

### 3. A scene with a double interpretation?

In Renaissance art, it was not uncommon for artists to depict young men with androgynous features, to express their beauty and innocence.

The young figure, in awe<sup>11</sup> of Christ, could be reminiscent of an angel. His gaze is both admiring and disturbing.

From then on, the depiction of this tragic moment seems to be overshadowed by the staging of two protagonists, Christ, originally unimbed, and an ‘adorer’.

Figure 23 : LAM 1642 (2021)



Another disturbing element is added to the scene. Like the Roman toga of Christ, ‘the Character’ wears a tunic with folds at the top in the direction of the collar. The two folds, marked by the white arrows, go upwards and follow the dorsal side of the hand. However, these folds should be symmetrical (in green, image on the right) to a vertical passing through the middle of the collar of the tunic (red dotted line).

Could these folds be formed by the pressure of Christ’s hand on the tunic, inducing a contact between Christ and ‘the Character’, an interpretation that is quite valid according to Mary Harlow<sup>12</sup>: “The folds you have marked out could be a reaction to the touch of Christ’s hand in that case. Unfortunately, it is impossible to be 100% secure in such an interpretation **but it is valid as far as I can tell**”.

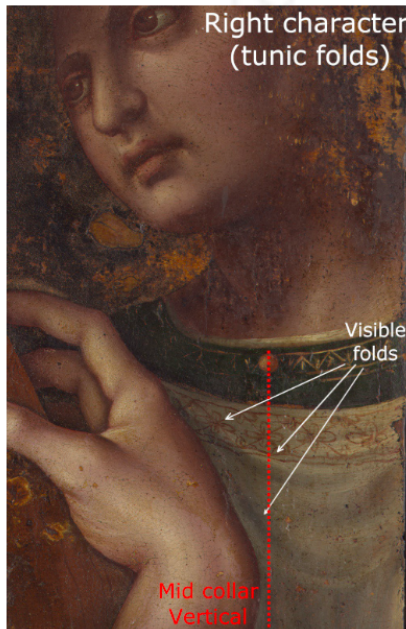


Figure 24 : Character's, visible folds



Figure 25 : Roman tunic, youth

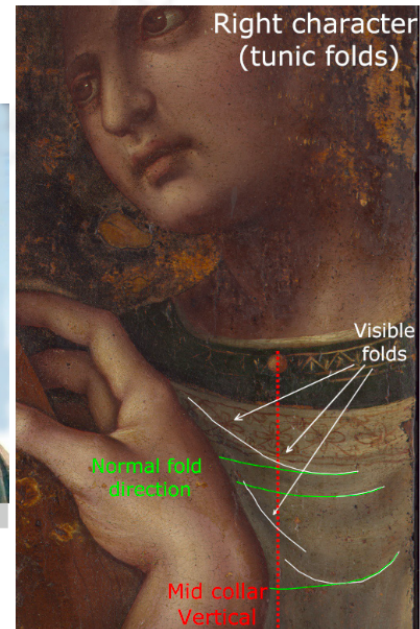


Figure 26 : Character's normal fold direction

11 : ‘The Character’s mouth is open (X-ray image).

12 : Mary Harlow (born in 1956): English archaeologist and classical scholar (Roman social history, dress and textile...).