

	Object: Cimon and Pero (Roman Charity)
	Museum: Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de
	Collection: Alte Meister, Gemälde und Skulpturen
	Inventory number: 1236-1980/2

Description

Antonio Bellucci, like Giovanni Battista Piazzetta, belonged to the so-called tenebrosi (“tenebrous ones”), those Venetian artists of the late 17th century whose works were characterized by stark contrasts of light and dark. The painting refers to an episode from the historical anecdotes of the Roman writer Valerius Maximus (who presumably died in AD 34) and tells the story of the Athenian Cimon, who had been thrown into prison and sentenced to death by starvation. His daughter Pero, however, who had just given birth to a child, gained entry to the prison and saved her elderly father by nursing him at her breast. This theme was especially popular in Baroque times because, on the one hand, it was an example of Christian charity (*caritas christiana*)—next to faith and hope, one of the three Christian virtues. On the other hand, it presented an irresistible opportunity to depict an erotic image. Bellucci arranged his figures in the shape of a pyramid. The portrayal of the child is rather unusual in the pictorial tradition of this theme. Whereas the father in his need and the son in playfulness are totally fixated on Pero, she casts a wary side glance, fearful of being discovered.

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Oil on canvas
Measurements:	118.0 x 101.6 cm

Events

Painted	When	1685
	Who	Antonio Bellucci (1654-1726)
	Where	

[Relation to
person or
institution]

When

Who

Valerius Maximus

Where

Keywords

- Anecdote
- Hope
- Painting
- Roman Charity
- Virtue