1. "Il demeure à monstrer, par figures antiques, la diversité & façon variable de leurs salades, cabassets, chappeaux, bonnets de fer, morrions simples & lassés: desquels la visiere (qu'ils haussoyent & baissoyent, comme celles que portent auiourdhuy noz Hommes-d'armes) estoyt faicte à la similitude des masques que l'on voyt encores par tout le monde. Quant aux crestes, bestes, ailes, oyseaux, cornes, fueillages, & autres animaux, que les Rommains faisoyent mettre sus leurs morrions, nous en retenons encors auiourdhuy la coustume." Du Choul, *Discours sur la castrametation*, fols. 48v–49r.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Mortimer 1964, vol. 1, pp. 222–23, no. 181.

17.
PORTRAIT OF JEAN DE DINTEVILLE AS SAINT GEORGE

Francesco Primaticcio
Italian, ca. 1550
Oil on canvas
64 ¼ x 53 ½ in. (163 x 136 cm)
The Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection Foundation

This commanding image is one of the few sixteenth-century portraits to represent the sitter in Roman-style armor. In this case, however, the costume was employed to identify the subject not with one of the caesars or with a classical hero like Alexander or Scipio, but rather with the most venerated of Christian warriors, Saint George. The vanquished dragon and broken lance leave no doubt as to the portrait's allegorical subject. The painting reminds us that, even in the sixteenth century, armor *all'antica* was not exclusively humanist in its allusions but it also retained medieval associations with traditional Christian iconography.

The costume is so meticulously rendered and specific in detail as to suggest that the artist had observed similar armors. The harness conforms to the canonical Roman muscled type, with an anatomically modeled cuirass with broad shoulder straps, lion-mask pauldrons with pteruges (pendent straps) below, a skirt of similar pteruges framed at the top by semicircular tabs emblazoned with lion heads, and openwork sandals with high crisscrossed leg straps surmounted by lion heads. Such armors, based on Roman sculpture, appear regularly in Renaissance paintings and sculpture of historical and religious subject matter but rarely in formal portraiture. The only complete parade armor *alla romana* of the sixteenth century is that made of elaborately embossed and damascened steel by Bartolomeo Campi of Pesaro, in 1546, for Guidobaldo II della Rovere, duke of Urbino (cat. no. 54). The portrait under discussion here is especially interesting in that certain details, such as the presence of mail at the sleeves and beneath the skirt and the turned and roped edges of some of the plates, are of sixteenth-century construction, indicating that the artist was also acquainted with current armor fashions. On the other hand, the olive-colored torso, its gilt mounts, and the pteruges of what appears to be pink satin may reflect the painter's knowledge of contemporary pageant armor constructed of leather, fabric, and papier-mâché, like those illustrated in Filippo Orsoni's album of 1554 (cat. no. 15). The elaborate cartouche at the top of the breastplate, which encloses a female figure holding a lance, probably Minerva or Bellona, is a purely sixteenth-century invention, as is the baldric and elaborate sword hilt, further confirming the impression that the artist had in mind an actual costume.

The helmet on the adjacent table is noteworthy, as it seems unrelated in style and material to the sitter's Roman armor. The headpiece is a contemporary burgonet of unusual symmetrical form, its surfaces covered with red velvet and gilt-metal appliqués, suggesting that it may originally have been intended to accompany a costume or matching velvet-covered brigandine (a textile-covered armor lined with small plates).[1] The gilt figure of a lion at the apex, the female herm at the front, and the putto clasping the surrounding acanthus scrolls belong to a well-established Renaissance vocabulary that will be seen many times in this catalogue.[2] The medallion or cameo set over the ear is a fanciful detail that suggests that the helmet is at least partly fictitious or perhaps that it was an elaborate tournament prize of a kind that no longer survives.

The subject of this portrait was first identified by Charles Sterling (in Amsterdam 1955) as Jean de Dinteville (1504–1555), lord of Polisy and bailly of Troyes, who was earlier represented by Hans Holbein in *The Ambassadors* (National Gallery, London) and again, this time in the guise of Moses, by an unknown Netherlandish or French artist in a panel of 1537, *Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh: An Allegory of the Dinteville Family* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. no. 50.70). Sterling also attributed the canvas, or at least its design, to the Bolognese painter Francesco Primaticcio (1504–1570), who worked with Giulio Romano in Mantua and then moved to France in 1531 to become the principal designer at the royal château of Fontainebleau. Primaticcio is recorded as having visited Dinteville at his château at Polisy in 1544, and according to Sterling, the portrait was painted immediately thereafter as an allusion to Dinteville's recent victory over political rivals. Henri Zerner (1996) has rejected Sterling's long-accepted identification of both the subject and the artist, suggesting instead that the canvas may have been painted by Luca Penni (1501/4–1556), a member of