

Painting Pairs 2023-2024

An Art Historical and Technical Study of The Courtauld Gallery's *Bearded Man with Falcon*

Nitzan Band and Jessica Raja-Brown



Attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani, *Bearded Man with a Falcon*, Oil on canvas, c.1500, 99 x 73 cm, The Courtauld Gallery (CIA 2932).

Abstract

The following report details the findings on a portrait painting, *Bearded Man with Falcon*, as part of the interdisciplinary research undertaken for the *Painting Pairs Project 2023-24* at The Courtauld Institute of Art. *Bearded Man with Falcon*, a work from the Courtauld Gallery collection, is currently attributed to Lazzaro Bastiani, a Venetian artist, and dated to c. 1500. However, research has called this designation into question largely due to apparent stylistic differences. Considering the inclusion of a falcon, a distinguishing feature of this portrait, comparisons with similar works of the same period have been investigated and revealed an interesting genre-spanning various regions outside of Venice. In contrast to other portraits with falcons, this painting is unusual in the scale and centrality of the falcon in the composition, suggesting that the bird was of particular significance to the sitter.

While both technical analysis and art historical research generated a wide range of possibilities, the establishment of a firm attribution for *Bearded Man with Falcon* was limited by the complexity of the painting's materiality and the extent of damage.