separate portraits of the queen and when the concept of a triple portrait on a single canvas was abandoned. It is unfortunate that Bernini did have the opportunity to create Henrietta Maria's bust. The Cavaliere did not sculpt many female portraits. Had he sculpted Henrietta, she would have been his only bust of a queen.

[100] Millar "Van Dyck in England" 529-532.
[101] Ibid, 529.
[102] Ibid, 530.
[103] Ibid, 529.

Bernini's Busts in an English Context

In both the diaries of Nicholas Stone (1638) and George Vertue (1713), Bernini agrees to create the Baker bust as a means of showing the English the potential of a marble portrait sculpted from life rather than after a painting. The following questions arise from Stone and Vertue's claim: Whom did Bernini hope to impress and teach with his bust of Thomas Baker? How common was it for an English aristocrat to have his or her portrait sculpted? How did the bust of Thomas Baker fit within the world of English sculpture? Charles I and Henrietta Maria's extensive collection of portraits suggests that upper class English men and women valued painted portraiture. Sculpture was the least common medium for English portraits.

Bernini's contemporaries in England were sculptors Nicholas Stone, Edward Pierce, Grinling Gibbons, Hubert Le Seur, Edward Marshall, John Bushnell, and Arnold Quellin. However, none of them achieved the artistic success of Bernini. British art historian Margaret Whinney describes the world of English sculptors:

> In painting, too, the course of English art was to be materially altered by the sojourn of Van Dyck from 1632 to 1641, and by the presence of other competent, though less brilliant, foreign painters. Unfortunately, no parallel occurs in sculpture. No English sculptor emerged of the caliber of Inigo Jones; and though Charles I employed foreign sculptors at his court, none of them had the stature of a Van Dyck, or even of a Mytens […] the mark they left on English sculpture was comparatively slight.[104]

Aside from Charles I, very few Englishmen commissioned portrait busts. Most busts served a funerary purpose, as did Edward Marshall's 1657 *Bust from the Monument of Dr. William Harvey* (Figure 27). Like the Baker bust, Dr. William Harvey is wrapped in a cloak and stares outward with pupilless eyes. However, Marshall's bust of the doctor is lifeless. The surfaces are flat and the doctor's hair and collar blend unnaturally with his cloak. Marshall followed the

[104] Margaret Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain: 1530 to 1830*. (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 67.

imago clipeata style present in the Baker bust, but the sculptor did not animate his sitter as Bernini had done.

The *imago clipeata* style is also present in other seventeenth-century English funerary monuments. In the *Monument to Robert Cotton* (1697), the sculptor and woodcarver Grinling Gibbons carves the deceased in low relief (Figure 28). The drapery protrudes beyond the wooden tondo frame, engaging the viewer's space, but Cotton's face and hair remain static. While this particular portrait is relatively uninteresting in comparison to the bust of Thomas Baker, Grinling Gibbons can help us to understand the impact of Bernini's bust in England. Gibbons used an *imago clipeata* style in the funerary monument for Sir Peter Lely at St. Paul's in Covent Garden.[105] It was Lely who purchased the bust of Thomas Baker sometime before his death in 1680.[106] Like Van Dyck, Sir Peter Lely was a portraitist and could recognize Bernini's mastery. Perhaps Lely was inspired by Bernini's bust to have his own *imago clipeata* portrait made. Unfortunately, the monument to Lely was destroyed in an eighteenth-century fire at St. Paul's, so a comparison between the two busts cannot be made.[107]

One of the only busts of an English sitter that attempts to challenge Bernini's portraiture is Edward Pierce's portrait of the English architect, Sir Christopher Wren (Figure 29). This bust was a present to Wren for his knighthood in 1673.[108] Unlike the previous English busts, this one attempts to capture Wren's presence in sculpture similar to Bernini. Tufts of curls rest on drapery that is animated with creases and folds. Wren's head is raised and his wide-set eyes fix on a point beyond the viewer. The corners of his mouth turn slightly upward and emphasize the lines and wrinkles in his skin. Yet, even this bust does not match the naturalistic and active qualities of the

[105] Ibid, 129.
[106] MacLagan, "Sculpture by Bernini in England," 61.
[107] Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain: 1530 to 1830*, 129.
[108] Ibid, 104.

bust of Thomas Baker. Pierce's sitter is dull; the sculptor does not differentiate the textures of Wren's hair, skin, and garments. Wren's eyes are almost cartoonish, staring into the distance with large pupils. This bust falls short of a true speaking likeness; although, Pierce did attempt to create an enlivened portrait after Bernini's precedent.

When the surviving Baker bust is placed in the context of English sculpture, Bernini's achievement becomes clear. The bust Baker brought to England was unlike anything his fellow noblemen and art collectors owned. For Bernini, there was no competition from English sculptors; Van Dyck was the only person who could be compared to the Cavaliere, but he worked exclusively in paint.

Conclusion

In the Victoria and Albert Museum, the bust of Thomas Baker sits on a pedestal in a gallery with other works from the Jacobean and Caroline periods. When museumgoers enter the space, they first encounter a wall text entitled "Who Led Taste: The Court, 1603-1649" (Figure 30).[109] Charles I and Henrietta Maria certainly led taste in England during their twenty-four year reign. Their choice to commission busts from the papal sculptor was unprecedented, and their marble portraits, although destroyed and unrealized, had lasting effects on the art of England. The Thomas Baker bust is in many ways the result of the Charles I commission, and historically has been reduced to an anecdote in the story of the king's bust. To understand the significance of the Baker commission, we do not have to divorce it from Charles I, but instead we must resituate it in both Bernini's oeuvre and in the context of Stuart portraiture.

Thomas Baker is not the sculptor's most striking portrait. Some consider it ugly. At first glance, the long, tufted hair does seem to overwhelm the sitter's head. Baker's modern lace

[109] Wall Text, "Who Led Taste: The Court, 1603-1649," Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

collar is at odds with the cloak that he wears, which is often found in ancient and funerary contexts. Thomas Baker is unusual, and for many, unremarkable. But what did Bernini see when he looked at his patron? In the Charles I commission, Bernini had to work from only three painted views of the king. In the case of Thomas Baker, Bernini could ask his sitter to part his lips, adjust his collar, and turn his head. He could rapidly sketch Baker, observe his face in different lighting, and make models that captured his physical presence. Bernini could hold the lace collar and feel its uneven textures before striking the marble block. He could talk to his sitter, and his sitter could talk to him. Although the sculptor created this bust with the same process he used for many of his Roman sitters, Thomas Baker does not present the same vocabulary of forms. This is because Mr. Baker was a foreigner in Bernini's world; he is an anomaly not because he is ugly, but because he is English.

The Baker bust is a part of the larger artistic exchange between Rome and London that started when Henrietta Maria arrived at the Stuart court in 1625. Thomas Baker was interested in Roman art before Bernini sculpted Charles I's bust, but in commissioning his own Bernini portrait, he followed the king's precedent. In this exchange between Rome and London, Bernini was able to observe Van Dyck's painting and in turn, send to London two different types of sculpture: one after a painting and one *ad vivum*. Thomas Baker provided the sculptor another opportunity to show both English patrons and artists the possibilities of the sculpted portrait. However this time, Bernini could use his preferred methods to capture the Englishman's presence: clay models, quick sketches, and conversation. Mr. Baker is Bernini's only Englishman who survives and speaks.

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Height: 82.5cm, Width: 70cm, Depth: 36cm
London, The Victoria & Albert Museum
Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 2: Anthony Van Dyck, *Portrait of Charles I of England with his wife Henrietta Maria,* oil on canvas, 113.5 x 163cm, Archiepiscopal Castle and Gardens, Kroměříž, Czech Republic
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Figure 8: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Portrait of Antonio Coppola,* 1612, marble, Museo della Chiesa di San Giovanni dei Fiorentini
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Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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Figure 17: Detail of Thomas Baker's lace collar
Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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Source: Bacchi, Andrea., Catherine Hess, Jennifer. Montagu, Anne-Lise. Desmas, J. Paul Getty Museum, and National Gallery of Canada. *Bernini and the Birth of Baroque Portrait Sculpture*. Los Angeles: Ottawa: J. Paul Getty Museum; National Gallery of Canada, 2008, page 269

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Source: Ashmolean Museum

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